

華嚴精舍舉辦梁皇寶懺大法會

Emperor Liang's Jeweled Repentance at Avatamsaka Vihara

蔡春影 文/譯

Written and English Translated by Chunyin Cai



2023年4月9日至16日，正值春暖花開的人間最美四月天，位於馬里蘭州的華嚴精舍，也是法界佛教總會在美國東岸的唯一道場，舉辦了為期八天的梁皇寶懺大法會，吸引了周邊地區的七十多位信眾參加。法會有幸得到了萬佛聖城和法界佛教總會屬下幾個道場數位法師的大力幫助。他們專程前來帶領法會並為大眾講法。法會期間還安排了莊嚴的授三皈依和五戒儀式，並在最後一天舉辦了歡喜慈悲的放生活動，讓信眾能攜老扶幼一同參加。

梁皇寶懺一直以來都是法界佛教總會非常重視的法會之一，

From April 9 to 16, 2023, amid a beautiful Spring, Avatamsaka Vihara, located in the state of Maryland and the only monastery on the East Coast under Dharma Realm Buddhist Association (DRBA), held an “Emperor Liang’s Jeweled Repentance,” which lasted for eight days and attracted more than 70 followers from the nearby areas. Several sanghans from the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas and other DRBA-affiliated monasteries came to support the event by leading Dharma sessions and giving Dharma talks. During the event, the solemn ceremony of the Three Refuges and the Five Precepts was also performed, and it was followed by a compassionate and uplifting ceremony of liberating life on the last day, in which those attending the Repentance and their families participated.

Emperor Liang’s Jeweled Repentance has always been an important Dharma event for DRBA, not only due to its special connection with Venerable Master Hsuan Hua, the founder of DRBA, but also due to its popularity among disciples, who gain benefit through its practice.



The Emperor Liang's Jeweled Repentance at Avatamsaka Vihara this year is the monastery's first public event since the three-year pandemic. Therefore it was embraced by followers with great joy, who have been unable to attend regular Dharma events during the pandemic.

Emperor Liang's Jeweled Repentance was developed about 1,500 years ago during China's Liang Dynasty. It was said that one day when the Emperor Wu of Liang saw a python in his palace who claimed to be his recently deceased Empress Chi. The python said she had no place to dwell and was in great pain due to thousands of worms gnawing at her body.

不僅與師父宣公上人有著特殊的因緣，也因其本身的教化和功德力量而深受信眾的歡迎。此次法會是華嚴精舍自三年疫情後首次舉辦的大型法會，向公眾全面開放，令因疫情而無法與往常一樣充分參加法事活動的信眾十分歡喜。

梁皇寶懺始於距今一千五百多年前的南北朝時期。當時梁國的開國皇帝梁武帝於一日在殿中見一蟒蛇，其自稱為梁武帝過世不久的郗皇后化身，現正無處可依且受蟲子噬咬痛苦不堪，懇請梁武帝施手相救。梁武帝向當時負有盛名的誌公禪師請教。誌公禪師言明唯有發大懺悔心禮佛而與冤親債主解除恩怨方有救脫的機會，於是帶領多位高僧從包括《法華經》、《華嚴經》、《涅槃經》、《楞伽經》等在內的多部重要佛教經典中擷取關鍵篇章語句編撰成十卷懺文，其中包括對一千多位佛之名號的稱頌跪拜。梁武帝隨後夢到彌勒菩薩為此經文賜名，稱其為《慈悲道場懺法》。

據傳說，梁武帝恭請僧團依此經文拜懺多日後，郗皇后於異香中現身稱已得生善處。因該懺文和相應的禮佛懺悔儀式所顯現的殊勝功

She pleaded with Emperor Wu to rescue her. The Emperor reached out to Chan Master Zhigong, a famous monk at the time, who said, "The only way is to bow to the Buddhas and repent sincerely on behalf of the Empress. Then the Empress can pay off her debt to her karmic creditors and be rescued." Upon Emperor Wu's plea, the Master then brought together ten high Sanghans to carefully select relevant texts from foundational Buddhist classics, including *The Wonderful Dharma Lotus Flower Sutra*, *Avatamsaka Sutra*, *Mahaparinirvana Sutra* and *Lankavatara Sutra* and compile them into a book with ten chapters and over a thousand names of Buddhas for people to chant and bow. Upon its completion, Emperor Wu met Maitreya Buddha, the future Buddha of this world, in his dream, who gave the book the title Repentance Dharma of Kindness and Compassion in the Bodhimanda.

