

金山通訊 2006 年六 - 七月份目錄

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諸佛的母親——華嚴經

《華嚴經》，也就等於虛空裡邊的祥雲，遍照三千大千世界，如甘露的法雨般潤澤一切一切的眾生。《華嚴經》的所在處，也就是佛的所在處，也就是法的所在處，也就是賢聖僧的所在處。所以，在佛始成正覺的時候，就說這部《華嚴經》，教化所有《華嚴經》的法身大士。這一部經，因為它是不可思議的妙經，於是乎，就把它保存在龍宮裡邊，龍王護持它。以後，由龍樹菩薩到龍宮把這一部經以記憶的方式帶出來。

The Mother of All Buddhas: The Flower Adornment Sutra

The Flower Adornment Sutra is like an auspicious cloud in empty space, which extends throughout the Three Thousand Great Thousand World-System, raining down the sweet dew of Dharma rain to moisten all living beings. Wherever the Flower Adornment Sutra is found, the Buddha is to be found, and also the Dharma and the Sangha of Worthy Sages. That was why the Buddha spoke the Great Flower Adornment Sutra to teach and transform the Great Knights of the Dharma Body when the Buddha accomplished Proper Enlightenment. Since the Sutra was a Sutra of inconceivable wonder, it was then concealed within the Dragons' Palace for the Dragon King to protect. Afterwards, Nagarjuna—"Dragon Tree"—Bodhisattva went to the Dragons' Palace, and brought it back by memorizing.

宣化上人事蹟

續編

弘法在全球

一、小引：

本章紀錄上人於 1978 年後積極從事弘法工作。法界佛教總會弘法團所到之處，萬人空巷。在馬來西亞、星加坡和泰國的佛學講座，吸引了無數青年。在台灣主持的護國息災法會，皈依者數萬人。在歐洲：英國、法國、波蘭和比利時等地，融合南北傳佛教於一家。上人不辭勞苦，帶病奔波，以至心力交瘁。1995 年雖在病中，仍經常親自訓導小沙彌團，為的是要培養佛教未來新血，來繼續肩負弘揚正教的責任。但願上人四眾弟子，毋忘師志，各盡所能，為佛教的發揚光大而努力。

上人出生在窮鄉僻壤，家境清寒，只唸了二年半私塾。但是，由於朝夕覽閱大乘經典，尤其是對「華嚴經」，更一心嚮往。要效大菩薩的精神，捨己為人，度盡眾生，方成佛

道。故十九歲出家後，廬墓守孝，依四弘誓願，發十八大心。心心以眾生是念；願願以慈悲為懷。總括來說，上人的誓言，就是：「若有一眾生未成佛時，誓不取正覺。」這樣的菩薩心腸，已決定了上人救世救人，弘法利生的志願。若果不是菩薩再來，定是佛陀示現！

上人廬墓期間，整天都是在墓旁草草建成的 A 字形小茅蓬內坐禪。有一天，上人在定中看到六祖慧能大師給他啟示：「你緣在西方。好應護持正法，把佛法帶到新的領域。」

1945 年，二次世界大戰結束後，上人憶及六祖大師的囑咐，決定往廣東韶關南華寺，參拜六祖大師的真身，和禪宗泰斗--虛雲長老。1946 年秋天，上人離開東北，南下雲遊，在普陀山法雨寺受具足戒後，跟著就到了曹溪。

當然，虛雲老和尚是開了悟的明眼人，一見上人，便知底蘊。那時候，剛巧有一位發心研究佛學，非常仰慕虛雲老和尚的美國女居士阿難陀詹寧士，經中美外交部斡旋，來到南華寺居住，親近這一位禪宗大德。

「來啊，安慈法師，跟這位女居士拍一張照。她是從美國來的。美國人對佛教都很陌生，我年紀老了，你們年輕的一定要把佛法帶到全世界沒有佛法的地方。」虛老叮嚀地說。



於是上人第一次和美國人結緣，三個人一同拍照。

1949 年，上人隨順因緣（請參看宣化上人事跡第三十三「雲門訣別」）來到洋化的香港。跟隨著上人的，還有一位年青大學生--果一居士(即恆定法師)。他是在東北奉天的時候就皈依上人。那時候，他懇求出家，

遭上人拒絕。但是，他意志堅決。知道上人是到南華寺去，所以，他也趕忙穿州過省，要追隨上人。皇天不負苦心人，他終於在南華寺找到了上人。恆定法師剃度後，在南華寺受具足戒。後來他在戒律學院當副教授，擔任中國古典文學科。在這期間，他深蒙上人的教導，為要使正法不滅，一年之間，背誦了整部《楞嚴經》。

