

學佛行儀（爲官第十）

Department Guidelines for Buddhist Practitioners (10. Serving as Official)

善因法師 述

Narrated by Dharma Master Shanyin

晨珪譯組 英譯

English Translated by Early Bird Translation Team



【白話】對有人問：「學佛的人如果當官，遇到應該判處死刑的罪犯，該怎麼辦呢？」

回答是：「遇到該判死刑的人，如果有一絲可以減刑的餘地，就改判無期徒刑即可；若是完全無可寬恕之處，即便執行死刑也不會違背慈悲之心。因為除去一個惡人，可以保全衆多善人，同時也能警示所有人。」（但在處決前，最好向犯人講解因果報應、佛法以及淨土往生的道理。）

過去佛陀在某一世中，曾遇到一個惡人捆綁了百名善人準備殺害。佛陀不忍見此慘狀，便自願捨身償還惡人的業債，隨即殺死惡人，救下所有善人——這才是真正的大慈悲！怎能用世俗婦人的狹隘仁慈，來比擬佛法的深意呢！

更妥善的做法是：判處犯人徒刑，而官員親自常去監獄宣講佛法，懇切至極。就像近年來浙江各地監獄推行佛法宣講那樣，如此一來，所有犯人無不受到感化！

☞待續

Someone may ask, “If a Buddhist practitioner holds a government position and is required to sentence a criminal to death, how should they handle such a situation?”

The answer: “If there is any possibility to mitigate the sentence, one should try to change the death penalty to life imprisonment. However, if there is no feasible way to do so, sentencing someone to death does not necessarily compromise one’s compassion. This is because ending the life of an evil person can save many innocent people, and such a ruling can serve as a deterrent to others.”

(That being said, before carrying out the execution, it is essential to expound the Dharma, particularly the Law of Cause and Effect and the teachings of the Pure Land, to the condemned individual.)

In one of his past lives, the Buddha encountered an evil man who had tied up a hundred people and was about to slaughter them all. Unable to bear such an atrocity, the Buddha took action and killed the evildoer to save the innocent. He was fully prepared to bear the karmic consequences of taking a life. This act, though seemingly harsh, was in fact an expression of great compassion. How can we fully grasp the Buddhist concept of compassion using only our ordinary, limited perspective?

An even more ideal approach would be for a judge, after issuing a ruling, to personally visit the prison and sincerely share the Dharma with the inmate. Speaking with genuine compassion and earnestness, the judge could help inspire transformation. In recent years, this application of the Buddhadharma has taken root in various prisons, profoundly impacting and reforming countless inmates. Such examples have been observed in the prison systems of Zhejiang. ☞To be continued