

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](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.

~ 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 Wise Man's Choice – To see the Buddha and listen to the Dharma (2)**

**What kind of bliss can a person achieve upon seeing the Buddha and listening to the Dharma?**

Upon seeing the Buddha and listening to the Dharma, we can attain the happiness of respite, the joy of being a Sramana, the bliss of Nirvana, and the happiness of enlightenment.

### **(1) Happiness of respite:**

To have respite means to stop our vexations and rest for a while. How comfortable it is if we could lie down after a day's hard work! It is easier to comprehend respite this way. But it seems like we get more tired after going for holidays. In that case, are we having a respite when we go on holidays or are we making ourselves more tired?

That is why some people might say: "Monday is the most tired day of the week."

~ THE WISE MAN'S CHOICE (2) ~

This is because the fun that they had on Saturday and Sunday is more taxing on them than the work from Monday through Friday.

The respite that one enjoys by ending suffering and attaining bliss refers to the inner joy of the mind. When our defilements cease – i.e., when our greed, anger, and ignorance all cease – that is a respite.

Example 1

When we get angry with someone and another person advises us not to be angry, we feel happy and relieved when we are able to do as advised. It is as though a burden has been taken off our shoulders. When our anger ceases, it suddenly feels like a big boulder is taken off our mind. That is a wonderful feeling.

Example 2

In the past, there was a person named Angulimala who was very respectful of his teacher. However, the teacher he associated with was heretic and evil.

One day whilst the teacher was out on an assignment, the teacher's wife who liked Angulimala tried to seduce him.

Angulimala rejected the teacher's wife's seduction. She was ashamed and angry, and when the teacher returned, she told him that his disciple offended her dignity.

The teacher then imparted a wrongful view to Angulimala that he could take rebirth in the heavenly realm by killing 1,000 people.

Angulimala believed his teacher's teaching and started to kill people. After killing 999 people, he thought of killing his mother.

The Buddha knew that the cause and conditions for Angulimala to attain enlightenment had ripened, and so the Buddha went to save Angulimala's mother. But when Angulimala saw the Buddha, he wanted to kill the Buddha.

The Buddha used his supernatural powers such that Angulimala could not keep up with him. Angulimala thought: "I am the mightiest warrior in the whole kingdom, yet I could not even catch up with the Buddha." At that moment, he shouted at the Buddha to stop.

The Buddha said: "I have stopped, it is you who have not stopped. I have rested, it is you who have yet to rest." What does this mean?

~ THE WISE MAN'S CHOICE (2) ~

Angulimala was a very sharp person and thought: "It seems I have not stopped nor rested yet."

He asked the World Honored One: "What do you mean?"

The Buddha replied: "You generated a wrong view and an angry mind. After killing so many sentient beings, your mind has not stopped. I have attained Anuttara Samyak Sambodhi and my mind has stopped, there is no longer any anger."

Thus, Angulimala let go of his angry mind. At that moment, he realized that he had acquainted with evil companions and had committed many wrongdoings. So Angulimala decided to follow the World Honored One and renounced to cultivate and practice as a monastic.

The Buddha said: "Welcome Bhikshu! Let your beard and hair fall off on its own and the kasaya draped over your body. Your attire and alms bowl are fully provided for. Accept the bhikshu precepts to become a Bhikshu."

Thus, the Venerable attained everlasting happiness of respite. He extinguished all defilements of greed, anger, and ignorance, and hence attained everlasting happiness of respite.

Once when Venerable Angulimala was collecting alms, he saw a woman experiencing difficult labor and felt that sentient beings were really suffering. After the alms round, the Venerable went back to see the Buddha and told the Buddha what happened.

The Buddha told him: "Go and tell this laboring woman that since you attained virtuousness and sagehood, you have not committed any killing. Bless her with this phrase and wish her an easy birth so that both the mother and child are safe."

The Venerable went and told the laboring woman. Thereafter, she had an easy birth and both mother and child were safe.

