

【水鏡回天錄白話解】

# 摩訶迦葉尊者

REFLECTIONS IN THE WATER-MIRROR: TURNING THE TIDE OF DESTINY

## THE VENERABLE MAHAKASHYAPA

宣公上人講於一九八六年十月十一日

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周芳枝 英譯

ENGLISH TRANSLATED BY FANNY CHOU

「迦葉」譯為飲光。往昔為冶金師，助貧女裝佛金，感世世全身有金光，能隱蔽日月之光，名為飲光。為富家子，奉父命而結婚，感世事多變化，與妻發心修道，各不相擾。為了生脫死，皈依佛，專修十二頭陀行：著衲衣、但三衣、常乞食、次第乞、日中一食、節量食、過午不飲漿、住阿蘭若、樹下宿、露地宿、塚間住、膏不著席。為梵行第一。

一日，佛於靈山會上，拈華示眾，眾默然；尊者破顏微笑，傳佛心印，繼承衣鉢，為西域初祖。奉佛之囑，於雞足山入定，待彌勒尊佛出世，代傳金縷袈裟。佛入涅槃後，召集五百大阿羅漢，於七葉窟結集經、律、論三藏。

註解：

這位初祖摩訶迦葉尊者，他是「頭陀第一」。雖然一百多歲，可是他還是勇猛精進，絲毫不躲懶偷安。佛都憐憫他，說：「你年紀這麼大了，你可以多休息了！」可是他還是不休息；所以在佛的弟子裡頭，他是「頭陀第一」。頭陀，是梵語，翻譯過來，就叫「抖擻」；抖擻精神，就是常常不懈怠。

摩訶迦葉，這也是梵語，翻譯到中文，就叫「飲光氏」。為什麼他叫「飲光

Essay:

**Kashyapa translates as “drinking up others’ light” in Chinese. In the past, he was a goldsmith who helped a poor woman gild a Buddha image. As a result, both of them had the reward of their bodies emitting golden light, outshining and thereby hiding the light of the sun and moon. Hence, he was called “drinking up others’ light”. He was from a wealthy family and his marriage was arranged by his father. He sensed that the mundane world was full of caprice. He and his wife both then resolved to practice the Way—and each did not interfere with the other’s cultivation. In order to end birth and death, he took refuge with the Buddha and focused on the twelve dhutangas (ascetic practices): wearing only rag robes, keeping only three robes, going on almsrounds, seeking alms in sequential order, eating only one meal a day at midday, eating in moderation, not drinking juice after noon, dwelling in an aranya, dwelling beneath a tree, dwelling in the open, dwelling in a graveyard, and always sitting and never lying down. He was foremost in practicing pure conduct.**

**One day on Vulture Peak, the Buddha twirled a flower in front of the assembly. The whole assembly was silent. However, the Venerable One smiled and thus received the transmission of the Buddha’s “mind-seal” as well as the Buddha’s robe and bowl. He became the first Patriarch in India. He followed the Buddha’s instruction to enter samadhi at Jizu (Chicken Foot) Mountain to await Maitreya Buddha’s advent into this world so that he can pass on the golden-threaded precept sash. After the Buddha’s Nirvana, he gathered five hundred Arhats at Seven-leaf Tree Cave to compile the Tripitaka—the Sutras, the Shastras and the Vinaya.**

Commentary:

The first Patriarch, Venerable Mahakashyapa, was foremost in *dhutangas*.

氏」呢？因為他身有金光，他這種金光，能把日月光都給隱蔽了、遮蓋住了，就是他這個光超過日月光，所以就叫「飲光氏」。因為在往昔，他是做金子的一個匠人——冶金師，後來，他遇見了一個很貧窮的、要飯的女人。這個女人見到一尊佛像在那兒，身上的金都脫落了；這個女人就賺錢買金子，準備給佛鋪金。但是自己不會給佛貼金，所以就找一個冶金師來商量，請他給佛像貼金；那冶金師，就是當時迦葉祖師的前生。

那時候，他是個還沒有修道的冶金師。他見到這個女人這麼樣誠心，把自己所有的積蓄都拿出來買金子，要給佛裝金；於是他說：「這個功德算我們兩個人的了！你出金子，我出人工！」把這尊佛像的金裝好了。因為裝金的功德，所以他們生生世世都身有金光，這光都可以隱蔽日月光。那麼今生他出生到印度一個很富有的家庭裡，照著世間法，父親就叫他結婚，於是他也就遵命結婚了。可是結婚之後，他覺得世間事情都是變化無常、不究竟的；於是，和他太太兩個人約定了修道，同時而居，是各不相擾——就誰也不麻煩誰、誰也不巴著誰。因為兩個人修道都有點明白了，爲的了生脫死，於是就皈依佛了！

在佛教裡頭，他就修「十二頭陀行」來利益自己，自己以這個爲法則、爲規法。這「頭陀」行什麼呢？第一，就「穿糞掃衣」。這個糞掃衣，就是人家不要的布，放到垃圾桶裡了；他從垃圾堆裡撿來，把它洗乾淨，再做成衣服，這叫「糞掃衣」。

二，「但三衣」，就是身上沒

Even though he was over one hundred years old, he still practiced vigorously and fearlessly without the least bit of laxness or laziness. The Buddha took pity on him and said: "Old as you are, you may rest more." But he would not rest. Therefore, among all the Buddha's disciples, he was the foremost in ascetic practices. *Dhutanga*, a Sanskrit word, translates as "to shake off [sloth]." Striking up the spirit, one presses on with vigor and does not slack off.