Continue from Last Issue

Biography of the Venerable Master Hsuan Hua

The Propagation of Dharma in the Whole World

1. Introduction

In this volume we have recorded all the work that the Master did in the propagation of Dharma. When the Delegation Group from the Dharma Realm Buddhist Association reached a place, audiences swarmed to see them. In Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand, young people were attracted to attend lectures. In Taiwan, thousands of people took refuge when the Master carried out the Ceremony of Protecting the Country and Quelling Disasters. In Europe, in the countries of England, France, Poland and Belgium, both the Mahayana and Theravada Buddhists joined as one family in dialogue with the Master. Despite his illness, the Master did not complain about any hardship as he travelled about, even though he was mentally and physically exhausted. In 1995, despite the fact that the Master was sick in bed, he still gave his personal attention to the group of young Sramaneras (novice monks), in whom he placed high hopes. The Master was intent on educating them to be the next generation of Buddhists that would carry out the responsibility of the propagating the Buddha Dharma. We sincerely hope that the four assemblies of disciples do not forget the intention of our Master and that each offers his talents, endeavoring to make Buddhism a shrine.

The Master was born into a destitute family and lived in the deserted countryside. Since his family was poor, he could only attend Chinese traditional school for two and half years. But, because he read Mahayana texts day and night, with special interest in the Avatamsaka, he was inspired to follow the spirit of the Mahabodhisattvas. He was willing to give up himself for the sake of others. He vowed to help all others attaining liberation before he would attain Buddhahood. After he left home at the age of nineteen and observed filial piety by accompanying his deceased mother at her tomb site, he made eighteen great vows according to the basics of the four grand devotions. His mind was engaged in thoughts of helping living beings; his vows were based on total compassion and kindness. To summarize the vows of the Master in a sentence: "If there is even one living being who has not yet become a Buddha, I will not attain the Right Enlightenment." With a heart like that of a Bodhisattva, no wonder the Master was destined to promulgate the Dharma to benefit and save the world and its people. If this person were not a Bodhisattva who came back to this world as an ordinary person, he must

be a Buddha transformed. During his observance of filial piety by the grave, all day long he sat inside a roughly constructed small A-shaped cottage and meditated. One day, when he was in samadhi, he saw the Sixth Patriarch give him instructions, "You have good conditions in the West. You should protect the Proper Dharma and bring the Dharma to a new territory."

When the Second World War ended in 1945, everyone thought that peace and happiness would soon come to the country and its people. But who would have guessed that the Communist movement rekindled right after that. The Communism received help from the Soviet Union, and waved its flag independently. Fighting and wars continued in the northern part of China. People could hardly survive. Fortunately at that time people could still travel from one province to another without restrictions. Remembering the Sixth Patriarch's words, the Master decided to go to Nan Hua Monastery in Shao Quan County, Kwangtung Province to bow to the existing real body of the Sixth Patriarch (naturally preserved since the Tang dynasty) and to pay his respects to the authority in Chan, Elder Master Hsu Yun. The Master left Northeast China and began travelling south in 1946. At Pu To Mountain, he received the complete precepts at the Fa Yu Monastery. Shortly thereafter he arrived at Cao Xi.

Of course, the Elder Master Hsu Yun, who was an enlightened, bright-eyed advisor, realized who the Master was when he saw him. At that time an American Upasika named Ananda Jennings who held Elder Master Hsu Yun in high regard, came and lived in Nan Hua Monastery with the help of the Chinese and American Embassies. She wished to draw near to this respected and virtuous Chan Master. "Come here, Dharma Master An Tze, let's take a picture with this Upasika. She's from America. The Americans do not know much about Buddhism. I'm old now. You young people must bring Buddhism to every place in the world where there is no Dharma."



admonished Elder Master Hsu Yun. The three are shown in the photo. That was the first time that the Master created an affinity with Americans.

In 1949, the Master, according with conditions, came to Hong Kong. Following the Master was a young college graduate, Upasaka Guo Yi (Heng Ting) who had taken refuge with the Master in Fung Tian, Northern China. At that time, when he begged the Master for permission to leave home, he was turned down. But he was determined.

When he found out that the Master had gone to Nan Hua Monastery, he rushed through province after province in order to catch up with him. At that time, the Communists, who were gaining power, laid siege to one place after the other. The Nationalists retreated to Taiwan. It was a strange situation: it always happened that only after Dharma Master Guo Yi left a city did the Communists arrive and transportation was cut off. Heaven will help those who are sincere!

Dharma Master Heng Ting finally found the Master at the Nan Hua Monastery. He received the tonsure ceremony and took the complete Bhikshu Precepts in the Nan Hua Monastery. Later on he accepted the position of an assistant professor in the Nan Hua Vinaya School and taught Classical Chinese. During that time, he received the Master's teaching in-depth. To stop the extinction of the Proper Dharma, he memorized the Surangama Sutra in one year.

