

# 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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此喻上中下三等。優劣不同。所以求福要擇戒行僧人。若不依此。甚為迷惑。如夢說夢也。

武帝又問。經價多少。請為指示。答曰。《金剛經》一藏。五千四十八卷。該價一百二十兩。

《彌陀經》一藏。〈往生神咒〉一藏。共銀八十兩。

《觀音經》一藏。該價十二兩。

《地藏經》一藏。該價三百八十兩。凡藏經數。俱係五千四十八卷為一藏。惟有《心經》。是無價之寶。載在大藏中。凡有念經祈福者。不可欠少經價。若有欠缺者。即有伽藍不肯。諸天不護。不生歡喜之心。不降天宮之福。

古云。欲求天上福。須用世間財。是以經錢易少。佛債難還。齋主若無捨心。亦莫起此念頭。僧道若無齋戒。切莫起此貪心。

藏經功德大如山  
勸君莫作等閑看  
若無信心休貪望  
僧道無戒也是閑  
三乘妙法古今傳  
開度人天大因緣  
生死海中念佛勝  
人天路上福為先

待續

This analogy describes the three levels of monastics who perform sutra recitation services: the superior, the intermediate, and the inferior. Likewise, when seeking blessings, one must turn to monastics who are virtuous and steadfast in observing the precepts. If one neglects to find such virtuous monastics for sutra recitation, it is like a muddled person speaking of dreams within a dream.

Emperor Wu continued and asked, “What is the reasonable price for recitation service? Please explain it to me!”

The Master answered, “Among the entire 5,048-roll Buddhist canon, the service for reciting the *Vajra Sutra* once is worth 120 taels of silver!

For one *Amitabha Sutra* plus the Rebirth Mantra, it is worth 80 taels.

One recitation of the “Universal Door Chapter” (of the Guanyin Sutra) is worth 12 taels.

One recitation of the *Earth Store Sutra* is worth 380 taels. Among the 5,048-roll canon, the *Heart Sutra* is considered a jewel that is priceless.

“According to the canon, anyone who requests a sutra recitation service to obtain blessings must not fall short in paying reasonable fees. If the payment is inadequate, the Sangharama guardians will disapprove, and the gods will not render their support; they will be unhappy and will not grace their heavenly blessings. The ancients said, “To seek heavenly blessings, one must spend some worldly wealth.” Therefore, it is easy to fall short in paying fully for a sutra recitation, but difficult to pay off the debt to monastics. If a donor is not willing to pay, then the donor should not bother with seeking blessings from requesting a sutra recitation. Similarly, if a monastic does not have the virtue of precepts, then he should not be greedy.

*The merit and virtue of the Tripitaka is as great as a mountain;*

*Thus, I exhort you not to take this matter lightly.*

*If lacking faith in the Dharma, laity should not bother seeking merit and virtue.*

*If lacking in the virtue of precepts, monastics' sutra recitations will be in vain.*

*The Three Vehicles of wondrous Dharma have been passed down from the ancient times to the present.*

*These provide the great conditions for gods and humans to be liberated.*

*To transcend the sea of samsara, Buddha recitation is foremost;*

*To become humans or gods, blessing is the most essential.*

待續