**The Wonderful Dharma Lotus Flower Sutra**

**Chapter 27: The Past Deeds of King Wonderful Adornment**

With Commentary by the Venerable Master Hsuan Hua

Wonderful Adornment, a king who believed in the externalist teaching of Brahmanism, had no genuine wisdom to speak of, but he did have good roots.

Long ago, there were four people who made a vow to cultivate together. All four of them could not cultivate at the same time however, because they had to eat. They also needed a place to live and a Dharma protector. And so one of the people made a vow to protect the others, saying, "If we all cultivate together, it would not work, because we would not have anything to eat or a place to live. I am going to make a vow to be a Dharma protector for the three of you. After you three have been certified to the fruition, then I will cultivate. I am going to go to work and make offerings to you."

Three of them went off to cultivate and one went to work. Finally, the three of them did certify to the fruition. Meanwhile, the Dharma protector had accumulated a lot of merit through supporting the Triple Jewel, and he became a king. Because of his good roots, he was compassionate and kind. However, he believed in a deviant teaching; he did not believe in the proper teaching. The three who had been certified to the fruition were worried and wondered, "What is going to happen to him if he does not get rid of his deviant views?" And so, of the three people, one vowed to become his wife. They knew that people are influenced by others around them, and so the easiest way to save him would be to become his wife. Most men do listen to their wives! After a time, surely he could be saved that way. The other two vowed to become his sons. Eventually, they influenced him to give up his deviant views and to believe in the Triple Jewel. Then they were all certified to the fruition.

**Sutra:

At that time the Buddha told the great assembly, “Long ago, in the distant past, uncountable, boundless, inconceivable asamkhyeyas of eons ago, there was a Buddha by the name of Cloud Thunder Sound Constellation King Flower Wisdom, Tathagata, Arhat, Samyaksambuddha. The name of his country was Adorned by Light, and the name of his eon was Delight to Behold.”**
Outline:

C4. Protectors among people.
D1. The origins.

**Commentary:**

**At that time,** after Shakyamuni Buddha had finished speaking the “Dharani Chapter,” **the Buddha told the entire great assembly, “Long ago, in the distant past, uncountable, boundless, inconceivable asamkhyeyas of eons ago, there was a Buddha by the name of Cloud Thunder Sound Constellation King Flower Wisdom.”** The Buddha's presence is like a cloud, providing shade for all. The sound of his voice is like thunder. **Tathagata** means Thus Come One. An **Arhat** is One Worthy of Offerings. The Buddha is worthy of receiving offerings from living beings in the nine Dharma realms: the Dharma realm of the Bodhisattvas, the realm of Pratyekabuddhas, the realm of Hearers, the realms of gods, people, asuras, hell-beings, hungry ghosts, and animals. **Samyaksambuddha** means "Unsurpassed, Proper, and Equal, Right Enlightenment." Those are some of the Buddha's ten titles.

**The name of his country was Adorned by Light.** It was always bright, even without the sun, moon, stars, or lamps. **And the name of his eon was Delight to Behold.**

**Sutra:**
 **“Within the Dharma of that Buddha, there was a king by the name of Wonderful Adornment. The wife of the king was called Pure Virtue. She had two sons, the first named Pure Storehouse, the second named Pure Eye. These two sons had mighty spiritual powers, blessings, virtues, and wisdom. They had long cultivated the path practiced by the Bodhisattvas--the dana paramita, shila paramita, kshanti paramita, virya paramita, dhyana paramita, and prajna paramita, the paramita of skillful means, kindness, compassion, joy and giving; as well as the Thirty-seven Dharmas Aiding the Path. They had completely understood and penetrated all of these. They had also obtained the Bodhisattva's Pure Samadhi, the Samadhi of Sun and Stars; the Samadhi of Pure Light; the Samadhi of Pure Form; the Samadhi of Bright and Pure Illumination; the Samadhi of Extensive Adornment; and the Samadhi of the Storehouse of Great Awesome Virtue. All of these samadhis they had also completely penetrated.”**
Outline:

D2. The teacher and those taught.

**Commentary:**

Within the Dharma of that Buddha, Thunder Cloud Sound Constellation King Flower Wisdom, there was a king by the name of Wonderful Adornment. The wife of the king was called Pure Virtue. She had two sons, the first named Pure Storehouse, the second named Pure Eye. He had the Wisdom Eye, which is just the Dharma-selecting Eye. With the Dharma-selecting Eye, he could distinguish between right and wrong, and between deviant and proper dharmas.

