

# **THE DHARANI SUTRA OF THE BUDDHA ON LONGEVITY THE EXTINCTION OF OFFENCES AND THE PROTECTION OF YOUNG CHILDREN**

Thus I, Ananda, have heard. At one time, the Buddha was at Mount Grdhrakuta, at the City of Royal Palace, together with a thousand two hundred and fifty disciples, who accompanied Him wherever He went.

There were also twelve thousand Bodhisattvas, Mahasattvas, the eight fold division of Gods and dragons, ghosts and spirits, humans and non-humans, who came together from different directions to listen to The Buddha Dharma.

At the same time, before expounding the Dharma, The Buddha, with His Spiritual Power, emitted different colourful lights, such as green lights, yellow lights, red lights, white lights and other lights, which shone forth from His face. In every ray of the colourful lights, there appeared uncountable Transformation Buddhas.

Every Transformation Buddha was able to carry out inconceivable tasks of the Buddha, and transform

uncountable and limitless Transformation Bodhisattvas. Everyone of the Transformation Bodhisattvas again praised, and sang about the merits and virtues of The Buddha.

The lights which were emitted by the Buddha were subtly wonderful and immeasurable. They shone forth pervasively up to the Heavenly Dwelling of Neither Thought Nor Non-Thought and down to the Avici Hell.

Those living beings who had encountered the illumination of the Buddha's Lights would naturally be mindful of the Buddha. Hence they were able to obtain skills-in-means in Zen concentration and attain the fruition position of The First Ground.

At that time, in the assembly there were forty-nine Bodhisattvas who had just brought forth the Bodhi Resolve. They also wished to enquire The Buddha concerning ways and means to obtain longevity, but they did not know how to do so.

At the same time, Manjushri Bodhisattva knew about their wish, so he stood up from His seat, revealed His right shoulder and put His palms together respectfully before the Buddha. On behalf of the forty-nine Bodhisattvas, He asked the Buddha:

"World-Honoured One, I know there are people in this Dharma Assembly who harbour doubts, but do not know how to ask about them. So I wish to ask on their behalf, and may The World Honoured One grant your permission." The Buddha said, "Good indeed! Good indeed! Manjushri Bodhisattva. Please do not hesitate, but ask on their behalf in order to clear their doubts!"

Manjushri Bodhisattva said, "World Honoured One, all the living beings who are within the sea of birth and death create all kinds of evil karma. From the kalpas of no beginning until now, they revolve constantly on the wheels of the six paths, without any respite. At times, even if they may obtain a human body, (due to) retribution, their lifespan is very short.

In what ways can all these living beings obtain longevity and put an end to all evil karma? May The World Honoured One teach them the Dharma on ways to attain longevity and the means to extinguish all their offences."

The Buddha answered, "Manjushri! Your kindness and compassion is great and immeasurable. Out of the pity for all sinful beings, you enquire on their behalf the Dharma for longevity and the ways to put an end to all

offences. But if I were to talk about them in detail, I am afraid that most sentient beings would be unable to believe, accept, practise and uphold this Dharma."

Again Manjushri Bodhisattva pleaded with The Buddha for His compassion, "World Honoured One! You are endowed with Great Wisdom. You are the Leader and Teacher of gods and people, the compassionate father of all living beings. You are the Great Dharma King who is able to pronounce all wonderful Dharma with one sound. May the World Honoured One have pity on all living beings and bless them widely with this Dharma!"

Then The Buddha smiled and said to the great assembly, "Please listen wholeheartedly and carefully. Now I will expound widely to you The Dharma....."

"In the past, there was world known as The Pure Land with No-Filth. In that Pure Land, a Buddha by the name The Thus Come One of Pervasive Lights and Proper Views came into the world."

He was also known as The One Who Is Worthy of Offering, or The Equal and Proper Enlightened One, or The One Who Is Perfect in Wisdom and Practice, or The One Who Is Skillful In Leaving the World Through Liberation, or The One Who Understands the World, or

The Unsurpassed Teacher, or The Taming Hero, or The Teacher of Gods and People, or The Buddha, or The World Honoured One. The Buddha was surrounded respectfully by uncountable and limitless Great Assemblies of Bodhisattvas.

When The Buddha was in the world, there was Laywoman by the name Confusion. She was practising the Buddha Dharma in her home life. She begged The Buddha to allow her to leave the home life. Sorrowfully she cried to The Buddha, "World Honoured One, I have created deep and evil karma. I am regretful of my evil conduct, and seek to repent my offences. I hope to reform, in order to lead a life of goodness. I only hope The World Honoured One will bestow kindness upon me and listen to the details!"

"My circumstance is such that my family's condition does not allow me to bear any children. That is why I used medicine to murder the foetus, which was fully eight months old. The foetus that I aborted was fully grown with four healthy limbs and was complete with a human form."

"Later I met with a wise man who told me, 'People who have purposely aborted the foetus will be infected with

serious illnesses in the present lifespan and receive the retribution of a short lifespan with very little blessing. After they have passed away, they will fall into the Avici Hell to experience terribly acute sufferings'."

"After listen to that, I was very frightened and I deeply regret what I have done. I only hope that the World Honoured One, with your strength of great kindness and compassion, will save me from falling into the deep pit. Please tell me the ways of liberation. Do allow me to leave the home life, so as to not undergo such acute sufferings."

The Thus Come One of Pervasive Lights and Proper Views said to Confusion, "There are five kinds of Evil Karma which are difficult to extinguish, even if one were to repent of them. What are the five kinds of offences? The first one is killing the father, the second one is killing the mother, the third one is abortion, the fourth one is to injure The Buddha, the fifth one is to create disharmony among the Sangha assemblies. These five types of evil and sinful karma are difficult to extinguish."

After listening to that, the woman Confusion wept sorrowfully with tears like falling rain. Sadly, she made

obeisance to The Buddha. Then she fell down before The Buddha and again she begged, "The World Honoured One is of great kindness and compassion, who is able save all beings. I beg the World Honoured One to have pity on me and tell me the way to liberation."

The Thus Come One of Pervasive Lights and Proper Views told her, "You are supposed to fall down into The Avici Hell because of your evil karma, and experience the acute suffering without any respite. In the cold Hell, the offenders will encounter the severely cold wind and be tortured by the sudden chill. In the feverish Hell of heat, the offenders will experience sudden heat waves, which are brought about by the hot wind."

"In the Uninterrupted Hell, there is no alternating sufferings of sudden coldness or sudden heat as experienced here. But there is a great burning fire, which plunges from the top to the bottom of the hell, then again shoots up from the bottom to the top. The four walls are made of iron, and covered with iron nettings. The four gates, on the East, West, South and North, are also filled with great burning fire of karma."

"The length of time the offender is in the Uninterrupted Hell is eight million Yojanas. Even though he is alone, his body still covers the whole hell fully. If there are more people, each of their bodies also pervasively fills up the whole hell."

"The body of the offenders is covered with great iron snakes. The suffering thus experienced by him is more severe than the great burning fire. Some of the iron snakes may enter his mouth and then come out from his eyes and ears."

"Or there are iron snakes which encircle his body fully. Great fire often bursts out from the limbs and joints of the offender. There are also the iron crows that peck and eat his flesh."

"There are also copper dogs which bite and chew his body. The hellish guards with bulls' heads hold the weapons and roar like thunder. With a harsh voice full of anger, they scolded..."

" 'You have purposely murdered the foetus, so you have to undergo this great torture from one kalpa to another kalpa without any respite!' If I were to lie to you about such torturing retribution, then I am not known as The Buddha."

"When the woman Confusion heard the teaching of The Buddha, she was so sorrowful that she fainted and fell on the floor. After some time, she gradually recovered, and again she asked, "World Honoured One! Is it the case that I alone will experience such torment? Or is this suffering to be experienced by all those women who have purposely aborted their foetus?"

"The Thus Come One Pervasive Light told the woman Confusion, 'Your foetus is fully grown like a human being. And its dwelling in the womb resembles that of a hell. It also resembles that of a great rock, which oppresses one's body. If the mother has partaken hot food, the foetus will feel as though it is dwelling in the Heated Hell. If the mother has taken cold food, the foetus will feel as though it is dwelling in the icy cold and chilling Hell. It is tormented by acute suffering the whole day"

"You are emotionally unstable because of the fire of delusion which gives rise to evil thoughts. That is why you have purposely taken the poison to abort the foetus."

