

地藏菩薩本願經淺釋

THE SUTRA OF THE PAST VOWS OF
EARTH STORE BODHISATTVA
WITH COMMENTARY

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什麼叫眾生的機宜呢？眾生就好像草木一樣，草木種在地上，這所有地上的一切草木，就等於機。用草木來比方我們眾生，下雨時，地上所有的花草樹木各得其長，大樹就得到多一點的滋潤；各得其潤，很平等的。這也就是說，經好像雨水似的，下到一切的草木、萬物上，這就叫契機。

下契眾生之機，怎麼契呢？就是你應得多少，就得多少。好像我現在講這部經，誰都可以得到智慧，有智慧的，更增加一點智慧；而愚癡的人，也增加一點智慧。各得其長，各人得到各人的好處。若是沒有善根的人呢？就不接受這種的法雨，而得不到好處。所以這是各得其益，以上都是經的意思，要是往廣的來說，那是很多的，我們只能大概說一說。

地藏王菩薩生生世世都很孝順父母，所以這一部《地藏經》就是佛教的孝經。孝是人的根本，人如果不孝順父母，在一生中就未能盡到做人的責任，為什麼呢？父母生我、養我，如果長大不知道報恩，這就是對於做人的義務沒盡到。

孔子一直提倡孝道，因此有一部《孝經》。《孝經》上說：「仲尼居，曾子侍。子曰：『參，先王有至德要道，以順天下，民用和睦，上下無怨。汝知之乎？』」

What are sentient beings' potentials and propensities? Sentient beings can be likened to various kinds of vegetation, like grass, trees, and medicinal herbs. Comparing plants to sentient beings, when it rains and as the rainwater falls to the earth, all the flowers, grass, shrubs and trees receive what they need. Big trees absorb more moisture; small shrubs take in less moisture. Each receives the moisture it needs. It's very fair. That's how it is in tallying with beings' potential.

They tally in the sense that you will receive however much you are ready for. For instance, as I am lecturing on the sutra, those among you who are wise will add to your wisdom, and the dim ones will also add to their wisdom, but the wise ones will be able to take in a bit more. Each person will receive his or her own share of benefit. Those lacking good roots reject the Dharma-rain and receive no benefit from it. Therefore, it works to each one's own benefit. "Sutra" has all those meanings, plus many more if we were going to cover more of them. That was just an overview.

In life after life, Earth Store Bodhisattva remained filial to his parents, and therefore the *Earth Store Sutra* is a Buddhist scripture on filial piety. Filial regard is the root and foundation of humanity. If one fails to be filial to one's parents, one is remiss in the responsibilities of being human. Why? Our parents gave birth to us and raised us. Now that we have grown up, if we neglect to repay their kindness, we have not lived up to our obligations as human beings.

All through his life, Confucius advocated filial regard and from that came the *Classic on Filial Regard*. Here is a passage from that text: When Confucius was at his abode and his disciple Zeng Zi was in attendance on him, the Master said, "Shen, the ancient king had an essential principle that brought ultimate virtue, that accorded with the world, that kept harmony among the populace, and that avoided resentment between

曾子避席曰：『參不敏，何足以知之？』子曰：『夫孝，德之本也，教之所由生也。復坐，吾語汝。身體髮膚，受之父母，不敢毀傷，孝之始也；立身行道，揚名於後世，以顯父母，孝之終也。夫孝，始於事親，中於事君，終於立身。』」

這是孔子和曾子有關孝道的一段對話。「仲尼居」，仲尼在杏壇裏居住。「曾子侍」，曾子在那兒侍候著孔子。因為那時候曾子是孔子的學生，學生要侍候老師。孔子講孝道，我們不但要孝順父母，也要孝順師長。有的時候，孔子要喝茶，曾子就去斟杯茶來；孔子想做什麼，曾子就侍候他。孔子就說：「先王」，中國的古聖先王。「有至德」，至是到極點了，最大的德行到極點了。「要道」，最重要的一個道理。「以順天下，民用和睦」，老百姓用這個道理，就和睦不爭了。「汝知之乎」，你知道不知道啊？

