金輪通訊
Gold Wheel Sagely Monastery Newsletter
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宣公上人 偈颂--大悲咒
婆婆诃
名曰大悲陀罗尼 四十二手世间稀
善根广积方能遇 不修此法太可惜

Verse on the Eighty-Fourth line
“SWO PE HF”
of the Great Compassion Mantra
Composed by the Venerable Master Hsuan Hua:

This, then, is called the Great Compassion Dharani, and, with the Forty-two Hands, these are extremely rare in the world. Only those with massive good roots encounter them. What a shame it will be if we fail to cultivate this Dharma!

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Section 38

Birth Leads to Death

The Buddha asked a Shramana, “How long is the human life span?” He replied, “A few days.” The Buddha said, “You have not yet understood the Way.”

He asked another Shramana, “How long is the human life span?” The reply was, “The space of a meal.” The Buddha said, “You have not yet understood the Way.”

He asked another Shramana, “How long is the human life span?” He replied, “The length of a single breath.” The Buddha said, “Excellent. You have understood the Way.”

The Buddha asked a Shramana, “How long is the human life span?” The Buddha deliberately posed this question. It was not that the Buddha did not know the answer himself and had to ask others to find out. The Buddha knew that people do not know the length of the human life span. That is why he asked a Shramana, “How long is the human life span? How long does a human life last?” He replied, “A few days.” In response, the Shramana said, “Probably after a few days we will die. Life is not very long.” The Buddha said, “You have not
He asked another Shramana, “How long is the human life span?” The reply was, “The space of a meal.” The Shramana answered, “In the time it takes to eat a single meal, a person’s life is over.” The Buddha said, “You have not yet understood the Way.” He said, “You too, still do not understand.”

He asked another Shramana, “How long is the human life span?” He replied, “The length of a single breath.” The life span of a human being lasts for one breath. The Buddha said, “Excellent. You have understood the Way.” The Shramana who gave this answer understood the Way.

In India there was once a king who believed in the adherents of non-Buddhist religions who cultivated many kinds of ascetic practices. Some followed the precepts of cows and some the precepts of dogs; some smeared ashes on their bodies and some slept on beds of nails. They cultivated all sorts of ascetic practices, such as those undertaken by yogis. Meanwhile, the Bhikshus who cultivated the Buddhadharma had a comparatively easy time of it, because they did not cultivate those kinds of ascetic practices. At that time, the king of that country said to the Buddha’s disciples, “I believe that although these non-Buddhists cultivate all kinds of ascetic practices, they still cannot stop their thoughts of sexual desire. How much the less are you Bhikshus, who are so casual, able to stop your afflictions and your thoughts of sexual desire? You surely cannot put a stop to them.”
金輪通訊第171期，2003年9月
Gold Wheel Sagely Monastery Newsletter, Issue #171, September 2003

有一個法師就答覆這國王說：「你可以在監獄裏提一個應該處死的人來，對這人講：『我給你一碗油，你用兩手拿著，在大街上遊行。你遊行市街時，如果灑了一滴油，就把你殺了；如果一滴油也不灑，回來就不殺你，把你放了。』那時候，你可以預備一些奏音樂的美女，在市街上奏音樂。等這個應該要死的人遊完了街，你看看他這油灑了沒灑？如果他的油灑了，當然就要被殺了。油，若一滴也沒有灑，你問他在這街上看上什麼？看他怎麼樣說！」

國王就照樣辦了，提出一個應該被殺的人，就對他說明白：「今天應該把你殺了，但是現在我給你一個不死的機會，怎麼樣呢？你必須去遊街。遊街時，我給你一碗油，你用兩手端著，這油若是一滴也不流出來，不灑出去，那麼回來就不殺你。若是灑了一滴油，回來還是照常把你殺了，你去試一試！」

於是乎，就這麼樣做。市街都遊完了，回來一看，碗裏邊的油果然一滴也沒有灑。國王就問了：「你在這市的大街上，你都見過什麼東西啊？」這犯罪的人說：「我什麼也沒有看見，就只看見這油，我時時刻刻都保護這油，不叫它灑了。我除了看見這碗裏的油，旁的什麼也沒看見，什麼也沒聽見。」

