

**Minwa-Fu Hokekyo Dowa Volume 28**

by Rev. Kōge Matsumoto

Chapter 27 of the Lotus Sutra

King Wonderful Adornment as a Bodhisattva in a Previous Life

# **Father Was a Great Benefactor of Dharma Practice In His Fellow Monks' Previous Existence**

**(Karmic Cause and Result in This Life)**

## **Chapter 1**

### **Karmic Relationship from the Previous Existence**

Innumerable and inconceivable *kalpas* ago, there lived a king called Wonderful-Adornment, his graceful wife named Pure-Virtue and two wise and compassionate sons, Pure-Store and Pure-Eyes. Their relationship actually began a long time ago as fellow monks from a previous existence.

## A) The Reunion of the Souls from the Past

There are many cases of relationships between parents and their children, between siblings, or between a master and his disciples in this life that were caused by a special relationship in their past lives.

It is likely that there was a special karmic cause between you and your parents from previous lives, so you should not behave like a selfish spoiled child. You may have made a promise in your past existence to be born and to meet your parents in this lifetime. So, you had better live with them harmoniously and peacefully. You should also know that it is very rare for us to be born as human beings.

The teachings of the *Lotus Sutra* tell us that you were not born as a human being because you were a human being in the past. It is also not guaranteed that you will be born as a person in your next life because you were a human being in this life. Your next life will depend on how you live in this life.

## B) Repeating Birth and Death in the Six Realms

1) **The Realm of Hell**: If a person kills someone without regard for the consequences, his soul will go to hell after his death. He must repeatedly suffer from the hardships of hell life for many lifetimes.

2) **The Realm of Hungry Spirits**: A person may be born with high intelligence and a strong purpose in life and as a result, become a well-known person. However, if he becomes attached to his fame and money, that person's soul will go to the realm of hungry spirits after his death. Such a soul will always feel hungry and thirsty in that realm. His throat will be too narrow to swallow a drop of water or a grain of rice. Such souls with unquenchable attachments will always feel hungry or thirsty .

3) **The Realm of Animals**: If a person makes mistakes judging right from wrong, choosing to indulge only in immediate pleasures or instant gratifications, the soul of such a person will fall into the animal realm after death. In this realm



his soul will have to practice judging what is right and wrong.

**4) The Realm of Asuras:** If a person is always in conflict with others, is not able to empathize with another person's situation, insists on blaming others and refuses to negotiate with them, the souls of such a person will not be able to get out of the *ashura* realm for many rebirths.

**5) The Realm of Human Beings:** If a person is friendly and harmonious with others, talks with them and understands their opinion, the souls of these people will be born as human beings in their next lives.

### **C) Hard to Be Born in the Realm of Human Beings**

You must realize that it is very hard to be born in the realm of human beings. To be born as a human being, your soul must have accumulated a lot of unthinkably good merits in your past existences. You were born as a person because of your accumulated good merits in your previous lives.

You must appreciate that you were born without any defects. You conducted yourself well and accumulated a lot of merits in your previous life.

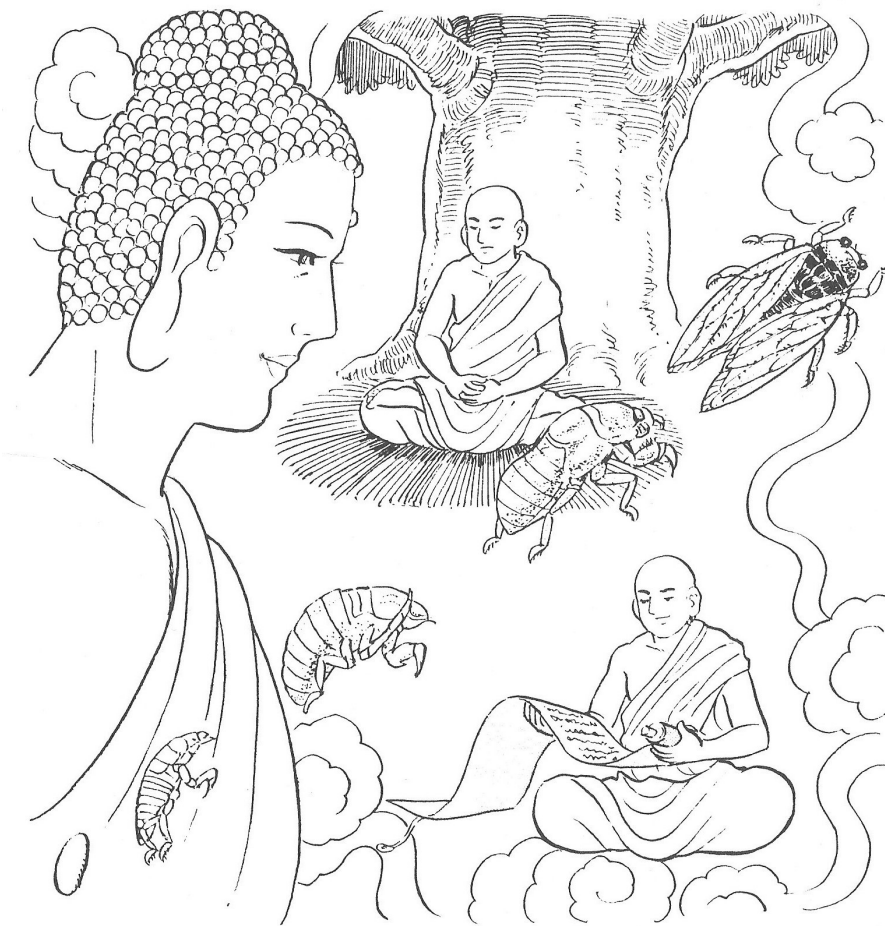
Be aware that your soul was chosen to be born as a human being because of your good actions that were seen through the Buddha-Eyes. You must realize that your soul was chosen to do some task as a human being in this life.