When we read this section from the scriptures, from the mundane world's point of view, the Buddha also has the way for mid-wifery. The Buddha let the mother and child feel that in the mundane world, there were kind and compassionate people with no defilements and had truly achieved respite, and they can come to this mundane world to be with such people.

Although there are many people in the mundane world who have defilements and who have generated many unwholesome deeds, there are also many people who are

cultivating and practising. Besides, there is the Triple Gem. This was the way of mid-wifery.

We can see that Venerable Angulimala had attained the happiness of respite. He was originally filled with anger and wanted to kill people. After achieving respite, there was no longer greed, anger, and ignorance in him; his mind was truly rested.

This is the merit and benefit of seeing the Buddha and listening to the Dharma. As such, we must listen to the Dharma expounded by the Buddha and must learn and cultivate accordingly.

## **(2) The joy of being a Sramana:**

The joy of being a Sramana refers to the first stage of fruition, Srotapanna; the second stage of fruition, Sakradagamin; the third stage of fruition, Anagamin; and the fourth stage of fruition, Arahat.

These four stages of fruition comprise the joy of being a Sramana; to sum it up, it refers to the joy of being an Arahat.

### Example

Seng Jia Mo (僧迦摩) was a Bhikshu who had renounced but was still thinking: "I have a wife who is the most beautiful woman in this city and everyone covets to be with her. How could I let her go?" Because of this, Bhikshu Seng Jia Mo returned to the lay life and renounced for a total of six times.

After renouncing for the seventh time, he thought: "I cannot be doing this all the time, to renounce and then return to the lay life again."

As such, he was determined to practice and cultivate to attain Arahatsip because of the suffering of the burning house of the triple world and the Samsara cycle.

Finally, through diligent practice and cultivation, he attained Arahatsip and enjoyed the joy of being a Sramana.

After he was enlightened, he did not return to his home for a long time and his mother-in-law was wondering why her son-in-law had not been visiting. So she decided to visit him. The mother-in-law told her daughter to adorn herself beautifully with flowers, perfumes, and to decorate herself with precious gems and flowers. They also brought the most delicious food and carried the baby to visit him.

~ THE WISE MAN'S CHOICE (2) ~

When the mother and daughter saw Seng Jia Mo, he ignored them and appeared to be unfeeling. As he was an Arahāt, he no longer had worldly desires and attachments.

The wife cried when she saw Seng Jia Mo, but he was unaffected.

The mother-in-law told him: "Your wife is the most beautiful woman in this city and everybody covets to be with her, only you do not want to be with her."

Seng Jia Mo replied as a sage should, and spoke about the abandonment of desires. After that, the mother-in-law and his wife left the baby at the side of the road and hid themselves at a corner to see whether Seng Jia Mo would pick up the baby.

Seng Jia Mo did not bother to move even though the baby was crying. So, the mother and daughter picked up the baby and sought repentance from the Bhikshu. This was because although they met the Arahāt, they still tried to pester and offend the Arahāt. "Better to stir the waters of a thousand rivers than to disturb a practicing person's mind."

Before the Buddha attained enlightenment, three demonic daughters of King Mara tried to seduce the World Honored

One with their beauty but the Buddha did not succumb to their seduction. As such, when the Buddha heard about this, he commended: "Amongst all my disciples, Seng Jia Mo is the first in subduing the followers of Mara."

Seng Jia Mo renounced for a total of seven times and attained Arahathship. As such, the Buddha decreed that a Bhikshu can return to the lay life for six times but if he were to do so for the seventh time, he would not be able to renounce again. This was due to the cause and conditions of Seng Jia Mo.

However, for the female followers, there is only one chance of accepting the full Bhikshuni precepts.

### **(3) The bliss of Nirvana:**

Nirvana means completely ending greed, anger, and ignorance forever. All defilements are fully abandoned. Whatever situation arises, these defilements do not arise again. This is Nirvana.

The bliss of Nirvana and the joy of Sugata<sup>14</sup> are far and beyond the joys of this mundane world.

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<sup>14</sup> One of the *ten epithets* of Buddha.

