

*Minwa-Fu Hokekyo Dowo*  
**(Volume 15 of 30 Volumes)**

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Translated by Rev. Shokai Kanai

# Accept and Enjoy Peaceful Practices

(Parable of a brilliant Gem in a King's top-knot)

## Chapter 1

# A Lifeboat Sent from Manjusri Bodhisattva

### A) Three Kinds of Strong Enemies

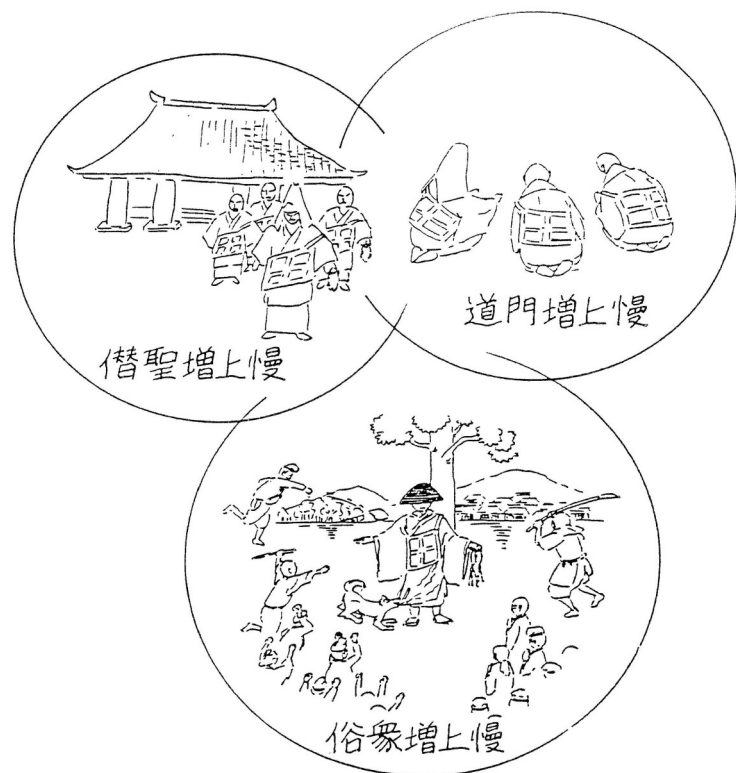
In the previous volume, Sacrifice One's Life reveals that the expounder of the Lotus Sutra in the Declining Latter Age of the Dharma will face severe or-

deals. Do you remember what kinds of ordeals the expounder of the Lotus Sutra will face?

The ordeals include three kinds of strong enemies throwing a piece of tile or stone at the expounder, beating him with a stick or trying to kill him. They may chase him away from his residence, exile him to an isolated island or spread a rumor about him. They will interrupt his expounding the Lotus Sutra.

Despite these severe ordeals, Medicine-King Bodhisattva and Great-Eloquence Bodhisattva, their twenty thousand attendants who are also Bodhisattvas and the eighty billion great Bodhisattvas from the ten directions of the universe all made their great vows together to expound the Lotus Sutra in the defiled world in the Declining Latter Age of the Dharma.

But the Buddha did not respond to their vows at all. Hearing the huge numbers of Bodhisattvas' great effort in making the vows, Manjusri Bodhisattva sent a lifeboat to save the wondering Bodhisattvas not to disappoint and asked the Buddha.



## **B) Honoring the Strong Determination by the Great Bodhisattvas**

Manjusri Bodhisattva said, “World-Honored One, these countless numbers of the Great Bodhisattva are extraordinarily rare. Their determination for expounding the sutra is very strong and great! I deeply respect them from the bottom of my heart because of their oath to expound the sutra at the cost of their lives.”

“World-Honored One, tell us how should an ordinary Bodhisattva, if someone wished to, expound the Lotus Sutra in the era of the Declining Latter Age of the Dharma after Your extinction?”



Thereupon the Buddha, responding to the question from Manjusri, said to them:

“A Bodhisattva with not-enough training who wishes to expound this sutra in the evil world should practice four sets of things. He must deeply engrave these four sets of things in his mind.”

“First, he should perform proper practices for himself: properly approach the people with a gentle mind, act sympathetically, speak thoughtful words and then expound this sutra to all living beings. He must not get angry, not shout, not become confused, and always be calm regardless of whatever happens or wherever he is.

### **C) Bodhisattvas with Not Enough Practices**

By the way, who are the Bodhisattvas with not enough practices yet to qualify expounding the Lotus Sutra? Manjusri Bodhisattva asked the Buddha because Medicine-King Bodhisattva and Great-Eloquence Bodhisattva, their twenty thousand Bodhisattvas and the eighty billion great Bodhisattvas from the ten directions of the universe made their great vows to expound the sutra even if they are persecuted with severe ordeals in the *map-*



*po* era. His question was aimed at those Bodhisattvas as to how to avoid such persecutions and expound the sutra peacefully. But the Buddha said “These great Bodhisattvas do not yet have enough practices for expounding the Lotus Sutra in the Declining Latter Age of the Dharma!” What is the meaning of this?

You cannot neglect even a single word or a phrase of the Buddha. Do you know the reason? It is because all words and phrases contain profound meaning in them. Each word is a manifestation of the Eternal Buddha. Each word benefits all living beings. Therefore, looking through Buddha’s eyes, those great Bodhisattvas who made vows to expound the sutra are from other worlds, not from this Saha-World. Compared to this Saha-world (the triple world\* that is full of sufferings), all other worlds are pure-lands (that have no sufferings). That is why these Bodhisattvas from the pure lands have not yet had enough practices.

- The triple worlds\*, this Saha-world, are divided into three worlds:*
- 1. The world of desire, whose inhabitants have desire.*
  - 2. The world of form, whose inhabitants have no desire.*
  - 3. The world of formless, whose inhabitants have no physical forms.*

These Bodhisattvas from other worlds made the vow to expound the sutra in this triple world even at the cost of their lives. Sakyamuni Buddha was surely glad to hear from them. So He revealed the peaceful practices, they are called the Four Sets of Peaceful Practice. Thus, they can expound the Lotus Sutra on this earth joyfully and patiently.



## Chapter 2

### Meaning of the Four Sets of Peaceful Practice

This volume discusses four kinds of peaceful practices: those of body, mouth, mind, and resolution (vows):

***(1) Peaceful Practices of the Body:***

This practice relates to how you should talk about the great teachings of the Lotus Sutra. If you do not behave as the Lotus Sutra teaches, people will not follow you. Therefore, the Buddha teaches us how to behave.

***(2) Peaceful Practices of the Mouth:***

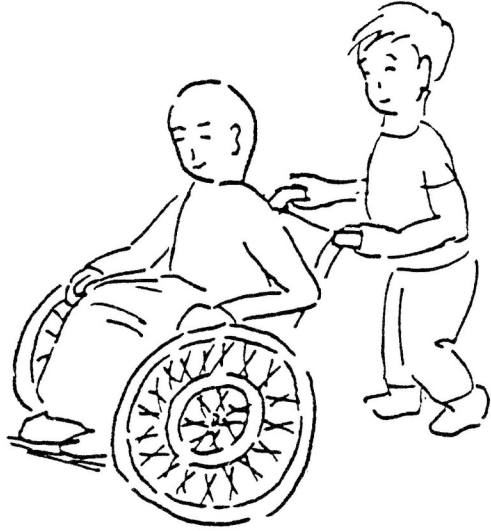
Even if you have a cute face and a beautiful appearance, if you talk badly, your spoken words hurt others. Thus, the Buddha teaches us to speak gently with compassionate words.

***(3) Peaceful Practices of the Mind:***

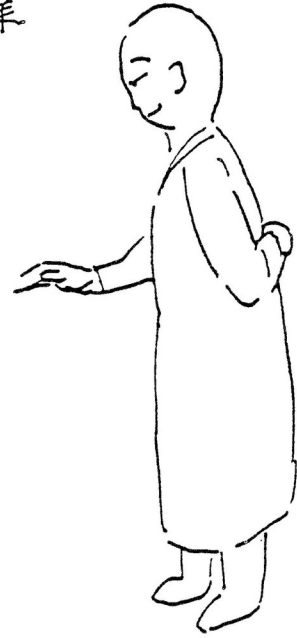
Even if you do not talk or do not show it in your attitude, if you are thinking something wrong or you hate someone or you are disloyal, you hurt someone. Thus, the Buddha teaches us to keep mindfulness and behave calmly.

***(4) Peaceful Practices of Resolution:***

In this practice, you resolve solemnly to make an effort to realize and spread the Lotus Sutra in the Age of Degeneration, or the evil world of the future. (I will talk about this subject later.)



