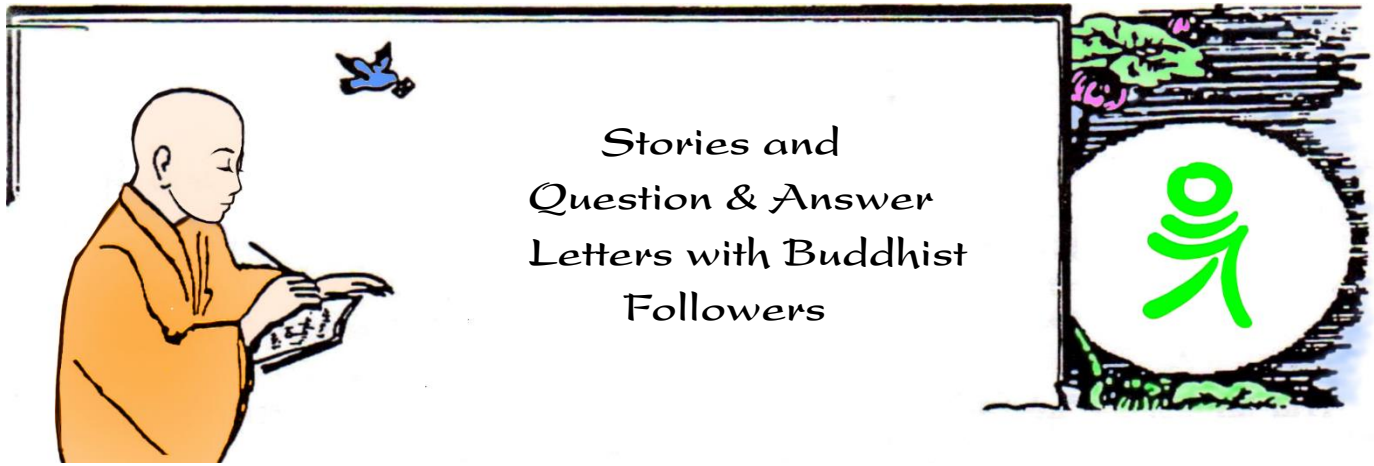




Question:

“What is the scariest thing in this world?”

Master answered, **“DESIRE!”**

The person looked skeptical, Master then said,
“Let me tell you a story:”

There once was a famous artist that wanted to draw a picture of BUDDHA and a DEVIL. He had a hard time finding an adequate model for Buddha, because he can't imagine an image of a true Buddha. He became worried. By chance, he was at a temple praying, and a monk caught his attention. This monk's disposition attracted this artist deeply. The artist immediately sought after the monk and promised him a large amount of money to be his model.

After a short time, the artist finished his masterpiece. The picture caused a commotion in the area, and the artist proclaimed, I am extremely pleased with that picture because the model gave me a chance to capture Buddha's features. His demeanor is serene and peaceful. People can sense that just looking at him.”

After that, the artist gave that monk lots of money just as promised, and because of the artist's masterpiece, people called him a “Saintly Artist.”

A long time has passed when the artist began wanting to depict a portrait of a DEVIL. This again started to become difficult for him because he doesn't know where to find someone to model as a devil. He searched everywhere for people that are mean and evil looking, but he could not find anyone who he agreed with. At last, he found a prisoner in jail to be his model. The artist was very happy. Looking at the artist, the model started to cry and cry.

Puzzled, the artist asked the reason why the prisoner is upset. The prisoner replied,
“Why was it when you were looking for the BUDDHA model you chose me, and

now when you need a model for a DEVIL, you chose me again?"

The Artist was startled. He looked closely at the prisoner then said,

"Why is that?"

