

# *Wonderful Dharma Lotus Flower Sutra*

## *Chapter Fourteen, "Happily Dwelling Conduct"*

*with commentary by Tripitaka Master Hua*

SUTRA:

HE SHOULD THINK OF ALL BODHISATTVAS AS HIS GREAT MASTERS. HE SHOULD ALWAYS REVERENTLY MAKE OBEISANCE TO THE BODHISATTVAS OF THE TEN DIRECTIONS WHILE MAINTAINING PROFOUND THOUGHT.

COMMENTARY:

HE SHOULD THINK OF ALL BODHISATTVAS AS HIS GREAT MASTERS. They are the teachers who show him how to cultivate. They are good teachers and wholesome guides. Using all kinds of methods they lead us along the road of cultivation. HE SHOULD ALWAYS REVERENTLY MAKE OBEISANCE TO THE BODHISATTVAS OF THE TEN DIRECTIONS WHILE MAINTAINING PROFOUND THOUGHT. With extreme sincerity and respect, he should always bow to the great Bodhisattvas of the ten directions.

SUTRA:

HE SHOULD SPEAK THE DHARMA EQUALLY TO ALL LIVING BEINGS. BECAUSE HE ACCORDS WITH THE DHARMA, HE WILL NOT SPEAK TOO MUCH OR TOO LITTLE. EVEN TO THOSE WHO PROFOUNDLY CHERISH THE DHARMA, HE WILL NOT SPEAK TOO MUCH.

COMMENTARY:

HE SHOULD SPEAK THE DHARMA EQUALLY TO ALL LIVING BEINGS. HE will be fair and equal, not selective. BECAUSE HE ACCORDS WITH THE DHARMA, HE WILL NOT SPEAK TOO MUCH OR TOO LITTLE. He should be kind, compassionate and equal; equal, kind and compassionate when speaking Dharma for living beings. Because he accords with the Dharma, HE WILL NOT SPEAK TOO MUCH OR TOO LITTLE. He will not speak more Dharma to one living being and less Dharma to another. He won't choose favorites among any living being, thinking, "This person has a lot of respect for me; I'll speak a little more Dharma for him. That person isn't so respectful; I'll speak a little less Dharma for him." He's not that way. Regardless of how much respect or faith they have, he will speak the Dharma to them equally—not too much, not too little. EVEN TO THOSE WHO PROFOUNDLY CHERISH THE DHARMA, HE WILL NOT SPEAK TOO MUCH. Even for those people who come to request and listen to the Dharma, who have deep and reverent regard for it, he will not speak a little extra Dharma for them.

SUTRA:

MANJUSHRI, THE BODHISATTVA MAHASATTVA, IN THE LATTER ENDING AGE WHEN THE DHARMA IS ABOUT TO BECOME EXTINCT, SHALL ACCOMPLISH THIS, THE THIRD HAPPILY DWELLING CONDUCT. WHEN SPEAKING THIS DHARMA HE WILL NOT BE AFFLICTED OR CONFUSED. HE WILL GAIN WHOLESOME FELLOW STUDENTS WITH

WHOM HE SHALL READ AND RECITE THIS SUTRA. HE SHALL GAIN A GREAT MULTITUDE WHO WILL COME TO HEAR THE SUTRA. HEARING IT, THEY WILL UPHOLD IT. UPHOLDING IT, THEY WILL RECITE IT. RECITING IT, THEY WILL SPEAK IT AND SPEAKING IT, THEY WILL WRITE IT OUT AND CAUSE OTHERS TO WRITE IT OUT. THEY SHALL MAKE OFFERINGS TO THIS SUTRA TEXT, REVERING, VENERATING, AND PRAISING IT.

#### COMMENTARY:

MANJUSHRI, you should know, THE BODHISATTVA MAHASATTVA who practices the Way, IN THE LATTER ENDING AGE WHEN THE DHARMA IS ABOUT TO BECOME EXTINCT SHALL ACCOMPLISH THIS, THE THIRD HAPPILY DWELLING CONDUCT. He can perfect the third happily dwelling conduct of the mind. He is this kind of Bodhisattva. WHEN SPEAKING THIS DHARMA, the *Wonderful Dharma Lotus Flower Sutra*, HE WILL NOT BE AFFLICTED OR CONFUSED; no one will disturb him. Why not? It is because when he is speaking the *Dharma Flower Sutra* all the gods, dragons, and others of the eight-fold division will protect him. Also, it must be the case that in the past he did not plant the causes of afflictions or troubling other living beings. As a result, living beings do not afflict or trouble him.

