

# 放下那五角錢吧！

## Forget about the 50 Cents!

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SPOKEN AND TRANSLATED BY THE ABBOT DM HENG LYU DURING THE AMITABHA CELEBRATION ON DECEMBER 23, 2007

我想跟大家分享一個故事，在過去有一對非常吝嗇的夫妻，在一個月當中，他們夫妻倆的父母都不幸往生了，所以親朋好友都建議他們，一定要為父母做些功德，最好能請些法師來家裏舉行法會，他們能隨喜參加，並且供養。由於在親友們強大的勸諫壓力下，太太就對丈夫說：「明天我打算請一些法師來家裏做法會，你覺得怎麼樣？」丈夫一聽，很緊張就說了：「不行，不行。你請法師來，我們要付車馬費，這個不能做。如果要做，我們到他們的地方去做，就省車馬費了。」

太太就說：「好吧，那我們就到附近的大廟去做法會。」丈夫說：「不行，不行。那間大廟有很多出家人，我們做法會價錢會很貴的，我們找間小廟，最好是一個人的廟，價錢會便宜一點。」

第二天，他們就到山上，終於找到一間小廟只有一個法師的，於是就跟那位法師說明來意，法師說：「可以，我可以幫你們做簡單的法事。」丈夫馬上問：「要付你多少錢？」法師說：「這是供養，隨你的意，你把供養金丟在功德箱就好了。」這時，太太緊張地說，「一塊錢，可不可以？」法師說：「隨你便，一塊錢也可以，不多也不少。」這時候，丈夫看著太太很不高興，「太太怎麼不說五角錢就夠了，這樣可省五角。」法師就說：「待會兒做法會，既然是你們的父母，要觀想他們就在旁邊，一起參加這個法會，這樣子，他們才容易得到真正的利益。」他們答應了，於是法師就開始念《阿彌陀經》，念佛。但是這個丈夫總是想到，「剛剛講錯話了，應該講五角就好了。」

法會結束後，法師就說：「我們現在開始迴向功德，以此功德迴向給法界有情眾生。」這時，丈夫馬上跳起來說：「不行，不行，你有沒有說錯？」

I'd like to share a story with all of you now. In the past, there was a very stingy couple. Unfortunately, within a month, the parents of both the husband and the wife passed away. Their relatives and friends suggested that they invite Dharma Masters to their house to do some ceremonies, so they could practice and also make offerings to the Triple Jewel. Under such strong pressure, the wife told her husband, "Tomorrow I am going to invite some Dharma Masters to our house to do some ceremonies." The husband was worried and said, "If we invite them to our house, we have to pay the transportation fee. It's not very economical; let's go to their place to do the ceremonies."

The wife said, "Alright, then tomorrow, we'll go to the monastery nearby and do the ceremonies there." The husband said, "No, no, let's not do that. You know that there are many monks in that monastery; we'll have to pay a lot for these ceremonies. Let's find a small temple, where there is just one monk living there, so it will be cheaper." That's what they did.

The next day, they went to a mountain and found a small temple. They told that monk what they wanted. The monk said, "Alright, since your parents passed away, I can do a ceremony for you." The husband immediately asked, "How much should we pay you?" The master said, "Whatever you wish. Just put whatever amount you want in the donation box." The wife quickly said, "How about just one dollar?" The monk said, "Okay, as you wish." But the husband was very unhappy and told his wife, "Why didn't you say 50 cents?" The monk said, "When we do the ceremony, since they are your parents, it will be easy for you to contemplate that they are here beside you, so they can benefit from this Dharma assembly. Can you do that?" "Yes, we can." Then they followed the Dharma Master to recite the *Amitabha Sutra* and Amitabha Buddha's holy name. However, the husband could not forget

我請你來給我父母做的，不是給其他人做的。」法師說：「你把功德給大家，才更有功德。」丈夫說：「沒有，沒有，大家都分的話，那我的父母只能分得更少了。怎麼大家都會一樣呢？」法師跟他解釋說：「這是跟點燈一樣，一燈點萬燈，原來的燈光亮不會減少。」丈夫就是不相信，說：「不行，不行，我還是覺得迴向給我父母就好了。」那個法師說，「不行，不行，一定要迴向給有情眾生。」最後丈夫說：「好吧，迴向給有情眾生可以，但是我隔壁鄰居，不要迴向給他們，因為他們偷我的水果，還不承認！」法師不理他，還是繼續念，「願以此功德迴向給一切世間法界有情。」

