NOW AND FOR THE FUTURE --- The Story of Falun Dafa

Episode 2: Dafa Begins to Spread

There was a Shengli Park by the train station in Changchun, the Spring City outside the Great Wall. During the Qigong boom, many city residents came to this park to practice different kinds of Qigong every morning. After practicing, people would often gather around and discuss topics related to Qigong. One day in May 1992, a young gentleman who was a stranger to those Qigong practitioners joined the discussions.

(Mr. Li, Falun Gong practitioner from Changchun) “Many people practiced there every morning, regardless of age and gender. They wanted good health. They practiced different kinds of Qigong. They often chatted with each other about Qigong after their morning practice. One person would say, ‘I feel good today. I feel warm all over my body.’ Another would complain, ‘But my hands feel numb.’ Sometimes these conditions existed. Master Li would go over and teach them. But no one knew who Master Li was. Master Li talked about the nature of Qigong in theory and practice and showed people several movements. They had never seen a Qigong practice like this. Many people wanted to learn from Master Li.”

The young gentleman was Mr. Li Hongzhi. Many had since become his first group of students. The first Falun Gong workshop was held here on May 13th, 1992. An event took place soon after the workshop began.

(Program of “Health ABC” from Jilin Education TV, 1999) “When I was working in the field, a beam collapsed. Heavy bags fell on me and injured my legs and back. After some time, I become paralyzed. I stayed in bed all day, not able to take care of myself. I used my elbows to support my body so often that my skin rubbed off. My neighbor told me about this Qigong class and invited me to join. My husband came to the hospital to find out if I wanted to go. I said there was no point in me going since my condition was so bad. Besides, it was difficult for me to go anywhere. Since I could not walk, people would have to carry me on a stretcher. After discussing it overnight at home, they came and carried me to the workshop the next morning. When we arrived, they went inside to find seats and left me waiting in the lobby. At that moment, Master Li came by and asked about my condition. I told him that I had intervertebral disc hernia. Master Li asked my folks to move me onto the stage. As I was lying on the stage, Master Li asked me if I could cooperate with him. I said I can. In less than three seconds, Master Li asked me to sit up and I indeed was able to sit up. Master Li then told me to stand and I indeed was able to stand. After that, Master Li told me that I was cured and could walk around now. I walked a circle on the stage. ”

After having successfully held two workshops in Changchun, Mr. Li Hongzhi came to Beijing in June 1992. He sought permission from China Qigong Science Research Committee to teach Falun Gong throughout the country. At that time, Qigong had been popular for nearly 20 years. There were about 100 million people practicing more than 2,400 different kinds of Qigong nationwide. The situation inside the Qigong community had also become very complicated. Since the Research Committee was overseeing so many kinds of Qigong practices, it was necessary for it to thoroughly evaluate the application from a newcomer.

(Mr. Ye, Falun Gong practitioner from Beijing) “Since there were thousands of different Qigong practices across the country at that time, how could one convince the Committee that his practice is worthy of consideration? Thus, he must clarify his mission, to guide people toward high levels, to restore the reputation of cultivation practice, and to correct misconceptions within the Qigong community. The Committee was fascinated and pleased when they learned that Master Li intended to correct misconceptions within the Qigong community and guide people toward high levels. After just a few words, they invited Master Li to stay and chatted with him for more than an hour. They told Master Li, ‘Don’t leave and please stay in Beijing. You have our full support.’”

Authorities in the Qigong community were convinced by Master Li Hongzhi’s supernormal abilities and his way of practice. They unanimously passed their evaluation of Master Li, agreed to immediately establish Falun Gong Research Committee under China Qigong Science Research Committee and to promote Falun Gong across the country.

These are video tapes teaching Falun Gong practice officially published in September 1994. Before that, the Qigong Science Committee and the National Sports Commission had also produced teaching programs for Falun Gong. Five gentle and elegant exercises soon spread across Beijing Qigong experts were immediately attracted to this simple but extraordinarily advanced way of practice.