HE WILL GAIN WHOLESOME FELLOW STUDENTS who will cultivate with him. Now you have all come here to investigate the *Dharma Flower Sutra*. You could say that we have all obtained good fellow cultivators. If you don't become angry with one another then you will gain wholesome fellow students. Therefore, all of you should respect one another. They will be those WITH WHOM HE WILL READ AND RECITE THIS *Wonderful Dharma Lotus Flower Sutra*. HE SHALL GAIN A GREAT MULTITUDE WHO WILL COME TO HEAR THE SUTRA. Not only will he have wholesome peers with whom to investigate the Sutra, but he will have a large audience who will come to listen to him lecture on the *Wonderful Dharma Lotus Flower Sutra*. They won't just listen to the *Dharma Flower Sutra* and forget about it. UPHOLDING IT, THEY WILL RECITE IT. "Upholding" means maintaining and studying the *Dharma Flower Sutra*. After you have been reading it for a while, you will be able to recite it from memory; you won't need to use the book anymore. RECITING IT, THEY WILL SPEAK IT. "Upholding" means reading it. "Reciting" means saying it from memory. Then one will be able to explain it to others. SPEAKING IT, THEY WILL WRITE IT OUT AND CAUSE OTHERS TO WRITE IT OUT. If you cannot write it out for yourself, you can ask someone else to write it out. This passage refers to the Five Kinds of Dharma Masters: those who read, uphold, recite, speak and write out sutras.

I knew a Dharma Master who wrote extremely well. Every day he sat in his room in full lotus and wrote out the *Dharma Flower Sutra*. After he had finished writing it out, it was printed. He had been an official who then went forth from the home life and concentrated solely on writing out the *Dharma Flower Sutra*. THEY SHALL MAKE OFFERINGS TO THE SUTRA TEXT, REVERING, VENERATING, AND PRAISING IT. After the Sutra has been written out, then you may bow to it, revere, venerate, and make praises to the *Dharma Flower Sutra*. The most inconceivable and wonderful thing about the *Dharma Flower Sutra* is that all the Buddhas and Many Jewels Thus Come One come to certify it. If you have one part of respect for it, you will attain one part response. If you have ten parts of respect, you will attain ten parts response.

Now that you have encountered the *Dharma Flower Sutra* you shouldn't casually pass your time in vain. Hearing the *Dharma Flower Sutra* is inconceivable. Your parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents probably never had a chance to hear the *Dharma Flower Sutra*. As their descendant, you now have an opportunity to hear the *Dharma Flower Sutra* and this means that your virtuous conduct excels theirs. It's really an inconceivable state. You shouldn't think that this is a common occurrence.

Those of you who are studying the Buddhadharma have great good roots and great virtuous conduct. That is why you have been able to come here to study the Buddhadharma.

Now for another piece of news. There are many people here every evening and the Buddhahall is getting too small. It's standing room only. Therefore, we need to find a bigger place. At the Buddhist Lecture Hall (1970-1971) the Bhikshus, Bhikshunis, Upasakas, and Upasikas recite the Great Compassion Mantra every evening hoping that the Buddhahall will hurry and expand so it can accommodate more people. After all these days of reciting, I believe that this week the Buddhahall is going to mushroom! How big will it get? It will hold four hundred to five hundred people with room left over. Wouldn't you say that was wonderful? You never would have guessed that such a little Buddhahall could grow so big. Wait until it happens; it's truly inconceivable. Let's hope the Buddhahall and the Sino-American Buddhist Association keep getting bigger. How big should they get? The bigger the better! The bigger it is the more people can participate. The main Buddhahall of Pu Ji Monastery "Universally Rescuing" ( 普濟寺 ) on Pu Tou Mountain didn't look very big, but interestingly enough, if there were a thousand people, they could fit in. If there were ten thousand or a hundred thousand people, they would all fit. It was an inconceivable jeweled hall. We should recite our mantras and get a jeweled lecture hall that expands and contracts depending upon how many people there are. I'll bet you never heard of such a wonderful state. Our future Bodhimanda will do that! If you don't believe it wait three years and you will know. "Sure enough, it's that way. This lecture hall expands and contracts!" This news I'm telling you is true, not false.

