

Everlasting Happiness,
as Buddha Attains 2

Presented by Venerable Da Shi

**Translated by
The Dharma Committee
Miao You Pu Ti Yuan (Singapore)**

Preface

Buddha came into this world to lead all sentient beings away from suffering and towards enlightenment. He forsook his throne and worldly possessions for the pursuit of enlightenment. It was his wish to guide all sentient beings in their understanding of the karmic cycle and the path to Nirvana. After his passing into Parinirvana, his teachings were collected and compiled by his followers.

It is Venerable Da Shi's wish to continue the Buddha's teachings, spread the seeds of compassion, and carry on his wish for all sentient beings to attain Nirvana. Since his ordination, Venerable Da Shi has been actively involved in the teaching of the Dharma in many places, including Taiwan, Malaysia, and Singapore. In 2004/2005, Venerable Da Shi was invited by the Life Television Station in Taiwan to present talks on various Dharma topics. This book was written based on the consolidated content of Venerable Da Shi's televised talks, in hope that his compassionate wish would be furthered through the spreading of the Dharma.

Foreword

EVERLASTING HAPPINESS, AS BUDDHA ATTAINS

Editorial Notes

The Buddha was born into this world out of great compassion with the aim to help all mortal beings avoid sufferings and attain endless bliss.

The world of mortal beings is full of suffering. It is a surreal world of endless desires and yet fulfillment of all desires is impossible. We have to work hard to find fulfillment but it is all transient. It is like a trap where we relentlessly pursue wealth, appearance, fame, gastronomic satisfaction, and excessive sleep without ever pondering what all these could lead to. We repeatedly go through birth, aging, sickness, and death and in this continuous cyclic existence, we suffer immeasurably.

The Buddha is like an expert doctor with the ability to diagnose and treat all kinds of ailments. Indeed, he dispenses

eighty four thousands procedures for as much trouble that mortal beings could possibly face in this world. All these are found in the Buddha's teachings. If we practice his teachings with complete faith and realization, besides saving ourselves from suffering in this life, we can also find liberation in time to come.

There are very few fortunate beings that have the chance to hear the Buddha's teachings. The number of people who are able to hear and learn the Buddha's Dharma teachings is said to be like the amount of soil caught in one's nail if one were to use hands to dig into the ground.

Everlasting Happiness, as Buddha Attains is translated from a Chinese compilation of Venerable Da Shi's Dharma teachings on television in Taiwan, R.O.C. He has used the Agama Sutra as the central focus of these teachings, supplemented by relevant Dharma from Mahayana Sutras, including the Prajna Sutras, the Middle Way, the Maha-prajna-paramita-Sastra, the Dasabhumika-Vibhasa-Sastra, the Saddharma-Pundarika, etc. for better understanding. Through his skillful narration and explanation, Venerable Da Shi has made the Buddha's Dharma very easy to understand and at the same time, interesting. There are also many citations of examples where one can apply in one's life and practice.

It is the wish of Venerable Da Shi that these teachings should reach out to more people, Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike. For Buddhists who have sought refuge in the Triple Gem, these teachings serve to strengthen their understanding of the Dharma and improve practices. For non-Buddhists, may it serve as a guide to attain true bliss.

There are a total of four chapters in this book, dwelling on two main themes. The first theme addresses the various challenges in our life and what we could do to overcome these challenges. The second theme explains what is destiny and how we could change our destinies. This is the second instalment of a translated series and it will also be made available on our website at www.mypty.sg. Other topics in the series will be published progressively in subsequent books.

The Dharma introduced in this series is in the Chinese Mahayana tradition, the text of which are translated from Sanskrit scriptures. Hence, Sanskrit has been used for the names and specific Buddhist terminologies in the text. Readers can find help from the footnote on the relevant page and the Glossary at the end of the book for explanation of common Buddhist terms (first appearance in italics in the text) and concepts.

~ FOREWORD ~

The Dharma Editorial Committee at Miao You Pu Ti Yuan in Singapore wishes all readers blissful fulfillments in reading.

@@@ This work is an effort to uphold and support Venerable Da Shi's great vow of spreading the Dharma in gratitude of the Buddha's compassion. Please help to spread the wisdom and cheers of the Dharma by passing this book on to someone else should you feel that you do not need it anymore. As the Buddha taught, the gift of the Dharma excels all gifts! May all have the chance to know the Buddha's Dharma! @@@

***The Dharma Editorial Team
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What is the biggest challenge in life? (2)

We already know how we should deal with life's most difficult challenge. When faced with the most difficult challenge, we can overcome it. Besides believing in and having faith in the Buddha and the Triple Gem, we must often listen to and learn the Dharma. We must also read Buddhist scriptures so as to cultivate the three teachings of Precepts, Concentration, and Wisdom. Only then will we be able to apply the Dharma that the Buddha had taught us. In this manner, these practices will gradually develop into habits which come naturally to us.

Generally, we are very familiar with the five desires of the mundane world and it would be better if we can slowly distance ourselves from them while we raise our proficiency in the sections of the Dharma that we are not as familiar with, until they become part of us.

This is similar to having driving lessons. We were initially unfamiliar with the controls as our instructor guides us. Gradually, we will familiarize ourselves with the handling of the vehicle, pass the driving test, and will eventually be able to drive easily without second thought.

When we encounter difficult or dangerous situations, we would be able to skillfully avoid them. This is the transition from unfamiliarity to familiarity and finally to skillfulness. We should adopt the same attitude when we learn the Dharma.

After listening to and learning so much Dharma, why can't we apply them?

Why do some claim that they could not apply the Dharma they had learned? It is because they have not mastered the transition from unfamiliarity to familiarity and finally to skillfulness. We must practice and not simply listen to the Dharma. After listening to the Dharma, we must frequently reflect upon it and practice regularly. This is a key point. The Buddha used his experiences in his path to enlightenment to show us how we should cultivate.

Example 1

In one of the Buddha's past lives, he was King Sakra. There was once he won a battle and captured an Asura. Seeing King Sakra's indifference to the Asura's incessant scolding, the Heavenly King's attendant asked him, "Oh Heavenly King! Are you afraid of him? Why don't you scold him or beat him?"

This is similar to the situations we often encounter in society. When we face our enemies or when others scold us while we do not respond, those beside us would start to protest, “Are you afraid of him? Are you afraid of him?” Finally, King Sakra told this attendant, “Only fools will scold people. The wise do not quarrel with the foolish. If you quarrel with him, you will also become a foolish person. When the foolish Asura is shouting abuse, do not shout back. You simply remain indifferent to it.”

However, the attendant continued to protest, “Fine! If you don’t scold him, he will look down on you and say that you are afraid of him.” Such a situation is often encountered in society as well. If we do not rebut the other party, others would say, “He is looking down on you. He says that you are useless.” and we may then give rise to such defilements as well. At this point, we must maintain calmness in our minds. Let us see how the Buddha replied.

The Buddha said, “I saw the ignorance of this sentient being and did not haggle over it with him. He thinks I am afraid of him because he is foolish. I am wise, so I do not think like him. If I do so, then I would be foolish as well. Being a wise person, I will be compassionate towards him.”

Those around him were thus silenced and ceased their gossip.

King Sakra then told the attendant, “No matter what other people think, we must treat all of them with compassion. By keeping my mind calm and not letting them affect me, I will continue to have compassion for him.” The Buddha said, “In my past lives, I had always treated Asuras in this way. They would always infuriate me in this manner, but I was always indifferent to it.”