**These two sons had mighty spiritual powers, blessings, virtues, and wisdom.** Why did they have such great blessings, virtues, and wisdom? Because **they had long cultivated the path practiced by the Bodhisattvas.** The Bodhisattva path consists of the Six Perfections. Here seven perfections are mentioned. Actually there are ten perfections, or paramitas.
**Dana paramita** is the perfection of giving. There are three kinds of giving: the giving of wealth, the giving of Dharma, and the giving of fearlessness. Actually, the giving of wealth is the giving of Dharma, the giving of Dharma is just the giving of fearlessness, and the giving of fearlessness is just the giving of wealth. If you have wealth, you can nourish the Way, you can support yourself as you cultivate. If you have no money, then you are in the same predicament as the four people who wanted to cultivate. If they just waited for a Dharma protector to come, and if one did not show up, they could have starved to death. If they starved to death, how could they cultivate? That is why one of them made a vow to go to work to support the others.

Making offerings to the Triple Jewel is practicing the giving of wealth. Once the wealth is offered, people are free to cultivate, and so that is the gift of Dharma. Having a Dharma protector, cultivators are not afraid of starving to death or freezing to death, and so they have no fear. That is the gift of fearlessness.

Food, clothing, and a place to live--these three things are very important. If you have nothing to eat, you will have false thinking and try to take advantage of conditions. If you have no clothes to wear, you will do the same; and likewise if you have no place to live, you will also not be able to cultivate with ease. However, if someone makes offerings to you, then you would not be afraid. "I am not going to starve or freeze to death. It is going to be okay. I can still do some cultivation." That is the giving of fearlessness. And so, divided, there are three kinds of giving; but taken together, there is just one.

**Shila paramita** is the perfection of morality. Shila means "precepts." Precepts are the basis for becoming a Buddha. You cannot break the precepts. If you break the precepts, it is as if your raft has sprung a leak and you are on your way to sinking in the sea. Once you take the precepts, you must uphold them. If you don't, you have sprung a leak, and you have outflows. "No-outflows" just means not breaking the precepts. If you break the precepts, and start leaking, then what should you do? You should establish merit and virtue. Use your time, energy, or money to establish merit before the Triple Jewel to counteract your offenses.

**Kshanti paramita.** This is the perfection of patience. Without patience, you cannot be perfect! If you can be patient, then you can be perfect.

"Perfection, perfection, what does all these mean?" you ask. "In Chinese, the character for perfection has the word for 'honey' in it, so is 'perfection' something sweet, like a confection?"

No. It is not sweet. It is very bitter. But after the suffering, there is sweetness. The perfection of patience means enduring what you cannot endure. Let's say you really want to get angry, you are as if armed with hand grenades, a walking atomic bomb looking for a place to go off! But you know you should not get angry, and so you just grit your teeth and remain patient. Your atom bombs do not go off. You do not blow yourself up and no one else gets blasted. That is patience. It is really fine.

After patience comes **virya paramita**, the perfection of vigor. This means being vigorous in body and in mind and never being lazy. Vigor means attending the lectures everyday, always investigating the Buddhadharma and bringing forth proper faith in the Triple Jewel.

**Dhyana paramita.**Dhyana means "the cultivation of consistent intention," and "stilling thought."

**And prajna paramita.** Prajna is wisdom. The word is left in Sanskrit because it has many meanings and the English word "wisdom" does not cover them all. There are:

1) Literary Prajna,
2) Contemplative Prajna,
3) Real Mark Prajna.

Literary Prajna refers to the study of the Sutras. Contemplative Prajna means using your own observing wisdom to illumine all states. Real Mark Prajna is the true appearance of all things. From Literary Prajna, there arise Contemplative Prajna. With Contemplative Prajna, one meshes with Real Mark Prajna. Since Prajna has these three meanings, it is not translated.

Paramita means "arrived at the other shore," success! For example, if you are cultivating to become a Buddha and you succeed, then there is paramita. If you want to eat something, and you do, then that is paramita! If you get up on the Dharma seat to lecture and then finish your lecture, then that is paramita. When you graduate from elementary school, high school, or college, then that is paramita as well.

