



佛法東來—

漢明帝

The Buddhadharma Comes East— Emperor Ming of the Han Dynasty

宣化上人講述於1987年9月5日

呂明賜 譯

Lectured by the Venerable Master Hsuan Hua on September 5, 1987

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BIOGRAPHIES | 人物誌

姓劉名莊，東漢光武帝之子。即位後，尊重儒術，行養老禮。於永平七年（公元六五年），帝夢金人，身高丈六，頂佩日輪，光芒四射，金色燦爛，飛行於殿。帝醒為奇，翌晨問太史傅毅曰：「何兆也？」對曰：「西方有神，其名曰佛，陛下所夢，即佛也。」

於是派遣蔡愔等十八人西訪，至大月氏國，遇迦葉摩騰及竺蘭二聖僧，持佛像、舍利、貝葉經東來，迎至洛陽。帝悅之，建白馬寺為二聖僧譯經場。譯四十二章經，乃中國第一部佛教經典，修持者奉為法寶。八十年後，安世高法師至洛陽，譯經弘教，教化大興，民間信仰日增。隋唐時，佛教因人而施，八宗教義，並行發展。

Emperor Ming's surname was Liu and his given name was Zhuang. He was the son of Emperor Guangwu of the Eastern Han Dynasty. When he ascended to the throne, he respected and revered the teachings of Confucius and practiced honoring and caring for the elders. In the seventh year of the reign of Yongping (65 C.E.), the Emperor dreamt of a golden person who was sixteen feet tall and had a sun wheel hanging around his neck. The wheel glowed with dazzling brilliance and radiated light in all directions. The golden person flew around the palace. When the Emperor awoke, he thought that it was strange and thus asked the Grand Historian Fu Yi the next morning, "What kind of omen is this?" The reply was, "In the West, there is a god by the name of Buddha. What Your Majesty dreamed of is in fact the Buddha."

Therefore, he sent a group of eighteen people, including Cai Yin, to the West to inquire about the matter. When they reached the Kingdom of Great Roudi (Tukhara), they encountered two sage monks by the name of Kāśyapamatanga and Dharmarakṣa, who were on their journey to the east carrying with them Buddha statues, shariras, and palm-leaf sutras. They invited these two monks to Luoyang. The emperor was delighted and had the White Horse Monastery constructed as a translation center for the two sage monks. They translated the *Sutra of Forty-Two Sections*, the first Buddhist Sutra ever translated in China, and was revered by the practitioners as the Dharma Jewel. Eighty years later, Dharma Master An Shigao

以前佛教還沒有傳到中國的時候，中國只有儒教和道教，沒有佛教。儒教是為佛教來鋪路的，先把荒地拓開，馬路修好了，然後交通才能便利；儒教就是為佛教而設的，所以孔子是佛教裏的水月童子，因為佛知道將來佛法會在中國大興，所以預先派遣水月童子，到這兒來周遊列國，提倡孝悌忠信禮義廉恥，這些做人的基本道理。而道教又比儒教進一步，所以儒教就像小學，道教和其他宗教都像中學，佛教就像大學；佛教包羅萬有，不論哪一個科目，佛教裏都有。

佛教傳來中國來也是要有一個時機的，這個時機就是在漢明帝的時候。漢明帝是東漢時的一個皇帝，姓劉名莊，是漢光武帝的太子。他做皇帝之後，很崇尚儒教的學術，力行養老尊賢的政策，其中當然也包含道教。

有一天，漢明帝夢見一個金人，這個金人有一丈六尺那麼高，項佩日輪，在他脖子以上佩戴著一個太陽般的光圈。這個日輪，實際上就是佛光；日輪的光芒四射，金色燦爛，金人就在金鑾殿上各處飛行。漢明帝作了這樣的夢，第二天早晨就問管天文學的太史官：「這是什麼預兆？」太史傅毅答覆說：「傳說西方有個神，這個神的名字叫佛，陛下您所夢見的就是佛。」那時候的西方指的就是印度；於是漢明帝就派遣蔡愔、秦景、王遵等十八人到印度去請佛。

他們走到大月氏國的時候，遇見迦葉摩騰和竺法蘭這兩位尊者在在那裏弘揚佛法；於是就迎請兩位尊者，以及佛像、佛的舍利、貝葉的經典等，回到洛陽。漢明帝一見到他們來了，非常高興，就建造一座白馬寺，作為二位尊者翻譯經典的場所。他們兩位最初翻譯的經典就是《四十二章經》，這是由印度文翻譯成中文的第一部經典。

arrived in Luoyang, where he translated Sutras and propagated Buddhism; thus, Buddhism flourished greatly and the number of believers grew daily. During the Sui and Tang Dynasties, Buddhism was taught according to individuals' capabilities, thus branching out into the Eight Schools that arose in China.

Commentary:

In the past, China did not have Buddhism. Before Buddhism spread into China, there were only Confucianism and Taoism. Confucianism paved the way for Buddhism in China, allowing Buddhism to spread more easily. Confucius was actually the Youth Water-Moon in Buddhism. The Buddha knew that the Buddhadharma would greatly flourish in China in the future, so he sent Youth Water-Moon to China first to travel to the various states, promoting propriety, righteousness, incorruptibility, humility, filiality, fraternity, loyalty, and trustworthiness, as well as other fundamental principles for being a good human being. Taoism was one step higher than Confucianism. Confucianism is like elementary school; Taoism and the other religions are like middle/high schools; while Buddhism is like universities. This is because Buddhism encompasses all the myriad things without exception.

For Buddhism to spread to China, it required the right timing and conditions, which occurred during the reign of Emperor Ming of the Han Dynasty. Ming was an emperor of the Eastern Han Dynasty. His surname was Liu and his given name was Zhuang, and he was the crown prince of Emperor Guangwu. As emperor, he greatly respected and admired the teachings of Confucianism, so he truly practiced and implemented the policy of honoring the worthy people and respecting the elders, which also included those among Taoists.

One night, he dreamed of a golden person that was sixteen feet tall. On the neck of this golden person was a sun wheel. This sun wheel was actually his Buddha light, and it glowed and radiated with golden brilliance, shining light in every direction. This golden person flew throughout the royal palace. The next morning, the Emperor asked his Grand Historian, who was also in charge of affairs of astrology, "What kind of omen is this?" The Historian, whose name was Fu Yi, replied, "In the West, India, it is said that there is a god named Buddha. What your Majesty dreamt was actually the Buddha." Therefore, Emperor Ming sent a group of eighteen people, including Cai Yin, to India to invite the Buddha.

When they arrived at the kingdom of Great Roudi (Tukhara), they encountered two Bhikshus who were propagating the Buddhadharma; their names were Kāśyapamatanga and Dharmarakṣa. Afterwards, they invited these two Bhikshus to come to China, together with images of the Buddha, palm-leaf Sutras and Shariras. They arrived in Luoyang, the capital, and were received by Emperor Ming, who was very delighted upon seeing them. He ordered the construction of White Horse Monastery as the translation center for these two Venerables. The first Sutra to be translated into Chinese from Sanskrit was the *Sutra of Forty-Two Sections*.

待續

To be continued