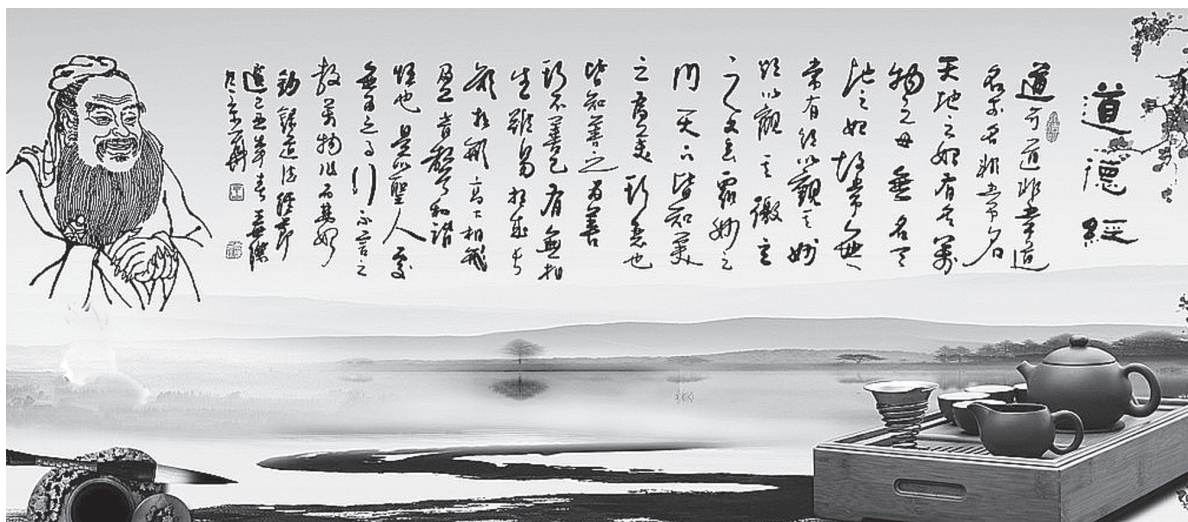


# 中士聞道，若存若亡（續）



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## When Average Men Hear the Way, They Half Believe It (continued)

待會兒，我們灑淨。灑淨，不只是誦持大悲神咒，將大悲水灑在佛殿地上，然後道場就會清淨的儀式，真正的是要對眾生生出慈悲心，自然這個地方就會充滿了慈悲、清淨的正氣。這樣就會清淨，而不是像農人灑殺蟲劑、灑農藥一樣，希望把蟲趕走或殺死。

如果常常保持慈悲心，灑淨的清淨作用就會很長，若沒有慈悲心，灑了以後，也是沒有用。所以灑淨就是用慈悲心來誦持大悲神咒，清淨我們的心和行為，道場就會產生清淨的共業。就像極樂世界，是阿彌陀佛、諸大菩薩、清淨海會大眾的清淨共業所成就的，這才叫做真正的灑淨。

即使是一念的慈悲心所產生的效用，都是不可思議的。我們來看《雜譬喻經》的故事。佛在世時，在舍衛國，風和日麗的天氣，突然烏雲密布，山雨欲來風滿樓。結果怎麼呢？下起了腥風血雨。那真的是雨中有血啊！整個國家都被怪異的血雨驚嚇到了。於是，國王馬上召開了緊急的會議來處理。

會議時，有個博學占卜的知識說，「根據古書記載，有毒獸化為人形，降生於世時，就會有腥風血雨。所以今天一定有毒獸以人形降生在國家裡。新生的小孩子中，一定有他的化身。」

Later we are going to purify the boundaries for the Guanyin session. Purifying the boundaries is not simply a ritual of reciting the Great Compassion Mantra and sprinkling the Great Compassion water to purify our monastery. The key point is to bring forth compassion and kindness for living beings. Our monastery will become pure because of the pure and positive energy from compassion and kindness. It is not like farmers spreading insecticide to repel or kill insects.