One of the Dharma Masters answered the king this way, “Take a man from jail who has been sentenced to execution and say to him, ‘Take this bowl of oil and carry it in your hands as you walk down the street. If you spill a single drop of the oil, I will have you executed. If you do not spill a single drop, I will release you when you return.’ Then, send some beautiful female musicians out on the street to sing and play their instruments in the area where the sentenced man is walking with his bowl of oil. If he should spill any oil, of course you will execute him. If he comes back without spilling a single drop, ask him what he saw on the road, and see what he says!”

The king of the country did just that: He took a man who was sentenced to be executed and said to him, “Today you were scheduled to be executed, but I am going to give you an opportunity to save your life. I will give you a bowl of oil to carry in your hands as you take a walk in the street. If you can carry it without spilling a single drop, when you return you will not be killed. But if you spill one drop, I will execute you on schedule. Go ahead and try it out.”

Thereupon, the sentenced man did as he was told. He went out on the street with the oil, and when he returned he had not spilled one drop. Then the king asked him, “What did you see out on the street?” The sentenced man said, “I did not see a single thing. All I did was watch the oil to keep it from spilling. I did not see or hear anything else at all.”
The king asked the Dharma Master, “Well, what is the principle involved here?” The monk answered, “The Shramana who has left the home-life in a very similar situation. He sees the problem of birth and death as so important that he has no time for thoughts of sexual desire. Like this man, the Shramana wants to end birth and death. If the sentenced man were to spill one drop of oil or to become the least bit afflicted, he would die. A Shramana who has left the home-life is also like this. Why is he able to end his sexual desire? It’s because he sees the matter of birth and death as very important. Why can’t the non-Buddhists end their sexual desire? They do not understand birth and death. They do not realize how important this matter is. Thus, they cannot end their sexual desire.” Why don’t people who cultivate put a stop to their sexual desire? They have not truly recognized birth and death or the immediacy of impermanence. If you realize the immediacy of impermanence, you will not have time to give rise to false thoughts of lust. You will not have time for the affliction of sexual desire.

Section 39

The Buddha’s Instructions Are Not Biased

The Buddha said, “Students of the Buddha’s Way should believe in and accord with everything that the Buddha teaches. When you eat honey, it is sweet on the surface and sweet in the center; it is the same with my sutras.”

Section Thirty-nine says that you should believe and accept all the Buddha’s sutras, not discriminating between the Mahayana and the Theravada or the sudden and the gradual, or deciding which sutras are important and which sutras are not important. Why make so many distinctions?
All of the Buddha’s teachings, as a whole, do not go beyond two kinds: the provisional and the actual teachings. The provisional teaching is spoken for the sake of the actual teaching; and if you speak the provisional teaching in detail, it leads to the actual. Provisional and actual are non-dual. Students of Buddhism should not discriminate between the Mahayana and the Theravada. When I was in Los Angeles, I said to the Bhikshus from Thailand, “In the Buddhadharma there were originally no discriminations between Mahayana and Theravada. It is just that certain disciples who were attached and who did not genuinely want to study the Buddhadharma strayed from it, made distinctions between great and small, and became unfilial disciples of the Buddha.” That is the principle discussed in this section.

The Buddha said, “Students of the Buddha’s Way should believe in and accord with everything that the Buddha teaches.” Those of you who study the Way of the Buddha should believe in all the Buddha’s sutras and teachings. You should not make any discriminations among them.

When you eat honey, it is sweet on the surface and sweet in the center; it is the same with my sutras. It is like eating honey. Honey is sweet on the surface and also in the center, and the sutras spoken by the Buddha are also like that. All of them establish the provisional for the sake of the actual and open the provisional to reveal the actual, in order to teach and transform living beings so that all alike can realize the Buddha Way. Everything is in accord with this principle.

