

Records of the Pure Land

Once there was a person by the surname Wang, who was extremely stupid. His parents and all of his other relatives had died, and Wang was unable to make a living to support himself, and so every day he would just stay at home. Once in a while, people would give him money, but he did not know how to keep track of it.

Then a Daoist by the name of Chen accepted him as his disciple and made him perform all kinds of menial tasks around the temple. He chopped the wood, swept the floor, and he was taught to recite the name of Amita Buddha each evening. Every day he would bow to the Buddha for the time it takes for one incense stick to burn (one to one and a half hours). Whenever he would recite the Buddha's name, the Daoist master would scold him, saying that he wasn't reciting correctly. If Wang nodded off to sleep, the Daoist would beat him saying, "You still don't know to be vigorous! You are so stupid!!" This went on for three years.

One night Wang started to laugh, which made the Daoist feel very strange. He didn't know what was going on with the disciple. The teacher reached for the stick to beat Wang.

Wang said, "This time you can't beat me."

The teacher said, "Why not?"

Wang said, "Teacher, you have just dryly sat there for eighteen years. If you could have been like me and very reliably recited the Buddha's name and bowed to the Buddha, then you would have already gone to the West."

The next day, the disciple went to a very high mountain, and standing up, faced the west, put his palms together, and went off to be reborn in the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss. After his cremation, two sharira were found in the ashes.

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