



The Binding of Isaac & Hatthi-Pala Jataka

Group 6



Binding of Isaac

- Genesis 22
- God commands for Abraham to kill his son Isaac as a sacrifice
- Abraham conflicted, but complies
- Takes son up a mountain
- Isaac oblivious to what's happening
- God stops Abraham right before he kills Isaac and commends him for his display of faith
- Sacrifice lamb instead



Binding of Isaac Analysis

- Story of proving faith in difficult situations
- Islam
 - Unnamed son
 - Submission
- Judaism
 - Willful and
- Christianity
 - Isaac as a Christ figure
 - More about trusting God



The story of Hatthi-Pala Jataka (Stephanie)

- Follows the tale of the king and the chaplain, both childless. They both decided that when either of them had a son, they would treat him as if he were both of their sons.
- The chaplain saw a “wretched” woman with 7 healthy sons but with no father, he asked her how this could be. She said she prayed to the deity of a banyan tree.
- The chaplain went to the tree and asked how this poor woman could have seven sons but the king who was rich had none.
- He threatened to cut down the tree if the king did not have a son within 7 days.
- After the 6th day, the deity realized he was serious
 - She asked for guidance from the gods of the four directions and the twenty-eight lords of the goblins, but none granted a child
 - She was helped by Indra, king of the Gods, he found 4 Gods in his heaven to send back to earth.
 - However, they did not want to be “burdened with royalty”, they wanted to be born into the Chaplains family instead.

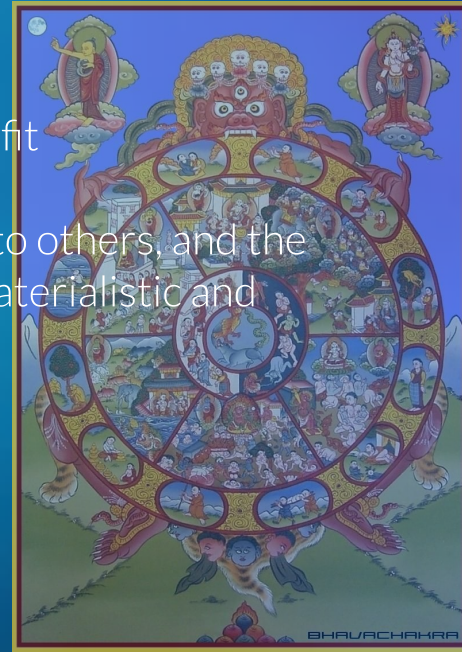
The story of Hatthi-Pala Jataka (Stephanie)

- The chaplain returned on the seventh day with a team of men with axes
- The deity told him he could have four sons who would become ascetics
 - He demanded some go to the king
 - The deity said this was not possible
- The chaplain accepted her gift
- The sons were born and the chaplain hoped they would not become ascetics
 - Made them work with horses, cattle and goats
 - Banned all ascetics from the kingdom so no one would inspire them
- The sons eventually all became ascetics and after failure of trying to change their minds, the chaplain joined them
- When the king found out, he went after the money the chaplain and his family left behind
 - His wife was upset by his attachment to wealth, she taught him a lesson
 - She set up a heap of dog meat in the yard with snares around it
 - After the vultures ate all the meat, they realized with the snares, they could not fly straight up with full bellies
 - They vomited the meat and flew away
 - Other birds stayed and ate the vomit
 - The wife compared the king taking the chaplains treasures to the birds eating the vomit
 - He realized she was right and they also became ascetics with other citizens



The story of Hatthi-Pala Jataka - themes/analysis

- The story follows a theme of the Buddhist way of living. We learned about the greedy king and hopeful chaplain, both needed to be taught a new way of going through life.
- Even though the Chaplain was trying to help the King, the King could not be helped because of his greedy and materialistic way of thinking.
- “Taking the Chaplain’s treasures is like eating vomit.”
 - Metaphor the Queen used to stop the King from being greedy
 - Taking the treasures others have earned gives us no real benefit
 - Only makes us greedy and selfish
- Buddhists go through life by doing the right things and causing no harm to others, and the story allowed us to see the type of karma people suffer when they are materialistic and greedy.



The binding of Judaism & Buddhism (Laronn)

- The two stories appear in stark contrast but upon closer examination they reveal important aspects of sacrifice, agony, faith and repentance. Judaism and Buddhism have some similar values. Consider the concept of “good and life” versus “death and evil” in comparison with the four noble truths.
- In Judaism, God gives free will to choose between righteousness and the hereafter or wickedness and the hellfire which relates similarly to the truths of how one can avoid suffering through selflessness once the four noble truths are understood.
- In Abraham’s act of attempted sacrifice on Mount Moriah, he had given in to the complete will of God and proved his faith. In response to his unwavering faith, God grants Isaac life and Abraham many bounties. It is to be mentioned that there had to have been great internal conflict with what Abraham was charged to do.
- Even in complete faith, the thought of sacrificing one’s child must have been a agonizing event. Such to the point that Isaac was unaware of what his father was going to do until they arrived at Mt. Moriah. In Genesis 22: 7-8(KJV), Isaac asks “..where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” as to which Abraham replies that “..God will provide himself a burnt offering...” Afterward Isaac is bind and place on the altar for sacrifice.

The binding of Judaism & Buddhism (Laronn)

- Abraham was willing to risk the most precious he had in his life in order to do the will of God. The test was to see the strength and conviction of his faith.
- In contrast, greed and need for scions was the main motivation for pressuring the tree deity to provide sons for the king. The chaplain sought to coerce the tree deity into providing sons for the king as he would lose his wealth if unsuccessful.
- **As all the children and chaplain ended becoming** ascetics and denying the world of wealth and high status. This contrast between the King and Abraham is the idea of wanting. Abraham sought to deny his feelings of love for his son over the will of what God asks of him whereas the King desired not only sons to extend his rule but also the chaplain wealth.
- The lesson behind what the King's wife was attempting to teach the king is that greed burdens the soul trapping it to this realm of existence. Only by becoming selfless can one reach a higher plane.

Examples

- Sacrifice
 - Abraham is to offer his only son to God without question as to why.
 - The Chaplain and his wife sacrificed the money they had to join their sons in their ascetic lifestyle
- Agony
 - Abraham does not tell his son what God asked him to do as he is convincing himself to go forward with the ritual.
 - When the Chaplain saw the poor woman with her seven healthy sons, he wondered how this could be and why the King had none if he was rich.
- Faith
 - Abraham binds his son Isaac upon the altar the constructed in order to kill him as God has prompted him to do so without question.
 - After the Chaplain questioned the deity and threatened to cut down the tree, she asked for help and the help she received was to restore faith in the Chaplain
- Repentance
 - At the last minute, Isaac is granted a reprieve as Abraham's faith is proven to be superior. God grants him blessings and abundance of progeny.
 - The King's wife put into perspective just how greedy he was being, after realizing, he repented and became ascetic like the Chaplain and his family.