### Example 1

When Venerable Vangisa went to collect alms together with Venerable Ananda, he saw a beautiful lady along the way and his mind became aroused. So he told Venerable Ananda: "What should be done? My mind is beating like a drum and restless, my desire is aroused."

Venerable Ananda said: "You have to perceive the impureness in her, do not think of her as pure and beautiful, follow the Buddha's teachings and perceive."

Venerable Vangisa hurriedly returned to the monastery and started to contemplate and soon he extinguished the fire of desire. He practiced further and cultivated diligently and eventually ended all defilements and attained the bliss of Nirvana.

### Example 2

The Buddha's cousin, Venerable Nanda was a family man before he renounced. His wife was the most beautiful woman in Kapilavastu. The Buddha knew the continued arising and ceasing of the mundane world. He also knew that Kapilavastu would eventually perish and be destroyed. Thus the Buddha guided and liberated the royalties of Kapilavastu. He then

proceeded to guide and liberate Nanda by passing his alms bowl to Nanda.

Nanda took the Buddha's alms bowl to fill it with food for offering to the Buddha. When he returned with the alms bowl, the Buddha was walking in front of him, Nanda kept running after the Buddha but could not catch up with him.

When he chased Buddha to the monastery, Buddha guided him to renounce and accept the Bhikshu precepts.

But Venerable Nanda was still thinking of his wife and still adorned the layman's attire occasionally.

When the Buddha learnt of this, he asked Venerable Nanda: "Do you really miss your family?"

Venerable Nanda replied: "I still miss my family."

The Buddha told him: "Let me bring you to a place."

The Buddha used his supernatural powers and brought Venerable Nanda to the mountains and saw a blind macaque.

The Buddha asked the Venerable: "Is this macaque more beautiful or is your wife more beautiful?"

~ THE WISE MAN'S CHOICE (2) ~

The Venerable replied: "World Honored One! That monkey looks so ugly, how can it be compared with my wife?"

The World Honored One said: "Right! That is fine!"

The World Honored One then brought Venerable Nanda to the heavenly realm where he saw that the female devas were more beautiful than his wife. There were 500 female devas playing but there was no male master around.

So he asked the Buddha: "Why are the female devas without any male master at their side, why is that so? Who are they waiting for?"

The Buddha said: "Go and ask them yourself."

Venerable Nanda asked the female devas: "Who are you? Why are you without your male deva?"

The female devas replied: "We are here waiting for Bhikshu Nanda who is cultivating as a monastic in the mundane world. When he passes away, he will come here to be our master."

The Venerable thought: "Oh! Isn't that me? That's wonderful!"

When the Venerable returned to see the Buddha, the Buddha asked him: "What did you just learn?"

The Venerable replied: "They are waiting for me!"

The Buddha asked: "In that case, do you want to practice and cultivate?"

The Venerable replied: "Yes!"

The Buddha asked: "You are practicing and cultivating because you want to be the master of these 500 female devas in future. Is that the case?"

The Venerable replied: "Yes!"

The Buddha asked: "When you compare these 500 female devas with your wife in Kapilavastu, which one is more beautiful?"

The Venerable replied: "World Honored One! My wife is just like that blind macaque, my wife cannot be compared with the female devas." Venerable Nanda had a change of heart so swiftly! When Venerable Nanda returned to the human realm to practice and cultivate, everybody joked that he was

~ THE WISE MAN'S CHOICE (2) ~

practicing and cultivating so that he can be the master of the female devas in his next life.

After some time, the Buddha again used his supernatural powers and brought Venerable Nanda to the hell realm. At the hell realm, he saw a cauldron filled with boiling water and Venerable Nanda felt odd because there was no criminal inside.

The Buddha told him to enquire from the hell warden.

The hell warden replied: "We are waiting for Venerable Nanda who is practicing and cultivating in the human realm. He is practicing and cultivating so that he will take rebirth in the heavenly realm. Once he has used up his meritorious reward in the heavenly realm, he will come here to suffer. This cauldron is waiting for him."

Upon hearing this, Venerable Nanda thought: "Isn't that me?"

He quickly reported to the Buddha: "The suffering in the hell realm is too much."