"You have created such evil karma, so it is natural for you to fall into The Avici Hell. The offenders in the Uninterrupted Hells are your partners."

After hearing that, the woman Confusion cried sorrowfully. Again she said to The Buddha, "Once I heard a wise man say, 'If we are able to encounter The Buddha, or pure Sangha members, whatever evil offences that we have created will be extinguished, if we seek to repent and reform sincerely'."

" Even when such a man has already passed away and entered the hells, if the relatives who are still alive are able to cultivate goodness and small blessing on his behalf, the dead one will be able to get a rebirth in the heavens!' Are there really such happenings? I beg The World Honoured One to explain this to me!"

The Thus Come One Pervasive Lights and Proper Views told the Woman Confusion, "It is true. If there is a living being who has committed all kinds of offences, but was able to encounter The Buddha and the members of the pure Sangha assembly, to repent sincerely and never to commit any more offences, then his sinful karma will be extinguished."

"Even if he has passed away, but his family and relatives are able to pay respect and make obeisance to The Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. If, within the seven days, they are able to read and chant ,on behalf of him, the Sutra of Great Vehicle, and to make offerings to the Triple Jewels with fragrant incense and flowers, the messenger from the Dark Realm will carry the Spiritual Banner of Five Colours, and go to the hall of The King Yama. There troops of ghosts will stand around the front and back of the Banner. They will sing and praise the dead man. With a gentle and subtly wonderful voice, they report to King Yama, 'The dead man has accumulated lots of merits!'"

"When King Yama sees the arrival of the Banner of five colours, he is greatly happy and says aloud, 'May my body which is full of offences be like him, in order to accumulate all merits.' "

"Immediately, the hells are transformed into pure streams. The hills of knives and the trees of swords are transformed into lotuses. All the offenders feel refresh and blissful."

"If there is another dead man who does not have faith in the Buddha Dharma, who does not read and chant

the Sutra of Great Vehicle, whose mind has a lack of filial piety, respectfulness, kindness and compassion, who (instead) believes in deviant paths and evil views. And if, within the seven days, there is no next of kin who is alive to perform goodness and blessings on his behalf., then the messenger from the dark realm will hold the Black Banner, together with innumerable evil ghosts, who make the following report to King Yama, 'The dead one has accumulated lots of evil deeds.' "

When King Yama sees the Black Banner, he gets angry immediately. All the halls and houses vibrate under his thunder-like harsh voice. The offender is immediately sent down to the eighteen layers of hells."

"The offender is forced to climb the trees of swords and hills of knives. Or he is forced to lie on the iron bed, to embrace the bronze pillar, or his tongue is being pulled out and ploughed by a bull. Or his body is being beaten by stony rod, his bones and flesh are grind to powder by a stone grinder."

"In a single day, there are millions of occurrences of birth and death. And then the offender will repeatedly fall into the Avici Hell, to experience acute suffering from one kalpa to another without respite."

Before The Thus Come One Pervasive Lights And Proper Views had finished His teaching, suddenly there arose from the empty space a great thunderous roar of harsh and evil voices, which called out to the woman Confusion, "You have purposely murdered the foetus. You should receive the retribution of a short life. I am the messenger of the ghostly troop, here to catch you to settle the case."

The woman Confusion was frightened and lost. She caught hold of the feet of The Thus Come One and wept. She begged, "May The World Honoured One widely propound the Great Dharma Store of The Buddhas for me, and the way to extinguish all sinful offences. Only then will I die in peace!"

At that time, The Thus Come One Pervasive Lights and Proper Views, with the awesome spiritual strength of The Buddha, told the ghost messenger, "Ghastly ghost of impermanence, I am now going to teach the woman Confusion on the Sutra of Longevity and the extinction of offences. Please wait for a while. Naturally there will be a change in circumstances."

"You also should pay attention and listen carefully. I will also tell you the Secret Dharma Door which was taught

by The Buddhas in the past, The Sutra of the extinction of offences and the prolongation of lifespan, in order to help you all to stay away from the evil paths."

The Buddha said, "Confusion, you should know that the ghastly ghost of Impermanence does not give any special favours to people. Even if you use innumerable amounts of gold, silver, lapis lazuli, beryl, red pearls, carnelian and other jewelry to bribe him in exchange of your life, it will still be in vain."

"Even people who are in honourable positions, such as The King, the princes, great officers, respectable elder and others, with their awesome spiritual strength, will still be unable to escape the ghastly ghost of impermanence who comes to claim their lives."

"Confusion, you should know that only the word 'Buddha' is able to sever the suffering of death. Confusion, there are two types of people who are very rare to be found. They are like the Udumbara Flowers which rarely bloom."

"The first type refers to those people who never practise any evil dharma, nor commit any karmic offences. The second type refers to those who are able to repent and reform when they realise their offences."

"People like these are rare and most precious. As you are able to repent sincerely before me, I will of course teach you The Sutra of Longevity and The Extinction of Offences, in order to free you from the suffering of being chased and caught by the evil ghost of impermanence."

"Confusion, let me tell you. In the future World of Five Turbidities, if there are people who kill the father, harm the mother, who purposely abort the foetus, who destroy The Buddha's Pagoda and Temple..."

"Who shed The Buddha's Blood, who create disharmony among The Sangha and others, they have created the five unwholesome deep offences and will surely fall into the Uninterrupted Hell to suffer the acute torments."

"If these beings who have committed the five unwholesome offences are able to accept, uphold this Sutra of Longevity and The Extinction of Offences, to write it down, read and memorize it, or copy it down by themselves, or ask others to copy the Sutra, they will be able to put an end to their offences, and be born in the Brahman Heaven to enjoy the heavenly blessing."

"Isn't that a better chance for you to extinguish your evil karma, as you are able to meet me personally at this time? Luckily, you have already cultivated lots of good roots in innumerable long kalpas past. In addition, you are eloquent in asking questions, besides repenting and reforming sincerely."

"So, not long from now, you will be able to turn the Unsurpassed Dharma Wheel, and cross over limitless great seas of birth and death. You will be able to fight against the Heavenly Demon Papiyan and destroy the Banner of Victory which was erected by him. You should listen wholeheartedly. I will teach you once the Twelve Conditioned Links of Causation, which was taught by The Buddhas in the past."

"All the living beings are originally pure. But, the arising of a single false thought out of delusion in the past leads to the creation of activities. Because of activities, there create karmic forces, and hence leads to the arising of consciousness to enter the womb. The consciousness that enters the womb will lead to the formation of a foetus presently. When there is a foetus, it is then complete with the six roots such as eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind."

"After leaving the womb, the six roots will experience the six senses of touch. The six senses of touch will give rise to six kinds of feelings. When there is feeling, love will arise. When there is love, the feeling of attachment will arise. Once there is attachment, a man will try to fight to possess. When there is fighting for possession, it will give rise to future karmic causes."

"When there are the future karmic causes, a man will experience birth in the future. When there is birth, it will naturally lead to the process of old age and death, and also all the worries, sorrows, sufferings and torments. This is known as the Door Which Is Accordance with the Production of Twelve Conditioned Links of Causation."

"If there is no false thought because of delusion, then from where will activities and karmic deeds arise? If there is no activity and Karmic deeds, from where will there be the entering of womb by consciousness? When there is no consciousness to enter the womb, what then will give rise to a foetus, the form of a body?"

"When there is no feeling, there is no love. Without love, attachment to possession will not arise. When

there is no attachment to possession, there are no more karmic causes for future birth..."

"When there is no karmic cause for the future birth, there is no more birth in the future. Without birth, there is also no old age and death. And the worries, sorrows, sufferings and Extinction of the Twelve Conditioned Links of Causation."

"Confusion, you should know that all the living beings are unable to contemplate the Dharma of Twelve Conditioned Links of Causation, and so they revolve and suffer in the seas of birth and death. If there is a man who is able to contemplate the Dharma of Twelve Conditioned Links of Causation, then he is able to see the Reality of Form Dharma. If a man is able to see the Reality of Form Dharma, he indeed sees The Buddha."

"When a man sees The Buddha, he is able to see The Buddha Nature. Why did I say so? Because all The Buddhas also base on the Twelve Conditioned Links of Causation as The Dharma Nature. Now that you are able to listen to the Twelve Conditioned Links of Causation from me, you will obtain the Pure Buddha Nature. You are suitable to be the Dharma Vessel in the Door of The Buddha."

