

February 1, 2014

Wisdom at Dawn Transcript

The Lotus Sutra

Lotus Sutra Episode 11

“He Came to the Saha World to Transform All Beings”

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靜思晨語-靜思妙蓮華第011集

(法華經·序品第一)

標題：為度眾生 來去娑婆

Since Sakyamuni Buddha attained enlightenment, an inconceivable number of asankya kalpas have passed. To transform sentient beings, He has never rested and has manifested countless births and deaths.

The Twelve Links of Cyclic Existence: Ignorance, Volitional Formation, Consciousness, Name and Form, Six Sense Organs, Contact, Sensation, Craving, Grasping, Becoming, Birth, Aging and Death.

**釋迦牟尼佛**

**時成佛道以來**

**已經不可思議阿僧祇劫**

**為度眾生 無有休息**

**數數示生 數數示滅**

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釋迦牟尼佛，為了一大事因緣而來人間，莫非就是「開、示、悟、入」，眾生佛的知見，但是眾生的知見，有利根也有劣根的不同。

Sakyamuni Buddha came to this world for one great cause: to "reveal and manifest". His wisdom and view so sentient beings can "realize and enter" them. But when it comes to knowing, sentient beings have either sharp or dull capabilities.

利根的，很快就能夠頓悟；若是下劣的根機，就是要一次又一次，不知道多久的時間，才能夠體會到。

Those with sharp capabilities, can instantly attain realization. Those with dull capabilities, have to hear things over and over again, for an unknown period of time before they achieve realization.

也曾說過，佛陀只為五比丘，就要三轉四諦法輪，何況說我們芸芸這麼多的眾生，當然就是要適應眾生的根機。

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I have mentioned that for five bhiksus alone, the Buddha had to expound the Four Noble Truths three times. So for the many sentient beings there are, He has to adjust to the range of all capabilities.

佛陀已立下這個願，從無始以來，一直就是發這樣的願，就是度盡天下眾生，芸芸天下眾生，根機就是不整齊，所以一定要用耐心，所以他就「五時設教」，這樣來適應眾生的根機。

The Buddha has made this vow since Beginningless Time, He has always made this vow to transform all sentient beings. But the capabilities of these many sentient beings are not the same, so He has to be patient. Therefore, He established the Five Periods of Teachings to resonate with all sentient beings' different capabilities.

若是根機比較利，一句話、一個道理，他就能體會十項，有的人很快地就能吸收。

If one has sharper capabilities, with one sentence or one principle, one can realize ten things. Some people can absorb things quickly.

「華嚴的境界」，那就是法身的大士，上上跟器的人才能接受，其他就沒辦法了。所以佛陀不得不施「權」，那就是以「阿含」。

For the Avatamsaka teachings, only the Dharmakaya-Bodhisattvas, those with superior capabilities, could accept them, while others could not. So the Buddha had to teach through skillful means He did so in the Agama Period.

經過了阿含，人人差不多對佛法，有建立了信心；所以開始八年的「方等」，就是更再進一步要跟大家說，人人有佛性。

During the Agama Period, within those 12 years, most people had built up confidence in the Buddha-Dharma. Then began eight years of Vaipulya teachings, during which He took the next step to explain that everyone has Buddha-nature.

八年的時間，慢慢地大家會覺得，佛陀說我們若願意認真用功，同樣可以成佛，不過還沒有對自己很有信心，所以八年過了之後，就開始講「般若」。

During those eight years, people gradually realized, "The Buddha said if we are willing to practice earnestly, we also can attain Buddhahood." But they did not have much confidence. So after eight years passed, the Buddha expounded the Prajna teachings.

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因為人開始相信有佛性，開始也知道能成佛，但是佛陀更在進一步，不要執著在「有」裡，開始就開般若門。

People had begun to believe in Buddha-nature and that they could attain Buddhahood, so the Buddha took them to the next step of not being attached to existence. So He opened the door to Prajna.

般若，那就是談「空」，就是說人人有一道明智，我們人人都本具有的，其實透徹深無暇穢，沒有污染，既然沒有污染，一切都明朗，就空。

The Prajna teachings are a discussion on emptiness. We all have clear wisdom; it is inherent in all of us. It is pure, profound, flawless, and untainted. Since it is untainted, everything is clear and radiant, is empty.

