

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

~ FOREWORD ~

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. 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.

~ FOREWORD ~

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)

The Most Blissful Person (2)

The Brahma King requested the Buddha to remain in the world

The Buddha, the most blissful person, helps us to also become blissful. Thus we should have a better understanding of the Buddha who helps us to achieve blissfulness.

When the Buddha was enlightened, he thought: "Through the limitless incalculable kalpas of my past lives, I had completely offered my body, my life, my kingdom, and wealth in exchange for the wonderful Dharma to end suffering and to achieve everlasting happiness that I have attained and understood.

"Sentient beings indulge in the five sensuous desires, hold mistaken and confused views. They would not be able to understand this profound Dharma. I may as well enter into *Nirvana!*"

~ THE MOST BLISSFUL PERSON (2) ~

At that moment, the Brahma King knew that the Buddha had this thought and came down from the heavenly realm to report to the Buddha: "World Honored One! Are you contemplating the thought of entering into Nirvana? Is it because you perceive that the sentient beings will not be able to understand the profound Dharma?"

The World Honored One replied: "Yes. Sentient beings who hold foolish and mistaken views indulge in the five sensuous desires. How could they possibly understand the wonderful Dharma of 'When this exists, that comes to be; when this arises, that arises' or 'When this does not exist, that does not exist; when this ceases, that ceases'?"

The Brahma King said to the Buddha: "World Honored One, sentient beings are like the lotus flowers growing in the pond and there are three types of circumstances:

"The first circumstance comprises sentient beings who no longer indulge in the five sensuous desires. Although they practice meditation, they are still unable to leave the World of Sensuous Desires. They can only reach the World of Form. This is akin to the lotus seed in the pond; although its bud has grown, it can only rise above the filthy mud.

"The second circumstance consists of sentient beings who have risen above the World of Form. They are like the lotus flower that rises above the filthy mud, barely reaching the surface of the water but not beyond.

"The third circumstance is where sentient beings have been practicing meditation and have reached the Formless World. They are just like the lotus flower bud that rises above the water; it is but still a bud that has yet to bloom.

"Under these three circumstances, sentient beings who want to abandon the sensuous desires, and who have practiced the Dhyana meditation of the World of Form and Formless World, will not be able to bloom nor attain Nirvana without the Dharma from the Buddha.



"The Buddha has *great compassion* and I have witnessed six past incidents where the World Honored One, for the sake of seeking the Dharma, offered your body. I implore the World Honored One not to abandon the sentient beings, but to

expound the Dharma to the sentient beings so that they could also end their suffering and attain everlasting happiness."

How did the World Honored One offer his body to seek the Dharma?

The Brahma King related the six incidents where the World Honored One offered his body to seek the Dharma. Upon hearing of these six incidents, we can imagine how great the Buddha's compassion towards the sentient beings is.

All the offerings that the Buddha made in the past lives were for the sake of seeking the Dharma, to achieve Anuttara Samyak Sambodhi. The Buddha also wanted to expound the Dharma to sentient beings so that they can also end their suffering and attain everlasting happiness!

(1) In one of the past lives, the World Honored One was known as King Surupa (妙色王). This was because he had the most excellent look and physique.

King Surupa managed his kingdom with the five precepts and the tenfold meritorious cause of action. Although the

kingdom had peace and prosperity, there was still suffering and no true happiness. So King Surupa announced to the world: "I am willing to offer all I have to the person who can teach me the Dharma."

At that time, one of the Kings of the *Heavens of the Four Deva Kings*, Vaisravana thought: "If someone can really do this, he must be a very rare Bodhisattva and will definitely become a Buddha in future."

So he transformed himself into a ghost yaksa to test the King. He told King Surupa: "If you are sincere in seeking the Dharma, you should offer your beloved wife and children to me to feast on. Once I have filled my stomach, I will tell you the Dharma."

In ancient India, the wife and children belong to the husband, thus they are able to give them away. Such practice is of course not allowed in the present world. So the King offered his wife and children to the yaksa. Of course the High Ministers advised the King that he should not do so but for the sake of the Dharma, the King still gave them away. The yaksa who was Vaisravana in disguise, devoured all of them.

King Surupa said: "Quickly, share the Dharma with me."

