



《華嚴經》在龍宮六百餘年

The Flower Adornment Sutra: Kept in the Dragon Palace for Over Six Hundred Years

上宣下化老和尚於華嚴經淺釋中之開示

EXCERPTED FROM THE VENERABLE MASTER HUA'S EXPLANATION OF THE FLOWER ADORNMENT SUTRA

孔果憲 英譯 ENGLISH TRANSLATED BY THERESA KUNG

唐代賢首法師在《華嚴經傳記》提到：「依文殊般涅槃經，佛去世後，四百五十年，文殊師利猶在世間。依智度論，諸大乘經，多是文殊師利之所結集，此經則是文殊所結。佛初去後賢聖隨隱，異道競興，乏大乘器攝此經，在海龍王宮，六百餘年未傳於世。龍樹菩薩入龍宮，日見此淵府，誦之在心，將出傳授，因茲流布。」

唐代清涼國師在《華嚴經疏》也提到：「本經謂摩訶衍藏，是文殊師利與阿難海，於鐵圍山間結集此經，收入龍宮。龍樹菩薩往龍宮，見此大不思議經有三本。下本有十萬偈四十八品，龍樹誦得流傳於世故。《智度論》名此為不思議經，有十萬偈。《梁攝論》中名百千經。西域記。說遮拘槃國有此具本。中本經，有四十九萬八千八百偈，一千二百品。上本經，有十三千大千世界微塵數偈，一四天下微塵數品。此上二本，非閻浮提人心力能持，故不傳之。」

這大乘的藏，就是文殊菩薩與阿難海

Dharma Master Hsien Shou (Worthy Leader) of Tang Dynasty mentioned in *The History of the Flower Adornment Sutra*:

According to *Manjushri's Parinirvana Sutra*, Manjushri stayed in the world for 450 years after the Buddha's passing. According to the *Shastra on the Perfection of [Great] Wisdom*, most of the Mahayana Sutras were compiled by Manjushri. This Sutra was indeed compiled by Manjushri. After the Buddha's passing, the Worthies and Sages subsequently withdrew into seclusion. Heresies were all the rage. There was a lack of people of Mahayana orientation who could uphold this Sutra. It stayed in the palace of the Sea Dragon for six hundred some years and did not circulate in the world. Nagarjuna [Dragon Tree] Bodhisattva entered the Dragon Palace and saw this expansive collection one day. He committed it to memory so that he could transmit it and put it into circulation.

National Master Qing Liang of the Tang Dynasty remarked in the *Prologue to the Flower Adornment Sutra*:

This Sutra is a Mahayana treasury. Compiled by Manjushri Bodhisattva and the Venerable Ananda in the Iron Ring Mountains, it was thereafter stored away in the Dragon Palace. Nagarjuna Bodhisattva went to the Dragon Palace and saw three volumes of this inconceivable Sutra. The last volume contained 100,000 verses and 48 chapters. Nagarjuna memorized them by heart and transmitted them to the world. The *Shastra on the Perfection*





尊者，在須彌山的外邊，有大鐵圍山那兒，來結集這個經的文義，把它修整、潤色。一個人是不能結集的，這時候有很多很多的菩薩，和很多很多的阿羅漢，在這個地方結集經藏，不是只有阿難海尊者和文殊師利菩薩兩個。結集《華嚴經藏》圓滿之後，大家就說這部經太妙了，這部經沒有人會相信的、沒有人會懂的，這一部經不應該存放在這世界上；於是就用神通把海龍王請來，說：「龍王！你的海裏有那麼多的地方，現在我們想把這《華嚴經》存到你龍宮裏頭保存著。」龍王叩頭頂禮，歡喜得不得了，說：「那最好了！龍宮裏不會有地震，也不會天崩的，龍宮裏是最平安的地方。保持經藏，那是最好的一個地方了。」就接受他們的吩咐，存到龍宮裏去。所以這一部《華嚴經》，這世界上根本沒有的。在結集經藏以後，世間就沒有人聽說有一部《華嚴經》。這是祕密的文字、祕密的經典，不可說不可說的經典。

想不到，這佛法到出世的時候，一定要出世的；它若不出世，這個世界就會壞了。所以在佛滅度以後六百年，有一位龍樹菩薩，他把世間的書都讀完了，沒有書可讀了，沒有經可看了，所有印度的經典，他都研究完了；他把人世間的文字都讀遍了，都能背誦如流，無論什麼文字都讀盡了。於是他用神通到龍宮裏去，他怎麼能到龍宮呢？這證果的聖人，他走到這個海裏，水自然就分開來，讓出一條路給他走。所以他從海岸上走到龍宮，也不會有水把他的腳給沾濕了。龍樹菩薩到了龍宮，就看見這《華嚴經藏》，一看這個法寶是無量無邊，這經典太不可思議，大不可思議！

那麼龍宮裏這一部《華嚴經藏》有其三本，有上本、中本、下本。上本《華嚴經》，有十三千大千世界微塵數偈頌，有一四天下微塵數品。一個日月、

of [Great] Wisdom called it the “Inconceivable Sutra” containing 100,000 verses. The Mahayana Samparigraha Shastra of the Liang Edition [Shastra on the Mindfulness of the Great Vehicle] names it “Hundred Thousand Sutra”. The *Annals of the Western Region* says the country of Kargalik had a complete copy of it. The middle volume contained 498,800 verses and 1,200 chapters. The first volume had verses as many as the dust motes in 13 thousand great-thousand world systems and chapters as many as dust motes in one set of four continents. Since these two volumes are beyond the mental capacity of people in Jambudvipa, they were therefore not transmitted.

