

## Just as the Karma of Living Beings Is Boundless, The Vows of Earth Store Bodhisattva Are Inexhaustible



師父來到西方國家時，就把四大菩薩所長駐的中國四大名山規劃在法總的道場。萬佛聖城是以觀世音菩薩為主，地藏王菩薩為副。所以來到萬佛城的人，不但可以學習觀世音菩薩的大慈大悲，同時也要效法地藏王菩薩難行能行的大願大力。

現在講法臺上就有十尊地藏菩薩像，就好比地藏菩薩的化身是遍及十法界，又好比他證得的是十地的果位，妙覺的佛位。雖然法身遍及十法界，地藏王菩薩是「偏向受苦眾生。永作幽冥教主。」他發願到惡業最重、最苦、最沒有眾生願意去的地方，他的悲願就是大家耳熟能詳的「地獄不空，誓不成佛」。

《地藏菩薩本願經》是佛在成佛後，為報母親摩耶夫人之生恩，而到忉利天宮為母說這部佛教的孝經。《地藏菩薩本願經》強調兩種的力量，一是業力，一是願力。地藏菩薩自云「我亦百千方便。度脫是人等。」眾生有無量無邊的業力，而地藏菩薩願力更是無窮無盡。

所有的大菩薩在過去都有發過特別的願。經中的第一品，佛要文殊師利菩薩觀察：上從諸佛如來，下至六道眾生，聚集在忉利天宮的人有多少？文殊菩薩回答說：即使以我的神力，千劫測度，也無法知道。文殊菩薩是菩薩眾裡面智慧第一，也是過去七尊佛的老師，現在學生都成佛了，他還在作菩薩。這一位

## 業力無邊 願力無盡

比丘尼恆教 講於2010年9月7日萬佛城大殿  
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When the Venerable Master arrived in North America, he established for DRBA the western equivalent to China's four most recognized, Buddhist sacred locations of China. He invited the four great Bodhisattvas who dwell in those four sacred locations, to come to the west to preside over them. Guanyin Bodhisattva is the primary host of the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas (CTTB); Earth Store Bodhisattva is its secondary host. Therefore people who come to CTTB may not only learn about Guanyin Bodhisattva's great compassion but also may imitate Earth Store Bodhisattva's great and mighty vow, which practices no matter how difficult it is.

Now you can see ten Earth Store Bodhisattva images on the platform. These ten Earth Store Bodhisattva images can represent Earth Store Bodhisattva's ten Dharma bodies dwelling in ten Dharma realms. These images can also represent his realizations of the Ten Grounds as well as wonderful enlightenment. Although his body appears in the ten Dharma realms, he especially sympathizes with living beings who are suffering. And so his vow is to be the teaching host of the realm of darkness. He vowed to enter the hells where living beings who committed the heaviest offenses and who suffer the most reside and where living beings are the least willing to go. His vow is full of compassion and also familiar to most of us. He vowed, "If the hells are not empty, I vow not to become a Buddha."

After Shakyamuni Buddha attained Buddhahood, he wanted to repay the kindness of his mother, Lady Maya, for giving birth to him. He went to Tushita Heaven to speak the *Earth Store Sutra* to his mother. This sutra is the sutra of filial respect among Buddhist texts. It emphasizes two major types of power; one is the power of karma and the other is the power of vows. In the sutra text, Earth Store Bodhisattva says, "I also will find thousands of expedient ways to save such living beings." Just as the karma of living beings is limitless and boundless, the vows of Earth Store Bodhisattva are endless and inexhaustible.

All the great bodhisattvas made their unique vows in the past. In the first chapter of the *Earth Store Sutra*, Shakyamuni Buddha asked Manjushri to observe how many living beings from the Buddhas above to the six paths below, have come to Tushita Heaven to listen to the Dharma. Manjushri

菩薩的願力與地藏菩薩很相應。文殊師利菩薩的學生沒有完全成佛，他也不成佛。地藏菩薩的願力更是要教化六道眾生，特別是地獄道的眾生，如一眾生不成佛，他自己也不願成佛。

地藏王菩薩在因地做婆羅門女及光目女時為救度母親，而為母發心，救度六道；就其所發的孝心，而迴小向大，修行菩薩道。更發廣大誓願，就如《梵網經》所提到，「一切男子是我父，一切女人是我母，我生生無不從之受生，故六道眾生皆是我父母。」

他以四弘誓願作依歸：地藏菩薩的「眾生度盡，方成菩提」就是落實「眾生無邊誓願度」的極至。經中佛提到，光目的母親也就是成佛前的解脫菩薩。地藏菩薩不但把自己的母親從地獄救脫出來，乃至到菩提果位，更將一切眾生看作是自己的父母來救度。