It was said that after the text was recited and the repentance bowed by a large gathering of monks for days, Emperor Liang saw Empress Chi appear amid extraordinary fragrance. She said that she had been reborn in a good place. Due to the profound meaning of the text and the bowing rituals, which resulted in the exceptional outcome, the *Repentance Dharma of Kindness and Compassion in the Bodhimanda* has become a popular Dharma ritual since the Liang Dynasty. It is more commonly called Emperor Liang's Jeweled Repentance because of its connection with Emperor Liang. Among all the repentance rituals in Buddhism, Emperor Liang's Jeweled Repentance is grand, profound and has a long history. Chan Master Zhigong, who led the repentance project, happened to be the founding master of the Golden-crowned Vairochana Sect of the Chan Buddhist lineage, which the Venerable Master Hua is part

德，《慈悲道場懺法》從此在佛教界及民間廣泛流傳，又因其與梁武帝的因緣而俗稱為《梁皇寶懺》。梁皇寶懺在中國佛教懺悔儀式中，以規模宏大、意義深遠、歷史悠久著稱，歷代用來祈請超度亡靈、滅罪消災、增福延壽等，而當年主領懺文編撰工作的誌公禪師，正是宣公上人所屬禪宗金頂毘盧派的祖師，令法界佛教總會屬下的信眾更覺親近和倍加珍惜。

此次華嚴精舍的法會安排頭六天每天用五支香的時間禮佛唱誦懺文，第七日上午安排授三皈依和五戒的儀式，第八日下午安排放生，整個過程順利莊嚴。每日的法會由萬佛聖城的法師用清淨梵音領唱，信眾們歡喜隨唱，頻頻禮佛，精舍大殿內法音繚繞，不絕於耳。雖然梁皇寶懺誦念跪拜的時間持續較長，對不少人來說並不容易，但前來參加的信眾都表示感到真心的感恩和歡喜。據華嚴精舍住持法師說，她在事後發現有不少人請了海青和縵衣，她為此覺得十分欣慰，因為可以感受到這些信眾的發心，也許他們會從此依照佛法的教導調整自己的生活方式，更多地參加佛事活動，更好地安頓自己的內心。

為讓來參加法會的信眾有更多的機會了解和深入佛法，藉此進一步提升自己的修行，法會還特別安排在每日的午餐之後由不遠千里前來帶領法會的法師們分別講法。來自西雅圖雪山寺的恒來法師向信眾們講述了梁皇寶懺的緣起，並提到鄒皇后特別嫉妒妃嬪側室，動心發口猶如毒蛇。她生前心懷瞋毒，因此死後墮落蟒中。篤信佛法的梁武帝忙於法事而疏於陪伴鄒皇后，由此引起她對佛法的厭棄和誹謗，也是鄒皇后死後墮入蟒蛇之身的部份原

of. Through this special connection, the Repentance has been particularly cherished by followers under DRBA.

During the first six days of the Repentance, participants spent five incense periods each day chanting the text and bowing. The ceremony of the Three Refuges and the Five Precepts took place on the seventh morning and the Liberation of Life ceremony was held on the eighth afternoon. The whole event went smoothly and solemnly. The Sanghans from the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas led the daily chanting in beautiful and pure voice and participants joyously followed, filling the Buddha Hall with sounds of Dharma. Although the Repentance requires constant bowing and kneeling and is physically demanding, participants expressed their gratitude and delight. According to the manager of Avatamsaka Vihara, a good number of participants bought Dharma robes and the five-precept sashes, showing they maybe inspired to adjust their life style to follow the teaching of the Buddha, attend more Dharma events, and find contentment.