"Now I will again tell you the only True Path. You should give thought to protect single mindfulness. The single mindfulness is known as The Bodhi Mind. The Bodhi Mind is also known as The Mind of the Great Vehicle."

"Because the root nature of the living beings is different, so all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas teach and differentiate the Three Vehicles. You should constantly be mindful, and look after the Bodhi Mind. Never should you forget it."

"Even if your body is burnt by the five skandas of forms, feelings, thoughts, activities and consciousness, is being swallowed and eaten by the four snakes of earth, water, fire and wind, is being attacked by the three poisoning of greed, hatred and delusion, is being invaded by the six thieves of forms, sounds, fragrance, tastes, senses of touch and dharma, and is being harmed and tormented by the devils and demons, you should remain unmoving and never should you change your Bodhi Mind."

"With the Bodhi Mind, your body will be as hard and firm as the Vajra. Your mind will resemble the empty space, where no one can really harm and destroy it."

"If the Bodhi Mind is firm and solid, it is replete with the four virtues of Nirvana, namely, Permanence, Bliss, True Self and purity. It will help us to attain The Unsurpassed Perfect Enlightenment."

"When you are replete with four virtues of Nirvana, you will be liberated from the conditions of birth, old age, sickness and death, and all the realms of hells. Then the ghastly ghost of Impermanence will naturally have no way to chase and catch hold of you to settle the case."

After The Buddha had finished His Teaching, the messenger of the ghosts who dwell in the empty space gave rise to the following thought, "Then the World Honoured One has said that even the hells could also be transformed into Pure Lotus Pond. Why then do I not renounce the state of the ghost realm?"

Then he told the woman, Confusion, "After you have certified to the sagely path, please do not forget to ferry me over!"

After that, The Thus Come One of Pervasive Lights and Proper Views again taught the woman, Confusion, "I have already taught you the Dharma of Twelve Conditioned Links of Causation. Now I will teach you

also The Six Paramitas, which are also practised by the Bodhisattvas."

"What are the Six Paramitas? The first Paramita is to give expansively. Giving helps us to cross over the feelings of greed and stinginess. The second Paramita is to uphold the precepts firmly. By doing so, we will cross over wrong actions and intentions; of being heedless in committing offences."

"The third Paramita is to be patient always. Such practice will cross over the feelings of hatred and anger. The fourth Paramita is to be diligent constantly. A man who is diligent will cross over laxity and heedlessness. The fifth Paramita is to cultivate concentration diligently. Concentration helps to cross over confusion."

"The sixth Paramita is to clearly penetrate wisdom. A wise man will cross over his delusion and ignorance. When a man is able to uphold the six paramitas fully and completely, only then will he arrive at the other shore. He should never even neglect any one of the Paramitas. There is also a verse on the accomplishment of Buddhahood by The Buddhas in the past."

"All activities are impermanent.

They are the dharma of birth and death.

When there is no more birth and death, a man will enjoy the bliss of quietude and extinction.

You should uphold and practise this dharma joyfully."

At that time, the woman Confusion was full of happiness after listening to the Buddha Dharma. Her heart opened up, and became clear and pure. She understood deeply, and had an awakening to the Dharma. With the endowment of the spiritual strength of The Buddha, she rose up to the empty space, and reached a height of seven times the height of a Tor-Lo tree, and sat in meditation peacefully in the empty space.

At that time, there was a wealthy Brahman, of Great Surname, whose wealth was incomparable by others, who, one day, was infected with a serious disease. After being examined by the doctor, it was found that his disease could only be cured by partaking of a mixture of human eyes and herbs.

So, the Wealthy Elder ordered a servant to sing out aloud as follows in all roads and lanes..."

"Who can tolerate the pain of digging out his eyes to sell? I will buy them at a good price. I will exchange them with gold, silver, pearls and jewels. You can take

as much as you wish. I will not be stingy. It is a promise!"

The woman, Confusion heard those words while sitting in the empty space. She was filled with joy, and immediately gave rise to the following thought, "Now I have listened to the teaching of The Buddha on The Sutra of Longevity. All my evil and sinful karmas have been extinguished. My mind has clearly awakened to The Buddha Nature. And I am able to stay far away from the ghastly ghost of Impermanence, and the acute torments in the hells."

"I should repay the kindness of The Buddha, even if it means to grind down my body and bones into powder." After thinking like that, she sang out, " I am forty-nine years old now. After listening to The Sutra of Longevity and The Extinction of offences from The Buddha, I will give up my body and life and vow to write forty-nine copies of the Sutra on Longevity, even if it means to grind my body down into powder. I only hope that all the living beings will be able to accept, uphold, read and memorize this Sutra. I must sell my eyes in order to pay those who help me to write the Sutra. The value of my eyes is not fixed. So you can pay me as you wish."

At that time, the Heavenly King Shakra transformed himself into forty-nine men who came to the home of the woman, Confusion. They said, "We wish to write the Sutra for you. Only after you have seen the Sutra will you sell your eyes. What do you think?"

The woman Confusion was genuinely happy, and grateful for their help. Immediately, she cut her body and took out a piece of bone. Then she sharpened it to become the shape of a pen, then offered her blood as ink for them to use to write the Sutra.

After seven days, they managed to finish writing The Sutra. The men who were the transformation bodies of The Shakra Heavenly King told Confusion, "We hope that you will keep your promise. As we have already finished writing The Sutra, you should dig out your eyes for us after you have read them. Then we will sell them to the Brahman."

Then the woman Confusion ordered a man by the surname Chandera to dig out both her eyes. She also asked the forty-nine men to give Chandera a share of the money for selling her eyes.

When Chandra was about to dig out her eyes, the forty-nine men cried out together to prevent him from doing so. They praised her thusly,

"Rare indeed! Rare indeed! It is inconceivable! This woman, Confusion, who cares not for her body or life, was able to sharpen her bone as pen, to squeeze out her blood as ink, and endure great pain and injuries, just for the sake of writing down this Sutra. How could we have the heart to dig out her eyes?"

So, with kindness and compassion, they told the woman, Confusion, "Now, we do not need to sell your eyes to the Brahman. But we hope that after you have accomplished The Way, please come first to rescue and ferry us over!"

"In life after life, wherever you are born, we hope to come together to you, to become good knowing advisers, and widely proclaim this Sutra, in order to rescue and carry over all sinful living beings."

At that time, the Dragon King Nanda, by using his spiritual penetration power, performed magical transformations, stole the Sutra of the woman Confusion, and kept it at the Dragon Palace. He accepted, upheld and made offerings to The Sutra. The

woman, Confusion, who had suddenly lost the Sutra in such a short space of time, was greatly disturbed. She cried tearfully and ran to see The Buddha. She said, "World Honoured One, I, who care not for body nor lifespan, cut the flesh and dug out the bone to write the Sutra of Longevity, only hoping to widely circulate it among all living beings. But now I have lost the Sutra. I feel extremely sad, just as though my body was pierced by the poisonous arrow. Such pain is difficult to bear."

The Thus Come One Pervasive Lights told Confusion, "Your Sutra was taken by the eight-fold Dragon King, who accepts, upholds and makes offering to it in the Dragon Palace. In fact, you should be happy about it. Don't be so worried and sorrowful."

"Confusion, your present deed is very good. After your lifespan is over, you will be born into the Heavenly Realm of No-form. With the merits and virtues thus accumulated, you will enjoy the heavenly blessings and bliss. Never will you be born in the form of a woman."

At that time, the woman Confusion told The Buddha, "World Honoured One! My wish is not to enjoy heavenly blessings. But I only hope to meet The World Honoured One in every life, to protect the Bodhi Mind

and never to retreat from the Bodhi Path. Wherever I go, I will proclaim this Dharma constantly to all sinful living beings."

The Thus Come One Pervasive Lights said, "Are you telling me a false speech?" The woman, Confusion answered, "If I were to falsely lie to you, may I be again chased and tormented by the ghastly ghost of Impermanence..."

"...If what I have said is true with no falsity, before The Buddha, may the wounds on my body be even and as smooth as before, immediately!" After she had made the vows, her body recovered immediately just as before.

The Thus Come One Pervasive Light told Confusion, "If you are able to sincerely be mindful of The Buddha, with one heart-undivided, then you can travel from one Buddhaland to the next Buddhaland. You will be able to see innumerable and limitless Buddha Worlds. Besides, you can also understand the unspeakable and inconceivable speeches and words of those Buddha Worlds."