~ THE MOST BLISSFUL PERSON (2) ~

The yaksa said:

*"All conditioned phenomena are impermanent,
all living beings suffer.*

*The primal essence of the five aggregates is nothingness,
there is no ego – no 'I' nor mine."*

This means that this body and mind of the five aggregates rise and cease perpetually. None of them is permanent and unchangeable. When there is life, there certainly comes boundless suffering in the stages of birth, old age, sickness, and death. The primal essence of the five aggregates of form, feeling, perception, volition, and consciousness is nothingness and unattainable. There is no "I" nor mine, there is no ego in control nor is there a person that I can control.

The Brahma King told Sakyamuni Buddha: "In your past lives, you had given up your wife and children for the sake of Dharma. You did not seek the Dharma for yourself. You sought the Dharma for the sake of all the sentient beings."

What is meant by seeking the Dharma for the sake of all sentient beings and not for oneself? If one sought the Dharma for oneself only, one would have become an Arhat. But to seek the Dharma for the sake of all sentient beings means to

seek the Dharma so that one can expound the Dharma to the sentient beings to enable them to end the suffering and attain everlasting happiness.

"This was what you did in your past life. I implore the Buddha not to abandon sentient beings, have compassion and pity for them. Expound the Dharma to them so that they may also end the suffering and attain everlasting happiness!"

(2) There was a Brahmin who knew that the King was seeking the Dharma and he told the King: "If you can endure the pain of carving out 1,000 holes in your body to light a lamp each, I will tell you the Dharma."

The King said: "Great! No problem. For the sake of the Dharma, I am willing to give up this body and life. But you must tell me first; otherwise after carving out 1,000 holes in my body to light the 1,000 lamps, I would die and will not be able to listen to the Dharma."

The Brahmin told him:

*"All permanent form will end,
the person who sits high will eventually fall,
the gathering will disperse,
all lives will end."*

~ THE MOST BLISSFUL PERSON (2) ~

"All permanent form will end". Generally, we believe that the building is permanent but they will deteriorate someday. We also believe that this body form is forever, but even the strongest body will eventually age and die.

"The person who sits high will eventually fall". Even a king will eventually lose the throne. There is no difference even if you were a government official. The managing director will have to step down some day too. All these show that no matter how high a status one has achieved, he will eventually fall.

"The gathering will disperse". Whether it is the people gathering together or the accumulation of wealth, they will eventually be dispersed.

"All lives will end". Once born, all sentient beings will eventually die.

After the Brahmin spoke of this stanza, the King immediately carved out 1,000 holes in his body and lighted 1,000 lamps.

The Brahma King told the Buddha what he did in the past to implore the Buddha not to abandon sentient beings but to expound the Dharma compassionately.

(3) Sakyamuni Buddha was a king in another life and also sought the Dharma from a Brahmin.

The Brahmin said: "If you can put 1,000 nails on your body, I will offer the Dharma to you."

The King replied: "I am willing to sacrifice this life for the sake of the Dharma, but you must first expound the Dharma so that I am able to listen to the Dharma before I die."

The Brahmin told him:

*"All conditioned phenomena is impermanent,
all living beings suffer,
all phenomena is empty and does not arise,
nothing belongs to me."*

After the Brahmin spoke of this stanza, the King immediately put 1,000 nails on his body, giving up his life for the sake of the Dharma.

(4) In one of the past lives of the World Honored One, he was Tan Mo Qian (曇摩鉗), the son of the Brahma King. King Sakra, who transformed himself into a Brahmin, told him: "If you want to seek the Dharma, jump down from this three storey

~ THE MOST BLISSFUL PERSON (2) ~

high tower into the fire pit below. If you can do so, I will tell you the Dharma."

Tan Mo Qian said: "You have to tell me the Dharma first and I'll jump down after that."

So the Brahmin who was actually King Sakra in disguise told him:

*"Endeavor constantly to develop loving-kindness
Eradicate all thoughts of ill-will
Develop great compassion for all sentient beings
See their sorrows with true empathy
Rejoice in the cultivation of Buddhahood
Remove the suffering of all sentient beings
With the Dharma, down the right path –
This is the practice of Bodhisattvas."*

These two stanzas refer to the great loving-kindness and great compassion. A Bodhisattva cultivates with great loving-kindness and great compassion, and he will eventually achieve the wonderful Dharma to end suffering and attain everlasting happiness, to enable the sentient beings to also end their suffering and attain everlasting happiness.

(5) Sakyamuni Bodhisattva was a teacher of 500 sages in one of his past lives. He was Uttara and taught them how to practice meditation.

