

維摩詰經—拉開宇宙大戲的序幕（三）

Vimalakirti Sutra—The Prelude to the Major Show of the Universe Has Now Begun (Part 3)

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這部經總共有十四品。十四品裏，很多品都在講淨土，這也就是為什麼第一品〈佛國品〉開宗明義就以佛國做為品名。

三萬兩千菩薩一起來到了這個法會。以其中五十二位菩薩做代表。菩薩是以德行來立名的——比如我們很熟悉的觀世音菩薩，他以觀世間的音聲而立名；其他佛菩薩的名號也是如此。

This sutra has fourteen chapters, many of which are discourses on the pure lands. This is why the first chapter, “The Chapter of the Buddhalands,” has the word “Buddhalands” in its title.

The Dharma Assembly described in this sutra is attended by thirty-two thousand Bodhisattvas. Among these, fifty-two are represented in the sutra. The names of the Bodhisattvas derive from their virtue and conduct. For example, Guanshiyin, the Bodhisattva with whom we are the most familiar, takes his name because he contemplates the voices of all beings in the world. So it is with the names of all the other Bodhisattvas.



寶手菩薩，他的手能夠拔眾生苦，給眾生樂。寶手菩薩有很多寶藏，他在度化眾生的時候可以使用。

寶印手菩薩手上有寶印。常舉手菩薩，為甚麼常舉手呢？目的在救度眾生，令眾生不恐懼。常慘菩薩，名字很特別，為甚麼常慘？他常常悲憫眾生，心心念念想要拔眾生的苦。

再來看香象菩薩和白香象菩薩。在佛教裏，大白象、大白牛，都是出貴的象徵。在《涅槃經》裏面有一個譬喻，所謂三獸渡河——三獸是兔子、馬跟大象。兔子代表聲聞人，馬代表緣覺，他們把煩惱降伏了，可是習氣還沒有斷；真正能夠解脫自在的只有佛菩薩，那就是大象。只有大象，不管河流怎樣湍急，牠肯定能安穩地渡過。這位香象菩薩，他身上經常飄著香；如果我們按照上述《涅槃經》的道理，這位菩薩已經接近正等正覺，跟佛差不多一樣解脫自在了。

再來，彌勒菩薩跟文殊師利菩薩，為什麼在五十二位菩薩當中，

Hands Full of Treasures Bodhisattva can “uproot” the suffering of living beings and bestow happiness upon them. Hands Full of Treasures Bodhisattva has many treasures which he uses to rescue and teach living beings.

Holding the Treasure Seal Bodhisattva holds a treasure seal in his hand. Always Raising His Hand Bodhisattva is always raising his hand. His reason for doing this is to save living beings and deliver them from fear. A very special meaning attaches to the name of Frequently Sorrowful Bodhisattva. This Bodhisattva is frequently sorrowful because he frequently empathizes with the suffering of living beings and his every thought revolves around eradicating their afflictions.

Now let's look at Fragrant Elephant Bodhisattva and Fragrant White Elephant Bodhisattva. In Buddhism, large white elephants and large white oxen are symbols of wealth and royalty. In the *Nirvana Sutra*, there is a metaphor of “three animals crossing the river.” The three animals in question are rabbits, horses, and elephants. Rabbits symbolize Hearers (Shravakas) and horses symbolize those Enlightened by Conditions (Pratyekabuddhas); both of them have subdued all their afflictions, but they have not cut off their habits. Only the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are truly liberated, and these are symbolized by elephants. No matter how fast the river flows, only elephants are able to cross it safely. Fragrant Elephant Bodhisattva always has fragrance wafting from his body. We know from the teachings of the *Nirvana Sutra*, that this Bodhisattva has almost reached Equal and Proper Enlightenment, and hence, where liberation and self-mastery are concerned, he is almost on the same level as the Buddhas themselves.