這個空，這樣大家在聽，高根機的人，很瞭解的人就知道，是啊！人人與佛平等有本性，清靜的智慧，但是到了終極，就要無罣礙，到了究竟的涅槃境界，就是佛寂光土。

When people hear about emptiness, those with superior capabilities, those who understand, will know that yes, we all have the same intrinsic nature and pure wisdom as the Buddha. But ultimately, we strive to have no hindrances and to attain the ultimate state of Nirvana, which is the calm, luminous land of the Buddha.

這若是上上根機的人，在華嚴海會就已經很透徹瞭解，那是法身菩薩，無始以來修行，已成就，所以這種遠離顛倒夢想的境界，早已遠離。

Those with superior capabilities had understood this thoroughly at the Avatamsaka Assembly. These Dharmakaya-Bodhisattvas have been practicing since Beginningless Time. Therefore they have transcended and left behind all confused, dream-like states.

不過中、下根機，雖然經過阿含，雖然經過了方等，到般若的時候，一切皆空，這還有一段距離。不過大家已經開始，慢慢慢慢要知道，但是空了之後那時，要如何？雖然都有信心，那要如何呢？還有妙有，所以空中妙有。

But those with average or inferior capabilities go through the Agama, the Vaipulya, and eventually the Prajna, the state of emptiness. This is quite a long process, but everyone has begun to very gradually understand. So after reaching the state of emptiness, then what? Even if they have faith, then what? Then they realize that there is still wondrous existence. There is wondrous existence in emptiness.

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我們人人若能相信，不要計較，不計較的人，就沒有是非，就能脫離那分妄想，我都不跟你計較了，我還要想什麼呢？怎麼樣都好，這種沒有計較心，沒有煩惱心，沒有得失的心，但是這個心都沒有的時候，那往那個方向走？那就是成佛。

If we all believe in this, we will have no issues with others. If we have no issues with others, there will be no conflicts, and we can be free from any kind of erroneous thinking. If we have no issues with anyone, what else is there to want? Everything is fine. Without that sense of striving, there will be no afflictions and no sense of gain or loss. Without all these desires, what is our course? It is the course toward attaining Buddhahood.

成佛的方向，就是要我們把世間的事情，都全部透徹，看開，那朦朧的境界打開了，前面這條道路是正確的，菩提大直道，這麼清朗明確，要我們往這條路走，那就是菩薩道。所以開始佛陀就要講《法華經》了！這就是佛陀來人間的，一大事因緣。

It is the course toward attaining Buddhahood. We must penetrate, see through everything, in the world. When we see through that hazy state, that road in front of us will be the right one. This is the broad and straight Bodhi-path, which is clear and apparent. When we follow this path, we are following the Bodhisattva-path. So the Buddha began to expound the Lotus Sutra. This is the great cause for which the Buddha came to this world.

其實，釋迦牟尼佛來人間，他用身教來教育我們，同樣降生在人間，同樣在人間裡面來長大，同樣有生老病死，這人生的型態都跟人一樣。只是思想不同——凡夫的思想，今朝有酒今朝醉，今日的歡樂，今日來享受，就不會去想到，世間有多少矛盾事？不會去想！哪怕外面的境界，所看見的生老病死，或者是春夏秋冬，四季輪轉等等...大家就是這樣在過日子，沒有人會去啟動他的心。

Indeed, Sakyamuni Buddha came to this world to teach us by example, He was also born into this human realm, He too grew up in this world. He also went through birth, aging, illness, and death. He appeared in the same form as all people but He had a different mindset. Ordinary people think only about instant gratification. They think about today's happiness and pleasures. They do not think about all the contradictions in the world. Even though in their external surroundings they can see birth, aging, illness, and death or spring, summer, autumn, winter, the changing of seasons, etc., they continue living their lives without awakening their own minds.