眾生的業力是怎麼來的呢？「今生的果是由前世的因所造成的，今生所作便結來世的果」，種什麼因就結什麼果。明白因果，才能閉惡興善。《地藏經》中講到的種種地獄境界，就是我們業力的表現。

幾個月前，在臺灣花蓮，原住民有一個豐年祭；在這個季節，花蓮的原住民就會出來打獵，都是打一些野生的動物——我當時也正好在花蓮，就聽到了一則新聞。有兩兄弟出去打獵，當時是在晚上，要打山豬，因為晚上看不清楚，所以不知是哥哥還是弟弟，反正一個就用槍把另外一個給打死了。所以在《地藏經》裡面的因果，就有一條談到「若遇畋獵恣情者，說驚狂喪命報。」

今天是地藏菩薩聖誕的正日，也是虛雲老和尚的生日。虛雲老和尚一出生時就有八地菩薩的境界。虛雲老和尚的生母因生他時，被自己生下的肉球而驚嚇至死，虛雲老和尚的父親因不瞭解虛雲老和尚出家而辭官返鄉。虛雲老和尚出家後，也就為報父母親恩而發願三步一拜遠赴五台山朝拜文殊師利菩薩，歷經三年，雖飽受艱難但感得文吉——也就是文殊師利菩薩的化身——相救，化險

replied that even if he tried to fathom the number for a thousand eons using his spiritual powers, he would not be able to know the answer. Manjushri Bodhisattva is known for being foremost in wisdom. He was the teacher of the past seven Buddhas. Now, his students have attained Buddhahood and he still remains a Bodhisattva. His vow is comparable to that of Earth Store Bodhisattva. If all of his students haven't become Buddhas, then Manjushri himself would not become a Buddha. Earth Store's vow to teach and transform living beings of the six realms, especially beings in the hells, is likewise endless. He made the vow that even if one single being has not attained Buddhahood, he would also not become a Buddha.

In past lives, when Earth Store Bodhisattva was the daughter of a brahmin and a girl called Bright Eyes, in order to save his mother from the hells, he brought forth the resolve to save all beings in the six paths. His initial wish was to repay his mother's kindness but later he evolved from the small to the great and expanded his vow to save all beings and practice the Bodhisattva Path. The *Brahma Net Sutra* says, "All males had been my father, all females had been my mother. Through life after life, I was born from them. So now I can see that all beings within the six paths of rebirth have served as my past mothers and past fathers."

Earth Store Bodhisattva made great vows based on the four great vows. Earth Store Bodhisattva's vow, "Only after I help all beings become Buddhas will I become a Buddha," is the implementation of the vow, "Living beings are boundless; I vow to cross them all over." The sutra tells of how the mother of Bright Eyes is Liberation Bodhisattva. Not only did Earth Store Bodhisattva save his mother from the hells, he also brought her to sagehood. He treats every living being as his parent and wants to save them all.

Where does the power of karma come from? "Our present lives result from causes created in previous lives. Our present actions will become causes for future lives." We now are creating our personal and collective futures. We know that what we do will shape what we become. Only when we understand causes and effects will we be able to stop unwholesome actions and become good. The various hells described in the *Earth Store Sutra* are the appearances of our unwholesome karma.

A few months ago there was an aboriginal harvest festival in Hualien, Taiwan. During that season, the local aboriginal people go out hunting a lot. They would target many wild animals. I happened to be in Hualien and heard this news. Two aboriginal brothers were hunting wild boars at night. Because it was so dark, they couldn't see each other clearly so one brother accidentally shot and killed the other. As the sutra says, "To hunters, he says that a frightened insanity that destroys one's life will be the retribution."

Today is the actual birthday of Earth Store Bodhisattva and also Venerable Master Xu Yun's birthday. When Venerable Xu Yun was born, he had the signs of a Bodhisattva of the Eighth Ground. When he was born, his mother was frightened and died from seeing him emerge as a flesh ball instead of as a baby. When Venerable Xu Yun left home, his father was upset and resigned from his official work and returned to his hometown. After Venerable Xu Yun had been a monk for about twenty years, he vowed to worship Manjushri Bodhisattva by making a pilgrimage to Wutai