To do so would be to face suffering without worry. I expect nothing of him and I will leave it to his causes and conditions to determine whether he is willing to change for the better or not. Even if he were to treat me well and listen to me, I will not immerse myself in the joy and be infatuated with it. I will not become the frog in the warm water⁶.

⁶ If a frog is dropped into boiling water, it will jump out immediately. However, if it is first immersed in warm water, which is slowly brought to a boil, the frog would not jump out of the water. As the water is heated up, the frog would enjoy the warmth initially. As the water heats up slowly, it will not realize that it is being boiled alive until it is too late. It eventually dies (is boiled alive) because of its attachment to the pleasurable feeling. This is used to describe the state that ordinary beings are in. Ordinary beings do not realize that life is suffering. They delight in the mundane life, having no urge to detach, renounce, and end the suffering. They would end up being boiled alive, just like the boiling frog.

Example 2

When the World Honored One attained enlightenment, Devadatta tried all ways and means to hurt the Buddha, as he (Devadatta) wanted to replace the Buddha. In fact, the Buddha did not become a Buddha for his own sake. He became a Buddha in order to liberate all sentient beings.

Once, the Buddha and Maha Ananda were collecting alms along a lane when they saw Devadatta coming into the same lane to collect alms.

The Buddha said, "Let's go to another lane."

Maha Ananda said, "World Honored One! You are the Dharma King, the Tathagata, why are you avoiding him?"

The Buddha said, "When you encounter an unwholesome person, do not stay with him. As the saying goes, "One who mixes with vermillion will turn red; one who touches pitch shall be defiled therewith"⁷. You will only learn bad behavior

⁷ This is a Chinese saying. It means that a person will be influenced by the company he associates himself with, i.e. if he stays with good company, he will be good and if he stays with bad company, he will become bad.

from a bad person. Therefore, do not stay with him and keep your distance.”

Maha Ananda then said, “World Honored One! Don’t you have supernatural powers? You can move this unwholesome person to another world, so we will not see him anymore.”

Sending the bad away would have been our normal approach to such a situation. But the Buddha did not do so.

The Buddha said, “Although I have supernatural powers, I do not have to use them to chase him away. I need not do anything except staying away from him.” Maha Ananda asked, “And what will happen to him?”

The World Honored One replied, “This person will be moved to another world by his own karmic force.”

Not long after that, Devadatta’s unwholesome karma ripened. He planned to harm the Buddha by hiding poison in his ten finger nails when he was paying obeisance to the Buddha. But, the Buddha said, “No sentient beings can harm the Buddha. When Devadatta comes before me, the ground will crack open and fire from the hell realm will spout.”

Just as Devadatta was falling into the crack, he generated a reflective and repentant thought, and was going to chant the Buddha's name and beg the Buddha to save him. But, it was too late. He had only managed to chant "Namah..." before he fell through the crack.

When the Buddha faced such situations, he did not have any defilement. He did not get worried or angry when he encountered suffering. This is what we should learn.

In the Agama Sutra, we often see such examples to remind us how we should practice and behave. This is a Buddhist scripture that is most applicable to our daily lives and most suited for us as mundane people. If we were to read the Agama Sutra frequently, we will know how to apply the Dharma in our daily lives. Therefore, when we are facing the most difficult challenge in life, we will be able to overcome it gradually. When we encounter suffering, we will neither be worried nor angry; when we encounter happiness, we will neither be joyous nor have cravings. We will be able to expect nothing in return nor be attached to attainments while having the *Right Understanding* and Right View.

Example 3

There was an old monk who was going on a trip, so he told his young Sramanera disciple, "I have a pot of orchid flowers here. Help me take good care of it."

As instructed by the master, the young Sramanera took care of the pot of orchid flowers. But as he was still a playful child, the young Sramanera accidentally broke the pot of orchid flowers. "What shall I do? I've broken the master's favorite pot of orchid flowers. He will surely scold me."

When the master returned, the young Sramanera reported to the master, "Master, I am sorry! I broke the pot of orchid flowers."

The old monk said, "It doesn't matter! It doesn't matter!"

The young Sramanera asked, "Why? Why is the master not scolding me?"

"Everything in this mundane world has causes and conditions for it to be manifested and destroyed. In its manifestation and destruction, everything is impermanent, nothing is forever. Something that is damaged is already damaged, so it doesn't matter! Just be more careful in the future."

“Master, are you not angry at all?”

“No!”

“Wasn’t that your favorite?”

“Master does not have any favorite item. I use this thing to foster an inner tranquility and not to develop clinging. You must understand this. I did not crave for it. I just used it to relax my mind. Since it is damaged, there is no need to cling on to it.”

When we earn money, do we not feel happy? But when we are penniless, do we not feel sad? In the future, we must reflect in this manner, “The money I earn is supposed to make me happy but when there is no money, I will be in pain because of it. Hence, the true nature of money is not one of happiness.” When we reflect in this manner, we will understand that whether we are rich or penniless, we should neither be sad nor happy for the sake of money.

If we have money, it is because we have merits; if we are penniless, it is because we do not have enough merits. So, we must practice generosity to cultivate merits; all else are irrelevant. Our gains and losses are the results of karma.

Hence, we should be cultivating wholesomeness and eliminating unwholesomeness. When facing the impermanence of life and death, it is most important that we can be liberated. Once we understand this, we should be like the old monk. There is no need to be sad when we experience loss and we must be able to live with ease.

Who is more important, the president or the beggar?

Let's ask ourselves a simple question: Is the President more important? Or, is the beggar more important? Between the President and his driver, who is more important? The general perception is that the President is more important, while the driver and the beggar are less so. This is the manner in which the mundane world thinks. We must use the Dharma to perceive the mundane world, instead of viewing it through the mundane world's perception.

If we view the world through the mundane world's perception, we will continue to be plagued by defilements and our minds will remain clouded. Through the mundane world's perception, the President is more important. Therefore, one would want to become the President, and not being one would bring about misery. We would also feel bitter if the President were to ignore us when we meet him.

How do we perceive the mundane world through the Dharma? The President, the beggar, and the driver are all equally important. Why is this so? If the President encourages us to be proper, it is wholesome karma. Suppose he tells all of us to be compassionate and to have a wholesome mind, to not harm others, not steal, and not commit sexual misconduct. Suppose he tells everyone to practice the *tenfold meritorious cause of action*. Between individuals, we must be faithful to our spouse, and not commit adultery. For those of us who have yet to marry, we should not engage in illicit sexual relationships.

We must speak the truth and not tell lies, and we should not be manipulative. We should avoid slandering and not be jealous of others, avoid rude or harsh words, not criticize others, and avoid creating conflicts between people. If the President were to tell these to the people, he is wholesome, and he is cultivating wholesome karma. Hence, everyone will praise him.

Similarly, if the driver or the beggar were to tell people, “We, as humans, should be compassionate. Do not kill. We must protect all sentient beings. We must liberate life. Do not steal. We must practice generosity. Do not engage in illicit sexual relationship, do not commit adultery, and be faithful to our

~ WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE IN LIFE? (2) ~

family. We must speak the truth, do not slander others, scold people, and avoid gossiping. We must talk about the Dharma. Do not be jealous and greedy. We must have the Right Understanding and Right View.”

