

Records of the Life of Tripitaka Master Hua

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THE RESURRECTION

When asked by the Venerable Master Syin Ren to assist in building a temple, the Master went to the village of Syi Da Ju to borrow wagons in order to haul materials to the building site, but no one was willing to help. When he spoke with the Mayor, Lyou Jung Jin, the Mayor replied, "I am sorry, but right now we are extremely busy planting fields and need every available wagon."

That morning, the Mayor's sister-in-law's child died. She brought the child to the Master and asked, "Why did my child die? He was good and obedient."

"Have you been filial to your parents-in-law?" asked the Master. "No doubt you haven't, and so your child has died. If you would like him back, bow to them and admit your errors. Then your child will come back to life."

Seeing her hesitate, the Master added, "I'm not kidding! Why would I joke about something like that? Go try it out!"

She went to her husband's family and bowed. "It's true," she said, "I haven't been filial and so my child has died." Soon the entire family was crying and apologizing. When she returned home, she ran to her child but found him still dead.

"Is he better?" asked the Master.

"No," she said.

"Give him to me," said the Master. He took the child in his arms, patted him firmly on the head three times, and the child began to cry. He was completely well. The entire house--hold took refuge with the Triple Jewel through the Master, and then the whole village took refuge, too. When the Mayor got word, he said, "You asked to use our carts? You may take them all. We will all help you build the temple."

After that, wherever he went, people fought to lend the Master a cart. Then the trouble began: "My mother is sick," said one. "Couldn't you help her?" Another said, "My uncle is not well...." In all cases, the Master exhausted his strength to cure the sick. "You have worked for the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas," he would say, "and they will certainly take care of you. From today on your sickness will be healed." In each case, as soon as he spoke, they were cured. Within a month, over eight hundred carts were available for the use of the temple.

It was winter, and the Master rose at three in the morning to work in the snow, wearing only three layers of cotton clothing. When people saw him, they would exclaim, "He only eats one meal a day and he's still not afraid of the cold. Incredible!"

When Li Ching Shan heard of the miraculous recovery of the Lyou child, he respectfully asked the Master to cure his little brother. When the Master entered the house, he said, "The house is too full of darkness. There is nothing I can do. Within a few days, a great misfortune will occur."

Towards the end of the week, Li Ching Shan quarreled with his brother and committed suicide. His brother and daughter died shortly thereafter. The villagers said that the Master had knowledge of the future, but the Master made no reply.

THE METHOD

The Master accompanied the Great Master Chang Ren, encouraging people to make offerings of charity. The two of them went everywhere. Once they passed through a country village, and just as they were about to enter the house of a Mr. Wong, he grabbed his child and knelt before them in the doorway, begging them to save his child's life. His child had tuberculosis and coughed up blood, and his stomach and head ached. Hearing his request, Great Master Chang Ren said, "Ask Dharma Master An Dzu. He can help you."

The Master replied, "The man asked you to help him. Why do you give your work to me?" The Abbot insisted, however, and so the Master agreed. Then he asked Mr. Wong a strange question: "Do you want your son to live? I am unable to save him. You must save him yourself."

"I want him to live," said Mr. Wong. "But how can I save him? I don't know how."

"Here is the method," said the Master. "If you want him to live, you must allow him to leave the home-life and become a Bhikshu. If he leaves home, he will live; if he does not, he will surely die. There are no two ways about it."

The child was eleven years old at the time. Mr. Wong's wife agreed to the conditions, and the Master repeated them. "If your child leaves home, from this very day, he will not cough blood and his stomach and head will be cured," he said.

"How do you feel?" they asked the boy.

"Better," he said. "In fact, I feel fine."

The child was soon completely well. Although the Master advised Mr. Wong on several occasions to bring his son to the temple, Mr. Wong did not do so. The Master waited two or three months. One day, as he was walking along the outskirts of the village, the child, sitting at home, was aware of his proximity. "Father," he said, "my teacher came to our village today, but he did not stop at our house. He is probably unhappy with us."

From that day, the child relapsed and his sickness was worse than before. A week later, his father went to the temple, but the Master wasn't there, and since none of the other people understood the situation, no one could help him.

Arriving home, his son said, "I went with you to the Temple today and saw every room and know who lives where. One room was hung with banners for the dead...."

"Strange," said his father. "Your mother says you were here all the time. How could you have gone with me to the Temple?"

A few days later the Master was again walking on the outskirts of town, returning to the Temple, and the child knew. "My teacher is returning to the Temple; he's not stopping here. Please follow his instructions and allow me to leave home right away. Go and see him immediately."

"Wait until tomorrow," said his father. "I'll go then."

"You don't have to go," said the boy. "Even if you went this minute, it wouldn't make any difference."

That evening, at dusk, the child sat up in bed. "Father?" he called.

"Light the lamp and tell me if I am sitting correctly."

His father lit the lamp and looked at his son who was sitting serene and upright in full lotus. He was dead.

No matter how hard his father and mother cried, the child didn't come back to life. They begged the Master to make him live again, but the Master said, "The method was yours, not mine. I gave it to you, but you didn't use it. There is nothing more I can do."

Why did the Master instruct the child to leave home? It was because he had the appearance of a Bhikshu, and in past lives he had made vows to leave the home life in every life.



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