The Buddha asked: "In that case, do you want to go to the hell realm?"

The Venerable replied: "No, no!"

The Buddha asked: "What about taking rebirth in the heavenly realm?"

The Venerable replied: "I do not want to go to the heavenly realm also."

The Buddha asked: "In that case, what do you want?"

The Venerable replied: "I want to be liberated!"

Thus, Venerable Nanda diligently practiced and cultivated and finally attained Arahatsip. Upon attaining Arahatsip, he still needed to attend to a matter.

The Venerable reported to the Buddha: "World Honored One! In the past, I made a wish to become the master of the 500 female devas in the heavenly realm, I would like to give up this wish."

~ THE WISE MAN'S CHOICE (2) ~

Even Arahats have to give up any wrongful promises they had made previously.

When the Venerable attained Arahatship, Mara went to his home and told his wife: "Nanda will be returning to the lay life to be with you, hurry up and go beautify yourself."

Nanda's wife beautified herself and waited for him to return.

At that moment, King Prasenajit heard that Venerable Nanda was going to return to the lay life. The King was very anxious as it was not easy for a Bhikshu to renounce to be a monastic, so how could he have given up the precepts and return to the lay life?

So the King went to ask Venerable Nanda: "I heard that you are going to give up the precepts and return to the lay life?"

Venerable Nanda replied: "I do not intend to return to the lay life, Arahats do not do so. Did you not hear the Buddha affirmed that I have attained extinguishment of defilements and attained liberation? Did you not hear that I have achieved the bliss of Nirvana?"

The King replied: "I have yet to hear of this. Now that I have learnt of this from you, I am certain that you are liberated and have achieved the bliss of Nirvana."

Thus, King Prasenajit left feeling rest assured.

Then Mara told Venerable Nanda: "You have to give up the precepts and return to the lay life quickly. Go back and enjoy your status as the Wheel Turning Monarch, your wife is beautifully adorned and waiting for your return."

Venerable Nanda contemplated and knew that it was Mara who had appeared to harass him and replied: "Mara! I will not be enticed by you, nor be deceived by you, you'd better leave!"

Mara knew that Venerable Nanda was aware of his true identity and left quickly.

Mara is only afraid if people recognize him. If you are not able to recognize that he is Mara, he will continue to bother you.

When we learn of the teaching of the three vehicles, we will attain the happiness of respite, the joy of being a Sramana, the bliss of Nirvana, and the happiness of enlightenment.

~ THE WISE MAN'S CHOICE (2) ~

Once we are able to attain these joys, we will experience everlasting joy and freedom.

In our daily life, many people are like Mara; they come along and tell you something on the one hand whilst they cause mischief on the other hand, leaving you in a state of stupefaction. This either results in quarrels and fights or to forging of kinship.

That is why monastics do not perform matchmaking. They cannot do as Mara does – i.e., instigating both sides, hoping Venerable Nanda will reconcile with his wife. This would be breaking the precepts.

In the wonderful teaching of ending suffering and attaining bliss, a wise person will choose to see the Buddha and listen to the Dharma.

Everyone can end suffering and attain everlasting bliss. We hope that each of us can get out of the triple world and the suffering of the Samsara in the six realms. We should quickly follow the Buddha's teachings, cultivate, and practice diligently.

## **Where should one start so as to end suffering and attain everlasting happiness?**

To be able to end suffering and attain everlasting happiness, we should start from the Agama Sutra that the Buddha expounded in the teachings of the three vehicles. This is because the Agama Sutra is meant to help us to resolve the vexations and suffering caused by our mind and body.

In the Agama Sutra, the Buddha expounded on the following: the teaching on practice of generosity, the teaching on upholding the precepts, the teaching on taking rebirth in the heavenly realm, the teaching that desires are impure, the teaching that contamination is the greatest fault, and the teaching that it is crucial to renounce. The Buddha then followed up with the teaching on suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, the way to end suffering, and the twelve links of dependent origination.