身安樂業



意安樂業



口安樂業



# Chapter 3

## Peaceful Practices of the Body

### A) Performing Proper Practices

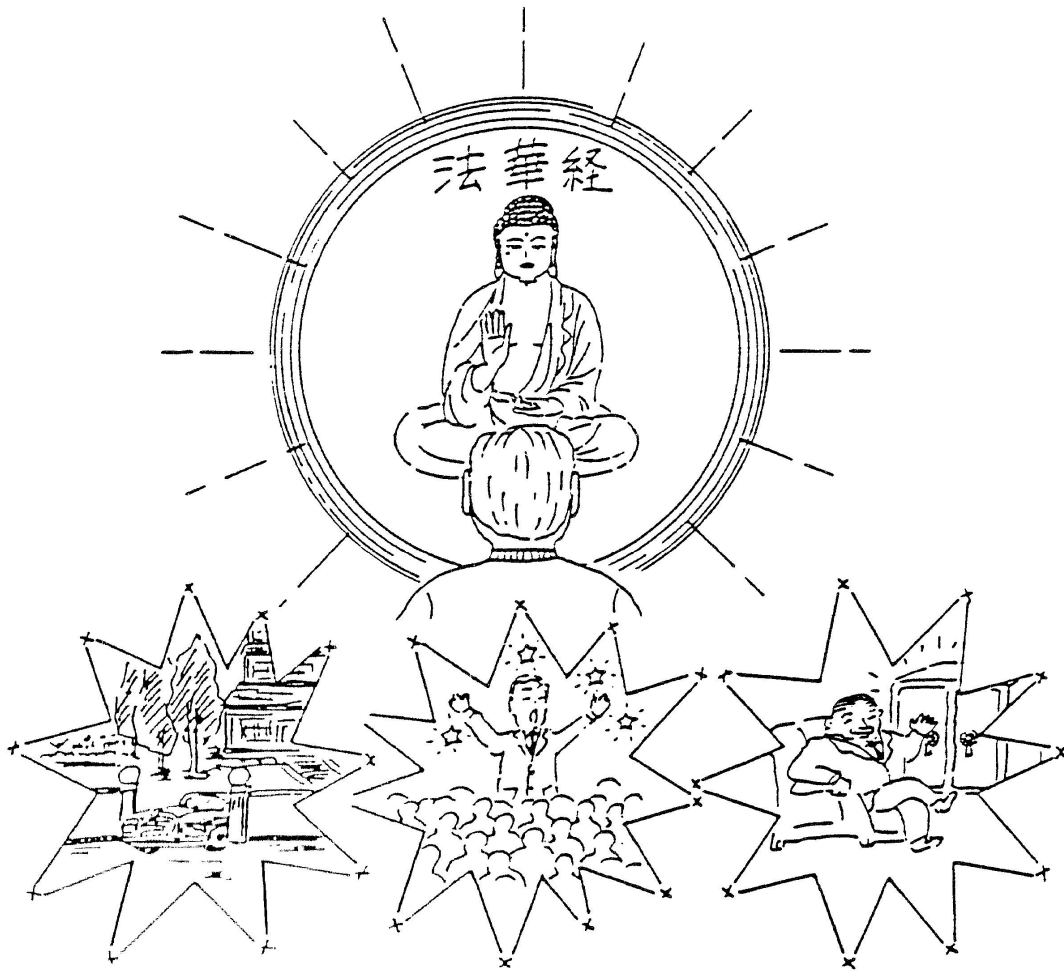
The three peaceful practices of the body, the mouth, and the mind mentioned above teaches us how to live rightfully, and they are our daily practices. But those people who cannot practice them must keep these practices in their minds for now. It is shameful to say, but it sounds like this may apply to me. Many people become vain or arrogant when they have learned something new and act like he or she is an expert in that field. The Buddha warns about these kinds of people and told the Bodhisattvas who were from other worlds, to keep these three kinds of practices in their minds, and to accept any ordeal patiently and enjoyably. Thus, He encouraged them.



## B) Approaching Proper Things and Not Approaching

Sakyamuni Buddha continued to say:

“A Bodhisattva who wishes to expound this sutra in the evil world after my extinction should keep in his mind that there are three kinds of people: those he should not approach at all, those he should avoid approaching if possible, and those he should approach willingly.”



## C) Do Not Approach A Person with Power and Influence

“What are the people whom you should not approach? They are the kinds of people who do not accept any ideas or opinions of others such as a dictator, a king, a powerful person like a prince, a minister, a military general or a powerful wealthy man. You should never think to approach such a person and flatter them to use their powers.”



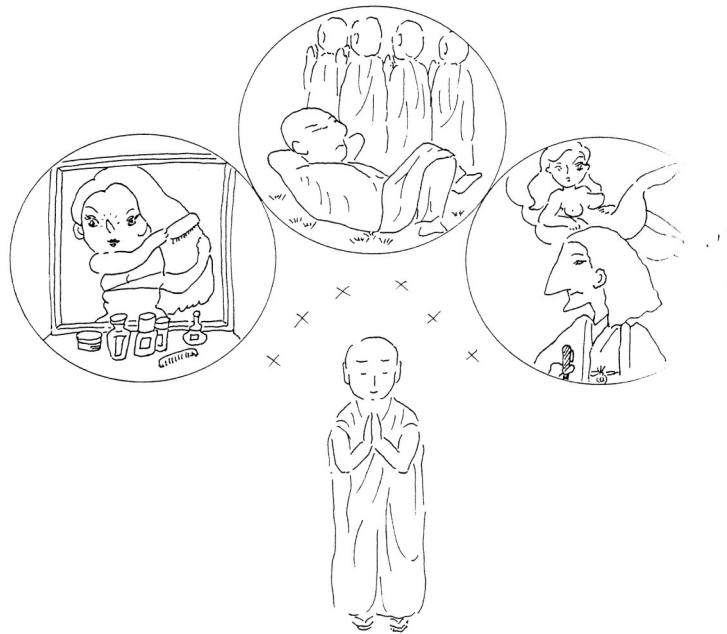
It is understandable for an ordinary Bodhisattva who cannot tell what is right and wrong to approach these powerful, authoritative people. Few people can do that except the great Bodhisattvas of this Saha-World.

It was only our Nichiren Great Bodhisattva, Superior-Practice Bodhisattva from Underground, who stood up against the Kamakura Government and pointed out its wrong doings in a dignified manner.

## D) Do Not Approach a Haughty or Distorted Person

Sakyamuni Buddha continued to talk about “The people whom you should not approach at all”: They are people who do not believe Buddha’s teachings, who do severe ascetic practices to damage their bodies, who think only for themselves, who do not care about the sufferings of others, who have closed their minds, or who writes worldly literatures that seek pleasure or vulgarity. The people who keep strict precepts, manners and forms recklessly also should be kept away from. They seem to have wandering minds, full of prejudice and vanity.

The Buddha does not like these types of inclinations very much. It is



important not to be attached to one side or the other. He likes a more natural style.



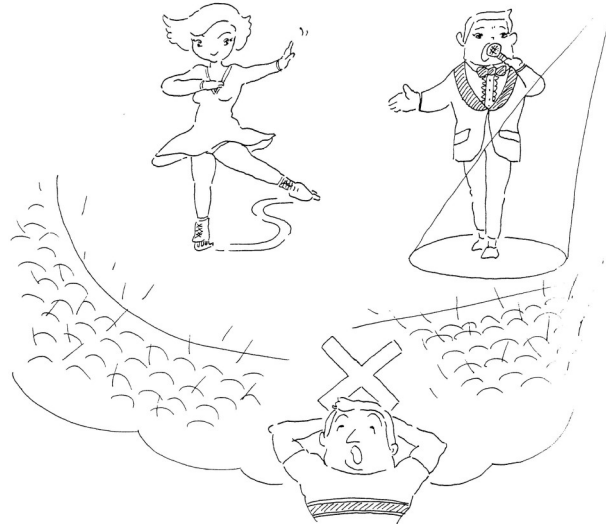
## **E) Stay away from the Flashy**

Sakyamuni Buddha teaches in more detail about what kinds of people the Bodhisattvas should not approach.

He teaches that the Bodhisattvas who have encountered the teachings of the Lotus Sutra will realize the benefits of the teachings and continue to practice it patiently. Then he will become happy. The Buddha teaches us just like a mother does with her children. So He continued to talk in more detail about “The people whom the expounder of the Lotus Sutra should not approach at all” and “The people whom he should avoid to approach”:

“He should not approach players of dangerous, fighting sports who compete with others. He should not approach various flashy amusement-entertainers receiving spotlights on stages. The Bodhisattvas should not look at worldly matters only but also see the insight of their minds. These contestants and entertainers had developed their skills slowly with steady trainings and with a lot of practice in the past. They might have suffered while they trained and may still suffer to keep up their fame.”

“The exponents of the Lotus Sutra must realize their sufferings and must save them, but those Bodhisattvas in less practices see only the outside-view and are not able to see the reality of their hidden sides of the higher ranked sports men and women or entertainers. The appearances of these top class contestants and entertainers often interrupt Bodhisattvas’ minds and practices. Therefore, the Bodhisattvas who want to expound the sutra should keep away from them. They should stay away from these contestants and entertainers. They must practice the Way of Bodhisattva at



any place and any time aiming to attain the Buddha's Eyes.”

