

Everlasting Happiness,  
as Buddha Attains 4

**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

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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.

This book comprises six chapters and dwells on three main themes. The chapters on "The Law of Dependent Origination" explain what Right View is and the Wrong Views that should be abandoned. In the chapters on "The Most Blissful Person", we will learn that the most blissful person is the Buddha. It is hoped that we would aspire to be Buddhas as we learn more about the Buddha. "The Wise Man's Choice" explains the three vehicles of the Buddha's teachings and describes the suffering we can end and the happiness we can attain. This is the fourth installment of a translated series and it will also be made available on our website at [www.mypty.sg](http://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.

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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.

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**  
**Miao You Pu Ti Yuan (Singapore)**

## **Priceless Treasure – The Law of Dependent Origination (1)**

**The *law of dependent origination* is the essence of Buddhism; it is a priceless treasure**

The *Buddha* spent much time in understanding the law of dependent origination. And out of *compassion*, the Buddha taught it to sentient beings. We should be grateful to and be respectful of the Buddha that we are able to listen to and learn about the law of dependent origination. It is helpful to us or our future lives if we are moved to tears when listening to the *Dharma*.

**Ought we to believe in ourselves?**

Example

When I was propagating the Dharma in Kuala Lumpur, someone once asked: "In the course of practice, I have

~ THE LAW OF DEPENDENT ORIGINATION (1) ~

encountered some issues. Sometimes they can be resolved smoothly; sometimes they cannot. What should be done? Should I believe in myself?"

I cautiously told the lay practitioner: "Do not trust yourself."

The lay practitioner asked: "Do not trust myself? Then who should I trust?"

And I replied: "You must trust what the Buddha said."

The lay practitioner asked again: "How do I believe in what the Buddha said? What should I do to believe? Where can I find it?"

So I answered: "Look for it in the Buddhist scriptures, understand it from the Dharma."

Why should I not trust myself? What is "I"?

"I" is the embodiment of ignorance, *defilements*, desires, and habit. The newspaper is replete with news about the fight for money, debauchery, and food.

For the sake of jobs, examination results, people fight amongst themselves, should you believe in such thoughts?

Ought we to believe in desires? Then you go on to rationalize it by thinking that you are doing this for the sake of your family, children, wife, parents, and friends. For these reasons, you believe in yourself.

What kind of results would such behavior entail? Under such circumstances, we create *karma* for the sake of defilements, desires and this body.

Some people might tell you: "Don't worry! You must take good care of this body then you can cultivate and practice." If, in order to take care of this body, you have to take the life of another sentient being as medication to sustain your life, should you believe in such view?

Of course not.

If you should not believe in yourself, who should you believe in?

Believe in what the Buddha said. The Buddha will not deceive us, he would not harm us. The Buddha's intention is to enable us to end suffering and attain liberation so that we need not remain in this world to suffer.

The Buddhist scriptures are divided into Three Baskets (*Tripitaka*) and Twelve Divisions. What should we understand

~ THE LAW OF DEPENDENT ORIGINATION (1) ~

from all these scriptures so that we would truly believe in what the Buddha said?

In the limitless Dharma, we should first grasp and understand the basics of the priceless treasure of the Dharma that the Buddha told us, and that is known as the "The Law of Dependent Origination".

Generally, we should listen to the Dharma expounded by Venerables who have the *Right View*. We should also understand what is being taught in the Sutras. Only then would we not stray in our life journey. If we are able to perceive the Law of Dependent Origination, we would have the Right View.

## **Difference between heretics and Buddhism**

There is a great difference between heretics and Buddhism, and this difference is fundamental.

Whereas heretics seek the truth extrinsically which is to cease what has arisen, Buddhism seeks to understand the truth intrinsically, not to let it arise so that there is no need for cessation.

## ◎ To cease what has arisen

When my desire arises, what method should I use to extinguish this desire?

### Example 1

When you are troubled and feeling upset, what method would you use to handle and dispel with such emotions?

The common method used by most people would be that some people would go shopping. "After all I have the money, I'll go to the departmental store for a stroll and buy something, to get rid of this troubled feeling." This is known as to cease what has arisen.

It might seem that such method works to eradicate such negative emotions. But in fact, the root of the problem that caused the unhappiness still exists. And why is it so?

Our unhappiness may be due to a quarrel with a friend, or it could be due to a marital dispute, or it could be due to discordant relationship with the boss or supervisor, or it could also be because of a fall-out in love. Would shopping be able to resolve the unhappiness caused by such problems? Of course not.

~ THE LAW OF DEPENDENT ORIGINATION (1) ~

The spirit may appear to be slightly lifted, but once you return to your room, you'll still recall the unhappy events, you'll still be troubled. As such, it did not fully solve the problem.

This is the heretics' method of ending what has arisen. It uses another way to eradicate the problem but in actual fact it did not stop that problem, it will still arise.

Example 2

If it was a man who is feeling troubled, he would resort to drinking to drown his sorrows. But in actuality, such aggravating act only cause more sorrows!

Some people may face a lot of stress at work. They work very hard during the day and go for a drink in the evening in the hope to expel some of their troubles. But instead, they become more tired and experience more misery after drinking as they lie in bed tossing and turning, unable to sleep. And they still have to get up early the next morning to deal with the work. So it remains stressful.

Some people would go to the night spots to eat, sing, and dance. All these appear to relax their mind. But in fact, they get so worn out that they simply slump there! There are also

others who do not have any progress in their work and do not know how to handle the problem. When they are feeling troubled, they would turn to drugs to help themselves relax.

We read from the media that many such problems occur. Why is this so? Because people do not understand the Dharma, do not believe in the *Triple Gem*, do not practice and cultivate. They want to get rid of their troubles extrinsically. Such method will not be able to resolve their problems. This is the heretics' way.

### Example 3

Some people would seek divine assistance or other third party in the pursuit after fame and wealth, or when they are unable to manage their relationship with their spouse or partners. They hope to make their spouse return to their side through such assistance. But more often than not, they end up losing everything.

### Example 4

Some politicians are afraid of losing their power and official status, and so they seek to win over the favors of those who can secure their positions.

In the end, they are still unable to secure their official status and are unable to have cordial relationship with others. Some even quarrel with their spouses. Indeed, the problem still exists.

Thus, it is not possible to use external means to achieve the purpose of extinguishing our defilements. And this is what is meant by "to cease what has arisen".

#### Example 5

When we have dispute with others, we get very angry. However, as our physique is smaller than the other person, have fewer friends than the other person, and have less authority than the other person, we can only bear with the insult. This is very stressful. In the end, we become sick.

If we have more authority, we can scold the other person. It might appear that after scolding the other person, we are not so angry anymore. But in fact, the problem is not truly resolved. Such ways of scolding the other person to dispel our anger and hatred is to end what has arisen. This is not true Dharma.

## © **No arising and hence no cessation**

What is it that does not arise? What does not cease? When the cause does not arise, there is no need to cease the result.

Why is there no need for cessation of the result? Because there is no result to cease.

Whenever there is a cause, there is a result. If it is an unwholesome cause, it creates an unwholesome effect. The unwholesome effect is the result of an unwholesome cause. As such, when we sow an unwholesome cause, we will have to suffer the unwholesome effect afterwards.

If we do not want to suffer unwholesome effect, we should not sow the unwholesome cause. And this means when we do not have any defilements, we will not create any karma. Without any karma, we do not have to suffer. This is how we grasp the fundamentals of the Dharma and expand it to observe and reflect on the finer points.

### Example 1

The problem with desire: It has been mentioned in the first volume of this series<sup>1</sup> that when the eyes want to watch variety shows, the eyes are "itching"! When the eyes are "itching", we would want to quickly "scratch the itch" – i.e., to switch on the television. We seem happy watching the singing and dancing. But when we continue to watch more, the eyes become tired and sore.

It would be less of a problem if we were younger, but at the age of 40 years old, 50 years old, we would have slumped over there. This is called "scratching the itch". The body gets tired because of its desire to watch variety shows or drama shows. So the cause is the desire to watch the television program and the result is the tired body. We would not be able to go to work the next day.

What should we do to perform well at work and not get tired? When there is no cause leading to fatigue, then there is no effect of being tired.

Thus, although the eyes desire to watch variety shows or drama shows, if we are able to control this desire, endure it,

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<sup>1</sup> "Everlasting Happiness, as Buddha Attains 1", Chapter Five – Staying Busy.

and not crave for such desire i.e., not to scratch the itch, not to switch on the television once, twice, thrice, or multiple times, this desire will disappear.

We would not want to watch the television when there is no such desire, and the body will be fine. This is therefore not letting something arise and hence no need for the cessation of it. If we are able to grasp this Buddhist wisdom, our lives will be very joyful!

### Example 2

What is the cause and condition of an unhappy mind? When we are unhappy, we must find the cause of it. We should find out the cause of it first, and not let the cause become an effect.

For a cause to become an effect, there must be many other conditions for that to arise. Once we have removed the cause, the effect will not appear. This is the gist of the Law of Dependent Origination.

What should you do when someone is scolding you? When someone is scolding or criticizing you, you ought to think: "What would happen when I get angry? I'll start to scold or even beat people.

~ THE LAW OF DEPENDENT ORIGINATION (1) ~

"Today if I beat him up or scold him, he'll get his family members and friends to come and beat me. I will also get my family and friends to beat him resulting in a bigger fight. We will be fighting and quarrelling in this life. If we were to cause injury or death during the quarrel and fight, we would take rebirth in the hell realm."

When you see this ending, would you still want to fight? No, you would stop fighting. Everything would be at peace if we could endure for just a moment.

So we must know the cause and effect and we would be able to endure insults. Thereafter, we should start from the basics and practice *Loving-Kindness* Meditation to eradicate the anger and hatred in our mind.

And when you are faced with any issues, you will not be angry anymore and will be able to forgive the other party. You become compassionate to both the other party and yourself.

When anger does not arise, we do not go around scolding or beating up people. At this moment, everything is calm and peaceful, likewise for the body and the mind. Such circumstances are best for us, our family, and the country.

### Example 3

There was a person who practiced and cultivated with his family. When he was cultivating, someone criticized him. Even throughout the period when his family member succumbed to death from cancer, he had to endure the insults and dispassionate treatment. After his family member had passed on, he started to become angry.

After some time, he thought: "I am a practitioner, how could I always harbor anger?"

When he faced his own anger and hatred, he thought: "How do I get rid of the anger and hatred?"

So he started to pay respects to the Emperor Liang Jeweled Repentance Sutra and he discovered a very crucial point when doing so. The Emperor Liang Jeweled Repentance Sutra mentions that when we form a bond of enmity with another person, we will meet with that person in the three unwholesome realms.

For instance, if I had generated anger and hatred for another person in this life, I may take rebirth as a cat and the other person might be a mouse in our future lives.

~ THE LAW OF DEPENDENT ORIGINATION (1) ~

When this cat catches that mouse, it plays with it and even throws it up mid-air and let it fall to its death. There is cause and condition as to why this occurs.

The mouse, upon falling to its death, also generates anger. So in its next life, it might become a bigger being to get back at the cat. So when will this repeated revenges end?

Indeed, the acts of revenge in the three unwholesome realms continue ceaselessly. When the practitioner came across this particular point in the Emperor Liang Jeweled Repentance Sutra, he began to realize the severity of the relationship between cause and effect. So he decided not to remain angry anymore!

Now let us examine the merits of endurance. If we are able to endure, everything remains calm and peaceful. But that does not mean that we force ourselves to endure. As sentient beings, we have the propensity to force ourselves not to get angry, but this ultimately results in sickness. So what should we do?

One day, the practitioner listened to a Venerable teaching Loving-Kindness Meditation. When he heard this, he felt happy and decided to recite and memorize the contents of the Loving-Kindness Meditation.

He constantly practiced meditating loving-kindness towards himself, his loved ones, the common people, and his enemies. The practitioner would visualize them one by one. Eventually, he was able to resolve all his enmity and did not harbor anymore anger and hatred towards anyone.

He released the heavy burden of anger and hatred in his mind. At this moment, he did not have any enemy in his mind. Instead, he was filled with compassion. This is indeed what we mean when we say that a compassionate person is invincible.

After that he even did many things. He went to see the people he was angry with and whom he hated and asked them: "All these time that we had been together, have I antagonized you? Did I make you angry?"

When the other person was speechless, he would pay respects to the other person three times. Why did he pay respects?

In the past, the other person had caused many harmful acts towards him and his family. Now, he not only had forgiven the other person, he was also being compassionate towards that other person, and had released the burden in his mind.

Lastly, he even went round to all those who had antagonized him before and apologized to them, eradicating the anger and hatred in his mind.

This method is different from that used by heretics. The heretics will scold or beat you if they find you an eyesore. But in Buddhism, it is not to let the cause arise so there is no need to end the result.

To eradicate the anger and hatred in one's mind and to apologize to others is truly invincible. If we are to oppose against others all the time or to be angry with them, we create a lot of obstacles wherever we go and our troubles would be endless.

#### Example 4

How should we deal with our desire when it arises? We should use the Dharma to observe it.

One day, Venerable Vangisa and Venerable Ananda were collecting alms. When the monastics were collecting alms, they had to guard and protect their *six sense bases*. However, when Venerable Vangisa saw a beautiful lady smile at him, the Venerable's mind became excited and his sensuous desires were aroused.

As the Venerable was diligently practicing, he realized that his mind was affected and has started to itch! He thought: "What should I do?" At this juncture, Venerable Vangisa told Venerable Ananda: "My mind is on that lady now, could you please help me!"

Venerable Ananda, who was his virtuous companion, told him: "You should immediately guard and protect your six sense bases now, stop looking and quickly practice the Perception of Impureness."

So Venerable Vangisa stopped looking at the lady and started to observe: "Where did I place my desire now? Is it on her hair? Is the hair beautiful? The hair is not beautiful.

"Is it on her eyebrow? Is the eyebrow beautiful? The eyebrow is not beautiful. Is it on her eyelashes? The eyelashes are not beautiful. Is it on her skin? The skin is just a layer of skin.

"Is it on her eyes? Are the eyes beautiful? No, they are not. Is the nose beautiful? There is mucus in the nose. Are the ears beautiful? The ears are filled with earwax.

"Is the mouth beautiful? There is saliva in the mouth; if you spit it onto your palm, you would not want to eat it yourself, let alone to eat another person's spittle."

After that, he considered the internals of the body: "If I were to take out any one part of the body, it would just be blood and flesh, bones, feces, and urine. My desire for her is so great, but which part of her exactly is my desire placed on?"

"Upon reflection, it should not be on any particular place. Why did I have the desire and itch for her just now? It was merely a misplaced illusion."

Once the Venerable completed the observation and contemplation, his desire was extinguished. And he recited a verse:

*"Desire, I know your true nature,  
Desire arises from thoughts,  
When I stop thinking about you,  
How would you arise?"*

This means: Desire, I know where your root is. It is because my mind is attached to you, thinking of you. Now I know your true nature is due to my ignorance and my mind kept thinking about you, that is why you start to burn slowly like a fire. Now that I stop thinking about you, you cannot do anything to me.

When he looked at the lady again, the desire in his mind was completely extinguished.

Once the desire was extinguished, he reflected upon his own body as the combination of hair, eyebrow, skin, nails, teeth, bones, muscles, tendons, internal organs, feces, urine, the saliva in the mouth, blood, etc, none of which was clean and pure, none of which was good. So who is this "I"?