**(1) The teaching on practice of generosity, the teaching on upholding the precepts, and the teaching on taking rebirth in the heavenly realm:**

Example 1

Elder Sudatta, who was also known as Elder Anathapindika, had a daughter-in-law known as Sujata. Sujata was not very respectful towards her parents-in-law. She was also very disrespectful of the Triple Gem and was hot-tempered and arrogant.

Once when Elder Sudatta met the Buddha, he implored the Buddha: "World Honored One! You are the wisest man, could you please help to guide and liberate my daughter-in-law."

The Buddha replied: "Definitely!"

When the Buddha accepted the alms offering, Elder Sudatta invited his daughter-in-law to meet the Buddha and to pay respect to the Buddha. The Buddha then expounded to the daughter-in-law: "There are four types of wife:

**(a) Like a mother:** A wife who is like a mother treats the husband the way a mother treats her child; always taking good care of him impeccably, always cherishing the husband.

**(b) Like the dearest:** The wife regards the husband as her dearest person and goes through thick and thin with the husband, always by his side. Whether in good or bad tidings, she does not abandon him, nor blames him, nor harbors any hatred. She does not change her mind on this.

**(c) Like a thief:** A thief-like wife's mind is elsewhere. She is always angry with her husband, she even hates her husband and disrespects him.

**(d) Like a maid:** Like a maid, she respects her master. The wife considers herself as a maid. She listens to her husband's instructions at all times, she endures her husband's temperament, gets up earlier, and sleeps later than him. She endures all sufferings, always treating her husband with kind and compassionate mind, and regarding her husband as the heaven. If the husband is not around, she will be lost and without any joy."

The Buddha asked Sujata: "Which type of wife are you?"

Sujata thought: "I am the thief-like wife."

So she sought repentance from the Buddha: "World Honored One! I am the third type of wife, I know my mistakes now."

~ THE WISE MAN'S CHOICE (2) ~

How skillful was the Buddha's way of expounding the Dharma! The Buddha did not scold her outright, he merely described to her the four types of wife and allowed her to reflect and correct herself. At that moment, she realized her mistake and wanted to amend herself.

The Buddha then expounded the Dharma to her, he expounded on the practicing of generosity, the upholding of precepts, and the way to take rebirth in the heavenly realm (the teaching on practice of generosity, the teaching on upholding the precepts, and the teaching on taking rebirth in the heavenly realm).

The Buddha further expounded that desires are impure and would lead to much unrest and vexations. One should renounce to become a monastic (the teaching that desires are impure, that contamination is the greatest fault, and that it is crucial to renounce).

Upon hearing this, Sujata's mind was purified. The Buddha then expounded on the teaching on suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, the way to end suffering, and the twelve links of dependent origination. Upon receiving this teaching, she attained the *Pure Dharma Eye*.

She willingly took refuge with the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha and asked to be accepted as a Buddhist disciple after receiving the five precepts.

When we read about this case, we have to reflect and ask ourselves which type of wife we are.

On the other hand, upon reading this article, the husband should also reflect: Did he treat his wife well? Is he cherishing the wife like a father? Is he treasuring her like his dearest?

Or is he treating her like his enemy and is filled with hatred for her? Or is he like a maid to his wife?

We must self-reflect upon these.

### Example 2

In the Agama Sutra, the Buddha taught us how to be good husbands and wives. In the Buddha's past lives, he had always had good relationship between the husband and wife. When the Buddha was still the prince, he had to endure six years of suffering when he renounced as a monastic. The ascetic practice did not have good food to eat, comfortable place to stay, nice clothing to wear, nor nice things to use.

~ THE WISE MAN'S CHOICE (2) ~

When the crown princess, Yasodhara who was residing in the palace learnt of how Prince Siddhartha cultivated his ascetic practice, she built a very humble hut separately and lived like the World Honored One, eating, living, wearing, and using poor quality things. She slept on floors that were harder than the wooden beds and wore rough clothing. She went through six years of ascetic living in the humble hut in the palace.

When the World Honored One attained enlightenment, someone told him: "Yasodhara also lived the ascetic life like you."

The Buddha said: "This is not the first time Yasodhara had carried out ascetic practice like me, she had been doing so in her past lives."

