

# *Minwa Fu Hokekyo Dowa*

( *Volume 3 of 30 Volumes* )

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## **Everyone Is a Buddha**

(*Chapter 2 Expedients of the Lotus Sutra*)

### **Chapter 1**

## **Buddha Sakyamuni Opens His Eyes**

The congregations on Mount Sacred Eagle were gods, deities, bodhisattvas, Buddha's disciples, kings, countless human beings and non-human beings. They were putting their hands in *gassho* and silently watching the Buddha with breathless interest after they listened to the conversation between Maitreya Bodhisattva and Manjusri Bodhisattva about the ray of light emitted from the Buddha's forehead.



“What is Buddha Sakyamuni going to expound? How is it important for us? How wonderful will it be?” Their hearts leaped with joy.

Thereupon the Buddha emerged quietly from his meditation and said to Sariputra, “The Number One Wisdom Disciple:”

“You waited for me to talk, but the One and Only Truth in the Universe is too difficult for the people to understand. It is difficult even for Sariputra, my wisest disciple, to understand. Those who understand the truth are only the people who are obedient, gentle and sympathetic and who have a compassionate mind like the Buddha’s.”

“Sariputra, because it is too difficult for anyone to understand, I have not taught the truth for over 40 years. Instead, I taught various teachings that were easy to understand depending on each individual, place and situation according to the capacities of all living beings.

When I attained Enlightenment, I could read people’s minds. Seeing with my Buddha wisdom, all people were selfish and ignorant. Because their minds were filled with dust and dirt, they thought about only their benefit. They were twisted in their nature. They were nervous and easily upset. They had no compassion for others. Thus, I thought they could not understand the One and Only Truth in the Universe at all.”



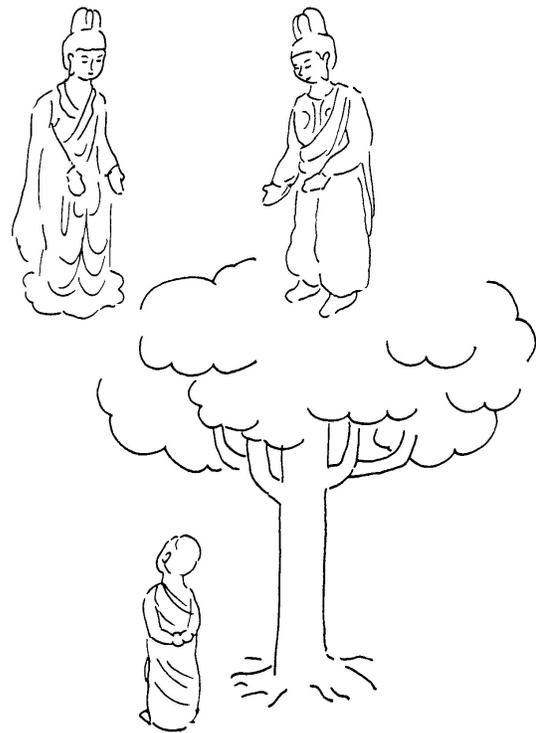
## Chapter 2

### The Worrying Buddha

The Buddha continued; “Thinking about it, I sighed and looked at the sky. Sariputra! I put my hands behind my back and went around a bodhi tree many many times while looking at the stars. ‘What should I do? How can I save these people? I wish to save them all, but nobody will understand the teaching of the truth.’ While I was walking around the tree, a good idea came to my mind.”



“At that time I heard a heavenly voice: ‘You really have come upon a good idea. That’s right! Do as your mind tells you! People who are crooked, twisted and selfish in their mind are suffering and worrying. Try to release their suffering and worries first. Then lead them to understand Buddha Dharma little by little. Have them be obedient to your teachings. Lead them with various stories of parables, similes and expedients!’”



