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Buddhism

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Buddhism



The Painting of the "Scenes of the Hells" Painting by Artist, Mr. Yi-Zi Jiang

Prologue

Life is short and impermanent. Our lives depend on the continuation of one single breath. Since there is life, it is inevitable that there will be death. There are lots of questions as to where we will go after we die. Are we going to the "World of Ultimate Bliss"? Or are we going to the Heavens? Or to the hells or to the realms of "Hungry Ghosts"? Or are we going to be re-incarnated as animals or human beings? Our ultimate destination will depend on the karma that we accumulate in our present lives.

The painting of the “Scenes of the Hells” displays the truth of human suffering after falling into the vast depths of hells. This particular painting also demonstrates that all human suffering is self-inflicted, rather than being imposed by the adjudicators in the hells. After viewing this painting, we should realise that it is truly difficult to be re-incarnated back into the human form and this idea in itself is terrifying – to have thoughts that would lead us to those sufferings in the torture of hells. The sutras say, that by sincerely confessing and repenting our past sins and misdeeds, we can eliminate misfortunes. Let us remind one another about this.



1. Amitabha Buddha and Other Sages Welcome Sentient Beings to the World of Ultimate Bliss

The greatest achievement in one's lifetime is to be reborn in the “Pure land” within this life. This will allow us to break

away from the perpetual cycle of rebirth and free us from the suffering of both life and death. The World of Ultimate Bliss is the unsurpassed Pure Land, created by Amitabha Buddha's incomparable will power with the purpose of ending the sufferings of all beings. If we have the faith, the vow, and the practice in chanting Amitufo mindfully. If we have complete sincerity in our faith, vow, and practice and we abide by the teachings of Buddha and practice this continually all our lives, at the time when our life comes to an end, the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas will come and lead us to the World of Ultimate Bliss.



2. Practices of Ten Good Deeds Lead to the Heavens

If we are not able to go to the World of Ultimate Bliss, but we did accumulate good karma through good deeds within our lifetime, we can still go to the heavens to enjoy heavenly bliss. However, the Ten Good Deeds must be observed.

What are the Ten Good Deeds?

1. No killing
2. No stealing
3. No sexual misconduct
4. No lying
5. No enticing speech
6. No slander
7. No abusive speech
8. No greed
9. No anger
10. No ignorance



3. To Gain a Human Form by Observing the Five Precepts

Buddha said to be born into the human form is unbelievably rare and “the human form once lost is extremely hard to regain.” How can one attain the human form in the next life? The basic requirement is to observe the Five Precepts. What are the Five Precepts?

1. No killing
2. No stealing
3. No sexual misconduct
4. No lying
5. No intoxicants

Whether one is rich or poor in life, depends on the amount of good and bad deeds one accumulates previously. There is a saying that to know what we did in our previous lives, we only need to know what we have in our present lives; to know what might shape our future life, we simply look at what we are doing now. It is fundamental that we understand this concept.



4. Practices of Ten Evil Deeds Leading to Suffering in Hells

The Ten Evil Deeds are the opposite of the Ten Good Deeds. There are only a few decades in one's life. If we do not realize the need to practice good deeds, or we choose to ignore the law of “cause and effect” or we do not practice doing good deeds and accumulate virtues, when we are taken by the Judge of Impermanence, when we are standing before the gate of Hell, it will be too late to regret.



5. Too Late to Regret Now, the Judge is Here to Try Us

It is like waking up from a dream. All actions done in one's life will be judged after one's death.



7. The First Hall in the Hells : The Hall of King Qinguang

Here in the First Hall in the Hells – the length of life, the level of auspiciousness, and the punishment in the hells are decided. All sinful souls are brought to King Qinguang to be tried and sentenced accordingly. These souls will be punished in the hells and to have their karma reduced. If souls can balance their bad deeds with their good ones, they can be sent to the Tenth Hall to await rebirth.



8. No One Can Hide in Front of the Karma Mirror

“The cunning and deceitful people will be exposed. When one dies, nothing could be retained except one's karma.” All of our bad deeds will be exposed in the Karma Mirror. No one can deny anything.



9. The First and Most Important Good Deed is Filial Piety The most serious sin of all is to commit suicide. It is foolish and also agonizing for one to commit suicide. The suffering after suicide is more painful. One would suffer the pain of suicide repeatedly because one has yet to repay the Four Great Kindnesses: the kindnesses of one's parents, teachers, country, and all other beings. If one commits suicide, without fulfilling one's duties, not only would the parents be heartbroken, the spouse and children would lead miserable lives. Therefore, this sin is exceptionally severe.



10. A Chaotic World Begins with the Loss of Conscience and the



Lack of Moral Education

In our physical world, it is easy to commit uncountable bad karma; for example, indulgence in sexual desires or gambling, indulgence in alcohol, or not being dutiful or devoted to parents or forgetting the kindness of others and betrayal of honor. One mistake leads to a thousand lifetimes of regret and it will be too late to realize this at the end of one's life.



11. If Everyone Fails to Abide by Their Responsibilities and Duties, Endless Karma Will be Committed.

The source of all misconduct comes from the three poisons: greed, anger and ignorance. The lack of morality these days is due to the failure of adhering to the teachings of saints and sages. Many people know their own religions only at a superficial level, and not their true essence, which is about the education of moral and virtue. Ignoring the essence of our own religion and focusing only on formalities further confuses people of the world and leads to deterioration of morals.



12. If One Does Not Practice What One Learns, One Should Feel Ashamed in Front of Virtuous Books

We study the teachings of the sages to educate and advance



our communities. If we do not harmonize ourselves with these teachings and not act as a role model for others, but instead indulge in fame and financial gain, then we will be the first to come to this hell for remedial study. After that, one goes to go to other hells to clear one's sins.



13. People Who Scheme for Profit Fail Those with Generous Sincerity

The purpose of being social educators is to serve and educate the people. Their only purpose is to look after the all beings' interests. Should anyone try to gain profit for oneself, not only would it damage the image of the educators, but

also betray other's faith in them. Such as, if people who lead Religious Chanting Ceremonies miss chanting phrases and even pages, or if they are unfocused or insincere, they would first have to make up for their lapses in this hell after death. Then they would be sent to different hells to absolve their sins.