In a previous life, the World Honored One was a deer king and Yasodhara was the doe. One day, the deer king was captured by the hunter's trap. The doe came to the deer king's side and knelt beside him. When the hunter came to get the deer king, the doe cried at the side. When the hunter asked, then he realized that they were husband and wife.

The hunter thought: "There are such faithful beings even in the animal realm. She is willing to sacrifice her life to be with

the deer king. Human beings on the other hand may even consider abandoning their wives or even carry out unscrupulous deeds. We humans really do not measure up to these deer!"

So the hunter released the deer king so that it could live a carefree life, and the doe followed.

The Buddha said: "Yasodhara endured the suffering with me then and this was not the only time."

When we read the Buddhist scriptures, we should learn the Buddha's every demeanor. We should look upon this life and reflect upon the Buddha's past lives. Since we already have a family, we should practice the family way; if we do not have a family, we should practice the monastic way.

When we learn how the Buddha explained to Sujata on the cause and conditions of being a wife, a wise person upon listening to this teaching would know how to deal with his life!

The purpose of speaking of the practicing of generosity, the upholding of the precepts, and the teaching of taking rebirth in the heavenly realm is to generate a wholesome mind in us and to make us understand the law of cause and effect.

If we do not practice generosity nor uphold the precepts nor have the cause and conditions for taking rebirth in the heavenly realm, we are heading towards the three bad existences in future.

**(2) Desires are impure, contamination is the greatest fault, and it is crucial to renounce:**

Amongst the five desires, the desire between man and woman is the most dangerous and impure. In society, we frequently come across murders of passion, of vendetta, or for money. Murder for money and passion is due to desires. This is especially so for passion. No husband would like to learn that his wife is having extra-marital affairs and to make him a cuckold. Nor would anybody be happy to learn that her boyfriend or his girlfriend is leaving them to be with another person.

As such, the desire between man and woman is very impure and will bring forth much unrest and vexation. This causes a lot of worry, sadness, suffering, and vexation. As such, desires are impure, contamination is the greatest fault, and it is crucial to renounce. We must be able to forsake the five desires.

The Buddha expounded the Dharma so that we are able to forsake the joy of the five desires and not generate any more

cause for such suffering and vexation. Only so can we truly be liberated.

### Example 1

The joy of five desires is just like the housefly being attracted to the sticky glue that gives off a sweet scent. Once the housefly is stuck to the sticky glue and it struggles, its legs break. So once we fall into the trap of desire between man and woman, we would not be able to walk out of it. Only the wisest and the most blessed person would be able to walk out of it.

### Example 2

There is a saying in the mundane world: "People die for money, while birds die for food". "Desires are impure and contamination is the greatest fault" applies likewise to the cases where one dies for food or money. Contamination refers to defilements and "it is crucial to renounce" means that we must renounce.

### Example 3

There is an oft-quoted verse: "The woman's warm bosom is the hero's grave."

From a man's viewpoint, a man's desire to carve out a great career can be subdued by a woman's tenderness.

~ THE WISE MAN'S CHOICE (2) ~

They incur enmity and vendetta when they become involved in fighting with another for man or woman. As such, the wise person will choose to abandon the desires between man and woman and renounce to be a monastic.

Example 4

There was a person who had a very beautiful wife. Before they were married, an artist saw her beauty.

King Asoka once wanted all the artists in the country to draw some beautiful items for him. This artist could not think of anything to draw, so he decided to draw the beautiful woman that he met. When King Asoka saw that painting, he instructed his ministers to find that beautiful woman and to bring her to the palace to be his concubine. The king, who was proud of his power and authority, forcefully seized another person's wife.

When this happened, the husband thought: "I could not even protect my wife, I better renounce and become a monastic."

After he renounced, he practiced and cultivated diligently and very soon attained Arahatsip.

Sometime later, when the king sent for him, he was able to expound the Dharma to the king.