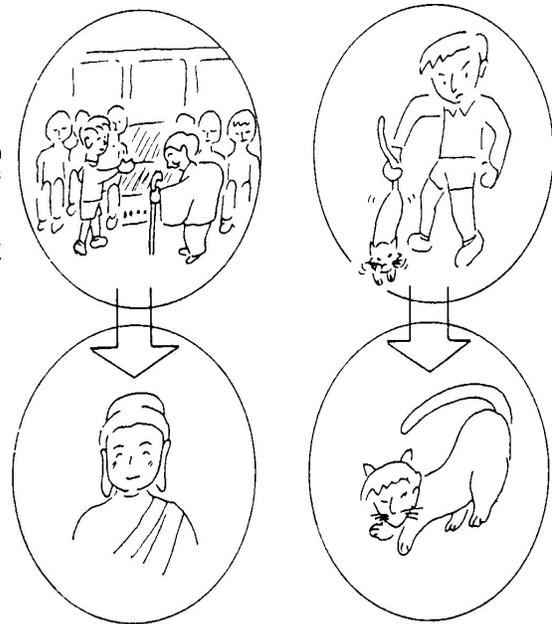
“Thus, I have taught various teachings and parables according to each individual’s capacity of understanding. I answered questions from my disciples and followers and consulted them for the last forty odd years. I have not revealed the One and Only Truth in the Universe that everyone is able to become a Buddha. People were rejoiced to hear my easy teachings and understand them whenever they were in trouble or suffering. They were now obedient, gentle and sympathetic with a compassionate mind like the Buddha’s.”

However, Sariputra, I will say no more because the Dharma attained by the Buddha is the highest Truth, rare to hear and difficult to understand. For the reality of all things is quite different in comparison with the teachings I have expounded so far. Only the people who have a compassionate and gentle mind like the Buddha will understand the Truth.”

# Chapter 3

## The Ten Suchnesses

One's look, such as the size of their eyes, the height of their nose and the shape of their mouth is not determined by their parents' discussion. One's look is determined by one's karma in their former lives. There are all kinds of children, such as cute, ugly, gentle or mean. Some people are strong while others are weak. There are skillful people and untalented ones. This is all caused by themselves in the past. It is not others who have made you strong or weak. You caused your own characters, features and abilities. Your characters, features and abilities are not caused only in this life but also in your many previous lives. Because of the causes created by you in the past, various conditions meet with the causes in the present; a good result will come up or an unexpected bad thing may happen in the future.



Therefore, whether one had good causes in the past or bad, the result appears in this life. Moreover, whether your life style is good or bad or whether you have lived in a good manner or not, you will be affecting your future. Therefore, it is a mistake to think that it's all right as long as it is good now, or that it's all right as long as I am joyful now, or it's all right if only I am happy, or that nothing exists after one's death. These ideas are all wrong. Past lives are important, but the present life is much more important because the present life will affect the future life; the past, the present and the future are all important. In other words, how we live everyday is important. That is the teaching of the Ten Suchnesses.

“Therefore, if you follow Buddha’s teachings as I have taught so far every-day, I shall expound for sure the One and Only Truth in the Universe that everyone is able to become a Buddha. I have taught for three different levels of people as follows:

1. “*Hearer*” who practice by listening to my teachings,
2. “*Private Buddha*” who practice by himself in the natural world,
3. *Bodhisattva* who practice to serve others by sacrificing himself.

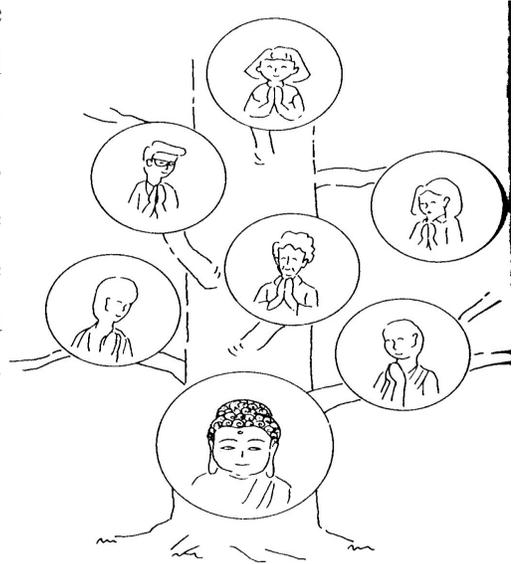
Thus, I have led many people step by step. The reason why I expounded various teachings for forty odd years was to lead all people to the level of being compassionate, so that the people can work for others even by sacrificing themselves,” said the Buddha at length.



