



# Guanyin Buddha

## 觀音古佛

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The word enlightenment is derived from the word light. How do we enlighten ourselves? We have electricity to brighten a room; but without electricity we are in darkness.

We are ordinary beings, who still cannot do without the conditions. We are conditioned by countless things—external and internal. Guanyin Bodhisattva, on the other hand, has gone beyond conditions, thus unconditioned. On the causal ground, Guanyin used his mental electricity to illuminate his own mind and saw empty-yet-not-empty nature of the five skandhas.

Originally, the *Universal Door Chapter of Guan-shi-yin Bodhisattva* was known simply as *Guanyin Sutra* and was independently circulating ever since the third century. It already existed when Venerable Dharmaraksha translated the *Lotus Sutra* in the year 286. The one we recite now is Venerable Kumarajiva's version, which was completed in the year 406.

There was another short sutra with a similar name; it is known by several names, two of which are *Guanyin Sutra in Ten Sentences*<sup>1</sup> or *King Gao's Guan-Shi-Yin Sutra* 高王觀世音經. This is how this small sutra originated.

There was a man named Wang Hsüan-mo (王玄謨 Wángxuánmó 388-468) who was a general sentenced to die. While in prison, he dreamed of someone teaching him to chant this *Guanyin Sutra in Ten Sentences* one thousand times to avoid death<sup>2</sup>. After he woke up, he chanted it one thousand times. After he completed it, the order to

在英文，「悟道」這個字眼是源自「光明」。我們如何把我們自己的自性照亮呢？我們可以用電燈來照亮房子，但是如果停電的話，我們就會在黑暗裡了。

我們是凡夫，還離不開有為法，我們被內在跟外在的因緣捆綁著。觀世音菩薩已經超出有為法，證得無為的境界。在因地裡，觀音菩薩用他的腦電波去照亮他的自性，看透五蘊真空妙有的境界。

本來，觀世音菩薩的〈普門品〉，很早的時候大家稱它為《觀音經》，從第三世紀以來都是單獨流通的。早在西元286年，笈法護大師翻譯的《法華經》已經存在了；我們今天誦的是鳩摩羅什法師所翻譯的版本，這版本是在西元406年完成的。

另外還有一部比較短的經，經名類似《觀音經》；它有幾個名字，其中兩個名字就是《十句觀音經<sup>1</sup>》或者《高王觀世音經》，這是這部短經的來源。

<sup>1</sup>A Guan-Yin Sutra in Ten Phrases 十句觀音經. Chün-fang Yü, Kuan-yin (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 114, 258, 614.

<sup>2</sup>In the dream, Wang Hsüan-mo was told to chant *Guanyin Sutra* a thousand times to be freed from this misfortune. Later around 1269, Chih-p'an (志磐 Zhì pán) identified this as *Guanyin Sutra in Ten Sentences* in the *Record of the Lineage of the Buddhas and Patriarchs* Fo-tsu t'ung-chi (佛祖統紀 Fózǔ tǒngjì). Also Kuan-yin, 111, 113-114.

王玄謨在夢中被告知念《觀音經》一千遍可免難。大約在公元1269年，僧人志磐在《佛祖統紀》裡把這部經確定為《十句觀音經》。

pardon him suddenly arrived. It was believed that it was King Kao (高王), the powerful prime minister of the Eastern Wei (東魏 Dōng Wèi), who propagated this sutra. This story is found in the *History of Sung* (宋書 roll 76, written in 487).

The Bodhisattva's powers are like magic only because our worldly logic system and views are limited. There is a vow mentioned in the *Universal Door Chapter of Guanyin Bodhisattva*. It says, "If someone facing deadly harm recites Guanyin Bodhisattva's name, the weapons of the assailants will break apart and he will get away."