When a beggar or a driver also speaks about such things, everyone will respect him as well. Given such wholesome karma, would the President, the driver, and the beggar not be equally important? They are in fact equally important with no difference between them. Hence, in the presence of karmic forces, all sentient beings are equally important. There is no differentiation between the President, the beggar, or the driver at all. Hence, this question has clearly been answered.

On the other hand, if the President were to verbally abuse people, gossip, create discord among people, engage in corruption, and hurt people. Under such circumstances, he is creating unwholesome karma. Would everyone not spurn or scold him? Similarly, if the beggar steals or commits sexual misconduct, would others not criticize or scold him? Therefore, they are equally important in the presence of karmic forces.

Let’s consider this from another angle; the President practices the tenfold meritorious cause of action, while the beggar

commits the tenfold unmeritorious cause of action. In the presence of karmic forces, regardless of a person's identity, he will go to the heavenly realm if he or she had done wholesome deeds. But if he or she had done unwholesome deeds, he or she will go to the hell realm. Hence, all sentient beings must face the karmic forces with no misgivings. This is wisdom.

How does one perceive the mundane world with wisdom?

We, sentient beings, are in fact very shallow. Hence, if we were able to perceive the mundane world with wisdom, we will not be biased and consider matters merely on the surface.

Example 1

For example, is there any difference between wearing a brown-colored robe or a red-colored robe? There is no difference. This robe is simply something that we put on, and it can be taken off. Hence, the intrinsic essence of the Venerable or Master remains the same, regardless of the color of his robe.

Therefore, we should not live at such a level of superficiality, and base our judgments on external qualities. When we

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perceive a person, we must consider the morals of his essence. Of course, the Buddha told us that we should reflect upon ourselves instead of sizing up others. Hence, when we are interacting with others, we must not differentiate them by their external appearances.

Example 2

As Buddhists, we must believe and have faith in Buddhism. We should not make comparisons or behave in a petty manner.

Should we be comparing over issues such as our respective Teacher's looks, age, moral conduct, and knowledge? We should not be making comparisons with others. When no comparisons are made, we will not be calculative and petty.

The same applies for a family. There is no need to make comparisons or to be calculative among siblings, as everyone should be cultivating wholesomeness and eliminating unwholesomeness. We will not worry when we face suffering, and we will have no greed when we encounter happiness. We are able to maintain equanimity in our hearts in any situation. This is a most difficult challenge but also the most important thing. In the presence of our karmic forces, we must ensure that we are not affected by the Wrong Views.

Example 3

There was once a king who thought, “I have created so much unwholesome karma in this life. What should I do about it?” He then thought of bribing King Yama. So he had all the gold in the country collected in preparation for his passing. He wanted to place them into his coffin and bring them along, so as to bribe and request King Yama to allow him to return to the human realm.

After he had collected the gold, he thought, “There has to be people who hid their gold and have yet to surrender it.”

So he said, “If anyone were to bring me their gold, I would give him an official position.”

At that time, a child told his mother, “When father passed away, a piece of gold was placed into his mouth. If we remove that piece of gold and bring it to the king, the king will grant me an official position.”

Because the mother loved the child very much, she agreed, “Sure! Let’s remove the gold.” After removing the gold, they brought it to the king.

The king asked, “I thought all the gold in the country have been surrendered? Why do you still hold this piece of gold?”

~ WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE IN LIFE? (2) ~

The child replied, “This piece of gold was placed in my late father’s mouth when he passed away. He was going to bring it to see King Yama as he wanted King Yama to allow him to return to the human realm in exchange for the gold. He did not want to die!”

Though the King was considering it from the mundane world’s perspective, he still had a little wisdom. Therefore, upon hearing this, the King thought, “This child’s father had a piece of gold placed in his mouth, but ultimately he still could not bring it along to see King Yama. Instead, it was brought over to me. If I were to die now, I would not be able to bring all the gold inside the coffin with me to King Yama.

Instead, my unwholesome karma will bring me to the hell realm to King Yama. If I were to cultivate wholesomeness, I will be able to take rebirth in the heavenly realm. Therefore, I must overcome the most difficult challenge now. I must not be angry when faced with criticism from others. Instead, I must bravely receive opinions from others and I should not be worried or angry. In happy moments, I will not immerse myself in it and create unwholesome karma. I will encounter suffering with no worries, and encounter happiness with no joy and no craving.”

He quickly implemented benevolent government policies, practiced the tenfold meritorious cause of action, and practiced the path of the *Wheel Turning Monarch*. Upon his death, he was reborn in the heavenly realm. He did not bring the gold to the hell realm. Instead, he used the gold to practice generosity, and to sustain and protect the Triple Gem. Unlike those who are superficial, a wise person would do all these.

Why is a compassionate heart able to calm and put everyone at ease?



Whatever comes after death, it is most important that we start cultivating loving-kindness and compassion.

Example 1

A house is built from a combination of steel bars, reinforcing steel, floors, cement, sand, and furnishings. Which one of these items do you think is the most important? Are all these items equally important? In the true form of all things as they are, if there were no steel bars, this house could not be built. If there were no cement, the house would not be strong. If there were no sand, the house also could not be completed. And if there were no furnishing, we cannot live in it.

Hence, for all causes and conditions, every part is equally important. From the social point of view, which item would we consider as the more important? It is water. If there is no water, the cement and sand will not coagulate together. The viscosity of water will gel the cement and sand together so that the mixture can be used as the foundation for beams and pillars. Thus, water is very important.

This is an analogy to show us what is more important within a family, a country, an organization, and a company. Though these are people, technology, and buildings, to form a cohesive family or organization, we need to bind our interpersonal relationships with loving-kindness by caring for and helping out each other, just as water binds cement and sand. With cohesion, everyone will be happy with no worries. When

we understand this point, we should be cultivating this water of loving-kindness and compassion at all times.

With this water of loving-kindness and compassion, there will be harmony and everyone will be able to co-exist peacefully.

Example 2

There was a very compassionate Bhikshu who was going to stay in a forest for four months. There, he was practicing Loving-Kindness and the Four Divine States of the Mind – Loving-Kindness, Compassion, Sympathetic Joy, and Equanimity. At the end of the four months, just as he was about to leave, the tree deity of the forest appeared before him and asked the Bhikshu, “Venerable! Can you please stay here?” The Bhikshu asked, “Why do you want me to stay here?”

The tree deity replied, “Before the Venerable came to this forest, the sentient beings living here, be they ghosts or animals, were always quarrelling with each other. But ever since such a kind and compassionate being as you came along, we became very happy, and everyone was able to get along happily with each other. If you were to leave now, everyone would quarrel again, and the peace and calm would cease. Hence, we are requesting the Venerable to continue staying here.”

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This Bhikshu was after all a very kind and compassionate person, so he stayed on. He said, "I will stay for another four months."

After four months had passed, the tree deity came and requested again and the Bhikshu again remained, out of loving-kindness and compassion.

Time after time, the Bhikshu would accept the tree deity's request to remain in this forest. Finally, with much calm and tranquility, the Bhikshu attained perfect extinction and nirvana in this forest.

Therefore, the presence of a very compassionate and kind person in an organization would enable everyone in the organization to enjoy a good and prosperous life at the workplace with much peace and contentment.

