

戒殺四十八問節選

An Excerpt from the Forty-Eight Inquiries of Non-Killing

清·周安士居士述（白話）

鍾佰晟 英譯

By Upasaka Zhou An Shi of the Qing Dynasty

English Translated by Brian Chung



慈受禪師的偈說：「世間上殺生殺得太多了，於是就引發了戰爭。於是曾經殺生的，在戰爭中就會被殺。曾經欠人錢財而賴帳不還的，在戰爭中房子就被燒掉。曾經搗毀鳥獸巢穴的，在戰爭中就會妻離子散。各各的報應，都相等於所造之業。所以大家要洗耳恭聽佛陀所說，因果報應的道理呀。（原偈：世上多殺生，遂有刀兵劫。負命殺汝身，欠財焚汝宅。離散汝妻子，曾破他巢穴。報應各相當，洗耳聽佛說。）」

由此可知，殺劫的發生，都是由於大家的殺生之業而感召來的。那麼面臨

The Chan Master Ci Shou once said, “As a result of the evil of animal slaughter, violence and wars will break out. Those who have taken life will in turn lose their lives. Those who have maliciously refused to repay their debts will lose their homes in the chaos. Furthermore, those who have destroyed burrows and nests will have their family members scattered. Each sin will result in the appropriate retribution. Thus, do not fail to heed the Buddha’s words.”

Therefore, violence and wars are caused by the evil karma of killing. If we are faced with impending violence or conflict, the only recourse is to abstain from killing. The merits from such abstinence is the most potent and materializes speedily. Other good deeds cannot match it.

殺劫，想要逃避的話，該如何呢？只有以戒殺來轉變，才是最快速，最感應的，做其他的善事都比不上它的效果。

因此之故，我特別寫此問答一卷，以解釋一般人對戒殺的疑惑，加強已戒殺者的信心。希望大家對過去所造的殺業，能夠念佛超度牠們。當下要斷除未來的殺業，發大慈悲心，發大堅強忍耐之心，發誓不再故意去殺害任何一個微細的生命。如果能夠這麼做的話，還會逃不掉殺劫。那麼我願意讓天龍八部及金剛神，把我的頭截去。

問：書經上說，天地是萬物的父母，人類是萬物之靈。所以我認為上天生長了這麼多的畜生類，就是爲了要養育人的。爲什麼要禁止殺生呢？

答：既然你知道天地是萬物的父母，那就應當知道萬物是天地的赤子。赤子之中，如果有強壯的欺負弱小的。有高貴的凌辱低賤的，做父母的一定是大大不樂的。如果你吃畜生的肉，就認爲是上天以此來養育你的話。那麼虎豹吃人肉，蚊虻吸人血，是不是說上天生人類，是爲了養育蚊虻虎豹的呢？

問：既然如此，那爲何上天不顯示報應，以禁止人類殺生呀？

答：上天當然禁止殺生，所以經常顯示殺生的果報。只是愚蠢的人不知其間的道理，所以仍照樣殺生。而有智慧的人雖然知道，卻仍然故意去犯，老天爺也莫可奈何呀。

在咸豐年間，全椒縣有位居民晚上睡覺時，夢見天神告誡他說，有軍隊馬上就要來了，不戒殺的話，絕對難逃一死。他驚醒過來，率領全家大小，

Thus, I have composed this scroll of questions and answers regarding non-violence. I wish to answer people's doubts regarding this matter and convince everyone to abstain from killing animals. Furthermore, I hope everyone will recite Namó Amitabha and dedicate the resulting merits to the souls of the animals we have killed in the past. We should never again kill. Moreover, we should give rise to the heart of Great Compassion and vow to exercise great forbearance. Henceforth, we should not dare to kill even the smallest creature. I vow that if you do as instructed but are unable to avoid conflict and violence, the Celestial Dragons and Vajra Dharma Protectors may have my head!

Question: In the *Book of History*, it is said that Heaven and Earth are the mother of all living beings, and mankind is the paragon of all beings. Therefore, animals are certainly created by Heaven for the benefit of mankind. Thus, why not kill?

Answer: As Heaven and Earth are the mother of all living beings, all animals are the beloved offspring of Heaven and Earth. No mother can be happy if among her children, the strong bully the weak and the successful exploit the poor. If you eat meat and feel that it is your right to do so, then by this logic, as tigers can eat humans and mosquitoes suck our blood—are humans not created by Heaven to nourish beasts and pests?