**6) The Realm of Heaven:** A person born in the realm of the heavenly state accepts all hardships as his divine tests and encourages others. Such a person may have had a strenuous time accomplishing his or her task in a previous existence.

Thus, everyone's future life depends on his or her actions, words and thoughts in this life.

Our souls are like the elements of the universe. Needless to say, we cannot see our souls. Living beings can be born in four ways: (1) from a mother's body, (2) from eggs, (3) from moistures or (4) from no medium such as a karmic appearance from a lotus flower as a Buddha). The duration of life of all living beings is very short compared to the duration of everyone's eternal life.

For example, the duration of life of cicadas or beetles as we normally see them is very short compared to their existence as larvae underground. It is said that the duration of the life of a cicada nymph is about ten times longer than the adult cicada itself.





## Chapter 2

### The Original Wish of One's Soul

The immeasurably deep relationship between one soul to another soul in previous existences will cause these souls to meet again in a similar condition in this life. People are born with the relationship between parents and their children, between siblings or close friends, or between a teacher and a student. These relationships form interconnected circles of relationships between people.

Therefore, you should not neglect these relationships between yourself and others. If you do not acknowledge and nurture the relationships, you will regret it after death. You do not need to regret it if you continuously behave the right way toward others.

**The Realms of the Upper Four:** After souls have passed the existences in the six realms, there are the upper four realms for those with higher spiritual souls. They are the realms of the *shomon* or those who are listeners of the Dharma, the *engaku* or those who are self-seekers of the universal truth, the Bodhisattvas and the Buddha. All of Sakyamuni Buddha's disciples had some sort of relationship with the Buddha in their former existences. Therefore, they became His disciples.

#### **A) Relationship of "All Living Beings In this World Are Buddha's Children."**

Sakyamuni Buddha said in Chapter Three, A Parable, "The triple world is my property. All living beings therein are My children." He meant not only human beings but all living beings.

It is wrong to say, "We have only this life." Please realize the mistake of thinking this. We were born as human beings to accomplish our tasks in this Saha-World. We are not sinful children. When we realize these mistakes, it is important for each one of us to live in the right way as a human being.

I wonder what kind of good deeds you had did in your previous past lives. I wonder what your deep relationship with your parents was in your previous life.

Let's go back to the main subject of this chapter of the sutra.

Looking at the congregation gathered on Mount Sacred Eagle, Sakyamuni Buddha said:

Now it is time for the story of King Wonderful-Adornment as a Bodhisattva in a Previous Life.

Innumerable, inconceivable *kalpas* ago, there lived a Buddha called Cloud-Thunderpeal-Star-King-Flower-Wisdom Tathagata. His world was called Light-Adornment; the *kalpa* in which he lived, Gladly-Seen. Under that Buddha lived a king called Wonderful-Adornment. His wife was gracious. They had two sons, Pure-Store and Pure-Eyes. Their relationships actually began a long time ago as fellow monks from a previous existence.

## B) The Bodhisattvas' Practices in their Previous Lives

The story began with a king, his queen and their two sons and their previous lives as four monks seeking the truth.

King Wonderful-Adornment was one of four Buddhist practitioners in his previous life. The four monks were trying to obtain the *samadhi* of the *Lotus Sutra* to save other people. They intensively practiced in order to obtain the *samadhi* day after day, month after month and year after year.

The more they practiced the less attached they became to worldly matters. They had no attachment to money, their properties or their clothing. They did not even care about consuming food. Instead they tried even harder to obtain the *samadhi* of the *Lotus Sutra*, so they would be able to obtain the ability to save other people. They had a strong determination to obtain the *samadhi* even



if it cost them their lives. However, one of them realized a very important matter.

### C) What Was the Important Matter?

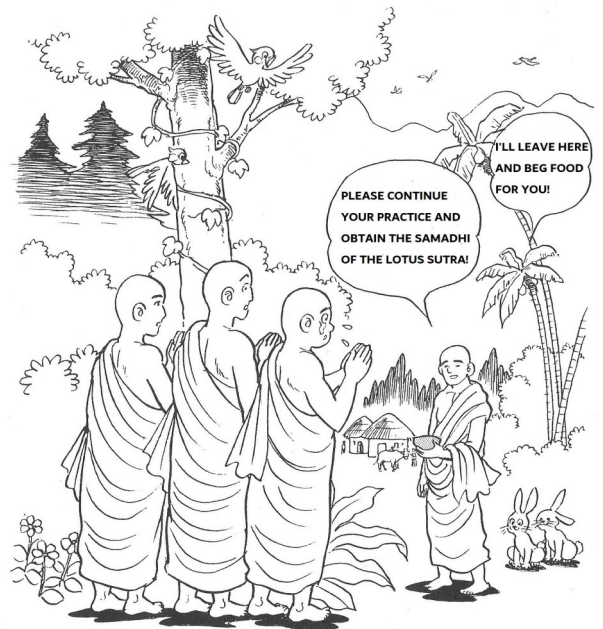
This monk thought, “We are training hard to obtain the *samadhi*, but if we die, we cannot save anybody. If we die, our practice will have been a waste of time and effort.

