



Verse about Recollecting Previous Causes

憶前因頌

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一見如故憶前因，
藕斷絲連骨肉親；
頓知輪迴無底止，
去欲割愛斬情根。

「一見如故憶前因」：憶前因，就是想想一想前生的事情是怎麼回事。我們人與人之間一見如故，一見就覺得很有緣，互相像骨肉至親似的。那麼怎麼見著這個人這麼有緣呢？憶前因，就想了：「或者前生我和這個人是親戚吧？或者是朋友吧？或者是我爸爸媽媽吧？或者是我姊姊妹妹吧？或者是我兄弟哥哥吧？」或者又是亂七八糟、七扯八拉，說不出那麼多了。這就叫「憶前因」，就是胡思亂想這麼想。想了之後怎麼樣呢？

When at first sight we recognize a friend, consider what previous causes have been.
A lotus root is stringy and won't cut clean. Neither will ties with close kin.
View the cycle of rebirth with vision keen.
It's bottomless and will never end,
Until desire and sticky feelings are cut through,
and emotion is entirely severed at its root.

When at first sight we recognize a friend, consider what previous causes have been. Recollecting previous causes, we should think about what happened in the past. Sometimes at first sight we recognize a friend. When we see someone, we feel that we have great affinity with that person. We seem to be as close as blood relatives. When we see this person, we wonder why we feel so good about him or her; why we have such a strong affinity. Then it occurs to us, "Oh, in my past, maybe we were relatives, maybe we were friends, maybe he was my father; maybe she was my mother; maybe my elder or younger sister or my elder or younger brother." In general, it's a chaotic mess with everything at sixes and sevens. There's no way to express the complexity of it. That's the general idea of recollecting previous causes. It's getting all caught up in imaginings.

A lotus root is stringy and won't cut clean. Neither will ties with close kin. A lotus root is the analogy here. When cut, the lotus root strings stay attached and are

「藕斷絲連骨肉親」：藕斷絲連，就像那個蓮藕似的，你把它切斷了，那個絲還連著，sticky（黏著）、不願cut off（切斷）。骨肉親，這大約是六親眷屬、無始劫的父母、兄弟、父母祖。不知道是怎麼回事了，弄得糊塗了，找不著了。總而言之，是很親蜜的，或者是夫婦，或者是父子，或者說不出來那麼近。

「頓知輪迴無底止」：正在這個藕斷絲連的時候，豁然覺悟了：「哦！我們人在輪迴裡，忽然而天，忽然而地獄，忽然而餓鬼，忽然而畜生，忽然而修羅，忽然而人道，什麼是個停止的時候呢？」無底止，沒有一個底。這六道輪迴沒有一個底，也沒有一個停止的時候。你說，這是very terrible（非常可怕），沒有法子受得了。所以說，頓知輪迴無底止。

「去欲割愛斬情根」：沒有底的這個輪迴，這時候把牙一咬，去欲，這個desire（欲）不要了；割愛，把這個愛也用刀割去了。斬情根，把情情愛愛的emotion（情）一下子都斷了。也沒有desire（欲），也沒有love（愛），也沒有這個emotion（情），你說這very pure（多麼清淨）！✽

not easy to cut through. It's the same with ties with close kin. Maybe this person was an immediate relative. He might have been my father or mother some uncountable eon ago. Or perhaps she was one of my six kinds of close relatives—a brother, a parent, or a grandparent. We have no idea who that person might be. We're muddled and can't figure it out. Basically there is a close but imperceptible relationship. Maybe we were husband and wife; maybe we were father and son, or some other intimate relationship.

View the cycle of rebirth with vision keen. It's bottomless and will never end. Remember the stringy lotus root that fails to cut clean and quickly awaken! "Oh! We are in the paths of rebirth where we suddenly ascend and suddenly descend; we are suddenly a hungry ghost; suddenly an animal; suddenly an asura; suddenly a human being. When will it ever stop?" It's bottomless and will never end. The cycle of rebirth is a six-spoked wheel. Those paths are bottomless pits. There is no end to them. Wouldn't you say that is really terrible? It's really impossible to endure. So the verse tells us: View the cycle of rebirth with keen vision. It's bottomless and will never end.

Until desire and sticky feelings are cut through, and emotion is entirely severed at its root. Since the cycle of birth and death is a bottomless pit, at this point we need to firmly make the resolve to cut off desire. Don't entertain it. Rebirth will only end when desire and sticky feelings are cut through and emotion is entirely severed at its root. As to emotional love, imagine a knife cutting it off. Sever emotional reactions—cut clear through the root of them. Then there will be no more desire, no more lust, no more emotion. Wouldn't you say that we will then be very pure? ✽

BUDDHISM A TO Z

「悲」的三種含義

Three Kinds of Compassion

一、愛見悲。這是一般凡夫所具有的，也就是一種同情的心，又叫愛見同情。一般人都是和你相近的，你就愛他、憐愍他；和你遠的，你就不愛他、不憐愍他。看見自己的親戚和最好的朋友有痛苦，就會盡你的力量去幫助他。可是和你遠的，沒有什麼相干的人，你就見到他受苦，你也不管他。為什麼呢？就因為對他沒有一種愛心。有這愛心，你才能有這個悲，這就叫「愛見悲」。

✽待續

First, Loving Compassion. This is a sympathetic attitude which most people would have towards others; it can also be called an attitude of Loving Sympathy. Average men love and sympathize with those close to them, but not with strangers. Seeing relatives or friends in distress, they exhaust their strength to help them, but when strangers are suffering, they pay them no heed. Why? Because they don't have a loving or caring mind toward them. Having compassion for those you love and don't love is called Loving Compassion.

✽To be continued