

# Story of an Ancient Cultivator: Words Spoken by an Ulcer with a Human Face

November 27, 2005

**(Clearwisdom.net)** During the reign of Emperor Jin in the Han Dynasty, seven royal dukes who had their own territories had become more and more arrogant. The Duke of Wu, Liu Bi, was plotting to overthrow the emperor. In order to preserve the empire and prevent the seven royal dukes from holding rebellions, Chao Cuo, a counselor at the royal court, urged the emperor to take away the royal dukes' holdings. Upon hearing that, the seven royal dukes decided to go ahead and rebel against the emperor anyway. Emperor Jin became worried and gathered his officials to talk about what he should do. Yuan An, another official at the court, was once the prime minister for the Duke of Wu. He also had some past personal conflicts with Chao Cuo. So he took advantage of the situation and blamed the whole rebellion on Chao Cuo. Yuan urged the emperor to kill Chao Cuo. The emperor listened to Yuan, and Chao Cuo was executed at the Eastern Market. The executioner cut him in half at the waist, which was a very painful way to die. His entire family was also executed along with him. Another official with the surname of Deng later wrote to the emperor and made an appeal on Chao Cuo's behalf. Emperor Jin realized that he had made a huge mistake but it was already too late. This happened in 154 B.C.

During the reign of Emperor Yi in the Tang Dynasty (860-875 A.D.), there was a very learned monk named Wu Da. When he was young, he met another monk at a temple in the capital of Chang'an. That monk was seriously ill. He had ulcers all over his bodies and

smelled bad. Nobody wanted to have anything to do with him. But Wu Da treated the monk kindly and never showed any disgust over his illness. When it was time for them to part, the ill monk told Wu Da, "If you have a tribulation in the future, you can come to Chalong Mountain (in today's Pengzhou City, Sichuan Province) and look me up. The mountain is marked by two tall pine trees."

As years went by, Monk Wu Da remained in the capital of Chang'an and became more and more well-known. Emperor Yi named him the Head Lecturer of the entire country, and bestowed a heavy and expensive incense holder upon him. Wu Da became quite pleased with himself, thinking that he was now above everyone else but the Emperor. Soon after that, he developed an ulcer on his knee. The ulcer looked like the face of a human, and could eat like a human. It brought Wu Da a great deal of pain and anguish. Wu Da went to visit many famous doctors seeking treatment but nobody could help him.

One day Wu Da suddenly remembered what the other monk had told him years ago. He decided to go to Chalong Mountain to look the monk up. When he arrived in the general vicinity of the mountain, it was dusk. He saw two tall pine trees on a mountain far away that reached all the way to the clouds in the sky. He walked toward the pine trees and indeed found the monk. He told the monk what he had been going through. The monk told him, "Don't worry about it. There is a mountain spring at the bottom of the cliff. In the morning, just go and wash yourself with the water there, and you will be fine."

In the morning, a servant boy of the monk led Wu Da to the spring. Just as he was about to wash the ulcer with the spring water, the ulcer suddenly yelled out, "Don't wash yourself yet. I want to tell

you what this is all about. You are a very learned person. Have you read about how Yuan An caused the wrongful death of Chao Cuo from the book *Historical Account of the Western Han Dynasty*?" Wu Da replied, "Yes, I have read it." The ulcer said, "You were Yuan An, and I was Chao Cuo. You caused me an excruciating death when I was cut in half at the waist. How unjust that was! I have been trying to seek revenge against you for ten lives now. During the previous ten lives of yours, you had always been a very well-cultivated monk who followed the Buddhist cultivation rules diligently, and therefore I couldn't find any way to exert my revenge. Now you have been honored by the emperor and you have developed attachments toward fame and self-interest. Because you have gaps in your virtue, I have been able to seek my revenge. Now Nuojianuo, a Holy Person, has given the Three Taste Water (representing the power of Nuojianuo, achieved through his righteous cultivation) and absolved me. So I have decided not to seek further revenge from you." Wu Da was very shocked by what he had just heard. He washed the ulcer with the spring water, and felt a deep pain from his bones. The ulcer soon went away, and he was cured.

The above account was recorded by Monk Wu Da in his book, *Repentance at the Water* after he was cured of the ulcer.

Wu Da had been a well-cultivated monk for the past ten lives, who had followed all the Buddhist cultivation rules diligently. But he was almost destroyed completely because he had developed attachments to fame and self-interest, and therefore had gaps in his virtue. The story shows how important it is for a cultivator to maintain righteous thoughts at all times. Today we are in a chaotic world in the Fa-ending period. We are surrounded by all kinds of wickedness and the standard of human morality has deteriorated to

the point where it is beyond repair. As Dafa disciples who live in such an environment and who must shoulder the immense responsibilities of validating the [Fa](#) and saving sentient beings, we must let go of our human attachments and maintain our righteous thoughts and righteous actions. Only then can we continuously make steadfast progress on our journey toward godhood.

First published in English at

<http://www.pureinsight.org/pi/articles/2005/6/27/3093.html>