

A Lifetime of Instilling Goodness —In Memory of Dharma Master Heng Bin

春風化雨的行者—憶恒彬師

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杜親誠 中譯



1984年恒彬法師（左）
在法界佛教大學畢業典禮上

Dharma Master Heng Bin (left)
at Dharma Realm Buddhist University's
Commencement Ceremony, 1984.

Dharma Master Heng Bin first encountered the Buddha-dharma in 1978. She was studying at San Francisco State and working part time in the library there. One of her jobs was shelving the new acquisitions. While she was doing this, she came across a couple books published by the Buddhist Text Translation Society that Professor Epstein had ordered for one of his classes. She was intrigued and signed up to take the class the next semester. A strange thing also happened while she was working in the library. One day an Asian woman came in and gave her a picture of Amitabha Buddha. She told her not to tell anyone she had given it to her and left. She never saw the woman again.

Later, she went to Gold Mountain Monastery to attend the evening ceremony and one of the Venerable Master's lectures. She then signed up for another class with Professor Epstein.

恒彬法師是在1978年首次遇到佛法。那時她在舊金山州立大學讀書並在學校圖書館打工，工作項目之一就是將新到的書籍上架。工作的時候，偶然間她看到幾本由「法界佛教總會佛經翻譯委員會」出版，易象乾博士為他的課程所訂購的書，她很感興趣，就報名參加易教授下學期的課程。在圖書館工作時，曾經發生過一件奇怪的事，某天，一位亞洲婦女走進來，送給她一張阿彌陀佛的像並告訴她不要跟任何人提起，就走了，從此她再也沒見過這個婦人。

之後，她去金山寺參加晚課並聆聽上人講法。然後，她又報名參加易

When she expressed her interested in looking into Buddhist practice more seriously, he encouraged her to speak to the bhikshunis who were then living at the International Institute for the Translation of Buddhist Texts in Pacific Heights. This is also where Instilling Goodness School first started.

She called to set up a time. That night she had a dream in which she was trying to recite Namō Amitabha Buddha, but it kept coming out all jumbled. Then the Venerable Master came and said, “Just picture Amitabha Buddha in front of you when you recite and it will come out clearly. She did and was able to recite. After that she was feeling more and more drawn to Buddhism and to the Venerable Master.

Later that summer, she went on a camping trip to Yosemite with some friends. In the middle of night, she woke up and something had a hold of her. It was terrifying. Then, she saw Guanyin Bodhisattva and Amitabha Buddha standing off to one side and, suddenly everything was fine. She could hear the river and felt very peaceful. Later, she had another dream. In this dream, Guanyin was taking her and some other people up into the mountains on an expedition. None of them had bodies, just consciousness. She told Guanyin, “You should come and speak at Professor Epstein’s class. I know he would really like it.”

Around that time, one of the bhikshunis gave her a copy of the *Dharani Sutra*. After that, the only thing she wanted to do was study the sutra and the mantra. She had another dream. In this dream, there was a statue by her bed. A small, Anglo woman about 4 feet tall stepped out of it. She was very thin, wore a white robe and had red hair piled on top of her head. She was very beautiful, and the kindest looking person Dharma Master Bin had ever seen. She held out her hand and asked Dharma Master Bin, “Do you want to come with me?” She really wanted to go with the woman, but at the last minute she chickened out and said, “I have to go to work.”

The next day she went to see the bhikshunis again to talk about these dreams and what it meant to take refuge. She also told them she was thinking of dropping out of school because it didn’t interest her any more. While she was there, the Venerable Master called and asked to talk to her. He told her that the woman in the dream was Guanyin Bodhisattva leading her to believe in Buddhism. He also said she should stay in school and that as Buddhists we should always do a good job of whatever we’re doing and not quit things. She took this advice very seriously for the rest of her life. After finishing school, she moved to the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas

象乾博士的另一門課。當她表示有興趣更進一步研究佛教的修行時，易教授鼓勵她與當時位在太平洋高地的「國際佛教譯經院」裡面的比丘尼們談談，那個地方就是現在的育良小學的起源地。

