

無常迅速，生死事大

Impermanence Strikes Quickly

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阿彌陀佛！今天輪到玉棋上台練習，若有不圓滿或錯誤之處，請給予指正。

很多時候，自己沒有經歷的事，總像是在閱讀報紙上的社會新聞，並沒有那麼真切，一旦臨頭，才想：「早知道就好了！」而為時已晚。就像新聞報導，幾千人死於地震，或多少人死於戰爭；對我而言，會有所同情，但終究事不關己，時間也會沖淡一切；當事關所熟悉的人，乃至於我是主角時，才能有更深刻的感觸。例如：昨天大悲懺完，法師說到往生堂為近白師迴向，才想：無常迅速，生死事大。如何應用有限的年身，是值得我們思維的！

在人生的過程中，不論是學業或其他人、事，我們總會經過無數的考試，但不知哪一場考試的得失，才是您所最掛心的？

今年暑假期間，我面臨一個大考試，各位猜我考得如何？像我這樣的眾生，當然是一敗塗地！幸運的是，有許多人在旁為我加油，最終讓這場考試轉為模擬考，讓我還有機會加強所學；所以，相信下一次的考試，我會考得好一點。

這是一個什麼考試呢？我身體的一小部份組織發炎，而我知識不足，以為只是感冒引起的噁心和沒胃口，也看中醫；拖了一星期，突然巨痛和嘔吐變成急症，臨時被救護車送往醫院。在急診室時，護士問我痛的指數：最不痛是1，最痛是10，那我是多少？這是一個很簡單的問題，我卻想了好一會，才回答10；因為我想回答的是20，可又怕他們認為我錯亂了！

從急診室轉到病房，除了痛，還伴隨嘔吐和瀉。我不知道有護士要幫我換床單，當她把

Amitofo! Today it is my turn to speak. Please correct me if I say something wrong.

Often times, the events we read in the newspaper don't really make an impression on us unless we experience them ourselves. Once something happens to us, we say, "If I only knew ahead of time!" However, by then it may be too late! For instance, I feel pity for the thousands of people killed in earthquakes or those killed in the war, as reported by the news media. But since I am not directly involved in those incidents, with time I will gradually forget about them. I am not deeply touched by them, unless they involve people close to me. For example, yesterday a Dharma Master said we should transfer the merit of the Great Compassion Repentance to Dharma Master Jin Bai at the Rebirth Hall. Only then did I realize that Impermanence strikes quickly and Birth and Death are great matters. We should ponder how to utilize our limited time.

We have faced numberless tests in school or in other matters during our lives. Which test do you worry about the most?

I faced my biggest test during the summer. Can anyone of you guess my grade? Of course I failed this test being the kind of living being I am. Fortunately, with encouragement from many people around me, this test became a trial which allowed me the opportunity to study more to attain better results when the next test comes along.

What kind of test did I face? A small part of my body was infected, but I thought the nausea and loss of appetite were caused by a cold. I only saw a Chinese doctor. After one week, I was sent to the emergency room due to the great pain and vomiting. The nurse asked me to describe the intensity of the pain using the numbers 1 to 10: 1 meant the least painful and 10 the most. It was a very simple question, but I had to think about it for a while before saying 10. I wanted to say 20, but did not want her to think that I was deranged.

I was transferred from the emergency room to a patient room. In addition to the pain, I was vomiting and had diarrhea. I did not know that the nurse was changing my sheets and when she laid the cover, which was folded in a square, on my body, I screamed loudly, scaring her. She asked me what was wrong. The reality was at that time I would scream