(Xiaodong Shao, former medical Qigong advisor of Human Science Research Association) “When I went to Beijing in August 1993, I heard a very beautiful sound as I was passing Zhongshan Park and Qingyin Temple. When I follow the sound, I saw tens of people practicing Qigong. When I realized that I had never seen this type of Qigong before, I stopped to watch their practicing from the beginning to the end. I was surprised by an exercise called the “Falun Standing Stance. There are only four wheel-holding positions: holding the wheel in front of the head, holding the wheel in front of the lower abdomen, holding the wheel above the head, holding the wheel on both sides of the head. Three of the four standing stances involve an elevated standing posture. The normal understanding within the Qigong community is that only those who are advanced in their practices are able to practice elevated stances. As a doctor, I know that beginners should not take on elevated stances. This is especially the case for those with hypertension. The raised hand position could lead to further elevation of blood pressure.

As a result, I was puzzled by this way of practice. I waited for them to finish and went to talk with them. They told me that they were practicing Falun Gong. I asked someone if any of them suffered from hypertension and asked about their conditions. He said that those with hypertension have lowered their blood pressure after practicing. I asked about those with hypotension. He said that those with hypotension and low blood sugar have all recovered after practicing. I asked him if they have attended Mr. Li Hongzhi’s classes. He mentioned that they all did. I got very interested and asked whether I still have a chance to attend Master Li’s class.”

Falun Gong had become a leading practice in the Qigong community. Wherever Master Li went, local authorities and Qigong associations offered their strong support. The press followed closely with in-depth reporting. People send letters from all 31 provinces, cities and autonomous regions to inquire about Falun Gong’s theory and practices, to ask for materials and to purchase books.

In June 1994, the second Jinan (Shangdong Province’s famous Spring City) Falun Gong workshop took place. On the first day, Mr. Li clearly stated the purpose of his workshop. “…We do not talk about healing illnesses here, either. Rather, we talk about holistically adjusting students’ bodies to enable you to cultivate. With an ill body you cannot develop gong at all. Therefore, you should not come to me for curing illnesses, and neither will I do such a thing. The primary purpose of my coming to the public is to guide people to high levels, to genuinely guide people to high levels.”

To most of those who attended the Falun Gong workshop for the first time, Qigong was a means to improve one’s health and getting rid of illnesses. In class, Mr. Li revealed the truth (Zhuan Falun): “…In the past, whether people practiced qigong in parks or at home, they did it with much effort and dedication, and they practiced quite well. But once they stepped out the door, they would act differently and go their own way, competing and fighting with others for fame and profit among everyday people. How could they increase gong? It could not increase at all, and for the same reason neither would their illnesses be healed. Why can’t some people cure their illnesses after a long period of practice? Qigong is cultivation and something supernormal, as opposed to everyday people’s physical exercises. One must focus on xinxing in order to cure illnesses and increase gong.”

In a nine-day course, Mr. Li Hongzhi systematically explained the law of higher levels in simple terms. He pointed out important things like: Qigong is cultivation practice, different levels have different Fa (law), why doesn’t Gong increase with practice, the distinction between the Buddha school Qigong and Buddhism, how to treat loss and gain, hospital treatment and Qigong treatment, the distinction between Qigong and physical exercises. He also clarified puzzling issues such as the celestial eye, spirit or animal possession, practicing evil cultivation, and cultivation insanity. Master Li’s lectures were so enlightening that people would never forget.

(Zhuan Falun) “What is the Buddha Fa, then? The most fundamental characteristic of this universe, Zhen-Shan-Ren, is the highest manifestation of the Buddha Fa. It is the most fundamental Buddha Fa. The Buddha Fa manifests different forms at different levels and assumes different guiding roles at different levels. The lower the level, the more complicated. This characteristic, Zhen-Shan-Ren, is in the microscopic particles of air, rock, wood, soil, iron and steel, the human body, as well as in all matter. In ancient times it was said that the Five Elements constitute all things and matter in the universe; they also carry this characteristic, Zhen-Shan-Ren. A cultivator can only understand the specific manifestation of the Buddha Fa at the level that his or her cultivation has reached, which is his or her cultivation Fruition Status and level. Broadly speaking, the Fa is very immense. From the perspective of the very highest level, it is very simple, for the Fa resembles a pyramid in form. At the highest point, it can be summarized in three words: Zhen, Shan, Ren. It is extremely complicated when manifesting at different levels. Take a human being as an example. The Tao School considers the human body a small universe. A person has a physical body, yet a person is not complete with only a physical body. One must also have human temperament, personality, character, and an Original Soul in order to constitute a complete and independent person with individuality. The same is true with our universe, which has the Milky Way, other galaxies, as well as life and water. All things and matter in this universe are aspects of material existence. At the same time, however, it also possesses the characteristic Zhen-Shan-Ren. All microscopic particles of matter embody this characteristic—even the extremely microscopic particles have this property.”