If we are always compassionate and kind, the function of purifying the boundaries will last longer. If we lack compassion, then even if we do the ritual, it won't work. The ritual is to recite the Great Compassion Mantra with compassion and kindness in order to purify our mind and our behavior, so that the whole monastery will produce a pure collective karma. It's just like the Western Pure Land, made by the pure collective karma of Amitabha Buddha, the great bodhisattvas, and the assembly as vast as the sea. That can be truly called as purifying the boundaries.

Even a single thought of compassion and kindness can produce inconceivable power. I'll share a story from the *Sutra of Miscellaneous Analogies*. The following story happened in Shravasti, when the Buddha was in the world. On a sunny day, it suddenly became dark, cloudy and windy. It started to rain blood. This weird and scary bloody rain terrified the whole country. The king called an emergency meeting.

A knowledgeable fortuneteller said that according to the ancient books, if a poisonous monster is born in a human form, the place of his birth would rain blood. So that day, a poisonous monster

國王就馬上命令當日所有新生的小孩都送到宮裡來檢查。其中有一個小孩，口水一接觸空氣，就變成火焰，有毒的火焰。當時旁邊的人看了，都被嚇到。

然而，大家並不敢把他殺害。因為害怕，若殺了他，恐怕會遭天譴，有更可怕的報應。就想出個辦法，把他送到隱秘的地方，把他撫養長大。因為隱秘的地方，就不會有人接近，而遭到毒殺。

人形的毒獸，慢慢長大了，從嘴巴生出的毒氣更可怕，更毒了。脾氣，也變得更暴躁了。因為長時間被養在這個地方，不能夠離開，任何的生物只要靠近，馬上就被毒殺。

然而舍衛國的人，實在非常聰明，發現了怪獸的這種天賦，用來做什麼？當劊子手，來處理死刑犯，節省國家開支。於是，怪獸所住的地方就變成了刑場，而怪獸就成為罪犯的終結者。

這樣子數十年過去了。有上萬的人，被毒殺了。然而，怪獸自己本身，也逃不過死神的命運，有一天也死了。有人問佛，人形毒獸這麼重的殺業，死後是不是掉到地獄啊？掉哪一層啊？佛怎麼回答呢？「不，他上升天界。」大家非常驚訝，請佛解釋因緣。

原來，人形毒獸快要死前，舍利弗尊者去看他。毒獸看到舍利弗來，非常生氣。他想到，我還沒有死啊，你竟然敢跑來接近我，你一定得死。於是就噴出最毒的毒氣，要毒死舍利弗尊者。

然而舍利弗尊者，不是冤冤相報，反而生起了大慈悲心，進入慈悲的光明三昧，把毒氣完全摒除於身外。毒獸看舍利弗尊者，怎麼跟以前看過的人都不一樣啊？這個人竟然是這麼慈悲的樣子。所以毒獸感動了，內心也生起柔軟心，和慈善的念頭，就在當下往生了。因為最後一念是慈善的心，就往生到天界。大家聽到佛這麼解釋，就問佛，「難道毒獸殺那麼多人，就沒有什麼果報嗎？」

佛就說了，因果是絕對不會錯的。在天界的福報用完後，毒獸會降生人間，繼續修行，因為精進修行，就證得有紫金身的辟支佛果。辟支佛有紫金身，在樹下打坐。有大部隊的軍隊經過，看到辟支佛不是人，是黃金的雕像。每個人都興奮不得了，拿起刀來就往辟支佛身上砍，砍得一片一片的，拾起來以為是黃金，

must have been born.

As a consequence, the king ordered all newborn babies to be sent to the palace for inspection. Sure enough, there was a baby whose saliva became a poisonous flame when it came in contact with the air. Upon seeing that, everybody was scared.

They didn't dare to kill that child, as they were afraid of bad retribution. So they sent him to a hidden place to be raised, to prevent him from harming or killing others.

When the child grew up, the poisonous gas from his mouth became more powerful. Living in confinement, his anger built up. Any beings near the monster were killed immediately by his poisonous gas.