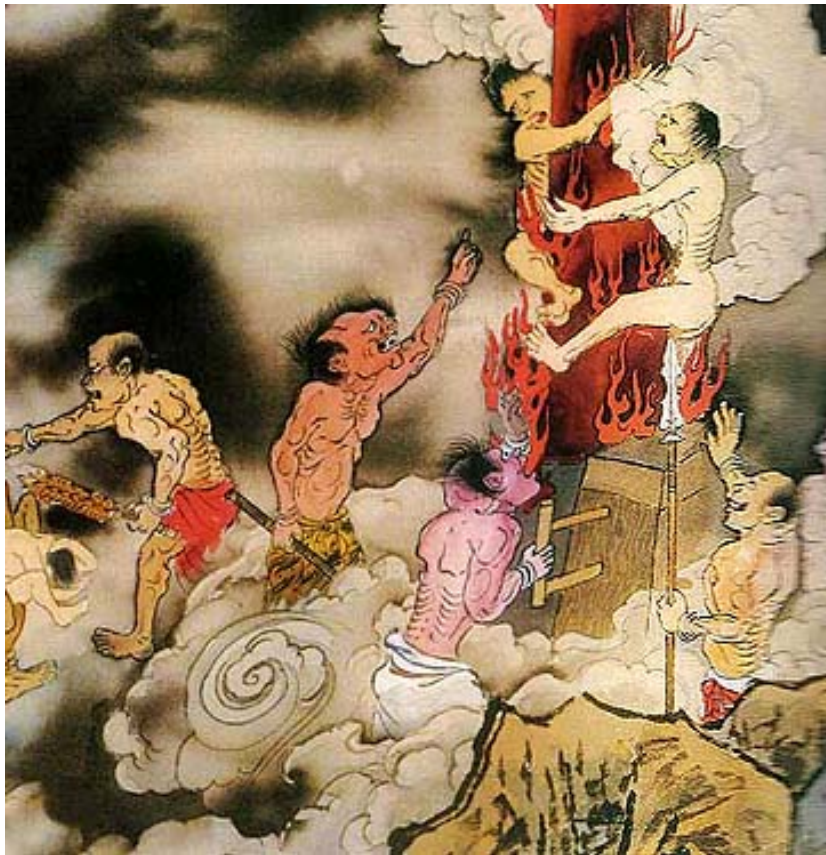
14. The Dim Lights from an Oil Lamp Cannot Reveal Black-Hearted and Unethical People

Intelligent, capable people can bring good fortune to others or bring disaster too. For some who claim to be religious and fail to follow the teachings in the holy scriptures, their suffering will be unbearable once the Judge arrives. They will also be “reborn as animals” to repay their remaining debts.



15. People Go to Different Hells According to Their Sins

Dictated by the course of one's karma, one will go to a specific hell according to one's past deeds as the due punishment is personally experienced and served.



16. The Hell of Pillars

It is said: "Lewd thoughts arise from a comfortable life."

Today, sexual indulgence is widespread. Most who suffer in this hell indulged, before their deaths, in sexual misconduct and adultery; in the selling of pornographic books, tapes and discs; or in the photographing, writing, possessing, or was involved in the public exhibition of pornography and similar materials. These people will be sent to this particular hell after their death. They will be forced to embrace a red-hot, burning copper pillar, die from burns all over their bodies, and then be reborn repeatedly in this hell as a form of perpetual punishment. This pain and suffering will be unbearable. Once these people can eliminate their bad karma, they are often reborn as animals. Ending their karma as animals; if they are to gain a human form, usually poor, despised, have short or harsh lives.



17. The Hell of Fire (Iron) Bed

The Hell of Fire Bed is like a cooking grill. Males who engage in sexual misconduct, will be forced to embrace a copper pillar as females suffer on an iron bed. We read that those who like to take lives or cook flesh in various ways, or those who trample on small insects come to this hell to suffer after their death. The period of suffering in this hell is inconceivably long. If they completely eliminate this type of karma for this hell, but they still have other karma, they will be sent to other hells to clear those karma.



18. The Second Hall in the Hells: The Hall of King Chujiang

King Chujiang is in charge of the second hall “Hell of Life” known as the Great Hell of Lasting Suffering. We are forced to come here due to countless killings in our former life. The punishment will be in accordance with the each and every particular type of killing that we had committed. One gets killed the same way in which one killed others. Beings come to this “Hell of Life” due to their love of killing in their previous lives. If the degree of the killing can be classified into three levels, there would be three levels of corresponding hells. In short, the punishment depends on one's karma, and one can be sent to as many as 16 places for punishment. One goes to other hells after completing the suffering here. The punishments can last hundreds or thousands of years. The level of suffering increases at each of the 16 places. They are linked successively: The torture seems endless.



19. The Hell of Stomach-Piercing

Those who viciously harm other beings, such as killing aquatic beings using forks and spears, or hunting animals, will enter this hell. They will not only have their stomachs pierced, but also have their bodies stabbed beyond recognition. Their misery is extreme and their lasting and painful death are revived by the mere touch of a breeze, the torture process will be repeated endlessly.



20. The Hell of the Sword Leaves

Ruthless people who use knives and clubs to fight with others or who instigate fights, or who engage in gang fights or who invade other country, or those who initiate wars, will suffer in this hell after death. When we look at the current state of our world, we see the weak falling victim to the strong. Competition escalates to become fighting. The escalation of fighting becomes war. Many innocent people are facing unprecedented disasters. Today the earth has become a global community. Invasion and occupation of another's country should not occur. When we have observe the sufferings of others condemned within this hell we should contemplate the real value and meaning of life.