(Youfu Li, former research associate of Chinese Academy of Science) “I was overwhelmed. He completely explained human nature, the characteristic of the universe, the relationship with man and the universe, as well as the purpose of life. He also explained how one can return to one’s original, true self and how one can assimilate to the characteristic of the universe. The teaching was very clear and shows cultivation step by step. It was real. It was different from what was taught in many religions. There are some aspects that people understand in theory but have little idea in real practice. Master Li taught people how to do it step by step. I was very overwhelmed and touched. I decided to cultivate myself this way from that point on.”

When Mr. Li began teaching in public in 1992, many social conflicts were intensifying in China. Corruption, inequitable wealth distribution, dual-track pricing of goods and services, stock market gyrations, an influx of migrant workers into urban areas, and people moving into the private sector en masse had caused a fundamental shift in many people’s moral values. Pursuing only self-interest and putting money above everything else became acceptable ethical standards.

(Bin Xue, former officer of China’s Ministry of Agriculture) “When we went to the countryside, we started out with only two or three of us. Our first stop was the provincial level. The provincial authorities would send some people to accompany us. Then at the city level, the city officials would again send some people to accompany us. The same thing happened at the township level. When we finally reached the village, we would have about 20 to 30 people free riding on meals provided by villagers.”

(Mr. Xue, Fujian resident) “If one goes to Fuzhou and needs to check into a hospital, they won’t accept you. You have to rely on connections and use bribery. Once you are in, you have to do it again in order to find a good doctor. You even need connections to have an X-ray taken. Without connections, you can’t even get an appointment. Without power, connections and money, it’s very difficult to get anything done. ”

Pop music often reflects the mood and feelings of the time. This popular song from the 90's, reflected the hypocrisy, indifference, weariness, and frustration people felt.

Misty trail breaks by the wood;

Sparse stars tell nothing to the man in water.

Fall grass listens to cold wind,

not knowing where it stands;

By the rock, sleepless,

bitter thoughts, interwoven threads.

Master’s appearance wakes him up,

Pointing to the way of truth, Out of eternal illusions.

This is a poem written by a practitioner after studying Falun Dafa. In a materialistic society where moral values were fast declining, it was a rare opportunity for people to hear Mr. Li Hongzhi teaching and explaining the high-level laws. That’s why many practitioners followed Mr. Li’s workshops everywhere despite distance and hardship.

Mr. Li held his last Falun Gong workshop in Guangzhou, China in December 1994. It was an exceptionally grand occasion. People from as far as Xinjiang and Heilongjiang provinces came for the opportunity to listen to Buddha Law.

(Dawei Gao, Falun Gong practitioner from Guangzhou) “When people learned that it was going to be the last workshop, many practitioners across the country went to Guangzhou by any means possible, by car, bus or air. Guangzhou Sports Stadium, where the workshop was held, could only accommodate 3000 to 4000 people. But about 6000 people showed up. Those who did not have enough money for food and accommodations sat in meditation overnight by the stadium and waited for an opportunity to attend the workshop. After having learned about the situation, Master Li negotiated with the organizer to let those in waiting into the stadium. Television sets were put in the hallways of the stadium so that everyone could watch Master Li lecturing.”

Mr. Li Hongzhi held 54 ten-day Falun Dafa workshops, from the first workshop in Changchun on May 13th, 1992 to the last one in Guangzhou in December 1994. It’s not hard for people to realize how busy Mr. Li was over those two and half years. Mr. Li never mentioned the hardships he experienced during the period when he was giving workshops. It was also difficult for people to comprehend. The hardship and complexity of successfully disseminating the Buddha Law in China’s controlled society where the ruling authority’s ideology and propaganda were completely different, were beyond people’s imagination. Mr. Li has little room to make mistakes. He had to be absolutely perfect beyond scrutiny. Mr. Li had accomplished his mission.