為夷。此外，他還影響自己的養母及說服他為俗家時的兩房妻子，出家修行。虛雲老和尚報答親恩的方法也是以佛教的行儀來表達至高的孝道。

最近在中國政府拍的一個虛雲老和尚的記錄片裡，提到中國政府承認虛雲老和尚是近代的高僧和對佛教的貢獻；片中有一小段提到虛雲老和尚對上人到西方弘法的願景和肯定。

秉承虛雲老和尚的傳承，上人也是人稱的白孝子，所發的十八大願就是在母親過世那一年，在母墓旁，守孝期間在佛前所發的願。其中第九條：「願一切地獄界等，若有一未成佛，或地獄不空時，我誓不取正覺。」

講到願力，師父上人也提到人若有願，佛菩薩會滿你的願。雖然我們還是凡夫，所發的願有限，但菩薩也是從凡夫做起。

如果十法界裡最苦的地方是地獄的話，那麼監獄也可以算是人間最苦的地方之一。地獄是幽冥眾生受刑的地方，而監獄是世間人受刑的地方。上人自己學習地藏菩薩的願力，不但發願到地獄，也開示弟子——哪裡有苦就去哪裡。因為這些因緣，師父有一位弟子多年來一直都在花蓮監獄做志工，他本人是修地藏法門，不但引導受刑人學習佛法，更讓他們念誦《地藏經》及地藏菩薩名號做為日常功課。幾年前我曾在這和大家報告，我們去花蓮監獄看望兩位皈依法總的死刑犯的一些經歷。

前幾個月，我們得知其中一位受刑人已於今年前在監獄吞電池自殺了。自殺的原因是因為不能忍受毒癮發作時的痛苦。當時聽到這件事心裡很有感觸，如同經中所說我們「聞浮眾生，結惡習重，旋出旋入」，以及「然諸眾生獲脫罪報，未久之間，又墮惡道。」雖然我們很幸運對地藏菩薩的深願有信心，學習了解經文的字義，甚至天天念誦，我們更不要忘記《地藏經》裡實踐的重要，惟有落實信、解、行、證，才能圓滿得道。

Mountain, making a full prostration every three steps, in order to repay his parents' kindness. This journey took him about three years, and although he encountered numerous hardships and suffering, he got a response. Wenji, a beggar who was the transformation body of Manjushri Bodhisattva, saved his life. Venerable Xu Yun also convinced his stepmother and his two wives to leave home to cultivate. He repaid his parent's kindness by cultivating Buddhist practices to show the highest filial respect to his parents.

Recently the Chinese government has recognized the Venerable Xu Yun as a contemporary eminent Buddhist monk. The Chinese government has filmed a documentary to recognize Venerable Xu Yun's contributions to Buddhism. In the film, there is one clip that confirms that Venerable Xu Yun had the same vision of the Venerable Master Hua's coming to the west to teach and transform living beings.

Carrying on Venerable Xu Yun's legacy, Master Hua was also well known as Filial Son Bai. He also made eighteen great vows while he was practicing filial mourning beside his mother's grave. The ninth vow is, "I vow that as long as there is a single hell dweller who has not realized Buddhahood, I too will not attain proper enlightenment."

Speaking of the power of vows, Master Hua also mentioned that if you want to make a vow, all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas will help you accomplish it. Although we are still ordinary people and our vows are very limited, the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas all started out being ordinary people.

Among the ten Dharma realms, if the most miserable places are the hells, then in the human realm prisons should be one of the most miserable places. Just as the hells are where beings undergo suffering in the realm of darkness, prisons are where inmates suffer in their human existence. Master Hua himself also practiced Earth Store Bodhisattva's great vow, not only vowing to save beings in the hells, but also instructing his disciples to go wherever there is suffering. Consequently, one of the Master's disciples has spent many years guiding the inmates in Hualien Prison in Taiwan to learn Buddhism. He has introduced Earth Store Bodhisattva to them and taught them how to recite the *Earth Store Sutra* and Earth Store Bodhisattva's name as a daily practice. A few years ago, I shared stories about two inmates who on death row who had taken refuge under DRBA.

A few months ago, I was told that one of those inmates had committed suicide and died recently. He chose to end his life because he could no longer bear the pain caused by drug addiction. This case led me to reflect. It shows that it is not easy for ordinary people to get rid of their bad habits accumulated in the past. As the sutra text goes, "Because beings of Jambudvīpa are so bound by their own heavy bad habits, they keep revolving in and out of the various paths over and over," and "Even if living beings are able to escape the retribution for their offenses, they will soon fall into the evil paths again." This reminds us that even though we are so fortunate to have faith in Earth Store Bodhisattva's deep and great vows, understand the meaning of the sutra, or even recite the sutra every day, we also must not forget to reflect on whether we have behaved properly in accordance with the Earth Store Sutra. Only if we have implemented faith, understanding, practice, and realization will we be able to accomplish the Way.