21. The Hell of Tongue-Raking

Conflicts can arise from the expression of too many wrong words. The karma of speech causes endless misdeeds. The punishments are numerous and extreme. In this painting, the tongue is raked as it is being pulled out. The Buddha said: "Those who bear tales sow discord often eat the flesh on their own back." People in this hell suffer and cry incessantly. After the particular karma for this hell is completely eliminated they will be sent to the Hell of Drinking Molten Copper and have their throat, heart, lung, liver and intestines scalded. So much suffering can occur with just the karma of speech. Those who defame the saints and sages, including the Buddha, or those who create rumors or extensive conflicts, or those who cheat the elderly and kind people, cannot escape torture within this hell after their death.



22. The Hell of Whipping

A creature, no matter how insignificant, is still a life-form. When we casually whip and hurt small animals, or stamp on insects, though those creature cannot talk or fight back, the pains that they suffer are no different from that of human beings. Unsympathetic people will be flogged and severely beaten after death. Retribution follows an action, like a shadow follows a form. We must be on our guard.



23. The Hell of Chopping

To satisfy their cravings for meat, people slaughter animals and chop them into pieces alive. They themselves will be chopped into pieces after death. As it has been said “Mind is the painter, painting one's own karma.” One has to take the consequences for one's actions.



24. The Hell of Icy Coldness

By putting creature within a cold place to freeze to death. For example, putting caught fish in freezers, or freezing a person soon after death is extremely merciless. People who commit these acts will be sent to this hell. The book Yu Zhun Lun Ke says that people who abuse power to bully others and who could cold-heartedly threaten others to lose hope will be sent to this hell. Today many unlawful people use threats to force others into submission. These lawless people will not be able to get out of this hell easily. The same applies for who indulge in alcohol and sex, and for those who are dutiful and unfilial to their parents.



25. The Hell of Hungry Ghosts

A moment of anger will cause millions of obstacles. People fall into this hell because of their greediness and miserliness. Because of greed, they do not want to give. These hungry ghosts suffer from extreme hunger and thirst and are inflicted with the burning of their bodies. They weep torrents of tears, they moan with great sorrow. As we see, the merciful Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara comes to the rescue and provides food. Should they deeply feel remorseful at this moment, they will rapidly free themselves from the Realm of Hungry Ghosts.



26. The Hell of Pus and Blood

Yu Li says those fond of killing go to this hell. It is a very sad and cruel sight to see animals slaughtered. Lying in their own pool of blood, they often wail and bleed to their deaths. How miserable that is. If it was a human being that was being slaughtered wouldn't we be angry? Wouldn't we want to take revenge? Yu Zhun talks about people who use tricks and cheat others of their wealth. For example, those who cheat the elderly people to take possession of money and belongings to cause these people to live or die in regret and misery. Those guilty of these most heinous blood-sucking crimes, will be forced into this hell to receive their retribution.



27. The Hell of Urine and Faeces

This hell is filled with urine, faeces, and boiling cooper. Not only is there an unbearable smell, there are also worms in the faeces with shells that are as hard as diamond. The worms enter the body when the offenders eat them. The worm feed on the person's lips, and next on their tongues, throats, hearts, lungs, livers, intestines, and tendons, along with the rest of the flesh and bones. Such torment is to last for uncountable times. Those who like to eat the animals' internal organs, or commit sinful behaviors when drunk; behaviours such as defying their parents, or bring harm to their friends and relatives, or commit adultery, or abandon responsibility and use vulgarism will be summoned to this hell. While our science and technology advances, our morals and values are retrogressing. For better or for the worse, we determine our own destiny. We have to act with all possible caution.



28. The Third Hall : The Hall of King Songdi

This king rules the Great Hell of Black Ropes. People come to this hell because of their deviated thought, deluded resentment, ignorance, and fondness for killing. Those who are forced into this hell are engulfed by the rage of everlasting flames and are bound with black ropes, then they are pushed onto a scorching ground full of sharp blades. Dogs with flaming iron teeth tear them from the sides. Their bodies are torn apart and devoured. In this extremely miserable hell, the sound of wailing is deafening. There is no getting out until the karma is cleared. If they are to gain human form, these people will be reborn into the lowest class of existence, and often forced to suffer from hunger and thirst. The suffering here is worse than in the great “Hell of Life”. When this karma is paid, and should there be other

karma, they will sent to other hells to clear those. Knowing such sufferings exist, we must not go to the hells.



29. The Hell of Pounding

One who pounds another to death with ill will will be forced into this hell after their death. For example, in order to taste delicious cooking, one pounds fish or meat into paste of different shapes. It is also said that there are people who often scheme and cheat on others. Currently, many choose to swindle uniformed people such as the elderly and children, leaving them miserable and helpless. Those who cause such suffering will go to this Hell of Pounding.



30. The Hell of Eye-Gouging

The retribution in hells is cyclical. One misdeed often results in many transgressions. The more offenses one commits, the more punishments one faces. Eye-gouging is only one of them. The Yu Zhun says that people who forge documents and defraud others of their personal belonging and property will fall into this hell. Those who commit misdeeds will be forced into the Hell of Black Ropes. Many of them will also suffer eye-gouging.



31. The Hell of Inversion Tortures

If one tortures others, like taking pleasure in forcing creatures to walk upside-down, or hanging others upside-down, like those who grill prawns and fish after catching them, or those who roast pigs, lamb, beef, pork, chicken and ducks and so on, will be sent to this hell. Those who set up traps, hang poultry and animals upside-down, or those who use means to abduct and sexually assault their victims, will also be sent to this hell.



32. The Hell of Feet-Amputation

Yu Zhun says that the strong who abuse the weak, or those who use their positions of power to bully others, like being mean to their subordinates and servants, and making life a living hell for them, will be sent to this hell where their feet will be amputated – as a form of punishment.



33. The Hell of Blood-Sucking

Yu Li says that those who use their position of power to embezzle public funds, property and food, are like parasites who exploit the weak and vulnerable. Such people will be sent to this Hell of Blood-Sucking. They will be helplessly attacked and assaulted by crows and bats. They will die from having their blood suck completely dry. They will be revived when the hellish wind touches them, and they will have to suffer the same agony over and over again until this particular karma is cleared. Then they will be sent to other hells to pay for their other sins.