摺疊成四方的床單放在我身上，引得我大叫一聲，嚇得她連問她做錯了什麼；其實那時就算是一張面紙飄到我身上，我都會喊痛。

從上救護車開始，姐姐就叫我念「觀世音菩薩」聖號；可是痛一來，我就只記得痛，姐姐一再提醒，我才能還記得有「觀世音菩薩」。住院第一天，每隔四或六小時就打一劑止痛針，可是一點也沒效；他們勸我使用嗎啡，它就放在床頭，只要我按下一個鍵就可。我不願意，止痛劑一點都沒效，它就一定有效？雖然我痛得說不出話，可也不喜歡意識被麻醉；我希望始終能清楚分明！醫生試著用抗生素來醫治我，用了三種抗生素都沒效，才決定開刀。在開刀前，吃什麼就吐什麼；沒得吐就吐苦水，苦水吐完吐酸水。連著五天，我也沒辦法睡好，只覺長夜漫漫。想著書上寫著：上人有一次坐船，在海上遇到水怪，吐得奄奄一息。想我大概就是像他那樣！後來他活了，那我呢？開刀，把發炎的組織拿掉，又因腸子已經沾黏，醫生把它拿出來，用了一加侖的藥水去清洗，後再放回。《地藏經》說「抽腸挫斬」，大概就是這樣；醫院實在就像個模擬的地獄！手術後，我非常虛弱，連坐著的力氣也沒；總覺得自己的頭很重，難以支撐，所以幾乎在床上躺了一個月。

當時我以爲我快死了！先生、孩子、姐姐、姐夫們都在身邊，可對我的病痛，他們也愛莫能助。《地藏經》不是這樣寫的嗎：「父子至親，歧路各別；縱然相逢，無肯代受。」而〈普賢行願品〉的經文也說：「臨命終時，最後剎那，一切諸根悉皆散壞，一切親屬悉皆捨離，一切威勢悉皆退失；輔相大臣、宮城內外、象馬車乘、珍寶伏藏，如是一切，無復相隨。」我知道，始終只有「觀世音菩薩」聖號能與我相伴。

我沒有求觀世音菩薩，也沒有求上人延長我的生命；只是想著：可惜今生學習佛法太晚、太慢，對於「信解行證」的「信」都沒有做好，只怕隨業流轉，也忘了今生的可惜。

學習佛法後，我常聽到阿彌陀佛的願力，

out with pain if even a Kleenex landed on me.

The moment I was in the ambulance, my elder sister asked me to recite the name of Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva. But all I knew was the pain, nothing else. My sister had to remind me again before I remembered that Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva existed. I was given shots for pain every four or six hours, but they did not work. I was told to push the button for morphine which was right by my bed, but I was not willing to do so. Since the pain killers did not work, would morphine be effective? Even though it was so painful that I could not speak, I did not want my consciousness drugged. I wished to be conscious. The doctor treated me with three kinds of antibiotics without success. Finally, he decided on surgery. Before the operation, for five days, I kept throwing up whatever I ate or drank, along with bitter and sour fluids from my body. I could not sleep well. During the long nights, I thought of what Venerable Master wrote about how he could barely breathe after throwing up upon his encounter with the water demon during his boat trip in China when he was a young monk. I was probably in the same way. The Venerable Master survived; how about me? The infected part was taken out during the surgery, but all the intestines stuck together and the doctor had to clean them with one gallon of medicinal solution before putting them back in my body. It was probably the same feeling as stated in the *Earth Store Sutra*, "...their guts are pulled out, sawed and chopped apart." For me, at that time the hospital was really like a miniature hell! After the surgery, I was very weak and did not even have the strength to sit up. My head felt so heavy, it was hard for me to hold it up. I was in bed for almost one month.

At that time, I thought I would die very soon. My husband, children, elder sister and brother-in-law were by my side, but they could not help me with my pain. The *Earth Store Sutra* also states, "Father and sons have the closest relationship, but their roads diverge and each goes his own way. Even if they should meet, neither would consent to undergo suffering in the other's place." The Sutra text of "Universal Worthy's Conduct and Vows" also states, "the last *kshana*-instant before one's death, all the organs become scattered and deteriorate; all your family members and relatives are to be left behind; all the power and prestige will go away; and the prime minister, high-ranking officials, elephants and horse carriages, jewels and treasures will not accompany the deceased." I know only the name of "Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva" can accompany me.

I did not pray to Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva or the Venerable Master to lengthen my life. My only thought was it was too bad I learned and practiced the Buddhadharma so late and so slowly. I did not do a good job in faith, understanding, practice, and realization and will continue to flow in the cycle of karma, having wasted this lifetime.