**The paramita of skillful means.** This means observing the potentials and dispensing the teaching, and speaking the Dharma according to the person's needs. There is nothing fixed about speaking the Dharma. The Vajra Sutra says, "Dharmas must be forsaken, how much the more so what is not Dharmas." You speak the Dharma in accord with the temperament of the person you are talking to.

For example, if you meet a butcher, you might discuss the art of butchering pigs with him in such a way that he knows you really understand what you are talking about. Then once he knows you are a professional, you can speak the Dharma to him, and say, "This business is really a killer! Killing pigs actually is about as bad as killing people. They are animals, and we are people. It is against the law to kill people. It is not against the law to kill pigs. Even so, it is the same as far as cause and effect are concerned." Then you explain cause and effect to the butcher.

"Oh! There is cause and effect? You mean to tell me that if I kill the pigs, they are going to come back and kill me? I had better not kill anymore!" he says.

First, you discuss his trade with him, and then you point out some important things and make him change from the deviant and go towards the proper and quit killing. This is all part of skill-in-means.

**Kindness** means making living beings happy. **Compassion** means relieving living beings of their sufferings. **Joy and giving.** Kindness, compassion, joy, and giving are the Four Unlimited Minds of the Buddha.

**As well as the Thirty-seven Dharmas Aiding the Path.** This refers to the Seven Bodhi Shares, the Eight Sagely Way Shares, the Five Roots, the Five Powers, the Four Applications of Mindfulness, the Four Right Efforts, and the Four Bases of Psychic Power--altogether making up the Thirty-seven Dharmas Aiding the Path. In the Small Vehicle they are called "Thirty-seven Wings of the Proper Path," but in the Great Vehicle they are called "Aids to the Path." In the Perfect Teaching of the One Buddha Vehicle, they are neither "proper" nor "aids," and they are both. The Perfect Teaching is so called because it is complete. As it is said, “Perfect Bodhi returns to non-attainment.” It is interpenetrating and unobstructed.

**They had completely understood and penetrated all of these,** without obstruction.

**They had also obtained the Bodhisattva's Pure Samadhi.** The two princes, Pure Storehouse and Pure Eye, had purified themselves of the three kinds of filth: greed, hatred, and delusion. You could also say they had cut off their view delusions and thought delusions; delusions like dust and sand; and delusions of ignorance. Having rid themselves of these three kinds of delusions, they had gained pure concentration.

**The Samadhi of Sun and Stars.** The sun represents real wisdom. The stars represent provisional wisdom. The provisional and real are non-dual. **The Samadhi of Pure Light,** the original nature is pure and manifests infinite light. **The Samadhi of Pure Form** also emanates from the purity of the original nature. All forms and colors manifest from the light of the pure, basic nature. **The Samadhi of Bright and Pure Illumination.** The light of the intrinsic nature shines everywhere throughout uncountable universes. **The Samadhi of Extensive Adornment; and the Samadhi of the Storehouse of Great Awesome Virtue.** This is the awesome virtue of the Ten Powers of the Thus Come One. **All of these samadhis they had also completely penetrated** without obstruction.

**Sutra:**
 **At that time, the Buddha, wishing to guide King Wonderful Adornment and also to be compassionate towards and mindful of living beings, spoke the Dharma Flower Sutra.**
Outline:

D3. Expedient teaching.
E1. The time arrives.

**Commentary:**

**At that time, the Buddha** Cloud Thunder Sound Constellation King Flower Wisdom, **wishing to guide King Wonderful Adornment and also to be compassionate towards and mindful of living beings, spoke the Dharma Flower Sutra.**

**Sutra:**
 **The two sons, Pure Storehouse and Pure Eye, went before their mother, placed their palms together and said, “We entreat you, Mother, to visit the Buddha Cloud Thunder Sound Constellation King Flower Wisdom. We should follow, draw near to, make offerings to, and worship him. Why? The Buddha is speaking the Dharma Flower Sutra for all the hosts of gods and humans. We should listen to it and receive it!”

The mother said to her sons, “Your father believes in an externalist way and is deeply attached to the dharmas of the Brahmanism. You should ask him if he wants to go along.”

With their palms together, Pure Storehouse and Pure Eye said to their mother, “We are Dharma Princes and yet we have been born into this house of deviant views!”

The mother replied, “Out of concern for your father, you should manifest spiritual transformations. If he sees them, his mind will be purified, and perhaps he will permit us to go to the Buddha.”**
Outline:

E2. The discussion.