她打電話約了時間，當天晚上就做了一個夢，夢中她試著誦「南無阿彌陀佛」聖號，但是一團混亂。然後上人出現了，告訴她：「念佛時，只要想像阿彌陀佛就在你面前，他就會很清楚的出現。」她照著做，真的就能好好念佛了。從那之後，佛教和上人越來越吸引她。

那年夏天，她和幾個朋友去優勝美地露營，半夜裡醒過來，覺得有東西纏著她，心裡很害怕，這時她看到觀世音菩薩和阿彌陀佛站在她的兩旁，突然間一切又回復正常，能聽到河水的聲音也感到很平靜。後來她又做了一個夢，在這個夢裡，觀世音菩薩帶著她和其他一些人上山探險，他們都沒有身體，只有意識。她對觀世音菩薩說：「你應該來易教授的課堂裡演講，他一定會很高興。」

「國際佛教譯經院」裡一位比丘尼送給她一本《千手千眼大悲心陀羅尼經》，從此，她唯一想做的就是讀經和誦咒。某天，她又做了一個夢，夢裡她的床邊有一座雕像，一個大約4英尺高的白人小女人從裡面走出來，很瘦，穿著白色長袍，紅色的頭髮盤在頭上。她很漂亮，是恒彬法師從沒見過的最和藹的人。她伸出手問恒彬法師：「你願意跟我來嗎？」恒彬法師真的很想和她一起走，但在最後一刻，她退縮了，說：「我得去上班。」

第二天，她又去見那些比丘尼，談到這些夢和皈依的意義。她告訴比丘尼們，她正在考慮輟學，因為她對學校已經不感興趣了。當她在那兒時，上人打電話來要跟她講話。上人告訴她，夢裡的女人是觀世音菩薩，要帶領她信奉佛



1981年恒彬法師受沙彌尼戒（左起第三位）

Dharma Master Heng Bin (bottom row, third from the left) and other newly ordained novices after receiving the ten novice precepts at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas from the Venerable Master Hua at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas.

and soon decided she wanted to leave the home life. She took the shramanerika precepts on the Buddha's Birthday in 1981 and was ordained in 1982.

Dharma Master Heng Bin's first allegiance was always to the Sangha. It was clear in everything she did that being a left-home person was central to who she was and she never wavered from that commitment. She took the Six Great Principles of the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas as her guide and was always very strict with herself.

The City of Ten Thousand Buddha was her home. She only left a handful of times, which included once to be part of a bhikshuni delegation to China in 1985, another time in the early nineties to care for her dying mother, and for a one year retreat to Snow Mountain Monastery in Washington State.

When Dharma Realm Buddhist Association (DRBA) established the Refugee Resettlement program, she volunteered to help teach in the schools. She had found her Dharma door. From then on, educating children and instilling them with goodness was her practice, and she embraced it with her whole heart. She helped her students

教。上人還表示，她應該留在學校，作為佛教徒，我們應該盡力把手上的事做好，而不是放棄。

恒彬法師終其一生都認真遵循上人的這個教導。學業完成後，她搬到了萬佛城，很快地她決定要出家。1981年佛誕那天，她受了沙彌尼戒，1982年受具足戒。

恒彬法師最崇敬的就是僧伽，這從她所做所為中可以清楚的看到，她以身為出家人時時為念，並且從未動搖。她以萬佛城的六大宗旨為依歸，對自己的要求總是很嚴格。

她以萬佛城為家，一生總共只離開過幾次。一次是在1985年隨比丘尼代表團去了中國一次，再一次是在90年初，為了照顧垂死的母親，再來就是曾到華盛頓州的雪山寺修行了一年。當法界佛教總會成立難民救濟計畫時，她自願到學校授課，就此找到了她的修行法門。從那時起，她全心全力的投入兒童教育並啟發他們的良善，這就是她的修行。她幫助學生們做個良善之人，鼓勵他們未來能幫助這個世界。上人鼓勵她獲得教



1992年恒彬法師在萬佛聖城大殿（左起第二位）

Dharma Master Heng Bin (bottom row, second from left) at the Buddha Hall at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas, 1992.

to be wholesome and encouraged them to help the world in the future. The Master encouraged her to get her teaching credential, which she did, and then conscientiously applied everything she learned in her teaching.