At that time, the woman Confusion, in the space of a breath, certified to the Dharma Patience of No-Birth,

which is also known as the Bodhi Mind of Unsurpassed, Proper, Equal and Perfect Enlightenment.

"Manjushri, you should know that the past Thus Come One Pervasive Lights was my former existence; while the woman Confusion was your former existence. The forty-nine men are the present forty-nine Bodhisattvas who have just brought forth the Bodhi Resolve."

"Manjushri, from innumerable long kalpas until now, I always proclaim for you all this Sutra and the Dharma to protect the body, in order to help all the sinful living beings to eradicate their offences after listening to the Sutra of Longevity and the Extinction of offences, even if they can only listen to as little as half a verse. How much more the effect would be as I am now again proclaiming it to you!"

At that time, The King Prasenajit was at the palace. At about midnight, he heard a lady crying aloud. She was so sorrowful that her uncontrollable cries almost disturbed the heavens. So he gave rise to the following thought, "My Inner Palace is supposed to be free from all happenings. But why is there such a sorrowful cry? What has happened?"

In the morning, King Prasenajit immediately sent people to all roads and lanes in search of the lady who was grief-stricken. The King's messenger found the lady, and brought her back to the palace. The lady was so shocked and startled that she lost her breath and fainted. King Prasenajit ordered people to sprinkle some water on her face. Gradually she recovered.

The Great King asked her, "Last night, someone was crying so sorrowfully and loudly. Could it be you?" The lady answered, "Yes. Indeed it was I who cried so sadly." The Great King asked, "Why were you crying in such great pain and sorrows? Who has bullied you?"

The lady answered, "I cried in pain as I was grief-stricken with anger and hatred. In fact, no one has bullied me. May the Great King listen to my story. I married when I was fourteen years old. During the thirty years of marriage, I have given birth to thirty children. Everyone of my children were extremely lovely. They were born with reddish lips and jade-like white teeth. Everyone was handsome and active. They were like the flowers in Spring."

"I love them as though they are the pearls on my palm. They are indeed my heart, liver, brain and marrow. I

value them more than my own life. But everyone of them left me, for they all died at a young age."

"Now, there remains the last one. He is about one year old. He is indeed my only hope in life. But he is so sick. I am afraid that he too will leave me soon. That is why I could no longer control myself last night, and I cried in great pain!"

After listening to her, the Great King was very worried. He was really sorry for the lady. He thought to himself, "All the people rely on me to stay here. They are like my sons and daughters, if I do not save and help her to solve the problems, then I will not be suitable to be called The King."

So he immediately gathered in the officers to discuss the problem. Among them were the six great officers whose names were as follows: The first one was known as Seeing Forms, the second was known as Listening To Sound, the third was known as Fragrant Feet, the fourth was known as Great Eloquence, the fifth was known as In Accord To Condition, and the sixth was known as Easily Defiled. Together they with respect told the Great King,

"When a baby is born, the family should prepare a spiritual altar for the seven stars and twenty-eight constellations to seek blessings and the prolongation of life. Then he will not suffer from dying young. We only hope that the Great King will widely announce this method to all people."

At that time, there was wise and intelligent great officer who had cultivated lots of good roots before innumerable Buddhas. His name was Concentrated Wisdom. He came forth and told the Great King respectfully, "May the Great King discern the matter. The method which was suggested by the six great officers will not be able to relieve the suffering of dying young. Only The Buddha can extinguish the suffering of dying young."

"Presently, The Buddha is by the surname Gautama. He is known as The Prince Siddharta. The Prince attains Enlightenment without a teacher. He clearly penetrates, and is certified to, the truth of the universe. Now he is at Mount Grdhrakuta, teaching the Sutra of Longevity and the Extinction of Offences. I only hope that The Great King will go to listen to his teaching."

"If a man is able to listen to half a verse of this Sutra, all the offences which were committed by him in hundreds of thousands of lives will be extinguished. All the young children who have heard of the Sutra will gain merits and virtues and they will naturally obtain a long lifespan, even if they cannot really understand its meaning."

The King Prasenajit said, "Once I heard the six teachers who told me about the monk by the Surname Gautama. They said that he practised The Way within a very short period of time. His knowledge was not profound enough, but very shallow, as he is still young and naïve. According to the Sutra of the six teachers, 'The youth who can create evil and auspicious transformations is by the Surname Gautama. People who have paid respect to him will mostly lose the Proper Path'."

Upon hearing that, the great officer, Concentrated Wisdom, respectfully presented the following verses to the Great King, "Sakyamuni is The Teacher of Gods and People, For Innumerable Kalpas. He has cultivated asceticism. Now he has attained Buddhahood and turned The Dharma Wheel, He based His teaching on the teaching of The Past Buddhas."

"He never goes against the wishes of all sentient beings. With great strength of kindness and compassion He rescues the lost beings. The chances for one to encounter a Buddha is like a tortoise which has come upon a floating log. And also like the blossom of Udumbara Flower which is the most wonderful. I only hope that The Great King will go to listen to The Dharma. May The King not listen to the words of the six deviant teachers."

At that time, after speaking the verses, Concentrated Wisdom the Great Officer, by using his spiritual penetration power, left the ground and rose to the empty space, reaching a height of seven times the height of a Tor-lo tree. Immediately, before The Great King, he said the Mantra. And in an instant, he was able to lead Mount Sumeru and the water of the great seas to enter his heart. But his body still remained calm and relax without obstruction."

When the King Prasenajit saw such a state, he was filled with awe. He knew that Concentrated Wisdom Great Officer was the Genuine Good Knowing Adviser. So he made obeisance to him and asked, "Who is your Dharma Teacher?"

Concentrated Wisdom Great Officer answered, "My teacher is Sakyamuni Buddha. Now he is dwelling at Mount Grdhrakuta in Rajagrha (The Royal Palace City), and speaking The Sutra of Longevity and The Extinction of Offences."

After listening to that, the Great King was filled with joy. Immediately he asked Concentrated Wisdom The Great Officer to take over the tasks of setting important issues in his country. The great King gathered in a big retinue of relatives, great officers and Elders. Then the whole procession of jewelled carriages led by four horses travelled all the way to Rajagrha. He also brought the lady and her son along.

When they arrived at Mount Grdhrakuta in Rajagrha, they offered fresh flowers and a hundred Kinds of special offerings to The Buddha. Then they took off the ornaments from their bodies and circumambulated The Buddha seven times. They put their palms together and made obeisance to The Buddha. They also showered fresh flowers as offerings to The Buddha. Then The King retold the happenings of the lady to The Buddha.

Immediately, The Buddha told The King Prasenajit, "This lady was a step-mother in her former life. Out of

jealousy she used poison to murder the thirty children of the first wife."

"Those sons and daughters who were being murdered by her made the following vows, 'I vow that I will become her son or daughter in every life. After she has given birth to me, I will die soon at a young age to cause extreme misery to her. She will suffer just as though her liver and intestines are being cut into pieces.'"

"But now she has come to listen to The Sutra of Longevity and The Extinction of Offences. Even if she can listen to a single verse, all her enemies and creditors will never again come to take revenge on her."

After that, The World Honoured One told the large multitude in the Dharma Assembly, "When the consciousness of a foetus enters the womb, The Mara Papiyan immediately releases four great poisonous snakes and six evil thieves of dustmotes into his body. If one of the four snakes or six thieves is not properly taken care of, the root of life for the foetus will immediately be terminated."

"I have a Dharani Mantra which can help to increase the lifespan of a child. If the child is infected with

diseases, and undergoes great sufferings, once he has heard the Dharani Mantra, the diseases will immediately be cured. This Mantra will chase away all evil ghosts. Then He said the following Mantra.

"Bo-Tou-Mi-Bo, Tou-Mi-Ti-Pi,  
Xi-Ni-Xi-Ni, Xi-Mi-Zhu-Li,  
Zhu-Luo-Zhu-Li, Hou-Lou-Hou-Lou,  
Yu-Li-Yu-Luo, Yu-Li-Bo-Lou-Bo-Li,  
Wen, Zhi-Zhen-Die, Pin-Die-Ban-Tzi-Mo-  
Die-Chi-Na-Jia-Li-Su-Bo-He."

