

Wonderful Dharma Lotus Flower Sutra

Chapter Fourteen, "Happily-Dwelling Conduct"

with commentary by Tripitaka Master Hua

SUTRA:

ONLY THE BRIGHT PEARL ON HIS COWL, THAT ALONE, HE DOES NOT GIVE AWAY. WHY NOT? ONLY THE KING CAN WEAR THIS JEWEL ON HIS CROWN. IF HE GAVE IT AWAY, THE KING'S RETINUE WOULD SURELY BE GREATLY ALARMED.

COMMENTARY:

ONLY THE BRIGHT PEARL ON HIS COWL, THAT ALONE, HE DOES NOT GIVE AWAY. The crown jewel is the only thing he will not give to his troops, generals, or anyone else. WHY NOT? ONLY THE KING CAN WEAR THIS JEWEL. The only place it can be found is on the crown of his head. Therefore, he cannot give it away. IF HE GAVE IT AWAY, THE KING'S RETINUE, the ones whom he was rewarding, WOULD SURELY BE GREATLY ALARMED. They would find it incredible. They wouldn't believe such a thing could happen. They wouldn't believe they themselves could attain such an invaluable gift.

SUTRA:

MANJUSHRI, THE THUS COME ONE IS ALSO LIKE THIS. THROUGH THE USE OF THE POWERS OF DHYANA SAMADHI AND WISDOM, HE HAS GAINED THE COUNTRY OF THE DHARMA AND IS KING OF THE THREE REALMS.

COMMENTARY:

MANJUSHRI, THE THUS COME ONE IS ALSO LIKE THIS. I, Shakyamuni Buddha, am like the Wheel-Turning Sage King. THROUGH THE USE OF THE POWERS OF DHYANA SAMADHI AND WISDOM, HE HAS GAINED THE COUNTRY OF THE unsurpassed, wonderful DHARMA, AND IS KING OF THE THREE REALMS. Within the desire, form, and formless realms, he is the Dharma King. The Buddha is the Dharma King, and is at ease within the Dharma. He is endowed with great wisdom, great knowledge, and the true Dharma.

SUTRA:

STILL, THE DEMON KINGS REFUSE TO SUBMIT. THE THUS COME ONE'S GENERALS, THE WORTHY ONES AND SAGES, DO BATTLE WITH THEM.

COMMENTARY:

STILL, THE DEMON KINGS REFUSE TO SUBMIT. They won't surrender. They don't want to return to what is honorable and venerated.

THE THUS COME ONE'S GENERALS, THE WORTHY ONES AND SAGES, DO BATTLE WITH THEM. They fight the demon kings. This is what our monthly journal "Vajra Bodhi Sea" does. By publishing the journal, we are also doing battle with the demon kings. We wish to protect the genuine Buddhadharma, and so those with phony credentials are being exposed. We are combatting the demons.

SUTRA:

WITH THOSE WHO ARE SUCCESSFUL, HE IS DELIGHTED AT HEART. FOR THE FOUR ASSEMBLIES, HE SPEAKS THE SUTRAS, CAUSING THEIR HEARTS TO REJOICE. HE CONFERS UPON THEM THE WEALTH OF DHARMA, THE DHYANA CONCENTRATIONS, LIBERATIONS, NON-OUTFLOW ROOTS, AND THE POWERS. HE FURTHER BESTOWS UPON THEM THE CITY OF NIRVANA, TELLING THEM THAT THEY SHALL ATTAIN TRANQUILITY. HE GUIDES THEIR THOUGHTS, CAUSING THEM ALL TO REJOICE.

COMMENTARY:

WITH THOSE WHO ARE SUCCESSFUL, HE IS DELIGHTED AT HEART. He is well pleased with those who defeat the demon kings. FOR THE FOUR ASSEMBLIES, the Bhikshus, Bhikshunis, Upasakas, and Upasikas, HE SPEAKS THE SUTRAS. He may speak the Storehouse Teaching, the Connected Teaching, or the Special Teaching. He may speak the Sudden, or the Gradual, the Secret, or the Unfixed Teachings. He may speak the Agamas, the Vaipulya, or the Prajna Teachings, CAUSING THEIR HEARTS TO REJOICE. HE CONFERS UPON THEM THE WEALTH OF DHARMA, the merits of DHYANA CONCENTRATIONS, the virtue of the LIBERATIONS, the NON-OUTFLOW ROOTS, AND THE POWERS. The non-outflow roots are:

1. the root of faith;
2. the root of vigor;
3. the root of mindfulness;
4. the root of concentration;
5. the root of wisdom.

Once the five roots come forth, they generate five kinds of powers of the same names. The Buddha bestows all this wealth of Dharma upon all living beings.

