

Feb. 1968, Lotus Sutra #3

ZMC

.cm (transcription checked, edited by Brian F.)

Maitreya asked Manjusri what was going to happen, and Manjusri started to answer that question:

"Whereupon Manjusri, the prince royal, addressed Maitreya, the Bodhisattva Mahasattva, and the whole assembly of Bodhisattvas (in these words): It is the intention of the Tathagata, young men of good family, to begin a grand discourse for the teaching of the law, to pour the great rain of the law, to make resound the great drum of the law, to raise the great banner of the law, to kindle the great torch of the law, to blow the great conch trumpet of the law, and to strike the great timbale of the law."

Manjusri is starting to say something about what he experienced before, because the same thing happened to him when he was studying Dharma in his previous life. There were various names for him: Manjusri, Manjusvara, or Manjughosha. "Manjusri" means an "auspicious man," and "Manjusvara" or "Manjughosha" means a "man who has a beautiful voice." "Whereupon Manjusri, the prince royal, addressed Maitreya, the Bodhisattva Mahasattva, and the whole assembly of Bodhisattvas." In this sutra the bodhisattva has the main position. You can almost say this sutra was told for bodhisattvas and to bodhisattvas. "...the whole assembly of Bodhisattvas." These words are repeated maybe twice or more in chapter fifteen, the famous chapter we recite on Dogen Zenji's memorial day each month. Old monks in Eihei-ji can recite this sutra almost by heart--in Chinese, not in Japanese. Zen Buddhists chant the twenty-eight volumes of this sutra. In former days they could recite very well. I cannot recite so well, but old monks can recite it quite easily in a short time, in Chinese.

Manjusri started in this way: "It is the intention of the Tathagata, young men of good family," these words are also repeated many times in this sutra, "to begin a grand discourse for the teaching of the law, to pour the great rain of the law, to make resound the great drum of the law." In Sanskrit drum is "dantobishi" [?], from the drum sound, "don, don, don". It is a very interesting name for drum. In festivals in Japan people strike a big drum: "dongbish, dongbish, dondabish". The great drum of the law. "...to raise the great banner of the law, to kindle the great torch of the law, to blow the great conch trumpet of the law,..." Do you know the conch trumpet? In Japan, in Shingon temples, the Tantric Buddhists have a big conch trumpet. "Boooo." It goes this way, [demonstrating it in the air]. "...and to strike the great timbale of the law."

This repetition of various instruments is not the same in different translations. Scholars who are studying this sutra compare the versions: in the Tibetan rendering this is missing, in the Nepalese this is missing, in the Chinese rendering this is missing. In this way they try to figure out how those scriptures were introduced to China or Nepal or Tibet. Those are very important studies, but... And I have Doctor Watanabe's translation here. He compares the new and old Chinese renderings to the Tibetan, Nepalese and Pali. So if you want to study this, I have various proofs for this material. But I must continue my lecture as quickly as possible.

"Again, it is the intention of the Tathagata, young men of good family, to make a

grand exposition of the law this very day." Right now he will explain the grand exposition of the law, as he it heard before. "Thus it appears to me, young men of good family, as I have witnessed a similar sign of the former Tathagatas," in his former life, "the Arhats, the perfectly enlightened," who have perfect wisdom, perfect enlightenment, "murogi". They have no desire or attachment to anything. "Those former Tathagatas, the Arhats, the perfectly enlightened, they too emitted a lustrous ray, and I am convinced that the Tathagata is about to deliver a grand discourse for the teaching of the law and make his grand speech on the law everywhere heard, he having shown such a foretoken. And because the Tathagata, the Arhat, the perfectly enlightened one wishes that this Dharmaparyaya meeting opposition in all the world..." Dr. Watanabe says "meeting" is not appropriate, but "teaching" or "learning". And because he translates it as "meeting", he says "opposition". But it should be some teaching or learning which is difficult. So, "And because the Tathagata, the Arhat, the perfectly enlightened one wishes that this Dharmaparyaya hard to learn in all the world be heard everywhere, therefore does he display so great a miracle and this foretoken consisting in the lustre occasioned by the emission of a ray.

"I remember, young men of good family, that in the days of yore, many immeasurable, inconceivable, immense, infinite, countless Aeons, more than countless Aeons ago, nay, long and very long before, there was born a Tathagata called Kandrasyapradipa, an Arhat, a perfectly enlightened one, endowed with science and conduct, a Sugata, knower of the world, an incomparable tamer of men, a teacher (and ruler) of gods and men, a Buddha and Lord." Those are Buddha's ten names, ten titles. Shakyamuni Buddha's ten titles also apply for this Buddha Kandrasyapradipa. "Kandra" means the moon, "Surya" is sun: "Burning Sun-Moon Buddha".

The ten titles: *Tathagata* [*nyora*] means a man who comes from the truth and who does not stay in any realm of form or form world, who comes from truth and who goes back to the truth, or someone who preaches right Dharma and right law, or someone who observes things as it is. *Arhat* [*arakan*] is one who has attained perfect enlightenment, the attainment of the Theravada Buddhist. *Samyaksambuddha* [*shohenchi*] is Buddha who knows everything and who knows things as it is, who has no discrepancy or one-sided understanding or observation.