Although all causes and conditions are very important, loving-kindness and compassion is the most important cause and condition that can unite the world together. The Buddha, being infinitely kind and compassionate, came to this mundane world because he saw the suffering of all sentient beings. It is also for this very reason that he generated the Bodhicitta and the Great Compassionate Heart to save and liberate all sentient beings.

Once we understand this, we must follow the Buddha's footsteps and be kind and compassionate to all sentient beings. When we generate the mind of loving-kindness and compassion, we must use our best endeavors in this life to do as the Buddha taught, and practice in accordance with the Dharma. And in our next lives, we can choose to go to the Western Paradise or to Maitreya Buddha's world.

What excellence can be found in Maitreya Buddha's world?

We may enter Maitreya's world in Tusita Heaven and in our next life, we can be in the human realm together with Maitreya Buddha. What is it like in Maitreya Buddha's world?

1. Life expectancy: In that time, sentient beings' life expectancy will be different. In Maitreya Buddha's era, humans have a life expectancy of 84,000 years.
2. Marriage: These days, most marry in their twenties, but in that time, they will marry only when they are five hundred years old.
3. Childbirth: Childbirth is presently a painful process. It will be easier and painless for people in that period.

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4. Work: People need not work very hard in that time, as they will have a natural supply of food for their consumption.
5. Money and wealth: We are always pursuing money and wealth, and even going to the extent of comparing our wealth. For people in that time, they do not want money, which is no more valuable to them in their hands than it is on the ground. They will hold up the symbols of wealth and remark, “The people during Sakyamuni Buddha’s era were always fighting over these symbols of wealth, and creating unwholesome karma. Hence, they lived short lives and were short in stature. We do not want these things.” Why are they able to disregard these symbols of wealth? It is because they received good karmic retribution from their wholesome karma.
6. Natural disasters: In that era, there shall be no earthquakes or typhoons. Typhoons bring about floods and landslides; when earthquakes occur, mountains may collapse while the ground may crack open, thereby causing much misery.
7. Mountains and rivers: The landscape in that era is flat like the palm, and the four oceans are very still. In the present world, pollution can be found everywhere. This does not happen in that era.

8. Ghosts and gods: In this era, there are supernatural beings and the weather is ever changing with rain falling irregularly. In that era, supernatural beings will cast rain to clean the streets and roads during the night, doing the task that is presently performed by sweepers. This is due to the karmic induction of the sentient beings.
9. Demon King: During Sakyamuni Buddha's time, *Mara King Pāpīyān* (also known as Mara King) would come and obstruct practitioners from their endeavors. However, during Maitreya Buddha's era, the Mara King shall be known as the Great General. The Great General Mara King will encourage sentient beings to join the monastic order to cultivate and practice. What a great difference!
10. Pure land: Although it is not the Western Paradise, it is still a Pure World in that era.
11. Time: It will be 5.67 billion years from now before Maitreya Bodhisattva attains Buddhahood. There is still a long way to go. Presently, Maitreya Bodhisattva is in the Fourth Heaven (the Tusita Heaven) and has not attained Buddhahood yet.
12. False rumor: Some religions claim that Maitreya Bodhisattva is now holding the heavenly compass and has

already arrived in the human realm. This is wrong! Such claims do not coincide with the Buddha's words. If we want to talk about Maitreya Bodhisattva, we must do so according to the Buddha's words. When the Buddha was in this world, he had clearly indicated when the next Buddha will arrive in the human realm. This is to prevent people from abusing Maitreya Buddha's name to cheat sentient beings, as Maitreya Buddha will only enter the human realm after 5.67 billion years.

13. Saving and liberating sentient beings: How would Maitreya Buddha save and liberate the sentient beings when he descends to the human realm? He will be born as a royalty. He will first observe and choose his deserving parents from the heavenly realm. He will thereafter descend to the human realm from the heavenly realm. His parents would be the ministers at the King's court and they are both very dignified and very pure. After ten months of pregnancy, he will be delivered from the right side of the body (which is the area between the armpit and the waist) and not from the birth canal. All Bodhisattvas who will become Buddhas are born from the right side of the body. In the Buddhist scriptures, it is said that this is a natural occurrence for all Buddhas.

14. Attaining Buddhahood: After Maitreya Buddha descends to the human realm and grows up, he need not undergo six years of ascetic practice after renouncement, unlike Sakyamuni Buddha.

The Buddha was telling us that we must cultivate wholesome karma of body, speech, and mind at all times or we will suffer like him. As the Buddha had created karma arising from speech in one of his past lives, he had to undergo six years of ascetic practice when he renounced to become a Buddha. During the six years of ascetic practice, he could not attain liberation due to the criminal karma.

But Maitreya Buddha does not have such criminal karma. Hence, on the night Maitreya Buddha renounces, he will attain Buddhahood on that very night.

15. Pay homage respectfully: Once Maitreya Bodhisattva attains Buddhahood, the earth deity will be promptly aware of it. He will immediately inform the tree deity and the mountain deity. Everyone will pass the message and it will reach the Four Heavens of the Four Deva Kings; from the Four Heavens of the Four Deva Kings to the Thirty-Three Heavens; from the Thirty-Three Heavens, the

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message will go to the Yama Heaven; from the Yama Heaven, it will go to the Tusita Heaven; from the Tusita Heaven, the message will go to the Nirmanarati Heaven; from the Nirmanarati Heaven, it will go to the Paranirmita Vasavartin Heaven; from the Paranirmita Vasavartin Heaven, it will spread to the Brahma World; it will continue to be circulated until all the beings in the human and heavenly realms know about it.

All the celestial beings will be very happy and they will all descend to the human realm to pay homage to Maitreya Buddha. At that time, even Mara King will descend and pay homage as well.

16. Expounding the Dharma: Maitreya Buddha will expound the Dharma to all the celestial beings, and they will attain the *Pure Dharma Eye*. Once they have attained the Pure Dharma Eye, they are guaranteed liberation and will not continue in the cycle of existence. Instead, they will attain Arahatship after going through a maximum of seven cycles of rebirth between the heavenly realms and the human realm.

This is the first exposition of the Dharma. When expounding the Dharma for the second time, Mara King

will encourage all sentient beings to come and listen to the Dharma. Mara King was originally supposed to obstruct the Buddha's work, but during Maitreya Buddha's era, Mara King is known as the Great General. The Great General Mara King, will encourage sentient beings to come and listen and learn the Dharma from Maitreya Buddha. The first person to come and listen to the Dharma will join the monastic order and attain Arahatsip after listening to the Dharma.

17. The Wheel Turning Monarch: The Wheel Turning Monarch, knowing that his minister's son has attained Buddhahood, would tell the Prince, "I am relinquishing this throne to you as I want to go and see the Buddha." The Wheel Turning Monarch then goes to see Maitreya Buddha, and after listening to the Dharma, he joins the monastic order and attains Arahatsip. When the Wheel Turning Monarch joins the monastic order, he brings along 84,000 people with him.
18. Family members join the monastic order: All the Brahmins will follow Maitreya Buddha's father and go to the Buddha. Upon hearing the Dharma, they will also join the monastic order. Other than his father, who will attain the first stage of fruition, all the Brahmins who join the monastic order

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will attain Arahathship. His mother will also bring along many female followers to join the monastic order and they will also attain Arahathship.

This is as stated in the Buddhist scriptures that only his parents will attain the first stage of fruition. It is the same for Sakyamuni Buddha's parents.