So he told the other three co-practitioners:

“My fellow monks! I will leave this mountain and beg for food and clothing for you in a town. I will offer them to you! Please do not worry about me but continue your practice and obtain the *samadhi* of the *Lotus Sutra* so that you will be able to transform yourselves into various living beings to save the suffering people. I will be satisfied if you can do this.”

### D) Real Friendship

The three monks were shocked to hear this because all four monks had promised to strive to obtain the *samadhi* of the *Lotus Sutra* together even at the cost of their lives. They said, “We cannot let you do that!” They refused to accept his proposal at first but realized his firm determination. They were grateful for his sacrifices and devotion to them and said, “We will surely attain Buddhahood and return your favor by saving other people.” They respectfully put their hands together and bowed deeply to the departing monk.



After many years, with the help of the monk who left them at the practice site, the three monks were able to obtain the *samadhi* to transform themselves into various living beings. The relationship between the four monks was wonderful!

Friendship is wonderful! You had better take good care of your friends. There is a saying, "A close neighbor is much better than relatives far away." People who have studied or worked together under the same roof and eaten the same food have a strong relationship. They should have sympathy towards their friends. It is very natural to help each other. You must always keep up your friendships.

### **E) Flame of Desire or Illusion**

Although the monk helped his colleagues by bringing them food and clothing, he himself quit the monastic life and returned to an almost secular life. Little by little his material desires began to come back again. It could not be helped! One day he happened to see a noble family passing in front of him in a certain city.

If he was still a monk practicing ascetism, he would have been able to control his mind. But all human beings have the ten levels of mind from the mind of a Buddha or a Bodhisattva to the mind of an animal or a being that lives in hell. So, you must be careful, otherwise the evil mind can arise in you, too.

One day, when the monk was resting, he happened to see the procession of a king of the country. At that time the man who left the monastic life thought, "How wonderful the procession is! I wish to be born as a powerful king in my next life." It was only a momentary thought because he had no attachment to becoming a king. He had once intended to obtain the *samadhi* of the *Lotus Sutra* and practiced for it. Instead, he became an ordinary person when he decided to help his fellow monks.

However, the Eternal Original Sakyamuni Buddha knew his momentary thought and answered his wish. He was born as a King called Wonderful-Adornment.

*{Note: B) and C) are quotations from T'ien-ta-I Chigi's lecture on the Lotus Sutra.}*

## Chapter 3

### The King Was a Non-Buddhist

Remember this chapter of the *Lotus Sutra* is Buddha's compassionate story of four monks.

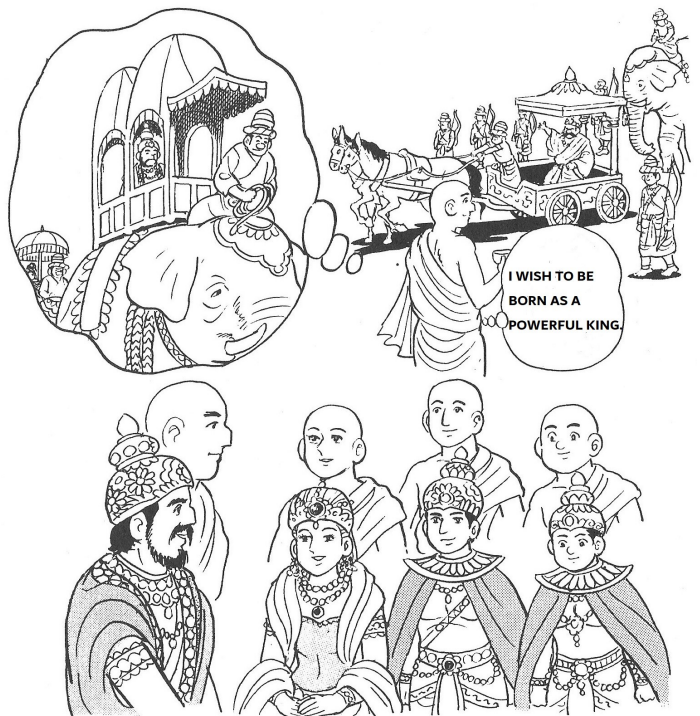
King Wonderful-Adornment used to be the monk who tried to obtain the *samadhi* of the *Lotus Sutra* in his previous life. But he had completely forgotten about his intention. The powerful king devoted himself to his status, money, estate, territories, and armaments. He became materialistic in his secularism and not like a Buddhist monk at all. Although his wish was answered, and he became a powerful king, he might have carried on his attachments from his previous lives.

#### A) Importance of How to Use Expedients

Please read the story carefully and perceive the Buddha's great compassion.

Thereupon the Buddha caused the appearance of the powerful king to co-exist with the appearances of his gracious queen called Pure-Virtue and their two sons, Pure-Store and Pure-Eyes, by name. The queen and two princes were the three monks returning the favor they had received in their preceding existence from the king who was the fourth monk.

Understanding all this and having great compassion for King Wonderful-Adornment, Cloud-Thunderpeal-Star-King-Flower-Wisdom Tathagata helped the king realize his good deeds in his previous existence and led him to the teachings of righteousness.



The two sons, Pure-Store and Pure-Eyes, and the mother, Pure-Virtue, had accomplished their practices and obtained the *samadhi* of the *Lotus Sutra* in their former lives. Therefore they already had the supernatural powers within themselves since their birth.