The Bodhisattvas must practice the basics regardless of whether someone was watching or not, and build up their skill just as we had learned the higher rank people had hard trainings in Volume 13. You must realize that not only Bodhisattvas have strict practices but also many other people in different fields have strict and severe trainings.

Thus, Sakyamuni Buddha presumably gave these warnings for the sake of the Bodhisattvas who are weak minded and have practiced less. So you must consider looking at not only people's appearances but also their hearts. Then you may be able to understand the reality of the world.

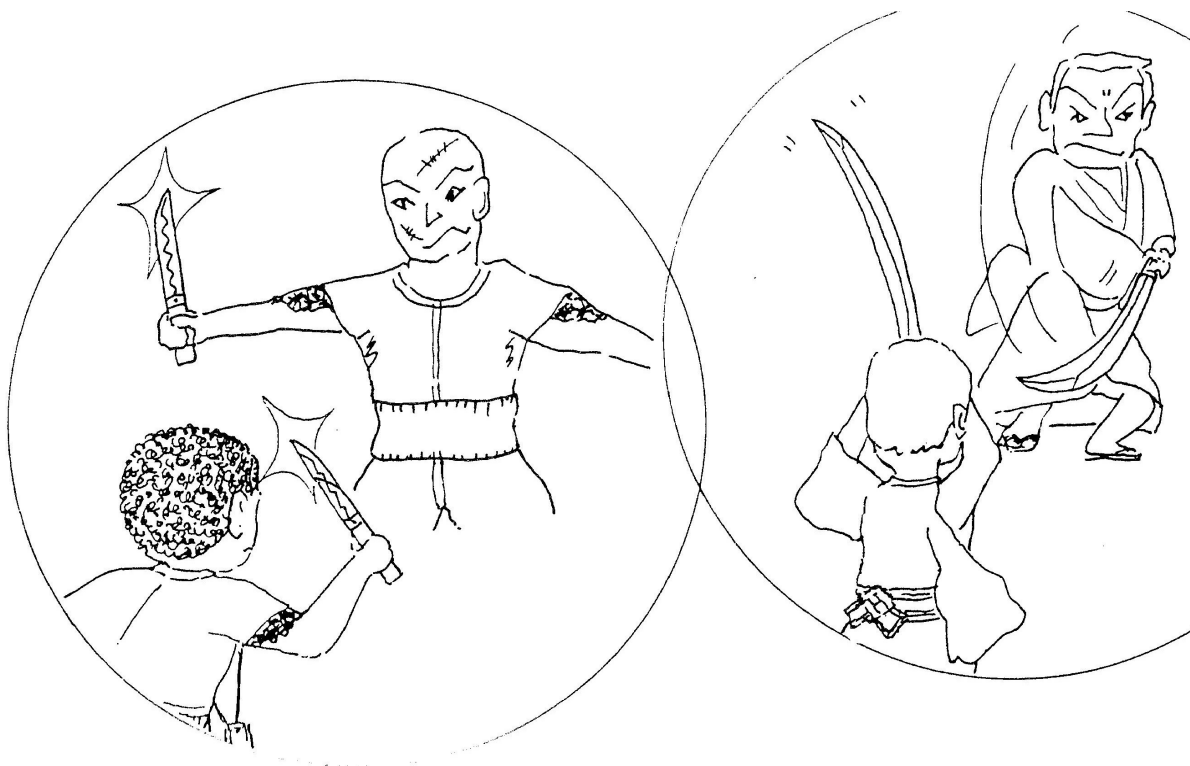
The Buddha's warnings are still going on!

## **F) Stay away from People Involved in Killing**

The Buddha said that you should never approach a murderer for any reason. For example, revenge was permitted over one hundred years ago in Japan. From Buddha's view point, revenge killings are not justified. Even though someone hates some other person a lot, forgiveness is much more valuable as a human being.

The soul of the forgiven murderer will repent his wrong doing and will ask his forgiveness. Then both souls will be saved by forgiveness.

The Buddha's warnings are still going on some more!



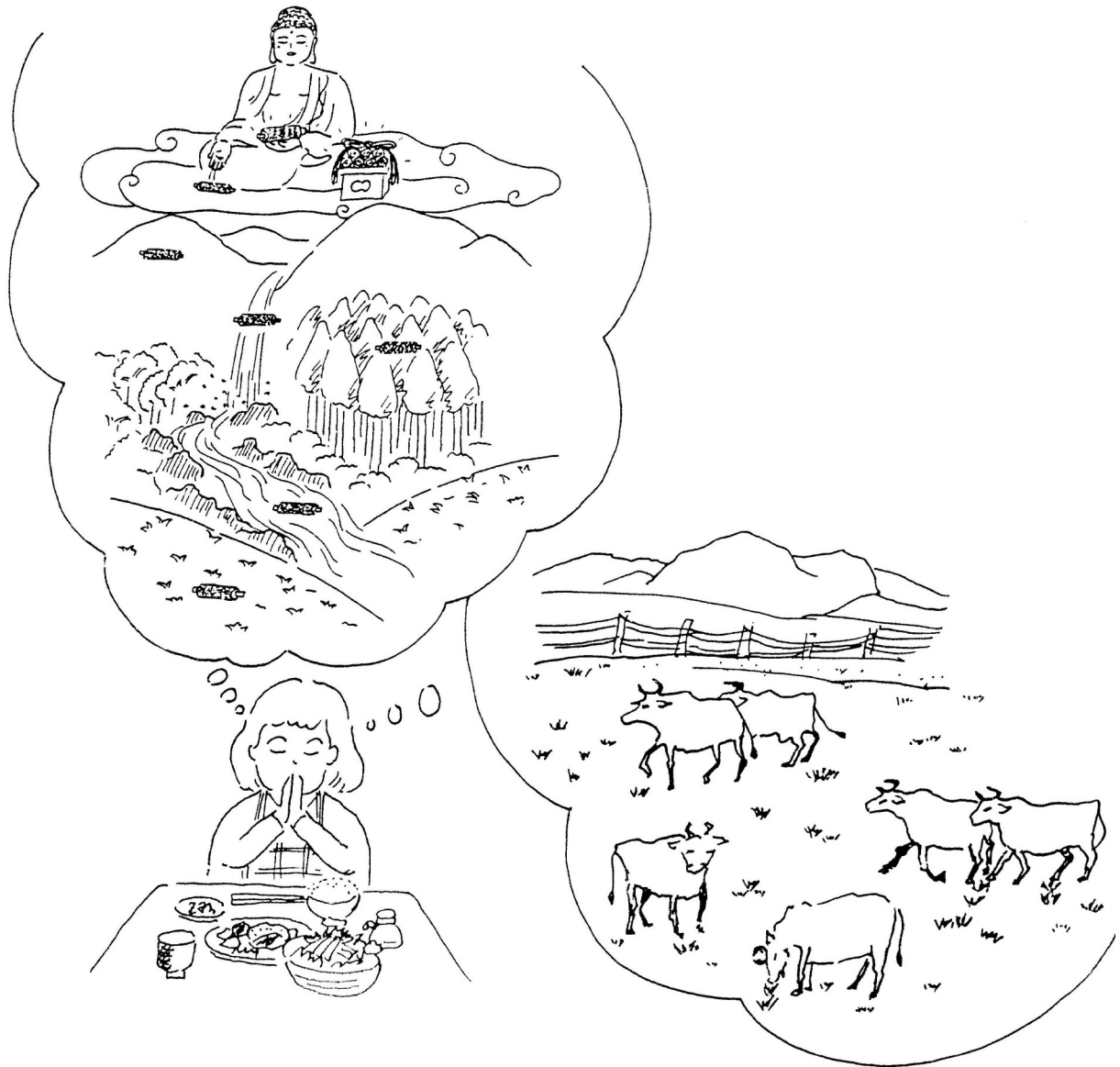
## **G) Appreciation to the Lives of All Living Beings**

Sakyamuni Buddha said, “He should not approach boar-keepers, shepherds, dog-keeper, hunters, fishermen, or other people who do evils for their livelihood.” Many people say that human beings and animals are the same living beings, but many of them kill animals without hesitation. You should not forget that the food from those living beings sustain our lives. We must appreciate all living beings and try to return their favor. These are the reasons why the Buddha reminded people who expound the sutra “Not to approach any animal-keepers.”

Do not forget that our lives depend on these animals. We should not sacrifice the fresh blood of living animals to a god and should not eat the animals alive. Even if we know that, if we become friendly with those people who make a living by keeping and killing these animals, our minds will be contaminated and may feel the thrill and our mentality will become abnormal. “None can touch vermin without staining his finger.”

Therefore, the Buddha said not to approach a person who may influence you in wrong ways. Whatever happens, good or bad to you, the Buddha wishes you to make the correct decision. He is worried and discussed such details for your benefit.