He went round seeking the Dharma for liberation. There was a Brahmin who told him: "Your skin can be used as the paper for writing the Dharma, your bone as the pen, and your blood mixed with the ink to write the Dharma. If you have the determination to do these, I will tell you the Dharma."

Uttara replied: "So long as it is for the Dharma, I can forego all these."

The Brahmin told him:

*"Always restrain the bodily action,
do not kill, steal, or carry out sexual misconduct,
do not slander or engage in harsh speech,
do not lie or use frivolous speech;
do not greed for various sensuous desires,
do not harbor angry or evil thoughts,
forego all wrong views,
such is the way of the Bodhisattva."*

~ THE MOST BLISSFUL PERSON (2) ~

These two stanzas refer to the ten meritorious deeds which are the way of the Bodhisattva. When the Bodhisattva wants to save and guide sentient beings, he must first uphold the precepts.

The Brahma King told Sakyamuni Buddha: "You had been offering your life and body in the past lives for the sake of seeking the Dharma for sentient beings."

(6) There was a time when King Sakra and Vaisravana wanted to test the sincerity of the Buddha in his Bodhisattva practice. Vaisravana transformed into a pigeon and King Sakra into an eagle.

The eagle was pursuing the pigeon. The pigeon hid into the King's arms and sought for protection. The King offered his protection to the pigeon.

But the eagle said: "I have no meat to eat. You offered protection to the pigeon but not to me. How can you consider this as equal protection?"

The King replied: "Fine! What would you like to eat?"

The eagle replied: "I want to eat fresh meat with blood."

The King thought: "You want to eat fresh meat with blood. If I asked that from others, that would be hurting others. So I will offer myself to you."

Thus the King carved out a portion of his body that was equivalent to the pigeon's weight and offered it to the eagle. But no matter how much flesh was cut, it could not be of the same weight as the pigeon. In the end, the King decided to put his whole body on the weighing scale, only then it was the equivalent of the pigeon's weight. Thus, the King offered his entire body and life to the eagle as food.

The Brahma King told the Buddha: "In your past lives, you had offered your body and life in such a manner in order to seek the Dharma for sentient beings. As such, I implore the Buddha not to enter into Nirvana." The Brahma King invited the Buddha to turn the Dharma Wheel and expound the Dharma.

Sakyamuni Buddha said: "Very well! Although it is difficult for sentient beings to believe and understand, there are still some who would like to abandon the sensuous desires, or go beyond the Dhyana meditation of the World of Form and the Formless World. These are the ones that I should save and guide."

Thus, the Buddha then contemplated and noted that some sentient beings have fewer defilements and unwholesome karmic deeds, whilst some have more. Some are more intelligent whilst others are less bright. Sakyamuni Buddha then accepted the Brahma King's request not to enter into Nirvana but to expound the wonderful Dharma on how to end suffering and attain everlasting happiness to the sentient beings.

The cause and conditions for the liberation of the five Bhikshus

When Sakyamuni Buddha decided to remain in the world to save and guide sentient beings, he thought: "My teachings can be profound or easy to understand, who should I teach first? In the past, I promised two sages who practiced meditation, I should guide them first."

At this moment, a celestial being told Sakyamuni Buddha: "The first sage passed away last night and the second sage passed away seven days ago."

The Buddha thought: "What a pity! If they had listened to the Dharma expounded by me, they would be liberated."

What does this mean? This means that a person who practiced meditation will have a pure mind and can be liberated.

Why is it that, after learning the Dharma for so long, we have yet to achieve anything? It is because our mind is filled with pursuing the five sensuous desires. We have a lot of defilements, and that is why it is difficult for us to accomplish anything. But at the very least, we believe in the Triple Gem and the karmic results of cause and effect.

The Buddha then thought: "Who should I expound the Dharma to? I should teach the Dharma to those sentient beings who have fewer unwholesome deeds, who are more intelligent, and have a respectful mind. This is because it is easier to teach and guide such sentient beings as they will be able to grasp, learn, and understand the Dharma that I am teaching.

"A person who has a respectful mind will be afraid to suffer the Samsara cycle, so he will abandon the unwholesome deeds and cultivate wholesome ones. He will not commit any unwholesome acts but will practice wholesome acts. I must also expound the Dharma to those who believe, and not to those who will offend me, or those who have no faith, and those who have criminal deeds."

