

The Causes and Conditions Behind My Recitation of the *Shurangama Sutra*

我背誦《楞嚴經》的因緣

A Talk by Will Liu at the Buddha Hall of the Sudhana Center on May 24, 2025

劉利偉2025年5月24日講於善財中心佛殿

大約五六年前，我偶然讀到法界佛教總會（法總）網站的一篇文章。

那是上人八十年代的開示，講述在末法時代真正修行的人如鳳毛麟角。文中上人立下規矩：為提升佛教整體素質，培養新一代佛教中堅力量，欲成為萬佛聖城的弟子者須滿足三個條件：

第一，必須能背誦《楞嚴經》；

第二，需從法界佛教大學畢業（已有其他學位者亦須入學）；

第三，完成法總為僧俗二眾設置的三年修行課程。

當時我已對上人弘揚的正法生起堅定信心。在他身上，我看到了真正三藏法師的圓滿示現——所行之處即是正法所在。既然他在美國，我便認定正法就在美國。更深刻意識到：在這末法時代，能成為他的弟子將比黃金更珍貴，是此生最有意義的事。

那時我經營鑽石貿易生意。一次交易失敗後遭受重創，閉門不出數週。獨處期間，我突然渴望閱讀《楞嚴經》，想為生命尋找新的意義與力量。

沒想到一打開經卷便無法停止。《楞嚴經》義理妙不可言，文言譯本字字珠璣。

某個瞬間，一個念頭自然浮現：我要背誦整部經典。此後三

About five or six years ago, I happened to come across an article from Dharma Realm Buddhist Realm (DRBA) website.

It was a talk by the Master in the 80s about how, in this Dharma-ending age, very few people truly cultivate, and genuine cultivators are as rare as phoenix feathers and unicorn horns. In that article, he proclaimed in such a degenerating time, in order to raise the quality of the Buddhist community and to raise a new generation of strong, dedicated force for Buddhism, he outlined three criteria for becoming one of his disciples:

First, one must be able to recite the *Shurangama Sutra* by heart. Second, one must graduate from Dharma Realm Buddhist University (DRBU); even if you hold other academic degrees, you must still enroll at DRBU. Third, one must complete a three-year training program for Sangha and laypeople offered by DRBA. Only then can someone become his disciple at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas.

Back then, I already had a deep faith in the Proper Dharma taught by the Master. I saw in him the perfect embodiment of true, genuine Dharma, A Tripitaka Dharma Master who truly lives up to the name—wherever he went, the Proper Dharma followed. Since he was in America, I believed the Proper Dharma was in America. I also reflected that in this Dharma-ending age, becoming his disciple would be the most meaningful thing I could do in this life—more precious than gold.

At the time, I was running my own diamond trading business. After a failed deal, I was hit hard, suffered a major setback and didn't leave my room for weeks. During that period of isolation, I suddenly felt an urge to read the *Shurangama Sutra*, hoping to find new meaning and strength for my life.

But little did I know, once I started reading, I couldn't stop. I found the principles in the *Shurangama Sutra* to be unspeakably wonderful and profound, and the classical Chinese translation of

年，我再未賣過一顆鑽石。全心研習《楞嚴經》與宣公上人講解，竭力背誦每個段落——至少達到次日能複述的程度。

這三年間，同修始終默默支持。雖不解《楞嚴經》為何物，也不明白我為何執着背誦，她卻幾乎從不質疑。奇妙的是，在我零收入的這段時間，她的薪資竟增長三倍，成為行業頂尖收入者——超過許多小企業主。後來，她再也不問我是否重返職場。

2023年初，當我即將背完《楞嚴經》「五十陰魔」章節前的內容時，偶然點開法界佛教大學網站。

又一個念頭生起：我要去美國讀佛學。那年我四十歲，有家庭、父母和孩子，失業已三年。某日我試探性地對同修提及這個看似不切實際的想法：「如果可能，我真的很想去。」出乎意料，她眼中瞬間綻放的光芒讓我震撼：「這主意太棒了！你應該去！」那神情仿佛看見了光。

於是，我來到了這裏。回望來時路，才發現自己正踏着上人為弟子規劃的道路前行：首誦《楞嚴》，次畢業於此。而按他制定的標準，我接下來要完成最後一步——參加僧伽居士訓練班。因為今日站在畢業典禮現場的這一刻，我仿佛正在向上人匯報：前兩項要求，弟子已完成了。

最後，感恩與我同行的所有同學。遇見你們是此生最大的福報之一。你們讓我明白「法親眷屬」的真諦——某種層面上，這份聯結甚至深過血脈至親。是你們幫助我領悟菩薩道的內涵，理解菩薩為何生生世世「衆生無邊

the text was breathtakingly beautiful.