"I'll never believe that," someone says. Wait until you see it yourself. Then, even if you don't want to believe it, you will have to believe it. Before you've seen it, you won't believe it if I tell you. Once you have seen it, I won't have to persuade you; you'll believe it on your own. It's not a question of believing or not believing. It's merely a question of time.

SUTRA:

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

IF SOMEONE WANTS TO EXPLAIN THIS  
SUTRA  
HE MUST CAST ASIDE JEALOUSY, HATRED,  
AND ARROGANCE,  
FLATTERY, DECEIT, DEVIOUSNESS, AND  
HYPOCRISY,  
AND ALWAYS CULTIVATE BEING  
STRAIGHTFORWARD.  
HE SHOULD NOT SLIGHT OTHERS  
NOR SHOULD HE TAKE THE DHARMA  
LIGHTLY.  
HE SHOULD NEVER CAUSE OTHERS TO  
DOUBT  
BY TELLING THEM, "YOU WILL NEVER  
BECOME A BUDDHA."

COMMENTARY:

AT THAT TIME, Shakyamuni Buddha, THE WORLD HONORED ONE, WISHING TO RESTATE THIS MEANING, reiterated it and SPOKE VERSES SAYING, IF SOMEONE WANTS TO

EXPLAIN THIS SUTRA, if the great Bodhisattva who cultivates the Bodhisattva Way wants to lecture on and explain the *wonderful Dharma Lotus Flower Sutra*, HE MUST CAST ASIDE JEALOUSY, HATRED, AND ARROGANCE. He should get rid of his mind of jealousy, hatred, and haughtiness, as well as FLATTERY, DECEIT, DEVIIOUSNESS, AND HYPOCRISY. He shouldn't be obsequious toward wealthy and honored people. Nor should he lie or be treacherous. He should ALWAYS BE STRAIGHTFORWARD. He should always cultivate straight words and act in a straightforward way. He shouldn't be evasive with anyone. Evasiveness is the opposite of straightforwardness. It is said, "The straight mind is the Bodhimanda."

HE SHOULD NOT SLIGHT OTHERS looking down on them as if they were vile and lowly. NOR SHOULD HE TAKE THE DHARMA LIGHTLY. HE SHOULD NEVER CAUSE OTHERS TO DOUBT. It is not permissible to cause others to have doubts about the Buddha's teaching BY TELLING THEM, "YOU WILL NEVER BECOME A BUDDHA. You're so lazy; you'll never get to Buddhahood that way." You shouldn't talk that way or upset other people.

SUTRA:

WHEN AS A DISCIPLE OF THE BUDDHA HE  
SPEAKS THE DHARMA,  
HE IS ALWAYS GENTLE AND PATIENT  
AND COMPASSIONATE TOWARDS ALL  
AND NEVER LAX.  
"THE GREAT BODHISATTVAS OF THE TEN  
DIRECTIONS  
OUT OF PITY FOR THE MULTITUDES  
PRACTICE THE WAY.  
I SHOULD HONOR THEM,  
FOR THEY ARE MY GREAT MASTERS."  
ONE THINKS OF ALL THE BUDDHAS, WORLD  
HONORED ONES,  
AS ONE'S UNSURPASSED FATHERS.  
ONE DESTROYS ONE'S THOUGHTS OF  
ARROGANCE  
AND SPEAKS DHARMA WITHOUT  
HINDRANCE.

COMMENTARY:

WHEN AS A DISCIPLE OF THE BUDDHA, a Bodhisattva Mahasatta, HE SPEAKS THE DHARMA, HE IS ALWAYS GENTLE AND PATIENT. With gentleness and patience, one puts on the Thus Come One's robes. He is COMPASSIONATE TOWARDS ALL living beings and so one enters the Thus Come One's room. He is NEVER LAX. "THE GREAT BODHISATTVAS Mahasattvas OF THE TEN DIRECTIONS OUT OF PITY FOR THE MULTITUDES, PRACTICE THE Bodhisattva Way. The Great Bodhisattvas practice the Way out of pity for living beings. I SHOULD HONOR THEM, the Bodhisattvas of the ten directions, and be extremely respectful, FOR THEY ARE MY GREAT MASTERS, my teachers. ONE THINKS OF ALL BUDDHAS, WORLD HONORED ONES, AS ONE'S UNSURPASSED FATHERS. The Bodhisattvas are his unsurpassed teachers and the Buddhas are like his great kind and compassionate fathers. ONE DESTROYS ONE'S THOUGHTS OF ARROGANCE AND SPEAKS THE DHARMA WITHOUT HINDRANCE.