

占察善惡業報經淺釋

The Sutra for Discernment of the Consequences of Wholesome and Unwholesome Karma with Commentary



PROPER DHARMA SEAL 正法印

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Commentary by the Venerable Master Hua in 1971

這一段文，在前邊具足六種成就，這是本經前邊序分的第一個部分。每一部經都有三分：有序分，有正宗分，有流通分；具足這三分，這才是一部圓滿的經典。現在開始講這個序分的第二個部分。

爾時，會中有一菩薩，名堅淨信，從坐而起，整衣服，偏袒右肩，合掌白佛言：「我今於此衆中，欲有所問，諮請世尊，願垂聽許。」

「爾時」：就是當爾之時。在什麼時候呢？就在說《占察善惡業報經》這個時候。這個時候，「會中有一位菩薩，名堅淨信」：在這會中有一位菩薩，他的名字叫「堅淨信」。堅，就是堅固；淨，就是清淨沒有染汙；信，信而不疑。因為這位菩薩能堅固他真正的信心，所以他叫「堅淨信菩薩」。

又有一個講法，堅，就是正因佛性；淨，就是緣因佛性；信，就是了因佛性。這一位菩薩具足正因、緣因、了因，所以他的名字就叫「堅淨信」。

這位菩薩在因地修行的時候，他除非不聞佛法，若一聞佛法，就是把它記得清清楚楚，不會再忘記了。那麼由這個記憶力堅固，而生出這種清淨的信心。對於佛教他是真信，深信不疑；不能說我信佛信了三年、或者五年，然後又開倒車了。開倒車，就向後轉，把這車往後退，不往前精進。這位菩薩從來學習佛法是向前勇猛精進的。那麼現在，在這種滅罪除疑的情形之下，他發起請問。

This paragraph illustrates the fulfillment of the six requirements and it is the first section of the sutra's preface. Every sutra may be divided into three parts: the Preface, the Principle Proper, and the Transmission; only when these three parts are fulfilled would this be considered a complete sutra. Now we will begin to discuss the second section of the preface.

Sutra:

At that time, there was a Bodhisattva in the assembly named Solid Pure Faith, arose from his seat, arranged his clothes, uncovered this right shoulder, put his palms together and said to the Buddha, "I now stand among this assembly, would like to ask a few questions. To sincerely seek the World Honored One's advice and hope the World Honored one would be willing to listen and explain to us".

Commentary:

"At that time": this refers to the time at that moment. Which moment is it? It is the time when the Sutra of Discernment of the Consequences of Wholesome and Unwholesome Karma was spoken. During this time, "there was a Bodhisattva in the assembly named Solid Pure Faith" in this assembly there was a Bodhisattva, his name is "Solid Pure Faith". Solid means strong and firm; pure means clean and undefiled; faith means belief without any doubt. Since this Bodhisattva can solidify his true pure faith, that is why he is called "Solid Pure Faith".

There is another explanation, "Solid" refers to the proper causes of the Buddha nature, "Pure" refers to the karmic causes of the Buddha nature, "Faith" refers to the revealing causes of the Buddha nature. This Bodhisattva fulfills the proper causes, the karmic causes and the revealing causes, therefore his name is "Solid Pure Faith".

When this Bodhisattva was cultivating in the causal ground, unless he did not hear the Buddhadharma, once he heard the Buddhadharma, he memorized them by heart and never forgot. From this solid memory, the pure faith is born. Towards Buddhism, he believes truly and has deep

在前邊那一段序，叫「證信序」，證明六種成就，證明這經是可信的；這一段是「發起序」，這個人發起來請法序。那個證信序又叫「經前序」，因為它在這經的前面敘述出來；又叫「經後序」。

怎麼既叫「經前序」，為什麼又叫「經後序」呢？前、後本來是不可以混合的，怎麼前又可以做後呢？後又可以做前呢？因為佛說經的時候，並沒有說：「如是我聞，一時婆伽梵、一切智人，在王舍城耆闍崛山，以大神通力，示廣博嚴淨無礙道場，與無量無邊諸大眾俱，演說甚深根聚法門。」這一段文是阿難結集經藏的時候，才加上去的，所以叫「經後序」；但是因為它放在經最前邊，可以說是「經前序」。這是很清楚了，所以前邊也可以當後邊、後邊可以當前邊，這也是沒有定法。