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那個時候的悉達多太子，他就啟動到了，他就會想：「應該要脫離皇宮，才能全心往這條道路去找。要如何能找出了，這人世間生命的真諦？」所以他這樣出家；所以這條路走過來很辛苦。

At that time, Prince Siddhartha awakened his mind. He thought, "I should leave the palace so I can devote myself to the path of discovering the truths of life." Therefore, he left home. The path he walked was very difficult.

是不是到了兩千多年前，那個悉達多太子來修行，才開始成佛嗎？不是！釋迦牟尼佛實成佛道以來，已經不可思議阿僧祇劫了，已經很久很久的時間，無法用算數的數字來說；在幾億幾萬，多久多久以前無法說。所以說「無量阿僧祇劫」，不可思議的，不是我們凡夫用數字，能去標示出來，是不可思議的阿僧祇劫。

Was that moment, over 2000 years ago when Prince Siddhartha began his practice, the beginning of his path to Buddhahood? "No." Sakyamuni Buddha has been enlightened for an inconceivable number of eons, for a very long time. This is an incalculable amount of time. It is hard to say how many tens of thousands or tens of millions of years ago. So we use the term asankhya kalpas to describe an inconceivable number. We ordinary people cannot express in numbers these inconceivable asankhya kalpas.

劫，也是曾經跟大家說過了，時間無法算，但是可以用比喻，經過一百年，在人壽十歲開始說起，經過一百年增加一歲，這樣不斷地經過一百年，增加一歲，一直加，一直加，加到人壽八萬四千歲，你們想，這樣累積起來，時間有多久？

I have explained the term kalpa previously as a length of time that cannot be expressed numerically but could be described with an analogy. The average human lifespan was originally ten years, and increased by one year by every century. This continues to happen every century. One year is added, then another, then another until the average human lifespan is 84,000 years. Consider this; how much time did this take?

難道說人壽八萬四千歲，就停住了嗎？這樣是不是叫一「劫」，這樣才是一「增」而已，但是還有「減劫」——八萬四千歲，過一百年，減一歲，過一百年，再減一歲，這樣不斷再一直減減減，減到人壽十歲，這樣叫做「一增減劫」，到底這樣是多久？

Does that process stop once we reach 84,000-year lifespans? Is this called one kalpa? This is only the increasing part, but there is also a decreasing part. Starting with an 84,000-year lifespan, for every 100 years, one year is subtracted. After another century passes, another year is subtracted. This subtraction continues until the average human

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lifespan is 10 years. This is one increasing and decreasing kalpa. How long is this period of time?

尤其是又說，不可思議阿僧祇劫，當然是很久！

So when we are talking about an inconceivable number of asankhya kalpas, that is a very long time.

其實這是要讓我們瞭解，讓我們知道，佛性本來就已經與生俱來，應該佛成佛以來是無量數劫，修行，他要修行，經過了這個過程。

The purpose of this is to help us understand that our Buddha-nature is intrinsic. The Buddha attained enlightenment and has practiced for an infinite number of kalpas. He went through a process of spiritual practice.

「因」——為什麼要成佛？因為眾生，所以他現相人間來成佛。所以我常常說，佛陀是為誰修行呢？名稱上看起來，好像是為他自己去修行，其實我們若能去思考它，為什麼會有生老病死？為什麼會有春夏秋冬？為什麼會有四姓階級？有的貧窮苦難人這麼苦，生老病死，生離死別，這麼苦，到底為什麼？所以為了要解決，很多矛盾的問題，這個矛盾的問題，是要為眾生解決。因為眾生在這種四姓階級，苦難人這麼多，生老病死，生離死別，愛別離苦，這些事情要如何更正過來？

Why did He want to attain enlightenment? Because of sentient beings, He manifested this form to attain enlightenment. I often ask, "Who was the Buddha practicing for?" On the surface, it seemed like He was practicing for Himself. We can also contemplate these questions ourselves. Why is there birth, aging, illness, and death? Why is there spring, summer, autumn, and winter? Why were there four castes? The poor live a hard life, go through birth, aging, illness, death, and separations; what is the reason for all this suffering? The Buddha wanted to solve the problem of these contradictions on behalf of the sentient beings that were suffering tremendously in the four castes. How would He reconcile the matters of birth, aging, illness, death, the suffering of being parted by death or separated from loved ones?