## Chapter 4

### Only Buddhas Understand

In the *Sutra of Innumerable Teachings* the Buddha Sakyamuni taught that the trunk and branches grow from the roots that spread deep and wide under the ground and the Buddha has not revealed the true teachings that are like the roots of a tree yet. After He declared that in the preceding sutra of the *Lotus Sutra*, He closed His eyes and mouth and went into deep meditation.



After the long meditation, the Buddha finally opened His eyes and mouth and began to talk to Sariputra the beginning of the *Lotus Sutra*. The mood of the Buddha was quite different compared to previous sutras.

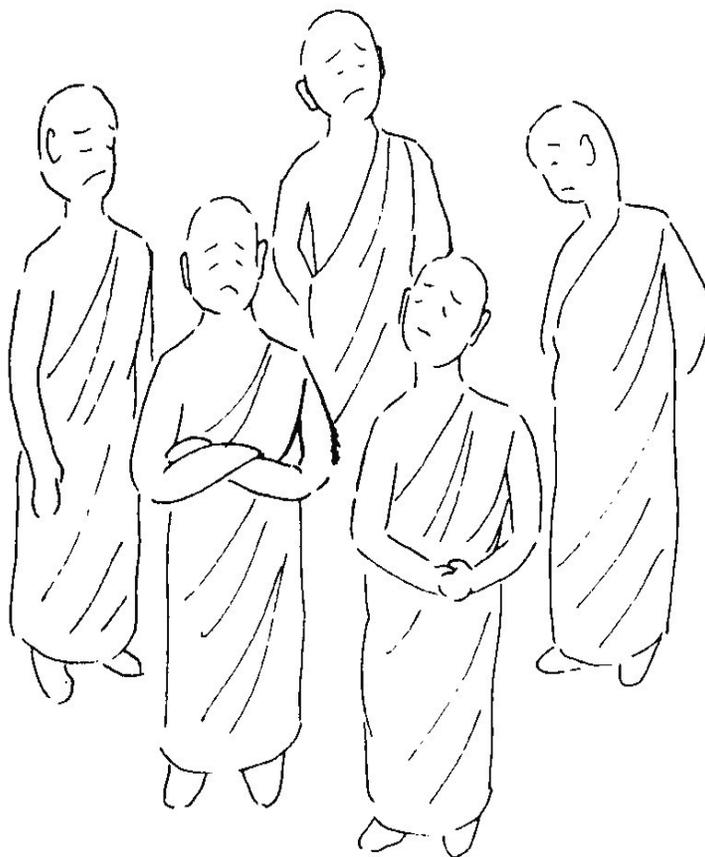
When He taught previous sutras, those who had troubles and sufferings asked Him: “How can I solve such and such problems?” Or “How can I be redeemed from such and such debts?” His disciples asked, “Lord Buddha! How should I lead others in such and such case?” Thus, the Buddha answered their questions and requests from His disciples and followers.

However this time was different! The Buddha emerged quietly from his meditation and began to talk to Sariputra, “The Number One Wisdom Disciple,” before anybody asked a question or requested a solution. He said, “The One and

Only Truth in the Universe is too difficult for people to understand. It is too difficult even for the wisest people like Sariputra to understand, much less the people who read books or listen to the Dharma or do the ascetic practices in the natural world to understand the truth.” So He does not talk any farther about the real teaching in His mind. He said that only the people who have compassionate minds like the Buddhas can understand the teaching and thus does not intend to talk.