HE FURTHER BESTOWS UPON THEM THE CITY OF NIRVANA. Why is Nirvana likened to a city? It is because it can ward off enemies, that is, the demon kings. Demons have no way to destroy your nirvana. He tells THEM THAT THEY SHALL ATTAIN TRANQUILITY. HE GUIDES THEIR THOUGHTS, CAUSING THEM ALL TO REJOICE.

SUTRA:

BUT HE DOES NOT SPEAK THE DHARMA FLOWER SUTRA.

COMMENTARY:

He holds back and does not speak the Wonderful Dharma. HE DOES NOT SPEAK THE Wonderful DHARMA Lotus FLOWER SUTRA. Just as the Wheel-turning King's pearl cannot be given away casually, so too, the Dharma Flower Sutra cannot be explained casually.

SUTRA:

MANJUSHRI, EVENTUALLY THE WHEEL-TURNING KING, SEEING AMONG HIS TROOPS THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN GREATLY SUCCESSFUL, IS OVERJOYED, AND AT LAST GIVES THEM THE INCREDIBLE PEARL WHICH HE HAS LONG WORN IN HIS TOP-KNOT, AND WHICH HE WOULD NEVER CASUALLY GIVE AWAY.

COMMENTARY:

Shakyamuni Buddha continues, "MANJUSHRI, Wonderfully Lucky, EVENTUALLY THE WHEEL-TURNING KING, who represents the Buddha in the analogy, SEEING AMONG HIS TROOPS THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN GREATLY SUCCESSFUL, IS OVERJOYED, AND AT LAST GIVES THEM THE INCREDIBLE PEARL WHICH HE HAS LONG WORN IN HIS TOP-KNOT, AND WHICH HE WOULD NEVER CASUALLY GIVE AWAY. But now he does give it away because they are entirely deserving of such a reward.

SUTRA:

SO TOO IS IT WITH THE THUS COME ONE. AS KING OF THE DHARMA WITHIN THE THREE REALMS, HE USES DHARMA AND TEACHES AND TRANSFORMS ALL LIVING BEINGS. SEEING THE ARMY OF WORTHY ONES AND SAGES DOING BATTLE WITH THE DEMONS OF THE FIVE SKANDHAS, THE DEMONS OF AFFLICTIONS, AND THE DEMONS OF DEATH, AND BEING GREATLY SUCCESSFUL EXTINGUISHING THE THREE POISONS, ESCAPING THE THREE REALMS, AND RENDING THE NETS OF THE DEMONS, THE THUS COME ONE IS GREATLY PLEASED. HE THEN SPEAKS TO THEM THIS DHARMA FLOWER SUTRA WHICH CAN LEAD LIVING BEINGS TO ALL-WISDOM, WHICH MEETS WITH RESENTMENT AND DISBELIEF IN ALL THE WORLD, AND WHICH HE HAS NEVER SPOKEN OF BEFORE.

MANJUSHRI, THE DHARMA FLOWER SUTRA IS THE FOREMOST AMONG THE THUS COME ONE'S TEACHINGS. AMONG ALL THE TEACHINGS IT IS THE MOST EXTREMELY PROFOUND, AND IT IS ONLY BESTOWED AT THE VERY

END, JUST LIKE THAT BRIGHT PEARL WHICH THE POWERFUL KING LONG KEPT AND THEN GAVE AWAY.

COMMENTARY:

SO TOO IS IT WITH THE THUS COME ONE. I, Shakyamuni Buddha, am like the Wheel-turning king. AS KING OF THE DHARMA WITHIN THE THREE REALMS, the desire realm, the form realm, and the formless realm, HE USES the unsurpassed, wonderful DHARMA AND TEACHES AND TRANSFORMS ALL LIVING BEINGS.

When SEEING THE ARMY OF WORTHY ONES AND SAGES, sages of the first, second, third, and fourth fruitions, and Those Enlightened by Conditions, as well as the Bodhisattvas DOING BATTLE WITH THE DEMONS OF THE FIVE SKANDHAS, the Buddha is pleased. The five skandhas are the five heaps we all possess: form, feeling, thinking, activity, and consciousness. He sees them battle with THE DEMONS OF AFFLICTIONS, AND THE DEMONS OF DEATH. Everyone has to die; death, too, is a kind of demon.

Now we are seeking mastery over birth and death; we go to battle with the demon of death. AND the Buddha sees them BEING GREATLY SUCCESSFUL in their battle with these demons, conquering all of them, thus EXTINGUISHING THE THREE POISONS of greed, hatred, and stupidity, ESCAPING THE THREE REALMS of desire, form, and formlessness, AND RENDING THE NETS OF THE DEMONS. THE THUS COME ONE IS GREATLY PLEASED. If in cultivation we overcome the demons of death, afflictions, and the five skandhas, and break up their evil networks, the Buddha is pleased. Now the Buddha sees that those cultivating the Arhat Vehicle and the Pratyekabuddha Vehicle, the Two Vehicles, have had some success and he is delighted.