In order to provide participants with more opportunities to learn and deepen their understanding of Buddhism, the monastery also invited the visiting Sanghans to give Dharma talks after lunch each day. Dharma Master Heng Lai from Seattle shared some of his interpretation of the Repentance during his Dharma talks. He said, “She (Empress Chi 鄒) was intensely jealous of and hated the Emperor’s consorts and concubines. Her words and thoughts were as vicious as that of a poisonous snake. Because she harbored so much hatred and anger while alive, she was consequently reborn as a python. He said Empress Chi’s rebirth as a python was partially due to her disgust and slander of Buddhism, which was mainly caused by Emperor Wu of Liang devoting too much of his spare time to Dharma events. Dharma Master Lai therefore reminded participants that they should first fulfill their family commitment. He said this was what Venerable Master Hua often told him. He also emphasized that one should think about cultivating oneself all the time and aspire to become a Buddha. Dharma Master Lai also introduced the monastery where he resides now, Snow Mountain Monastery, as well as a DRBA branch monastery in Australia: Gold Coast Dharma Realm.

The text of the Repentance starts with taking refuge and repeatedly emphasizes the importance of the Bodhi mind and making vows, Master Jin Chuan from Redwood Vihara talked about the importance of transforming the mind during the ceremony of Three Refuges and the essence of cultivating the Bodhi mind and

因，藉此提醒大家首先要盡好自己在家庭中的責任。來法師說這正是師父宣公上人對來法師自己的提醒，師父曾告訴他，重要的是自己的心要時時想著修行，要志在成佛。來法師還向大家介紹了雪山寺以及法界佛教總會在澳大利亞的分支道場金岸法界的情況。

因梁皇寶懺的經文以皈依為起始，並一再強調發菩提心和發願的重要性，且法會後期安排有皈依和五戒的儀式，來自紅木禪林的近傳法師便藉午間講法的機會，特別向信眾講解了皈依的關鍵處和發菩提心及發願的要點。近傳法師說，要皈依的佛弟子在皈依儀式中不僅僅是要遵循皈依的儀軌和皈依文，更為重要的是通過皈依的儀式，讓自己的心真正皈依到自我本有的佛性即自性，從此讓生命有了羅盤找到了方向，而發菩提心就是要發願利他，發願以仁愛、慈悲、智慧來利益一切眾生。近傳法師強調說，一個人如果只做善事卻不發菩提心，就相當於種田卻不撒種子，到最後是一無所獲；發菩提心做善事和出於本能做善事的效果是大不相同的，因為念頭不同，所產生的效果便不同，所以我們每一分每一秒都要發願去做善事；只有發願，才能讓一個人永遠朝著善的方向走。

近傳法師還特別分享了一個幫助加州聖昆汀州立重犯監獄犯人轉換身心的項目，名為GRIP（Guiding Rage Into Power，「化憤怒為力量」）。這個為期一年的項目幫助犯人了解並改變他們的暴力行為，代之以保持正念和高情商的態度。然後通過這個自性的覺醒（這可視為類似佛教的修行）而對自己產生期許，隨後通過一系列的步驟啟動真正的懺悔和發願，懺悔自己曾經的過錯，發願不再做同樣的事情，並學習如何控制自己的習氣和情緒，讓曾經的憤怒轉化為改變自己和他人的力量。許多犯人藉此項目的幫助而提前獲得假釋，過上了自己創造的有意義的生活。在場的信眾聽了近傳法師的介紹後都非常感

making vows. He said individuals who plan to take refuge should try to guide their mind to find their Buddha nature (one's original nature) as well as following the text and ritual of the ceremony. This will help them locate the compass of their life. He further explained that cultivating the Bodhi mind is to make vows to benefit others and to serve others with kindness, compassion and wisdom. He also emphasized that doing good deeds without resolving on Bodhi is like plowing soil without planting seeds afterward. This would result in no harvest at the end. He said there is a crucial difference between doing good deeds out of the Bodhi mind and out of instinct when it comes to results because one's mind affects the outcome of one's deeds. Therefore everyone should make vows to do good things in every moment. He concluded that only by making vows can one permanently guide one's life on the right track of being kind.