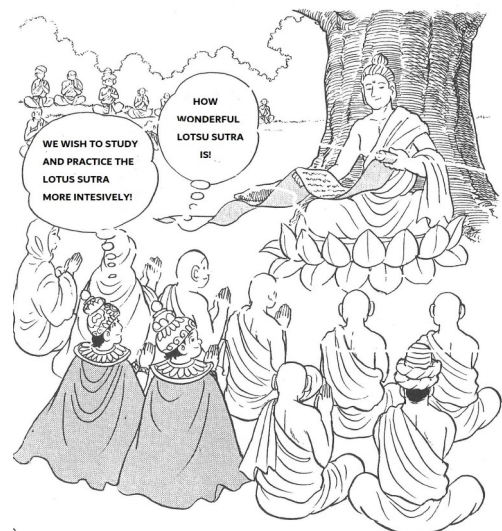
With their supernatural powers, Pure-Store and Pure-Eyes used various expedients to impress the bewildered people to aspire to the right way, made greedy people desire less, and made less fortunate people have good fortune and wisdom. The two sons acted in the ways of the Bodhisattva and enjoyed helping others with compassion. They knew various expedients and used them to save all people from sufferings. But they had no memory of what they had done in their preceding existence.

There are many people who are trying to do better for their societies, who study the right teachings and benefit others, who make ordinary people have Buddha wisdom and who give others a peaceful mind like a Buddha or a Bodhisattva. They have contemporally supernatural powers compared to ordinary people.

## **B) Accumulated Merits in the Past Existence Will Be Activated in This Life.**

Pure-Store and Pure-Eyes, the two brothers, were among the Buddha's congregation together with other people who had a very deep relationship with the *Lotus Sutra*. They all listened to the Buddha enthusiastically.

Pure-Store and Pure-Eyes had completely forgotten about their past existences and relationships among other monks. Although they had forgotten the wonderful teachings of the *Lotus Sutra*, they were able to listen to the Buddha joyfully and understood it. They thought "How won-



derful the *Lotus Sutra* is!” The two brothers wished to become disciples of Cloud-Thunderpeal-Star-King-Flower-Wisdom Buddha. They wanted to study and practice it more intensively!

Even though their souls in a previous existence had obtained the great supernatural powers, they did not realize it in their current existence. They had forgotten about it because it was not yet the time.

As we studied in Chapter Two of the *Lotus Sutra*, “Only the Buddhas who attained the highest Truth understand each other.” The four members of the king’s family did not know their relationship in their previous existence yet.

Therefore, you had better live obediently. This physical world is very tiny compared to the spiritual realms of the souls. It is said our world is only one ten thousandth of the spiritual realms. If you live righteously at this moment, you won’t regret it later. You will be able to be born again as a human being to fulfill your original wish without being aware of it until the right time comes.

If you live righteously at every moment, your soul will go naturally to the higher realms.

### **C) Promise to Accomplish in This Life**

Everyone has a task to do in this world. Like the two princes, most of us do not realize it . You made a promise in the realm of the souls before you were born. Can you imagine what kind of promise you made? You had better try to keep that in your mind.

These two princes with the help of their mother had a task to lead their father to the *Lotus Sutra* away from his wrong views . But none of them realized their task. Thereupon Cloud-Thunderpeal-Star-Flower-Wisdom Buddha expounded the *Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma*, wishing to lead King Wonderful-Adornment and all living beings out of His compassion towards them.



Listening to the Buddha, the two sons wished to share the Buddha wisdom with their mother. The two sons, Pure-Store and Pure-Eyes, came to their mother, joined their fingers and palms together, and said, 'Mother! Please go to Cloud-Thunderpeal-Star-Flower-Wisdom Buddha! We also want to go to attend on Him because He is expounding the *Lotus Sutra* to all gods and men in this world. This teaching is the One and Only Truth in the Universe. We sincerely wish you to hear and receive this sutra with us!'



#### **D) It Is to Lead Their Father, the King!**

How admirable and cute the two princes were! Their mother must have been so glad to hear their words. But she felt so sorry for the king if he did not attend the gathering. She wished all four of the family members to attend and listen to the Buddha. She said to the princes:

“Yes, I will! Pure-Store and Pure-Eyes! I am very pleased to hear it from you. You surely will grow up to a great adulthood! But you have forgotten an important matter! Your father who has raised you believes in heresy. He is deeply attached to the teachings of Brahmanism. Go and ask him to allow us to go to that Buddha! That will be a great way to show your appreciation towards him! Isn't that the Way of the Bodhisattva?”

#### **E) Two Princes' Tears of Disappointment**

Listening to their mother's strict but compassionate words, Prince Pure-Store and Prince Pure-Eyes joined their palms together firmly and said to their mother with eyes filled with tears of disappointment:



“Always merciful mother! If our father had ears to listen to us and would go to that Buddha, how glad we would be! But King Wonderful-Adornment will never listen to us! We used to like him a lot, but he is different these days. He is very materialistic and never tries to listen to stories about spiritual matters at all! He is only interested in money, status, estate, and other objects. The king does not understand that the reason to be born is to raise up the level of our souls. Life is a part of the process of upgrading the souls. We are all Buddha’s children. Why were both of us born into this family that is attached to the wrong views, even though we are sons of the King of the Dharma (the Buddha)?” Thus, the sons, with tears of disappointment, blamed their father.