HE THEN SPEAKS TO THEM THIS DHARMA FLOWER SUTRA WHICH CAN LEAD LIVING BEINGS TO ALL-WISDOM, WHICH MEETS WITH RESENTMENT AND DISBELIEF IN ALL THE WORLD, AND WHICH HE HAS NEVER SPOKEN OF BEFORE. It is not easy to believe in the doctrines of the DHARMA FLOWER SUTRA. For more than forty years of the Buddha's teaching, he did not speak this Sutra, but now he does. He will now explain the wonderful aspects of the Wonderful Dharma Lotus Flower Sutra for everyone.

MANJUSHRI, THE DHARMA FLOWER SUTRA IS THE FOREMOST AMONG THE THUS COME ONE'S TEACHINGS. AMONG ALL THE TEACHINGS IT IS THE MOST EXTREMELY PROFOUND, AND IT IS ONLY BESTOWED AT THE VERY END. The Wonderful Dharma Lotus Flower Sutra is by far the most supreme and profound; there is nothing more lofty, nothing more deep. It is only spoken for living beings at the very end. It is JUST LIKE THAT BRIGHT PEARL WHICH THE POWERFUL KING LONG KEPT AND THEN GAVE AWAY. The king held on to that pearl for a long, long time before he finally gave it away. In time, his troops were so successful that they deserved to have it.

SUTRA:

MANJUSHRI, THE DHARMA FLOWER SUTRA IS THE SECRET TREASURY OF ALL THE BUDDHAS, THUS COME ONES. AMONG ALL THE SUTRAS IT IS THE HIGHEST. IN THE LONG NIGHT OF TIME IT HAS BEEN GUARDED AND NEVER RECKLESSLY SPOKEN. TODAY, FOR THE FIRST TIME, I AM SPEAKING IT FOR YOU.

COMMENTARY:

MANJUSHRI, THE DHARMA FLOWER SUTRA IS THE SECRET TREASURY OF ALL THE BUDDHAS, THUS COME ONES of the ten directions and the three periods of time. It is a secret, a Dharma that basically is not transmitted. AMONG ALL THE SUTRAS IT IS THE HIGHEST. It is above all the other Sutras. IN THE LONG NIGHT OF TIME, for such a long time IT HAS BEEN GUARDED AND NEVER RECKLESSLY EXPOUNDED. It cannot be casually explained for people. TODAY, FOR THE FIRST TIME, I AM SPEAKING IT FOR YOU. I am explaining the Sutra in detail. Don't think this is an ordinary Dharma you are hearing.

SUTRA:

AT THAT TIME THE WORLD HONORED ONE, WISHING TO RESTATE THIS MEANING, SPOKE VERSES SAYING,

ALWAYS PRACTICING PATIENCE,
AND BEING MERCIFUL TO ALL,
ONE WILL THEN BE ABLE TO PROCLAIM
THIS SUTRA PRAISED BY THE BUDDHAS.

COMMENTARY:

Shakyamuni Buddha, having spoken the above passages out of great compassion, AT THAT TIME spoke verses to elaborate these principles. THE WORLD HONORED ONE, WISHING TO RESTATE THIS MEANING, SPOKE VERSES SAYING, ALWAYS PRACTICING PATIENCE is what the great Bodhisattva cultivating the Bodhisattva Way does. He must bear the unbearable. BEING MERCIFUL TO ALL, having sympathy for living beings, ONE WILL BE ABLE TO PROCLAIM / THIS SUTRA PRAISED BY THE BUDDHAS. The Wonderful Dharma Lotus Flower Sutra is praised in unison by all the Buddhas of the ten directions and three periods of time.

SUTRA:

IN THE LATTER ENDING AGE,
THOSE WHO UPHOLD THIS SUTRA,
BE THEY AT HOME, LEFT HOME,
OR THOSE WHO ARE NOT BODHISATTVAS,

SHOULD GIVE RISE TO KINDNESS AND COMPASSION.

COMMENTARY:

IN THE LATTER ENDING AGE when the Dharma is about to become extinct, THOSE WHO receive, UPHOLD, read, and recite THIS Wonderful Dharma Lotus Flower SUTRA / BE THEY AT HOME, LEFT HOME / OR THOSE WHO ARE NOT BODHISATTVAS / SHOULD GIVE RISE TO KINDNESS AND COMPASSION. "Those who are not Bodhisattvas" refers to those who are neither laypeople nor left-home people, and who do not understand the Buddhadharmā.

SUTRA:

THINKING, "THOSE WHO DO NOT HEAR OR BELIEVE THIS SUTRA SUFFER A GREAT LOSS."

COMMENTARY:

One should take pity on such beings THINKING, "THOSE WHO DO NOT HEAR OR BELIEVE THIS SUTRA SUFFER A GREAT LOSS." This is the greatest loss, because if you do not believe in the Dharma Flower Sutra you cannot become a Buddha. If you want to become a Buddha, you have to believe in this Sutra.