Here are a few stories<sup>3</sup> illustrating this. There was a soldier named Sun Ching-te (孫敬德 Sūnjingdé) in the sixth century. As recorded by Vinaya Master Tao-hsuan (道宣 596-667) in the *Continued Records of the Biographies of Eminent Monks* 續高僧傳, Sun worshipped an icon of Guanyin which he kept in his prison room. He was falsely accused of a crime and was sentenced to die. The night before the execution, he felt remorseful and repented of his karmic debts. He then fell asleep and dreamed of a monk who taught him to chant the *Guanyin Sutra in Ten Sentences* one thousand times to avoid death. He did as he was instructed. As he was led through the streets, he managed to finish chanting the Sutra before his beheading. When the executioner tried to behead him, the knife broke into three sections. Although the executioner changed the knife three times, the same thing happened. Sun Ching-te was not hurt at all. When they reported this to Prime Minister Gao Huan, and asked him to pardon Sun. When Sun Ching-te returned to his prison room (barrack), he saw three cuts made by a knife on the neck of his Guanyin image. It seemed that the Guanyin image received the knife cuts on behalf of Sun Ching-te.

Another related tale happened in the fourth century—more than one hundred and fifty years earlier than the previous story. It tells the story of someone from P'eng-ch'eng (彭城 Pénghéng, 徐州 Xúzhōu in present day 江蘇 Jiāngsū province) who was wrongly accused of being a robber and was sentenced to die. He worshipped Guanyin and always wore a golden image of the Bodhisattva inside his knotted hair behind his neck. When he was led out to be killed, he concentrated his thoughts even more firmly on Guanyin. When the executioner's knife struck his neck, there was a metallic sound and the knife broke. Although three times another knife was substituted, no harm could be done to him. Everyone was astonished and he was questioned by the official in

從前有一個叫王玄謨的將軍，被判死刑，關在監獄裡。有一天他夢到有人教他念《十句觀音經》一千遍，他就可以免死<sup>2</sup>。他醒來之後，就念這《十句觀音經》一千次；念完後，傳旨免罪的命令忽然就到了。我們相信，根據歷史是渤海王高歡（簡稱「高王」），東魏掌權的宰相，把這部經流通。這段歷史在宋書裡可以找到。

對我們來說，觀世音菩薩的神通妙有，就好像魔術一樣，這是因為我們以邏輯為基礎的世俗觀，是很有限的。在〈普門品〉裡，觀世音菩薩有一個願力說：若復有人臨當被害，稱觀世音菩薩名者，彼所持刀杖尋段段壞而得解脫。這以下有幾個故事<sup>3</sup>來說明這一點。

在第六世紀，有一個士兵叫孫敬德，道宣律師在〈續高僧傳〉裡面講述這一則公案。孫敬德在監獄牢房裡，供奉一尊觀世音菩薩像。他被誤控而判處死刑。行刑的前晚，就感覺非常非常慚愧，他懺悔自己宿業的業障，接著就睡著了，夢到一個法師叫他念《十句觀音經》一千次，這樣就可以免死，他照做了。當他被領到街上的時候，他完成了一千次的誦念。

當他的頭要被砍下之前，那把刀就斷成三段；雖然換了三次刀，但是同樣的事情發生，孫敬德毫髮無傷。當他們把這件事情報告給高歡的時候，就請求他釋放孫敬德。當孫敬德回去牢房的時候，看到他所供奉的觀音菩薩像的頸上有三道刀痕。這觀世音菩薩的像，就替孫敬德受了這三刀。

另外也有類似的一個故事，發生在四世紀，比前面的故事早150年。這個故事說，有一個人從彭城來的，被誤為偷盜，判了死刑。他一直都供奉觀世音菩薩，他在他的髮髻裡面藏著一尊觀世音的金像。

當他被領去砍頭的時候，他更專心念

<sup>3</sup> Kuan-yin, 176-177. Yü, Chün-fang, "Miracle Tales and the Domestication of Kuan-yin," <http://www.chibs.edu.tw/chbj/html/chbj/11/chbj1114.htm>. 參見于君方教授所著《觀音：菩薩中國化的演變》第四章「感應故事與觀音的本土化」。

charge. He answered that he had no special magic except that he worshipped Guanyin and wore the image in his hair bun. When they loosened his hair and examined the image, there were three cuts on its neck.