I feel sorry for the princes! Even though they were noble princes and had sweet hearts, they could not make their wishes easily become reality. They must have felt their inability as princes. Their mother might have felt sorry for them, too. But their mother’s soul level was higher than her sons’ and she was aware of the need to return the favor that she had received in the past. The promise that the three monks made in their previous existence was the same. It was to save the monk who had left them in order to bring food and clothing to them. However, the level of their eagerness to save him was different. The level of thoughtfulness of the mother who became the queen to save King Wonderful-Adornment who was the deserted monk was deeper than her sons.

## **F) Queen Pure-Virtue Trying to Encourage the Two Sons**

Queen Pure-Virtue tried to encourage her sons and said:

“Pure-Store and Pure-Eyes! What are you worrying about? Whatever it is, you must show the result of what you had practiced under the Buddha to your father whom you owe a lot of debts. Think harder and use your heads with wisdom. You will surely find a way to lead him to righteousness. If he has not listened to you even if you tell him the Dharma, show some wonders that you have obtained to your father

out of your compassion towards him! If he sees the wonders, he may have his mind purified and will go to the Buddha together with us. Whatever you have learned from past lives, use your talent to impress your father first before using it on others. Please lead your father to the Buddha Dharma first!”

## Chapter 4

### Sensed Destiny

While the two princes were listening to Queen Pure-Virtue, they felt courage spring up in their minds and sensed a wonderful feeling that they had never experienced before. It must be their destiny. They wished strongly to take their father to the Buddha and make him listen to the *Lotus Sutra* together with them.

When a person is doing something unwillingly, he or she does not have the power to make others join in the work nor produce vibrations in the souls of other people.

When a person has strong will power and wishes to do something, he or she will be able to fulfill the job and produce vibrations in the souls of other people.

Therefore, the two princes rushed before their father, King Wonderful-Adornment.



## A) Everything Depends on One's Way of Looking at it

With energetic feeling, the two princes' attitude towards their father was changed. They looked refreshed and radiant. They were filled with compassion and appreciation toward their father; therefore, the soul of King Wonderful-Adornment sensed their warm feelings.

Pure-Store and Pure-Eyes said to their father:

“We would like to show you the results of our practices. Please look at us!” Suddenly they disappeared in front of the king. The king looked around and heard from the sky, “Father! Father! We are here!” The two sons were up in the sky seven times as high as a tree. When he looked up, they walked, stood, sat and reclined in the sky as if they were on the ground.

Then they issued water from the upper parts of their bodies and fire from the lower parts. They became giants large enough to fill the sky, became dwarfs, and became giants again. Then they disappeared from the sky and suddenly appeared on the earth. Next they dove into the earth as if it was water, and stepped on the surface of water as if they were on earth. They showed various supernatural powers to the king.



## B) Surprised King

Seeing these supernatural wonders displayed by his sons, King Wonderful-Adornment felt the greatest joy that he had ever had. He joined his hands together towards his sons in the sky, and said:

“Come down here! When did you obtain such wonders? Who is your teacher? What kind of Dharma does he teach you?”

Pure-Store and Pure-Eyes were glad to hear these questions from their father. They came down in front of the king immediately and thought that he had finally accepted their ways of practice and showed his interest in the wonders. They both showed their appreciation to their father and explained what they were thinking for a long time but were never able to tell their father.

The two sons said, “Great King, our father! You are great and dear to us. We deeply respect you ruling this country in peace and bringing the people prosperity and happiness. But you are sometimes too materialistic and believe in Brahmanism. You have strong attachments to matters of fact only and not to spirituality. We felt sorry for you. But you are now interested in our teacher and we are so glad you asked us his name. We cleared our minds toward you.”

“Our teacher, Cloud-Thunderpeal-Star-King-Flower-Wisdom Buddha is now sitting on the seat of the Dharma under the Bodhi-tree of the beautiful seven treasures. He is expounding the One and Only Truth in the Universe, the *Sutra of Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma*, to all gods and men of the world. Both of us have studied and practiced under him. We wish sincerely for you to attain Enlightenment as a Buddha’s child.”

### **C) Leaning Forward**

Surprisingly, King Wonderful-Adornment who had never listened to his sons before, leaned forward and said earnestly to them:

“I also wish to see your teacher who taught you and made you practice so hard. I will go with you. Your teacher must be excellent! He trained both of you to obtain such wonderful supernatural powers. Let’s invite the Queen and any interested vassals. Please take us to Cloud-Thunderpeal-Star-King-Flower-Wisdom Buddha.

The two sons were so glad to hear what their father said. They felt like they were in a dream.

## D) Princes Who Accomplished A Great Task

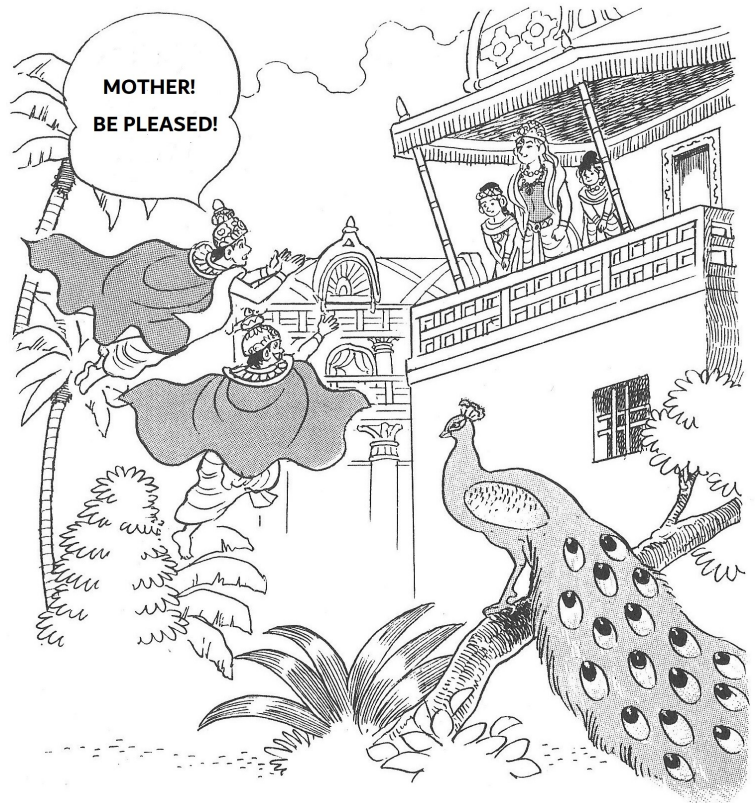
They went to their mother right away, joined their hands together, and said to her:

