

破缸救友——

# 司馬光(續)

*Smashing A Water Vat to  
Save a Drowning Friend—*

## Sima Guang

(continued)

宣化上人講述於1987年6月12日

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Lectured by the Venerable Master Hsuan Hua on June 12, 1987

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BIOGRAPHIES | 人物誌

「追遠」，在父母過世之後，時間久了會不會忘了他們？不會忘記。在十月十五日那天特別紀念他們。《論語》上說：「慎終追遠，民德歸厚矣。」若老百姓都能這樣，人人的德行就會很好、很多、很可觀了。

贊曰：

以石擊缸 救淹溺郎  
人以為奇 我說平常  
本有智慧 不假商量  
儼然宰相 兒童之光

「以石擊缸，救淹溺郎」：司馬光小時候，有一天和一些兒童在一起玩耍，一個還不太懂事的小孩跌到水缸裏。其他小孩子看到有人跌進水缸裏，心想一定會淹死，所以大大小小差不多都跑了，沒有一個說想

“Continue sacrifices to the distant ancestors.” When your parents pass away, will you forget them as time goes by? No. In the fifteenth of the tenth lunar month we should especially remember them. In the *Analects of Confucius* it is said, “Be circumspect in funeral services and continue sacrifices to the distant ancestors, and the virtue of the common people will thrive.” If everyone could be like that, then everyone’s virtue will thrive and be spectacular overall.

**A verse in praise says:**

Smashing a vat with a rock,  
To save a drowning friend.  
People all marvel at this feat,  
But I see it as ordinary.  
Because the innate wisdom,  
works its way naturally.  
Just as dignified, as a primer minister,  
Light of wisdom, as a young child.

**Commentary:**

**Smashing a vat with a rock, to save a drowning friend.** Once, as a young child, he was playing with friends near a large water vat. A heedless little guy fell into the vat. Not knowing what to do, and fearing he might drown they all ran away. Not even one tried to think of something. Only Sima Guang stayed. He was wondering: “Seeing someone in

法子把他救出來。可是司馬光不跑，他想：「見到人快要死了，應該救他。用什麼方法救呢？這個缸是瓦做的，我用石頭把它砸出窟窿，這小孩大概就能得救了。」於是拿起一塊石頭把缸打破，缸一打破；水流出來，那小孩子也就沒有淹死。所以說「救淹溺郎」，他情急生智，以石擊缸，救出溺水的小孩。

「人以為奇，我說平常」：人人以為他小小年紀能救溺水的小孩，這是多麼希有奇怪的事！其實並不奇怪。「我說平常」這個「我」，不一定是指寫這個偈頌的我，而是指一般人。這件事情沒有什麼出奇的，怎麼不出奇呢？

「本有智慧，不假商量」：這是司馬光本有的智慧。那麼其他小孩有沒有這種本有的智慧呢？也都有的。只是司馬光會用，其他的童子不會用，把它遮蓋得深了。這種救人的行為，是他本有的智慧，不假商量——不需要別人告訴他，也不需要向誰問一問：「我怎麼辦啊？這小孩子淹到水缸裏了，你想想法子啊！」不需要的。不假商量，不假思索，不假造作，用一塊石頭把缸砸破，水放了，小孩就活了。

「儼然宰相，兒童之光」：雖然當時司馬光年紀很小，可是他具有大智大慧，處理此事，儼然具宰相的智慧，這是所有兒童的光榮。其實各個小孩都有這種智慧，都能利用它，都可以做宰相。為什麼他們不能做宰相？就因為他們盡貪玩。司馬光那時候雖然也玩，可是他救人的思想還存在；其他小孩就因為玩心太重，所以把救人的這種智慧也都忘了。

### 又說偈曰

三歲看大七知老 政治學問人稱好  
忠君愛國無雙士 真言實語有獨覺  
資治通鑑良策訓 溫公司馬善書寶  
齋僧布道修福慧 般若花開早早早

「三歲看大七知老」：小孩子三歲的時候，就能看出他長大之後怎麼樣。等到七歲的時候，將來老年的境界，旁觀者都可以知道。所以一個小孩的前途，在他很小的時候就可以觀察得到。

☞待續

danger, one should help. But how? This vat is made of earthenware and I can smash it with a rock, then the boy may be saved.” So he found a rock and flung it at the vat; once the vat was broken water ran out and the child was saved, thus “to save a drowning friend.” In an emergency, Sima Guang showed his resourcefulness and saved a friend’s life.

**People all marvel at this feat. But I see it as ordinary.** Everybody thought that this was an extraordinary act for a small child. Yet it’s quite a natural act. This “I” does not necessarily mean me who is writing these verses now, it is speaking in a general sense. Breaking a vat to save a friend is nothing special. Why isn’t it special?

**Because the innate wisdom works its way naturally.** This action of saving a child’s life, came from his inherent wisdom. Then what about the other children, did they not have inherent wisdom? Yes, they did, however only Sima Guang knew how to use his while the other children did not. Their inherent wisdom had been masked. This action of saving others was part of his inherent wisdom. He doesn’t need someone to tell him what to do. Neither does he need to ask: “What should I do? The kid is in the water vat, think of something!” No need for that. “Works its way naturally” means that he was spontaneous. He intuitively solved the problem—using a stone to break the vat and let the water run out to save a child.

**Just as dignified, as a prime minister. Light of wisdom, as a young child.** Even though Sima Guang was still very young, he already had wisdom. In handling this emergency, he was wise and decisive, just like a prime minister. This type of action proves all children possess this innate wisdom, and could use it. They could all become prime ministers. Why don’t they then? Because they are too fond of playing. Sima Guang was also playing but he still had the mind of saving others. Other children were too engrossed in child-play to remember the wisdom of saving someone’s life.

### Another verse says:

**At age three, one’s future foreseen; at seven, old age predicted.  
Acclaimed are both his political capacity and scholarship .  
Unmatched is his loyalty to both the emperor and country.  
Sincere and honest having his own awakening,  
Comprehensive Mirror full of good advise for government.  
Sima, Duke of Wenguo treasures books above all else.  
Serving monks meals and spreading teachings,  
acquiring blessings and wisdom.  
Early indeed, early indeed, the blossoming of *Prajna*.**

### Commentary:

**At age three, his future foreseen; at seven, old age predicted.** When a child is three, we can divine clues about his future personality traits when he becomes an adult. When he is seven, we can divine clues about what his personality traits will be when he reaches old age. Therefore, one can tell a child’s future by observing what the child does.

☞To be continued