1989 護國息災觀音大法會



1989年宣公上人應台北寶巖寺、桃園大溪妙法寺及花蓮東淨寺之請，再度返國主持「護國息災觀音大法會」。訪問團三十餘人於10月8日飛往台北。法會由十月十日起至十月二十九日止分別在花蓮中正體育館、東淨寺及大溪妙法寺舉行。每天持誦大悲咒、觀音菩薩聖號及普門品。十月三十日及十月三十一日兩天上人又在台北板橋致理商專開示。法會期間，上人再度進行絕食，把自己的福報，迴向給台灣人民，每天只喝清水。

上人抵達台灣時說：「我準備餓死在台灣。」雖然打餓七對上人來說都不知多少次。筆者記得上人在香港時，每有弟子犯錯，上人也就不但是過午不食，而是整天不食。有一次，法會期間，我們以為師父不進飯，徒弟那敢就坐。這樣就更激怒師父，全都受罵。

漸漸大家都知道上人隨時可以多天不吃。如果我們也不吃，那裡來力氣去完成一天六枝香的打七法會功課？不過，這一次上人在台灣絕食，他老人家已經是七十一歲的高齡，仍然是不惜身命，造福群生。

10月15日及29日上人在東淨寺及妙法寺傳授幽冥戒。台灣《福報》報導說：「宣化上人此次傳授幽冥戒，在台灣亦開首例。」幽冥戒的公告上寫著：「凡是想為亡者求受幽冥戒的人，應發廣大心，願所有幽冥眾生，同時得到佛法利益，脫離幽冥罪苦，往生善道。並且要觀想亡者的容貌形像，發殷重心，代替亡者頂禮，求受皈依及淨戒，方能感得亡者靈魂感應道交，同樣發至誠心，願受皈依及大乘菩薩十戒（梵網經中的十重波羅提木叉戒）。」由此可知幽冥戒對地獄受苦眾生實具由濟拔之功。

上人在台期間，全心全意地為台灣人民消災祈福，更為救助亡靈，首次傳授幽冥戒。10月17日下午五時零四分美國三藩市遽傳噩耗，歷時二十秒的7.1級地震動蕩整個灣區，橋斷車翻，地裂樓塌。幸虧接著而來一星期的餘震不大，所以，雖然財產損失逾億，喪生僅六十多人。是共業難逃？還是護法神躲懶？因為上人在1968年時，為使來自西雅圖的弟子們安心留住灣區修行學道，曾說過他一日在三藩市，三藩市就不許地震。只有有道德、有修行的人才敢說這些話。現在上人剛走了一星期，地震就發生啦！雖然法界佛教總會物業無損，一切操作正常，上人還是趕返美國，留駐數天，再回台灣主持法會。

10月30日上人在板橋致理商專開示時說：「我覺得很對不起三藩市的人，因為我的願力是：我在三藩市一天，三藩市就不許地震。這一次我來台灣就把這件事忘了，一心只希望台灣能免除一切災劫，結果三藩市就發生地震，我覺得很對不起他們。」

從上人的感嘆中，我明白由於上人把精神都放在消除台灣地區人民的共業上，卻忽略了三藩市延遲多年的災禍在數難逃啊！

11月1日因緣湊合，美國法界大學台灣區董事會在台北圓山飯店舉行第一次會議。數十位董事踴躍支持，並捐助經費。宣化上人指出：教育是每個人的根本。真正教育的宗旨是倫理道德，也就是著重於孝、悌、忠、信、禮、義、廉、恥。上人再強調說：「要弘揚佛法就是辦教育。」

11月3日上人率領訪問團趕返美國，主持萬佛聖城藥師琉璃光如來開光典禮。

The Great Compassion Guanyin Dharma Assembly for Protecting the Nation and Dispelling Disasters

In 1989, the Venerable Master Hua once again returned to Taiwan to host the Great Compassion Guanyin Dharma Assembly for Protecting the Country and Dispelling the Disasters under the invitation of Bao Jie Temple, Taipei and Miaofa Temple, Taoyuan, Daxi. The delegation of over thirty members flew to Taipei on October 8. From October 10 to October 29, the Dharma Assemblies were held respectively in the Sun Yat-sen Memorial Stadium in Hualian, Dongjing Temple as well as Miaofa Temple in Daxi. The Great Compassion Mantra, Guanyin Bodhisattva's Sagely Name and the Universal Door Chapter were recited every day. On October 30th and 31st, the Master lectured at Zhili Business College in Banqiao, Taipei. During the Dharma Assembly, the Master once again went on a fast, transferring his blessings to the residents of Taiwan. He drank only pure water everyday.