People in Sharavasti shrewdly saved money by utilizing the monster's lethal ability to kill convicts. The place became an execution ground. The monster became the official executioner for criminals.

Over several decades, the monster killed more than 10,000 convicts. He himself could not escape death, and one day he died. People asked the Buddha if the poisonous monster would fall into the hells because of his killing karma. The Buddha answered, "No, he was reborn in the heavens." People were surprised. The Buddha explained why.

Shortly before the monster died, the Venerable Shariputra had gone to see him. Upon seeing the Venerable Shariputra, the monster was very angry and thought, "I haven't died yet; how dare this man come near me. He must die!" He emitted his poisonous gas to kill Venerable Shariputra.

The Venerable Shariputra used his compassion and entered the samadhi of compassionate brightness to repel the poisonous gas. Moved by Shariputra's compassion, the monster calmed down and was no longer angry. Gazing at the Venerable Shariputra who was so compassionate and different from convicts he had met previously, he gave rise to a gentle and kind thought and died. Because of this kind thought, he was reborn in the heavens. People heard the Buddha's explanation but questioned, "Did he not have to suffer any retribution for killing so many people?"

The Buddha assured them that the law of cause and effect is never off. After using up his blessings in the heavens, he will be reborn and cultivate in the human realm. Because of his diligent cultivation, he will be certified as a Pratyekyabuddha with a golden body. At that time, the golden-bodied Pratyekabuddha would sit under a tree to meditate. A large army would pass by, and thinking he was gold, would cut him to pieces and then find out that he was only flesh and blood instead of gold. They would discard his body and leave."

Then this Pratyekyabuddha will have paid off his debt and will enter nirvana. Those who cut him to pieces were the people he had killed in the past. The workings of cause and effect are never off.



卻發現是一些血肉，於是就丟了，離開了。

就那樣子，辟支佛把過去的債還完了，也入了涅槃，而那些砍他的人，就是過去生被他所毒殺的人，所以因果是不昧的。

聽完這個故事，可以簡單說，最起碼有三點可以來研究。第一點呢，就是慈悲的力量，是  
不可思議的。舍利弗把人形毒獸從墮入地獄的邊緣救回來，投身天界，乃至後來能夠證得辟支佛果。

第二就是因果是不昧的。可以想一想，人形毒獸為什麼有這麼大的威力，而脾氣也這麼大呢？我們可以猜，或許過去生就是修行者，但是有很大的瞋恨心，所以這一生才變成了人形毒獸。

但是他的修行在過去也不會白費了，所以能夠證得辟支佛果。但是仍然要把過去的殺業再償付完，所以被砍成一片一片。所以我們要小心所想的，所說的，所做的，盡量能夠往好的去做，產生好的業，善的業。

第三個，就是善知識的重要。沒有舍利弗尊者慈悲的幫助，人形毒獸一定是墮落的。

就像所說的，「中士聞道，若存若亡。」上人就是最好的善知識。應該注意上人說的，「道是行的，不行哪有道？」最後祝大家都早點成道。

After hearing this story, we may learn three points. First, the power of kindness and compassion is inconceivable. It saved the monster from falling into the hells and helped him be reborn in the heavens and become a Pratyekyabuddha.

Second, cause and effect never fail to work out. We may guess or imagine that in a previous life, this monster must have been a cultivator with a big temper. So, he became a monster with poisonous power.

His cultivation in the past was not in vain, for later on he became a Pratyekyabuddha. However, he still had to pay off his debt by having his flesh cut off piece by piece. We should be careful of what we are thinking, speaking and doing. We should try to create good karma.

Third, a good knowing advisor is very important. Without Venerable Shariputra's compassion to help him, the monster would have definitely fallen into the hells.

It's just like what we discussed in the beginning about "When Average Men Hear the Way, They Half Believe It." The Venerable Master is our good knowing advisor and we should follow his instructions. Just like he said, "The Path has to be practiced. Without practice, there's no Path." May everyone soon attain the Path.