這個丈夫就對他太太說：「拿來，拿五角過來，這是我們的父母，你父母也有在內，所以，我們要一人一半。我出五角，你出五角。」太太就付了五角給丈夫。丈夫就拿著這一元錢——兩個五角到功德箱去，但是並沒有把兩個五角都丟下去，他只丟了一個五角，而他自己的那個五角錢，還留在手裏，做他的私房錢了，這是很多丈夫的秘密，不能讓太太知道的。

接著他們就回家了。第二天一早，他們兩個還在床上，突然有人敲門，太太就去應門。一看，昨天做法會的那位法師在門口，就對法師說：「您有什麼事那麼早就來了？」法師說：「我要見見你的丈夫。」那太太說：「法師請等一下，我進去通報一聲。」他丈夫還在睡眼朦朧中，太太說：「昨天那位法師來啦，要找你。」丈夫馬上嚇醒了，是不是向我要那五角？五角錢我還沒給，馬上說：「跟他講，說我丈夫正在生病，沒法見他，請下次再來。」太太很奇怪，丈夫怎麼這麼怕這位法師？就去對法師說：「法師，對不起，我家丈夫身體不舒服，沒辦法見您，麻煩您下次再來啦！」法師說：「他身體不好，身體不好，我要見他，我幫他念經，幫他消災祈福。」太太說：「那請等一下，我再跟他講一聲。」她就跟丈夫說：「法師聽到你生病，一定要進來跟你消災祈福，怎麼辦啦？」丈夫說：「你跟他講，我死啦！死了，還有什麼好消災祈福的！這樣跟他講就好了，你叫他趕快走。」太太很奇怪，這麼怕這位法師幹什麼。就去對法師如此講。法師說：「死啦，死啦，我更要去跟他超度，這個機會怎能放棄呢？」不管太太怎樣，就跑

about the 50 cents.

After they finished the ceremonies, the Dharma Master started to do the transference of merit. He said, "May the merit and virtue from this Dharma assembly be dedicated to all living beings." The husband immediately jumped up and said, "What did you say? I asked you to do it just for my parents, not for everyone. If everyone has a share, how much can my parents get?" The Dharma Master explained, "No, that's now how it works. It is just as how the flame from one lamp can light up a thousand lamps, but the original lamp is still bright." The husband said, "No, I cannot do that." The Dharma Master said, "This is the tradition; we have to do this." They argued until finally, the husband said, "Okay, go ahead, but I can't really put my heart in it; I have to exclude my neighbor, who steals my fruits and never admits it." They finished the transference of merit anyway.

The husband told his wife, "Give me 50 cents. Since it is for both of our parents, you pay half and I'll pay half." The wife gave her husband 50 cents. He took it to the donation box, but he did not donate two 50 cents. He just donated one 50 cents and saved his own 50 cents for himself. It was a secret that he kept from his wife. Both of them went home.

The next day, early in the morning, both of them were in bed, still in a deep sleep, when someone knocked on the door. The wife answered the door; it was the Dharma Master who had done the ceremony for them the day before. She said, "Venerable One, what can I do for you?" The monk said, "I want to see your husband." The wife said, "Yes, Venerable One, please wait as I go and tell him." The husband was still in the bed. When he heard that the monk was there, he woke up right away and said, "Tell him I got sick and cannot see him. Tell him to come back next time." The wife thought it very strange that her husband was afraid of the monk, but she dutifully told him, "I'm sorry, but my husband is sick now and unable to see you. Could you come again next time?" The monk said, "Oh, since he is sick, I will do a ceremony for him so he can quickly recover. Please let me go in." The wife said, "Hold on, let me tell him again." She went into the house and said, "The master insists on seeing you and doing a ceremony for your quick recovery." The husband said, "Oh, tell him I passed away suddenly and there is no need for a quick recovery." The wife told the monk, and the monk said, "He passed away? Then I certainly have to do a ceremony for him and transfer the merit so that he can be reborn in the Pure Land. Let me go in." Then he went into the house directly.