Looking at the Buddha not intending to talk, the great multitude including the five original monks like Kaudinya, twelve hundred monks and disciples thought, “Why does the World-Honored One repeatedly say that nobody except a compassionate person like the Buddha will understand the One and Only Truth in the Universe that everyone is able to become a Buddha? We have practiced the Buddha’s teachings for many years and practiced the teachings in mountains and forest in the natural world.

We thought we have reached Nirvana. We do not understand why He says, “Only a compassionate person like the Buddha understands it.” We do not understand why He does not talk and tell us how to become the compassionate person to understand the One and Only Truth in the Universe that everyone is able to become a Buddha. What does He want us to do? We wish to listen to the highest truth.

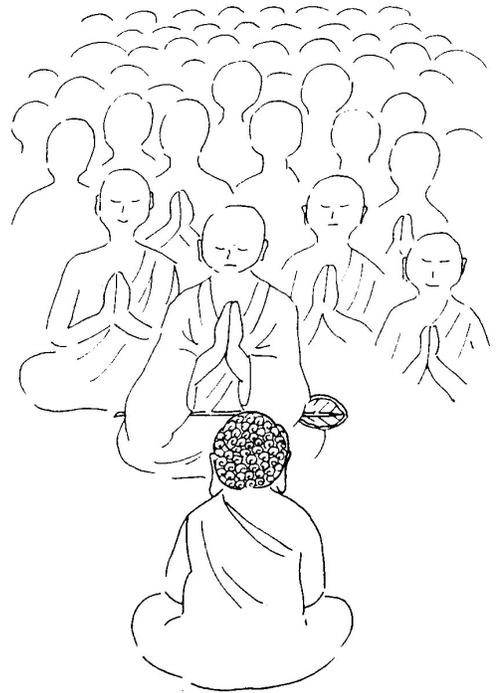


## Chapter 5

### Three Requests and Three Denials

Sariputra, being worthy as the wisest disciple, could understand the congregation's murmurs at the time and asked, "Sakyamuni, the World Honored One, you are like the sun, which is most important to us! You kept your eyes and mouth shut for a long time in the Introductory of the Lotus Sutra. Then red and white lotus flowers petals in varying sizes rained down from the sky. The earth shook in six different directions. You emitted a ray of light from the white curls between your eyebrows and illuminated the east.

We wondered what is going to happen and what you are going to talk about. We waited for you to speak up for a long time. However, once you spoke, you kept saying that we would not understand at all. I have heard various teachings from you for the last forty odd years. I have never before heard the words that the One and Only Truth in the Universe is that everyone is able to become a Buddha and only those who have compassionate minds like the Buddha are able to understand the reality of all things. Besides that, you have repeated that it is hard to understand and difficult to enter the gate to the Buddha Wisdom.



There must be a supreme meaning for you to say these words. Lord Buddha, you have praised me as the wisest among your disciples, but I still cannot understand what you have revealed now. Please explain all this for the multitudes of over eighty thousand people, bodhisattvas, deities and all living beings who are gathered here. Please expound the ultimate truth."