19. The Three Assemblies of Nagapuspa: During Maitreya Buddha's time, The Three Assemblies of Nagapuspa will exist.

When Mara King encourages sentient beings to go and cultivate themselves, many people would go to the Maitreya Buddha.

All who attend the First Assembly are those who possess sharp faculties, 9.6 billion people will join the monastic order and attain Arahathship.

In the Second Assembly, 9.4 billion people will attain Arahathship.

In the Third Assembly, 9.2 billion people attain Arahathship. These are The Three Assemblies of Nagapuspa.

20. Passing on of the robe and alms bowl: Mahakasyapa is now sitting in meditation in Kukkuṭapāda (or Chi-tsu Shan). He will wait for 5.67 billion years, until Maitreya Buddha descends to the human realm and attain Buddhahood. Then Mahakasyapa will pass on Sakyamuni Buddha's golden robe to Maitreya Buddha.

After the Three Assemblies of Nagapuspa, sentient beings will become ill-disciplined. Maitreya Buddha will then bring his disciples to Mahakasyapa. Upon reaching Kukkuṭapāda, Maitreya Buddha uses his finger tips to open up the mountain. This is because the people during Maitreya Buddha's era have very big stature, while Mahakasyapa, who is sitting in meditation, has a small body in comparison.

After Kukkuṭapāda is opened, Mahakasyapa appears in that small stature while carrying the golden robe.

Maitreya Buddha would then use fragrant flowers as offering for Mahakasyapa. Why would he do this?

This is because Mahakasyapa will represent Sakyamuni Buddha and pass on the True Dharma to the next era. Thus, the Dharma continues to be passed on from one era

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to the next. The current Buddha who inherited the Dharma from the previous Buddha, will then pass on the Dharma to the next Buddha. Therefore, Maitreya Buddha uses fragrant flowers as offering for Mahakasyapa to show his respects to the Buddha's True Dharma. Even Maitreya Buddha will also respect Mahakasyapa.

Therefore, when we are making offerings to the Triple Gem, we must also adopt such a respectful mentality when we make offerings to the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha.

At that moment, Mahakasyapa displays his supernatural powers to the native, after which he will pass into Nirvana.

When the people witness this, it will inspire them to set their minds on cultivation and emulate Mahakasyapa. Hence, many people would cultivate diligently and attain Arahatsip.

21. Sakyamuni's disciples: At that moment, the Maitreya Buddha will tell everyone, "All disciples who are present here, you were all practitioners that remained from the Sakyamuni Buddha's Perfect Age of the Dharma, the Dharma Semblance Age, and the Dharma Ending Age. You

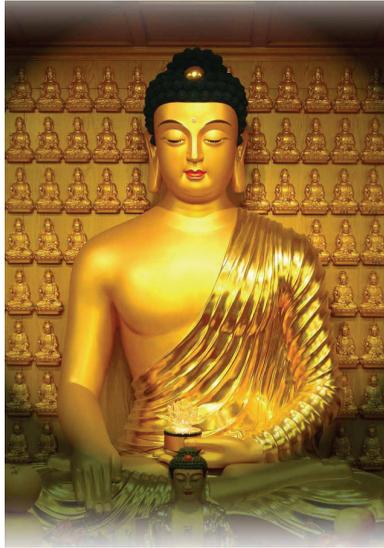
will be liberated in this era when I appear.” Maitreya Buddha will tell everyone about this when the time comes.

How does one get to meet Maitreya Buddha?

In order to meet Maitreya Buddha, how should we cultivate? We are very lucky that in this life, we can cultivate according to the Dharma left over by Sakyamuni Buddha.

1. Join the monastic order and cultivate: Have faith in the Triple Gem, listen to and learn from the Dharma, take and uphold the precepts, practice generosity, and rejoice in gratitude. Cultivate the Four Noble Truths, the Twelve Links of Dependent Origination, and practice the Six Paramitas. This is the cultivation of the pure practices, which can be done by joining the monastic order.
2. Uphold the precepts: After listening to and learning the Dharma, uphold the precepts and follow the discipline strictly.
3. Cultivate the Four Divine States of Mind – Cultivate Loving-Kindness, Compassion, Sympathetic Joy, and Equanimity, and treat all sentient beings with a heart of equanimity.

~ WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE IN LIFE? (2) ~



4. Seek refuge in the Triple Gem, and uphold the *five precepts*: Go to the Triple Gem for refuge and uphold the five precepts. Chant “*Namah Buddha*”, “*Namah Dharma*”, “*Namah Sangha*”, “*I go to the Buddha for refuge*”, “*I go to the Dharma for refuge*”, “*I go to the Sangha for refuge*”.
5. Protect and maintain the Triple Gem: Protect and maintain the Triple Gem, and rejoice in gratitude. Make offerings to the Triple Gem. Enable sentient beings to be acquainted with the Triple Gem so that they will be able to meet Maitreya Buddha in the future.

6. Believe in and have faith in the Triple Gem, and encourage others to believe in and have faith in the Triple Gem as well: Believe in and have faith in the Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, and be willing to uphold the precepts. Only with such belief and faith can we encourage others to do so as well.

7. Build monasteries: We know that the building of a monastery is different from that for an ordinary home. That is because the Buddha and the Triple Gem reside in the monastery. Upon seeing the monastery, everyone will think of the Buddha and the Triple Gem, and they will generate wholesome thoughts. They will also generate the aspiration to seek liberation and Buddhahood, and would not descend into the three *bad existences*. So building a monastery can help save and liberate many sentient beings. These are the merits of building a monastery.

8. Mend old monasteries: Some monasteries are old and dilapidated. For example, the Taiwan earthquake on September 21, 1999 destroyed many monasteries. We helped to repair and rebuild damaged monasteries so as to direct the people's minds towards the Triple Gem. These are all wholesome deeds, which are devoid of unwholesomeness.

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9. Undertake the *eight precepts*: After undertaking the eight precepts, we will aspire to see Maitreya Buddha, the future Buddha, and to go to the Western Paradise. As a result of the merits generated through the undertaking of the eight precepts, we will see Maitreya Buddha in the future.
10. Make offerings of fragrant flowers: When we receive flowers or anything nice, we will offer them to the Triple Gem. When we are offering flowers to the Triple Gem, we will keep our minds on the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha, and we will be able to meet Maitreya Buddha in the future.
11. Be touched and moved by the Dharma: When we listen to the Dharma, we can be moved to tears. If we are touched and moved by the Dharma, it means that our hearts are connected with the Dharma. With this connection, there will be hope in seeing the Buddha. Moreover, the Buddha has said that we will surely see Maitreya Buddha in the future. Therefore, be attentive when you are listening to and learning the Dharma. Some people will fall asleep while listening to the Dharma. This is such a pity.
12. Cultivate the pure practices whole-heartedly: When we listen to the Dharma whole-heartedly, our wisdom will

grow. In this life of ours, we have the opportunity to be in contact with the Dharma. Therefore, we must cultivate the pure practices whole-heartedly, and in this manner, we can also see Maitreya Buddha.