When the husband heard that the monk was on his way,

進去了。

這個丈夫突然聽到法師強行進來，很緊張，趕快把被單蓋在自己的臉上裝死。法師進來就拿起木魚，開始念《佛說阿彌陀經》，「如是我聞，一時，佛在舍衛國祇樹給孤獨園……歡喜信受，作禮而去」，接著念「南無阿彌陀佛」。念了兩個小時，那太太也跟著念，兩個小時後，太太不得不說：「法師，夠了吧！已經兩個小時了。」法師說：「不夠，要八個小時才算。要等他的神識離開了，我才能走。」這個丈夫早晨起來，廁所都還沒上，被單蓋了兩個小時，在裏面呼吸不順暢，汗都流出來了，還得裝死。心想：「還有六個小時，我真的是受不了了！」這時候，他真的開始念阿彌陀佛了，「阿彌陀佛！快點救救我。阿彌陀佛……」他真的很誠心地開始念阿彌陀佛。

念了一段時間，噫！外面怎麼沒有聲音了，他突然發現一片光明，心裏想，「怎麼會這個樣子？這個被子蓋在臉上，應是一片漆黑的，怎麼會現出一片光明？是不是我家著火了？他們兩個跑掉了。留我一個人在這裏！」趕快把被單拿下一看，他看到什麼了？

他看到阿彌陀佛就在眼前，他太太誠心地跪拜在那裏念阿彌陀佛。阿彌陀佛轉過來對他說：「你這麼誠心地來念我，我現在就帶你到西方極樂淨土去。」這誠心感動佛了！我們念佛，怎麼沒有見到佛呢？因念佛沒有像他這麼誠心。你知道那個丈夫怎麼說？他說：「好，我跟你走。」還是說：「請等一下，讓我去上一下廁所。」結果他說：「阿彌陀佛，請你不要跟我要那另外五角錢就好了。」

你會覺得很好笑。其實我們大部分時間，就像這個丈夫一樣，也執著我們的五角錢，什麼是我們的五角錢呢？我的妻子、我的丈夫、我的孩子、我的車子、我的房子、我的名譽、我的銀行存款、我的升遷、我的老板、或者我討厭的人，都是我們的五角錢，因為我們都放不下，所以，就留在這個娑婆世界。

為什麼放不下這些東西，主要是因為我們沒有很強的願力，所謂「信願行」。我們都沒有願求生，我們都願這些房子、孩子、妻子、男朋友、女朋友、工作等這些事情順利，所以將來我們就再來這個娑婆世界。

自滿益大師《阿彌陀經要解》說「得生與否，

he was very nervous and quickly covered his head with the bedsheet and pretended to be dead. After the monk came, he compassionately took out his wooden fish and started to recite the *Amitabha Sutra*, “Thus I have heard, At one time the Buddha dwelt at Shravasti, in the Jeta Grove...” After he finished, he started to recite Amitabha Buddha’s holy name for one hour, then two hours. The wife had to follow along because her husband had passed away, and she had to do the same thing. After two hours, she felt very tired, and said, “Master, two hours of recitation is enough. You are very compassionate and may leave now.” The monk said, “No, no, I have to recite for at least eight hours to make sure his consciousness completely leaves.”

The husband under the bedsheet heard that they would continue reciting for another six hours. He thought, “Amitabha Buddha, I am sweating and haven’t gone to the restroom, and I have to suffer for another six hours. I am going to die!” He sincerely started to recite Amitabha’s name, “Save me, Amitabha Buddha, quickly!”

After a while, he suddenly found that there was no sound of recitation anymore and saw a light in front of him. Because his face was covered by the bedsheet, it was dark there. He thought, “What’s happening? Did my house catch on fire? Did those two run away and leave me here?” He was so nervous that he got out from under the bedsheet. What did he see?

He saw Amitabha Buddha right in front of him, and his wife kneeling down before Amitabha Buddha, reciting. Amitabha Buddha turned around and said to him, “Since you are so sincerely reciting my name, I am going to bring you to my Western Pure Land.” You see! That is why he saw Amitabha Buddha and we don’t see him. It’s because we do not recite Amitabha’s name as sincerely as he did. However, guess what he said! Did he say, “Okay, I’m ready to go with you,” or, “Wait, let me go to the toilet first, then I’ll go with you”? No, he told Amitabha Buddha, “Amitabha, be compassionate, please do not ask me for another 50 cents!”

Maybe you think this is a joke. However, most of the time we are just like the husband, who was attached to his 50 cents. That’s why we linger in the Saha world. What is our 50 cents? It is our husband, our children, our cars, our house, our reputation, our deposit, our promotion, our boss, etc. All these things are our 50 cents, and we cannot put them down. The point is that we don’t have a strong vow, a wish to attain rebirth in the Pure Land.