(To be continued ...)
Dharma Master Tan Yi was fond of establishing monasteries. At that time, Mount Jun at the Ba Ling prefecture was abundant with timber. However, a mountain spirit inhabited the area and no one dared log the wood. The Master said, “We may be able to use it to build a monastery. The mountain spirit might be willing to make an offering of it. We should investigate the possibility.” Therefore, he led many workers up the mountain. What do you think happened? Half way up they saw many white snakes lying across the road. This was an indication that people should not venture further into the mountain. At that time, the Master brought the workers back. When he arrived at the monastery, he lit a stick of incense and faced the mountain, he said, “I pray to the mountain spirit to become a donor and make an offering of wood.” The next day, he went up the mountain again and this time the white snakes had disappeared. Nevertheless, in the evening, the mountain spirit appeared before the Master in a dream and said, “Dharma Master, you have lofty virtue and I respect and revere you. Therefore, you can come to take my wood. But if there are others who would take it for their personal use, I will not allow that. Do not tell other people they can take the wood.” After that, the
Master brought the workers up the mountain to gather the wood. However, there were some very selfish workers who took more wood than the monastery needed. But the wood those people took was confiscated by the government. It turned out that only the wood needed by the monastery was not taken by the government. The response power of the Master was great indeed.

Later the Master thought, “King Ashoka constructed a lot of Buddha statues. We should request one for this place.” From then on, every day, the Master bowed to the Buddha to pray for a Buddha statue constructed by King Ashoka. He prayed and prayed continuously. Then one day, a Buddha statue was found emitting light at the northern gate. The monks from the White Horse Monastery in Loyang initially discovered it, and rushed to seize the Buddha statue. However, no matter how many monks or workers came to move the statue, they still could not manage to lift it up. Dharma Master Tan Yi said: “I have requested this Buddha statue. We should go and invite it here.” Even though the monks from White Horse Monastery could not move the Buddha statue, nevertheless, when the Master arrived and sent for his three disciples to lift it up, they were able to do so with great ease and they carried the statue to the Master’s Chang Sha (“Long Sand”) Monastery.

Having obtained the Buddha’s sharira and wood (offered by the mountain spirit), now the Master also had a Buddha statue constructed by King Ashoka. Though Dharma Master Tan Yi proclaimed that King Ashoka constructed the statue, still, ordinary people would not believe it. Later on, an Indian monk came and when he saw the statue, he said, “Oh! This is a Buddha image constructed by King Ashoka.” From then on, Buddhism flourished exceedingly well in the surrounding area of Jiang Lin all due to the merit and virtue of the Master’s teaching.

In Buddhism, basically there is no school or sect, no Great Vehicle and no Small Vehicle. There is no Lin Ji School, Tsao Dong School,
Also, there is no difference between the schools of Chan, Teaching, Vinaya, Esoteric, and Pure Land. All these schools are not in accord with the Buddha's original intent. When the Buddha first spoke the Dharma, he was speaking the Dharma of the Dharma Realm with no segregation of Japanese Buddhadharma, Chinese Buddhadharma, Myanmar Buddhadharma, Thai Buddhadharma, or Sri Lankan Buddhadharma. There is no difference at all, however, having nothing to do, people from later generations tried to find something to do. Basically there are no differences, but they made differences and established the Lin Ji, Tsao Dong, Yun Men, Fa Yen, and Fa Yang sects. Then there are the Five Great Schools of Chan, Teaching, Vinaya, Esoteric, and Pure Land. Amidst the impartial Buddhadharma, people insisted on establishing so many schools and sects. Every school can be said to be equivalent to a door, or a house. Differentiating doors and houses, they said that your door and mine are different, and my house is not the same as yours. So each manifested their spiritual powers; each claimed that theirs was the best.

Originally, within the Buddhadharma, how can there be good or bad? Good comes from bad. Bad comes from good. Good to the ultimate turns bad. Bad to the ultimate turns good. For that reason, one should not make distinctions about which one is higher and which one is lower. The Vajra Sutra said, “All Dharmas are level and equal”. The impartial Dharma is “neither high nor low.” There is no superior and no inferior Dharma. When people sought Dharma from the Great Master the Sixth Patriarch, he said: “If I say I have one word of Dharma to tell you, I am telling a lie; if I say I have Dharma to teach you, I am lying too. Basically there is no Dharma.
that can be spoken.” Therefore, other buildings may have the Buddhadharma, but within our building there is no Buddhadharma.

