

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

水鏡回天錄白話解

清世祖

Qing Shi Zu

宣公上人講於1987年9月2日

Commentary by the Venerable Master Hua on September 2, 1987

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姓愛新覺羅，譯為金部族。名福臨，六歲入關稱帝，年號順治。吳三桂向清借兵，攻打李自成，其叔多爾袞率兵佔領北京，大明亡矣。順治二十四歲時，乃對玉琳國師言：「朕思釋迦如來，捨王室而成正覺；達摩初祖棄王位而成祖師，朕欲效之。」故在讚僧詩中云：「脫卻龍袍換袈裟，只恨當初一念差，我本西方一衲子，為何流落帝王家？」在位十八年而失蹤。據說於五臺山出家，史無記載。其子康熙帝，三訪五臺，遇其父，假名八乂和尚，而不識，惜哉！所謂「出家者乃大丈夫事，非將相所能為也。」

今天我們共同研究清朝第一個皇帝，所以叫清世祖——順治皇帝，他開始做皇帝時還是個小孩子。清朝一開始是個小孩做皇帝，結束時也是個小孩子做皇帝；小孩子登基上臺，小孩子失去天子地位下臺，這可以說是因果相對。

Essay:

His last name was Aisin Gioro. Translated, it means “the gold clan.” His name was Fulin. He was proclaimed emperor at the age of six after crossing through the [Shanhai] Pass. His royal title was Shunzhi. Wu Sangui borrowed the Manchu troops and fought against Li Zicheng. His uncle Dorgon led the troops and seized Beijing. The Great Ming Dynasty then perished. When Shunzhi was twenty-four years old, he said to National Master Yulin, “I have determined that since Shakyamuni Tathagata renounced his royal court and realized Proper Enlightenment, and the First Patriarch Bodhidharma also gave up his throne and became a patriarch, I want to do the same.” Hence in his poem of praising the Sangha, he said: “Take off the imperial robe in exchange for a kashaya. I only regret a single erroneous thought in the past. As I was originally an itinerant monk from the West, how did I end up being born into the imperial family?” He was on the throne for eighteen years before he disappeared. It was said that he left the home life on Wu Tai Mountain. However, it was not recorded in history. His son Emperor Kangxi visited Wutai Mountain three times. He met his father who faked his name as Ba Ca, but he failed to recognize him. How pitiful! It is said: “Leaving the home life is the feat of a great hero of which even generals and ministers are incapable.”

Commentary:

Today we will investigate together the first emperor of the Qing Dynasty. That's why he was called Qing Shi Zu – Emperor Shunzhi. When he first be-

順治皇帝姓愛新覺羅，翻譯為金部族，又姓肇，名字叫福臨，六歲的時候入關（山海關），進北京做皇帝；這時候他什麼事情都不懂，都要聽攝政王多爾袞的指揮。為什麼他能做皇帝呢？因為明朝末帝崇禎的時候，遍地都是土匪，到處都有人稱王稱霸，尤其是李自成、張獻忠，他們的勢力都是很強的；其中最有力量的就是李自成那支軍隊，他先佔領了北京。

本來李自成這支軍隊是很好的，裏邊有一些有智慧的謀士，武將也很多，所以就將明朝的天下搶了過來；到了北京，李闖王（李自成）就在那兒做皇帝。可是他有福不會享，因為做土匪頭做慣了，一旦做皇帝他也不會做，一得到天下，也不想法子治理天下，就專門想吃的，專門要吃好的，荒淫無道，無所不為。本來中國人都是過年才吃好東西，平時不吃好的；那麼他這回可做皇帝了，他要天天過年！本來他可以坐十八年天下，可是他一天過一個年，十八年縮短成十八天。他在北京做了十八天皇帝，吳三桂就為了一個愛妾，做了賣國賊，去向滿清借兵來打他。這時順治的叔叔多爾袞就率兵進關，可是這借來的兵到了中國，就把中國佔領，不走了。順治就在北京做皇帝，一做做了十八年。

在這十八年之中，大部分的時間他是個小孩子，不懂事情，就做傀儡；懂事情以後，再叫他做傀儡，就覺得不太滿意了。於是就研究佛教；一研究佛教，覺得出家是不錯的。當時有個玉琳國師，是個得道的高僧，在二十四歲那年，他就對玉琳國師說：「釋迦牟尼佛捨棄王位而成佛；達摩祖師也不要王位，而修成祖師。我要效法釋迦牟尼佛和達摩祖師。」所以他在讚僧詩上說得很好，他說：

脫卻龍袍換袈裟，
只恨當初一念差；
我本西方一衲子，
為何流落帝王家？

待續

came an emperor, he was still a young child. This was at the beginning of the Qing Dynasty. When the dynasty ended, the last emperor was also a young child. You can say this is relativity in cause and effect.

Emperor Shunzhi's last name was Aisin Gioro. This translates as "the gold clan." His other last name was Zhao. His name was Fulin. When he was six years old, he crossed through the Pass (Shanghai Pass) into Beijing and became the emperor. At that time, he was too young to understand anything, so he had to follow the orders of his uncle, Prince Regent Dorgon.

How did Shunzhi become emperor? It's a long story. During the reign of the last emperor Chong Zhen of the Ming Dynasty, there were bandits swarming all over the empire. Everywhere there were self-proclaimed lords. Both Li Zicheng and Zhang Xianzhong were very powerful and influential. Between the two of them, Li Zicheng had the stronger military force. He was the first to seize Beijing.

In the beginning, Li Zicheng's military troops were excellent. He had wise strategists and a large number of generals. So he easily snatched land from the Ming Dynasty. When his troops arrived in Beijing, Li Zicheng proclaimed himself emperor. However, he couldn't simply appreciate his good fortune. He was accustomed to being a bandit, and once on the throne he did not know how to conduct himself like an emperor. He had won the land, but he had not thought out how to govern it. He especially liked fine food and other debauchery; there was nothing he would not do. Basically, the Chinese only eat fine food during the New Year. On other days, they eat regular meals. When Li became emperor, he wanted to live every day like it was the New Year! He could have stayed on the throne for eighteen years. Since he spent every day like it was the New Year, the eighteen years were shortened to eighteen days. He was the emperor in Beijing for only eighteen days. Wu Sangui betrayed him over an incident involving a concubine. He borrowed troops from the Manchus to fight Li. At that time, Dorgon, Shunzhi's uncle, led the Manchu soldiers through the Pass. When the borrowed troops reached China, they did not want to return. They just seized China. Shunzhi then became the emperor in Beijing for eighteen years.

He was only a young man with insufficient understanding during those eighteen years, and he was used as a puppet. When he grew older and came to understand more, he was not content to be used so. So he started to study Buddhism. Over the course of his studies, it struck him that renouncing the home life wasn't a bad idea. At that time, the National Master Yulin was an eminent Sanghan certified to the Way. When Shunzhi was twenty-four years old, he said to National Master Yulin, "Shakyamuni Buddha renounced his throne and realized Buddhahood. Patriarch Bodhidharma didn't want his throne either. He cultivated successfully and became a patriarch. I want to imitate Shakyamuni Buddha and Patriarch Bodhidharma." In his poem praising the Sangha, he said it well:

I take off the imperial robe in exchange for a kashaya,
I only regret a single erroneous thought in the past.
As I was originally an itinerant monk from the West,
How did I end up being born into the imperial family?

To be continued