13. Write, uphold, read, and chant Buddhist scriptures: We must respect the Dharma expounded by the Buddha. Hence, we should copy the Buddhist scriptures, write them, and read or chant them. As some people are illiterate, they can uphold, and read or chant the Buddhist scriptures. After reading and chanting, we must contemplate upon it. After contemplating upon it, we may even share it with others, and thereafter start to cultivate ourselves. Writing, upholding, reading and chanting, practicing reflective thinking, practicing in accordance with the exposition, and sharing the exposition with others, these will also enable us to see the Maitreya Buddha.
14. Honor, pay obeisance, and pay respect to the Triple Gem: Be close to the Triple Gem and help out with monastic activities as this will also help us meet Maitreya Buddha in the future. In that era, the environment will be very wholesome and the people very kind. We will be able to meet the Buddha, attain Arahantship, and generate Bodhicitta.

15. Cultivate the Ten Thoughts: These ten thoughts will help us to attain liberation faster. This mundane world is impermanent; continuously arising and ceasing. The body is impermanent; continuously arising and ceasing. Form, feeling, perception, volitional activity, and consciousness are impermanent. The extrinsic world is also impermanent. There is no happiness to be spoken of in impermanence.

Happiness slips by in a blink, and suffering follows. In the midst of suffering, no one can control their physical bodies. Since it cannot be controlled, it does not have an intrinsic self. Without that, it is therefore of no inherent existence.

The food that we eat will eventually be passed out from our bodies. Hence, they are indeed really unclean. If they remain in the body, they will be unclean as well. The body will transform through the process of aging, and it is therefore not lovely at all. When the body deteriorates and stops functioning, the corpse will become bloated. At this point, the bloated body will disintegrate if it remains unrefrigerated. Moreover, the color of the body will change, and even a beautiful woman will turn into an ugly one as well.

Therefore, we should not have cravings for our body. There is nothing lovely about it and it should be given up and abandoned. Note that this does not mean we should view it with hatred. We should instead simply not crave for it. We can make use of this unlovely body to cultivate wholesomeness, to help others, to pay respect to the Triple Gem, to pay obeisance to the Buddha, and to cultivate ourselves. When we have wealth, we can benefit others, and protect and maintain the Triple Gem.

We can cultivate:

- the meditation on impermanence,
- the meditation on suffering,
- the meditation on selflessness,
- the meditation on emptiness/nothingness,
- the meditation on form,
- the meditation on the blue, mottled color of a corpse,
- the meditation on the corpse as bloated and filled with air,
- the meditation on the corpse being mutilated by birds, insects, and animals,

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- the meditation on the state of decomposition of the corpse whereby blood oozes out and there are messes of bloodstains,
- the meditation on everything in the mundane world as not being pleasurable. Instead, everything has its unwholesomeness, thereby developing a mind that detaches and does not delight and cling on such things.

Although we have yet to attain liberation in this mundane world, we hold the knowledge that we will be able to meet Maitreya Buddha in the future.

If we cannot meet Maitreya Buddha while not being able to take rebirth in the Western Paradise, what should we do?

Wouldn't it be very miserable if we cannot go to the Western Paradise or meet Maitreya Buddha? Hence, in our daily lives, there is no need to pursue or envy fame and wealth. Instead, we should be able to encounter suffering without worry and develop no craving when we encounter happiness, to expect nothing and have no attachment to attainments.

When we are cultivating wholesomeness and eliminating unwholesomeness, we can aspire to first enter the Tusita Heaven and meet Maitreya Buddha in our next life. In this manner, our minds will be calmed. Once our mind is settled down, we should reflect clearly on the True Dharma taught by the Buddha. How should we continue with this life?

Even during the most difficult times, we should not depart from *Right Mindfulness*, the Buddha, or the Triple Gem. In our future lives, we will be able to practice steadfastly, and be able to see the Buddha every time, instead of rebirth into a time when the Buddha is not around, such as the present period. Fortunately, we are still able to learn and listen to Dharma taught by the Buddha.

We wish that everyone will be able to see Maitreya Buddha or *Amitabha Buddha* in the future, and be able to fully accomplish this most difficult challenge in our life.

Glossary

Altruistic Joy: Also known as Sympathetic Joy or Mudita. See also Four Divine States of Mind.

Amitabha Buddha: The Buddha of Infinite Light and Infinite Life, who presides over the Western Pure Land, to which anyone can be reborn through single minded recitation of or meditation on the Buddha's name.

Anagamin: One who has attained the third stage of Liberation. Such a person has abandoned sensuous desires. Upon passing from the human realm, he will take rebirth in one of the five special worlds in the World of Form, called the Śuddhāvāsa worlds, or "Pure Abodes", from which he will attain Arahatsip and will never return to the human realm. Hence, he is also known as a Non Returner. An Anagamin has abandoned the five lower fetters, out of ten total fetters, that bind beings to the cycle of existence. See also Arahatsip.

Anuttara Samyak Sambodhi: The Supreme and Complete Enlightenment.

Arahat: One who has traversed the Eightfold Noble Path to reach the fourth and final stage of Liberation, called Arahatship. An Arahat has abandoned all ten fetters that bind beings to the cycle of existence. Also known as the Perfect One. See also Arahatship.

Arahatship: The fourth and final stage of Liberation, in which one is fully liberated from Samsara and is no longer subject to death and rebirth. The four stages of Liberation are: The First stage known as Srotapanna; the Second stage known as Sakradagamin; the Third stage known as Anagamin; and the Fourth stage known as Arahat.

Avici Hell: Also known as the Hell of Uninterrupted Torture. It is the deepest and worst hell. Those born in this hell suffer, die, and are instantly reborn to suffering without interruption, until they have exhausted the retribution for their evil karma.

Bad existences: The three lower realms of hell beings, hungry ghosts, and animals; as opposed to the good existences, which are the three realms of humans, asuras, and heavenly beings. See also Six realms of cyclic existence.

Bhikshu: A fully ordained male member of the Buddhist Sangha or monk observing 250 Precepts.

Bhikshuni: A fully ordained female member of the Buddhist Sangha or nun observing 500 Precepts.

Bodhicitta: Also known as the Bodhi-mind or the Bodhi-heart, in which "Bodhi" means "enlightened". It is the aspiration to attain supreme Enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings.

Bodhisattva: A being who has developed Bodhicitta and is striving for enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings.

Brahma King: The King of the Brahma World.

Brahma World: In the widest sense, this is the name of the World of Form; in a narrower sense, it is the collective name of the first three heavens of the World of Form. See also Three planes of existence.

Buddha: The Fully Enlightened One, who possesses perfect wisdom and compassion.

Chakravartin: A universal emperor and protector of Buddhism. Also known as Wheel Turning Monarch.

~ GLOSSARY ~

Compassion: Also known as Karuna. See also Four Divine States of Mind and Great Compassion.

Cycle of existence: See Samsara.

Cyclic existence: See Samsara.

Defilements: The mental states of greed, hatred, and delusion which temporarily cloud the mind and manifest in unwholesome actions. These defilements are seen as the very roots of samsaric existence and are known as the three poisons.

Deva: A heavenly being.

Dharma: The Teachings of the Buddha.

Eight precepts: Observed by lay Buddhists during certain retreats: (1) Do not kill; (2) Do not steal; (3) Do not engage in sexual activities; (4) Do not tell lies; (5) Do not take intoxicants; (6) do not wear bodily adornments, use perfumes, engage in singing and dancing, and watching dances or plays; (7) do not sleep in a raised bed; and (8) do not eat after noon.

Eightfold Noble Path: The fundamental teaching of the Buddha that shows the path that leads to the cessation of suffering: (1) Right View or Right Understanding; (2) Right Thought; (3) Right Speech; (4) Right Action; (5) Right Livelihood; (6) Right Effort; (7) Right Mindfulness; and (8) Right Concentration.