But why do Maitreya Bodhisattva and Manjushri Bodhisattva come at the end of the line of the fifty-two Bodhisattvas represented? According to Dharma Master Sengzhao: “Numbers go from small to big; Bodhisattvas line up from junior to senior.” He also says: “In other lands they are less renowned, whereas in this land they are more renowned.” In other words, here in the Saha world, we are very familiar with Maitreya Bodhisattva

排在最後面？僧肇法師認為：「數從小至大」，所以兩個大的就排在後面。法師又解釋說：「在餘方為小，在此方為大」，意思是在我們的娑婆國土，我們很認識彌勒菩薩跟文殊師利菩薩，因為有緣；可是在他方國土可能就不盡然，因此把他們放在後面，這是說明度化因緣和願力。我覺得只要解釋得通，跟義理沒有違背就行。

現在是初會，在毘耶離來了許多聽法的大眾。其中梵王一萬。釋提桓因一萬二千。還很多比丘、菩薩、天神、天龍八部等等都來參加法會。

毘耶離城有一個長者子叫寶積。故事即將要拉開序幕。我們先來說說另一位長者的故事。他就是大家都耳熟能詳的給孤獨園長者，他住在舍衛城。有一次，他去王舍城拜訪朋友。到了晚上，他聽到朋友交代家人：「趕快生火，準備上好的飲食，把家裏內內外外都打掃乾淨，莊嚴起來。」他問所以。朋友回答說：「我要準備供養佛和比丘僧。」

給孤獨園長者一聽到供養佛，心裏就莫名地開心起來，可是他不知道佛是什麼，比丘僧是什麼。朋友解釋說：「佛原來是個太子，剃髮出家，現在他解脫、得道了，這叫成佛。什麼叫僧呢？跟著佛一塊修行解脫成道的出家眾叫做僧。」他聽了以後，便迫不及待想要見佛。朋友說：「你稍安勿躁，我馬上就要供養佛，你很快就會看到他了。」

那天晚上給孤獨園長者睡得很舒服，因為他一聽到佛的名號，

and Manjushri Bodhisattva because we have strong affinities with them; however, in other worlds, that is not the case, so they have been placed in the back. This explains the different affinities Bodhisattvas have for saving living beings as well as the power of their vows. Personally, as long as an explanation makes sense and is in accord with true principles, I think it is alright.

This is the first Dharma assembly held at Vaishali, and many people have come to listen to the Dharma. Among them are the 10,000 kings from the Brahma Heavens and 12,000 Shakra Indras. Also, many bhikshus, Bodhisattvas, gods, dragons, and other spiritual beings of the Eightfold Division came to attend the Dharma Assembly.

Present at the assembly in Vaishali is an elder's son by the name of Jewel Accumulation. Before the story begins let's talk about another elder, a well-known elder of the Garden of the Benefactor of Orphans and Solitaries, and he lives in the city of Shravasti. Once he went to Rajagriha to visit some friends. After night came he heard one of his friends tell his family, "Quick, start a fire, prepare food and drink, clean the house inside and out, and decorate it." When he asked why, his friend replied: "I am preparing to make offerings to the Buddha and the bhikshus Sangha."

As soon as the elder heard that his friend was making offerings to the Buddha, he felt delighted, even though at that time he did not have any knowledge of the Buddha or the Sangha of bhiksus. Then his friend explained this to him, saying: "The Buddha was originally a crown prince, but he shaved his head and left home. Now he is liberated and has attained the Way, which is what we call 'becoming a Buddha.' What is the Sangha? It is a monastic assembly that cultivates under the Buddha's guidance, attains liberation, and realizes the Way." After he heard this, he couldn't wait to meet the Buddha. "Don't be impatient," his friend said, "I am about to make offerings to the Buddha, so you will see him very soon."

That night, Elder of the Garden of the Benefactor of Orphans and Solitaries slept very well, because as soon as he heard the Buddha's name, an unexpected sense of peace and well-being filled his heart. After he woke up, he saw a bright light before him. He thought the sun had risen, so he went out for a walk, but once in the city, he discovered it was actually 10 at night. It was so dark he couldn't see his fingers. Thinking he had encountered a monster, he was about to run away.