The Buddha said, "If good men and good women are able to accept, uphold, read and memorize the words in this Dharani Mantra, or speak the Mantra for the fetus that dwells in the womb, the babies who leave the wombs, or sick children for seven days and seven nights, besides making offerings by burning the incense and showering the flowers. They must also write down, listen, accept and uphold the Mantra wholeheartedly. Then all the serious diseases and the former offences will be eradicated."

At that time, the Medicine King Bodhisattva, Qi-Po went forth to The Buddha and said, "World Honored

One! I am known as The Great Medicine King ,and I am able to cure all diseases. The small babies may be infected with nine kinds of diseases, which will cause them to die young. What are the nine kinds of diseases? The first is that the parents have coitus at wrong hours."

"The second is that the place where the baby us being delivered is defiled by the blood. So the earth spirits leave the home, and the evil ghosts get the chance to enter the household. The third is that during the delivery, the navel of the baby is infected with bacteria, as it is not properly cleansed with antiseptic. The fourth is that during the delivery, cotton wool with no antiseptic is used to wipe the defiled blood from the womb which envelopes the baby."

"The fifth is that animals are killed in the preparation of a feast for relatives and friends. The sixth is that during the pregnancy and the period for feeding, the mother partakes of all kinds of raw and cold fruits and food. The seventh is that when the child is sick, he is fed with all types of meat."

"The eighth is that during delivery, an evil state appears in the delivery room. If the umbilical cord is still

attached to the mother, the mother will die. If the umbilical cord is already cut off, the baby will die."

"What is meant by the inauspicious appearance? For examples, people can see all types of dead carcasses, and different unusual, strange and unclean appearances. Because the eyes see unclean appearances, so, it is known as inauspiciousness. If we grind the Niu-Huang (Gorocana), pearls and granulated bright sand into powder and mix it with honey to feed the baby, it will help to stable his mind and spirit. And he will escape from all inauspiciousness."

"The ninth is that the baby is beaten by the evil ghost when he is brought for a walk at night. All newborn babies should be taken care of properly in order to avoid the above situations. Then he will not die young."

At the same time, in the place of the Mara, the Heavenly Mara Papiyan who had the penetration of others' thoughts knew that the Buddha was teaching The Dharani Mantra of Longevity, The Extinction of Offences and The Protection of Young Children to the multitude. So he was very angry. He scolded harshly and was worried and displeased.

The King of Mara had three daughters. They saw that their father was extremely angry, uneasy and worried. So they went forth to enquire of him, "May we know why our father, The King is so worried, angry and unhappy?"

The Mara's King answered, "That Monk by the surname Gautama is now speaking The Sutra of Longevity and The Extinction of Offences to innumerable and limitless living beings at Mount Grdhrakuta in Rajagriha. He intends to widely circulate and proclaim this Sutra to all present and future living beings, so that they will attain the bliss of longevity. By doing so, he has invaded my Mara's state and brought about great harm. So, how can I not give rise to evil thoughts?"

"Now, I want to lead my retinue of relatives and all the Mara's soldiers to conquer Him. Even if I cannot stop The Monk Gautama from proclaiming The Sutra of Longevity and The Extinction of Offences, but with my present strength of awesome spiritual penetration, I can close the ears of all heavenly beings and the multitudes in that assembly so that they will be unable to hear The Buddha speaks The Sutra."

After hearing that, the three daughters of Mara immediately advised their father by using the verses,

"The Heavenly Mara Papiyan has three daughters,

Who made obeisance before their father, The King and said,

"The monk Gautama is The Teacher of God and People, The power of the Mara is unable to affect him.

Formerly He dwelt under the Bodhi Tree,

When He first sat on the Auspicious Dharma Seat,

The three of us tried to lure Him with our beauty,

As we are the most beautiful among the Heavenly ladies."

" 'We used hundreds kinds of beautiful dances to capture His attention,

But the Bodhisattva did not even give rise to a thought of indulgence.

He contemplated the three of us like old ladies,

So now He is able to attain The Bodhi of Proper Enlightenment.

And becomes The Teacher of all beings.

Father, you with your bow and arrows tried to frighten Him,

With your soldiers and weapons that fully filled up the empty space,

But the Bodhisattva contemplated them like a show for children,

He was not frightened; neither did He retreat from The Bodhi Mind.

So now He is certified to The Bodhi Path and becomes The Dharma King.

We only hope that our father, The King will put to rest the evil thoughts.' "

After listening to the verses of his daughters, the Heavenly Mara Papiyan renewed his plan and readjusted his retinue of relatives into new groupings. Besides, he chose an efficient troop of intelligent soldiers and told them, "I will go with you all to the dwelling of The Buddha. We must pretend that we want to surrender. We must make use of different kinds of skills-in-means so that The Buddha will believe in us."

"If we are able to get his trust, then we can use the chance to do all kinds of evil deeds, in order to obstruct the propagation of this Sutra." After saying that, he together with his retinue of Mara went to the dwelling of The Buddha. They circumambulated The Buddha for seven times. After that he said,

"World Honored One, are you tired after speaking the Dharma? I now bring my retinue of relatives along to listen to The Sutra of Longevity and The extinction of Offences. We wish to become the disciples of The Buddha. I only hope that The World Honored One who is kind and compassionate will accept us. May I obtain what I have desired."

The World Honored One scolded the King of Mara immediately; "You were already full of anger when you were at your palace. Your plan is to come here and pretend to walk about in my assembly, waiting for chances to commit all evil deeds. In the Buddha Dharma, we do not allow you to deceive others."

Immediately the King of Mara Papiyan was ashamed of himself. He stopped putting on his deceitful appearance and said to The Buddha, "World Honored One! My stupid and deceitful plans are surely unable to

be concealed from you. May The Buddha, who is greatly kind and compassionate, forgive my offences! Now, as I have heard The Dharani Mantra on Longevity, The Extinction of Offences and The Protection of small children, I vow that,

" 'In the Dharma Ending Age, if there are living beings who accept uphold, write down, read and recite this Sutra, wherever they may be, I will protect them, so that no evil ghosts will have the chance to harm them.'"

" 'If those people who have already fallen into the hells are to remember and be mindful of this sutra for just an instant, I will use my spiritual power to take the water of the great seas and pour on the offenders, so that they will feel refresh with the moisture of water. I will transform the great Hells into lotus ponds too.'"

At that time, many Flying Raksas, with Eating Children Raksa as their leader, came together with their retinue of Raksas of the same family. They came down from the empty Space and circumambulated The Buddha for a thousand times. They told The Buddha, "World Honored One! We for innumerable kalpas have been

born as Raksas. Our retinues of relatives are as many as there are sands in the Ganges River."

"Everyone of us suffers from hunger; wherever we go, we will look for fetuses and new born babies. We then eat their flesh and drink the blood. Our retinues always spy on all living beings, and we wait for the time when the husband and wife are having coition in order to eat the sperms. Then, they will have no children. Or at times, we follow them and enter the wombs to destroy the fetus and partake the blood."

"Or we try to find chances to kill the new born baby within the first seven days. Even for a child who is under ten years old, our retinues will change themselves into all kinds of evil worms and poisonous bacteria to enter the stomach of the child. We consume his internal organs, sperms and blood. By doing so, the child will vomit the milk and be infected with dysentery. Sometimes he may be infected with intestinal disorders of Malaria."

"Or at times, we will cause him to be so sick that his eyes become greenish blue in color. The body will be swollen with water and the belly inflated. Gradually, we are able to take away his life. Now, we have listened to

The Buddha's teaching on Longevity, The Extinction of Offences and The Protection of Young Children, we will uphold the order of The World Honored One even if it means that our retinue will have to suffer from hunger. We will never again dare to eat the fetuses and babies."

The Buddha told the raksas, "You all should accept and uphold the precepts in the Buddha Dharma. By upholding the precepts, after the passing away of the raksa's body, you will then be able to attain a rebirth in the heaven to enjoy the blessing and bliss."

Again, The Buddha told the multitudes in the assembly, "If there is a child who is suffering from all kinds of diseases, you should teach the kind mother to take out a small portion of the breast milk and disperse it into empty space, to give all the raksas. And with a pure body and mind, she should accept and uphold this Dharani Sutra on Longevity, The Extinction of Offences and The Protection of Young Children. She may write it down, read and recite it. The child will soon recover from the sicknesses."