(Shuwen Nie, Falun Gong practitioner from Shanghai) “After we arrived in Guangzhou, we picked a relatively inexpensive hotel as the cost of living there was quite high. There were rats and cockroaches crawling over us while we were sleeping at the hotel at night, a lot of them. Two groups of people couldn’t stand it any longer. They complained that the hotel was terrible and they couldn’t stand rats crawling all over them at night. They left the very next day to find a better hotel. Only one group stayed. To their surprise, they saw Master Li having his meal when they were having meals in the cafeteria. Master Li was staying at the same hotel. ”

Heaven and Earth, so vast, look small to my eye,

For who created the limitless Firmament?

Beyond the Cosmos ‘tis yet more boundless,

To fulfill my grand hope I spread the Great Way.

Mr. Li Hongzhi wrote this poem, “My Hope”, on January 1st, 1991, before he began his teaching in public. Two years later, his hope was fulfilled with his hard work and efforts. The book “Zhuan Falun”, where Mr. Li Hongzhi had compiled the lectures he gave, was officially published in December 1994.

He presented a complete picture of the law of the universe to the public. How many people can truly believe and how many people can truly practice cultivation? At the conclusion of his last workshop in Guangzhou, Mr. Li expressed his earnest hope (Zhuan Falun) : “All of what I have addressed in the lectures is for guiding everyone to cultivate toward high levels. In the past, no one taught these things in their instruction. What we have taught is very explicit and has incorporated modern science and contemporary science of the human body. In addition, what has been taught is at a very high level. It is primarily intended to enable everyone to truly obtain the Fa in the future and ascend through cultivation—this is my intention. In the course of teaching the Fa and gong, many people have found the Fa very good, but very difficult to follow. Actually, I think it depends on the person as to whether it is difficult or not. For an everyday person who does not want to cultivate, he will find cultivation simply too difficult, inconceivable, or impossible. As an everyday person, he does not want to cultivate and will find it very difficult. Lao Zi said, “When a wise person hears the Tao, this person will practice it diligently. When an average person hears it, this person will practice it on and off. When a foolish person hears it, this person will laugh at it loudly. If this person doesn’t laugh at it loudly, it’s not the Tao.” To a genuine cultivator, I would say that it is very easy and not something too high to reach. In fact, many of the veteran practitioners sitting here and many of the veteran practitioners who are not present have already reached very high levels in their cultivation. I didn’t tell you about these things so that you wouldn’t develop some attachment or become lecture nine People with Great Inborn Quality 446 complacent. That would affect the development of your gong potency. As a truly determined cultivator, one is able to endure everything and give up or care less for any attachment in the face of various self-interests. As long as one can do this, it will not be difficult. People who say it’s difficult are those who cannot let go of these things. Cultivation itself is not difficult, and neither is raising one’s level itself difficult. It is because they cannot give up human desires that they call it difficult. This is because it is very difficult to relinquish something in the face of practical gain. The benefits are right here, so how can you abandon these attachments? It is actually because of this that one will find it difficult. When an interpersonal conflict occurs, if you cannot contain yourself or cannot even regard yourself as a practitioner in dealing with it, I would say that is unacceptable. When I practiced cultivation in the past, many great masters told me these words, and they said, “When it’s difficult to endure, you can endure it. When it’s impossible to do, you can do it.” In fact, that is how it is. Why don’t you give it a try when you return home? When you are overcoming a real hardship or tribulation, you try it. When it is difficult to endure, try to endure it. When it looks impossible and is said to be impossible, give it a try and see if it is possible. If you can actually do it, you will indeed find, “After passing the shady willow trees, there will be bright flowers and another village ahead!” Because I have talked so much, it will be very difficult for everyone to remember with so many things mentioned. I will mainly make a few requirements: I hope that all of you will treat yourselves as practitioners in future lecture nine People with Great Inborn Quality 447 cultivation and truly continue your cultivation. I hope that both veteran and new practitioners will be able to cultivate in Dafa and succeed in it! I hope that after going home everyone will make the best use of his or her time for genuine cultivation.”

Please watch episode 3 - Breaking Illusions And Rectifying Minds.