Whereupon he heard a voice come from the sky: "Don't be

心中就莫名的祥和。一覺醒來，眼前一片光明，他心想天亮了，於是外出散散步，孰知走到城外，發現原來不過二更天而已。因為一出城門，伸手不見五指，他想：一定是碰到妖怪了，拔腿就要跑。

這時聽到空中傳來一個聲音說：「你不要怕，要繼續往前走。」他問：「賢者是誰？」神對他說：「你繼續往前走，就會得到很大的利益。」他將信將疑。神又說：「世間上一百匹馬，一百兩黃金，一百乘的車馬，都不及你向前走所得利益的十六分之一。」聽到這裡他更覺奇怪了，再問：「賢者，你是誰？」神說：「我是守城門的神，我在上一世的時候，聽到舍利弗跟目犍連講法，當下生了敬信心就生天了，現在我的責任就是守護這個城門。」長者一聽就信受了，繼續往前走。城門神就用光明照耀他，從城門一直照到塚間，發現原來佛在那裡經行。

由於當時他還沒有學佛，見到佛就像一般人禮貌地打招呼。跟佛問好：「請問，你睡得安不安穩呢？」佛說：「我心裏已經沒有染污，五欲已經解脫，所以我的心任何時候都是安穩的。」他聽罷覺得非常歡喜，就跟佛請法：「那您可不可以到我的國土——舍衛城去傳法，讓更多的人可以像我聞法這樣快樂自在？」佛陀問他：「你叫什麼名字？」他說：「我叫須達多，可是大家都叫我給孤獨；因為我們國中凡是鰥寡孤獨，我都會去幫助他們，所以國人就給我這樣的名號。懇請佛陀到我的國家去教化，讓眾多受苦的人可以離苦得樂？」佛陀問他：「舍衛城有沒有精舍？」他就說沒有。

afraid; you must keep walking.” “Who are you, Wise One?” he asked, and the spirit replied: “Keep walking and you will receive immense benefits.” Since he hesitated, the spirit continued, “100 horses, 100 ounces of gold, and 100 horse-drawn carriages, when added up all together, do not even come to one sixteenth the value of the benefits that await you.” On hearing this he felt even more perplexed, so again he asked: “Wise One, who are you?” “I am the spirit who guards the city’s gates,” came the reply, “in my previous life I heard Shariputra speaking the Dharma to Mahamaudgalyayana. Giving rise to a mind full of faith and respect, I immediately ascended to the heavens. Now I am responsible for guarding the city’s gates.” Believing what he had heard, he continued to walk forward. The spirit that guarded the gate shone a bright light on him as he walked all the way from the city gates to the graveyard, where he discovered the Buddha, who was mindfully walking around there.

Since the elder had not yet studied Buddhism, he greeted the Buddha as one would an ordinary person. “Permit me to ask,” he said, “Did you sleep well?” The Buddha replied, “My mind is already free of defilement and I have been liberated from the five desires, so my mind is always at peace.” Upon hearing this, Jewel Accumulation felt very happy and requested the Dharma from the Buddha: “Can you come to my country, Shravasti, and propagate the Dharma there, so that more people feel happy and at ease like I do when I hear the Dharma?” Then the Buddha asked him, “What is your name?” “My name is Sudatta,” said the elder, “but I am known as the Benefactor of Orphans and Solitaries; in my country, wherever there are widows, widowers, orphans, or solitary people, I always go help them. That is why I was given this name. I earnestly invite you, O Buddha, to come teach in my country, so that those who are suffering there can free themselves from suffering and attain bliss.” The Buddha then asked, “Does Shravasti have any monasteries?” and the elder said it did not.