After I studied the Buddhadharma, I often heard about the power of Amitabha Buddha's vow, whereby one who can recite his name single-

只要能一心稱其名號十聲，就可往生到極樂世界；我想：那有什麼難的？只要撐著一口氣，總能念十聲的！這一次生病，讓我瞭解：當病痛時，意志力不算什麼；這痛的意念，會大過所有的念。痛也會讓我沒力氣去想要念一聲佛號，更不要說往生如生龜脫殼般的痛苦；怎能讓佛號相續不斷？若平時沒有用心修持，意隨境轉，將不知流落何處？

很痛的時候，我也想著：觀世音菩薩您在那裏？後來想起〈普門品〉中：「念念勿生疑，觀世音淨聖；於苦惱死厄，能為作依怙！」也想起：「心念不空過，能滅諸有苦。」才能又繼續有一聲沒一聲地念「觀世音菩薩」聖號。

回來聖城，慢慢比較有體力了，才想起觀世音菩薩早就巧安排。生病期間，姐姐無微不至的照顧、姐夫噓寒問暖、二個孩子每天固定在上下午輪流念一遍〈普門品〉給我聽、我們的簽證也轉換成功。有人送卡片、花，提醒我在病中也不要忘記念佛、生病是助道之增上緣…等鼓勵及祝福康復的語句；後來我也才知道，還有人為我寫放生、念經、念佛號、或將參加慶祝觀世音菩薩成道日舉辦的觀音七法會等種種功德迴向給我…；而離開聖城前及回來後，也都有善知識為我送飯、煮藥、告訴我保健之道…等。我想：這種種，都是讓這場考試轉為模擬考的重要原因。很高興能與諸上善人聚會一處，感恩大家為我所做的一切，讓我還有機會學習佛法；希望在這通往阿彌陀佛國度的路上，我們都能相互提醒、學習、精進，同生極樂國！阿彌陀佛！

mindedly ten times can be reborn in the Land of Ultimate Bliss. I used to think it was not difficult at all since we could always recite his names ten times in a single breath. My recent illness made me realize that one who is in severe pain or critically ill can lack the willpower to do even that. The thought of the pain will overwhelm everything else. The pain weakened and prevented me from reciting the Buddha's name even once. How can we recite the Buddha's name continuously while suffering and dying from excruciating pain? If we don't cultivate all the time, and instead let ourselves be turned by the states, we won't know where we will be reborn.

I also wondered where Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva was when the pain occurred. Later I remembered the following verse in the Universal Door Chapter:

In thought after thought have no doubt:
Guan Shi Yin is pure and sagely.
In times of suffering, agony, danger, and death,
He is our refuge and protector.

And I also recalled:

One holds this Bodhisattva's name not in vain,
For he can extinguish the suffering of all realms of existence.

Only then could I recite Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva's name without cease.

After returning to the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas, I slowly regained my strength and realized that while I was sick, Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva had skillfully made arrangements for my elder sister to provide me such thorough care; for my brother-in-law to constantly check on my well-being; for my two children to take turns reciting the Universal Door Chapter every morning and afternoon; for our visa applications to be approved; for my friends to send get-well cards, flowers and reminders to recite Buddha's name and realize that illness was a way to make progress in cultivation... and other words of encouragement; and well wishes for a full recovery. Later on, I also realized that some people even liberated lives, recited Sutras and the Buddha's name on my behalf, or transferred the merit from attending the session to celebrate Guan Yin Bodhisattva's Enlightenment... I think all of these are the main reasons for this test to become a trial test. Besides, many good advisors brought food, brewed Chinese herbal medicines for me, and advised me on how to care for myself, etc. I am very happy to be together with these kind people. I am thankful for what you all have done for me and for giving me an opportunity to study Buddhadharma. In the journey of reaching the Land of Amitabha Buddha, I wish we all can encourage each other, study and make progress together, and be born in the Land of Ultimate Bliss. Amitofo.