We often hear in the Sutras about Buddhas having a vajra indestructible body. In fact, in the *Eighth-eight Buddhas Repentance*, we recite “Namo Vajra-Indestructible Buddha.” Why is it that the Buddha has this kind of body, and our bodies can be subject to harm and injury by knives, fire, and poison. The Venerable Master explained during last Thursday night lecture that the Buddha attained a solid, indestructible body because he refrained from hurting or killing other sentient beings. Guanyin Bodhisattva is the same way in that he/she cultivated non-harming, instead he practiced saving beings from harm. In that way, the Bodhisattva continued to accumulate blessings of causing living beings to prolong their lives. Along those lines, when we promote vegetarianism, perform liberating lives or protecting animals in accord with Dharma and in accord with local laws, we also accumulate blessings, planting seeds for prolonging lives. Now I’m going to share a few stories happened to my family.

My mother has been a devotee of Guanyin Bodhisattva. When she was in Myanmar, she had obtained a statue of the Bodhisattva from overseas through her younger brother who was a sailor. She regularly and faithfully made offerings to the Bodhisattva. Without being taught by her parents, on her own, she would choose to be vegetarian on special lunar days. She would be content with eating simple foods; even her house maid was amazed that she could eat such simple foods. She often told us this story of the time when she was pregnant with her children. She would be at the hospital and whenever the doctor asked her if she had cramp yet, she would innocently asked him where it was supposed to be. She delivered her children without any pain or difficulty.

Guanyin Bodhisattva’s affinity with people is vast and great. Before the Guanyin Session, our big dining hall had very few people because of many residents being away. On the first day during lunch, I saw that the dining hall was full of people. This is also the same with the Venerable Master. He had special affinities with people from all walks of life and from ancient past. Now I would like to share a

誦觀世音菩薩。當他的頭被砍的時候，他聽到金屬的聲音，刀就斷了。雖然砍了三次，他們試著換刀，但他都沒有受傷，大家都非常驚訝。那個官員問他，他說他沒有特別的神力，只是供奉觀世音菩薩，在他髮髻裡有一尊觀世音菩薩。當他們把他的髮髻鬆開的時候，他們檢查那個觀世音菩薩像，同樣地看到觀世音菩薩像的頸上有三道刀痕。

我們常常在經上聽說佛菩薩有金剛不壞身，在〈八十八佛懺悔文〉裡面，我們也念到「南無金剛不壞佛」。為什麼佛菩薩有金剛不壞身，而我們的身體會受到傷害，或者刀、或者火、或者毒的傷害？

上個星期四晚上，上人（錄音帶中）講經的時候提到：佛有金剛不壞身，因為他不殺生，不傷害其他生。同樣地，觀世音菩薩也修行這個不傷害眾生的法門，而且他修行的法門就是要把眾生從所有的苦厄中救度出來。在這方面，觀世音菩薩繼續累積讓眾生延長壽命的功德。

同樣的，當我們推廣素食，或者做合乎佛法與世間法的放生及護生，也會讓我們累積功德和種下延壽的種子。接下來我分享自己家裡發生的一些故事。

我媽媽供奉觀世音菩薩，當她在緬甸的時候，她從她弟弟那邊——她弟弟是水手——從國外請到一尊觀世音菩薩像，她平日很虔誠地供奉。

雖然她的父母沒有教她，但是她會選擇在特別的農曆節日吃素，吃很清淡的食物，覺得很滿足；雖然她家裡的傭人都很驚訝，為什麼她可以吃那麼清淡的食物。

她常常告訴我們這個故事：她要生我們的時候，每當醫院裡的醫生問她，妳有沒有陣痛啊？她都很狀況外的問說：什麼地方該痛啊？她生小孩的時候都是沒有痛苦，也沒困難的。

觀音菩薩跟眾生的緣是很廣大的，在觀音法會之前，我們齋堂裡只有幾個人，因為很多常住都離開了。但在法會第一天，我看見齋堂裡滿滿的都是人，這個跟上人和眾生的緣分是一樣的。上人跟所有各種各樣的人都有很大的緣分。這邊我想分享幾個關於上人的故事。

我的妹妹們跟上人比我更有緣分，我也分享一個小妹的故事。我妹妹在1988年到南加州一個

few stories of the Venerable Master.