We do not say that we have Buddhadharma here. If so, it’s only a tiny bit, just one kind of Buddhadharma. What use is that? It’s useless. Buddhadharma is vast, great, encompassing, essential and subtle. It is the nature of the Dharma Realm. There is no place that has the Buddhadharma, and there is nowhere without Buddhadharma. Such is its state. If you say there is Buddhadharma here, you have an attachment. If you say another place has Buddhadharma, you are attached again. Therefore basically, Dharma cannot be spoken of. Just within this indescribable, is the Dharma. You cannot say any school is real, or any sect is false. There is no true or false.

Real Buddhadharma encompasses everything; there is true and there is false, there is no true and there is no false. Just that is wonderful. So if you hear someone say, “Oh! The Buddhadharma is in this place and not in another place.” Then, you ask, “If the Buddhadharma is here, then where is the place that has no Buddhadharma?” If the person says: “Outside my building there is no Buddhadharma,” then you are basically dead. Your Dharma is a dead Dharma that is only confined inside a room. What use is that? Can the Dharma be confined?

“As to the Dharma, there is no fixed Dharma”: Since there is no fixed Dharma, how can it be restricted to a building? So you should ask that
在building裡頭？所以當時，你像我頭先問他，看他怎麼樣講。你在這個building裏邊，你用一把火把這個building燒了，沒有了，好像那個窗戶也沒有了，門也壞了，你說這個法跑了嗎？要跑到什麼地方去？這個法是【不增、不減、不垢、不淨、不生、不滅】怎麼可以說在某一個building裡頭？這簡直是太可憐了。在我們所講的佛法，沒有好，沒有不好；佛法在我這裡，也不在我那兒，在整個宇宙，整個法界。那個法絕對不會單單到我這個房子裡頭，若單到我這個房子裡，那豈不是一個自私的法嗎？那豈不是太孤獨了這個法嗎？太單獨了，這叫一個什麼法！

所以我們所講的佛法，是無論它是法，非法都是佛法。就是天主教、耶穌教，其他旁門外道，什麼都是佛法。這法呀，外邊什麼也沒有，法裏邊什麼都有一所以你看看廁所，這廁所也是有佛法的。它是無在無不在。那個最骯髒的地方，那個法也不離開它；最清淨的地方，那個法也不停止在那個地方，妙就在這個地方。

person my previous question and see how he responds. “You said it’s inside this building? If you set a fire to burn down the building, so that the windows are gone and the door is broken, would you say that the Dharma would run off too? Where would it go? This Dharma is “neither increasing nor decreasing, not defiled and not pure, not produced and not destroyed”. How can you say that it only exists in a building? This is truly pitiful. The Buddhadharma that we speak of has no good or bad. The Buddhadharma is not in our place, and it is also not in your place. It exists in the whole universe, in the entire Dharma Realm. Dharma will not just come to my house. If it only comes to my house, then won’t it be a selfish Dharma? Won’t it make the Dharma too solitarily confined? It’s just too lonely --- what kind of Dharma is this?

Therefore, the Buddhadharma that we speak of, whether it is the Dharma or not the Dharma, inclusively it is all Buddhadharma. Even if it is Catholicism, Christianity or other religions of the side door and outside way, everything is the Buddhadharma. The Dharma does not have anything outside and it encompasses everything within. For that matter, take a look at the toilet. The toilet also has Buddhadharma. It exists nowhere and everywhere. Even if it is the filthiest place, it is never apart from the Dharma. Likewise, the Dharma will not just dwell in the most clean and pure place. It is just this wonderful.

(下期待續)
Heaven and Earth's Divine Text -- the Shurangama Mantra
Single-mindedly Recite and Uphold It to Obtain Wonderful Mindfulness

If we were to discuss all the benefits of the Shurangama Mantra, there are so many we could not finish speaking of them for years. All the Buddhas of the Ten Directions are born from the Shurangama Mantra. Hence, we can say that the Shurangama Mantra is the mother of all the Buddhas.