Dharma Master Jin Chuan also shared a healing project that has helped prisoners at San Quentin State Prison to transform their lives. The one-year project, GRIP (Guiding Rage Into Power), enables prisoners to understand and transform their violent behavior and replace it with an attitude of mindfulness and emotional intelligence. Through this self-awakening process which could be considered to be a parallel to what is practiced in Buddhism, participants are inspired to build their new expectation about themselves. The project then teaches participants a series of methods about true repentance and making vows, namely, regretting their past wrongdoings and vowing not to do them again. Participants also learn how to manage their habits and emotions. This comprehensive set of reflections and skills eventually helps these prisoners succeed in guiding their anger into the power of transforming themselves and helping others. Many of these prisoners are paroled early and begin living meaningful lives. After listening to the story shared by Dharma Master Jin Chuan, many of the Repentance attendees were deeply moved, saying that common people should also make an effort in transforming themselves and Buddhists should work even harder in practicing Buddhism. Dharma Master Je of Avatamsaka Vihara encouraged attendees to learn from the story and communicate more openly with their family members and friends to help them discover their true nature and make vows to become a better person.

動，覺得一般的人也應致力改變自己，尤其是佛弟子更應該努力修行佛法。恒哲法師也鼓勵大家在自己的家中和朋友群體裡，採用這樣的敞開心扉互相交流的方式，讓更多人通過自我發現和發願而成為一個更好的自己。

來自聖荷西金聖寺的恒榮法師和來自萬佛城的近安法師，在午間講法時為信眾描述了自己出家的因緣。

恒榮法師和近安法師的分享所洋溢的皈依佛門後的法喜，深深感染了在場的信眾。而哲法師在兩位法師分享之後則不忘提醒大家，修道的路千條萬條，每個人都會不一樣，每個人都要珍惜自己特殊的因緣，守住自己的清淨，盡自己最大的努力來發願親近三寶。

帶領大眾唱誦梁皇寶懺的恒異法師則藉午間講法的機會，為大家介紹了法界佛教大學近期的活動，一是為目前正在錄製的《法華經》英文版有聲書徵集背景音樂，二是這個夏天將舉辦為期一周的佛經翻譯班。恒異法師歡迎有興趣的信眾參與，哲法師也鼓勵大家有機會還可以考慮參加法界佛教大學所舉辦為期一年的「佛經翻譯碩士研修班」，以增進自己在佛學上的深入研習。❀

Dharma Master Heng Rong from Gold Sage Monastery in San Jose, California and Dharma Master Jin An from the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas shared their stories of becoming bhikkhunis. Their joy of completely devoting themselves to Buddhism captivated the audience. Dharma Master Je took the opportunity to remind participants that out of the thousands of ways of practicing Buddhism, each person has his or her own unique path, while the key is to cherish one's own Dharma connection, to keep a pure mind, and to try one's best to make vows to get closer to the Three Treasures, namely, the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.

Dharma Master Heng Yi, who led the chanting of the Repentance, introduced some of the recent initiatives and events being planned by Dharma Realm Buddhist University. The university has arranged a sound recording of the English version of *The Wonderful Dharma Lotus Flower Sutra* and is now calling for background music to go with the audio book. During the summer, the university will again have its popular one-week summer camp, titled "Seminar on Reading and Translating Buddhist Texts," to be held from July 31 to August 6. Dharma Master Heng Yi welcomed participants to apply. Dharma Master Je encouraged all to also consider attending a one-year translation program at the university, called The Graduate Certificate in Buddhist Translation, which she said would help deepen one's learning of Buddhism. ❀



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