When all the raksas heard this, they were extremely happy and told The Buddha, "If we are able to attain a

rebirth in the heaven, our retinue will never again harm the children and take their milk. Even if we were to swallow iron pellets, we will never drink the children's blood."

"After the Buddha has entered Nirvana, if there is a man who can read, recite, accept and uphold this sutra, wherever he may be, we will carry the Vajra Rod of The Buddha to protect him. We will never let the evil men to get the chance to disturb and harm The Dharma Master, neither do we allow the evil ghosts to cause any harm and misery to the young children."

At that time, all the great Heavenly Kings and their retinue, all the Dragon Kings, Yaksa Kings, Asura Kings, Garuda Kings, Kinnaras Kings, Mahoragas Kings, Xue-Li-Dou Kings, Pi-She-Zhe Kings, Fu-Dan-Na Kings, Jia-Zha-Fu-Dan-Na Kings and other Kings who each brought along their retinue of followers and relatives.

They made obeisance to The Buddha. Then they brought forth the same mind, put their palms together and said, "World Honored One! From now onwards, wherever there are Bhikshus, Bhiksunis, Upasaka and Upasika who are able to accept and uphold this Sutra of Longevity, or write it down, I together with my

retinue will always protect such a person and the place where he dwells."

"We Kings are able to chase away all evil ghosts. There are evil ghosts who disturb and harm the living beings and cause them to be infected with diseases. If such a patient is able to write down, accept, uphold, read and recite this Sutra with a pure body and mind, we Kings will subdue all the evil ghosts so that they will be unable to harm this man. Neither will he die in accidents or experience great pain and torture in his death bed."

At that time, The Heavenly Spirits of Firm and Solid Earth also left his Seat. Respectfully he said to The Buddha, "World Honored One! If the disciple of The Buddha accepts and upholds this Sutra of Longevity, the Extinction of Offences and The Protection of Young Children, we Heavenly Spirits of Earth will always provide him with abundant food from the earth in order to strengthen him. He will obtain an increase in the blessing of a long lifespan.

"We will always offer all kinds of gold and silver, wealth, grains and rice to the man who has faith in this Sutra, so that he will never be in lack of anything. He will

obtain a healthy and peaceful body with no more worries, suffering and anger."

"His mind is always blissful for he has obtained the superior fields of blessing. No evil ghosts will be able to take away his life. If there is a new born baby, within the first seven days of his birth, we earth spirits will protect him so that he will not die at a young age."

After that, The Vajra of Great Strength also said to The Buddha at the assembly, "World Honored One! After The Thus Come One has spoken This Dharani Mantra of The Sutra of Longevity, The Extinction of Offences and The Protection of Young Children, all the different Heavenly Kings and their retinue, those raksa kings, The Dharma Protectors and the good spirits all brought this vows to protect those who read, recite and write down this Sutra. Besides, they also offer them whatever they need, so that they will not be in lack of anything."

"I once asked the Great Virtuous One Bhagavan who spoke the Great Spiritual Strength Mantra of Auspicious words. If there are living beings that are able to hear these words for once, in hundreds of thousands of lifetime, they will not experience the suffering of a short life span. Besides they will be

endowed with innumerable blessing and life span. Besides their bodies will be free from sicknesses."

"Even with the four Mara who are still dwelling in the body, they will be under control. So such a being will increase in life span. He may live up to one hundred and twenty years old. He can even attain a state with no aging and no-death. He will obtain the Fruition position of non-retreating."

"If those disciples of The Buddha who are infected with serious diseases are able to hear this mantra, the evil ghosts will have no way to take away their lives." Then The Great Strength Vajra said The Mantra:

" 'Duo-Ti-Ye-Ta, Zhan-Ta-Li, Zhan-Ta-Luo-Pi-Ti, Zhan-Ta-Luo-Mo-Niu, Zhan-Ta-Luo-Pa-Ti, Zhan-Ta-Luo-Pu-Li, Zhan-Ta-Luo-Men-Yi, Zhan-Ta-Luo-Ti-Li, Zhan-Ta-Fei-Mie, Zhan-Tu-Luo, Zhan-Ta-Luo-Po-Luo-Zi, Zhan-Ta-Luo-Fu-Ta-Li, Zhan-Ta-Luo-Po-Ti-Yi, Zhan-Ta-Luo-Po-Mie, Zhan-Ta-Luo-Fa-Zhi, Zhan-Ta-Luo-Lu-Ji, Su-Po-Ho.' "

The Buddha said, "Good indeed! Good indeed! The Great Strength Vajra! Now, as you are able to speak this Auspicious Spiritual Mantra of Protecting the Young Children, you will soon become The Greatest Leader and Teacher of all sentient beings."

The Buddha then turned to speak to Manjushri Bodhisattva, "Manjushri! You should know that all the past Buddhas proclaimed this Mantra. It has the awesome strength to protect all cultivators. Besides, it helps to increase the life span of Gods and People and to eradicate all offences, defilement and evil views. It also helps to protect those who uphold this Sutra, so that they will increase in blessing and obtain a prolongation of life span."

Again, the World Honored One spoke to the Dharma Prince Manjushri, "After my extinction, in the Evil World of Five Turbidities, if there is a Bhikshu who goes against the rules of precepts which are taught by me, who is attached to Bhiksunis and other girls, or who desires the Shramanas and Shramaneras, or who partakes meat and drinks wine, who has strong and uncontrollable desired for love, or who carries out other impure worldly affairs, but still does not give rise to a sense of shame or remorse. Such a mind resembles that of a piece of hard wood, and he is sure to be despised by worldly people. Indeed he will destroy my Dharma. You should know that such a Bhikshu is not my disciple. He belongs to the group of Bhikshus who practices the five unwholesome deeds. He also belongs

to the retinue of Heavenly Mara, and is in the group of six teachers of the deviant path."

Bhikshus like these will presently obtain a short life span. Those Bhiksunis who break the precepts will also receive the same retribution. But if they are able to repent and reform sincerely, and never to commit such offences, besides receiving and upholding this Sutra, then they will be free from offences and obtain longevity."

"Moreover, Manjushri! After my extinction, in the Evil World of Five Turbidities, if there are Bodhisattvas who slander others, who enjoy praising themselves for being full of merits, virtues, goodness and beauty, who are stingy in teaching and passing on the Great Vehicle Sutras to others, such Bodhisattvas indeed belong to the retinue of the Mara. They are not true Bodhisattvas."

"But if such a Bodhisattva is able to sincerely and wholeheartedly receive and uphold this Sutra, to write it down, read and recite it, then he will also obtain an indestructible, permanent Vajra Body just like all the Buddhas. Moreover, Manjushri, after my extinction, in the Evil World of Five Turbidities, if there is a king who

kills or harms his parents, who kills the relatives without any reasons, who does not carry out his duty in accord to the Proper Dharma, who invades other countries for no reason at all and who kills the loyal officers if they try to advise him. On top of that, he himself indulges deeply in sexual desires, and goes against The Proper Dharma, which was set up by his forefathers in the King's Lineage. Besides he destroys the Buddha's pagodas and temples, and burns down the Buddha's images and sutras. The country of such an evil king will face the calamities of flood and drought. The wind and rain will not come at proper time and so the citizens will suffer from thirst and hunger. Many of them will die of plague."

"As the king is unruly, so he will obtain a short life span in this life. After he has passed away, he will fall into the Great Avici Hell. But if he is able to write down this Sutra, to propagate the Sutra widely, besides making offering to it, to repent and reform sincerely his offences, and to carry out the tasks and country's affairs in accordance to the Proper Dharma set up by his forefathers in the King's Lineage, then he will gain longevity."

"Moreover, Manjushri! After my extinction, in the Evil World of Five Turbidities, if there are High Officers and those officers appointed by the Royal Palace, who enjoy the salary but do not carry out the duties wholeheartedly. These unfaithful officers are not shameful, nor do they feel remorseful in their misdeeds. They are pretentious and deceitful. They praise falsely, and are not loyal to the country. They are greedy and corrupted, and go against the law. On top of that, they bully the people and kill the innocent beings."

"With their power, strength and position, they claim others' wealth and jewels as their own without any consideration. They also harm the people in their country. In addition, they look down on Sutras, and obstruct the propagation of the Great Vehicle Buddha Dharma. People like these will obtain a short life span presently. After they have passed away, they will fall into the Avici Hell and never will they obtain a release."