Upon arriving in Taiwan, the Master said, "I am ready to starve in Taiwan." The Master had fasted for seven days countless times before. The writer remembers that when the Master was in Hong Kong, whenever his disciples committed offenses, the Master not only fasted in the afternoon, he would fast for a whole day. On one occasion during a Dharma Assembly, the disciples dared not sit down to eat, thinking that the Master was not eating. This irritated the Master even more, and he admonished us all. Gradually, we came to understand that the Master was capable of fasting for many days. If we did not eat, however, we would not have the energy to conduct the seven-day Dharma Assembly consisting of six sessions a day. This time when the Master fasted in Taiwan, despite his advanced age of seventy-one, he still paid no attention to his own physical welfare; his only concern was to benefit the multitudes.

On October 15 and 29, the Master transmitted the Precepts for the Deceased at Dongjing and Miaofa Temples. "News of Blessings" reported this incident: "The Venerable Master Hua transmits the Precepts for the Deceased for the first time in Taiwan." The announcement for the Precepts Transmission stated, "Whoever seeks to receive the Precepts on behalf of the deceased should bring forth a vast resolve, wishing that all beings in the dark realms will benefit from the Buddhadharma, leave the agony of the hells and gain rebirth in the good paths. Moreover, you should sincerely contemplate the countenance and appearance of the deceased as you prostrate and take the refuges and pure precepts on his/her behalf, thus moving the deceased soul to bring forth his/her utmost sincerity and be willing to receive the refuges and the Mahayana Ten Major Bodhisattva Precepts (the Ten Major Pratimoksa in the Brahma Net Sutra)." From this we know that the Precepts of the Deceased can certainly save living beings who suffer in the hells.

During his visit in Taiwan, the Master dedicated all his heart to quelling disasters and praying for the residents in Taiwan; furthermore, to rescue deceased souls, the Master transmitted the Precepts for the Deceased for the first time. On October 17, at 5: 04 pm, a sudden earthquake registering 7.1 in magnitude occurred in San Francisco. Twenty seconds in duration, it shook the whole Bay Area and resulted in bridges breaking, cars overturning, the ground cracking, and buildings collapsing. Fortunately, the aftershocks the following week were not immense. Therefore, while property loss and damage totaled over a hundred million, there were only sixty-some fatalities. Was the earthquake a form of collective karma that could not be avoided? Or had the Dharma-protecting spirits been negligent? In 1968, in order to reassure disciples from Seattle so that they might stay in the Bay Area to cultivate, the Master had declared that as long as he was in San Francisco, he would permit no earthquakes to occur in San Francisco. Only those with virtue as well as cultivation would dare to utter such words. Only one week after the Master left San Francisco for Taiwan, San Francisco suffered an earthquake! Although the Dharma Realm Buddhist Association did not incur any loss during this incident and everything was functioning smoothly, the Master nevertheless hastened back to the U.S. for a few days, then returned to Taiwan to resume hosting the Dharma Assemblies there. On October 30 when the Master delivered an instructional Talk at Zhili Business College, he said, "I owe deep apologies to the people of San Francisco, because my vow is: As long as I am in San Francisco, I will not allow San Francisco to have an earthquake. This time when I came to Taiwan, I have been preoccupied with praying for Taiwan to be free of all disasters and calamities, and totally forgot about my vow. Consequently, San Francisco suffered an earthquake. That's why I feel very apologetic towards the people there." From his lamentation, I realized that due to his concentration on dispelling the collective karma of Taiwan people, the Master had overlooked the fact that the disasters delayed for many years from striking San Francisco would be hard to escape.

On November 1, the Taiwan Board of the Trustees of Dharma Realm Buddhist University held its first meeting at the Grand Hotel, Taipei. Several dozen members enthusiastically supported the University and donated funds. The Venerable Master Hua pointed out that education is a person's foundation. The genuine purpose of education is to promote ethics, with emphasis on the virtues of filial piety, fraternity, loyalty, trustworthiness, propriety, righteousness, integrity, and conscience. The Master further stressed, "To propagate the Buddhadharma, we must promote education."

On November 3, the Master led the delegation back to the United States to conduct the Opening Ceremony for the Medicine Master Lapis Lazuli Thus Come One at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas.