The husband knew that the desire between man and woman is impure and leads to defilements, pain, suffering, and dispute. Thus he decided to give up his family and renounce to be a monastic. Desires are impure, contamination is the greatest fault, and it is crucial to renounce. The Agama Sutra tells us that we have to end suffering and attain bliss.

### **(3) The Four Noble Truths and The Twelve Links of Dependent Origination:**

The Four Noble Truths are the teaching on suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the way to end suffering.

The Twelve Links of Dependent Origination refers to "When this exists, that comes to be; when this arises, that arises. When this does not exist, that does not exist; when this ceases, that ceases."

#### Example

When the Buddha was entering into Nirvana, Venerable Ananda asked the Buddha: "Chandaka does not listen to instructions. When the World Honored One disciplined him, he would listen but when the World Honored One is not around anymore, how should we instruct and guide him? If he

~ THE WISE MAN'S CHOICE (2) ~

does not listen to the teachings and instructions, what should we do about it?"

The Buddha replied: "Use Brahma Dana Punishment."<sup>15</sup>

What is Brahma Dana Punishment? It involves not expounding the Dharma to him and not allowing him to recite the precepts. A monastic who does not listen to the Dharma would not be able to cultivate and practice. If he is unable to cultivate and practice, what is the point for him to be a monastic? Would this not be the same as being a layman?

"As such, you can use this method to punish him, there is no need to chase him away."

Venerable Ananda followed the instructions and punished Chandaka for three months. After the three months, Bhikshu Chandaka realized his wrongdoings and begged the Bhikshus to expound the Dharma to him.

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<sup>15</sup> Brahma Dana Punishment (梵檀罰): "Brahma" means pure and "Dana" means practice of generosity. So it meant using pure practice of generosity to punish him.

The Bhikshus told him: "All conditioned phenomena are impermanent, all things lack inherent existence (no ego), and that Nirvana is perfect quiescence."

Chandaka said he knew these teachings and that he had listened to these from the Buddha. He knew them but disliked to listen to them.

Thereafter when Chandaka went to see Venerable Ananda, the Venerable said: "You really have a repentant mind and are sincere about repenting. This is good."

After the Venerable praised him, he said: "A person who perceives the gathering of the mundane world with the right view will not see the things of the mundane world as being non-existent; a person who perceives the cessation of the mundane world with the right view will not view that things of the mundane world really exist."

We sentient beings live in the world of "exist" and "non-exist". When a loved one passed away, does this mean that he is "non-exist"? When the loved one appears before us, we perceive that he "exists", is that right?

~ THE WISE MAN'S CHOICE (2) ~

As such, when he is gone, we perceive it is "non-exist" and feel sorrow; when he appears, we perceive that he "exists" and we feel happy. Such is the illusion of the mundane world.

What is the real situation?

*"A person who perceives the gathering of the mundane world with the right view will not see the things of the mundane world as being non-existent":*

When we truthfully observe that all things exist due to the cause and conditions, we realize that the "non-exist" that we perceive is only an illusion, because it does not really "non-exist", it is only waiting for the cause and conditions to rise; once the cause and conditions have ripened, it will exist.

*"A person who perceives the cessation of the mundane world with the right view will not view that things of the mundane world really exist":*

When we truthfully observe that all things cease to exist due to the cause and conditions, we realize what we perceive as constantly "exist" is incorrect, because it does not really "exist". Once the cause and conditions for cessation are ripe,

it will cease to exist. As such, "exist" is not attainable, so is "emptiness".

When Bhikshu Chandaka listened to Venerable Ananda's exposition of the Dharma, he immediately attained the Pure Dharma Eye. At that moment, he was deeply grateful to Venerable Ananda and he started to practice and cultivate diligently. Very soon he attained Arahatsip.

Once we understand the marvelous purpose of the teachings of Suffering, the Cause of Suffering, the Cessation of Suffering, the Way to Cease the Suffering, and the Twelve Links of Dependent Origination, we will no longer have to suffer the Samsara cycle. We will then be able to attain the everlasting happiness of respite, the joy of being a Sramana, the bliss of Nirvana, and the happiness of enlightenment.