「從坐而起」：這位菩薩在這個法會裏，他就從他的座位站起來。他是有原因的才站起來的，他想要請法。「整衣服，偏袒右肩」：那麼請法必須要衣服衣冠都整齊，在印度的風俗他要偏袒右肩，他就整頓衣服，看看衣服穿得好了沒有？是不要跌到地下？他把衣服整頓好了，就把右邊的肩露出來。這個偏袒右肩，表示敬順，就是恭敬而順從的意思。又，右邊屬於實方，這表示要請求真實的法門，所以這位菩薩偏袒右肩。

「合掌白佛言」：就合起掌來，對佛說了。合掌，表示「十法界不離現前一念心」，這是一個表法；又表示「權實二智合一」。合一，權就是實、實就是權，權實不二；不二，就是一個。

「我今於此眾中，欲有所問」：我現在在這個法會大眾裏面，我看大家都想請法。「諮請世尊」：諮，就諮問；自己不明白來請問，這叫諮請。所以我現在就為大家來代表，請求佛說一說這個法，究竟這個道理是怎麼樣子的。

☞待續

faith without any doubt. It is not liken to one that says I believe in the Buddha for three years or maybe five years and then drive in reverse. To drive in reverse is to turn back, drive the car backwards and not go forward in vigor. This Bodhisattva always studies the Buddhadharma diligently and vigorously. And now, in this context to eradicate karmic offences and resolve doubts, he raised a question.

This previous preface is called the “Certification of Faith” Preface. It certifies the six requirements and proves that the sutra can be believed. This paragraph is the “Arising of the Dharma” Preface, it is the preface of a person arising from the assembly and requesting the Dharma. The “Certification of Faith” Preface may also be called the sutra’s Preface, because it is narrated at the beginning of the sutra. It may also be called the sutra’s Afterword.

How come it is called the Preface and may also be called the Afterword. Pre and after fundamentally do not merge, how come the pre can be the after? And the after can be the pre? It is because when the Buddha spoke the Sutra, he did not say: **“Thus I have heard. At one time, the Bhagavan, the wisest among all people, dwelt at Rājagṛha at the Gṛdhrakūṭa Mountain. With his spiritual powers, he manifested a vast, pure, sublime and unobstructed Bodhimanda. To infinite living beings, he proclaimed the most profound Dharma, the Dharma of the interfusing the faculties.”** This passage was later added by Venerable Ananda when he was editing the sutra, therefore it is called an “Afterword”. However, this paragraph is place at the front of the sutra so it can also be called a Preface. This explanation is very clear now, that is why a pre can also be treated like an after, an after can also be treated as a pre, there is no fixed dharma in this.

“Arose from his seat”: this Bodhisattva was at the assembly and he stood up from his seat. He stood up for a reason which is to request the Dharma. **“Arranged his clothes, uncovered his right shoulders”**: before requesting the Dharma, one’s clothes must be neat and proper, and according to the custom in India he has to uncover his right shoulders. So he arranged his clothes to see if his clothes are in proper order, to see if his clothes have fallen to the floor. After he arranged his clothes, he then proceeded to uncover his right shoulders. To uncover the right shoulder represents respect and submission. Also, the right side belongs to the truth, this represents the intend to request the true Dharma, therefore this Bodhisattva uncovered his right shoulder.

Put his palms together and said to the Buddha: he put his palms together and said to the Buddha. Putting the palms together represents “the ten Dharma realms are not beyond a single thought”, this is one representation. It also represents “the two wisdom of expedient and actual merging into one”. Merging into one, expedient is also the actual, the actual is also the expedient, expedient and actual are not dual, not dual means it is one.

I now stand among this assembly, would like to ask a few questions: I am now at this Dharma assembly, I see everyone would like to request the Dharma. **To sincerely seek the World Honored One’s advice**: To seek for advice is to ask questions when one does not understand. Therefore I now represent everyone here and request the Buddha to speak this Dharma, ultimately what is the meaning of this principal.

☞To be continued