學佛必備的三個條件—— 信 願 行

◎葉炳宏

今天輪到我上來跟大家結緣；末學沒有什麼學問，才疏學淺，講錯的地方，請多包涵，並多指教。

今天和大家討論一下學佛必備的三個條件：信願行。佛陀在世的時候，距離現在大約二千五百年；不過佛陀所說的一切教導到現在，在當今的社會，還是很清新、很適用於現在的時代。

佛另外一個尊稱是無上士、調御丈夫、天人師。他不僅僅是一位大導師，而且他更是一位心靈的工程師，而且是一位生活藝術家。

我們學佛，第一個就是要相信。當然佛陀教導他的弟子時，並沒有說你一定要相信我，反而他很鼓勵他的弟子在確切行證後，再相信他所講的話。我們初學者一定會有點懷疑；佛陀講的道理和上人開示的道理是科學上無法印證的。不過，那並不表示佛法是錯誤的。百法明門論中提及：信是十一個善法中的第一個善法，懷疑是造成六種煩惱之一。菩薩本願經：第一個，我們初學者要先相信，信為本。第二個，我們要思維它。

思維之，思考它；有時，我們會產生一些懷疑。當然這些就是科學上教導我們的。我們在學校受的教育，基本上就是懷疑，不要相信別人所講的話。不過，這個可能對初學者來講，是一個很大的障礙。第三個，我們要用行為來證實它，行為證。譬如：有時你告訴一個人說：你念佛有多麼大多麼大的功德，多大多大的好處。他會懷疑念佛真的有這麼大的功德嗎？又譬如我們會在道場或在家裡念大悲咒、楞嚴咒，我們不懂咒文，我們會懷疑：這些咒文到底是什麼意思呢？真的有這麼大的功德嗎？可是你要仔細地想一想：這個就是信：真的就是真的。你相信它，假的也會變成真的！你不相信它，真的也會變成假的。

舉個例子來講，比如某位病人很相信某位名醫；他相信他看了這個名醫，病大概就好了；先不要說吃他開的藥，即使這位名醫給他的藥可能只是一些維他命丸，他都相信：哇！這位名醫把我的病治好了。事實上，這個道理我們是用在醫學研究上。我們要研究兩種藥的話，第一個要兩組對照；一組給他真正的藥，一組給普通的藥（像維他命丸這一類不會產生很多效果的藥）。可能不同的醫生開給病人同樣的藥，可是病人吃了效果可能會不一樣。

另外一點，比如說：我記得我自己有一個經驗；我在路上碰到一個盲人，他希望我載他一程；我請他上我的車子，當時我的車上正播放大悲咒；他是一個美國人，之前也都沒有聽過。聽完了後問：你放的是什麼音樂啊？聽了，我覺得身心很舒暢！另外一個經驗：我在辦公室放大悲咒及十小咒給自己聽；剛好一位同事來了，說：你在聽什麼啊？這是什麼意思啊？我回答說：我也不知道是什麼意思。同事說：你不曉得是什麼意思，那你聽它做什麼？這個就是你要先相信它，先相信它是真的。

第二個是願。願力是非常重要的。地藏菩薩本願經是地藏王菩薩過去發的大願，而今才能成為菩薩。梁皇寶懺也提到要發願；中午上供臨齋儀也有三願。以前在台灣，還沒有接觸到正法的時候，我如果遇到困難，就希望趕快得到答案，但是不可能很快得到答案的。於是我就去求神問卜。所以我也略知邪魔外道的事情。我覺得我很幸運地沒有入邪道，大概是我過去生發過什麼願，希望能接觸正法，所以我也沒有相信邪道；雖然我也看過乩童或什麼附身，我自己也嚐試過。

來到美國剛好接觸、親近上人的道場；我覺得我很幸運。各位也很幸運，能夠接觸正法。我才知道原來佛和菩薩過去生都發過願。可是佛菩薩的願，不像凡夫俗子所發的願：能夠做事順利、發財賺錢、家庭美滿等。

願力願力，有願就有力。阿彌陀佛發的願是很大的，所以極樂世界是非常莊嚴的。上人發過十八大願；我們誦藥師經，知道藥師佛發的十二大願。我們眾生就希望能夠離苦得樂，不要那麼痛苦。我記得我的孩子有一門科學的課，有一次科學實驗，他拿一隻蠶回來自己養。你們可能也知道，蠶在剛剛破殼後，翅膀還沒有完全長好；可是我的孩子看到殼破了，就很著急，放在手上拿著牠，怎麼辦？怎麼辦？怎麼不會飛呢？這下慘了，把蝴蝶的翅膀弄得亂七八糟。他就請我的同修到處打電話，怎麼辦啊？老師回答說：蠶的殼剛破了，不要動牠。這一折騰，這一隻蠶就殘肢不全了；牠的翅膀可憐地倒著，不但不能飛，也不能站。看牠很可憐，我的同修就說讓牠安樂死。但是我的孩子還有一些小小的想法。他說：我看牠很想活著；我餵牠糖水，牠就想吃；牠想活著，牠不想死。