Although the Buddha said not to approach these people, He does not discriminate against them. He clearly mentioned that point in the following:



## H) Expound the Dharma when They Yearn for the Dharma

Sakyamuni Buddha said, “In the Era of the Declining Latter Age of the Dharma, when they come to you, you should expound the Dharma sincerely to them with compassion!” He also said that you must preach equally to people without any discrimination. You must teach them the spirit of the Lotus Sutra that all living beings are equal, so you must remove their sufferings from their minds.

There is still more to say. A mother might be shocked to find out the Buddha’s worry about His children may be much more than a mother’s care for her children.



## I) Do Not Approach Women Unnecessarily

“The Bodhisattva should not expound the Dharma to a woman he desires. He should not wish to look at her. When he enters the house of others, he should not talk with a little girl, an unmarried woman or a widow. He should not approach or make friends with eunuchs. He should not enter the house of others alone, especially a widow’s. If he must enter it alone for some reason, he should think of the Buddha with all his heart. When he expounds the Dharma to a woman, he should not laugh with his teeth visible to her. He should not expose his chest to her. He should not be friendly with her even for the purpose of expounding the Dharma to her.”

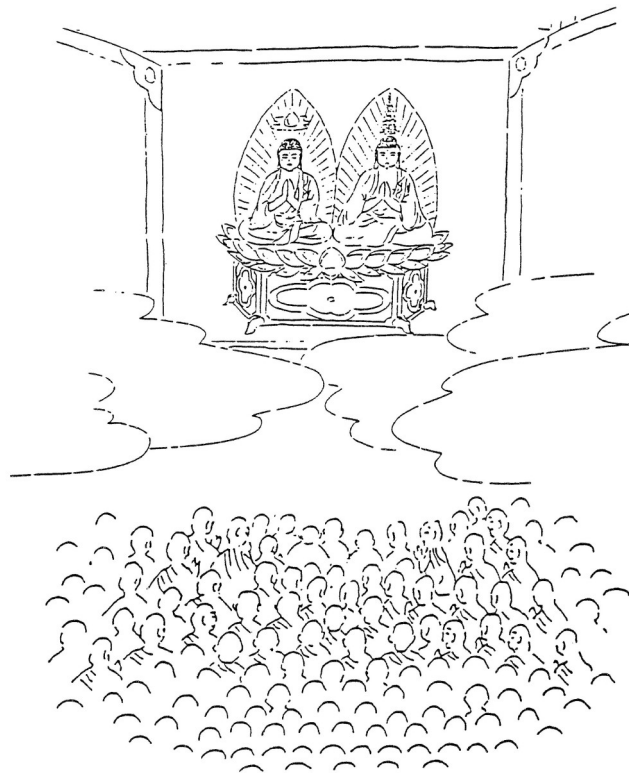
Thus, the Buddha warns about every detail to the untrained Bodhisattvas whose minds are easily led into temptation! A mother may not worry with this much detail. Sakyamuni Buddha really has the three virtues of the lord, the teacher, and the parent. He is the only one greatest person in the universe!



## J) Always Look Back Upon the Past

Sakyamuni Buddha said gently and slowly, “He should always make it a pleasure to sit in a quiet place and look back at the past. He should live in a retired place and concentrate your mind and expound the Lotus Sutra equally without any prejudice but with compassion to the people in the *Mappo* Era. How thoughtful and gentle He was!

These are called the Performing Proper Approach Practices. So far we talked about performing proper practices toward people. This is the first of two proper practices. The other practice is the way to see the universe. The Buddha will talk about the vast and limitless universe.

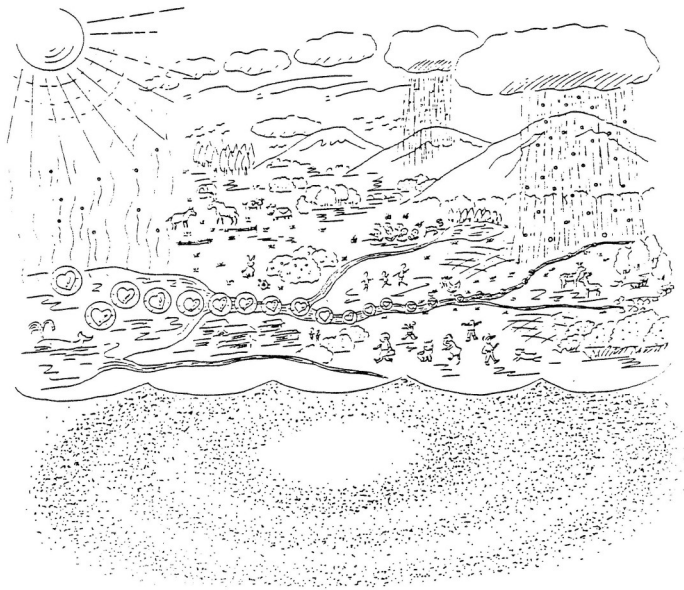




## K) The Earth and Human Beings Are Parts of the Universe

“The Bodhisattva (who expounds the Lotus Sutra) also should know the following truth. All things such as human beings, trees, grass, the ground, the ocean, the sky and the stars are all changing every second. They are as they are. Things essentially never stay the same. They do not move. They do not go. They do not turn. They have nothing substantial just as the sky does not. They are inexplicable. They are not born. They do not appear. They do not rise. They are nameless. They are formless. They have no property. They are immeasurable and limitless. They have no obstacle or hindrance. You should see all of this. Things can exist only by dependent origination. This truth is the second thing you should approach.”

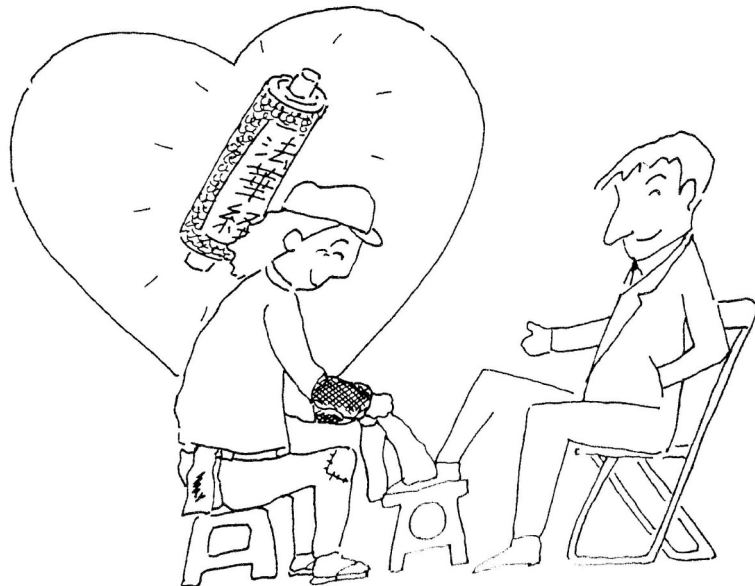
Everything is constantly changing; therefore, do not get attached to any one thing. Do not cry whatever happens to that thing. You must accept the law of cause, conditions and effect. You have to accept a thing as it is. It is hard to describe all causes and condition of a thing. Nothing on the earth and the universe belongs to a certain person. All things belong to all things. This truth is called the second thing the Bodhisattvas should approach.



## L) Have the Lotus Sutra rather than Property

How great this idea is! If you can accept the truth, you will not worry about the price of a land going up or down or your house loan. It is too ridiculous to worry about the price and the loan. There is no value for a preacher whether he owns land or not. There is no value on a place for him to live in a huge estate or in a small apartment room. The one who has nothing may be free from sufferings.