**Commentary:**

**The two sons, Pure Storehouse and Pure Eye, went before their mother, placed their palms together and said, "We entreat you, Mother, to visit the Buddha Cloud Thunder Sound Constellation King Flower Wisdom. We should follow, draw near to, make offerings to, and worship him. Why?** Why do we want to do this? Because **the Buddha is speaking the Dharma Flower Sutra for all the hosts of gods and humans. We should listen to it and receive it!"**

**The mother,** the Queen Pure Virtue, **said to her sons, "Your father believes in an externalist way.** He does not believe in the Buddha!" “An externalist way” refers to a religion other than Buddhism, such as Christianity or Brahmanism and its Chinese equivalent, Taoism. The doctrines of externalist religions are not accurate or ultimate. "**And** your father, the king, **is deeply attached to the dharmas of the Brahmanism. You should ask him if he wants to go along** with you to see the Buddha."

Now, these three people--the Queen Pure Virtue and her two sons--had gained the penetration of past lives a long time ago. Even though they came here to be people again and acted out the parts of being a wife and two children, in reality they were great Bodhisattvas, and they possessed mighty spiritual powers.

At one time, they were the four Bhikshus who went to the mountain to cultivate. When no one made offerings to them, one of them went off to work to be a Dharma protector. He would go into the "dust-filled world" to buy flour or oil or salt, to beg or take a job. Quite often he worked in close proximity to the palace. When the king appeared in all his pomp and glory, the Dharma protector would think, "Being a king looks pretty good. If I were a king and a Dharma protector, wouldn't that be great? I would really have tremendous influence!"

With that one thought, he ended up becoming the King Wonderful Adornment. After he was king for a while, he forgot all about protecting the proper Dharma. He started protecting deviant dharmas and got himself attached to the externalist teachings of Brahmanism and all the rest of the "self-development" fads current at the time, movements guaranteed to "put out your eyes."

With that one greedy thought of wanting to be a king, he became a king. And so when you cultivate, do not be greedy. Your false thinking can come true. That is speaking of negative false thinking.

Positive false thinking is not easy to accomplish, however. Take for example the leaders of the countries of the world today. They were cultivators at one time. Some were asura kings, who thought, "I would like to be a king." Since they had the desire for leadership, they are now leaders. You should not think they are so fine. Many of them are very confused, just like King Wonderful Adornment. Fortunately, King Wonderful Adornment had a fine wife and two fine children who saved him. The present leaders of the world would have a hard time finding such a fine family.

The mother probably thought she could not save her husband by herself, so she sent her sons to go ask him if he wanted to go hear the Buddha speaking the Sutra.

**With their palms together, Pure Storehouse and Pure Eye said to their mother, "We are Dharma Princes.** We are Bodhisattvas practicing the Bodhisattva Path! **And yet we have been born into this house of deviant views!** Terrible! What a rotten luck!"

**The mother replied.** The two children were not anxious to go save their father, but the mother could not put him down, so she said, **“Out of concern for your father,** you should know to be filial. In the distant past, he made offerings to us so that we could accomplish the Way, obtain the penetration of the knowledge of past lives, and practice the Bodhisattva Path. Do not forget! You should go save your father. He is confused right now. **You should manifest spiritual transformations. If he sees them, his mind will be purified and perhaps he will permit us to go to the Buddha.”**

**Sutra:**
 **Then, out of concern for their father, the two sons rose up into space to the height of seven tala trees and manifested various spiritual transformations.

In space, they walked, stood, sat, and reclined. From the upper part of their bodies, they emitted water; and from the lower part, fire. From the lower part of their bodies, they emitted water; and from the upper part, fire. They manifested in huge bodies filling up all of space, and then they manifested as being small. From being small, they again manifested as being large. In space, they disappeared and then suddenly reappeared on the earth. They entered the earth as if it were water, and walked on the water as if it were earth.

Manifesting such spiritual transformations of all kinds, they led their father’s mind to purity, belief, and understanding.**
Outline:

E3. The transformations.

**Commentary:**

**Then, out of concern for their father** and following their mother's request, **the two sons rose up into space to the height of seven tala trees**--fifty feet, **and manifested various spiritual transformations,** the eighteen transformations.

**In space, they walked**--they do not need a plane. They also **stood, sat, and reclined. From the upper part of their bodies, they emitted water; and from the lower part, fire. From the lower part of their bodies, they emitted water; and from the upper part, fire.** It was really strange. Water and fire were both emitted, and one was not afraid of the other.