的確，我們眾生，即使是一隻小螞蟻，你動它，它都想要逃生。眾生都希望不要痛苦，所以佛菩薩發的願都為了眾生，願眾生能夠離苦得樂。

最後講的是行。孔子也講，我們要克己復禮。摩西也告誡以十戒。佛陀教導我們要諸惡莫作，眾善奉行。所以我們來到道場，修行、持戒念佛、打坐參禪，各位大概都知道這是最重要的一環。我很慚愧，我自己這一環是做得最差的。所以說，我們要息滅貪瞋癡，諸惡莫作；但我覺得這個我也都沒有做到。不過，沒做到也儘量鼓勵自己，儘量親近道場，然後慢慢薰修。

最近，我看到一個故事；有一個日本學者寫了一本書叫水的故事；他研究水在不同狀況下的結晶。如果對著水講好話，水就會產生好看的結晶體。相反地，如果對水說壞話，或者在瓶子上貼上不好聽的字眼，水就不會產生好看的結晶體。佛教講得更透徹——起心動念，無非是罪、無非是惡。我們的一點小思維，都會造我們以後要承受的成因果。這一點，我自己做得很差。各位諸君大德都比我更有修行。今天就略事討論至此。

Three Prerequisites for Learning Buddhism – Belief, Vows and Practice

◎葉炳宏

All good-knowing advisors, today is my turn to come forward to share my experience of being a Buddhist. Being a novice and lack of knowledge, I look forward to hearing from your comments and correction on my talk.

The topic of today's talk is “Belief, Vows and Practice”. Although it was more than 2500 years when Buddha Shakyamuni lived in this world, his teachings are still applicable and relevantly fresh in nowadays. The synonyms of Buddha are Supreme Scholar, Heroic Tamer and Teacher of Gods. In fact, he is not only a great teacher, but also an engineer of mind and artist of life.

The first thing to learn Buddhism is to believe. When Shakyamuni Buddha instructed his disciples, he encouraged them to practice what he taught instead of believing what he said. We beginners, based on our limited knowledge, surely have doubts about Buddha's or Venerable Master's instructions. Even though nowadays ‘science’ could not validate or prove what Buddhist teachings are right, it does not mean they are wrong. In “Hundred Dharma Doors Analects”, the text states that belief is the first dharma door among 11 beneficial dharma doors, while doubt is one of the causes of 6 afflictions. The “Sutra of Budhisattva's Original Vows” also

states that first is to believe; second is to think; third is to validate it. We have to believe what Buddhist teachings first and think afterwards. Doubt arises when we think because it is what we are taught at school, to suspect what other people say before it was proved. However suspicion sometimes is a large hindrance for beginners in learning Buddhism. Third is to prove it by the act. We need to confirm Buddhist teachings by acting. For instance, when someone told you that reciting Buddha's name will grant you such merits and virtues, you may suspect whether it is true. Similarly while we are reciting mantras such as Great Compassion Mantra or Shurangama Mantra, we may doubt about their powerful strength simply because of not knowing the meanings of mantra. We might ask ourselves "Will I gain benefits by reciting those unmeaning words to me?" Indeed that is what belief is. Whatever we are convinced is true; it is true even though it may be false. Whatever we are convinced is false; it is false even though it is true. Another example is seeing a doctor. A patient may feel cured without taking any medicine by just seeing a well-known doctor, simply because of his confidence in this doctor's techniques. Even though doctor gave him or her some vitamin pills, he or she may believe that such a famed doctor has cured his illness. In fact that is why two groups, control and experimental, were used for testing a new drug. The participants in control group are given a placebo and experimental group, the real medicine. Likewise the same medication prescribed from two physicians may get significantly different results on the same patient.

I have some personal experiences on this. I remembered one time I picked up a blind lady who needed a ride. It came upon that I was playing the Great Compassion Mantra in the car and she asked me what music it was. She said she felt very peaceful and relaxed after listening to the Mantra. She is an American and I believed she has never heard any mantra before. Sometimes I play Great Compassion Mantra during work and my colleagues are curious what the meanings of the song are. My reply is "I do not know, either". They all wonder why I keep playing a song that I do not know what it is. I think it is what belief is, i.e. to believe it is true first.

The second is to vow. The power of vow is very important. The "Sutra of Past Vows of Earth Store Budhisattva" mentions Earth Store Budhisattva's past vows before he accomplished the Budhisattvahood. Emperor Liang's Repentance also states the vows in the text and we recite the three vows in our daily chanting before meals.