### **How does one practice to become a Bodhisattva?**

It would be most excellent if we could liberate ourselves from the Samsara cycle and attain the Dharma joy. As for a Bodhisattva practitioner, what should he do? A Bodhisattva practitioner should generate the great compassionate mind, the Bodhicitta mind.

~ THE WISE MAN'S CHOICE (2) ~

The Prajna Sutra provides a more detailed explanation of generating the great Bodhicitta mind:

To generate an Indestructible Diamond-like Mind; to generate the Great Rapid Mind; to generate the Immovable Mind; to generate the Mind to Benefit and Bring Peace and Joy; to generate the Mind to Seek the Dharma, to Enjoy the Dharma, and to Practice to Attain the Dharma.

A Bodhisattva must be able to immerse himself in the various *Samadhi* and the *Four Foundations of Mindfulness*; the Four Kinds of *Right Effort*; the Four Occult Powers; the Five Wholesome Roots; the Five Powers; the *Seven Factors of Enlightenment*; and the Eightfold Noble Path. He should also generate the mind to attain the Ten Powers of a Buddha and the Eighteen Distinctive Characteristics of a Buddha.

He must be able to expound the Dharma to sentient beings in order to eliminate various mistaken views – i.e., the view of existence of an ego, the view of existence of a person, the view of sentient being, the view of a life span; the various Dharma views of the five aggregates, the six bases of the senses, the eighteen compositional elements of cognition, and the perception of existence and non-existence.

These mistaken views are the causes for defilements that will in turn generate the karma to suffer in the Samsara cycle. The Bodhisattva practitioner must also grasp the *Bhutatahata*.

Then the Bodhisattva practitioner will be able to uphold his great vow, practice the Six Paramitas, cultivate towards the Great Vehicle, fulfill the Ten Stages of Bodhisattva Practice, purify his body, speech, and mind, as well as that of the sentient beings under his tutelage, thereby culminating in a pure Buddha World, and ultimately guide all sentient beings to be The Great Buddha. These are the things that a Bodhisattva should do to help to guide and liberate sentient beings.

The Buddha came into this world out of great compassion with the original intent to lead all sentient beings away from suffering and towards enlightenment. There is no difference in the intrinsic nature between the Buddha and all sentient beings. Thus the Buddha aims to rid us of our ignorance and defilements to reveal our Buddha nature within.

The Buddha then manifests the great wisdom and merits of the Buddha to aspire all sentient beings to be The Great Buddha.

~ THE WISE MAN'S CHOICE (2) ~

Through the teachings of the three vehicles, we are able to understand the path leading to Buddhahood.

Ultimately, we are able to see the Buddha nature and enter the path of the wisdom and insight of the Buddha which is like a palace filled with bountiful treasures.

However, even though the Buddha nature is present in all sentient beings, if we do not practice and cultivate ourselves, we will still be going through Samsara in the six realms endlessly. That is why the Buddha expounded the wonderful teachings to show us the way to attain our original pure Buddha nature.

The Great Buddha is selfless. Besides attaining Buddhahood himself, he wanted all sentient beings to be able to attain Buddhahood just like him.

That is why the Buddha said: All sentient beings can become the Buddha. The Sravaka, the Arahats, and the Pratyeka Buddha can also become Buddhas.

Did the Buddha only live for 80 years? In fact, the Buddha's lifespan is infinite. The Buddha's supernatural powers can combine the worlds of the ten directions into one world. The

Buddha's wisdom is able to know the infinite happenings, including the infinite happenings of the future.

The Buddha's loving-kindness and compassion allows all sentient beings to attain the all-inclusive cognition.

If we are able to fully understand the system of the Dharma in the Great Vehicle and the Lesser Vehicle, we will know how to apply them.

Once we have established the Right View, we will not use the Great Vehicle to criticize the Lesser Vehicle, nor to use the Lesser Vehicle to defame the Great Vehicle. Only then we will be able to see both the forest and the trees in it, to harness the wisdom to see all of the constituent elements of existence.



## 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

~ 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.

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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 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

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

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

**Ten 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.

## **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](http://www.mypty.sg)) for updates.

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