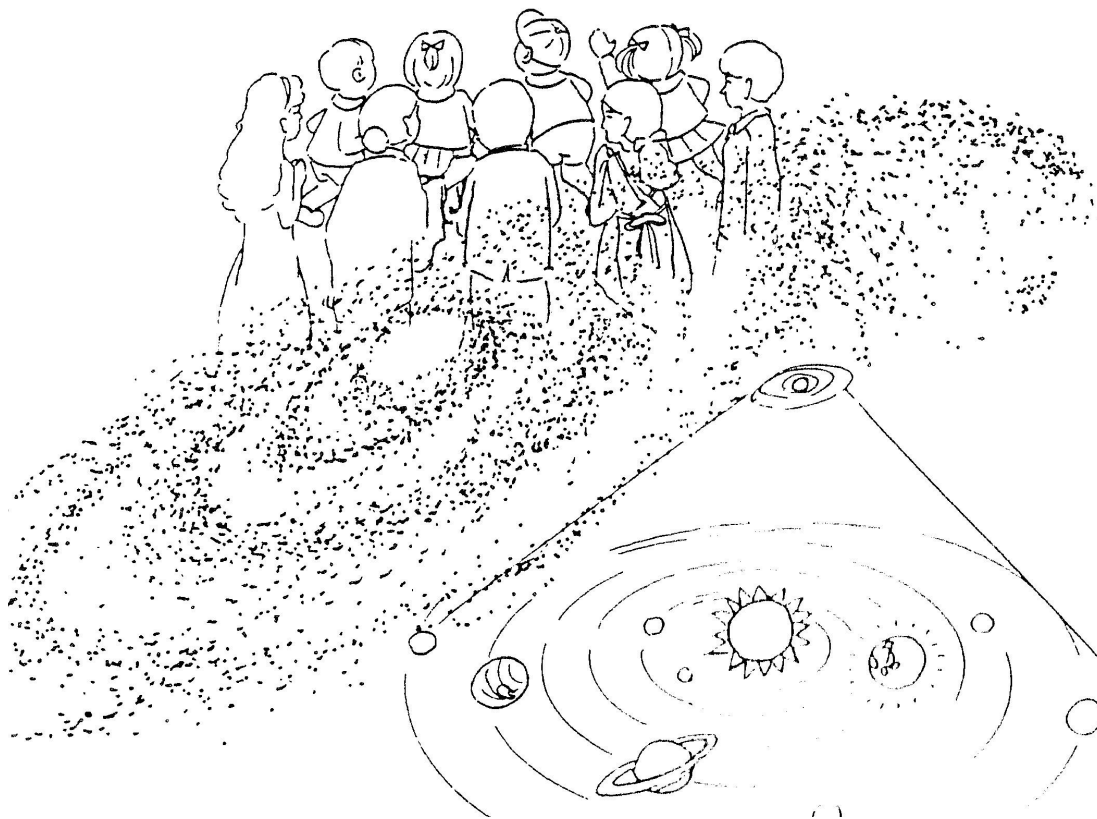
Sakyamuni Buddha is a good example of having nothing. He cast away all His belongings including his castle, property, and everything else. The most valuable thing on this earth is to meet with the Lotus Sutra. Make the spirit of the sutra your possession.



## **M) Put Your Energy into Even Small Matters**

For the Bodhisattva who expounds the Lotus Sutra in the *Mappo* Era, Sakyamuni Buddha explained how to conduct oneself in every detail. For the first step, He told one to go through the ordeals but to enjoy them with patience. For the methods one should take, the Buddha revealed three kinds of approaches of the Practice of the Body: “Should not approach,” “Avoid approaching,” and “Should approach.” For the practice of “one should approach,” He mentioned two ways of approaching; one toward the people and the other toward the universal truth. He emphasized the expounder of the sutra should put energy into even small matters, should believe in oneself as one with the universe and not get attached to any one thing but instead to have trust and pride as a valuable person meeting the Lotus Sutra. He should live through his life as a fortunate expounder of the sutra. This is how Sakyamuni Buddha explained the Peaceful Practice of the Body.

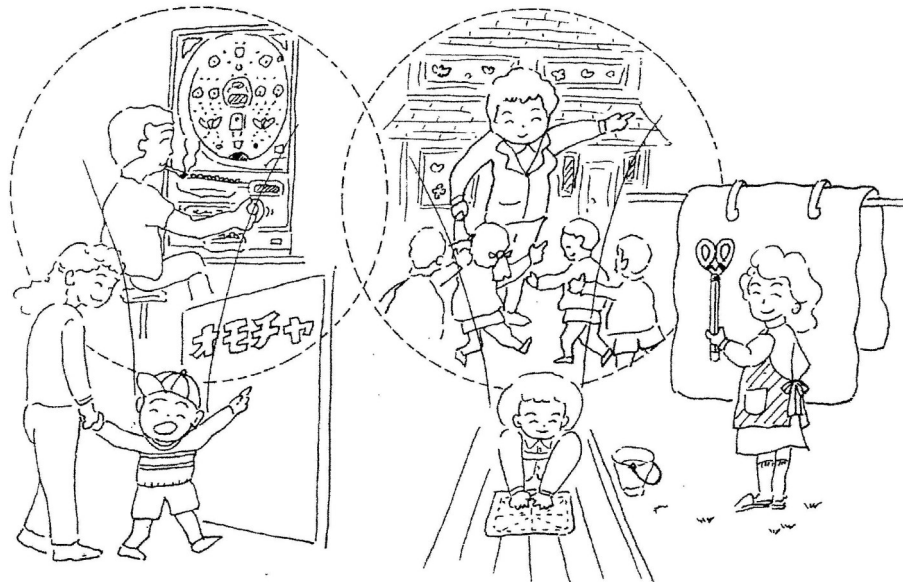
Even so, it was shocking to hear that Sakyamuni Buddha said that countless numbers of the great Bodhisattvas who came from the ten directions of the universe have not had enough practices to expound the Lotus Sutra toward the people on this earth, Saha-World. He gave many warnings to them if they wished to expound the sutra in the *Mappo* Era.



## N) No Hardship in His Life Is the One Who Has Not Had Enough Practice

The same thing can be said to us in this world. Suppose there is a person called, “A.” He was raised spoiled and self-centered without any hardship. On the other hand, person “B” has experienced happiness, sadness and many hardships, so he was raised to shine his soul to be happy even during hardship. Person “B” probably can handle his appointed big task better when he becomes an adult.

Therefore, I feel sorry for the child who was raised spoiled. But I feel better about the child who was raised in a strict but warm family surrounded by laughter. So for you too, please do not behave like a spoiled child but have discipline yourself! There is a saying in Japan, “Heavy work in youth is quiet rest in old age !”



## Chapter 4

### Peaceful Practice of the Mouth

#### A) *Shaku-buku* and *Shoju*

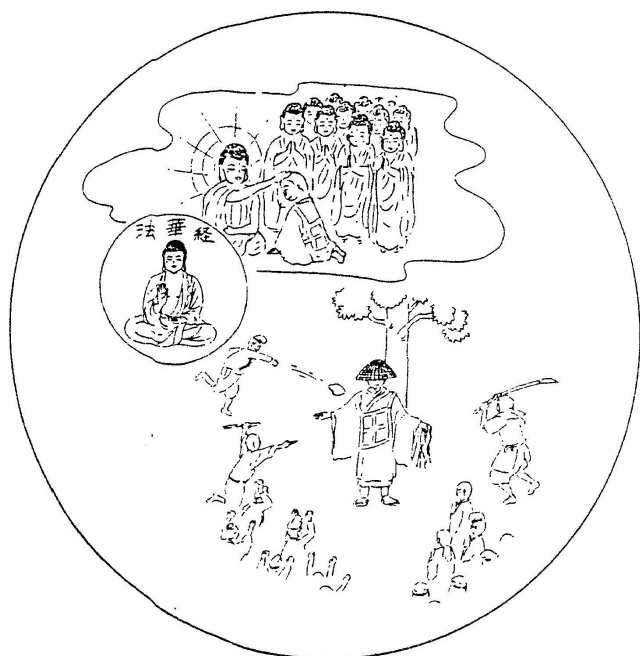
After Sakyamuni Buddha revealed the peaceful practice of the body, He talked continually about the peaceful practice of the mouth.

In order to spread the Lotus Sutra, there are two ways: *Shaku-buku* and *Shoju*. *Shaku-buku* means to convert others by persistent preaching. On the other hand, *Shoju* is to lead and convince them by respectfully accepting and understanding their view points and individual situation.

The Buddha said at first, “When one expounds or reads this sutra, one should not point out the faults of other persons or sutras.”

You must understand that these warnings were spoken to the Bodhisattvas who have not had enough practices. Beginners like us with less practice are not permitted to criticize other sutras of the Buddha even if it is inferior to the Lotus Sutra. The only person who can criticize other sutras will be revealed in Volume Sixteen. He is the Great Bodhisattva dis-

patched by the Eternal Sakyamuni Buddha. He is the one who can save all people in the Declining Latter Age of the Dharma.



(觀行)

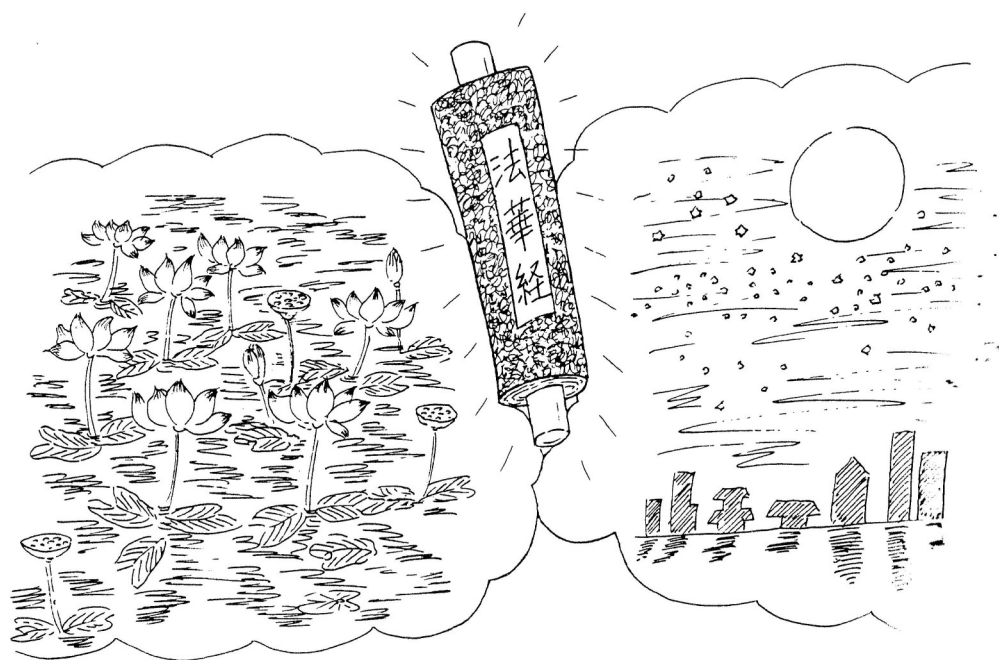


(止行)

## B) Preach Righteousness instead of Blaming Fault

Even though you think that another sutra may be faulty compared with the Lotus Sutra, you cannot say that the other sutra is wrong because it was revealed by the Buddha. Before Sakyamuni Buddha revealed the Lotus Sutra, He taught many teachings depending on the level of understanding of each listener. Therefore, although some sutras may not fit the people in the *Mappo* Era, the teachings of the sutras themselves cannot be at fault, because the sutra was revealed at a time that was best suited for a particular person. Therefore, if you criticize that sutra, it is the same as criticizing the Buddha.