My sisters have more affinity with the Venerable Master than I do. So I will share a story of one of my younger sisters. Back in 1988, out of curiosity she went to the Pacific Asia Museum in Pasadena, California. This museum featured oriental art, and they had a shop upstairs. She went up and right at the entry way was a reclining Buddha statue. There were other artifacts in the store, but this one caught her attention right away because being from Myanmar she recognized the style of the statue as being one from Myanmar. The price was very high, probably because it was antique, though she did not have the knowledge to determine how old it was.

Since she felt that it was not a respectful place for a Buddha statue to be in the middle of all the antiques, she decided to buy it. She tried to negotiate the price, but without success. She finally bought it despite the fact that there was damage on the statue. She carried it in her car and took it to Gold Wheel Monastery and offered it to the temple.

Not long after that, she had a dream in which a Dharma Master was trying to prevent all the bad spirits at the museum shop from bothering me or giving me any trouble. One day when she had a chance to sit with the Master, he briefly asked out of the blue, "Wasn't the statue expensive when you bought it?" She nodded her head. That was the only time he mentioned about it. She was surprised that he knew, even though she never told anyone how much it cost. Later, two of her Dharma friends shared the cost of the statue.

In early April of 2007, our mother suggested doing some remodeling on this reclining Buddha statue, which was still at Gold Wheel Monastery, since it looked like it had not been re-touched since it was brought there almost twenty years before. After getting permission from the Dharma Master there, she started to work on it with some gold leaves obtained from Myanmar a few months earlier.

Then, the Dharma Master at the temple told her that she should finish it before the Buddha's birthday celebration on May 20. But Cherishing Youth Day was going to be celebrated on May 6, so she needed to finish it before this event of May 6, because the statue was in the open area in the Buddha Hall where people would be coming in. So one thing led to another and she had to hurry up to finish the job in three or four weeks.

When she started doing the work, most people at Gold Wheel Monastery were astonished, inquiring her about how she started, how she was going to do, and so on. In the beginning, she said she had no idea where to start. She does have some artistic sense and ability. She just felt she needed to renovate it and she could not find any person with this kind of experience either.

博物館，這博物館正展示著東方藝術作品。她們到樓上的一個商店去，在那個商店門口展示了一尊臥佛像。這個臥佛像吸引了她的注意力，因為這是一尊緬甸式的臥佛像。

這尊臥佛像價格非常高，因為是古董。但是她覺得這不是供奉佛像的地方，就決定把它買下來。她想討價還價，但是沒有成功，她還是買了下來。雖然這尊佛像有缺損。她將佛像請到金輪寺供奉。不久之後，她夢到一個法師，試著避免所有在那個博物館的商店裡面的那些惡神，來給她麻煩。

有一天，她跟上人坐在一起的時候，上人忽然問她：那個佛像不是很貴嗎？她點頭。這是上人唯一一次跟她提到這件事情。她非常驚訝上人知道，因為她從來沒有告訴過人，這尊佛像多少錢。接下來，就有兩個法友跟她分擔了這尊佛像的價錢。

2007年4月初，母親建議為這尊臥佛貼金。因為自從近20年前請到金輪寺之後，看起來尚未整理過這尊佛像的外觀。獲得金輪寺法師首肯後，小妹著手為這尊臥佛貼金，金箔是幾個月前從緬甸買來的。

接著法師告訴她，要在5月20日浴佛節前，完成貼金，而懷少節於5月6日即將舉辦，因此她必須在5月6日之前完工。因為這尊臥佛就在大殿入口處，她必須在三到四個星期內，快快完成這項貼金工程。

當她開始貼金時，金輪寺的人多感驚訝，紛紛問她如何著手？如何進行？等等問題。其實一開頭她真不知道如何著手，她是有些美感和藝術天份，她覺得這件事該做，但找不到有經驗的人可以請教。