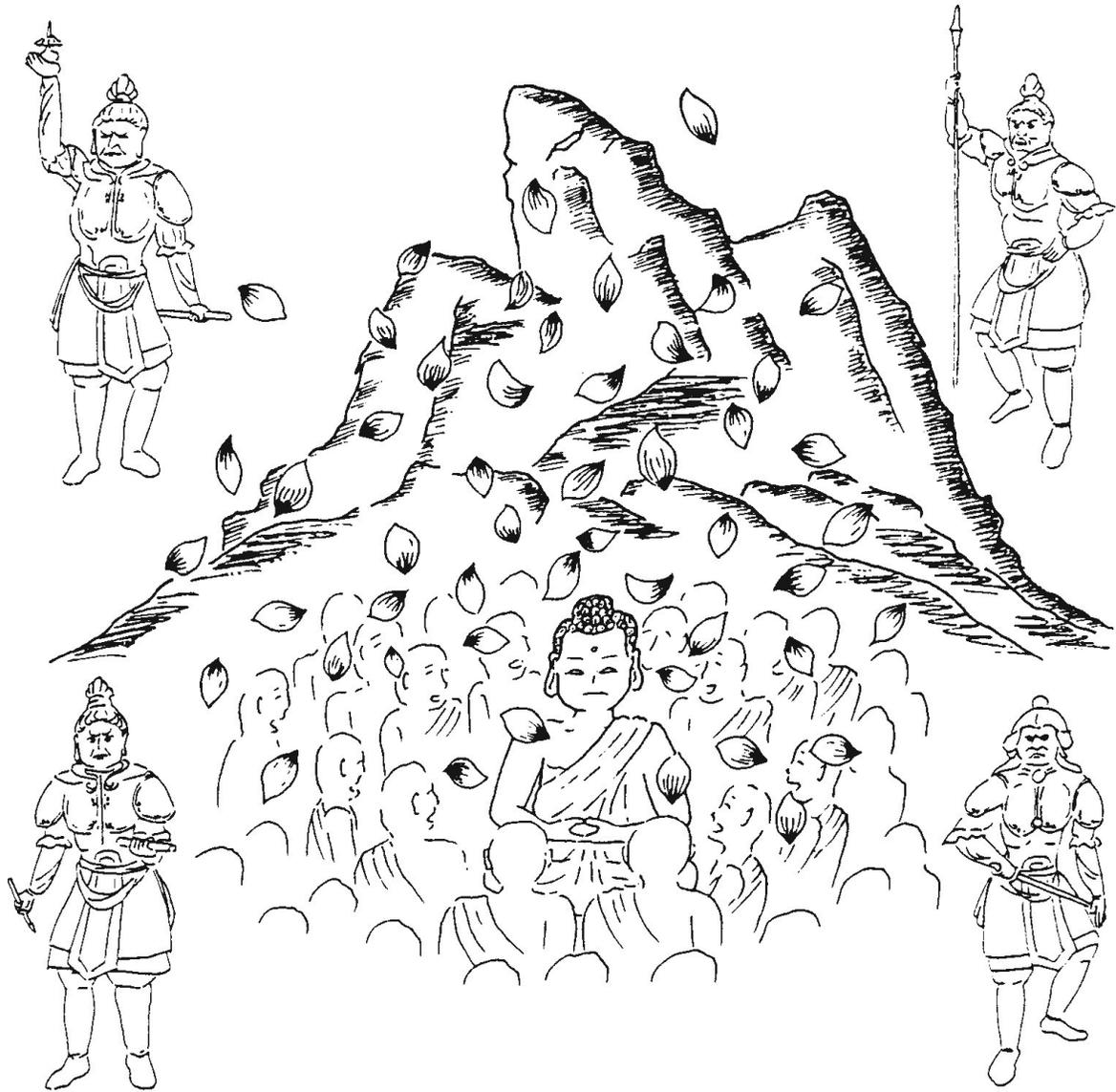
Thereupon Sariputra was sad and lonesome to hear the rejection from the Buddha. He wished to hear the teaching of the One and Only Truth more than ever. So he requested again, “World-Honored One! Expound the Dharma, please expound it! The hundreds of thousand living beings in this congregation followed the past Buddhas and received their teachings in their precious existences. There is no one to doubt your teachings. We will respect and believe it sincerely however difficult it is to understand.”

Thereupon the Buddha denied him again, saying “No, Sariputra, if I expound the One and Only Truth, the people on the levels of “*hearer*” or *Shomon* and “*private Buddha*” or *Engaku* will be surprised for sure and doubt my teachings. *Shomon* people (hearers) think that they are always listening to the Buddha Dharma and practicing it diligently in their own ways. So they often laugh at others who are not. *Engaku* (self-learning) people practice Buddha Dharma by themselves in forests or woods and think highly of themselves as they have almost reached Enlightenment but others have not. If someone doubts the Buddha’s teachings, they will surely fall into a great pit of hell. The arrogant people will fall into hell. That is the reason why I better not expound the truth.”