34. The Hell of Flesh-Eating Maggots

Those who commit bad and impure deeds will be sent to this particular hell. Poisonous maggots will bite and chew on them. Every inch of their skin, flesh, and every part of the body will be devoured. This incomparable torture is akin to your heart being drilled whilst you are still alive.



35. The Hell of Rib-Piercing

Yu Li says that government officials who are disloyal, receive bribes, or do not look after the people; or those who escape from prison, deface graves, defame others, commit perjury, or help others to terminate marital contracts, will be sent to this hell. Today, freedom of speech has reached unrestrained levels. More and more disputes and misfortunes arise due to defamation and criticism. This causes great danger and chaos in our society. Those who choose a profession to commit perjury, or to be witnesses to divorces, thus destroying families, will suffer in the Hell of Rib-Piercing.



36. The Hell of Tendon-Taking

Those who like eating animal tendon, such as ox tendon or those who traffic in drugs, or coerce others into committing crime will be sent into



this hell. Those in this hell are chained on an iron cart. Their tendons are pulled out and are used as ropes to pull the carts, while the Hell wardens whip them continuously. Painful and agonizing cries fill the air. Yu Zhun also says those who entertain lewd thoughts after seeing attractive people, those who are persistent and indulge in sexual behavior or those who encourage others to break their marital engagements, those who encourage one's partner to commit sexual misconduct will be sent to this hell.



37. The Fourth Hall : The Hall of King Wuguan

King Wuguan is in charge of this hall of hells. The suffering that occurs here are worse than those in the previous two hells. The reasons that we are forced into this hell include indulging in killing, stealing and evil deeds in the previous life. People in this hall are engulfed by infernos. Tears of fire flow from their own eyes to burn their own bodies. The hell wardens chop away at the sinner's eye sockets and beat them with iron hooks and rip apart their anuses with hot iron vises. Scorching liquefied paraffin wax is injected into the body, while fires burn away on the outside. With intense heat inside and out, the torture is beyond description. It will take countless years before the sins can be cleared. Should one be reborn later as a human being that person will usually suffer digestive tract ailments. Also his or her body will be dry, dull and unattractive.



38. The Hell of Waist Level Chopping

Here are those who pretend to be priests or alike who use scam ceremonies to deceive people of their money and personal belongings. Yu Zhun says that those who are disrespectful towards “heaven and earth” and the spiritual world will be sent to this hell. Destroying the environment and not treasuring our natural resources are considered being disrespectful to “heaven and earth” or nature. Nowadays, many people still have no concept of respecting nature. In fact, many disasters are caused by humans; like overlogging forests and contaminating water sources.



39. The Hell of Tongue-Removal

Those who like to bear false tales, those who use abusive, wrongful or flattering words or those who are arrogant and defame the holy scriptures, or those who envy, despise, and slander capable and talented people will be sent to this hell. Their tongues will be pulled out by the hell wardens and torn apart by burning iron hooks, and their throats will be stabbed by hot burning spears. They want to die, but they cannot. The torture and their suffering is beyond description and will last thousands of years. Should they obtain human form, most of them will be deaf-mute. By seeing this hell, we will understand how horrifying the retribution of negative verbal karma is.



40. The Hell of Boiling Water

Those who like to eat live seafood will be forced into this hell. Some people indulge in eating live seafood, often throwing live fish or prawns into boiling water and catching them painfully trying in vain to escape. These poor sea creatures then become their delicious food. Think about this. Would this momentary pleasure worth our experiencing the same amount of pain in the future? Also, those who kill chicken, duck, pigs, cattle and sheep, in order to remove the hair easily, would often cook and boil animals alive. The animals' suffering is unspeakable, their hatred is endless. When those people's physical form ceased to function, they will suffer in the same way. We must carefully consider our deeds.



41. The Hell of Skin-Peeling

Those who fall into this hell usually skin animals for a living. For example, snake killers who often skin snakes alive, eat their flesh and suck the blood; or those who whip, torture and flay others will be sent to this hell. Also bullies who humiliate others till they feel stripped, leaving them with unbearable torment. All those mentioned above will be forced into this hell.s



42. The Hell of Burning Wheels and Cart

This Hell is also called Burning Cart. Those who chop other beings with blades; those who mistreat their stepchildren with anger, and those who kill, steal and commit sexual misconduct will be sent to this hell after death. Broken family is a tragedy of life. Innocent children are the most vulnerable victims. Already without the love of their own parents, if they have to further suffer mistreatment from their stepparents. Wouldn't the child's misery be further compounded? Human nature is intrinsically good: Everyone originally possesses a loving heart. Individuals form a family due to the affinities in their past lives. Humans only live to a few decades. A bully today may become the weaker party in the future. Retribution can come sooner than expected, and it'll be too late for regrets.



43. The Hell of Sword Tree

The trees in this hell are 40 miles tall with thorns 16 inches long. The hell wardens drag sinners up the sword trees and throw them down, shearing their flesh and piercing their bodies. Those who ignore their own families and have affairs, leaving their spouses to suffer, will be sent to this hell. When offenders look up to the top of the trees all they see are attractive and seductive soft-bodied women. Mesmerized, they rush to the Sword Tree. The sword-like leaves cut in their flesh and tendons, shear their bones and break their spines until their bodies are cut into pieces. Revived by winds of karma, they rush up the trees for the seducing bodies again, only to find them on the ground below. Deceived by karma, they let desire take control and rush down the trees. Again the trees cut their flesh, break their tendons, shear bones, break spines, until their whole bodies are cut up into pieces. These people rush up and down the trees and suffer over and over again. How would this kind of torment not be feared by anyone? From this, we can see that the harm from sexual misconduct is immeasurable. We don't have many years in this life, so why don't we make use of our lives to do something that would benefit people and society?