Mahakashyapa is also a Sanskrit word. Translated into Chinese, it means "drinking up others' light". Why was he called "drinking up others' light"? It was because his body emitted golden light, outshining the radiance of the sun and moon. Hence, he got the name of "drinking up others' light". It's attributed to his past as a goldsmith. He met a poor woman who was a beggar. She saw that a gilded image of the Buddha was peeling, and endeavored to re-gild the image by earning some money. [After she had some money,] she still lacked the know-how for gilding. So she found a goldsmith, talked to him and requested him to help with the gilding. This goldsmith was Mahakashyapa in his past life.

In that lifetime, he was a goldsmith who had not yet cultivated the Way. Seeing that this woman was so sincere, taking out all her savings for gilding the Buddha image, he said: "We should share this merit. You contribute your gold and I my labor." They gilded the image, and that merit brought about the retribution of having bodies that emitted light life after life. That light could outshine and obscure the light of the sun and the moon. He was born into a very well-off family in India. Following the custom which he obeyed, his father arranged his marriage. But afterwards, he found that the world was ever full of impermanence. Hence his wife and he decided to cultivate the Way and not interfere with and bother each other. Since both of them cultivated, they realized that they had to end birth and death. Therefore, they took refuge with the Buddha.

Mahakashyapa cultivated the twelve *dhutangas* (ascetic practices) to benefit himself and use these as his standard for practice. What are the *dhutangas*?

1. *Wearing rag robes*, which are made from the pieces of cloth people discard in the trash can. He would pick them up from the garbage, clean them and patch them together to make a rag robe.

2. *Keeping only three robes*: He didn't have anything else but these three robes: the five-piece robe, the seven-piece robe and the host robe, the *samghati*.

3. *Going on almsrounds* for offerings.

4. *Seeking alms in sequential order*. He would take his bowl and go door to door consecutively to receive offerings. This practice limited him to go to seven households only. If there were offerings of food, he got his meal; if no offerings were made, he would not go further. This is called "seeking alms in sequential order."

5. *Eating only one meal a day*.

6. *Eating in moderation*. He ate a fixed and moderate amount of food.

有旁的東西，只有五衣、七衣和大衣——主衣，這個「僧伽梨」。

三，他也「常乞食」，常常到外邊托鉢乞食。四，又「次第乞」；他挨著門、挨著戶那麼托鉢，只限定乞七個門口。若化到齋菜，這一天就吃飯；若化不著，就不再多化了，這叫「次第乞」。五，「日中一食」；六，「節量食」；七，「過午不飲漿」；過了中午，他連水漿都不喝，一天只是日中吃一餐。

八，他常常住在「阿蘭若」；這個阿蘭若，就是「寂靜處」，常常在清淨裡頭住。九，又在「樹下宿」(樹下住)。十，又「在露宿」；露宿，就在露天的地方住。十一，又在「塚間住」，就是到墳地去修道；因為對著這一班死人，自己好能把一切都看得空了。十二，他也「脅不著席」。這樣子，他專門修行這頭陀行，抖擻精神；「頭陀」就叫「抖擻」，就是「不懶惰」，就是再老他也不服老；不會說：「我老了、我不行了！你們年輕人該去做事情了！」不這樣子。

在靈山法會上，有一次，釋迦牟尼佛就微笑著用手拿起來一支金蓮花，也沒有說什麼，就拿著花給大家看；大家默然，默然，就不知道是什麼回事？就只有迦葉尊者破顏微笑。這時候，釋迦牟尼佛就說：「我有正法眼藏，涅槃妙心；實相無相，教外別傳，不立文字。我已咐囑摩訶迦葉！」就說，我這個法門，已經傳給摩訶迦葉了！所以迦葉是西域第一代祖師。等到釋迦牟尼佛入涅槃之後，迦葉祖師就秉承佛命，結集經藏；召集五百大阿羅漢，在七葉窟那個地方，結集經、律、論三藏。

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贊曰：

佛法住世 梵行精嚴  
拈華微笑 承受心傳  
為第一祖 接引後賢  
坐待彌勒 世尊遺言

◎待續



大迦葉尊者 約11~13世紀石雕

A stone statue of Ven Mahakashyapa made around 11-13 centuries

7. *Not drinking any juice after noon;* all he had was one meal per day.

8. *Dwelling in an aranya.* He always lived in an *aranya*—a quiet reclusive place, thus maintaining the purity of mind.

9. *Dwelling under a tree.* He he lived under a tree.

10. *Dwelling in the open,* outside under the sky.

11. *Dwelling in a graveyard.* He dwelt and cultivated there. Since he had to face the diseased, he could practice seeing through the nature of

all phenomena.

12. *Always sitting and never lying down.* His ribs never touched the mat”—he always slept sitting up.

He focused on practicing the *dhutangas*. “Dhutangas” translates into English as “to strike up one’s spirit”, to shake off all sloth. Even though he was old, he never succumbed to old age, and never said, “I’m getting old. I can’t do these things anymore. You young people should be the ones doing this.” This certainly wasn’t the case here.

Once on Vulture Peak, Shakyamuni Buddha with a smile showed the Dharma assembly a golden lotus flower, and yet remained silent. All the members in the assembly were left speechless and perplexed, except Venerable Mahakashyapa, who broke into a smile. Right then, the Buddha said, “I have the Treasury of the Orthodox Dharma Eye, the Wonderful Mind of Nirvana. The reality is beyond appearances, a special transmission apart from the formal teachings, and not established on the written or spoken word! I have already given it to Mahakashyapa.” The Buddha meant he had transmitted this Dharma to Mahakashyapa, establishing him as the first Patriarch in India. After Shakyamuni Buddha entered Nirvana, Mahakashyapa followed the Buddha’s instruction to compile the Tripitaka: the Sutras, the Shastras and the Vinaya, together with the five hundred Arhats at Seven-leaf Tree Cave.

◎To be continued