~ THE MOST BLISSFUL PERSON (2) ~

When we understand how the Buddha thought, should we then cultivate ourselves to meet these criteria? The Buddha treats all sentient beings equally, without differentiating. It is the sentient beings' own defilements that differ and make themselves unable to accept the Dharma.

As the Buddha understands the situation with sentient beings, he decided to save and guide the five Bhikshus. When the five Bhikshus saw the Buddha, they thought the Buddha had been contaminated by the five sensuous desires of the mundane world and decided not to welcome Prince Siddhartha.

However, when the Buddha approached them, they could not stop themselves from standing up. One went to fetch the Buddha's begging bowl, another Bhikshu brought water for the Buddha, and took out the seat for the Buddha to sit on. They even brought water to wash the Buddha's feet and clean up the surroundings. When the Buddha reached where the five Bhikshus were located, the Buddha's 32 major physical marks and 80 minor physical marks were indescribably magnificent.

Deer are shy creatures. But the deer were not afraid of the Buddha. They just stood at the side, staring at the Buddha.

This is because the Buddha's compassion can encapsulate and receive all sentient beings. Even the cows that were very tired and worn out, looked at the Buddha quietly when the Buddha appeared. All the people who were rushing about on the roads, also stopped to look at the Buddha.

When the Buddha attained enlightenment, the five Bhikshus did not recognize the Buddha. When the Buddha finally came towards them, then they realized that Prince Siddhartha finally became the Buddha.

The Buddha then expounded the "Four Noble Truths – the Suffering, the Cause of Suffering, the End of Suffering, and the Way to End the Suffering". Kaundinya was the first one to attain *Srotapanna*, the first stage of Liberation. Slowly, the other four persons also achieved the first stage of Liberation. Eventually, all five of them achieved Arahatsip and became Arahats.

Why did they have to go through this process? It is due to the principle of "arising and cessation are due to causes and conditions".

In fact, these five persons and the Buddha had shared some causes and conditions in their past lives.

~ THE MOST BLISSFUL PERSON (2) ~

In their past lives, the five Bhikshus were actually five yaksas. At that time, there was a King known as Maitribala-rajā who encouraged his citizens to practice the tenfold meritorious cause of action. Because everybody practiced the tenfold meritorious cause of action, there were no disasters in the country and the yaksas did not have any food to eat.

The hungry yaksas complained to the King and begged the King to donate food to them. The yaksas requested for fresh blood and the King said: "I will offer myself to you." Maitribala-rajā dug five holes in the veins of his body and the yaksas feasted on the gushing blood.

At that moment, Maitribala-rajā made the vow: "Now I will feed you with my blood so that you will not suffer from hunger. In future when I become a Buddha, I will feed you with the Dharma to end your suffering and achieve everlasting happiness, to eradicate your poisons of greed, anger, and ignorance."

That is the cause and conditions that led to Sakyamuni Buddha, upon attaining Buddhahood, to first guide the five Bhikshus.

When we understand the cause and conditions that led to the five Bhikshus being guided and liberated, we find that these five Bhikshus were really blissful. This is because from then onwards, they would not have to endure the suffering of Samsara anymore. But the most blissful person would be the person who had worked hard for it, and that is the Buddha.

Because the Buddha worked hard for it, that is why he is able to accomplish such great merits and ability to be able to feed all sentient beings, and enable all sentient beings to end their defilements and sufferings, and not to go through Samsara anymore.

The progressive teaching of the Buddha

After the Buddha guided and saved the five Bhikshus, he continued to guide and save the countless and limitless number of sentient beings whilst expounding the Dharma of the great vehicle.

What is the purpose of expounding the Dharma of the great vehicle? If the Buddha had only spoken of sravaka teachings, then the sentient beings would attain Arahatsip and nobody

~ THE MOST BLISSFUL PERSON (2) ~

would become the Buddha. If nobody became the Buddha, this would mean the end of the Buddha lineage, wouldn't it?

As such, besides expounding on the sravaka teachings to attain Arahatsip, the Buddha also expounded on the Dharma to attain Buddhahood. That is why the Buddha also expounded on the Prajnaparamita-sutra to teach sentient beings to generate Bodhicitta mind and to attain Anuttara Samyak Sambodhi. At the same time, the Buddha also inspired the Arahats to also generate the Bodhicitta mind to enable the Arahats to realize the preciousness and great merits of the Bodhisattva and the Buddha.

