

梁武帝問誌公禪師因果經 (續)

The Sutra of Emperor Wu of Liang Dynasty Inquiring of Chan Master Zhi Gong about Cause and Effect (continued)

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武帝又問。不持齋戒僧道。禮佛誦經。福德如何。

誌公答曰。不持齋戒僧道。誦經禮佛。全無功德。有甚福田。

經云。求福要齋戒。齋戒是求福。佛事門中。齋戒為本。若不齋戒。福從何來。

《大乘戒經》云。口吃五辛酒肉。四十九日。污穢不淨。尚且不敢登佛殿寶塔。何況禮佛誦經。

又《楞嚴經》云。吃五辛人。夜臥之中。有鬼來舐唇吻。受其污氣。令人福德日消。罪障時益。

《戒疏發引》云。提壺相勸。感五百劫無手足報。況自飲乎。

噫。為僧道尚不信齋戒。況施主怎得有福田。枉費貲財。徒勞心力。

《大藏經》云。昔有三個人。欲度大海。要過海東。有一大智士。就造一隻船。而渡海去。又有一人。用一大牛。拽住牛尾。亦渡海去。又有一人。不造船。不用牛。只用一豬。拽住豬尾。亦欲渡海。其豬焉能渡得海。

待續

Emperor Wu asked, “Some monastics fail to uphold the precepts or observe vegetarianism, yet they bow to the Buddha and recite sutras. What blessings, if any, do such individuals receive?”

Master Zhi Gong explained:

“For monastics who recite sutras and bow to the Buddha but fail to uphold the precepts and practice vegetarianism, there is no merit, let alone blessings. A sutra teaches that one who seeks blessings must uphold the precepts and practice vegetarianism. These two practices are essential paths to cultivating blessings. Within Buddhism, for any undertaking, upholding the precepts and observing vegetarianism are foundational. Without them, from where can blessings arise?

The Mahayana Precepts Sutra states: ‘A person who eats meat and consumes the five pungent plants remains defiled for forty-nine days. A conscientious practitioner dares not enter the Buddha hall or approach stupas, much less bow to the Buddha or recite the sutras.’

Similarly, the *Shurangama Sutra* warns that those who consume the five pungent plants attract ghosts. When they sleep, these ghosts come to lick and kiss their lips, spreading ghostly energy to defile them. This causes their blessings to diminish and their karmic hindrances to increase day by day.

The Guidance and Elaboration on the Commentary of the Precepts further states: ‘Those who, while carrying a wine bottle, pressure or persuade others to drink will endure the retribution of having no hands for five hundred kalpas. How much graver, then, is the retribution for those who drink wine themselves?’

Alas, when monastics themselves disregard the precepts and vegetarianism, how can their sponsors hope to gain blessings? By paying such monks for sutra recitations, sponsors merely waste their resources.

The Buddhist canon recounts a parable about three people seeking to cross the sea to the east. Among them, one was a wise man who built a boat and successfully sailed across. Another clung to the tail of an ox and managed to cross. But the third neither built a boat nor relied on an ox; instead, he foolishly grabbed the tail of a pig, hoping to ‘sail’ across. How could a pig possibly serve for crossing the sea? Both the pig and the person sank to the bottom, becoming objects of ridicule.

To be continued