I grew up in Taiwan but I did not have an opportunity to know proper Dharma until I came to the United States. Whenever I encounter troubles, I always want to have a quick answer for solving the problems. Hoping to get help, I personally have tried practicing external or deviant paths such as asking embodied divines or ghosts. However the answer I got was against my wish most

of the time. Luckily I did not believe in those, maybe because I have made such a vow in the past so I would be able to get acquaintance with proper Dharma in this life.

I had the chance of getting close to Venerable Master's Way Places when I came to the States. I feel very blessed, just like you, to have the opportunity of knowing Proper Dharma. By that time, I realized that all Buddhas and Budhisattvas have made different vows in their past lives. Moreover their vows are different from those of ordinary people who may only wish to have a prosperous business, making profits and money, a wonderful family and so on. Vow and strength interacts each other. When we make a vow, we have the strength. Pure Land is an auspicious and magnificent place, that is because Amitabha Buddha has made tremendous vows in his past lives. Venerable Master has made 18 great vows and so does Medicine Buddha, 12 great vows. They have their similarities, i.e. hoping all beings to attain bliss and free of suffering.

I remembered one time my son had to breed a caterpillar larva (silkworm) for his science class. You may know that butterfly has soft and fragile wings when it just comes out of cocoon. At that time, my son was holding the newly born butterfly in his palms and wondering why it did not fly away. Unfortunately his action has severely injured butterfly's wings and legs such that it could not even make itself stand up, leaving alone to fly. He called his teacher and Mom for help. Upon seeing this scene, my wife has suggested euthanizing the butterfly for getting rid of its suffering. However my son has a different thought. He has demonstrated us this poor little butterfly's strong will to live on by showing us its desire to sip sugar water whenever he fed it. Just like a small ant, it would run away for its life whenever it is disturbed. Indeed all beings would like to live without any pain or suffering. That is why Buddhas and Budhisattvas make their vows for benefiting all beings, i.e. wish every living being can leave suffering and attain bliss, but not for the sake of themselves.

The last is to practice. Confucius said 'refrain ourselves from wrong doing by practicing proprieties'. Moses also taught his disciples the 10 precepts. Shakyamuni Buddha instructed us not to do any evil but do practice all good deeds. Therefore we come to the Way Place for practicing cultivation, holding precepts, reciting Buddha's name and meditating. We all know this is the most important step cultivation. However I feel very shameful on discussing this because it is my worst part. Sutra texts say "ceasing greed, hatred and stupidity" and "do no evils". Although I am still far from that state, I would still encourage myself to come to the Way Place as often as possible so I could be molded and influenced gradually by the merits of Triple Jewels.

Recently I have read a book called “Stories of Water”, which was written by a Japanese scholar. He has investigated water crystallization under different situations. He found it water created beautiful crystals at low temperature when it was spoken with decent words. On the contrary, if water was spoken or tagged with bad or hatred words on the bottle, the crystallization was awful. Buddhist texts have even illustrated this concept more thoroughly by stating “A single rise of thought is yet a fault, an offense.” Our thoughts are the causes of all karmas that we need to endure in the future. I do not have more comments on this part because I myself did not put efforts in practicing Buddhism. All you great advisors with virtue certainly do better than me.

啞女唸觀音

1981年12月24日法界大學亞洲訪問團到達了馬來西亞檳城的第二日，求見上人的信眾，使訪問團註錫的佛教大廈頓時熱鬧起來。有一位中年女居士帶著她二十多歲的女兒求見上人。少女面貌娟好，可是從兩歲起，失去聽覺，不能說話。上人觀察她善根因緣成熟，吩咐她們晚上參加法會，藉眾人虔誠迴向之功德，助她消除業障。

到了晚上，上人開示完畢，隨即叫人把這位少女莊玉枝帶到台上。在二千餘人眾目睽睽之下，上人用一條白手絹，放在莊玉枝的喉嚨部位，專心為這個聾啞少女加持，訪問團的隨行法師們，也在旁邊教這位少女念「南無觀世音菩薩」。起初，她反應遲鈍，表情呆滯。可是，不到兩分鐘，啞女居然喃喃欲語，啞啞作聲。這時，上人洪亮的聲音，透過麥克風，向大眾指示：「大家一齊來念觀音菩薩聖號。一心迴向給這個少女，讓她即刻能講話。」