In the end, the Buddha expounded the Lotus Sutra and told the Arahats, the *Pratyeka Buddhas*, and all sentient beings that each of them can also become the Buddha and this is very extraordinary.

From the first turning of the wheel of the Dharma at Deer Park in Sarnath, the Buddha expounded on the scriptures of the lesser vehicle followed by the scriptures of the great vehicle, to save and liberate countless and limitless number of sentient beings. When the cause and conditions for the Buddha to remain in the world ended, he entered into *Parinirvana* between two sala trees.

The cause and conditions of Subhadra's liberation

When the Buddha was going to enter into Parinirvana, the last person to give offering to the Buddha was Cunda. There were also some laypersons who came to take refuge and listen to the Dharma. But the last person who came to seek the Dharma was Subhadra.

The Buddha told him: "If there is no Eightfold Noble Path in this mundane world, then no one will be able to attain liberation. It is because there is the Eightfold Noble Path in the Dharma, there will be sages who attain the first stage of Liberation, the second stage of Liberation, the third stage of Liberation, and the fourth stage of Liberation."

When Subhadra heard this, he immediately renounced and attained Arahatsip. Subsequently, he entered into Nirvana ahead of the Buddha.

There was a cause and condition between the Buddha and Subhadra in one of their past lives. In that past life, Subhadra was a rabbit and the Buddha was a mighty deer.

Once, there was a big forest fire and all the wild animals could not escape from the forest. Except for one side which was

~ THE MOST BLISSFUL PERSON (2) ~

fronted by a wide river, the remaining three sides of the forest were engulfed by the fire which had burnt down most of the trees in the forest.

All the wild animals were frantic except for the deer which thought: "My body can cross over the river. I can let all the wild animals escape to the other side of the river by stepping over my body. Then everybody will be safe."

So the deer told everybody: "All of you step over my body to escape to the other shore!"

So all the wild animals used the deer's body as a bridge and crossed over to the opposite shore. When the deer's body was going to succumb to the ordeal, a rabbit ran over in a panic. The deer held on till the rabbit escaped to the other shore before falling into the river.

The deer used its body to save and liberate the sentient beings and thus it was known as the Deer Bridge. Throughout the 49 years after Sakyamuni Buddha attained Buddhahood till he entered into Nirvana, he had been guiding and liberating sentient beings. Even when his body was tired and he was going to abandon it, he still guided Subhadra, who was the rabbit then, before the Buddha entered into Nirvana.

Passing on of the robes and alms bowl and the compilation of the scriptures

When the Buddha abandoned his body and entered into Nirvana, the heavens and earth shook severely, and all the celestial beings were moaning sadly. When they used the funeral rites of the Wheel Turning Monarch and prepared to cremate the coffin, the fire would not start. Why? It was because Venerable Mahakasyapa had not returned yet.



When Venerable Mahakasyapa returned, the Buddha stuck out his foot. Venerable Mahakasyapa paid respects to the Buddha, and promised to pass on the Dharma thereafter.

~ THE MOST BLISSFUL PERSON (2) ~

Only after that, the Buddha then withdrew his foot, symbolizing that the Dharma would be passed down.

The Buddha was very compassionate, after the jhapita⁸, he left behind many sarira so that when sentient beings see the Buddha's sarira, it would be like seeing the Buddha.

All the sarira from the Buddha's body were distributed to the various kingdoms. At that time, all the celestial beings and the people in the mundane world also planted the cause and conditions to have a share of the sarira.

A few years ago, the Buddha's finger sarira which was kept at the Famen Temple from China, arrived in Taiwan. We attended the special event and also planted the cause and conditions for future liberation to become a Buddha.

Venerable Mahakasyapa promised the Buddha that he would pass on the Dharma, and the celestial beings invited Venerable Mahakasyapa to compile the scriptures to pass on the Dharma so that sentient beings can end their suffering and attain true happiness.

⁸ Jhapita: Transliteration of the Sanskrit, meaning cremation.

Venerable Mahakasyapa thought: "If the Dharma that the Buddha had attained through incalculable kalpas of practice were to be lost because of the failing physical form of the Buddha, there will be no more Dharma after the Nirvana. In that case, sentient beings would be like losing the bright light and would continue to endure the suffering of Samsara in darkness again.

So, how should the heritage of the Buddha's Dharma be carried on? We should call upon the Arahats to compile the scriptures."