Then, out of nowhere, a thought came to me: I wanted to memorize the entire sutra. And so, for the next three years, I didn't sell a single diamond. I devoted myself completely to studying the *Shurangama Sutra* and the Master's commentaries, striving to memorize every passage I studied, at least well enough to recall it the next day.

During those three years, my wife supported me silently. Although she didn't understand what *Shurangama Sutra* was or why I was so committed to memorize it, she rarely questioned me. And remarkably, during that same period, while I had no income at all, her salary tripled, making her one of the highest-paid professionals in her field, earning more than many small business owners in the industry. Eventually, she stopped asking me whether I would return to work or not.

Then in early 2023, as I was finishing the chapter just before the "Fifty Skandha Demons" in the *Shurangama Sutra*, I happened to visit the Dharma Realm Buddhist University website.

That's when another thought arose, I wanted to come to the United States to study Buddhism at DRBU. I was 40 years old, with a family, parents, and a kid, and I had been unemployed for three years. One day, I casually mentioned this idea to my wife, without too much hope. I said, "If possible, I really want to go." But to my surprise, her reaction shocked me. She said, "That's a great idea. You should go!" I still remember her look when she heard me saying I wanted to go to DRBU. Her face lit up, as if she had seen light itself.

And so, here I am. Looking back, I realize I've been walking the very path the Master outlined for his disciples. First: memorizing the *Shurangama Sutra*. Second: Graduating from Dharma Realm Buddhist University. And, according to his criteria of becoming one of his disciples, the next and final step for me is to enroll in the Sangha and Laity Training Program. Because as I am now standing here today at this graduation ceremony, I feel I have reported back to the Master for completing his first and second criteria.

Lastly, I want to thank all my cohorts who walked this path with me. Meeting all of you has been one of the greatest blessings of my life. You have shown me what it means to have a "Dharma Family." In some way, my connection with you feels even deeper than with some of my own family members. You have helped me understand what the Bodhisattva path is, what Bodhisattva vows are, and why Bodhisattva vows, life after life to help living beings. With all my heart, I know that saying "thank you" is not enough. So, how about perhaps we meet again in next years' translation program, if causes

誓願度」。任何語言都不足以表達我的感激，或許——若因緣具足——我們可以在明年的翻譯課程中再續法緣？

特別感恩法界佛教大學的師長同仁。是你們讓我此刻能站在夢寐以求的地方——善財參學中心大殿，獲得佛學碩士學位。你們讓夢想照進現實！阿彌陀佛！ ❀

and conditions permit.

Finally, I must thank the DRBU community, professors, teachers and faculties members. You have brought me to this sacred moment—this commencement ceremony, in this very place I once dreamed of standing, in the “Buddha Hall of Sudhana Center” to receive my Masters Degree in Buddhist Classics. You made my dream come true! Amitufo! ❀

萬佛聖城紀念宣公上人涅槃三十週年（二）

City of Ten Thousand Buddhas Commemorates the 30th Anniversary of Venerable Master Hsuan Hua's Entering Nirvana (II)

季年文/譯 Written and Translated by Ji Nian



6月1日清晨：

June 1, Early Morning

清晨6點50分，在「南無上宣下化老和尚」的唱誦聲中，朝山大眾分成六列，從山門三步一拜，虔誠頂禮上人。隊伍綿延一千五百呎，領眾的法師拜到祖師殿前時，隊尾的居士還在行政辦公室一帶頂禮。這是萬佛聖城今年人數最多的一次朝山。

At 6:50 in the morning, as voices chanted “Namo Noble Hsuan Venerable Hua,” the assembly for the three-steps-one-bow pilgrimage formed six orderly lines. With every three steps, they made a full bow, paying devout homage to the Venerable Master, starting from the mountain gate. The procession stretched nearly 1,500 feet—by the time the leading monks reached the Patriarchs’ Hall, the tail end of the group was still bowing near the Administrative Office. This was the largest pilgrimage of the year at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas