



正法印
PROPER DHARMA SEAL

地藏菩薩本願經淺釋

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

【觀眾生業緣品第三】

CHAPTER THREE:

CONTEMPLATING THE KARMIC CONDITIONS OF BEINGS

宣化上人講解

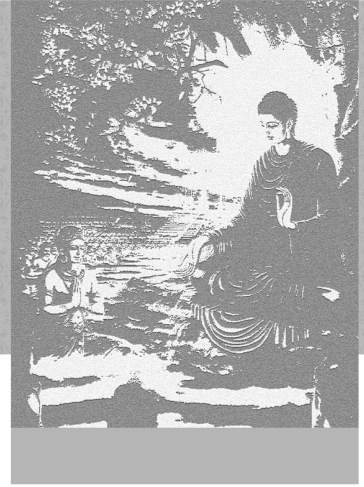
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佛經翻譯委員會修訂

Commentary by the Venerable Master Hua

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「父兮生我，母兮育我，昊天罔極，撮髮難報」，父親生我，母親養育我，這種的恩好像昊天，昊天就是比天都高。昊天罔極——沒有比這個恩再重的。所以一定要孝順父母。

怎麼叫孝順父母？天天給父親、母親買一點好吃的東西，買點好衣服，這就是孝順了嗎？這不是。這僅僅是皮毛的孝順。什麼是孝順的內容呢？我們要以順為孝——順父母的心。父母所歡喜的，我也要歡喜；父母所愛好的，我也要愛好。有人說那就是孝？那我父親歡喜抽鴉片煙，他一天抽一兩，我一天抽二兩，這是孝順吧！？因為他喜好這個，我也喜好這個，這就是順嗎？這不是！順是順他的心，不是講吃東西。他們歡喜吃的，你也要和他爭著吃，例如：他歡喜吃麵包塗奶油，你說這個我才歡喜吃。就說：「你先不要吃，等我吃完你再吃。」這個是爭，不是順。那麼順呢，就是順他的心。你找他的心，他所歡喜的事情，你就不要違背他，不要逆他的心，這就叫孝。

方才說父母之恩「撮髮難報」，撮

Therefore, it is said, “Father gave me a life, mother raised me; their kindness — as vast as high heaven, as manifold as the hairs on the head — is difficult to repay.”

What does it mean to be filial? Does it mean buying delicious food for our parents every day? Is it a filial act to buy them some fine clothes? No. These are superficial forms of filial respect. What is the true content of filial respect? Filial respect is about complying with our parents’ wishes. I enjoy what my parents delight in; I like what my parents like. “Suppose my father likes to smoke opium. If he smoked one ounce a day, and I smoked two, would that be filial respect?” It certainly would not. When I said “comply,” I meant to comply with his wishes, not with his eating habits. It does not mean competing with your parents in eating their favorite foods. Otherwise, you might as well tell your father who likes bread and butter, “I like that, too. You’re just going to have to wait while I eat it.” That would be fighting, not complying. To *comply* means to accord with another’s wish; look into his heart and not go against his wishes. That is filial respect.

Earlier I said the kindness of parents is “as manifold as the hairs on the head and difficult to repay.” Even if you could count how many strands of hair you have, you still would not be able to repay your parents’ kindness.

髮，就是把頭髮數出來有多少根，可是父母的恩都還報答不過來的，所以要孝順父母。我去年暑假時候講「羔羊跪乳，烏鴉反哺」，羔羊吃奶時，前腿跪在牠母親面前吃。小烏鴉在中國叫牠為孝鳥，因為老烏鴉把小烏鴉孵出來後，那個老烏鴉——烏鴉的媽媽，就不會飛、飛不動了，小烏鴉就去撿食物回來餵牠。你看這是小鳥，連小烏鴉都知道孝順老烏鴉。烏鴉是個飛禽，羊是獸類，我們人要是不孝順父母，就連禽獸都不如了。我們人具足五常之德——仁、義、禮、智、信，有這五種德行，若連烏鴉羔羊都不如，那怎麼可以呢？所以我們人都應該要孝順父母，這是最要緊的。

有人說：「我想孝順父母，但是我現在出家了，父親也不在我身邊，母親也不在我身邊，那我要怎麼孝順呢？」出家，那正是大孝，所謂「一子入佛門，九祖升天」，你一個後人要是出家修道，九祖都會借你的光而升天的。你看！九祖都超升。所以這不單是孝順今世的父母，就是過去的祖先，過去世的父母，你都孝順了。但是你可要修行，你要是不修行，九祖又全都墮地獄了，他們就都會哭起來了。怎麼哭起來呢？他們說：「我本來以為我有一個後人出家，因為他修道，我們就都可以升天了。誰知道他不修道，天天睡覺，懶得不得了。我們現在罪業又都不赦免了，所以又都墮地獄了。」所以說雖然出家修道，九祖升天，你要是不修道，九祖一樣墮地獄。不是說我出家了，我就有理了，九祖一定要升天的，不是的。不修行，就不會升天；你要是修行，這就是大孝，將父親母親都超度了。

講到這個地方，今天我們有一個小沙彌，我在佛堂很久了，他還沒起身，我一看，把我這個沒有火的師父也惹出火來了，一個出家人這麼懶怎麼可以？發了脾氣。他還不錯，什麼也不出聲。

☯ 待續

Last summer I mentioned the couplet “The lamb kneels to drink milk; the young crow returns with food to the nest.” When the baby lamb drinks its mother’s milk, it bends its forelegs. Crows are considered filial birds in China because young crows return with food for their aged mother who can no longer fly. Even baby crows know how to be filial. Crows are birds and lambs are mammals. If we were not filial to our parents, we would be worse than birds and beasts.

Human beings are supposed to be endowed with the five virtues: humaneness, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and trustworthiness. Since we can be virtuous in these five ways, how can we be worse than crows and sheep? There is nothing more important than being filial to our parents.

Someone might ask, “I want to be filial, but now I have left the home life and my parents are nowhere nearby. How can I be filial?” Leaving the home life is an act of great filial respect. There is a saying, “When one child enters the Buddhist order, nine generations of ancestors ascend to the heavens.” If you leave home to cultivate the Path, nine generations of ancestors receive the benefit and may go to the heavens. In this way, you are being filial not only to your parents but to your ancestors and parents of your lives past. Of course, you must continue to cultivate. If you stop cultivating, your nine generations of ancestors will fall into the hells, where they will wail and moan: “We had a descendant who left the home life to cultivate, and because of him we should have been born in the heavens. Who would have thought that he is so lazy that he sleeps all day instead of cultivating? Now our offenses cannot be pardoned, so we have fallen into the hell once again.”

The mere act of leaving home life is not sufficiently powerful to cause your nine generations of ancestors to be reborn in the heavens. If you do not cultivate, they will not enter the heavens, but if you do cultivate, you are practicing great filial respect that can eventually liberate your parents.

Speaking of this, I was in the Buddha hall for quite a long time today and even so, a certain śramanera (novice monk) had still not gotten up. Even I, the teacher without a temper, was on fire. “How can a monk be so lazy?” I scolded. He was not bad though; he did not rebut at all.

☯ To be continued