Venerable Mahakasyapa started to strike the ghanta⁹ and recited a stanza to summon all the Arahats to return.

The Venerable recited: "All Buddha's Disciples, if you are thinking of the Buddha, to repay the Buddha's kindness, do not enter into Nirvana."

This was because at that time, all the Arahats saw that their teacher, Sakyamuni Buddha, had entered into Nirvana so they also rushed to enter into Nirvana. At that moment, the

⁹ Ghanta: Transliteration of the Sanskrit, meaning bell, gong, or similar resonant instrument that is used when gathering and assembling people.

~ THE MOST BLISSFUL PERSON (2) ~

Venerables heard Venerable Mahakasyapa's summon for them to return and not to let the Dharma perish. They were also asked to complete the compilation of the scriptures first before entering into Nirvana.

999 Arahats were chosen to compile the scriptures, waiting for Venerable Ananda to fill the last seat. However, as Venerable Ananda had not yet attained Arahatship, they could not compile the scriptures.

Venerable Mahakasyapa went to the heavens to look for Gavampati who asked: "Where is the World Honored One?"

Venerable Mahakasyapa replied: "The World Honored One has entered into Nirvana."

Gavampati asked: "Where is my monk, Sariputra?"

Venerable Mahakasyapa replied: "Sariputra also entered into Nirvana."

Gavampati asked: "What about Venerable Maudgalyayana?"

Venerable Mahakasyapa replied: "Also entered into Nirvana!"

Gavampati asked: "What about Venerable Ananda?"

Mahakasyapa replied: "As he has not eliminated his sensuous desires and severed his sensual mind, he is not allowed to compile the scriptures."

Gavampati asked: "What about the Buddha's son, Rahula?"

Venerable Mahakasyapa replied: "Rahula is travelling in the mundane world to liberate the sentient beings."

Gavampati replied: "Since the Buddha, and Venerable Sariputra, and all my monks have entered into Nirvana, I will also enter into Nirvana."

So Gavampati entered into Nirvana in the heavenly realm.

At that moment, Venerable Mahakasyapa went to look for Venerable Ananda and asked him some questions. Venerable Ananda attained Arahatship that night. When Venerable Ananda went to see Venerable Mahakasyapa, Venerable Mahakasyapa told him: "Since you have attained Arahatship, enter the room through the key hole."

~ THE MOST BLISSFUL PERSON (2) ~

As Venerable Ananda was really an Arahant who had achieved liberation through concentration and wisdom, he transformed himself and entered the room through the key hole. Upon entering the room, he sought repentance from Venerable Mahakasyapa. Thereafter, they started to compile the scriptures together.

When Venerable Ananda took the Dharma seat, everybody thought he was the Buddha as he looked very magnificent.

Upon taking the Dharma seat, the Venerable said: "Thus have I heard¹⁰, at one time, the Buddha said such a scripture at such a place, how many Bhikshus and followers were present."

So the compilation of scriptures started with Venerable Ananda reciting the Four Agama Sutra and Venerable Upali reciting the Vinaya.

Together, the Sutra, the Vinaya, and the Abhidharma-pitaka are known as the Tripitaka.

¹⁰ Thus have I heard: The phrase that starts off Buddhist sutras, spoken by the Buddha's disciple Ananda.

Why were the scriptures of the great vehicle not being compiled?

When the Arahats were compiling the scriptures, Maitreya Bodhisattva asked Venerable Ananda: "Why were the scriptures of the great vehicle not being compiled?"

Venerable Ananda replied: "Sentient beings will not be able to believe in the scriptures of the great vehicle, so these will be compiled at another time."

As such, Maitreya Bodhisattva, Manjusri Bodhisattva, and Venerable Ananda compiled the scriptures of the great vehicle separately.

Why is it so hard to believe in the scriptures of the great vehicle? The Buddha sacrificed his body and life for the sake of the Dharma, isn't it hard for people to believe?

To relinquish and sacrifice one's wife and children for the sake of one stanza: "All conditioned phenomena are impermanent, all living beings suffer. The primal essence of the five aggregates is nothingness, there is no ego – no 'I' nor mine." If you believe that it is possible to do so, then it shows that you

~ THE MOST BLISSFUL PERSON (2) ~

have full faith in the Buddha, and have very deep wholesome roots and less defilements.

