

地藏菩薩本願經淺釋

The Sutra of the Past Vows of Earth Store Bodhisattva with Commentary



【忉利天宮神通品第一】

CHAPTER ONE:

SPIRITUAL PENETRATIONS IN THE PALACE OF THE TRAYASTRIMSHA HEAVEN

宣化上人講解

國際譯經學院記錄翻譯

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「作一恒河」：每一種草作一條恒河。有多少草，就有多少恒河，所以這個數目根本就數不過來。不只草、木、叢、林、稻、麻、竹、葦都是這樣，一種東西就作一條恒河，不是單提出來一件，而是每一件作一恒河，兩件作兩條恒河，三件作三條恒河，四件作四條恒河……。草木是沒有數量的多，恒河也就沒有數量的多。所以這就表示數目太多了，根本就沒有法子計算得出來。

「一恒河沙」：那每一件東西作一條恒河，你說這恒河沙有多少呢？「一沙一界」：所有恒河沙裡的每一粒沙，又作一個三千大千世界。「一界之內，一塵一劫」：這三千大千世界所有的每一粒微塵又作一個大劫。「一劫之內，所積塵數」：在這一個大劫中，所積聚到一起的這些個微塵的數目。又「盡充為劫」：每一粒微塵再變成一個大劫。而「地藏菩薩證十地果位以來」：他證得十地的果位到現在，「千倍多於上喻」：還比那些多得很多，比起上邊的比喻，多過一千倍還不止。「何況地藏菩薩在聲聞、辟支佛地」：何況地藏菩薩，他以前做聲聞時不知經過多長的時

Then, however many blades of grass there were, there would be that many Ganges rivers. But keeping track of how many that would be isn't possible. And not only would that be the case with blades of grass, it would be the same for trees, grassy areas, groves of trees, rice plants, hemp stalks, bamboo shoots, and reeds. One item would equal one Ganges river. Nor is this a generalization by type. Every single one of each type would be a Ganges river. Any two would be two Ganges rivers; any three would be three Ganges rivers; any four would be four Ganges rivers. The number of grass and trees are virtually infinite, so there would be virtually infinite Ganges rivers. This is meant to show that the numbers would be so many there would be no way to calculate them.

Then consider the grains of sand in every one of those Ganges rivers. So far, every item was equated to a Ganges river. Now, can you tell me how many grains of sand are there in a Ganges river? **Then suppose that each grain of sand was a world.** Suppose each grain of sand in the sands of all those Ganges rivers was itself a Three Thousand Great Thousand World System **and that each dust mote in each of those worlds was an eon. Then suppose each dust mote accumulated in each of those eons—great eons—was itself an eon.** Imagine if all those motes of dust were each an eon. **The time elapsed since Earth Store Bodhisattva was certified to the position of the Tenth Ground—he is now a Tenth Stage Bodhisattva—and the time since he became one is a thousand times longer than that in the above analogy.** It's a much longer time than what's described in the analogy—more than a thousand times as long. **Even longer was the time he dwelled on the levels of Hearer and Pratyekabuddha.** This doesn't even mention how long Earth Store Bodhisattva was a Hearer, how long he was a sage enlightened by conditions—a Pratyekabuddha. We don't know how long a time he spent in those positions. So we can simply say that

間；做緣覺、辟支佛，又不知道經過多長的時間。所以地藏菩薩他這種的行願是太久了。

文殊師利。此菩薩威神誓願。不可思議。若未來世。有善男子善女人。聞是菩薩名字。或讚歎。或瞻禮。或稱名。或供養。乃至彩畫刻鏤塑漆形像。是人當得百返生於三十三天。永不墮惡道。

「文殊師利」：釋迦牟尼佛叫文殊師利，說「此菩薩威神誓願不可思議」：此菩薩是哪一位菩薩呢？就是地藏菩薩，他的威德和神通及誓願不可思議，度一切罪惡深重的眾生，他用威神來折服他們。他發的誓願是：

地獄不空，誓不成佛
眾生度盡，方證菩提

地獄哪個時候不空，他不成佛的；他要把所有的眾生度完了，他才成佛。

若有一個眾生沒有度完，他就不成佛，所以他才經過這麼長遠的時間還沒成佛。因為這個眾生度完了，那個又來了，總也沒完。不是這個眾生出世，就是那個逝世了；那個眾生逝世，這個眾生又出世了。出世的眾生總是比逝世的眾生多過十倍、百倍、千倍、萬倍。你看我們現在計算三藩市死的人多呢？還是出生的人多？死的人要等到老了，又有病，才會死；出生的只等懷胎十月，就可以出生，非常的快。因為人要經過幾十年才死，所以出生比死的超過幾千萬倍，因此累得地藏菩薩到現在也不能成佛。

但是你說他後悔不後悔呢？他不後悔。眾生越多，他越有工作做了；要是沒有眾生，他也沒有工作，就成佛去了。成佛去，也沒有什麼事情幹了，所以地藏王菩薩這就是沒有事情來找事情幹。本來很清閒的，他願意一天到晚忙忙碌碌的，總是去度眾生，這是地藏王菩薩的願力。

☸待續

Earth Store Bodhisattva's conduct and vows have been in existence for a long time.

Sutra:

Manjushri, the awesome spiritual vows of this Bodhisattva are inconceivable. If good men or women in the future hear this Bodhisattva's name, praise him, behold or bow to him, call his name, make offerings to him, or if they draw, carve, cast, sculpt or paint images of him, such people will be reborn in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three one hundred times and will never fall into the evil paths.

Commentary:

Manjushri, Buddha Shakyamuni called out, the awesome spiritual vows of this Bodhisattva are inconceivable. Which Bodhisattva is the Buddha referring to? Bodhisattva Earth Store. His awesome virtues, spiritual powers and vows are inconceivable and ineffable as he works to save all beings with profoundly heavy offenses. He uses his awesome spirit to subdue them. He made these vows:

*Until the hells are empty I will not become a Buddha.
Only when all beings are saved will I certify to Bodhi.*

As long as the hells are not empty, he will not realize Buddhahood; he wants to save all beings before he, himself, becomes a Buddha.

If there is one being who has not been saved, he will not become a Buddha. This is why he has been doing this for so long and he is still not a Buddha. When one being is saved, another comes along. It never ends. If it isn't that some being is getting born, then it's that another being is passing away. Or a different being is passing away and yet another being is coming into the world. There are ten times, a hundred times, a thousand times, ten thousand times more living beings becoming born than passing away. For instance, do you know whether in San Francisco the number of deaths is more than the number of births? Deaths come after aging and sickness; whereas birth only requires ten months of pregnancy, a relatively shorter period of time. Since people live for several decades before dying, it stands to reason that there are many millions more births than deaths. That makes Bodhisattva Earth Store's burden such that he has not yet become a Buddha.

But does he regret it? He does not regret it. The more living beings there are, the more jobs he has. Without living beings, he is out of work and he goes on to realize Buddhahood. There is not much to do as a Buddha either, so Bodhisattva Earth Store King looks for things to do when there is not much to do. He was very much at leisure but he would rather be busy all day saving living beings. This describes the power of Bodhisattva Earth Store King's vows.

☸To be continued