"But if they are able to sincerely repent and reform, in addition to accepting and upholding this Sutra, write in down, read and recite it, then they will obtain longevity, and are able to retain their position as High officers and enjoy the wealth. Moreover, Manjushri,

after my extinction, in the Evil World of Five Turbidities, if there are Good Men or Good Women who dwell in the home life to practice The Buddha's teaching, but later they change their faith and believe in the confused and evil views of the deviant path for they no longer have faith in the Proper Dharma of The Great Vehicle."

"People like these are very stingy. They prefer to store up the innumerable amount of hundreds of thousands of gold and silver pieces, but refuse to give them away. Their greed is never satiated for they will continue to seek and acquire more wealth and benefit. These rich people do not enjoy giving in order to relieve the poor. Besides, they cannot write down, accept, uphold, read and recite the Twelve Divisions of Sutras. They will never be able to escape the suffering which is brought about by the Ghost of Impermanence."

"The household of such a person will not be peaceful. Inauspicious events will take place in the most unlikely manner without any reason at all. For examples, there may have the sudden appearance of sparrows under the stove; the snake will glide into the halls and bedrooms; the dog may suddenly climb up the house while the rats will practice hundreds of kinds of sounds.

Many wild animals and birds will try to push their way into his house."

"Hundreds of kinds of ghastly ghosts of the forests will appear in his house. Because of seeing the ghosts and strange sights, the man will be afflicted and is extremely frightened. Such a man may die young because he is tortured by these afflictions and frightening appearances. But if he is able to accept, uphold and write down this Sutra, and widely circulate it for people to read and recite, then he will over-power the above strange happenings. He will then obtain a long life span.

"Moreover, Manjushri, after my extinction, in the Evil World of Five Turbidities, there are those living beings who as the parents in the family, will continue to pity and worry about their grown up children. Because of worries and over concern their mind is always unsettled. What is the reason behind this?"

"For examples, the boy who has grown up to be a man is forced to enter the military force according to the law of the country. He is not free to go anywhere, and his parents will continue to worry about him. Such is called the sickness of the mind. Or may be the grown-

up daughter who has already married is being looked down upon by the husband's family. The husband and wife never live in harmony. The daughter will be bullied by the mother in laws. Because of over concern for their daughter, their mind is never at ease."

"Because of an unsettled mind, a man is tortured by worries, suffering and anger throughout the day. This will again cause him to fall sick easily. He will suffer from all kinds of diseases in the present life span. Finally he is sure to die young."

"But if a man is able to write down, accept and uphold this Sutra, then he will obtain longevity. Because of the strength of the Sutra and Mantra, the marriage will be successful and blissful. The in-laws will live in harmony. The son will return home peacefully, and so the sickness of the mind will be eradicated."

"Moreover, Manjushri! After my extinction, in the Evil World of Five Turbidities, there are living beings that are not replete with a mind of kindness and compassion. They kill and harm the living beings, and devour the flesh of all kinds of animals. Manjushri! Such behavior is the same as killing one's parents, and

it also resembles the eating of our next of kin and friends."

"Because of killing and harming the living beings, in addition to destroying the fetus, such a man will lead a short life span presently. Even when the husband and wife are having coition, the sperms will be eaten by the Evil Raksas and so they will have no children in future."

"But if he is able to write down, accept, uphold, read and recite this Sutra, then he can escape the evil fruition of a short life with no children to carry down his surname. Moreover, Manjushri, after my extinction, in the Evil World of Five Turbidities, all living beings are born without spiritual penetration of the past lives. So they do not know the cycle of cause and effect. When they temporarily obtain the human forms, they feel that they should fully enjoy themselves presently."

"Besides, such a man will create all sinful karma with his body. Maybe he enjoys slandering others, or he may make use of his powerful, honorable and wealthy disposition to threaten others' lives. He will give rise to all kinds of evil thoughts. On top of that, he will have no faith in the Great Vehicle Sutra for he is arrogant and proud."

"People like these will not live long presently. But if such a man is able to repent and reform sincerely, and with a subdued, soft and gentle mind, he is able to write down this Sutra. Besides he will accept, uphold, read and recite it. With the strength of such good roots, he may have the chance to prolong his life span. Even if he is seriously ill, and has to face all calamities and dangers, he will never die in accidents."

"Moreover, Manjushri! After my extinction, in the Evil World of Five Turbidities, if there is a living being who has to represent the country to go to another country with the order of the King, or who has to seek for treasures and wealth so as to fulfill the wishes and instructions of his parents. He may have to go through dangerous path and cross over the deep sea to carry out the business affairs."

"And after such a man has obtained much wealth and benefits, he becomes proud, arrogant and stubborn. He practices all evil deeds such as playing chess, gambling and dancing. He will make friends with the evil men, and spend his money on prostitutes."

"As he does not follow the order of the King, neither does he listen to the teaching and advice of his parents,

he will lose his life finally for spending too much time in drinking and seeking the companionship of beautiful women."

"Or at times, he may be lucky enough to stay alive with a little more treasure and wealth. But because of drinking, his mind gets confused, and so he is unable to differentiate the safety of the roads. Finally he will enter the dangerous path, and be robbed by evil robbers. He will then be killed."

"But if he is able to write down this Sutra, to widely bring forth the deep vows, then wherever he dwells, the evil robbers will not come forth. All evil animals will be unable to harm him. His mind is blissful and so the body is naturally calm at ease. His wealth and jewels will always be with him. With the strength of the Sutra and Mantra, he will obtain a long life span."

"Moreover, Manjushri! After my extinction, in the Evil World of Five Turbidities, there are living beings who have created bad karma and fallen into the hells, they will be born as animals."

"Even if such a man is able to obtain a human form, his six roots will be incomplete. Maybe he is born deaf, blind, dumb and mute. The shape of the body hunch-

backed, deformed, with abnormal curvature of the spine. Or at times such a person is born as a woman who is illiterate and unable to read the Sutras. Even if he is born as a man, he will be deluded, stupid and dull in nature because of the evil karma from past lives. He will not be able to read and recite The Sutra of Longevity."

"As he is always worried, and experiences all kinds of sufferings and anger, his mind is never at ease and so he will die at a young age."

"But if he is able to invite the Good Knowing Adviser to write the Sutra for him, in order to give to others, besides making obeisance respectfully and wholeheartedly to the Sutra, with the innumerable merits and virtues thus accumulated, he will never have to undergo such evil retribution. Presently he will obtain a long life span."

"Moreover, Manjushri! After my extinction, in the Evil World of Five Turbidities, if there is a living being who after his death, his relatives are able to practice good deeds on his behalf so as to create merits and virtues for him within the first seven days or forty-nine days, if the merits and virtues were to be divided into seven

portions, the dead one can only obtain the benefit of one portion."

"On the contrary, within forty-nine days, if a man who during his present life span is able to stop all household and worldly activities to write this Sutra, to offer incense and flowers to it and to make obeisance to The Buddha. He also specially prepares seven times of Vegetarian Food as Dana to offer to the Sangha, in order to cultivate offering widely. The merits and virtues thus accumulated will be as many as there are sands in the Ganges River."

"By doing so, such a man will obtain a long life span presently. He will never fall into the three evil paths to there undergo acute sufferings. If he has already passed away, his next of kin can then use his wealth and property to practice giving widely, to relieve the poor and make offering to the virtuous ones in the ten directions. If they can cultivate such blessings and virtues for him, the dead one will obtain all the seven portion of merits and virtues."

"Moreover, Manjushri! After my extinction, in the Evil World of Five Turbidities, if there are those living beings who are not filial to their parents, who are

unkind and with no compassion. Instead, they create the five unwholesome deeds. Besides, they are not grateful to their parents, neither do they show any love towards their brothers and sisters."

"But the Heavenly King Who Practices The Path still goes around all worlds under the Heavens, playing all kinds of music. He also sends His retinue of relatives to Jambudvīpa during the Vegetarian Diet Months, so as to bring benefit to all living beings. If a man is involved in accidents or falls sick seriously, The Heavenly King Who Practices The Path will still help him to get rid of the evil ghosts. Then he will recover from sickness."

"But, if the living beings are not filial to their parents, are full of jealousy and create evil deeds, they will fall sick for encountering the Ghost King Who Disperses Diseases. The Ghost King will blow the foul air at them. They will then be infected with diseases of plague, or feel cold and hot alternately. They will be weak because of Malaria, or get confused when evil ghosts control them. Or the whole body is infected with ringworm and other chronic diseases."