「曾子避席」，曾子就站起來；避席，就是站起來。「曰：參不敏，何足以知之？」不敏，就是不聰明。說：唉呀！我曾參哪！很愚癡的。我怎麼會知道呢？我不知道啊！「子曰：身體髮膚，受之父母」。孔子說，這個身體髮膚——頭髮、皮膚，是從父母那兒得來的。「不敢毀傷」，你不要隨隨便便就把它損壞了。「孝之始也」，這樣是孝的開始。

可是啊！美國一般人誤解孝道，怎麼叫誤解孝道呢？說是中國那個孔老夫子說過：「身體髮膚，受之父母，不敢毀傷，孝之始也。」所以就出了一班嬉皮，頭髮也不剃，臉也不洗。洗臉他說是傷了皮膚；剃頭剪髮，他說傷了頭髮。這是一種錯誤的思想！不敢毀傷，不是說你一剪去，這就毀傷了；不是說你洗洗臉，這就傷了皮膚了。這意思是叫你不要把它破壞了。剪髮，這是一種時代的習尚，應該隨著時代，把頭髮剪了。

現在有些嬉皮就想轉移時代，他說孔子講的「身體髮膚，受之父母，不敢毀傷，孝之始也。」你說怎麼樣？他去吸鴉片煙，食「馬爾娃那」（大麻），他說這些都不毀傷身體。

這東西把身體的細胞弄死了不知多少，

those above and those below. Do you know what it was?” Zeng Zi rose from his seat, and said, “Shen is not clever. How could I know this?” The Master said: “Filial regard is the root of virtue and the source from which all teaching comes. Sit down and I will talk to you about it. Our physical body -- its structure, hair, and skin were given us by our parents. The first principle of filial regard is that we should never harm ourselves. By establishing our person and practicing this way, we leave a reputation for future generations to know. The final principle of filial regard is to glorify our parents. Filial regard begins with service to our parents, matures into service to our ruler, and culminates in the formation of our character.”

In this passage, Confucius and Zeng Zi have a discussion about filial regard. “When Confucius was at his abode and his disciple Zeng Zi was in attendance on him.” Zeng Zi was caring for his master because at that time he was one of Confucius’ students, and students were expected to serve the teacher. Confucius taught that not only should we be filial to our parents, we should have filial regard for our teachers and elders. And so sometimes he would want a cup of tea and Zeng Zi would prepare it. Whatever Confucius needed, Zeng Zi was there to serve him.

“The Master said, ‘Shen, the ancient king -- the sage kings in olden China -- had an essential principle that brought ultimate virtue, that accorded with the world, that kept harmony among the populace, and that avoided resentment between those above and those below. Do you know what it was?’”

“Zeng Zi rose from his seat and said, ‘Shen is not clever. How could I know this?’” He said, I, Zeng Zi am really dull-witted’ -- not clever -- meaning, not intelligent. ‘How could I know this principle? I don’t know about it.’ “The Master said, ‘Our physical body -- its structure, hair, and skin were given us by our parents.’” Confucius said that because this body of ours -- its frame, its hair, its skin -- came from our parents, ‘the first principle of filial regard is that we should never harm ourselves.’ We must not recklessly injure ourselves -- that is where filial regard begins.

However, there are those in the United States who misunderstand filial regard. In what way do they do it? They quote these lines from Confucius: *Our physical body -- its structure, hair, and skin were given us by our parents. The first principle of filial regard is that we should never harm ourselves.* Hippies use this as reason not to cut their hair or wash their faces. They say washing their faces would harm their skin, and cutting their hair would harm their hair. That thinking is wide of the mark. They argue they will harm their hair, but cutting the hair does not harm it. And washing their faces certainly will not harm their skin. Confucius’ meaning is that you do not destroy anything. When it’s the custom to cut one’s hair, then one should follow the custom.

Today’s hippies want to turn the times around. Guess what some of them do who quote these lines from Confucius: *Our physical body -- its structure, hair, and skin were given to us by our parents. The first principle of filial regard is that we should never harm ourselves.* Some smoke opium and marijuana, contending that they do not harm their bodies.

