

The Warrior & the Monk

Once there was a battle-worn warrior who was on his way home. On his horse he travelled for many miles over hills, across valleys, forests and rivers. Finally, the terrain started to look familiar and he knew he was almost home. Then he came across an old monastery. He got off his horse and decided to do a quick stop over for a rest and visit the monk.

Inside the monastery, the resident monk was seated peacefully in a meditation pose, taking slow deep breaths in silence. The warrior entered the monastery and walked towards the peaceful monk.

Finally, the warrior spoke: "My dear monk, I have travelled for miles and I am tired and worn. I have been through many battles. I have a question that I always wanted answered. Please tell me about heaven and hell."

The monk quietly replied, "I cannot tell you about heaven and hell because you are not ready."

"What do you mean I am not ready?" the monk asked in an agitated tone.

"No, you are not ready. Come back at another time." the monk suggested.

"I am exhausted after journeying through distant lands. I am almost home. And you tell me I am not ready."

The monk once again in a calm voice said: "You are not ready. Come back and try again at another time."

The monk raised his fist in anger and was about to strike the monk: "How dare you..."

Quickly, the monk said: "And that, my friend, is hell."

At first the warrior was confused, but then an insight broke open, and the warrior realized that in that very moment, the monk was answering his question.

Deep peace came over the warrior for the insight he had gained through the monk's teaching. And so in gratitude, he dropped his knees to the ground and bowed towards the monk.

The monk then said, "And that, my friend, is heaven."