This Treasury of the Mahayana was compiled by Manjushri Bodhisattva and the Venerable Ananda in the Great Iron Ring Mountains outside Mount Sumeru. They compiled the texts of the Sutras, and edited and polished them. This work could not have been done by one person alone. At that time, there were a great many Bodhisattvas and Arhats—not just Manjushri Bodhisattva and the Venerable Ananda—helping to compile the Sutra Treasury.

Once the Treasury of the Flower Adornment Sutra had been compiled, everyone said that the Sutra was so wonderful that no one in the world would believe or understand it. They decided the Sutra should not be stored in the world. Therefore, using their spiritual powers, they invited the Sea Dragon King over and said to him, “Dragon King, since there is ample space in the sea, we would like to keep the *Flower Adornment Sutra* in your Dragon Palace for safekeeping.” The Dragon King, who was extremely delighted, bowed in veneration and said, “Excellent! In the Dragon Palace, the earth does not quake nor do the celestial bodies collapse. It is the safest place and therefore best suited for safekeeping the Sutra.” He accepted their guidance and stored it in the Dragon Palace.

Therefore, the Flower Adornment Sutra ceased to exist in the world. Once the Sutras had been compiled, no one in the world heard of *Flower Adornment Sutra* ever after. These are secret texts, secret scriptures. It is an ineffably ineffable Sutra.

However, although people never imagined it would happen, when the time had come for the Buddhadharma to appear in the world, it had to emerge. Otherwise, the world would go to ruin. Therefore, about 600 years after the Buddha entered nirvana, there was a Bodhisattva named Nagarjuna, who had read all the books in the world, all the Sutras, all the Hindu scriptures, all the texts in the human realm. Moreover, he committed all of it to memory and was able to recite it by heart. When there were no more books left to read, he used his spiritual powers to go to the Dragon Palace.

How did he reach the Dragon Palace? As an enlightened Sage, when he went into the ocean, the water parted to make way for him. So when he





一個須彌山、一個四大部洲，這是一個世界；集聚這一個世界成一千個世界，就是一千個須彌山、一千個日月、一千個四大部洲——東勝神州、西牛賀洲、南瞻部洲、北俱盧洲，這個也是一千，這叫一個小千世界；再集聚這個小千世界成一千，這是中千世界；再集聚一千個中千世界，這是一個大千世界。所以三千大千世界是很多了，這還僅僅是一個三千大千世界，現在所說的是十三個三千大千世界，有這麼多的微塵數偈；這十三個大千世界所有的這微塵，每一粒微塵都算上，你說是多少？沒有人知道！但是，它就是這麼多的微塵數偈。一個須彌山、一個日月、一個四大部洲，這叫一四天下；在這一四天下，盡虛空的微塵都算上，有這麼多的品。你想想，是多少！中本《華嚴經》，有四十九萬八千八百偈頌，有一千二百品那麼多。

這上本和中本的《華嚴經》，因為太多了，不是我們世界人心的力量能修行得到的，是我們人的智慧達不到，記憶不清楚。在這麼多的品和偈頌，不要說你算，就是裝在腦海裏，也沒有地方放這麼大一個數目了。

所以就以龍樹菩薩的大智大慧，他也有望洋之歎，就因為上本《華嚴經》、中本《華嚴經》，都是太多了，太大了，他也不敢看了。那麼他就在很短的時間來看一遍這下本的《華嚴經》，有十萬偈頌，其中有四十八品。龍樹菩薩以他最好的這種記憶力，記憶力特別清楚，而且大約在龍宮裏時間也不太多；太多了，怕這一些個魚鱉蝦蟹或者不高興，又怕龍王太孤寒，捨不得供養他，所以他慌慌張張地，只在很短的時間作客。因為他的記憶力特別強、特別好，過目不忘，念一遍就記得了，所以他在那兒給偷出來的。把這《華嚴經》給記得很清楚，回來把它寫出來，流傳在這個世界上，流通人間。

walked from the seashore to the Palace, his feet did not even get wet.

When Nagarjuna Bodhisattva arrived at the Palace, he saw the *Flower Adornment Sutra*. He realized that this Dharma jewel was infinite and boundless. The Sutra was totally inconceivable, tremendously inconceivable.

The Treasury of the Flower Adornment Sutra has three volumes: the first, second, and last volumes. The first volume of the Sutra contains verses as many as the dust motes in the 13 thousand great-thousand world systems and chapters as many as the dust motes in one set of four continents. One sun, one moon, one Mount Sumeru, plus one set of four continents make up one world. A thousand worlds — 1,000 Mount Sumerus, 1,000 suns, 1,000 moons plus 1,000 sets of four continents (Purva-videha in the east, Aparaganiya in the west, Jambudvīpa in the south and Uttarakuru in the north)— make up a small-thousand world system.