These things kill who-knows-how-many body cells and ruin physical

把身體搞得也不健康了，這根本就是毀壞身體！而他不說是毀壞，反而說是孝道。這樣的人把父親、母親撇到九霄雲外、十萬八千里遠。問他：「你父親是誰？母親姓什麼？」他甚至都忘了，而他還說這是行中國的孝道。這完全是錯誤，這種思想完全要糾正。你說你髮不剃，卻把身體搞得一天到晚胡作非為的，甚至於去打劫，去作一些不好的事情。你說這會跑到什麼地方去？將來要是被一槍打死了，這才真是不孝。

如果犯法打劫，或者把警察槍殺，或者警察把他槍殺，這是不是「不敢毀傷，孝之始也」呢？這是錯誤的。所以我希望在這個國家，人人都循規蹈矩，都守法，把這種不好的習慣改正過來，不要生一種怨恨心。我們人要慎行身心，在任何地方都要對人有益處，對於國家世界也要有益處，不要對世界有所害，這是我的希望。

如果人人都這樣子，不願意做工，也不願意從事生產，這國家一定會不好。所以我們每一個人現在學佛法，人人都應該去做工，來幫助世界，幫助人類，以身作則，自己做個模範，來影響整個社會，令人心都變成好的，這是我們佛教徒的責任。

在美國，本來許多制度都非常好，尤其在教育方面。美國的教育這樣普及，這樣鼎盛，比其他國家的教育都辦得好，所以能做世界的一種榜樣。如果每一個人再知道孝順父母，能以所謂：君子務本，本立而道生，孝悌也者，其為仁之本與？君子你要找到這根本，根本若能立得住，道就生出來了。

什麼叫「根本」呢？孝順父母，悌敬兄長。對兄長要和氣、不能打架，這叫弟（悌）。孝悌這兩個字，是每一個人的根本。若人人能找到根本，人人都知道孝順父母，那麼，美國這個國家就一定更好。

因為孝順父母的人，就不會去做種種非法的事。而你若能守法，就是國家一個良好的公民；整個國家的人，都變成良好的公民，這也可以說是做整個世界的好公民；因此可以說，你引導整個世界的人類都向好的路上走。

☯待續

health -- bringing fundamental harm to the body. But they do not admit that drugs are destructive. Instead they say they are practicing filial regard. In fact, filial regard is the furthest thing from their minds. If asked, "Who are your parents? What is your mother's name?" they may have even forgotten, yet they profess to practice the filial regard of China. This erroneous thinking needs to be completely corrected. From refusing to cut their hair to engaging in shady dealings -- even robberies and other vices -- where do you suppose they will end up? If one day, they should be gunned down, that would truly be unfilial.

Once they become involved in illegal dealings or robberies, they will either end up killing policemen or being killed by the police. Now, is it that "the first principle of filial regard is that we should never harm ourselves"? No, that's a mistake. It is my hope that in America, this country I reside in, that the citizens will follow the rules and abide by the law. I hope they will rectify the bad habits they may have. Do not give in to hatred and resentment. We need to be careful with our thoughts and actions. Wherever we are, we should be of benefit to the local people, to that country and to the world. Do not be a menace to the world. This is my wish.

If everyone were to behave the other way -- rejecting work and refusing to be productive -- this country would definitely go downhill. Therefore, we Buddhists should all take up jobs and, by working at our jobs, help the world and humankind. By setting good examples ourselves, we influence society so that human minds as a whole will change for the better. That is the responsibilities of Buddhists.

The United States has a great legal system and many fine institutions, especially the educational system, which has made education widely available and excellent. It serves as an exemplar for the world. If everyone also learns to be filial to his or her parents, then this saying can apply to them: *A superior person tends to the basis, for when the basis is established, the Way comes forth; are not filial and fraternal regard the basis of humaneness?*

The basis refers to being filial to our parents and respecting our elder siblings. Fraternal regard means we must be harmonious in our sibling relationships and not quarrel. Filial and fraternal regard are the basis for each of us. If everyone can discover that basis, if everyone knows how to be filial to his or her father and mother, then America will become an even better country.

People who are filial to their parents steer clear of the various illegal dealings and abide by the law, making them good citizens of the country. When all the people of the country have become good citizens, they can serve as good citizens of the entire world. They will lead humanity, as a whole, well onto the right track.

☯To be continued