“Mother! Be pleased! Before we met with our father, we discussed what to do as you advised. We courageously showed our supernatural powers as expedients. If you had not advised us to go to our father, we would have wondered why we were born in such a heretical home. And we would not have been able to lead our father to righteousness.

Since you gave us advice to go to our father first, courage sprang up in our minds. We tried hard to convince our father with our supernatural powers. As a result, the king has said that he wishes to go with you and his vassals. The king has now understood the Dharma by faith. Following your advice, we were so glad to make our father go to listen to the Buddha. We did the work of the Buddha for the sake of our father.”

After they reported about their father, they said:

“Mother! Let us hurry and go to the Buddha!”



## E) Appreciate Even If You Were Scolded

As you see how the princes behaved toward their parents, you also must be obedient and appreciate your parents. Your parents sometimes scold you for YOUR sake! Since they always worry about your future, you must be obedient and appreciate them. Let me go back to the story.

Thus, the two princes reported to their mother and sincerely appreciated her.

## F) Princes Requested to Renounce the World

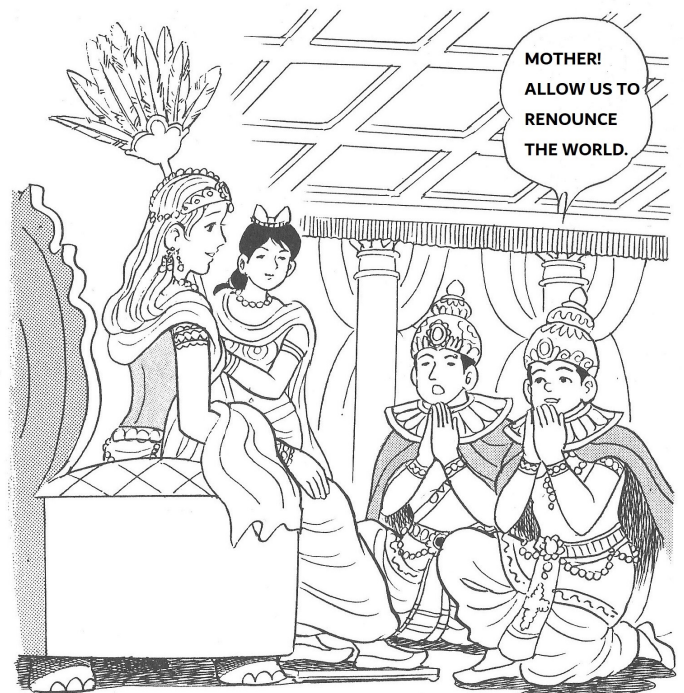
“Mother! Allow us to renounce the world and practice the Way of the Dharma under the Buddha!”

“It is difficult to see a Buddha. We will follow that Buddha. We will study and practice. To see a Buddha is as difficult as to see an *udumbara*-flower. Allow us to renounce the world!”

Thus, the sons sincerely made this request to their mother.

Everyone! When you are certain of something you want to do, think it over again, and if you have self-assurance in it, you should ask your parents sincerely just like the two princes. It is no good if you have no self-assurance and say “I just want to do it!” or “I will do it despite what other people may say!”

I wonder what the mother, Queen Pure-Virtue, thought about her wise and compassionate sons. It is the mother who wishes her children to stay with her as long as possible and to take care of them so they will be happy. She might wish for her wise sons to get married with gracious beautiful brides and live in happiness and peace in prince-hood.



## Chapter 5

### Karmic Causes and Conditions in the Past and Results in the Present

Queen Pure-Virtue and her two sons might have realized something about their relationships in the past and the present. Therefore, Queen Pure-Virtue did not think like an ordinary mother might have.

She said to her sons:

“I will allow you to renounce the world if you have firm determination to study and practice the Way of the Bodhisattvas, not only for your sake but also for other people. I will allow you to become ordained monks if you will be able to help your master as soon as possible and to keep up the pure relationship between you and your master.” Thus, Queen Pure-Virtue said distinctly to her two princes.

#### A) Finally Allowed to Be Ordained Monks

To renounce the world and to become an ordained monk meant to train oneself to become a person who encouraged and led people to live peaceful and happy lives. It was to seek happiness for oneself and for all. The two princes were so excited to finally be allowed to become monks. The two princes sincerely said to their parents:



“Thank you very much for allowing us to renounce our prince-hood and the world and to become ordained monks. There must be some special meaning from our past existences. It is said to see a Buddha is as difficult as to see an *udumbara*-flower that blooms only once in one thousand years or to see a one-eyed tortoise who comes to the surface of an ocean only once in one hundred years to find a hole in a floating piece of wood in an ocean. We had



to accumulate many merits in our previous existences so that we are now able to meet the teachings of the Buddha in this life of ours.”