44. The Hell of Eye-Shooting

Treating parents with hostility is the most unfilial thing a child can do. Aged parents, frail like candles in the wind, will be heartbroken when they see such behavior from their children - "Filial piety is the foremost among all good deeds." Filial piety is the source of being a human and is the foundation of family education. Being filial, we set good examples for our children to follow. Today, less emphasis is placed on moral education. Children know how to study, not how to be grateful and appreciate for their parents. From the time a child is born, parents provide them the best. When a child is spoiled and pampered since young, that child would naturally grow up recalcitrant and unfilial. But who is responsible for this? The Three Character Classic says if a child is not taught, the father is at fault. If a child is not taught when young, unfilial behavior is expected in the future. When one clears his karma in this hell, should he obtain human form, he will be blind, hunchbacked, and will have a short life. Those who fall into this hell will remain in the dark

without end. Even when regaining the human form, they will still not be able to see.



45. The Hell of Knee-Torture

Yu Zhun says that one who embezzles ancestral properties and creates problems, conflicts and lawsuits among siblings will fall into this hell after death. Today, it is common for family members to become enemies by fighting over their ancestors' assets. When descendents inherit from their ancestors, they should be grateful and sincerely carry on the good virtues of their ancestors.



46. The Fifth Hall : The Hall of the King Yanluo

King Yanluo is in charge of this Great Hell of Wailing. Those who are forced to be here had indulged in killing, stealing, misconducts and intoxicants. The suffering here is more severe than those in previous hells. Offenders who suffer this punishment cannot stop wailing loudly; thus the name of this hell. If they obtain human form after this retribution they often suffer from blood related illness. Or they will be born poor or in desolate countries. Most who fall here have already been to the previously mentioned hells and have suffered lengthy periods of time. Those who clear their karma will be allowed to be reincarnated. Those with more severe karma are sent to other hells to clear their karma after ascending the Tower of Hometown-Viewing.



47. The Tower of Hometown-Viewing is 8,000 miles long and is full of people attaching stubbornly to their faults. After climbing up the Tower of Hometown-Viewing, they look forward to see loved ones they can never meet again. All that they get to see are heartbreaking scenes.



48. The family shrine is in wreck, and traditions fade away.



49. Creditors come to demand repayments while the corpse is still warm.



50. Siblings become enemies, fighting over assets that are left.



51. Fires destroy properties and wealth of prosperous families.



52. Has not yet died, dating another new lover.



**53. A beloved daughter is bullied and forced into prostitution.
Viewing all these miserable scenes is the smost heart-wrenching
experience for offenders on the Terrace of Hometown-Viewing.**



54. The Hell of Intestines-ripping and Heart-slicing Yu Li says that for fame and gain some will use unscrupulous means to deceive the public. Even worse, some repay kindness with enmity. Such merciless people with no conscience at all will be forced into this hell after death. Also those appearing to be gentlemanly but commit rape may indulge in a momentary pleasure but in their future, they will pay dearly for it. They will have their intestines ripped and their hearts sliced up.



55. The Hell of Blade Mountains

In this Hell, there are knives and blades everywhere. Offenders are cast down from the sky. Their intestines are pierced and their blood cascades everywhere. Those who harm genuine places of proper teachings or defame saints and sages will fall into this hell after their death. Yu Zhun says that those who deceive others with fake products, or who deceive uninformed and ignorant people, even causing them to die, will also fall into this hell. Nowadays, there are syndicates of people who take advantage of the weaknesses of human nature to cheat people with despicable scams. Such as making counterfeit products and medicines for profit. These unscrupulous people don't know how terrible their retribution will be!



56. The Hell of Flying Swords and Burning Stones

Flying swords and burning stones rain down from the sky. The offenders have no escape and will be cut-up and be crushed to pieces. Offenders are forced here because they have bullied the weak, or they have caused wars or cursed and slandered the will of God or the course of nature. They will be forced into this hell after their death.



57. The Sixth Hall : The King of Bian City

The King of Bian City is in charge of this Great Hell of Screaming. The suffering here is more severe than those in previous hells because the levels of killing, stealing, and misconduct committed are more serious than the previously mentioned. Thus the torture is proportionate to their crimes and their sufferings are more severe. They scream in pure agony every time they undergo the tortures; thus, it is called Great Hell of Screaming. Here, the penalty for wrongful speech, such as lying, is more severe and the time of suffering is extend beyond the times in the other hells. The torture is extreme and intense beyond human comprehension.



58. The Hell of Throat-Nailing

This hell is for those who commit sexual misconducts. Ignorant people, blinded by their heart and passion, commit these offences and receive the retribution here. It's not worth it all. People who carry out sexual misconduct with words will have their throats pierced by hot burning nails. Should people clear off their karma and obtain human form they will have foul-smelling mouths from any remaining retribution.



59. The Hell of Pounding Pillar

Those who slaughter animals or catch fish for a living will all get this retribution after their death. Offenders are placed in a mortar. The hell wardens use a metal pillar to pound the offenders until their flesh and blood are all meshed together.



60. The Hell of Mill (or Iron Mill)

People who commit sexual misconduct Or who have many partners or who pay for sex, will fall into this hell after their death. When alive, they enjoy having many sexual partners; After death, they will be milled into mince. The retribution for sexual indulgence is incredibly horrible.



61. The Hell of Decapitation

Well-educated people can exploit their knowledge to cause harm to others; for example, the promotion of violence or pornography. Powerful people abuse their power to hurt others; for example, the abuse of authority and the suppression of honourable people. These able people use their abilities to harm others, and those in high positions who seek benefit only for themselves will all fall into this hell. The mass media today promotes violence and pornography, which contaminates the minds of the young, harms society, and ruins good traditions. Those who commit such deeds will fall into this hell after death.



62. The Hell of Tiger-Biting

People who are not contented with just eating gourmet food set up traps to catch wild animals such as wild boar, deer, monkey, etc. Those who like eating animals in such way will fall into this hell after death and become food for tigers. Pregnant women who abort the pregnancy with medication will receive such retribution. In this world of declining morality, many ignorant young girls and women often resort to abortions. They do not know the horrors in the Hell of Tigers-Biting.