5月6日的限期逐漸逼近，她可慌了。因為有一處待補，但特別難進行。母親也來幫忙，但她擔心限期前無法完工。5月6日懷少節那個星期就要到

As the May 6 deadline approached, she was almost frantic. There was a particular difficult part that she needed to patch. Our mother also helped her out. She was worried that she wouldn't finish that job on time. As the date got closer to the week of May 6, Cherishing Youth Day, she had a dream before completing the job. In the dream, she sensed that she was given some sort of reassurance from the Venerable Master. Although she did not actually see his entire form in the dream, she saw part of his robe and felt his presence, walking around the area, inspecting everyone's activities. Amazingly things started to work out slowly but surely. With a lot of help from the Dharma Masters at Gold Wheel Monastery, her mother, and Dharma protectors, she managed to finish it on time. On a side note, around that time in Hong Kong's Buddhist Lecture Hall, the main Buddha image was being renovated. According to the bhikshuni in charge, the man who was doing the work on the statue saw the Venerable Master [during the period he was working.] The state of the Venerable Master is something we cannot fathom yet.

One time, when I visited my family in Los Angeles, we gathered in the living room. My younger sister decided to play a video of the Venerable Master speaking in Malaysia. He was proclaiming the power of the *Great Compassion Mantra*. As the video of the lecture started playing, my sister lit incense on the nearby altar. Typically, the incense stick is thin and the incense ash falls down as it burns. Or sometimes, if you practice at home in front of your altar, you might see the ash stay upright briefly and then it breaks and falls. What do you think happened? The incense stick lasted for about half an hour and Venerable Master's lecture ended as the incense burned to the end of the stick. The incense ash stayed unbroken for the whole time; in fact, as the time went by, the ash bent slowly toward the video image of the Venerable Master who was speaking about the *Great Compassion Mantra*. It remained bent at a 90-degree angle to the leg of the incense, defying the force of gravity. When the lecture finished and the Venerable Master's voice stopped, the ash was not sustained anymore and it dropped down. You could say that it was a demonstration of the Venerable Master's power of faith, vigor, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom—the five powers—in speaking the Dharma.

The Venerable Master's state speaks of his vow powers to benefit living beings everywhere. Being selfless, he has transcended time and space. We are lucky to receive the wise teachings of the Venerable Master. Let us all cherish the Way places he has established and encourage each other to walk the path of Bodhisattvas. ❀

了，在完工前，她做了個夢，夢見上人彷彿再度給她保證。雖然在夢中她未能親睹上人法身，但她看到上人袍子的一部份，也感覺到上人來了，就在那裡走動，看看每個人都在做些什麼。接下來，奇妙的事情發生了。金輪寺的法師、佛友、還有母親都來幫忙，因此在限期前順利完成佛像貼金的工程。附帶一提，那段期間，香港佛教講堂供奉的佛像也在重修。講堂的當家比丘尼說，重修佛像的人員，在工作中見到上人。上人的境界，實在是我們無法想像的。

有一次，我探訪我在南加州的家人，我們聚集在客廳裡，我妹妹就放了一段上人在馬來西亞講法的影片。

在這個影片裡，上人在宣講〈大悲咒〉的力量。在放的時候，我妹妹就在傍邊的佛桌上點著香。通常我們的香很細，一直燒的時候，灰就會掉下來。或者有時你在佛桌誦經的時候，你會看到那個香它會在上面，或者在很短的時間，會立著，但是繼續燒下來的時候，香灰就會掉。你們覺得接下來會發生什麼事情呢？

這個香，是可以燒半小時的香，在上人講完法的時候，那個香也燒完了，但是那個香的灰都沒有斷，它整個半個小時的時間都沒有斷；不只是這樣，那個香灰還慢慢彎，彎向放上人的影片的方向去，當時上人在講著〈大悲咒〉。

那這個香灰呢，它保持著跟香腳垂直90度，方向就向著上人的畫面，完全不符合地心吸力的原則。當那個影片停了，上人的聲音也停了，這灰撐不住，就掉下來了。你可以說這個是顯示上人信力、精進力、念力、定力、慧力，這說法的五力。

上人的境界顯示他要利益所有眾生的願力，上人無私的精神，超越時間和空間。我們非常幸運可以接觸到上人的教誨。我們珍惜所有上人建立的道場，還要鼓勵彼此行菩薩道。❀