“Mother! Cloud-Thunderpeal-Star-King-Flower-Wisdom Buddha is now expounding the Dharma. We must have a special deep relationship among the four of us in our past existences. Let us go to the Buddha together now!”

## **B) The Monks Returned the Favor Received in their Past Existences**

Excellent! Excellent!

The three monks were finally able to return the favor they had received from the monk who left them to bring food and clothing for them in their previous existence. That had been done very well!

Nichiren Dai’Shonin said, “If you want to know causes from the past, you should look at yourself in this life. If you want to see your future, look at yourself in this life.”

Everyone who is reading this book has a deep relationship with the *Lotus Sutra* in the past. Therefore, I hope you learn and practice the sutra willingly and raise up the level of your soul to the great compassion of the Buddha. If the number of people like you increase, world peace will come for sure some day.

By the way, when King Wonderful-Adornment, Queen Pure-Virtue, Pure-Store and Pure-Eyes came to Cloud-Thunderpeal-Star-King-Flower-Wisdom Buddha together with their ministers and attendants, the king’s family felt some past recollections that were hard to explain in words. It was like accomplishing a big task that had continued from Buddhist practices in their past lives. Their minds were refreshed with their old memories.

## **C) Reunion in This Life**

Relationships among human beings are something like that. Whether it is good or bad, a cause creates a relationship with something or someone. The good or bad relationship with someone or something (condition or *E’N*) is created by you. That



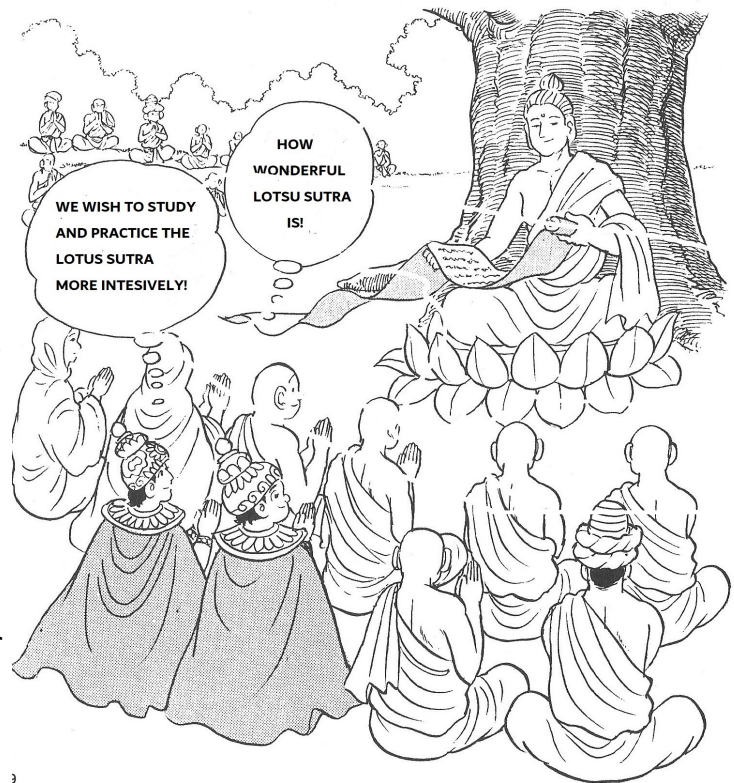
relationship will create a result. Keep your mind under control whether something has a good or bad result. If it is good, you should hold it and keep it up. If it is a bad result, you should repent right away and cleanse your bad karma, purify your six senses and pray for the Buddha's protection.

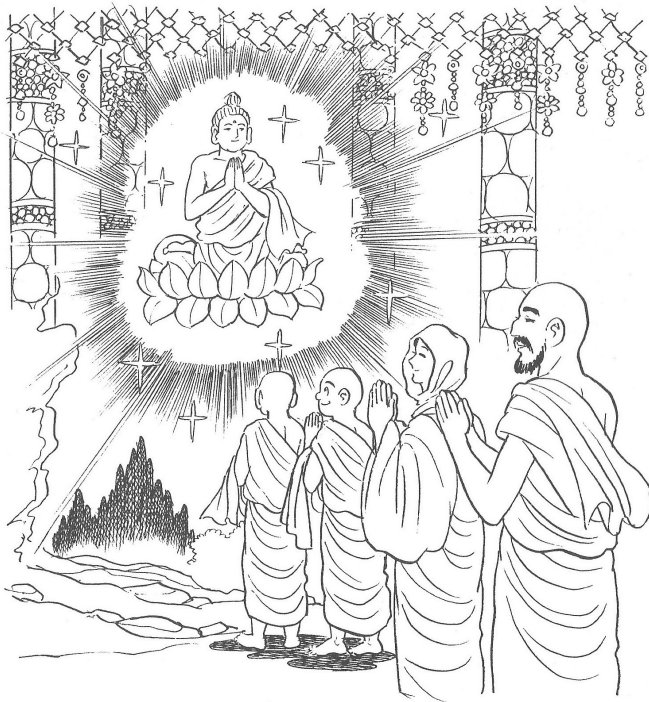
King Wonderful-Adornment, Queen Pure-Virtue, Pure-Store and Pure-Eyes finally realized their relationships in their previous lives. It all came back in their minds. When they saw the Buddha, they worshipped the feet of that Buddha with their heads, walked around the Buddha three times, retired, and stood to one side.