One thousand small-thousand world systems together make a middle-thousand world system. One thousand middle-thousand world systems together make a great-thousand world system. Therefore, one great-thousand world system consists of a lot of worlds, let alone 13 thousand great-thousand world systems! The sutra has verses as many as the dust motes in 13 thousand great-thousand world systems. If we count every mote of dust in all the 13 thousand great-thousand world systems, how many motes of dust would we get? No one knows. That's how many verses there are.

One Mount Sumeru, one sun, one moon plus one set of four continents make one set of four continents. The chapters in the first volume are as many as the number of dust motes in one set of four continents. Think about it! How many is that? The second volume of the *Flower Adornment Sutra* contains as many as 498,800 verses and 1,200 chapters.

The first and second volumes of the *Flower Adornment Sutra* were so expansive that they were beyond the mental comprehension of human



這《華嚴經》藏在龍宮中，共有三本：上本、中本、下本。我們現在世界上所流通的《華嚴經》，這是下本經，就是這一部八十卷的《華嚴經》。上本和中本的《華嚴經》，都不是我們這個世界人的心力所能修持的，所以隱而不傳。

在上本裏邊所說的每一類的神，就說一億種那麼多；在中本裏邊所說的每一類的神，就說一萬種那麼多；在下本裏邊所說的每一類的神，就說十。這個「十」就表示無量；一萬、一億，這也就是表示無盡、無盡，重重、重重。所以佛在這個說《華嚴經》，無論講神也好、鬼也好、人也好、菩薩也好，都以「十」為數。為什麼要說十個呢？這十個是表示十就成百，百就成千，千千又成萬。那麼就是代表百千萬這麼多。因為如果說百千萬是太多了，就要說出十個。所以這個「十」就是表示重重無盡，那麼也表示這個《華嚴經》的境界是重重無盡的。

這個《華嚴經》，你看上來好像很重覆似的，每一類這個都說有十個王，然後又說十首偈頌，不厭其煩這麼說。這就是《華嚴經》的道理，都是重重無盡的，說也說不完的。《華嚴經》所說的道理，都是總起來說的，沒有詳細說。所以每一種只說十個道理，要是詳細說，就是盡未來際也沒有法子說得完。

beings in this world. They are beyond our wisdom and our memory capacity. Even if you were to place all the chapters and verses in your mind—let alone counting them up—there would not be enough room for such a great number.

Therefore, even Nāgajūna Bodhisattva—with his great wisdom—had to “sigh at the sight of the ocean.” Because the first and middle volumes of the *Flower Adornment Sutra* are just too copious, too expansive, he dared not take a look. He skimmed through the last volume of the *Flower Adornment Sutra*—100,000 verses and 48 chapters in all—in a very short time. Nāgajūna bodhisattva had a great memory, and since he had little time to spend in the Dragon Palace—for fear that if he were to linger too long, the fish, turtles, prawns and crabs might get upset, or the Dragon King might be too stingy to make offerings to him—he had to make haste and cut short his stay.

Since he had an extraordinary, photographic memory, he had only to read the sutra once to commit it to memory. That was how he “stole” it from there—by memorizing the *Flower Adornment Sutra* and later copying it out. That’s how it got to be circulated in the world, in the human realm.

The *Flower Adornment Sutra* had been stowed away in the Dragon Palace. It is made up of three volumes: first, middle, and last. The version of the *Flower Adornment Sutra* that’s circulated in the world is the last volume that is made up of 80 rolls. Since we of this world lack the mental capacity to retain and cultivate the first and middle volumes of the *Flower Adornment Sutra*, they remained hidden and were not transmitted.

The first volume makes references to 100 million types of spirits. The middle volume speaks of 10,000 types of spirits. The last volume refers to ten of each type of spirit. “Ten” represents infinity. “10,000” and “100 million” represent infinite infinity, layers upon layers. Therefore, when the Buddha lectured the *Flower Adornment Sutra*, the spirits, ghosts, people, Bodhisattvas, etc., were mentioned in sets of ten.

Why the number “10”? Ten times ten makes one hundred; one hundred times one hundred makes one thousand. One thousand times one thousand makes ten thousand. Therefore ten represents hundreds of thousands of tens of thousands. It is way too much to account for all the hundreds of thousands of tens of thousands, so only ten [representatives] are mentioned. Therefore, “ten” means layers upon layers of infinity. It also symbolizes that the state of the *Flower Adornment Sutra* is multi-layered and infinite.

It might seem redundant to you how the *Flower Adornment Sutra* speaks of ten kings from each category, followed by ten verses, over and over. That is exactly the purport of the *Flower Adornment Sutra*—layer upon layer of infinity which cannot ever be fully recounted in words.

The principles outlined in the *Flower Adornment Sutra* were generalized, and not detailed. That is why only ten principles per type were spoken of. If they were to be explained in detail, there would be no way to finish recounting them to the end of time.