The Thus Come Ones of the Ten Directions depend on the Shurangama Mantra to accomplish the unsurpassed proper enlightenment. The Thus Come Ones of the Ten Directions are able to manifest in countries as numerous as motes of dust to turn the Dharma Wheel and to teach and transform living beings. They rub the crowns of living beings in the Ten Directions and give them their prediction. They alleviate the sufferings of living beings as well as liberating living beings from disasters both large and small. All of these are dependent on the power of the heart of the Shurangama Mantra.

If you wish to attain Arhatship, you must definitely recite this mantra so that you will not encounter demonic situations. In the Dharma Ending Age, if a person can recite the Shurangama Mantra from memory or encourage others to read the Shurangama Mantra, this person cannot be harmed by fire nor water and neither lethal toxins nor minor poisons can hurt him.

Any toxins that enter the mouth of a person who recites and upholds the Shurangama Mantra will turn into sweet dew. People who receive and uphold the Shurangama Mantra will not be born in unwholesome places, even if they want to be. Why is this? The Shurangama Mantra will pull you back,
telling you, “Do not go there! Do not go there!” The Thus Come Ones of the Ten Directions will give their own merit and virtue to those living beings who have not accumulated any meritorious blessings, but who recite and uphold the Shurangama Mantra. Is this a real bargain or not? If you read the Shurangama Mantra, you will always be born during the lifetime of a Buddha, and be able to cultivate with the Buddha.

If you are scatter-brained, unable to focus on a single thing, and without samadhi power, but you think of the Shurangama Mantra as spoken by the Buddha, reciting and upholding it, Vajra Treasury King Bodhisattva, with his special mind of authenticity, will accompany you and aid you invisibly. Gradually your absent-mindedness will be eradicated and you will obtain samadhi power. He will enable you to open your wisdom and attain single-mindedness, and you will be able to clearly understand everything from the present back as far as eighty-four thousand kalpas ago.

If you are able to read through the Shurangama Mantra and recite the Shurangama Mantra from memory, as if it were flowing naturally from your mind, then the Shurangama Mantra and your mind are equivalent to each other. You can attain the samadhi of mantra recitation, reciting the mantra in much the same way as flowing water, continuously without stopping. If you can do this, then you can be wealthy as an American oil tycoon for at least seven lives. For seven lives, you will be an aristocrat; you will be wealthy.

You may say, “This is so good. I had better learn the Shurangama Mantra quickly, so I can be an aristocrat for seven lives.”

If you are attached to small states like this, then you do not have to learn the Shurangama Mantra. Seven lives as an aristocrat could pass as quickly as the wink of an eye. So, then what do you want to wish for in learning the Shurangama Mantra? You should aspire to ultimately becoming a Buddha and attaining the unsurpassed, unequalled, proper enlightenment. Do not be so small-minded. In actuality, learning the Shurangama Mantra is equivalent to having the transformation
佛的化身；不但是佛的化身，还是佛的顶上化佛，化佛中的化佛，所以〈楞嚴咒〉的妙处是不可思议的。

有人真能持〈楞嚴咒〉，在这个地方，虚空裡头就有一个大白伞盖。你的功夫若大、若高，你一念这个伞盖，甚至於几千里地以内，都无灾无难了；你功夫若小，那么这个伞盖在你自己的头上，也保护著你。

你若是有道德，是一个大德高僧，你这一念，甚至於整个国家都得到好处了，都没有什么灾难了。就有灾难，大的灾难也就化小了，小的灾难就化没有了。

無論哪一個國家飢荒、瘟疫传染病，或者有打仗、贼难，所有一切的灾难。你若能写〈楞嚴神咒〉，放到城的四门口，或者有砲台、堡垒那个看兵的地方，使令这个国家所有的众生都迎接这个〈楞嚴咒〉，叩头顶礼恭恭敬，一心供養这个〈楞嚴咒〉，就像供養佛那么样恭敬。使令这个国家的人民，每個人身上都佩戴一卷〈楞嚴咒〉，或者每人把它放到自己所住的住宅裡邊。这样，这些灾难的事情都消灭了。

如果有〈楞嚴咒〉在这个地方，天龍就都欣喜，也没有狂風暴雨这种灾害了，所有的五穀也都丰收，一般老百姓都很平安的。所以〈楞嚴咒〉这个功德是不可思议的，你想不到，思也想不到，它妙的地方也在这个地方。

body of a Buddha. Not only is it the same as having the Buddha’s transformation body, but it is the same as being the transformation Buddha on the Buddha’s summit, the transformation Buddha within the transformation Buddha. Therefore, the Shurangama Mantra is inconceivably wonderful.