Cloud-Thunderpeal-Star-King-Flower-Wisdom Buddha already had insight into their relationships in their past lives and expounded the Dharma to them, especially to the king. He showed him the Way, taught him, benefited him, and caused him to rejoice. The king had great joy. The Buddha had seen through their relationships in their previous lives.

#### **D) Overwhelmed King and Queen**

King Wonderful-Adornment and Queen Pure-Virtue, overwhelmed with joy, took off their necklaces of pearls worth hundreds of thousands and threw the necklaces to the Buddha. Surprisingly, the necklaces flew up to the sky and changed into a jeweled platform equipped with four pillars. On the platform was a couch of great treasures and thousands of heavenly garments were spread on the couch. The Buddha went up, sat cross-legged on the couch, and emitted great rays of light.





Thereupon Cloud-Thunderpeal-Star-King-Flower-Wisdom Buddha said to the people of His Buddha-Land, “Do you see this King Wonderful-Adornment standing before me with his hands joined together? This king will become an ordained monk under me, strenuously study and practice the various ways to the enlightenment of the Buddha, and then become a Buddha called Sala-Tree-King in a world called Great-Light in a *kalpa* called Great-Height-King.” Thus, the Buddha assured the king of becoming a Buddha and gave him his Buddha-name.

### **E) The King Renounced the World**

Thereupon the king abdicated his throne in favor of his younger brother, renounced the world, and with his wife, two sons, and attendants, practiced the Way under that Buddha. The king constantly and strenuously acted according to the *Lotus Sutra* for eighty-four thousand years.

Then he went up to the sky seven times as high as the tala-tree, and said to that Buddha, “World Honored One! These two sons of mine did the work of the Buddha. They converted me from wrong views by displaying wonders. They caused me to dwell peacefully in your teachings. They caused me to see you. These two sons of mine are my teachers. They appeared in my family in order to benefit me. They activated the roots of good which I had planted in my previous existence.”

Thus, King Wonderful-Adornment told of the cause and condition in his previous life and the result in this life.

## F) Pray for Each Other as a Family

I wonder what kind of relationship or “E’N,” in the past lives you have had between you and your parents, your siblings, your master, and your spouse. How about having a discussion of this matter in your family? It is very natural for parents to pray for their children’s healthy growth while the children pray for their parents’ long and peaceful lives. There is no excuse for parents to dislike their children and send them away or for children to neglect their parents. It is very shameful to do that especially if one of the family members has done something great for other people.

Listening to King Wonderful-Adornment’s acknowledgement of his two sons, Cloud-Thunderpeal-Star-King-Flower-Wisdom Buddha nodded satisfactorily and said to the king with a smile:

“So it is, so it is. It is just as you said. The good men or women who plant the roots of good will have teachers in their successive lives. All souls of your family were the result of the roots of good in their previous existence. In order to return the favors you had received in the past, they were born in your family and led you to the great Dharma. Your family proved it!”



“The teachers do the work for the Buddha, show the Way to them, teach them, benefit them, cause them to rejoice, and cause them to enter into the Way of Enlightenment. Great King, know this! Your teachers were great and excellent causes for your enlightenment because they led you, and caused you to see the Buddha and aspire for enlightenment. Your two princes are great Bodhisattvas who led you to the *Lotus Sutra*.”

Thereupon King Wonderful-Adornment came down from the sky and said to that Buddha staying in the sky, “World-Honored One! You have great merits and wisdom. The fleshy tuft on your head shines bright. Your eyes are long and wide. The curls between your eyebrows are as white as a bright moon. Your teeth are white, regular and bright. Your lips are as red and as beautiful as the fruits of a *bimba*-tree! Just looking at you, our minds were automatically cleansed. Listening to your beautiful voice eliminated all our doubts and illusions!” Then the king respectfully bowed to the Buddha.

### **G) The Family of the Great King Are All Great Bodhisattvas**

So far, Sakyamuni Buddha revealed the relationships of the souls of the four members of the great king’s family in their past and present existences.

He said to the great multitude on Mt. Sacred Eagle:

“What do you think of this? If you think this story was just made up, you are wrong! King Wonderful-Adornment was no one but Flower-Virtue Bodhisattva who had asked me, ‘What roots of good did Wonderful-Voice Bodhisattva plant to obtain his supernatural power (in Chapter 24 of the *Lotus Sutra*).’ Queen Pure-Virtue was no one but Light-Adornment-Appearance Bodhisattva who is now before me. She appeared in that world out of her compassion toward King Wonderful-Adornment. The two sons named Pure-Store and Pure-Eyes were Medicine-King Bodhisattva whom you already know well and Medicine-Superior Bodhisattva. These two Bodhisattvas have already obtained great merits and have been attending this assembly on Mt. Sacred Eagle since the beginning.”

Thus, Sakyamuni Buddha revealed the causes and conditions of the past existences and the results in this present life of these Bodhisattvas.

Everyone! Have an obedient mind,  
Trust the Buddha.  
Live honestly with right mindfulness.  
Do not be preoccupied by things, money and fame,

Regardless of whether someone watches or not,  
Cherish your valuable karmic relationships in the past,  
Strive to work hard.

Keep in your mind that  
The Buddha knows everything.  
The Buddha is always watching.  
Behave yourself with confidence,  
With courage and responsibility.

Then, your soul will receive good results in this life.  
Your aura will start to shine,  
So as others  
Just like the Buddha's aura.