Eighteen kinds of transformation: Includes (1) moving objects or even worlds; (2) emitting fire from the body; (3) illuminating innumerable worlds; (4) causing sentient beings in all the six realms to be seen; (5) changing an object into something different; (6) roaming freely by penetrating walls, mountains, water, air, and so on; (7) rolling anything into a minute size; (8) enlarging objects to gigantic proportions; (9) storing up swarms of people, mountains, or earth within the body; (10) entering any group, assuming their forms and voices, preaching to them, and then disappearing; (11) magnifying the body to a thousand fold; (12) hiding this magnified metamorphosis; (13) subjecting sentient beings to one's will; (14) controlling the supernatural powers of those below one in spiritual achievements; (15) endowing sentient beings with eloquence; (16) restoring memory to those who forget the Dharma; (17) giving joy to listeners; and (18) lighting up the creatures in all the worlds.

Eon: See Kalpa.

Equanimity: Also known as Upeksa. See also Four Divine States of Mind.

First Stage of Fruition: Also known as the first stage of Liberation. One who has attained the first stage of fruition is known as a Srotapanna or Stream Enterer.

Five aggregates: Form, feeling, perception, volition, and consciousness.

Five desires: Wealth, lust, fame, food, and sleep.

Five precepts: (1) Do not kill; (2) Do not steal; (3) Do not engage in sexual misconduct; (4) Do not tell lies; and (5) Do not take intoxicants.

Five sensual pleasures: Pleasurable feelings derived from the contact between the five sense bases of eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body, and the five sense objects of form, sound, odor, flavor, and tactile object.

Four Divine States of Mind: (1) Maitri or Loving-kindness; (2) Karuna or Compassion; (3) Mudita or Sympathetic Joy; and (4) Upeksa or Equanimity.

Four Foundations of Mindfulness: (1) Contemplation of the body; (2) Contemplation of feelings; (3) Contemplation of the state of mind; and (4) Contemplation of phenomena. See also Right Effort.

Four Noble Truths: (1) The noble truth of suffering; (2) The noble truth of the cause of suffering; (3) The noble truth of the cessation of suffering; and (4) The noble truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering.

Good existences: The three upper realms of humans, asuras and heavenly beings; as opposed to the bad existences of hell beings, hungry ghosts, and animals. See also Six realms of cyclic existence.

Great Compassion: The aspiration to remove the sufferings and causes of sufferings of all sentient beings.

Heavens of the Deva Kings of the Four Heavens: Also known as the Heavens of the Four Deva Kings. This is the first of the six heavens in the World of Sensuous Desires. See also Three planes of existence.

Heavens of the Four Deva Kings: See Heavens of the Deva Kings of the Four Heavens.

Hell of Screaming: One of the eight hot hells. The other seven are: the Hell of Thoughts, the Hell of Iron Chains, the Hell of Crushing, the Hell of Great Screaming, the Scorching Hot Hell, the Extreme Scorching Hot Hell, and the Hell of Uninterrupted Torture (also known as the Avici Hell).

Kalpa: Also known as Eon. It is often used to denote a very long period of time. There are small, medium, great, and incalculable kalpas. A great kalpa indicates the length of time between the creation and recreation of a universe, spanning the period of the universe's formation, existence, destruction, and non-existence.

Karma: The deeds carried out by a person and their effects on the person's future, especially in relation to their succeeding rebirths. Karma can be classified as actions of the body, speech, and mind, each of which can have the moral quality of wholesomeness, unwholesomeness, or indeterminate.

Karuna: Also known as Compassion. See also Four Divine States of Mind.

King Yama: The King in charge of the hell realm.

Law of causality: Also known as the law of cause and effect. This is a fundamental concept within Buddhism governing all

situations, in which all actions, which is a cause, will produce a corresponding effect. It is also stated as good begets good, evil begets evil; good will not beget evil, evil will not beget good.

Loving-kindness: Also known as Maitri. See also Four Divine States of Mind.

Maitri: Also known as Loving-kindness. See also Four Divine States of Mind.

Mara: The Demon King who resides in the Paranirmita Vasavartin Heaven.

Mudita: Also known as Altruistic or Sympathetic Joy. See also Four Divine States of Mind.

Naga: Dragon or serpent. A beneficent divine being who governs the various water bodies, such as seas, lakes, rivers, and springs.

National Preceptor: The Religious Adviser to the King equivalent to the position of a Prime Minister.

Nirmanarati Heaven: This is the fifth of the six heavens in the World of Sensuous Desires. See also Three planes of existence.

~ GLOSSARY ~

Nirvana: The perfect state of mind that is free from greed, hatred, and delusion, and hence all suffering. See also Parinirvana and Residue-less nirvana.

Non Returner: See Anagamin.

Once Returner: See Sakradagamin.

Paranirmita Vasavartin Heaven: This is the sixth of the six heavens in the World of Sensuous Desires. Mara, the Demon King, resides in this heaven. See also Three planes of existence.

Parinirvana: Also known as the Great Nirvana; it indicates the Buddha's entering into the state of residue-less nirvana. See also Nirvana and Residue-less nirvana.

Perfect One: See Arahant.

Prajna: Wisdom; insight; divine intuition.

Pratyeka Buddha: Also known as the Silent Buddha, or Self-enlightened One. The Pratyeka Buddha appears in an era when there is no Buddha or the Buddha's teachings. He lives apart from others and achieves enlightenment through self-contemplation and realization of dependent arising.

Pure Dharma Eye: The pure vision of the true Dharma.

Residue-less nirvana: Also known as nirvana without residue. It refers to the state of total liberation from all physical and mental conditions. This is in contrast with nirvana with residue, where the body still exists. See also Nirvana and Parinirvana.

Right Action: To conduct oneself in moral, peaceful, and honorable ways, that is in keeping with the precepts of not killing, not stealing, and not committing sexual misconduct. See also Eightfold Noble Path and Tenfold meritorious cause of action.

Right Concentration: To develop one's meditation according to the four Dhyanas. See also Eightfold Noble Path.

Right Effort: To develop the four types of efforts: (1) the effort to get rid of unwholesome thoughts that have already arisen in one's mind, such as the desire to take another's property; (2) the effort to prevent the arising of unwholesome thoughts; (3) the effort to develop wholesome thoughts of loving-kindness and compassion; and (4) the effort to maintain and develop further wholesome thoughts that have already arisen in one's mind. See also Eightfold Noble Path.

Right Faith: To develop faith in the Triple Gem and the Four Noble Truths, that through practicing Buddhism, all sentient beings can eventually attain liberation from Samsara.

~ GLOSSARY ~

Right Livelihood: To live honorably in a profession which is in no way harmful to sentient beings, and in keeping with the precepts. See also Eightfold Noble Path.

Right Mindfulness: To practice the Four Foundations of Mindfulness. See also Four Foundations of Mindfulness and Eightfold Noble Path.

Right Speech: To abstain from telling lies, slandering, frivolous speech, and harsh speech. See also Eightfold Noble Path and Tenfold meritorious cause of action.

Right Thought: To have only thoughts which are in line with Buddhist teachings. See also Eightfold Noble Path.

Right Understanding: See Right View.

Right View: To develop the understanding or view that complies with the Buddhist teaching of causality or the law of cause and effect; understanding the Four Noble Truths. See also Eightfold Noble Path and Right Understanding.