The elder continued: “If you, O Buddha, agree to go and teach the Dharma in Shravasti, I will provide offerings of food for the entire Sangha and will build a monastery so that the Buddha and his disciples have a calm and peaceful environment where you can cultivate the Way.” That is how the Garden of the Benefactor of Orphans and Solitaries came to be. At this point someone will surely ask: what qualities does a person need to have to be worthy of being called an elder? According to the Fahua Wenju (the Commentary on the Main Text of the *Lotus Sutra*): “An elder is someone who has a high status in society, possesses abundant

給孤獨長者說：「只要佛陀您答應到我們舍衛城去傳法，我會供養所有僧眾的飲食，也會造立精舍給佛陀跟弟子安心辦道。」所以就有後來的祇樹給孤獨園。講到這裡不禁要問：長者需要具備什麼條件？《法華文句》上說：位高，大富，願意幫助別人，所謂上歎下皈。到第二品〈方便品〉，我們就可以看到維摩居士都具備這樣的功德。

再回到經文。這時寶積跟五百個長者子，每一個人拿著七寶蓋——金、銀、琉璃、玻瓈、砮磬、赤珠、瑪瑙七寶裝飾成的傘蓋。五百個長者子拿著七寶蓋來到法會供養佛，佛就用他的神力把這五百張的寶蓋合成一蓋。

佛顯神通把五百個七寶蓋合成一個寶蓋，而且遍覆三千大千世界。就像科幻電影一般，三千大千世界裏面的江河湖海、日月星辰，宮殿輦輿全都在寶蓋裏面一一呈現；十方世界的佛說法也都在寶蓋裏面一覽無餘，這也難怪與會的大眾看得目瞪口呆。

大眾瞻仰佛，自然而然也都想要得到像佛這樣的境界。這時佛就可以教化與會的大眾如何如法修行。說到這裡，這世上也有很多似是而非的佛法。佛陀教導我們教理，最主要的目的是要我們依照教理修行。所謂修行就是修正我們的行為，修正我們的習氣。所以當我們聽到所謂有神通的大師在傳法，如果跟著趨之若鶩，就要小心了。佛已經明明白白告訴我們這些道理，我們反而不想老老實實的照著教理去修行，企圖一步登天，這是無有是處的，我們要好好思維。

riches, and is willing to help others. He is respected and praised by people of higher status, and people of lower status take refuge with him.” When we get to the second chapter, “The Chapter of Skillful Means,” we will see that the layman Vimalakirti has just such merits.

But now let us return to the sutra text. At this time, Jewel Accumulation and five hundred sons of an elder came to visit the Buddha, each of them holding up a canopy laden with the seven jewels—gold, silver, lapis lazuli, crystal, mother-of-pearl, red pearls, and carnelian. They came to the Dharma assembly to make offerings to the Buddha carrying the seven-jewel canopies, and the Buddha used his spiritual power to combine these five hundred seven-jewel canopies into one.

Using his spiritual power, the Buddha combined the five hundred seven-jewel canopies into one canopy, and it covered all the Three Thousand Great Thousand World systems (the great trichiliocosm.) Just like in a science fiction movie, the sun, the moon, and the stars, the rivers, the lakes, and the oceans, and all the palaces and carts in all the Three Thousand Great Thousand World systems were presented in this jewel canopy.

The Buddhas throughout all the worlds of the ten directions were speaking the Dharma, and this was also shown within the jewel canopy without any obstructions. No wonder all those attending the assembly were stunned!

The assembly pays homage to the Buddha, and naturally everyone in the assembly wants to be like the Buddha. At this time, the Buddha can teach the assembly how to practice according to the Way. Speaking of which, there are many dharmas in the world that seem to be true but are false (semblance-but-fake dharmas). The main reason that the Buddha gave us these teachings is so that we can practice in accordance with them. This practice consists in correcting our behavior and habits. Thus, if you hear a so-called master with spiritual powers transmitting the Dharma, you rush to follow others that is swarming around him, you must be careful. The Buddha has clearly explained the principles, but if we do not sincerely follow these principles in our practice and instead look for some kind of shortcut—trying to ascend to the heavens with one step, it will be useless; hence [when we have an urge to find a short cut,] we have to consider it well.