If you can truly uphold the Shurangama Mantra, then a white umbrella-like canopy will hang in empty space above you. If you are highly skilled in upholding the mantra, then once you recite, this canopy will be huge and offer protection that reaches an area of thousands of miles in circumference. There will be no calamities nor disasters within that area. If your skill is tiny, the canopy will be on top of your head, at the least protecting you.

If you have Way virtue, or if you are a greatly virtuous Sanghan, once you recite the Shurangama Mantra, the entire country will benefit. There will be no calamities or disasters. Should there be any disasters, then disasters originally supposed to be major ones will be transformed to minor ones, and minor ones will be wiped away.

In any country suffering from famine, epidemic, war, ravage by bandits and other calamities, you can write the Shurangama Mantra down and put it on top of the four gates of the city, or mount it upon the canon stands, and thereby inspire all living beings of the country to welcome and accept the Shurangama Mantra. If you can inspire them to bow in respect and with one mind make offerings to the Shurangama Mantra in the same manner as making offerings to the Buddha, or encourage the people in the country to each wear a roll of the Shurangama Mantra, or to place the Shurangama Mantra within their abode, then all calamities and difficulties will be eradicated.

Wherever the Shurangama Mantra exists, heavenly dragons rejoice and calamities such as hurricanes will not occur. All land planted with the five grains will reap bountiful harvests. All the citizens of that land will be peaceful and calm. Thus, the meritorious virtue of Shurangama Mantra is inconceivable. It is way beyond what your mind can conceive. This is where its wonder lies.
During the Ming Dynasty, Sun Ji Gao, a native of Wu Hsi County, Kiangsu Province, went on a trip one day. He stayed as a guest at someone’s residence that night. The owner’s wife had a maid deliver a cup of tea to him. In the cup, there was placed a gold ring. Sun Ji Gao pretended that he did not see it and sent the cup back.

At midnight, the maid came knocking at his door. She said the hostess was there with her and asked Sun Ji Gao to open the door. Mr. Sun, at this juncture, picked up a big wooden board to brace the door and refused to open it.

The next day, Mr. Sun quickly packed up and went home. When people asked him why, he said “I am of the younger generation. I could not do as they asked. I do not deserve to stay in their residence.” He always kept this secret and never wanted to publicize it.

Later, Mr. Sun went to the Capital to take an imperial exam. He passed the exam attaining first place. His descendants benefited from his virtue as well. They all became highly respected citizens.

Comments: Mr. Sun was not confused by money or lust. This made him a man of integrity. He was benevolent, generous, and did not expose others’ secrets. He also preserved other people’s honor and integrity. His character is worthy of praise. Therefore, his long-lasting blessings and virtue benefited his descendants and the whole world joins in rejoicing and celebration.
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<td>28</td>
<td>29◎※</td>
<td>30◎※</td>
<td>◎禮拜大悲懺 Great Compassion Repentance 12:30 pm</td>
<td>※詛地藏經百日法會 7月20日起至10月27日(每週一至週六)</td>
<td>A Hundred-day Recitation of Earth Store Sutra Starting from 07/20/2003 to 10/27/2003</td>
<td>Mondas — Saturdays 7:00 pm-8:30 pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*A Hundred-day Recitation of Earth Store Sutra*
Starting from 07/20/2003 to 10/27/2003
Mondas — Saturdays 7:00 pm-8:30 pm
☆09/06 宣告上人涅槃每月紀念日
Monthly Memorial Day of Venerable Master Hua's Entering Nirvana