Then, Sariputra requested Buddha again, “World Honored One, we beg you to expound the supreme teachings that will lead us to attain Buddhahood. I am the one whom you call “The Number One Wisdom Disciple,” and I sincerely request you to expound it. Please look at us waiting for your sermon. Putting their hands in *gashho* without blinking their eyes, they wish eagerly to hear from you.



Please understand our requests and expound the One and Only Truth in the Universe! Explain the teachings for us to attain Buddhahood! We will be delighted and saved!”



**Preaching at Mt. Sacred Eagle**

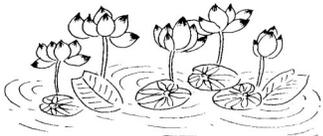
## Chapter 6

### The Buddha Decided to Expound the Truth

Buddha Sakyamuni finally decided to expound the One and Only Truth in the Universe after Sariputra's third request. Before he spoke up, he looked around the congregation again and read their minds. He understood that the majority of the congregation were sincerely waiting for his sermon; however, he read the minds of some of them who thought that they have already listened to the Buddha Dharma well enough in the past and understood them and that they did not need to listen His complicated teachings any more. They think that they were different than other people, and thought that was enough!



Thereupon the Buddha said, “Sariputra, you are really gentle and honest. I understand what you said. You said that the congregation gathered here are obedient and waiting for my sermon in *gassho*. Because you are obedient, you think that they are too. I understand that there are so many people waiting for me to talk; however, there are some who are not satisfied with me. You asked me to expound the truth three times with enthusiasm. How can I leave the Dharma not expounded! Listen to me attentively. Now I will teach the Dharma to you and to all.” So the Buddha finally decided to expound the truth.



## Chapter 7

### Five Thousand Futile People Retired.

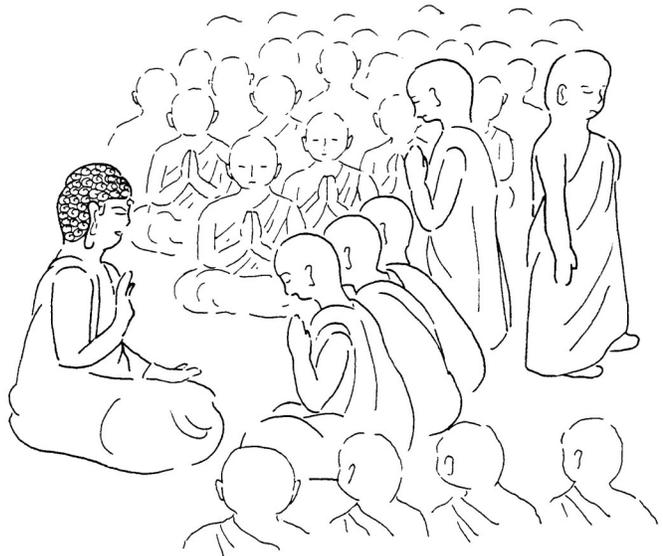
Do you remember that the Buddha said, “There are some who are not satisfied with me”? Five thousand people were not satisfied with the Buddha and rose from their seats, bowed to the Buddha and retired. They were so sinful and arrogant that they thought that they had already obtained what had not yet heard. They thought that they had already understood what they had not yet heard.

There were so many countless people and deities from around the world, that even if the five thousand people left, the place would be full of people and deities. In fact, the Buddha waited for them to leave from the beginning.

The Buddha had not revealed the true teachings; however, the five thousand arrogant people thought that they had already attained Buddhahood. They were not delighted and satisfied with the Buddha’s word, “The arrogant people will not be able to understand.” Therefore, they left.

The Buddha quietly watched them leave. It is better that there are no arrogant and high-headed people. After they left, the Buddha finally started to talk.

It is now the time that Buddha Sakyamuni begins to expound the One and Only Truth in the Universe!