"I" do not exist in any of the component part. The "I" is merely a fictitious name and is a combination of various cause and conditions. Reflecting on this, the Venerable not only had no more desire for the lady, he had no more attachment to himself too – his desire was completely extinguished. Thus, if there is no arising, there is nothing to extinguish.

Often when we see a lady we like and when the desire starts to grow, we hurriedly run after and talk to her. This is in fact very tiring.

But the Venerable did not do this. After he extinguished his desire, he went back to the monastery. He meditated, contemplated, and finally attained *Arahatship*.

When there is desire in our mind, we expect the other party to be with us and this results in suffering when there is unfulfilled desire. When our desire is fulfilled, we guard him to ensure that he does not change his mind. We want to be

~ THE LAW OF DEPENDENT ORIGINATION (1) ~

with that person forever and ever but this is impossible and will lead to more suffering.

The Dharma teaches us that if there is no arising of cause, there is no cessation of result. But the heretics simply seek cessation of the result. Whatever you see or possess will be gone, this is known as:

*"All conditioned phenomena is impermanent,  
this is the law of things that arise and cease."*

Just as it arises due to cause and condition, so it ceases due to cause and condition. Thus, we should prevent the cause and condition to arise.

*"The cessation of arising and ceasing brings about the  
ultimate cessation that is the real bliss."*

When arising ceases, ceasing ceases. Once arising and ceasing have ceased, this is known as no arising and no cessation, and that is the ultimate bliss.

People who practice the Loving-Kindness Meditation are very happy. So are people who practice the Perception of Impureness. However, the happiest people are those who practice the Perception of No Ego. The ultimate cessation is real bliss.

It is best when we do not have any "itch" because we would not get angry and there are no desires.

## **The Right Teaching in the Mundane World**

Right Teachings include Right Views in the Mundane World and in the Supramundane World. Just as there are Right Views and Right Teachings, there are Mistaken Teachings and Mistaken Views.

Mistaken Teachings and Mistaken Views refer to:

- (1) The Theory of Divine Blessing;
- (2) The Theory of Fate; and
- (3) The Theory of No Cause and No Condition.

These three theories are fraught with four kinds of misconception:

- (1) To perceive the impure as pure;
- (2) To perceive suffering as joy;
- (3) To perceive no ego as "I";
- (4) To perceive the impermanent as permanent.

## © Right View in the Mundane World

Right View in the Mundane World means there are wholesomeness and unwholesomeness. Most people in the mundane world are confused and unclear as to what is wholesome and what is unwholesome.

There is a common saying in the society: "So long as my mind is kind, why is there a need to pray to the Buddha, to believe in the Buddha?"

Such sayings show that they do not know what wholesome and unwholesome are. They cannot differentiate between wholesomeness and unwholesomeness.

Wholesomeness is essentially benefitting others and not just for oneself. There are four scenarios for the wholesomeness and unwholesomeness:

(1) For a person to be able to enjoy the benefit himself whilst benefitting others, this is wholesomeness.

(2) For a person to suffer loss himself whilst benefitting others, this is wholesomeness.

(3) For a person to harm others whilst he reaps the benefit, this is unwholesomeness.

(4) For a person to harm others whilst he does not reap any benefit, this is unwholesomeness.

Whilst benefitting others, whether or not we reap any benefit ourselves is also a form of wholesomeness.

What is meant by unwholesomeness? It is harming or antagonizing others, making others suffer whilst the person may or may not reap any benefit.

### Example 1

Would you consider the producer of Japanese or American wrestling shows as being wholesome or unwholesome? Were the actors who wrestled in the shows being wholesome or unwholesome? Or would you consider them to be neither of both?

We mentioned earlier that we should not trust ourselves but believe in what the Buddha said. And why is this so? Generally, we would believe ourselves because while watching the shows, we feel happy and we think that the creation of those shows is wholesome.

But the Buddha says this is unwholesome, not wholesome. Why? When we see others fighting and wrestling, our mind burn like fire and anger is incited. Thus this is an unwholesome show and an unwholesome teaching.