Question: If animal slaughter is an offense, why does Heaven not inflict punishment to deter such conduct?

Answer: Heaven is definitely against animal slaughter. Thus, the karmic retributions for hunting and slaughtering are actually numerous and fully visible. However, the foolish fail to heed these warnings and the intelligent willfully refuse to change their behavior. Thus, there is really nothing more Heaven can do.

For instance, in 1851, a native of Quanjiao County dreamed of a celestial deity who warned him that: “An army is fast approaching your residence! If you do not cease slaughtering animals, you cannot hope to escape death!” After he awoke, he and his entire household burned incense and vowed that they would never slaughter or hunt again. No one breached their vows... except for one dissenting matron. She said to him, “You simply had a dream, we cannot be sure if it is true or not.” A few days later, the violence indeed spilled into their hometown. Everyone managed

焚香發誓要永遠斷除殺業，大家都遵從。其中只有一位婦女不同意。她說：「這只不過是夢而已，不值得相信的。」幾天之後，軍隊果然來了，他們全家都逃出去。只有這位婦女，由於戀家的緣故，比別人走得遲些，結果就被殺了。這件事是我親自見聞的。

問：天下的畜生種類那麼多，如果人人戒殺的話，那些畜生不停的生長，人間豈不就成了禽獸世界？

答：蚯蚓、昆蟲及蛇，一般人是不吃的，牠們可有充滿天地之間呢。世間的禽獸之所以多，正是因為殺生的人多之故。這叫做冤冤相報，彼此互成畜生，那就會成為禽獸世界了。若是人人戒殺的話，那麼畜生果報的業就會慢慢消滅，而人類和諸天的數量就會增多。楚人不捕蛙類，而蛙類反而減少。蜀人不食螃蟹，而螃蟹卻日漸稀少，這些不都是證明嗎？

問：上天既然厭惡人類殺生，那就應當使畜生血肉的味道，變得很臭惡噁心才對呀。如此一來，普天之下，自然人人都戒殺而不敢吃畜生血肉了，這樣不是挺好的嗎？

答：禽獸血肉的味道，上天是認為很臭惡噁心的。世間的人吃了覺得是美味，就好比廁所的蛆，貪吃糞便一樣，這是習性而自己無法覺察出來。譬如前世做貓的人，當時心心念念就想著要捉老鼠來吃。前世做鶴的人，當時一心只想吞蛇。現在今世為人，就不會想吃老鼠或蛇了。可見是那一種軀體，就具備那種軀體的嗜好。嗜好的不同，是由於業力與因緣之故。而業力與因緣的各不相同，又是因心而起的。人的心如果和天的心一樣，自然會覺得血肉的味道，實在是很臭惡噁心的。

to escape except for the matron, who had delayed leaving the family compound and was killed. The native and his family members personally brought this incident to my attention.

Question: There are so many animals in the world. If no one hunts or slaughters, wouldn't their populations grow out of control?

Answer: There are plenty of insects and animals that humans do not eat or kill; their numbers are numerous without issue. Furthermore, the reason there are so many beasts and animals is due to the karma of killing. Animal rebirth is caused by the cycle of retribution and revenge. People who kill animals are reborn as animals to even up the debt. If everyone abstains from taking animal life, the karma that supports the realm of animals will gradually dissipate while the ranks of devas and men will increase. For instance, if people do not trap frogs, the population of frogs will decrease. Likewise, if people do not fish for crabs, the population of crabs will gradually decrease. Thus, the laws of karma are quite clear.

Question: If Heaven wishes for mankind to refrain from eating meat, then why isn't the meat of animals disgusting and foul as a deterrent?

Answer: The truth is that Heaven already considers meat to be foul and disgusting. However, people believe the taste of meat to be delicious — like how maggots revel in putrid feces. As this is a matter of deep-rooted habits, it is difficult to change perceptions. For instance, if a man was a cat in his past life, he would have craved for rodents during that life. Likewise, if a man was a crane in his past life, he would've craved for snakes. However, as they are now men, they no longer yearn for rats and snakes. Thus, each body has its own habits. Variations in preferences and habits are due to karma, causes and conditions. Differences in karma, causes and conditions are in turn caused by differing intentions. If people's hearts and intentions can accord with Heaven's will, they will naturally understand that meat is indeed foul and disgusting.

☞ 待續

☞ To be continued