She used every ounce of her energy to teach and cared deeply about every single student. At one point, she even taught in both the boys' and girls' schools. Each day after morning ceremony, she would light all three woodstoves at the girls' school, teach her morning classes, accompany students to lunch ceremony, and then supervise them at lunch time, even though it was her only meal of the day. Next she would return to pack up her things, and then head over to the boys' school to teach for the entire afternoon. In her spare time, she mopped the floors, cleaned the bathrooms, and worked in the financial office.

She wasn't the kind of teacher who stood at the front of the classroom and lectured. Instead, she engaged the students in active learning, skillfully gaining their interest and encouraging them to work hard. And she made learning fun and interesting. Whether she was drilling students on math facts, helping them build pyramids during the study of Egypt, taking them to the back pasture to sketch the grapevines, or enticing them into the world of literature and written expression, she did it with her whole heart and her students responded in kind. Through her own actions and the way she taught, instilling goodness naturally happened too. Even when she became gravely ill, she continued to teach and her students were almost always foremost on her mind.

Outside of her teaching duties, she was a reclusive cultivator and lived a simple life. She did not like to talk about herself, but she was always interested in helping and encouraging others. She had deep faith in the Venerable Master, and relied on him and Guanyin Bodhisattva to help her throughout her illness. One of her Dharma sisters said about her, "I was inspired by Dharma Master Bin's passion, her bravery in overcoming difficulties and accepting suffering so that she could continue to teach. She prayed that any beings hurt by her could forgive her." Her loss is a great one and she will be sorely missed. We hope that the seeds of compassion and virtue she planted in her students, her fellow teachers, and others she encountered will continue to sprout and grow. ❀

學證書，她做到了，並切切實實的把所學都應用到教學當中。

她用盡每一分心力教學，也非常關心每一個學生，有一陣子她甚至同時在男校和女校教學。每天早課結束後，她點燃女校的三個火爐，開始早上的教學。中午她陪學生們參加午齋儀式，儘管這是她一天中唯一的一頓飯，她仍然繼續工作，監督學生們的午餐。接下來，她會回去收拾東西，前往男校，繼續整個下午的教課。稍有空閒，她就擦地板，清潔浴室，還在財務部門幫忙。

她不是那種站在教室前面講課的老師，相反的，她啟發學生積極學習，運用技巧讓學生們找到興趣所在，並鼓勵他們認真努力。她使得學習變得好玩又有趣，無論是帶領學生鑽研數學理論，或是在學習埃及文化時教他們建造金字塔，帶學生們到後面的牧場去素描葡萄藤，以及誘導他們進入文學領域並練習以文字表達。她全心全意的付出，學生也以成果回報。藉由她的言行身教、潛移默化，激發了良善的種子。學生在她心中永遠是最重要的，即使在重病期間，她仍然繼續教書。

除了教學職責之外，她還是個隱居的修行者，過著簡樸的生活。她不喜歡談論自己，卻總是喜歡幫助並鼓勵他人。她對上人有極崇高堅定的信念，依靠上人和觀世音菩薩來面對疾病。一位師姐談到她時說：「我被恒彬法師的慈悲心所感動，她回向給所有曾經被她傷害過的眾生，求它們原諒。她勇敢的克服各種困難，接受疾病所帶來的痛苦，這樣她才能繼續的教書。」

失去恒彬法師是我們巨大的損失，大家都會十分懷念她。希望她在學生們、同事們以及其他曾與她相遇的人身上所種下的慈悲與美德的種子能夠繼續發芽、茁壯成長。恒彬法師，長存於我們心中！❀