台下反應如潮。頃刻，二千餘眾齊聲唱誦：「南無觀世音菩薩！南無觀世音菩薩！」音韻悠揚，節奏齊整。尊聖號聲如海潮波浪，緊接不停。由於大眾虔誠一心的緣故，轉眼間整個佛教總會大廈如雷鼓齊鳴，震撼人心，有一種難言的熱衷與懇切，非在場親自體會是不能感受的。這時，有人把麥克風拿到少女面前，那啞啞的聲音，已改成擊拍有節的發音！「南....無....觀....世....音....菩薩！」。開始時，她念得很勉強，每個字都是從嗓子底下逼出來，怪吃力的。但她堅持到底，越念越興奮。上人仍舊在為她加持，不到十分鐘，少女的音聲衝破台下念聖號聲，居然響亮地一字一字地念起來。「南無觀世音菩薩！南無觀世音菩薩！」雖然，音韻還有一點艱澀，並且發音未能完全準確，但是，很明顯，啞女已經懂得說話了。台下的信眾聞聲莫不訝然，個個嘖嘖稱奇。更雀躍得跳起來，激

動得淚流滿面，慨嘆奇跡中之奇跡！上人說：「這個女孩子前身曾經作過大官，將軍也作過。但前生殺業頗重，尤其是好施絞刑，使罪犯咽喉壓縮，斷氣而死。再加上累世毀謗三寶，訾罵出家人，故今生是個啞巴。從她現身說法，諸位應覺悟。因果報應是多麼嚴厲，絲毫不爽！大家應該警惕！」

The Mute Girl Chants Guan Yin

On December 24th of 1981, the second day after the arrival of the Dharma Realm University's Visiting Assembly to Asia at Bintulu City in Malaysia, the multitude of faithful believers who sought to see the Venerable Master suddenly made the Great Hall of Buddhism, where the Visiting Assembly stayed, bustling with excitement. A middle-aged female lay disciple brought along her twenty-ish daughter to seek visitation with the Venerable Master. The young girl's visage was comely, but ever since she was two years old, she lost her hearing and could no longer speak. The Venerable Master observed that the destiny of her good roots has matured, so he instructed the mother and daughter to join in the Dharma Assembly during the evening, when they can take advantage of the virtuous merits from everyone's sincere transference, which would help her eliminate her karmic hindrances.

During that night, after the Venerable Master finished his instructional discourse, he immediately called on people to bring the girl, Yu-Zhi Chong, to the stage. Under the watchful gaze of over two thousand people, the Venerable took a white handkerchief, placed it upon Yu-Zhi Chong's throat, and in concentration bestowed aid upon the deaf and mute girl. In the meantime, the Dharma Masters who traveled along with the Visiting Assembly stood alongside the young girl to teach her in chanting, "Namo Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva". At first, her reaction was slow and hesitant, as she carried an absent-minded expression. However, in less than two minutes, the voiceless girl actually mumbled and tried to speak, as she made some simple sounds. At this time, the Venerable Master's loud and clear voice amplified through the microphone and directed the great multitude: "Let everyone join together in chanting the holy title of the Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva, with the united intention of transferring merit upon this young girl, so that she can speak immediately."

The reaction of those below the stage was like tidal wave. Immediately, the two thousand plus multitude chanted in unison: "Namo Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva! Namo Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva!" The euphony was soothing and resounding, in a rhythm that was uniform and orderly. This resonance of the holy title was like waves coming in with the ocean tide: incessantly and one after another. Because of everyone's singular sincerity, in a blink of an eye

the entire Great Hall of Buddhism was like roaring with thunder, where the clamor inspired awe in everyone's mind. There were indescribable fervor and candor, which cannot be comprehended unless one was physically present at the scene. At this time, someone brought the microphone before the young girl, and simple noises she was making had already turned into rhythmic and syllabic pronunciations! "Na...Mo...Guan...Shi...Yin...Bodhisattva!" As she began, she chanted by overcoming great strain, as each word was forced out of the bottom of her throat. She had to exercise tremendous effort. However, she was determined to the end, and each word was chanted with more and more excitement. The Venerable Master continued to bestow aid upon her. In less than ten minutes, the girl's voice rose above the chanting from those below the stage, as she loudly uttered each and every word. "Namo Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva! Namo Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva!" Although her voice still carried a slight unevenness and her pronunciations were not totally accurate, clearly the mute girl had learned how to speak.

The faithful multitude below the stage could not help in becoming amazed upon hearing her voice. Everyone was in awe. Some were even on their feet, with tears streaming down their faces out of excitement, as they exalted upon this miracle of miracles.

The Venerable Master explained, "The girl in a past life had been a significant government official. She was even a general once. However, she incurred heavy karma of killing in past incarnations, where she was especially fond of execution by hanging, where the guilty criminals' throats were strangulated so that they died from suffocation. Furthermore, for many life times she slandered the Triple Jewels and verbally insulted those who left the common house life. Thus in this lifetime she lives as a mute. As she illustrates the Dharma in person, everyone should now realize. Karmic retribution is so severe and harsh, never a bit trivial! We must all be take heed!"