這在他為太子時，不是為自己！自己每天在享福，但是是為眾生，所以為眾生修行，為眾生成佛。所以他來人間，就是沒有休息過。不是兩千多年前而已，過去的過去無量數劫，他還是發心在六道中。現在來人道，為悉達多太子，貴為王子，他也一樣，要為人去找出了一條覺道。他本身已經覺了，就是以身作則給大家看，來修行。

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When the Buddha was a crown prince, instead of enjoying himself, he practiced for the sake of sentient beings and attained Buddhahood for the them. Since Sakyamuni Buddha attained enlightenment, an inconceivable number of asankhya kalpas have passed. To transform sentient beings, He has never rested and has manifested countless births and deaths. So He came to this world and has never rested. He did not just come over 2000 years ago. For countless previous kalpas, He aspired to stay within the Six Realms. This time He was in the human realm as Crown Prince Siddhartha. Though He was honored as a Prince, He also searched for a path to enlightenment for others. He had already attained enlightenment, yet He manifested a body to set an example for our spiritual practice.

修行，你辭親割愛，自然你修行知道這個道理，你就沒有家屬的掛慮，你沒有家屬的掛慮，就沒有愛別離苦，沒有生離死別的苦，這就是要辭親割愛出家去沒有這些家屬的顧慮，你就能專心去瞭解生死的道路。

Part of this practice is renouncing family ties. We understand this principle as part of practice so we will be free from family attachments. Without such attachments, we will not suffer from parting with our loved ones, will not feel the pain of separation. If we renounce family ties and become monastics, we will be free of family attachments and can focus on the path to understanding life and death.

所以我們在四諦、十二因緣的裡面，佛陀就跟我們解釋的很清楚，你要先瞭解，人生這種的苦、集、滅、道，我們要修行於道；我們還要知道，觀身不淨，觀受是苦，觀心無常，觀法無我，這些我們都可以去體會。

In the 4 Noble Truths, and the 12 Links of Cyclic Existence, the Buddha clearly explained that we must first understand the Truth of Suffering, of the Cause of Suffering, of the Cessation of Suffering and of the Path to the Cessation of Suffering. We must practice this and contemplate the body as impure, all feelings as suffering, the mind as impermanent, and all things as having no self. We can come to realize all this.

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## 十二因緣

1. 無明 2. 行 3. 識 4. 名色 5. 六入 6. 觸 7. 受 8. 愛 9. 取 10. 有 11. 生 12. 老死

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然後人如何來？從十二因緣開始。你從本來是清靜一面的本性，因為一念無名開始，所以我們長了六粗，就是六粗的境界來誘引，所以就有無明。所以說「一念無明生三細，境界為緣長六粗」，所以我們的這個境界，因為外面的境界，誘引我們的六根，因為六根，所以就去造作很多。

Then how do people come into being? From the 12 Links of Cyclic Existence. The 12 Links of Cyclic Existence: Ignorance, Volitional Formation, Consciousness, Name and Form, Six Sense Organs, Contact, Sensation, Craving, Grasping, Becoming, Birth, Aging, and Death. Our intrinsic nature was originally pure. Then beginning with an ignorant thought, we developed the Six Coarse Marks. So the conditions of Six Coarse Marks tempt and lead us to ignorance. It is said, "An ignorant thought causes the Three Subtleties, External Conditions lead to the Six Coarse Marks." We face these circumstances because external conditions attract our Six Roots, our sense organs. Because of the Six Roots, we take many actions.

所以說來，從十二因緣來為我們解釋，我們就能很瞭解人如何起因，這就是一個修行方向的道路，所以我們要很感恩。

So through the 12 Links of Cyclic Existence, we can understand how humans come into being. This is the course of our spiritual practice. We should be grateful.