"But if such a man is able to purify his body and mind, burn incense and shower flowers before writing down

this Sutra, on the first day of the first Lunar month, or make obeisance to The Buddha and offer Dana to the Sangha besides upholding the precepts and observing the vegetarian diet before reciting this Sutra for seven days, then, he will never fall sick forever because of the good merits and virtues. He will gain longevity."

"Moreover, Manjushri! After my extinction, in the Evil World of Five Turbidities, the root of living beings has gradually deteriorated and the blessing is getting less. At the end of the kalpa, there will appear in the sky the seven suns, which shine at the same time. Even if there are not as many as seven, but due to the King who is lack of virtue, the land will face drought, with the air resembles that of burning fire."

"All the grass, herbs, wood and forests, the hundreds kinds of grains and sugar cane, the rice, hemp, flowers, fruits and others on the earth will wither and die."

"But if the King and all living beings are able to read and recite, accept and uphold this Sutra, the Dragon King Nanda, Prananda and others will show pity on living beings. They will lift the water from great seas to moisturize all woodland, forests, grains, herbs, flowers, fruits, sugar cane and others. The rain like sweet dew

will moisturize all beings. Everyone will gain longevity because of the strength of the Sutra and Mantra."

"Moreover, Manjushri! After my extinction, in the Evil World of Five Turbidities, if there are living beings who without righteousness are greedy for wealth while carrying out business affairs. They cheat the customers by adjusting the weighing machines and giving wrong measurements. Such sinful karma will bring them down to Hells after death."

"After the retribution in the Hells, they will be born as animals like cows, horses, goats, donkeys, pigs, elephants, birds and other wild lives, worms, mosquitoes, ants and other insects."

"If there is a great Bodhisattva who is replete with kindness and compassion, who recites this Sutra repeatedly before all animals, birds, wild lives, snakes, worms, rats, ant and others, so that they will hear this Sutra in their original consciousness, then these beings will each attain liberation from their group and kinds with the strength of Sutra and Mantra."

"These animals and minute beings will leave their present life forms and be born in the Heavens to enjoy bliss. But is there is a Bodhisattva who is not replete

with kindness and compassion, who does not have pity on living beings, and is unable to widely proclaim this Sutra, then he is not the disciple of The Buddha. He belongs to the retinue of Mara."

"Moreover, Manjushri! After my extinction, in the Evil World of Five Turbidities, if there are living beings who are arrogant, and have no faith in the Sutra of Buddha Dharma, besides they slander my Dharma."

"Or when there is a man who speaks The Buddha Dharma, but the audience is not attentive, then with the above offences, they will obtain a short life span. After passing away, they will be born in the Hells."

"If there is a Way-Place which lectures in this Sutra of Longevity, and all living beings are able to go and listen to the Sutra, or exhort others to do so besides sharing the seats with them, such people are the great Dharma Protectors in Buddhism. They will obtain longevity, and never fall into the three Evil Paths. If there is a man who wishes to speak this Sutra, then he can simply arrange a pure Way-Place in accordance to the size of the room."

"Moreover, Manjushri! After my extinction, in the Evil World of Five Turbidities, all those pregnant women

who kill and devour the flesh of living beings or eat the eggs so as to strengthen their bodies, such a woman, who is lacking in kindness and compassion, will get the retribution of a short life span presently. She will face a difficult delivery and might even die from it."

"Even if she can deliver the child safely, he is indeed the creditor or enemy who comes to seek a repayment of debts. He can never be the good knowing adviser who is beneficial to the family."

"But if this woman is able to bring forth good vows besides writing down this Sutra, accept, uphold, read and recite it, then she will not have to face a difficult delivery. Safely she will deliver the child without any hindrance. Mother and child will both be blissful. She will get what she has vowed for, either a son or a daughter."

"Again, the Buddha spoke to Manjushri Bodhisattva, "This Sutra on Buddha's Nature of Longevity, The Extinction of Offences and The Twelve Conditioned Links of causation that I am now speaking was also spoken by all Past Buddhas. If living beings are able to accept, uphold, read and recite this Sutra, they will

obtain great blessings and benefits. Their present life span will be more than one hundred and twenty years."

"When they are to pass away, torturing such as the cutting of bodies with the knives of wind will not be experienced by them. In fact they will be free from all sufferings. They will obtain The Buddha's Vajra, Permanent and Indestructible body for reading the Sutra of Buddha's Nature. Such a body is naturally clear and pure, with firm and solid mindfulness in every thought. Wherever they are, they will constantly be protected and illuminated by all Bodhisattvas."

"The Bodhisattva Who Contemplates The Sound of The World and The Great Strength Bodhisattva will come to welcome the man who is mindful of Buddha. They ride on white elephants with six tusks, and travel on clouds of five colours. They brought along a Lotus Flower dais to lead him to attain rebirth in the Non-Moving Buddha land. He will naturally be blissful and does not have to undergo eight sufferings."

"Manjushri, you should know that all deluded living beings do not realize that their life span with little blessing is as short as the sparks from rubbing stones or the lightning. Their life span also resembles the foam

on the surface of water. So they are not frightened nor worried while soaking in the seas of birth and death."

"As these livings do not realize their danger, which resembles that of burning eye-brows, so they greedily indulge in the benefits of wealth, love and sensual desires. Or they consume so much wine that their life span is at stake. There are also those who are jealous, deluded and arrogant. Most of them will sink in the seas of suffering with no chance for liberation."

"Only the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are able to cross over the seas of birth and death. The common sentient beings are sure to sink into them. The ghastly ghost of Impermanence comes at unpredictable times. Even if we wish to bribe him with innumerable and limitless amount of gold, silver, money and precious jewels and seek to lengthen our life, it will still be in vain."

"All living beings should know and contemplate constantly that the body is just like the four great poisonous snakes with innumerable worms that feed on it throughout the days and nights. They should contemplate that the body is full of evil. It is like a dead dog, which is not to be desired. And the body is impure, with the nine apertures that produce the

smelly dirt, wax and sweat constantly. And it is also like a city's pond which becomes the dwelling place for Raksas Ghosts."

"Living beings should also contemplate that the body is like the morning dew which cannot dwell long. It will be eaten by birds and hungry dogs, so we should renounce the foul and smelly body to seek the mind of enlightenment. We should contemplate the time of death, when a man suffers acute pain just as though millions of arrows are penetrating his heart, with the two empty hands open widely."

"When the root of life is completely cut off, the body swells and is covered with greenish bruises, within the first five days. Blood, pus and foul liquid will ooze out. Even our beloved parents, wives and sons will not desire to take a look at it."

"Even if it is buried in the earth, the flesh and bones will all be separated. The bones of the skeleton such as the tibia, scapula, ribs, spine and others will be at different positions. The flesh, intestines, stomach, liver, kidney, lung, heart and others will all be the feeding place of abundant worms and bacteria."

"If we are able to contemplate thus, then we will realize that there is no one who is really in existence. Then, even if we were to be born in the world, all the gold, silver, pearls, carnelian, money and the treasury are none of our business. Then such a man will know how to renounce the foul, smelly body in search of Bodhisattva Path."

"If there are living beings who seek to escape from these sufferings, then they should sacrifice all exterior possessions, even to the point of sacrificing their heads, eyes, brains and marrow, in order to write down this sutra besides accepting, upholding, reading and reciting it."

"This Sutra on The Buddha's Nature of Twelve Conditioned Links of Causation is the secret store of all Buddhas. If a man is able to make offering to it, circulate it and be mindful of it wholeheartedly, then he will be certified to The Unsurpassed Proper, Equal and Perfect Enlightenment. He will not die at a young age, neither will he suffer death accidentally."

After The Buddha had spoken the Dharma of Buddha's nature of Twelve Conditioned Links of Causation in the Great Assembly, all The Bhikshus, Bhiksunis, Upasaka,

Upasika, Heavenly Dragons and Eight-Fold Division, the Humans and Non-Humans and others, The King Prasenajit and His Retinue of relatives, and other beings as many as the sands in the Ganges River, all obtained The Unsurpassed, Proper, Equal and Perfect Enlightenment. They were certified to The Dharma Patient of No-Birth.

They praised this blissful Dharma, which was unprecedented. The multitude made obeisance wholeheartedly before The Buddha, accepted and upheld it joyfully.