We should not be watching such things because they incite our anger, and may cause us to fight with others in future. The producers and wrestlers of such shows will end up in the three unwholesome realms to suffer.

### Example 2

In society, there are some women who specialize in acting in restricted category shows, are they acting wholesomely or unwholesomely? Some people might say that they feel very happy after watching these women perform, is this wholesome or unwholesome?

During the Buddha's era, someone asked the Buddha: "I heard that women who performed in restricted category shows will go to heaven upon their death. This is because they make the audience feel happy and joyful. As such, they will go to heaven upon their death."

The Buddha said: "They will go to hell, the three unwholesome realms to suffer upon their death."

"Why is this so?"

The Buddha replied: "If you were to tie up your hands whilst these women perform erotic acts before you, your mind will be filled with unfulfilled lust, will you be suffering? In this case, is she giving you joy or suffering? She is giving you suffering, so she will go to hell for that."

People who act in violent or sexual movies have to suffer in the three unwholesome realms in future because they do not know what is wholesome and what is unwholesome. The future retribution will be very severe. As Buddhist practitioners, we should not watch such movies.

### Example 3

Some people might say: "There is no future life, nor is there a past life. There is only the present life."

If that is the case, why then is it that when a person is born, he knows how to cry or laugh, knows when to eat and empty his bowel?

He does not learn this himself, it must have been learnt in the past, and continued in this life.

~ THE LAW OF DEPENDENT ORIGINATION (1) ~

As such, there is past and present. Since there is past life and present life, there will definitely be future life.

Just like the animals, the male and the female will naturally mate, there is no need to teach them. This is not due to non-cause and non-condition, it must have been learnt in the past life and carried on to the present life.

It is the same for humans. If you leave a human in the mountains, when the time is ripe and the physical attributes are developed, he will be able to do the same act. Such acts were done in the past life, in the present life and will continue in the future life as well.

Thus, we know there are *three periods*, there are karmic actions and results due to cause and effect. Whatever suffering we reap is due to our sowing of unwholesome deeds. Likewise, whatever happiness we enjoy is due to our own wholesome deeds. Because of these, we are able to perceive the cause and effect of being wholesome and unwholesome.

When we carry out wholesome deeds on behalf of our parents, such as giving generously to protect and sustain the place for Dharma practice, the expounding of Dharma, the monastics and the Triple Gem, it is best to let our parents know.

Although these acts are karma of committed activities, as you had committed them on their behalf, you must let them know so that they will also share the same mindset. At this juncture, under the law of cause and effect, they sow the wholesome cause now and will reap the benefit of the wholesome effect in future.

If we simply carry out the wholesome deeds for our parents without them knowing about it, how would the relationship between karmic action and result develop for them?

So when we are helping our parents or family members to carry out wholesome deeds, we must let them generate a joyful mind. All humans have compassion and wholesomeness, and we can use different methods and ways to create wholesomeness amongst family and friends.

## © Right View in the Supramundane World

In this mundane world, we know that ordinary sentient beings have been in *Samsara* from the past life till the present life, and will continue to be in *Samsara* in the future life. But we see that the Buddha who had perceived the *Twelve Links of Dependent Origination* and the *Four Noble Truths*, indeed attained final liberation.

~ THE LAW OF DEPENDENT ORIGINATION (1) ~

After the Buddha expounded the Dharma, many people also attained Arahatsip, and were liberated from the mundane world. Therefore, we must respect the Triple Gem so that we will be able to generate the result of the cause and condition to become a Buddha in future, to be one of the Triple Gem.

The September 21, 1999 earthquake in Taiwan shattered many monasteries and schools. Some people said: "So and so, why don't you use the money for restoring the monasteries to provide for the schools instead?"

People who said this do not understand the difference in the merits for donating to the Triple Gem and donating to schools. When our mind is towards the Triple Gem, one day we will also be part of the Triple Gem; if our mind is towards the women who acted in the restricted category movies or to be one of the wrestlers, we will head towards that direction.