The model for Buddha, he looked extraordinary! *But you, you looked exactly like a devil! How could this be the same person? This is strange, so hard for anyone to explain this."*

The prisoner painfully said, *"It's because of your money. It caused me to change my image from a Buddha into a Devil."*

The artist exclaimed, *"How could you say that, I didn't do anything to you!"*

"Since I got the money you gave me, I immediately spent it at the brothel looking for fun and entertainment. I spent all my money. I had no money left, but had become accustomed to that lifestyle. I could not control my desire. I started to steal money and kill people for money. Because of money, I would do any evil deed to get it. This is the result of who I am today."

The artist listened to these words feeling overwhelmed. He feared that human nature changed quickly for desire. People are weak. Anxiously, he threw his pen to the ground and since that day, he hasn't drawn another picture.

Once people fall into the trap of pursuing their desires for money, materialism, fame, wealth, power, beauty, and sexual lust, they easily lose their true sense of goodness. It is very difficult to not be tempted with desire. This is why human nature cannot go without greed.

The Master after retelling the story, closed his eyes without saying anything more. The person who asked the question could easily see his answer through the story.

Therefore,

To have a peaceful life, peace of mind, and happiness, you must be content and be happy with what you have on hand. Don't be greedy. Don't plan to harm others to get ahead. All the rich and the poor, the beautiful and ugly, the wise and foolishness in this life are due to the **"consequence"** of good or evil that was sowed in the past. The consequence became **"the result"** (*good or bad*) of this life.

Buddha dharma taught:

To learn about causes in past lives,

Just examine the effects in current lives.

To learn about the fruit in future lives,

Just examine the seeds planted in current lives.

That is:

To know the *seed* that was sown (*good or bad*) in the past life, one must look at the *fruit* in this life.

To know the *fruit* (*good or bad*) in the future, one must look at the *seed* sown (*action of good or bad*) in the present. You will receive the fruit of which the seed was sown. Everything is the result from the heart and mind of GOOD or EVIL, and desire.

According to the law of cause and effect, sentient beings reincarnate among the six realms based on their “**positive or negative karmas**”.

The Great Venerable Yongjia taught:

- Anger, adultery, and wickedness condemn you to HELL.
- Greed and stinginess imprison your soul in Hell as a STARVING GHOST.
- Ignorance and sloth lead to becoming ANIMALS.
- Egotism and elevated pride lead to becoming ASURA (*semi devils*).
- Wholly upholding the five precepts (*no: killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, and alcoholism*) lead to the HUMAN realm.
- Steadfast practice of the ten meritorious deeds earns you the ticket to HEAVEN.
- Achieving the truth of Selflessness earns one **the rank Auditory-perceiver of their Sainthood**.
- Clearly understanding **dependent origination** leads to PRATYEKA-BUDDHA (*rank in Sainthood, Affinitive -Com prehensor*)
- **Cultivating six paramitas** (*invaluable qualities: Charity, devotion, patience, discipline, meditation, wisdom*) is the karma of BODHISATTVAS.
- Having the mind of compassion and equanimity lead to the BUDDHA karma.
- Pure minds will be reborn in Pure land, residing in bejeweled palaces and fragrant thrones.
- Disturbed minds will gain rebirth in an impure world, full of rugged terrains and pits.

All forms of natural phenomena originate from the mind, and only within the limit of the mind will they exist. Therefore, to enjoy the wholesome fruit, one must cultivate pure conducts.

Therefore,

WE MUST THINK OF THE CONSEQUENCE BEFORE COMMITTING ANY ACTION.

The brief teaching of Venerable Yongjia, effectively explains the theory of rebirths among the six realms. It clearly presents the cause-effect concept to be born in any of

the ten dharma worlds.

The Patriachs taught:

**Bodhisattvas “fear” Cause,
Living beings “fear” Effect.**

Because,

Bodhisattvas fear Cause, they don't create (*sinful*) Cause.

Sentient beings don't fear Cause, thus they freely accumulate (*immoral*) Cause.
When the (*vile*) Effect turns up, they face sufferings and tragedies.

It turns out that the most frightening thing in this world is desire. The more people desire, the more unsatisfactory they become, which causes more unhappiness and sorrow.