There is a famous saying from Great Master Ou Yi’s commentary on the *Amitabha Sutra* that says: “Whether we

全由於信願之有無。」信願有，才能够往生。往生後的品位高低，在於你念佛定力的高下、深淺。如果沒有這個願力，只是有很強的定力，你還是在這個娑婆世界。所以我們在做任何的善行，都不要忘記把這功德迴向求生極樂世界——願一切眾生，都往生極樂世界。

所謂善行，並不只是說念佛才迴向，還是參加法會，才可以迴向。其實我們做的任何一點小事，就像今天來到萬佛聖城，來擁護道場，這就是一個善行，這些都可以迴向的。或者我今天掃掃地，掃掃葉子，幫助廚房，今天幫大家來做烹飪，這些都是善行，我們都可以迴向。善行簡單地說，就是解除自己或別人的痛苦，這是善行，這就有功德了。那這功德，我們不要迴向給我們的公司發展很好，或者是自己長命百歲；要迴向給一切眾生，都往生極樂世界。

除了要做善事，我們不要做惡，所謂諸惡莫作。什麼是惡、不好的呢？不好的事，簡單地講，就是讓自己或別人痛苦的事，這種事，就叫惡事，我們就不要做。這種損人利己，或者傷害自己的不好事情，我們不要去做，這屬於惡的事。所謂惡的要止；善的要做。

把功德迴向給一切的法界眾生，不能夠像這位丈夫一樣，說「唉，我不迴向給我的討厭的冤親債主，或者我討厭的人。」要知道我們的敵人，或我們討厭的事物，我們更要迴向給他們，希望他們能夠往生極樂世界。或許你會說，「我了解了，是不是要他們早點死？早點往生？」不是這樣子的，我們希望他們有善因緣能夠往生極樂世界。「那我們到極樂世界不是又見面了嗎？」那時候再見面不一樣了，那時因緣改了，大家都是好朋友，不會有那麼多的冤憎會苦。

所以簡單來講，諸惡莫作，眾善奉行。將這些功德迴向給法界眾生，同生極樂淨土，就是自淨其意。這是佛教的基本道理，也是三歲小兒都知道，七十老翁做不得的道理。我們既然了解這個道理，盡力去做，我們將來一定會得到往生極樂世界這個果報的。

attain rebirth in the Pure Land depends on our faith and vow, and the grade of our rebirth in the Western Pure Land depends on our concentration in reciting the Buddha's name." If you don't have a strong vow to attain rebirth in the Pure Land, it doesn't matter how much concentration you have, you remain stuck in this Saha world. So that is very important when we do good deeds, we transfer the merit from those good deeds to attaining rebirth in the Pure Land with all living beings together.

What is a good deed? A good deed involves helping others and yourself to leave suffering. For example, today when you come here to support the monastery and to recite Buddha's name, you help yourself and others to leave suffering. Therefore, you have great merit and virtue. Not only should you chant the Buddha's name and attend the Dharma assembly, you could also sweep the streets, rake the leaves, or help in the kitchen. If you do this, you have done a good deed, and you accrue merit. You can transfer the merit to all living beings, wishing them to attain rebirth in the Pure Land. It is not just for a personal benefit, like a promotion, a house, a job, or something else. In this way, you help living beings. However, you have to stop doing evil before you can do good deeds. What is evil? Evil is doing something that causes ourselves and others suffering or trouble. If we stop doing evil and practice good deeds and transfer the merit from these good deeds to all living beings, we can attain rebirth in the Pure Land. This is also to purify our own minds. Don't be like the husband, who excluded his enemies from his transference. The best way to get rid of our enemies is to transfer merit on behalf of them. This doesn't mean we hope they can die quickly; no, it means we hope they have good conditions to attain rebirth in the Pure Land. You may say, "Then we will meet again in the Pure Land." Yes, however, at that time, we will have good affinities, and we will be good friends instead of enemies. So that is the basic principle of Buddhism. Stop doing evil and practice good deeds and purify our minds. It is really an easy principle, a principle that even a three-year-old can know, but that a seventy-year-old elder fails to practice. Now, since we understand this principle, we should try our best to practice it, and then we will attain the fruition of being reborn in the Pure Land.