When we set our mind on the Triple Gem, we will become one of the Triple Gem one day; we could become the Buddha or an *Arahat*. As such, to donate to different cause will provide different effect.

From the Right View in the Mundane World, we know that there are three periods and the *cycle of existence*. Since there

is the cycle of existence, there will be liberation. As such, we have to respect those who are liberated and hope that we will also be liberated from the cycle of existence.

Everything in the mundane world will arise and cease. In the midst of this arising and ceasing, nothing is adorable nor is it within our control or grasp. It is suffering. In the midst of suffering, we should not stagnate in the joy and continue to create karma.

In the midst of no ego, do not generate an ego but seek to extinguish the defilements. This is true bliss. Only when we let ourselves to be neither arising nor ceasing, then, can the mind be calm and peaceful. We will be able to be at ease with ourselves and abide in true bliss in this 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 World, 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 Suddhavaśa worlds, or "Pure Abodes", from which he will attain Arahatship 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 Arahatship.

**Anuttara Samyak Sambodhi:** The Supreme and Complete Enlightenment.

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**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.

**Bardo:** A Tibetan term for the state of existence intermediate between two lives.

**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.

**Bhutatahata:** The true character of reality. The inherent or true nature of phenomena or true suchness. (诸法实相)

**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.

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

**Chakravartin:** See Wheel Turning Monarch.

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

**Cycle of existence:** See Samsara.

**Cyclic existence:** See Samsara.

**Dana:** Charity; benevolence; generosity.

**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.

**Dharma-kaya:** The dharma body, the truth body, the reality body.

**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

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

**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.

**Kasaya:** The robes of a monastic.

**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.

**Law of Dependent Origination:** The principle that phenomena do not come into existence on their own but as a result of causes and conditions.

**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.

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**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.

**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.

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**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.

**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 known 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.

**Rupa-kaya:** The material body.

**Saha World:** The secular world, which is known as the world that must be endured as it is full of sufferings.

**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.

**Samadhi:** Meditative concentration. Often used to denote the deepest state of pure concentration, in which the mind is free from distraction and totally absorbed in the object of concentration. There are many levels and types of Samadhi, such as the Samadhi of Loving-kindness and Compassion.

**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:** (1) Mindfulness; (2) Discriminative investigation of the Dharma; (3) Effort; (4) Joy; (5) Ease of body and mind; (6) Concentration; and (7) Equanimity.

**Sila:** The precept; code of morality; Buddhist ethics.

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

**Six consciousnesses:** The consciousnesses of the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind.

**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

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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),
- The Perfection of Wisdom (Prajna Paramita).

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

**Six sense bases:** Eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind.

**Six sense objects:** Form, sound, odor, flavor, tactile object, and phenomena.

**Sramenera:** A male novice monk observing Ten Precepts.

**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.

**Stream Enterer:** See Srotapanna.

**Supernatural powers:** The six supernatural powers are: (1) Divine eye or clairvoyance; (2) Divine ear or cliraudience; (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 directions of space:** The directions of North, South, East, West, Northeast, Southeast, Southwest, Northwest, Zenith, and Nadir, thus covering all spaces.

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

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

**Ten Kinds of Mindfulness:** (1) Mindfulness of the Buddha; (2) Mindfulness of the Dharma; (3) Mindfulness of the Sangha; (4) Mindfulness of the Precepts; (5) Mindfulness of Generosity; (6)

Mindfulness of the Heavens; (7) Mindfulness of the Cessation of Thoughts; (8) Mindfulness of Breath; (9) Mindfulness of the Impermanence of the Body; and (10) the Mindfulness of Death.

**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,
- 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.

**Tripitaka:** The three main collections of the Buddhist canon – sutra-pitaka (sermons collection), vinaya-pitaka (rules collection), and abhidharma-pitaka (philosophical treatises collection). Also known as the Three Baskets.

**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.

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

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

**Wheel Turning Monarch:** Also known as Chakravartin. A universal emperor and protector of Buddhism. It is a term used 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.

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