63. The Hell of Fire Cattle



Yu Zhun says that cattle, horses, and dogs contribute a lot to the farms. When these animals get old, owners with no compassion will try to sell or kill them for profit or for food. These behaviours are extremely inhumane. These people will fall into this hell after death.



64. The Hell of Kidney-Eating

Those who have families and still carnally desire and seek other's wives, husbands or even children, or those who scheme to ruin others or cause other's families to break up or the members to die, will fall into this hell after death.



65. The Seventh Hall: The Hall of King Taishan

He is in charge of the Great Hell of Heat and Fire. This hell is for those who committed the aforesaid crimes, such as killing, stealing, wrongful thoughts and deeds, drinking intoxicants and untruthful speech, but yet have not a single thought of remorse. These people will fall into this hell after death. The suffering in this hell is a lot of harsher than in previous ones, as the burning fires in this hell are unrelenting. Those who clear their karma will spend three hundred lifetimes within the hungry ghost realm followed by two hundred lifetimes within the animal realm. After that, should they obtain human form again, they will be born as disrespectful children, without remorse or shame for their misconduct. They will be despicable and behave like animals, have terribly cracked hands and feet, and be incapable of earning enough to even buy food. Their entire lives will be void of fortune and merits. This hell is encircled by great fire and heat. In this hell, sinner's entire body will be burnt thoroughly, suffering immense pain, cycling from birth to death and death to



66. The Hell of Tongue-Removal and Cheek-Piercing

Yu Zhun says those who often write dishonest words, harm others by instigating unnecessary lawsuits, devise schemes, manipulate facts, cheat for financial gain, or cause others to die from a miscarriage of justice, will fall into this hell after death. Today, people use their pens just like real blades, manipulate facts, instigate lawsuits; threaten, extort, or cheat others for money; or even cause others to die from miscarriage of injustice. All such people will receive their retribution after death and fall into the Hell of Tongue-Removal and Cheek-Piercing.



67. The Hell of Stone-Bearing

Yu Zhun says that ferocious women who act unrestrainedly or those who scheme and kill for money will fall into this hell. Likewise, those who do not respect teachers, who do not show gratitude to their parents, or who do not behave in propriety.



68. The Hell of Dog-Howling and Wolf-Biting

Those who start disputes or cause trouble to retain power, or who are void of loyalty, honor and kindness will fall into this hell. A Chinese proverb describes heartless and malicious people as having the heart of a wolf and the lung of a mad dog. These people may have enjoyed wealth and power but after death they will be bitten by dogs and wolves in hell, dismembered, and their joints and bones crushed. The tragic retribution is too horrible to contemplate.



69. The Hell of Boiling Oil

Those who like trying the flesh of creatures, setting fires in mountains or



forests, or roasting creatures over a fire will suffer in this hell after their death. People today who wish to develop forested or mountainous areas often use fire or explosives to clear the land. Not only do they destroy the natural environment, they also take millions of lives! People who like to hike or barbeque in the woods may carelessly start a forest fire. Those who cause other creatures to die in such ways will fall into this hell.



70. The Hell of Scale

Merchants who cheat customers, take advantage of others, are dishonest in business dealings. Or refuse to repay their debts, intentionally wind up the company without good cause, or keep property and assets they find that belongs to others will fall into this hell after their death.



71. The Hell of Iron Balls

The Kstigarbha Sutra says that those who fall into the Avici Hell suffer relentlessly from swallowing iron balls when hungry and from drinking molten iron when thirsty. Beings in this hell lie on burning hot iron. As their mouths are pried open by clamps, burning iron balls will be thrown into their mouths. The balls burn their lips, tongues, throats, and intestines. When excreted, the



balls are still red hot. The process repeats endlessly and the pain is beyond imagination.



72. The Eighth Hall: The Hall of King Dushi

King Dushi is in charge of the Great Hell of Intense Fire and Heat. The torture and suffering caused within this hell is never-ending. From the ground to the sky, the inferno is everywhere, burning continuously for infinity. Those in this hell are burned for countless time. They are bathed in boiling blood, till death and then revived again in the same hell. Their karma cleared, they fall into the ghost and animal realms where they suffer from thirst and hunger, even from

eating one another. After such suffering for immeasurable lives, it will be extremely hard for them to become human again. Even if they were to be reborn as humans, poor and illness stricken, they will be easily irritated and have short lives as the remaining retribution for their karma. Suffering in this hell is far more severe than in prior ones. The main causes for coming here are similar, but the offences are much worse; therefore, the retribution is much more extreme.



73. The Hell of Burning-Marrow

Those who instigate the burning of lowlands, or who do so themselves, or build sealed spaces to suffocate and thus kill mice, mosquitoes, or ants will fall into this hell. People often use electricity or fumigation to kill insects. Out of convenience, people burn the weed without knowing that many small creatures live in the ground and will be killed by the fire. We must be aware that these are serious killing karma. Additionally, when cleaning, people often fumigate or use poison to kill ants and small insects. These are very appalling offences. Three days prior to such activities, we should sincerely ask Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva to compassionately protect these small creatures and ensure their safety. Incompetent doctors who worsen their patients' conditions will also fall into this hell after death.



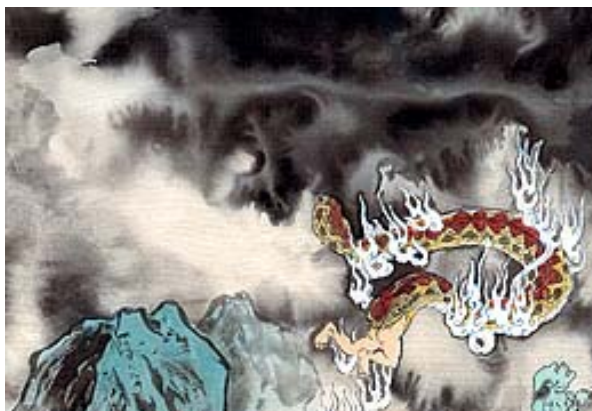
74. The Hell of Pointed Spikes (Hell of Steel Spikes)

Those who engage in corruption, dishonesty, or bribery, and who oppress the poor, who unscrupulously cut others' wages, who treat others meanly, or who induce and encourage lawsuits, will fall into this hell to suffer the pain of pointed spikes.



