

妙法蓮華經
MYŌ HŌ REN GE KYO

Chapter 19 The Most Venerable Teaching

What is the most important teaching among all of the Buddha's teachings? It is "The Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma, or the Lotus Sutra, in short. I would like to explain the sutra, chapter by chapter for you to easily understand. However, I almost forgot to say some important things. I will tell you these things in the next two chapters.

Chapter 20 The Compassionate Teaching to His Home Kingdom

Buddha Sakyamuni walked around India to preach various teachings to a lot of people in many different ways and in many places. One day, He stopped by His hometown, Kapilavastu Castle. He expounded the Dharma to His wife, Princess Yashodhara, His only child, Rahula, and His father, King Shuddhodana.

The people of the Sakya Clan in the kingdom had been very sad when they had heard that the princely heir had renounced the principedom and had started the homeless life of a monk. However, when the prince became the Buddha and returned to His hometown, the people around the kingdom gathered to see Him, even for just a glance.



The Buddha kept the promise made to

Princess Yashodhara at the time He had left the castle. The promise was that He would return to the palace after attaining Enlightenment. He talked to her at length about the following teachings: “Once we are born, we must die.” “Once we meet, we must be apart sooner or later.”

The soul is eternal. It exists while it is changing. Life on this earth is for everyone to repent the wrongdoings in their past lives. One must live through his or her life even if life is full of suffering, even if one is not blessed, or even if one is handicapped. You must live through it no matter what. When you live through this life, you are able to repent the wrongdoings in your previous lives. Your next life will match the karma in your present life.

It is useless to complain to others about your sufferings. If you suffer in this life, it may be caused by wrongdoings in your previous lives. In order not to carry on these sufferings and distresses in your next life, you must live the Eightfold Path. Thus, the Buddha expounded the Dharma to the people in the kingdom.

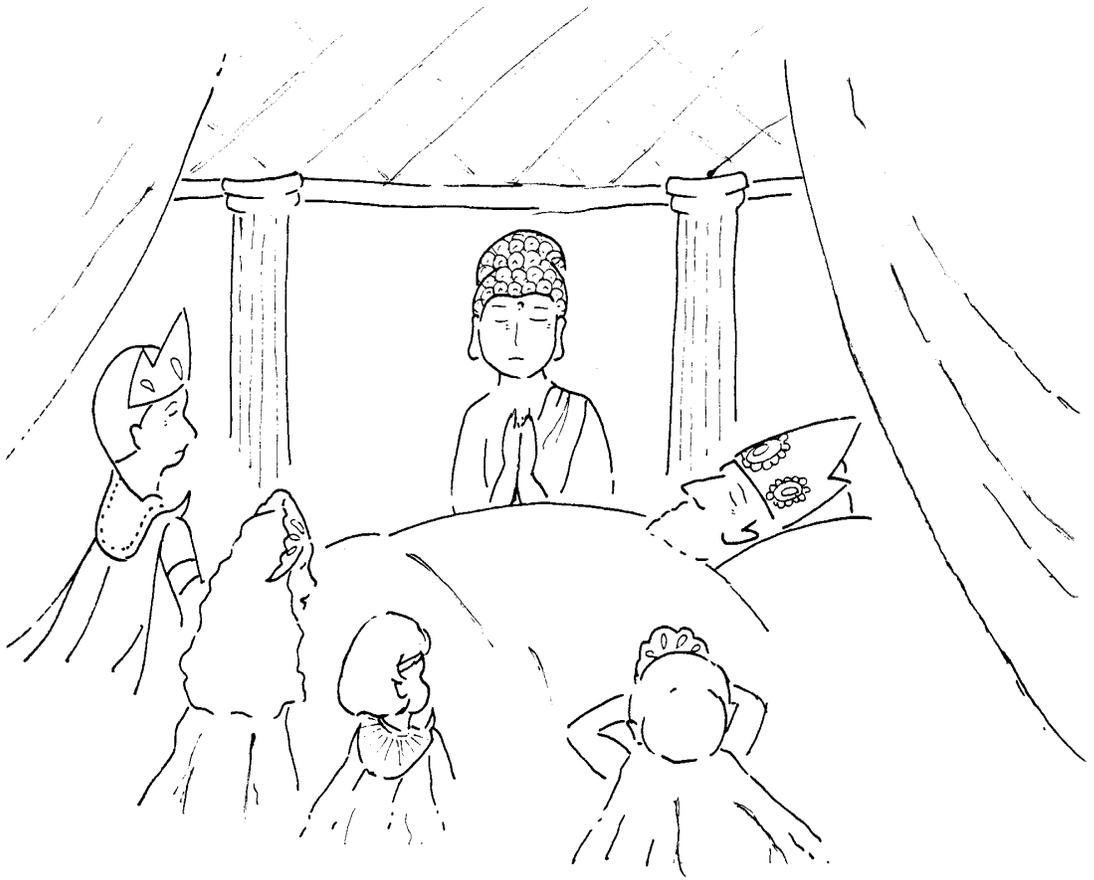
Chapter 21

Real Happiness

Listening to the Buddha’s stories, those who had been worried and distressed, slowly became courageous. The souls that were born as a human felt happier and courageously practiced Buddha’s teachings more often throughout their lives. When the time comes for a person to die, one thinks solemnly that it is time to say “Good-bye” to everyone on earth and to be born in the next life. One will not be afraid to die.

Live through this life in the right ways. When you get old and die, you need not be afraid. The Buddha will probably be proud of you and put His hand on your head and say, “You did well!” You will be very happy.

More details are revealed in the Lotus Sutra. Real happiness is to meet with the Lotus Sutra; therefore, I will introduce you to the Lotus Sutra next.



The Time to be Reborn