The Lotus Sutra says for us to chant the name of the sutra, “Namu Myo-ho Ren-ge Kyo” sincerely with trust in it. So you should bravely talk about it instead of blaming the fault of other sutras.





Since the Lotus Sutra was revealed to save all living beings just like the full moon brightens the complete darkness or a lotus flower blooms beautifully without any stain of the dirty water on it even though the lotus grows in the muddy water. The Lotus Sutra symbolizes the white lotus flowers blooming in the dirty water but never gets stained. Its teachings save the souls of the people. Thus, the Buddha is trying to have us preach to the people righteousness instead of speaking ill of another sutra.

### **C) Don't Talk about Others**

Sakyamuni Buddha talked about this more. “One should not despise other teachers of the Dharma. One should not speak excessively of the good or bad points or the merits or demerits of others. One should not mention others by name when blaming them. Nor should one do so when praising them too much.”

We often say or hear, “Don't speak ill of others!” The Buddha says, “One should not speak excessively of the good or bad points or the merits or demerits of others. His warning was for us not to praise him too much or not to excessively speak ill towards beginners or those with less practice of the Bodhisattvas. If the beginners were criticized bitterly or heard



scandals about themselves, they will feel bad and may quit trying to practice and learn more.

Why should we not praise others too much? Can you think of a reason?

## D) Be Careful When You Were Praised Too Much

In order to understand Sakyamuni Buddha's mind, your mind must be very pure without any particle of dust.

Why should we not praise someone too much? It is because those Bodhisattvas who have not had much training or had less practice will become arrogant, their minds may be captivated with praise or their minds may become negligent. They will think that they have already reached the top. As a result they will lose their value as preachers.

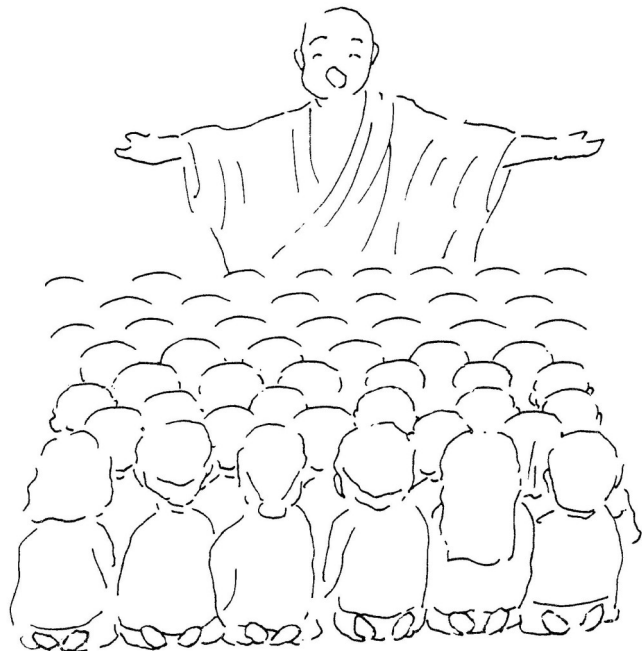
When you were praised with lip service, you have to brace yourself, "Watch out! I have to be more careful!" You should work harder. If you were deceived by flattery and then you died, you will be sorry for yourself in front of the Buddha. Instead, be patient while you practice but enjoy the practice so you work harder. In that situation, the Buddha will praise you after your death. That will be more precious and you will become a lucky person.



## E) Believe in One's Buddha Nature

The Buddha's talk still continued: "You should not have hostile and grudging feelings against those you dislike. You should not speak ill of them or try to point out their faults. You must carefully choose the right words to speak. If you preach the Dharma generously, your sermon will become full of gentility. Then the people will listen quietly and rejoice. When you are asked questions, you should sympathetically expound the Lotus Sutra, the teachings of the Great Vehicle so that the questioners may be able to obtain the knowledge of the equality and differences of all things, that is the Buddha Nature."

He said that the expounder of the Lotus Sutra should expound the Lotus Sutra sincerely, then the listener will awaken their Buddha nature. One should save suffering people. It is important to save the listeners' sufferings and not your own. That must be the expounder's intention to keep in mind.



## F) Expound the Dharma Peacefully

“The Bodhisattva should wish to bring peace to all living beings, and then expound the Dharma to them. He should make a seat in a pure place, wash the dirt and dust off himself and wear a new and undefiled robe. Clean himself within and without, sit on the seat of the Dharma peacefully, expound the Dharma, and answer questions.”

“A monk who expounds this Sutra of the Lotus Sutra of the Wonderful Dharma with these practices after my extinction, will be emancipated from jealousy, anger, and other illusions, that is to say, from all obstacles in the Declining Latter Age of the Dharma. He will have no sorrow. He will not be spoken ill of. He will not live in fear. He will not be threatened with swords or sticks, or driven out of his monastery.”

Thus, the Buddha explained the Peaceful Practices of the Mouth.



# Chapter 5

## Peaceful Practices of the Minds

The Peaceful Practices of the mind means to maintain the right mental attitude while expounding the Dharma.

### A) Should and Should Not

Nobody can see someone else's mind, except the Buddha, so it is a matter of one's own practices but it is very important. This practice also has "Should" and "Should not" practices.

"Should Practice," means to expound sincerely the sutra bravely with great compassion.

"Should Not" means the practice is no good even if the expounder of the sutra thinks about them. There are four things the expounder should not think about:

1. The Bodhisattva should not be jealous of others, or flatter them, or deceive them.

2. He should not despise anyone who studies the Way to Buddhahood by any other method, speak ill of them, or point out their faults.
3. He should not disturb and perplex those seekers of the Dharma.
4. He should not get involved in meaningless quarrels with the followers of other schools of sutras.



(觀行)

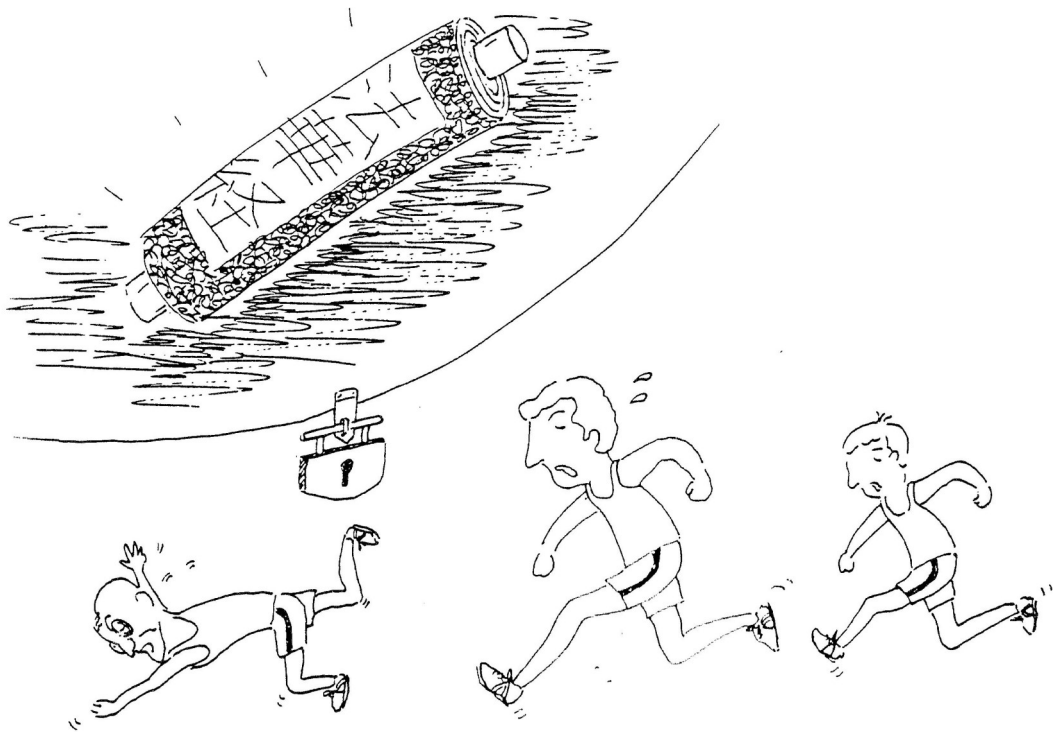


(止行)

## B) Never Expound the Dharma in Meaningless Quarrels

4. He should not get involved in meaningless quarrels with the followers of other schools of sutras.

This is because all sutras are Sakyamuni Buddha's golden words. Even though the teachings in some sutras are inferior compared with the Lotus Sutra, they are still the Buddha's teachings revealed step by step for the different level of listeners to be able to gradually understand the highest teaching - the Lotus Sutra. Those Bodhisattvas who have not had enough practices and the beginner level Bodhisattvas should not get involved in a logical quarrel of words in the sutras.





