



## The Sutra of the Past Vows of Earth Store Bodhisattva with Commentary

### CHAPTER ONE:

### SPIRITUAL PENETRATIONS IN THE PALACE OF THE TRAYASTRIMSHA HEAVEN

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「當成就，未成就」：「成」字在這部經典上當什麼講呢？當「盛」字講，就是很茂盛。「就」字當什麼講呢？當「高」字講，高低的那個高。言其所成就的果位很大，很茂盛，而且又很高的。為什麼這個「就」字當「高」字講呢？因為他成就的這個果位，是很高的。又當「孝」字講，就是孝順父母的孝字。在中國這個孝字，不是一般人可以擔得起的，那誰擔得起？皇帝。古來皇帝以孝道來治天下，他成就最高的德行。因為這是皇帝以孝治天下的這種孝道，所以叫「成就」。

而在這部經上地藏菩薩已經幫助一切眾生成佛了。那麼，現在幫助眾生做菩薩，將來又幫助這一切的眾生，成就他們最高的佛果。這個意思具足「種、熟、脫」這三個字——種，是把種子種到地下；熟是成熟了。譬如種穀子到地下，經過耕培灌溉的功夫，然後成了。成了，這叫熟。熟一段，然後又應該脫了。就是沒有種善根的眾生，令他種善根；已種善根的眾生，令其增長；已經增長善根的，令其成熟；善根得到成熟了，就令其得到解脫。所以「成就」有這三種的意思。

「文殊師利白佛言」：文殊師利又對佛說，「世尊！我已過去」：我文殊師利在過去，「久修善根」：很久很久以來，就修這個善根。「證無礙智」：已經證得到無礙的智慧。無礙智就是四無礙辯，四無礙辯也就是四無礙智。「四無礙辯」，辯才有四種：

Some **have been brought to accomplishment, are being brought to accomplishment, or will be brought to accomplishment.** The word **accomplishment** is the translation of a Chinese noun compound 成就. Considering the two characters separately, what would 成 chéng mean? It can be explained by the word “successful,” 盛 shèng. What would 就 jiù mean? It can be explained by the word “lofty” 高 gāo.

This description indicates that their level of success was lofty. It can also be explained as “filial,” 孝 xiào, indicating respect and care for their parents. Not everyone can carry the burden that filial regard requires. Who can? Well, in China, emperors could. Emperors of old governed their empires using filiality. They embodied the highest virtue. Here, the word **accomplishment** includes the filial way in which emperors governed their empires.

In this sutra, Earth Store Bodhisattva has already helped beings realize Buddhahood; he is now helping beings be Bodhisattvas; and in the future he will continue to help beings to realize the highest fruition—Buddhahood. This refers to a three-stage process: Planting, becoming mature, and reaching liberation.

1. In the planting stage, seeds are planted in soil.

2. During the stage of becoming mature, the plants ripen. For example, seeds of grain are planted and then work is done to nurture and irrigate them until they sprout, grow and ripen.

3. The stage of reaching liberation should follow. In other words, he helps beings who have not planted roots of goodness to begin

法無礙辯：講出來的法非常有道理。雖然是一個道理，但能分別出來有百千萬種那麼多的道理，可是百千萬種道理歸納起來，還是一個道理。

義無礙辯。

辭無礙辯：這是說出來的言辭非常有道理。

樂說無礙辯：樂說就是歡喜講。

聞佛所言。即當信受。小果聲聞。天龍八部。及未來世。諸衆生等。雖聞如來誠實之語。必懷疑惑。設使頂受。未免興謗。唯願世尊。廣說地藏菩薩摩訶薩。因地作何行。立何願。而能成就不思議事。

「聞佛所言，即當信受」：說我文殊師利在過去修大乘法，所以現在佛一說什麼我立刻就信受了。

「小果聲聞」：可是小乘的人呢？小果就是小乘的果位——聲聞、緣覺。「天龍八部」：和八部鬼神龍眾，天龍、夜叉、乾闥婆、阿修羅、迦樓羅、緊那羅、摩睺羅伽。

「及未來世」：和未來世「諸眾生等」：所有一切的眾生等。「雖聞如來，誠實之語」：雖然聽見佛所說的話是誠實之語。「必懷疑惑」：你看！佛所說的話這麼樣的誠實，他們還生疑惑，何況我的弟子？我講經他不相信，要跑了，這也難得的。你看文殊師利說，對於佛講的誠實之語，一切天龍八部都不相信，都生懷疑。

現在講經，有的人以為這是很平常的，其實你能聽到人講經，這是最不容易的一件事，最難最難了。尤其在美國這兒，你看有幾個地方講呢？尤其是這樣照著經典，一字一字把經裡所有經文的意思都講出來，這是沒有的，在西方國家裡可以說是很少、很少的。

☞待續

planting them. For beings who have already planted roots of goodness, he helps them multiply. For beings with multiple roots of goodness, he helps bring them to maturity—helps them gain liberation. This is the three-stage process involved in reaching “accomplishment.”

**Manjushri said to the Buddha, “World Honored One, I have cultivated roots of goodness for a long time.** I, Manjushri, in the past, for an extended period of time, nurtured roots of goodness. **And I have certified to unobstructed wisdom.** I already have been proved to have attained unobstructed wisdom. Unobstructed wisdom refers to the four kinds of unobstructed eloquence. The four kinds of unobstructed eloquence are also known as the four types of unobstructed wisdom.

The four unobstructed eloquences are:

1. The unobstructed eloquence in expounding the Dharma. The Dharma spoken is well-grounded in principle. And yet this eloquence can delineate any given principle into millions of principles and then bring those millions of aspects back to that singular principle.
2. The unobstructed eloquence in explaining the meanings.
3. The unobstructed eloquence in turning a phrase. The words and phrases chosen are full of principle.
4. The unobstructed eloquence that brings delight in speaking. Such a person is happy to explain things.

**Sutra:**

**When I hear what the Buddha says, I immediately accept it with faith. But Hearers of small attainment, gods, dragons, and the rest of the eightfold division, and beings in the future who hear the Thus Come One’s true words will certainly harbor doubts. Even if they receive the teaching most respectfully, they will still be unable to avoid slandering it. My only wish is that the World Honored One will proclaim for everyone what Earth Store Bodhisattva Mahasattva practiced and what vows he made while on the level of planting causes that now enable him to accomplish such inconceivable deeds.**

**Commentary:**

**When I hear what the Buddha says, I immediately accept it with faith.** Since I, Manjushri, cultivated Mahayana dharmas in the past, I believe instantaneously what the Buddha says. **But Hearers of small attainment**, positions in the Theravadan tradition such as Hearers and Those Who Enlighten to Conditions, **gods, dragons, and the rest of the eightfold division**, such as *yakshas, gandharvas, asuras, garudas, kinnaras, and mahoragas* and **beings in the future who hear the Thus Come One’s true words will certainly harbor doubts.** Look, as truthful as the Buddha’s words are, they are still skeptical, not to mention my disciples. Someone does not believe in my explanation of the sutras and wants to run away. It is no wonder, considering what Manjushri said about how all of those in the Eightfold Division do not believe and question the Buddha’s spoken truths.

Some people think it is very normal to hear sutra lectures. Actually it is one of the most difficult and rare things to hear sutra lectures live, especially in the United States. How many places offer lectures following lines in the sutra text and explaining the meaning word by word? None, or extremely few, in Western countries.

☞To be continued