Right View of Dependent Arising: Also refer to as Law of Dependent Origination. It is the principle that phenomena do not come into existence on their own but as a result of causes and conditions. It is an elaboration of the Principle of Cause

and Effect, highlighting the concept of inter-dependency of existence, and also the duality/non-duality.

Sakra: The King of Trayastrimsat Heaven.

Sakradagamin: One who has attained the second stage of Liberation. Such a person, upon passing from the human realm, will take rebirth in the heavenly realms, after which he will be reborn in the human realm one last time to attain Arahatsip. Hence he is also known as a Once Returner. A Once Returner has abandoned the first three fetters, out of ten total fetters, that bind beings to the cycle of existence. He is distinguished from the Stream Enterer by the fact that the Once Returner has weakened greed, hatred, and delusion to a greater degree. Therefore, he has fewer than seven rebirths. See also Arahatsip.

Samsara: Also known as the Cycle of existence or Cyclic Existence. This refers to the endless cycle of suffering caused by birth, death, and rebirth in the six realms of cyclic existence.

Sangha: The Buddhist monastic order or community.

Seven Factors of Enlightenment: The precept; code of morality; Buddhist ethics.

Siksamana: A female novice nun in waiting observing Six Precepts.

Six Paramitas: The Sanskrit word Paramita means to cross over to the other shore. Paramita may also be translated as perfection, perfect realization, or reaching beyond limitation. Through the practice of these six Paramitas, we cross over the sea of suffering (Samsara) to the shore of happiness and awakening (Nirvana); we cross over from ignorance and delusion to enlightenment. The six Paramitas refer to:

- The Perfection of Generosity (Dana Paramita),
- The Perfection of Ethics (Sila Paramita),
- The Perfection of Patience (Ksanti Paramita)
- The Perfection of Joyous Effort / Enthusiastic Perseverance (Virya Paramita),
- The Perfection of Concentration (Dhyana Paramita),
and
- The Perfection of Wisdom (Prajna Paramita).

Six realms of cyclic existence: The realms of hell beings, hungry ghosts, animals, humans, asuras, and heavenly beings.

Sramanerika: A female novice nun observing Ten Precepts.

Srotapanna: One who has attained the first stage of Liberation. One who has attained this stage is said to have entered the Stream that leads to Liberation, hence he is also known as a Stream Enterer. Due to the fact that the Stream Enterer has attained an intuitive grasp of Buddhist teachings ("Right View") and has complete confidence in the Triple Gem, he will not be reborn in the three bad existences again, and will take at most seven cycles of rebirths alternating between the heavenly realm and the human realm before attaining the final stage of Liberation, Arahatsip. A Stream Enterer has abandoned the first three fetters, out of ten total fetters, that bind beings to the cycle of existence. See also Arahatsip.

Supernatural powers: The six supernatural powers are: (1) Divine eye or clairvoyance; (2) Divine ear or clairaudience; (3) mental telepathy or ability to read the thoughts of others; (4) psychic travel or telekinesis; (5) knowledge of the past and future; and (6) ending contamination. The first five supernatural powers can be acquired by one who practices deep concentration, but the sixth supernatural power is only attainable when one has attained Arahatsip.

Sympathetic Joy: Also known as Altruistic Joy or Mudita. See also Four Divine States of Mind.

Ten epithets: The ten honorable titles of Buddha. These ten epithets are common to all Buddhas.

- Tathāgata - Thus-Come One or Thus-Gone One,
- Arhat - Worthy of Offerings,
- Samyak-Sambuddha - Equally, Perfectly Enlightened One,
- Vidyācarana-Sampanna - Knowledge and Conduct Perfected,
- Sugata - Well-Arrived One or Well-Gone One. Tathāgata is completely in control of his own births and deaths,
- Lokavid - Understanding the World,
- Anuttara - Unsurpassed One,
- Purusa-Damya-Sārathi - Tamer of Men,
- Śāstā Deva-Manusyānām - Teacher to Gods, Humans, and heavenly beings,
- Buddha-Bhagavān - Buddha the World-Honored One.

Ten Stages of Bodhisattva Practice: According to the Prajna sutras, the ten stages of Bodhisattva Practice are:

- the stage of dry wisdom,
- the stage of nature,
- the stage of the eighth person,
- the stage of insights,

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- the stage of diminishment of afflictions,
- the stage of freedom from desire,
- the stage of completion of discernment,
- the stage of the Pratyeka Buddha,
- the stage of the Bodhisattva, and
- the stage of the Buddha.

Tenfold meritorious cause of action: (1) Do not kill; (2) Do not steal; (3) Do not engage in sexual misconduct; (4) Do not tell lies; (5) Do not slander; (6) Do not engage in frivolous speech; (7) Do not engage in harsh speech; (8) Do not bear greed; (9) Do not bear hatred; and (10) Do not stay deluded.

Three periods: The past, present, and future.

Three planes of existence: The World of Sensuous Desires, the World of Form, and the Formless World. All beings in the six realms of cyclic existence can be found in the World of Sensuous Desires as these beings are plagued by various sensuous desires. Beings in the World of Form have abandoned sensuous desires but still cling on to physical forms, while beings in the Formless World have even relinquished the physical forms and exist only in mental states.

Three poisons: See Defilements.

Trayastrimsat Heaven: Also known as the Thirty-Three Heavens. It is the second of the six heavens in the World of Sensuous Desires. See also Three planes of existence.

Triple Gem: The Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha.

Tusita Heaven: This is the fourth of the six heavens in the World of Sensuous Desires. Maitreya Bodhisattva is currently residing in this heaven, awaiting for the causes and conditions to ripen for him to descend to the human realm and become the next Buddha to save and liberate all sentient beings. See also Three planes of existence.

Twelve Links of Dependent Origination: The twelve links of dependent origination provide a detailed description on the problem of suffering and rebirth. They are: ignorance, mental formation, consciousness, name and form, the six senses, contact, feeling, craving, clinging, becoming, birth, aging and death. There is no existing phenomenon that is not the effect of dependent origination. All phenomena arise dependent upon a number of casual factors, called conditions.

- Ignorance is the condition for mental formation.
- Mental formation is the condition for consciousness.
- Consciousness is the condition for name and form.

- Name and form is the condition for the six senses.
- The six senses are the conditions for contact.
- Contact is the condition for feeling.
- Feeling is the condition for craving.
- Craving is the condition for clinging.
- Clinging is the condition for becoming.
- Becoming is the condition for birth.
- Birth is the condition for aging and death.

Upeksha: Also known as Equanimity. See also Four Divine States of Mind.

Western Pure Land: Also known as Sukhavati in Sanskrit. It refers to the Pure Land of Amitabha Buddha.

Wheel Turning Monarch: Also refer to as Chakravartin. It is a term used in Indian religions for an ideal universal ruler, who rules ethically and benevolently over the entire world. Wheel turning literally means whose chariot is rolling or whose Dharmachakra (Wheel of the Dharma) is turning everywhere without obstruction.

Yama Heaven: This is the third of the six heavens in the World of Sensuous Desires. See also Three planes of existence.

About this series

"Everlasting Happiness, as Buddha Attains" is based on a series of video Dharma teachings presented by Venerable Da Shi. We hope to continue releasing more titles in this series at a later date. You may check our website (www.mypty.sg) for updates.

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