Thus, the Buddha gave a warning about the four practices that beginners should not do.

Soon after that, Sakyamuni Buddha revealed what you should do for the beginner Bodhisattva who wishes to expound the Lotus Sutra. “He should have great compassion toward all living beings especially to those who may not be able to meet the Lotus Sutra.” There are so many people who never knew or heard the Lotus Sutra. It is very unfortunate for them. Therefore, those of you who are reading this book are very fortunate. You are a lucky person! That means you have met this Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Law in your previous existence.

Isn't it great!

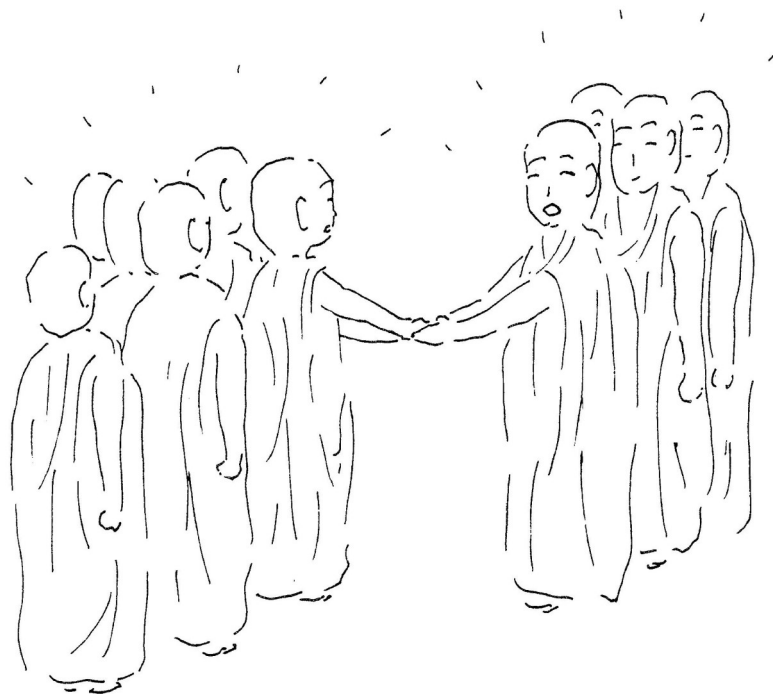
### **C) Save Them with Your Sincere Heart!**

The second “Should” is “You should expound the Dharma to all living beings without partiality.” There are many people who never knew or heard the name of the Lotus Sutra. For those people who have attachment to the teachings of the small vehicle, tell them that you will lead them to the Lotus Sutra in the future. You should have compassion like your father. The Buddha teaches us to have thoughtfulness toward our companions who have not yet encountered the Lotus Sutra. The Buddha does not like a selfish person saying “Only I am a good person!”

The third “Should” is “You should respect all Bodhisattvas regardless if they are beginners or virtuous ones because they will become great and virtuous Bodhisattvas for sure by practicing these Peaceful Practices.

The fourth “Should” is “You should expound the Dharma to all living being without partiality to the people who wish to listen to it.”

After revealing these four “shoulds,” the Buddha added the following:



## D) Expound the Dharma Peacefully and Joyfully

“A Bodhisattva who performs these peaceful practices in the latter days after my extinction can expound the Dharma without disturbance. He can have protections of the many Buddhas. A great multitude will come to him, hear and receive this sutra from him, keep it after hearing it, recite it after keeping it, expound it after reciting it, copy it to cause others to copy it after expounding it, make offerings to the copy of this sutra, honor it, respect it, and praise it.” The Buddha told how important the Peaceful Practice of Mind is!

In our society, someone may hate others and say, “I want to kill him!” However, the Buddha said, “It is sinful even if you think of killing some-

one.” It is because this thinking may contaminate your soul and you may not make the right decision. Therefore, you must try not to think of the wrong way but have a gentle mind instead. Otherwise your soul will be contaminated. Even if you may hate someone, you should pray for them to be a good person. Then your mind will settle calmly and see things brightly.



# Chapter 6

## Peaceful Practices of Resolution

This practice is to resolve solemnly to make every effort to realize and spread the Lotus Sutra in the Age of Degeneration.

### A) The Three Great Vows of the Great Bodhisattva

This is the last of the Four Peaceful Practices.

“The Bodhisattva who keeps this Lotus Sutra in the latter age after my extinction, should have resolution! The gods in the sky will always serve him in order to hear the Dharma from him.” Thus, the Buddha promised.

That was the reason Nichiren Great Bodhisattva as the great leader in the Declining Latter Age of the Dharma made the Three Great Vows:

“I shall become the pillar of Japan.”

“I shall become the eyes of Japan.”

“I shall become the great vessel of Japan.”

How daring are these great vows!

Therefore, the gods one after another protected him.



## B) Your Three Great Vows!

It would be nice if you make your own vows: “I shall become the pillar of my house to support my family.” “I shall become the eyes of my house to protect my family.” “I shall become the great vessel of my house to make my family happy!”



## Chapter 7

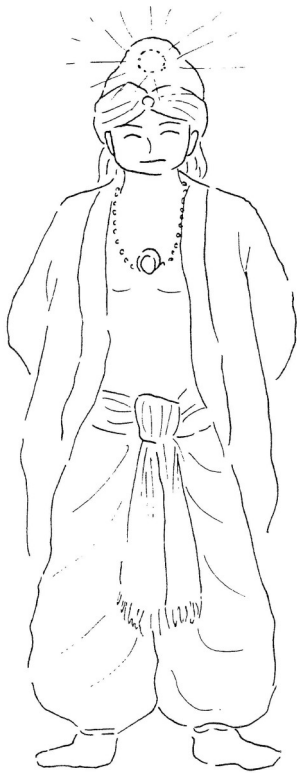
### A Parable of a Brilliant Gem in the Top-knot

#### A) A Gentle and Powerful Great King

Sakyamuni Buddha gave us a parable, “A brilliant gem in the top-knot” after the four peaceful practices.

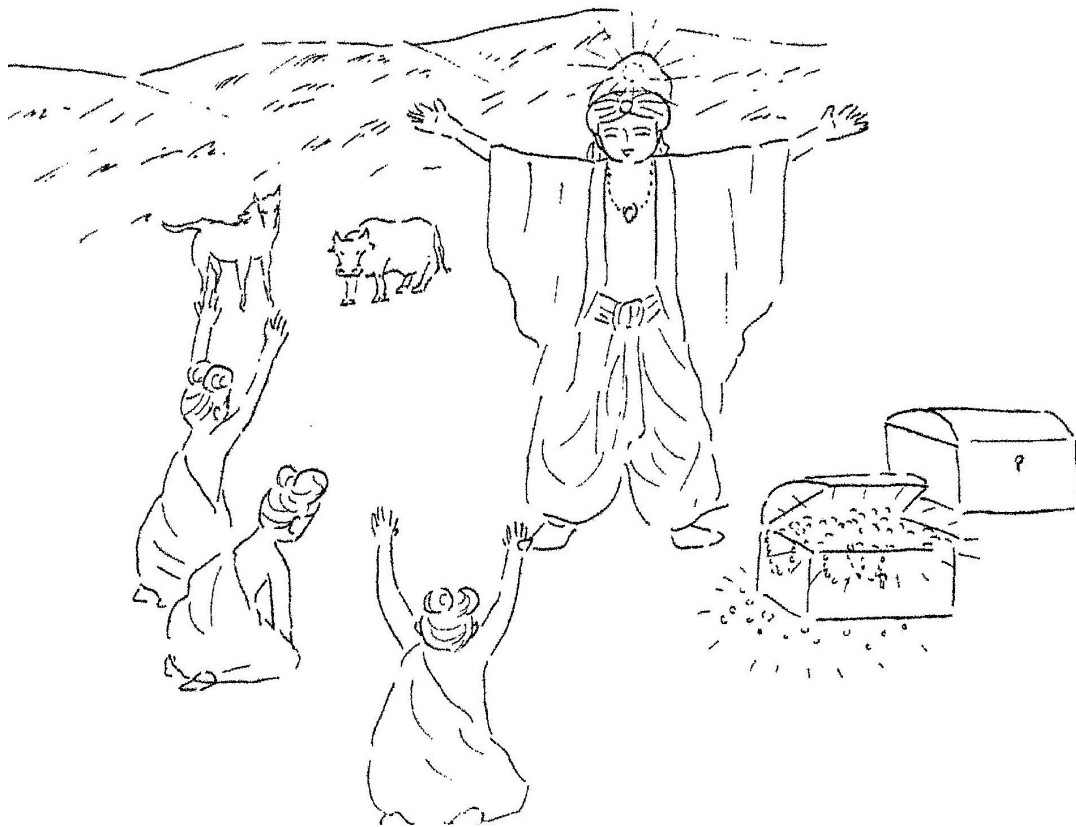
Suppose a powerful king ruled his kingdom for the sake of world peace and everyone’s happiness in the world. He had countless number of servants. He was very gentle. He was not an ordinary king who only wished peace in his own country and happiness of his own people. He also wished

for other countries that were fighting, countries that were not prospering, and countries that were poorly ruled to become peaceful and prosperous.