佛陀已經跟我們說：「眾生人人與佛同等的本性。」給我們很多智慧的吸收，不過我們吸收了很多的智慧，我們若沒有去應用，這不算覺悟；你要去應用！不是說你辭親割愛，你沒有家屬的罣礙；你修行，你就是都不要去攀緣；這樣是不是能夠成佛呢？這樣還不夠，我們還要再入人群眾中。

The Buddha already told us that sentient beings have the same intrinsic nature as Buddhas, and He gave us a lot of wisdom to absorb. However, if we absorb a lot of wisdom but do not apply it, that does not count as enlightenment. We have to apply it. We may renounce family ties, have no worries about family, engage in spiritual practice, and avoid forcibly creating karmic connections. But is doing this enough to attain Buddhahood? This is not enough. We have to go among humankind.

瞭解這些道理之後，我們的心，不會受外面的境界誘惑，那怕是外面的境界來了，我們也要用尊重心、感恩心，付出了那分無私的大愛。

After we understand these principles, our minds will not be tempted by external conditions. Whatever external conditions arise, we will be respectful and grateful, and we will give unconditionally with great love.



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釋迦牟尼佛的過去，為「常不輕菩薩」，他就是到這樣的境界，不管外面什麼樣的境界給我，我還是尊重、頂禮、感恩，因為你們人人都會成佛，這也就是佛陀這樣跟我們說法。

Sakyamuni Buddha was once the Never-Slighting Bodhisattva in a past life He attained this understanding, "No matter what external conditions I face, I will prostrate, be respectful and grateful because everyone can attain Buddhahood." This is also what the Buddha taught us in the Lotus Sutra.

這在《法華經》裡，在無量劫以前在修行的過程，就是接受到無量諸佛的教法，所以能夠瞭解，啟開了心，撥開了人我是非，無所有，煩惱都撥開掉。所以是真的，是假的，對我都沒有關係，是空，是有，對我們都沒有執著。

After practicing for countless kalpas and accepting the teachings from countless Buddhas, He could understand [all this], open His mind and push aside interpersonal conflicts and afflictions, whether they were real or illusory. Whether something was real or illusory did not matter to Him. Whether it was emptiness or existence, He was not attached to it.

所以他不斷不斷來人間，示相成佛，是不是已經取涅槃，入寂淨土了呢？在寂光土裡全都不動？不是！還是要不斷地來人間，所以無有休息，為了要度眾生。

That is why He kept coming to this world and manifesting the way to attain Buddhahood. When He attained Parinirvana did He enter and abide in the tranquil pure land? "No." He still continuously comes to this world, without any rest. He comes to transform sentient beings.

我們芸芸無明的眾生還很多，佛陀雖然示滅，不過他還是不斷地為眾生，沒有休息，「數數示生，數數示滅」。不斷地來人間，不斷地生老病死，到了生命的終點，在生命的終點之後，再來到生命的起點，所以無數來來回回，無有休息——「數數示生，數數示滅」。所以我們能夠瞭解，釋迦牟尼佛成佛以來，真的是很久了。

There are still many ignorant sentient beings. Even though the Buddha manifested death, He still keeps coming back for sentient beings without rest. "He has manifested birth and death countless times." He keeps coming to this world, going through birth, aging, illness, and death until the end of each life. After the end of each life, He comes to the beginning of a new life. He has come and gone countless times, without any rest. "He manifested birth and death countless times." So we can understand that it has been a very long time since Sakyamuni Buddha attained enlightenment.

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各位菩薩，各位同修，我們人人應該要用感恩心，我們人人應該日日，我們的心要清除到清澄，我們生活在這個惡濁的世間裡，我們自己的心蓮，這個「妙蓮華」，也應該要浮現出來。

Fellow Bodhisattvas-practitioners, we must have a sense of gratitude. Every day we have to purify our hearts until they are clear. We live in this evil and turbid world so the wonderful lotus flower in our hearts the wonderful lotus flower in our hearts has to emerge from the muck.

蓮花出淤泥而不染，就是在人我是非，人事煩惱中，我們才能開出了，一朵燦爛的蓮花。所以希望人人，要時時多用心。

A lotus arises from mud but remains undefiled. Only among interpersonal and worldly conflicts can our bright lotus flower bloom and grow. I hope everyone will always be mindful.

Gratitude and appreciation expressed to <http://moya.iyard.org> for this transcript.