75. The Hell of Hacking

Those who financially scheme or steal money from others, disbelieve the proper teachings, or those who often have perverted views will fall into this hell. Con artists who cheat and delude people for profit or lust will be punished the same way. Their bodies will be hacked into pieces like a log. The pain is extreme.



76. The Hell of Iron Snakes

Foolish beings who condemn and look down upon and dismiss the merit of alms giving, who instigate others to hoard and be stingy, and who speak against the nature's law of cause and effect will fall into this hell after their death. Buddha said that giving wealth results in gaining wealth, giving teachings results in attaining wisdom, and giving fearlessness results in having health and longevity. Also, the law of cause and effect runs through



numerous lifetimes. Causing good to be done produce good effects; whereas causing negative actions will produce bad effects. Those who perform good deeds but have not received good effects or who committed offences but have not been punished are still undergoing remaining retribution or fortune from their previous lives.



77. The Hell of Molten Iron

In this hell, molten iron is poured into the offender's mouth. From head to toe, the whole body is burned instantly and miserable scream of horror and wailing could be heard everywhere. This is the direct result of our bad deeds that we have performed within our previous lifetimes, especially from verbal misconduct. Be aware that the mouth is the door to good and bad fortune.



78. The Hell of Fire Dogs

San Fa Du Lun says silkworm farmers will go to this hell and those who fry living beings, and who feed small animals to tigers or leopards will fall into this hell after their death to suffer the biting and tramping by fire dogs. Just as nature provides for all living beings, we should also have compassion for all animals.



79. The Ninth Hall: The Hall of King Pingdeng

King Pingdeng is in charge of the biggest hell of all: Avici the Hell of Incessant Suffering. Suffering in this hell is much worse than the previous ones. Those who killed their parents and committed even more serious evil deeds because of their greed, anger and ignorance will be sent to the Avici Hell. This hell is arranged in layers of punishment halls, with fires from all sides. The offenders had committed the most evil of deeds when they were alive, so here they are to suffer the most severe torture. In addition to being burnt, they will be sent to freezing places where cold winds blowing on them cut like knives. The excruciating pain is beyond description. All transgressions are caused by one's karmas. There are 16 small hells with increasing levels of sufferings due to the varying degrees of causes. It will be immeasurable time until the karmas are cleared completely, and only then can the beings here leave.



80. The Hell of Wasps and Scorpions

Yu Zhun says those who have power and wealth but who are reckless and unscrupulous, or who seduce the young and innocent, who pretend to obey rules and orders, who fail to be good role models, and who cause others to do evil shamelessly will fall into this hell after death. Today, people tend not to trust each other. Or obey rules publicly but indulge in evil behavior privately. All of these are examples of why people go to this hell.



81. The Hell of Poisonous Snake

Yu Zhun says that the Hell of Wasps and Scorpions and Hell of Poisonous Snakes punish those who are shameless. Those with strong hatred will also fall into this hell after death. Those who do not know the meaning of shame can easily commit all sorts of dreadful deeds. Those who are filled with hatred will act irrationally and thus commit endless sins. They will fall into this hell after death.



82. The Hell of Brain-Removal

Those who treat parents and teachers arrogantly; who show others how to



do something illegal; who impose all sorts of hardship on others, such as catching living animals by their heads, thus frightening them and making them suffer great pain will be sent to this hell after their death.



83. The Hell of Standing on Mountain Full of Pointed Stones

Yu Zhun says those disloyal to their superiors and those who misbehave without restraint, thereby causing misfortune for their superiors, will be sent to this hell. Those who cut trees excessively and ruin the environment, or who damage nature for self enjoyment will go to this hell.



84. The Hell of Crow-Gnawing

Yu Zhun says that those who kill out of hatred and impute the blame, or empowered people who commit sexual misconduct out of arrogance, or those who conspire to cause the deaths of others will fall into this hell after death. Offenders here will be gnawed into pieces by iron crows, and suffer endlessly, life after life in the same hell.



85. The Hell of Raining Needles

In this hell, steel needles fall like rain from the sky. Offenders' bodies will be pierced by the fine needles as they scream and scream in agony. These people committed a inestimable bad karmas due to lying, or using needles or medication to abort a pregnancy. This is the cause for falling into this hell after their death.



86. The Tenth Hall: The Hall of Great King Zhuanlun

This hall faces our polluted world, and this king reigns over all souls brought here from the other halls. He will judge the fortunes and misfortunes of the offenders before sending them to the Four Great Continents for rebirth. Depending on the amount of good or bad deeds, these souls will cross the Bridge of Vainity, whether of, gold, silver, jade, stone or wood, to be reborn. The lists of names are compiled and, sent to the First Hall for registration, before the souls are sent to the city of Fengdu to be classified further according to expected life span, or according to the changes of fortune or misfortune they have. The whole process is meticulously managed. The people in this picture had done good deeds. Admired by heavenly and human beings when they were alive, they are greeted respectfully by King Zhuanlun after death. Good deeds will cause good results. They will be reborn to fortunate or wealthy families. In summary, good deeds lead to good results; bad deeds lead to bad results. The law of cause and effect functions faultlessly.



87. By giving alms and doing good, people accrue good merits

Those who enjoy giving and helping others and who always follow moral principles, who are filial to parents, respectful to teachers and elders, who are compassionate and do not to kill any living beings will have a good death and be reborn in either the heaven or human realm. Therefore, what people do in their current lives will determine what they become in their next life. It is not arranged by heaven or deities.



88. People in all walks of life have their own affinities and fortunes

There are reasons for being rich or poor so we should not envy the rich nor be despondent that we are not. After understanding the principals of the natural law of cause and effect, we should make peace with ourselves and try our best to fulfil our responsibilities. As is said, “rich or poor, everyone should behave in accordance with their status.” Doing so without resentment is the way to clear one's karma.