## B) Rewards as their Wishes

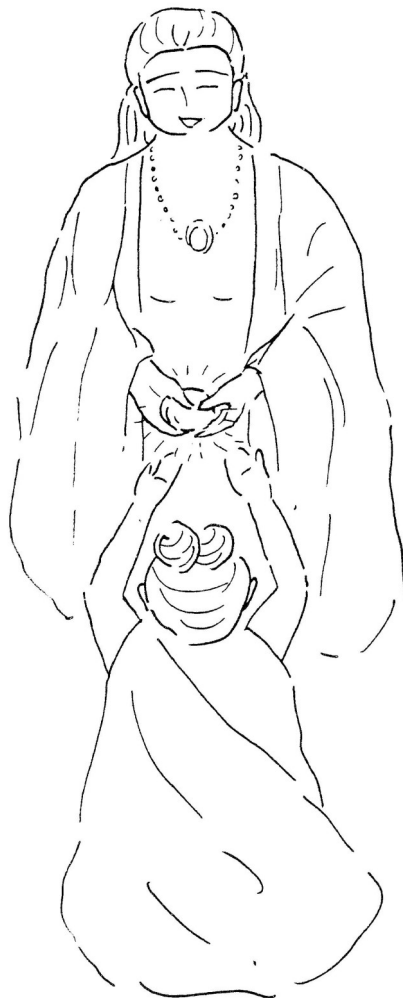
He was very glad to see that some soldiers distinguished themselves in war. According to their merits, he gave them paddy fields, houses, gold, silver, cows, and horses as they wished. But he did not give a brilliant gem which he was keeping in his top-knot to anyone because the gem was the only one in the world. The gem was only to be given to a great general who could lead them to world peace.



## C) Reward for Saving the Minds of the People

He will praise and be glad to give the precious gem to a soldier of extraordinary merit who fought bravely for the sake of world peace and happiness of all humankind just like the king.

This king has never fought for widening his territory or for his fame. He worked hard to establish peace on earth and harmony of the community and happiness for all living beings. Therefore, he had no attachment to the precious gem on his top-knot.





## Chapter 8

# The Buddha is the Great King in the Triple World

Sakyamuni Buddha said, “I am the great king of the Dharma in the triple world just like the great king in the parable. I am the great king who destroyed all *Mara* (devil) of illusion and attachment in the triple world. The *Mara* disappeared from my mind. I am full of calmness and wisdom. The *Mara* has changed his evil mind and now vows to protect the Dharma. Many Buddha’s disciples also bravely fought with the *Mara* and attained the doctrines of “Non-self and Void.”

Sravakas, who practice the teachings of the small vehicle, became free from their illusions. They are now free from the sufferings of birth, old age, disease, death and another four sufferings. They all had merits worth receiving rewards, so they have reached the castle of Nirvana. That was their reward received, but not enough merits to receive the precious gem of the king’s top-knot which is the only one profound teaching in the universe, the Lotus Sutra.”

“I did not expound the Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma before, because if I had done so, many people in the world would have hated it and few would have believed it. If there is someone who has the same mind as Buddha’s world peace and happiness of all man-kind and saves them all, the Buddha will be glad to present this precious gem to him.”

That was Sakyamuni Buddha’s declaration.



# Chapter 9

## The Great Bodhisattvas Who Have Not Showed Up Yet

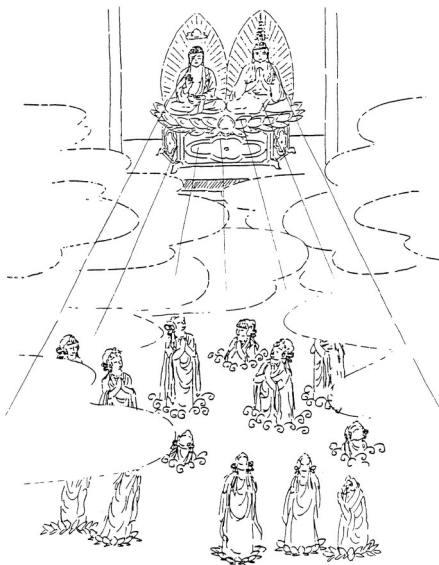
It now approaches the final scene.

Sakyamuni Buddha said that the eighty million Bodhisattvas from the ten directions of the universe have not had enough merits and enough practices yet.

Who will be the great Bodhisattvas whom the Buddha accepts?

Aren't you excited to find out?

Who will be the lucky person to receive the Lotus Sutra like the precious gem from the Buddha and where are they and when do they appear? We are looking forward to seeing them. We wish to see them sooner!



Sakyamuni Buddha said after the parable: “If anyone speaks ill of him (the expounder of the sutra), the speaker’s mouth will be shut.” Then He continued to say, “He (the expounder) can go anywhere as fearless as the lion king. The light of his wisdom will be as bright as that of the sun.” Then He talks to us about wonderful dreams:

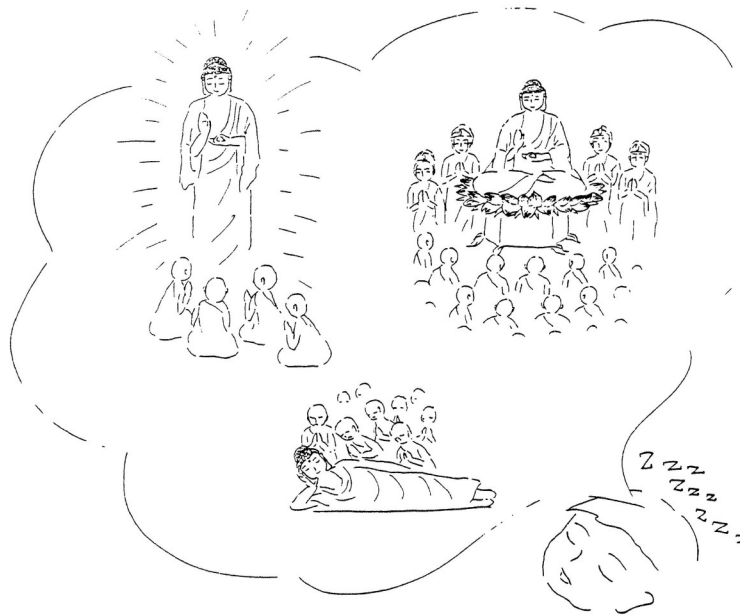
# Chapter 10

## Wonderful Dreams

“He will see only wonderful things in his dream. Many living beings, including dragons and *assuras* are joining their hands together toward me respectfully, and I am expounding the Dharma to them. He also will dream: ‘The Body of the Buddha is golden colored. They emitted innumerable rays of light. The Buddha knew that I entered deep into the Way to Buddhahood. So he assured me of my future attainment of perfect enlightenment. I expounded the Wonderful Dharma and saved innumerable living beings. Then I entered into Nirvana just as a flame dies when smoke is gone.’ Anyone who expounds these supreme teachings in the evil world after my extinction will obtain great benefits as previously stated.”

What wonderful dreams aren't they?

I wish to dream like that!



## Chapter 11

### **Fulfill the Peaceful Practices of the Body, the Mouth, the Mind and the Resolution**

We must behave well, speak right words, keep our minds pure, and have the resolution to expound the Dharma. In order to keep up these practices, we must be gentle and peaceful, enjoy our tasks and have patience! Then we may have wonderful dreams such as sitting on lion-like seats, looking at golden-colored Buddhas, watched by many respectful congregations and receive the assurance to become Buddhas.

Keep that in your mind: Be patient and challenge your task joyfully. Do not fear anyone! If someone requests to hear the Lotus Sutra, let him or her listen to the wonderful Dharma without any discrimination.

These are the real peaceful practices of the body, the mouth, the mind, and the resolution!