Vidyacaranasampanna [*myogyo-soku*] is one who can see through things, who knows his former life, and who has perfect enlightenment. This is also an attainment of the Arhat. In the morning we pray to have three wisdoms or powers, the Arhat's power. Nowadays we have science instead of those three powers, so maybe that is why he translated it as "science". *Myogyo-soku* or "conduct" means precept observation; his mouth and body and mind are perfectly enlightened. *Sugata* [*zenzei*] means a man who has great knowledge, can say things nicely, and who has deep, great *samadhi*. The sixth one, *lokavit* [*sekenge*], one who knows this world [*lokadhatu*] completely, who understands human life completely from both sides, the mundane way and the enlightened way. *Annutara*, [*mujoshi*] is the so-called incomparable one, who has supreme Nirvana. As his attainment is supreme, he is the supreme, incomparable one. "Tamer of men," *purusadamyasarathi* [*jogo-jobu*], who has great means of helping people with great mercy. *Shasta devamanusyanam* [*tenninshi*, "teacher"] of human beings and celestial beings. And the last one is Buddha and Lord, *lakanatha* or *Buddha-bhagavat*. Those are the ten names.

"He showed the law; he revealed the duteous course which is holy at its commencement, holy in its middle, holy at the end, good in substance and form, complete and perfect, correct and pure." This should also be counted as ten elements of the quality of the teaching, but it is very difficult to figure out with this translation. "Holy at its commencement, holy in its middle, holy at the end" is a rather stock term for us. "*Sho chu go zen*" [?], we say. "Good in substance" should be good in meaning or contents, "form" should be "words". Good in meaning and good in words. "Complete" and "perfect" should be two elements. Complete doesn't include any other meaning; in this sense, it is complete. It also means pureness of the elements of the teaching. "Perfect" here means sufficient. One teaching suffices for every teaching. In this sense it is perfect. "Correct" is one element and "pure" is another. "Correct" means nothing is wrong with it, and "pure" means pureness of practice, or precepts observation.

"That is to say, to the disciples he preached,"--"he" means Kandrasuryapradipa--"the law containing the four Noble Truths, and starting from the chain of causes and effects, tending to overcome birth, decrepitude, sickness, death, sorrow, lamentation, woe, grief, despondency, and finally leading to Nirvana." The first one is, as you know, the four noble truths for the Theravada Buddhists or *sravakas*. And the teaching of causality or interdependency of birth, old age, "sickness, death, sorrow, lamentation, woe, grief, despondency, and finally leading to Nirvana" is the teaching of the *pratyeka-yana*. Here, as you heard, there is no distinction between the teaching for the *sravakas* and the teaching for the *pratekas*. From the viewpoint of the *Lotus Sutra*, which is a Mahayana teaching,...

Oh, I'm sorry. Maybe it is too tedious for you. (lots of laughter in this paragraph) I almost gave up already, so I can imagine how you feel. When I was young, I would go to school by train. As long as the train was going, I was sleeping, but when the train stopped, I woke up. I woke up suddenly because I had to get off. As long as my tedious lecture is going, you may sleep. If I stop my lecture, you should wake up. There will be no need to remember these things, you know. But you should know how complicated our Dharma is. Very complicated, but very clear, you know. But to make it clear, we have to make a good effort. Sometimes it looks like some story, and you may think if you read those scriptures, that there's no truth in them, that they are just fairy tales or stories, but it is not so. The underlying thought is very deep and accurate. So as long as we are studying it, we should make it clear.

Those teachings starting from birth, old age, sickness, death, sorrow, lamentation, woe, grief, uneasiness and Nirvana are the teaching of interdependency. Most scholars used to understand this as a teaching of causality: birth is the cause of old age, and birth is the cause of sickness. Because we were born, we have old age and sickness and death. But this is actually the teaching of interdependency and is another form of the four noble truths.

We say the Four Noble Truths and Eight-fold Path are teachings for the *sravakas*, and the Twelve Links of Causality is a teaching for *pratyekas*, but according to recent results of scholarship, Buddha actually taught both of those teachings without separating them: sometimes the Four Noble Truths and the holy Eight-fold Path, sometimes the Twelve Links of Causality. And if you analyze those two teachings, they are two different versions of the same teaching. What he meant was the same. So it is no wonder that in this *Lotus Sutra* those two teachings are mixed and are supposed to

be for the disciples. Here it says "disciples", but the Chinese rendering says "the disciples of words [or disciples of the worlds?]". It looks like *sravakas*, but it may be better to say "to the disciples of words". Then the meaning becomes clearer. It is said that the original text says "disciples of words", and it includes both *sravakas* and *pratyeka* buddhas.

"...and to the Bodhisattvas he preached the law connected with the six Perfections, and terminating in the knowledge of the Omniscient, after the attainment of supreme, perfect enlightenment." So far the teaching was for *sravakas* and *pratyekas*, and now the teaching is for the bodhisattvas. For the bodhisattva, Buddha gave the teaching of the six *paramitas*. I think I explained them already. *Dana Paramita*, bestowing of material and teaching; *Sila Paramita*, keeping the precepts; *Ksanti Paramita*, the practice of patience; *Virya Paramita*, zeal and progress (shoji [?] *paramita*); *Dhyana Paramita*, the practice of meditation; and *Prajna Paramita*, wisdom *paramita*, the power to discern truth or reality.

Thank you very much.

EZT – early SFZC transcript – 68-02-00-C