89. People on the Bridge of Vainity will find it's too late for regrets

After leaving the hell and stepping onto the Bridge of Vainity, they will be lead by their karma to happiness or suffering. To be animal or ghost, or gaining human form, they will suffer through uncountable cycles of rebirth endlessly.



90. Sutra followers who commit bad deeds are sent to the Pavilion of Mengpo first. Yu Li says that it would be hard for the King of Hell to sentence offenders who had recited sutras and mantras. So they will be first sent to the Pavilion of Mengpo and made to drink the Soup of



Forgetfulness, and then sent to be reborn. But they will die young. They will forget the sutras and mantras they have learned and then be sentenced.



91. Yu Li says that the Jade Emperor of Heaven ordered Mengpo to be the Goddess of Spirit and Darkness and to build a forgetting platform. Those who are to be reborn will all be sent to this platform to drink the soup so that they will forget everything about their previous life.



92. After drinking the Soup of Forgetfulness, it is time for rebirth. Having drunk the Soup of Forgetfulness, those had done good deeds will be reborn as humans, wiser and healthier than before. Those with bad deeds will become dull minded, weak and weary. They therefore have the motivation to start afresh to become a better person.



93. It is hard to be born as a human, to encounter Buddha Dharma. The Buddha said that the chance to obtain human form is unbelievably rare. We should treasure this precious opportunity to be a human and act as proper human beings. The sufferings in the 'six realms of rebirth' are too terrible to bear. Beings have been suffering for eons unknowingly. Now that we have encountered the teachings of the Buddha, it's like a light being lit in a room darkened for millennia. We should treasure every second and learn diligently so that we can break out the suffering of rebirth cycle.



94. Most of those named on the rebirth list are to be reborn in forms lower than human. Checking the names on the rebirth list, the King of Ghosts will find mostly will be reborn as animals and ghosts. Seeing the many animal skins to be worn at their rebirth and so few human ones, it becomes very clear that the chance to be reborn as a human is very rare.



95. The King of Ghosts waves willow twigs and souls are reborn. Myriad souls will be reborn according to their karma, either as human or as different kinds of animals, including flying birds, running beasts, wriggling worms, etc. They will re-enter the circle of endless rebirth.



96. The morning sun is shining and the world is very bright. Good or bad consequences are brought upon us by ourselves. After completing the suffering in the hell, new lives are reborn and there is a new dawn. The Three Character Classic says that the intrinsic nature of human beings is pure and king. We have committed myriad offences because of our polluted karmic habits, which are not innate in our true nature. It is hard to obtain a human form but we have one now. It is hard to meet the Buddha Dharma but we have found it. We must treasure every second in this life, cultivate diligently, and avoid making karma that will lead to further rebirth.

Conclusion

The Tai Shang says that good fortune and misfortune are created by individuals, so we must be responsible for our thoughts and behaviours. After viewing the Paintings of the Scenes of the Hells, we can feel the horror and realize that being sent to hell is due to committing sinful deeds.

Everything is impermanent except the law of causality. Having already committed many bad karma, what could we do? Buddha taught us to sincerely repent, and not to repeat the same mistakes again. This way, we can reduce our bad karma. Lastly, let us all follow the teachings of the Buddha: "Do nothing that is evil, do everything that is good."

Realm of Dreams

Perhaps you have in your mind these questions. On what basis had I drawn this Painting of Hell? I would say that the painting is nothing but is a reflection of the state of beings in the world today. And from what intention did this creation arise? I would say that the creativity naturally awakens when I observe this human body, while trapped in a world of five turbidities and blinded by three poisons and five sins, remains unaware of the truth.

I can still remember the solicitous attempt of my teacher, the late elderly Xue to get me to paint. All these years I had not forgotten his words. Many visions had come to me since. This painting is the result of many visions, in particular, the three separate dreams in which the Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva appeared to me. The impressions were very vivid though I was half-awake. Images were peaceful and clear, and the joyous feelings from seeing these images lingered for a long time afterward. When Master Chin Kung learnt about this, he asked me to paint these impressions. Touched by the sincerity of his request, I ventured to paint based on the three dreams I had. Such is the place of enlightenment of a dream.



Creation of Images

In the year of 2003, when I was painting the Court of Tai Shan, I dreamt that I was making a statue of the Bodhisattva. Out of the vast emptiness, the Bodhisattva appeared and told me that I had already made four statues of bodhisattvas. When I woke up, I counted the number of statues I made, once I included that of my late teacher's, the total was four! Some people said that the elderly Xue was the reincarnation of the Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva, but he would humbly answer that he wished he were.



Paying Tribute to the Saints

While taking a nap in the afternoon on November 16 in 2003, images of the Tenth Court and deities and sages appeared to pay respect to the Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva. The assembly was sublime and unsurpassed that paints and fine brush strokes could not accurately depict what I saw even by a fraction of a hundredth.



Propagation

When the “Propagation” painting was almost completed in the early morning of December 23rd, the Bodhisattva entered my dream. I saw him assembled all beings from the various realms and they were all shrouded by the light and then the horrors of hell appeared. The Bodhisattva taught with great earnestness about karmic retributions. Being compassionate and truthful, the Bodhisattva never for a moment lose his empathy toward the lost souls. When I woke up, I found that my tears had soaked my pillowcase. Due to my sincerity, three consecutive dreams had shown me the manifestations of the Bodhisattva. This encounter is indeed remarkable!

Respectfully noted by Yi-zi Jiang, in March 2004

The Shadowy man of Green Creek Path Remembering the Grace of His Teacher

First: Being filial and respectful toward our parents, teachers and elders; being compassionate towards and not killing

any living being, and following the Ten Virtuous Conducts.

Second: Taking the Three Refuges, observing precepts, laws and customs, and conducting ourselves in a proper and dignified manner.

Third: Generating the Bodhi mind, deeply believing in the Law of Cause and Effect, reciting and upholding Mahayana Sutras and encouraging others to advance on the path to enlightenment. And, such three conditions are known as Deeds of Purity.

Glossary
Established date: 03/06/10

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