## Chapter 8

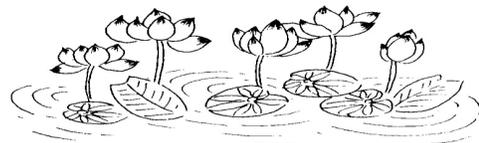
### Beginning of the Sermon

Thereupon the Buddha said to Sariputra, “Now, this congregation is cleared of twigs and leaves, and only sincere people are here. Listen attentively! I am going to talk about my real Enlightenment to make all people attain Buddhahood. It is the One and Only Truth in the Universe. Sariputra listen attentively, I am going to expound it.”

“Thank you very much, World-Honored One! I sincerely and honestly wish to listen to you. Please let me listen to the teaching of the One and Only Truth in the Universe and understand it,” said Sariputra with tense.

The Buddha said to him, “It is very rare to hear the Wonderful Dharma, as rare as the *undumbara*-flower which blooms once every three thousand years. Sariputra! Believe what I am going to say! My words are not false but all true!”

“Sariputra! I had expounded various teachings with innumerable expedients such as stories of previous lives, parables, similes and discourses for over forty years. These expedients were for you all to become more gentle, thoughtful, obedient and honest. I have taught you the Dharma step by step. I have not expounded the real teaching that I wished to reveal, as I have attained Enlightenment because no one was able to understand the supreme teaching of the One and Only Truth in the Universe that make all people become Buddhas.”



## Chapter 9

### One Great Purpose to Be Born

“Sariputra! Remember? When I was born in Lumbini Garden, I had one great purpose to be born. It is why all Buddhas appear in the worlds only for one great purpose! ”

“What is the one great purpose for which the Buddhas appear in the worlds? The Buddhas appear in the worlds in order to cause all suffering people to open their eyes to see things with Buddha’s Wisdom, in order to show the Dharma to all living beings to see things with Buddha’s Wisdom, in order for all people to realize to see things with Buddha’s Wisdom, and in order for them to enter the Way to see things with Buddha’s Wisdom, so that they are able to become Buddhas. This is the one great purpose for which the Buddhas appear in the worlds.”



“Sariputra! This was the sole reason why I was born in Lumbini Garden and declared, ‘From heaven to the earth I alone am the most honored one! The triple worlds are full of suffering, but I alone am able to free all living beings from these sufferings.’” Thus, the Buddha explained the reason why He was born and continued to talk him:

## Chapter 10

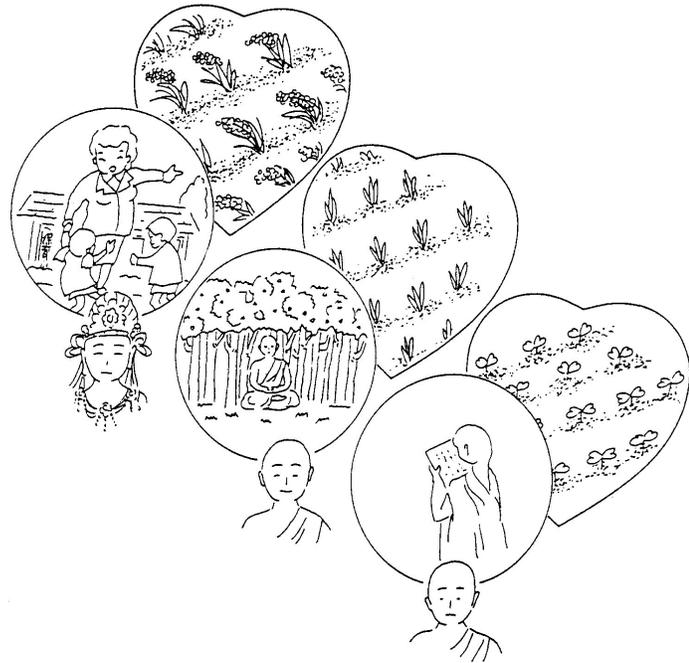
### Only One Way to Become Buddhas

“Sariputra! Listen well! There is only one way for people to become Buddhas. It is to ride on the One Buddha Vehicle (Dharma) that have all living beings becoming Buddhas. In order to ride the One Buddha Vehicle, you must always be gentle and unselfish to others. Only the gentle and unselfish people can understand the Dharma. The way is not to study and listen to the Dharma by oneself nor practice the Dharma by oneself in a forest or in the woods away from society, nor is it fasting, or bathing under a cold waterfall.”