Generally, people cannot comprehend the spirit of the Buddha's sacrifice of his body and life for the sake of the Dharma. This is because sentient beings cling on to the ego and indulge in the five sensuous desires. For the sake of this body, they become attached to the people, events, and things around them.

Besides, sentient beings tend to only look at the external world and not reflect upon themselves. That is why it is very difficult for sentient beings to comprehend the scriptures of the great vehicle. As such, the scriptures of the lesser vehicle were compiled at Rajagrha, whilst the scriptures of the great vehicle were compiled at another place.

Buddha compassionately guides the sentient beings

When we juxtapose the Buddha's compassion towards sentient beings with ourselves and those who have not yet learnt the Dharma, we would realize that to have the Buddha and the Dharma is a bliss that is truly beyond words.

The nature of the Buddha is that he does not differentiate, does not desire fame or wealth, nor would he spend longer time accepting the offering and sustenance from presidents or kings who were respectful of him.

The purpose of the Buddha coming into the mundane world is to liberate sentient beings by expounding the wonderful teaching so that they can end suffering and attain everlasting happiness.

Example 1

There was once when the Buddha was in Rajagrha. After King Bimbisara, his High Ministers, and all the citizens offered sustenance to the Buddha, the Buddha said: "I am leaving to go to another kingdom."

At that time, some of the people implored the Buddha to stay to enable them to continue to offer and sustain the Buddha. But the Buddha nevertheless decided to leave. Everybody was upset. Then, a servant said he had an idea to make the Buddha stay, so this minion, Fu Li Jia (福梨迦) went to see the Buddha.

Fu Li Jia was a poor man and never had any meritorious reward in this life. So when he went to see the Buddha, he

~ THE MOST BLISSFUL PERSON (2) ~

told the Buddha: "World Honored One! The purpose of your coming into this world is to save and liberate all sentient beings. For someone who is so poor and pitiful like me, will the Buddha please have pity on me to enable me to end suffering and attain everlasting happiness. I implore the Buddha to please accept my offer of sustenance tomorrow."

The Buddha replied: "Certainly!"

The World Honored One was indeed very compassionate. He would not remain to accept the offering and sustenance from the King and royalties simply because they had faith in the Buddha, or because they have merits. The Buddha does not crave fame and wealth. For those sentient beings who had not sowed their cause and conditions for liberation, the Buddha would give them the opportunity to do so.

After Fu Li Jia made his offering and sustenance to the Buddha and planted the cause and conditions for liberation, the royalties and the King were very touched. The King allowed Fu Li Jia to renounce and upon renouncing, he immediately attained Arahatship.

The Buddha regards all sentient beings equally, thus it is truly blissful to be the Buddha's children!

Example 2

When the Buddha was guiding and liberating sentient beings, the Mara King would attempt to disturb him. But the Buddha would not be angry with the Mara King, instead how did the Buddha treat the Mara King? When the Buddha attained Buddhahood, the Mara King sent his heavenly army to harm the Buddha but the Buddha transformed them into lotus flowers and precious gems.

When the demonic daughters of King Mara came to seduce the Buddha, the Buddha told them: "The body is impure and impermanent."

Whilst the Buddha was guiding and liberating the sentient beings, the Mara King always appeared to disrupt him but the Buddha never showed any anger at all.

One hundred years after the Buddha's Parinirvana, Maha Upagupta guided many people to attain Arahatsip. Once when the Venerable was in a meditative state, the Mara King mischievously placed a flower garland on the Venerable's head. As a monastic, it is a great offence to adorn flower garlands, because monastics are not allowed to adorn any fragrant flower garlands.

~ THE MOST BLISSFUL PERSON (2) ~

When the Venerable came out of the meditative state, he wondered why there was a flower garland on his head. When he entered into a meditative contemplation, he realized that it was Papiyas the Mara King who placed the flower garland on his head. The Venerable then used his supernatural powers to go and see the Mara King, and hung something that the Mara King most abhorred on his body.

The Venerable hung three carcasses on the Mara King's body: One was the corpse of a dead man, one was the carcass of a dead snake, and the last a dead dog. These three carcasses were extremely pungent. The Mara King had great meritorious rewards and would not use such obnoxious items on himself. However, no matter what he did, the Mara King was unable to use his supernatural powers to remove these items from his body. He thus turned to King Sakra for assistance.

King Sakra told him: "I cannot help you! The only one who can fix the problem is the one who created it. Only the person who hung these carcasses on you could remove them."