“Sariputra! Just as I have done, all the Buddhas in this world in the past and all Buddhas in the universe expounded various expedients to all living beings at first in order to lead them to the One Buddha Vehicle that everyone becomes a Buddha. All the Buddhas who will appear in the future also will expound various teachings to all living beings with innumerable expedients. When living beings become gentle and unselfish, the Buddhas will reveal the One Buddha-Vehicle for the purpose of letting them ride on the One Buddha Vehicle. It is because everyone has a Buddha seed in his or her mind.



Every person has a Buddha seed. Think it over deeply! Even if you planted good seeds of grains in a field full of rocks and pebbles, they may not sprout. You must cultivate and loosen the soil, take the rocks and pebbles out of the soil, give it fertilizer and water, and take care of the soil and the plants to produce a good harvest. It is the same with your Buddha seed. The Buddhas try to cultivate your minds as you take care of the soil for a good harvest. The Buddhas use various expedients just like softening soil, giving water and fertilizer, and taking weeds out. When the seeds shoot up, then the roots will spread and the plant will grow bigger in good health. Its flowers eventually bloom and fruits will be produced which benefit you. So it is for you, that you will become Buddhas eventually.



In order to make good soil, which are the minds of people, the Buddha let his disciples of *Shomon*-people listen to a lot of Buddha's teachings and study Dharma while he let the *Engaku*-people to realize that human beings and nature are all living together while they practice the Dharma in forests and woods in order to sprout their Buddha seeds. For Bodhisattva-people, the Buddha let them know the importance of helping others, even by sacrificing themselves. Although the levels of the teachings for them are different, the purpose is not different. It is the one great purpose for all living beings to become Buddhas.

## Chapter 11

### Everyone Can Be A Buddha.

“The Buddhas taught various teachings for one purpose: to let everyone become a Buddha. Sariputra! It seems that there are three vehicles (teachings) for *Shomon*, *Engaku* and *Bodhisattva*, but the three vehicles are a part of a process to become a Buddha. Actually there is only one vehicle that everyone rides on. For example, everyone has a Buddha seed. When the seed was planted in good soil, the seed will shoot up. When you take care of the plant by giving water and fertilizer, it grows; and the flowers will bloom and the fruits will be produced. All Buddhas in the past used the same method and taught three Dharma vehicles first to lead the people to the One Dharma Vehicle.”

“Sariputra, the Wisest Man among all my disciples! You must understand what I am teaching now. This is a very important teaching, so please trust what I am saying and do not forget it. There is no fault in my teachings, so do not doubt me. Do not forget that there is only one way to become a Buddha.” Thus, Buddha Sakyamuni taught to Sariputra and all the others in the congregation.



# Chapter 12

## Tears of Rejoice

Sariputra and the countless people and deities gathered at Mount Sacred Eagle were delighted and excited with Buddha's teaching that everyone is able to become a Buddha. Their eyes were filled with tears. They kept their hands together in *gassho* without wiping the tears.

“My dear children! Please study hard, be obedient, and listen well to your parents, teachers and elders; and practice Buddha's teachings. Repent your wrong conducts at a quiet place and appreciate what others have done for you. If you are gentle and obedient, and help others who are weaker than you, you will surely shoot up your Buddha seeds and eventually become Buddhas.

Let me see who will become a Buddha first?

Let's have a race! Ready? Set! GO!

I will see you again in the next volume. It will be a parable of “A Burning House and Three Toy Carts.” It is an exciting story but a little scary.