The Mara King then went to seek the help of the Brahma King. The Brahma King said: "Only the Venerable Arahat can ease your suffering."

In the end, after going round to everybody for help but without success, he had no choice but to obediently seek Maha Upagupta.

Maha Upagupta told the Mara King: "You played a prank on me and that was not the right thing to do. You did something wrong and you should repent for such wrongful act."

After the Mara King sought repentance, Maha Upagupta told him to take refuge in the Triple Gem. The Mara King told the Venerable: "When Sakyamuni Buddha was around, I never had to endure such suffering, and he would not ask me to take refuge in the Triple Gem. Now, even before telling me to take refuge in the Triple Gem, you already made me suffer."

The World Honored One was really one with great loving-kindness and compassion. The Mara King had been disrupting him for so long yet he never allowed the Mara King to be upset. Eventually, the Mara King took refuge and when Maitreya Buddha comes to the world, the Mara King is one of the great protectors of the Dharma.

This shows that the Buddha will not disturb or harass the sentient beings because in the Buddha's mind, there is no opposing party.

The merits of paying respects to the Buddha

There are 5 merits when one pays respects to the Buddha:

(1) To receive perfect, dignified appearance: Everybody would like to look magnificent. How does one get such a result?

When we are filled with joy upon seeing the Buddha's statue, this will generate the merits of looking perfect, beautiful, dignified, and stately. As such, when we look at the Buddha's statue, do not just browse and give it a passing look without any feeling as this is such a waste! We should feel happy upon seeing the Buddha and join our palms in rejoice and respect.

2) To possess a beautiful voice: How does one get the merits of a beautiful voice? What is the cause and conditions?

This is by chanting Nama Buddha, Nama Dharma, Nama Sangha. Chanting the Buddha's name will generate the merits of having a beautiful voice.

(3) To possess wealth: Through the offering of flowers, fruits, food and beverages, and accommodation to uphold and sustain the Buddha, we would be able to receive great wealth.

(4) To take rebirth in a rich family: To take rebirth in a rich family, we must not have any tainted mind. We must sincerely pay respects to the Buddha, and be respectful to the Buddha, to receive the merits of wealth.

(5) To be liberated like the Buddha: When we have faith in the Buddha, we will uphold the precepts willingly. As we generate good thoughts towards the Buddha, we will take rebirth in the Thirty-Three Heavens, and eventually will also be liberated and become a Buddha.

As such, the greatest merit that we receive is to become the Buddha's children. This also generates good meritorious rewards, accompanied by full and complete wisdom.

Let us all come and pay respects reverently to the World Honored One, the Tathagata!



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.

~ GLOSSARY ~

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.

~ GLOSSARY ~

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

~ GLOSSARY ~

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.

~ GLOSSARY ~

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.

~ GLOSSARY ~

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 Arahathship. 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 Arahathship.

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

~ GLOSSARY ~

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.

~ GLOSSARY ~

Upekṣa: 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.

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.

Acknowledgement

We would like to thank all who have contributed to the translation of this series of works into English.

Title: EVERLASTING HAPPINESS, AS BUDDHA ATTAINS 4
Presenter: Venerable Da Shi
Editor: The Dharma Editorial Committee,
Miao You Pu Ti Yuan (Taiwan, R.O.C.)
Translator: The Dharma Committee,
Miao You Pu Ti Yuan (Singapore)
Publisher: Miao You Pu Ti Yuan (Singapore)
Address: 15 Lorong 29 Geylang
#02-01 PTH Building
Singapore 388069
Contact: (65) 67496460
Website: www.mypty.sg
Facebook: www.facebook.com/Mypty
E-mail: ven.dashi@yahoo.com.tw
Publish date: Aug 2013
ISBN: 978-981-07-7057-0

Miao You Pu Ti Yuan (Taiwan, R.O.C.) has granted permission to Miao You Pu Ti Yuan (Singapore) for the translation and publication of this book.

This book is for free distribution only, not for sale.

If you wish to reprint this book, please contact Miao You Pu Ti Yuan (Singapore) at (65) 67496460 or email to dharma@mypty.sg.

The Gift of Dharma excels all other Gifts

If you would like to share the Gift of the Dharma with others by supporting the production cost of Dharma DVDs and books for Free Distribution, please kindly contact Jing Jue at (65) 97879508, Ben Yuan at (65) 97366520, Yuan Man at (65) 91080057, or Miao Yong at (65) 91711453.