**They manifested in huge bodies filling up all of space, and then they manifested as being small. From being small, they again manifested as being large. In space, they disappeared and then suddenly reappeared on the earth. They entered the earth as if it were water, and walked on the water as if it were earth.**

**Manifesting such spiritual transformations of all kinds, they led their father's mind to purity, belief, and understanding.** Seeing this, their father woke up, returned to purity, believed in the proper Path, and no longer believed in externalist ways. "My children have such great spiritual powers. This is really strange! They must have a good teacher. Who is he?" He decided to learn some spiritual penetrations himself, too.

**Sutra:**
 **Seeing his sons’ spiritual powers, the father rejoiced greatly and gained what he had never experienced before. Placing his palms together, he said to his sons, “Who is your Master? Whose disciples are you?”

The two sons said, “Your Majesty! He is the Buddha Cloud Thunder Sound Constellation King Flower Wisdom. He now sits on the Dharma seat beneath the seven treasures Bodhi tree proclaiming the Dharma Flower Sutra for all the hosts of gods and humans. He is our teacher; we are his disciples.”

The father said to his sons, “I now also wish to meet your Master. Let us go there together!”**
Outline:

D4. Those who are taught gain benefit.
E1. Belief in the children and their teacher.

**Commentary:**

**Seeing his sons' spiritual powers** and their amazing function, **the father rejoiced greatly and gained what he had never experienced before.** The externalist ways had nothing like this. **Placing his palms together, he said to his sons, "Who is your Master? Whose disciples are you?"**

**The two sons said, "Your Majesty! He is the Buddha Cloud Thunder Sound Constellation King Flower Wisdom. He now sits on the Dharma seat beneath the seven treasures Bodhi tree proclaiming the Dharma Flower Sutra for all the hosts of gods and humans. He is our teacher; we are his disciples."

The father said to his sons, "I now also wish to meet your Master.** Your Master's spiritual penetrations must surely be even more spectacular. I would like to meet him. Can you give me an introduction? If so, **let us go there together!"**

**Sutra:**
 **The two sons then came down from space, went to their mother, and with their palms joined, said, “Our father, the king, now believes and understands. He has been able to bring forth the resolve for anuttarasamyaksambodhi. For the sake of our father, we have carried out the Buddha’s work. We pray, Mother, that you will give us permission to leave the home-life and cultivate the Way under that Buddha’s guidance.”

At that time, the two sons, wishing to restate their intention, spoke verses to their mother saying,**

**“We pray our mother will let us go,Leave the home-life and become Shramanas.The Buddhas are extremely hard to meet,And we will follow the Buddha in study.**

**As rare as the udumbara flower,And harder to meet, is the Buddha;It’s difficult, too, to cast off difficulty.So please let us leave the home-life!”**

**The mother then said, “I permit you to leave home. Why? Because the Buddhas are difficult to get to encounter.”**
Outline:

E2. Asking their mother’s permission to leave home.

**Commentary:**

**The two sons** of King Wonderful Adornment had manifested the eighteen transformations in space, thus convincing their father to believe in the Buddha and make offerings to him.

They **then came down from space, went to their mother, and with their palms joined, said, "Our father, the king, now believes;** he has proper faith **and understands. He has been able to bring forth the resolve for anuttarasamyaksambodhi,** the Unsurpassed, Proper and Equal, Right Enlightenment. **For the sake of our father, we have carried out the Buddha's work. We pray, Mother, that you will give us permission to leave the home-life and cultivate the Way under that Buddha's guidance."**

**At that time, the two sons,** Pure Storehouse and Pure Eye, **wishing to restate their intention, spoke verses to their mother saying, "We pray our mother will let us go, leave the home-life and become Shramanas.”**Shramana, a Sanskrit word, means "diligent and putting to rest." A Shramana diligently cultivates precepts, samadhi, and wisdom and puts to rest greed, hatred, and stupidity. **The Buddhas are extremely hard to meet.** It is very difficult to meet with a Buddha, with the Dharma, or with the Sangha. **And we will follow the Buddha in study. As rare as the udumbara flower, and harder to meet, is the Buddha.** The udumbara flower only blooms once every three thousand years, so it is hard to encounter. But it is even harder to get to meet the Buddha. **It's difficult, too, to cast off difficulty.** It is hard to get out of the eight difficulties. **So please let us leave the home-life!** Now that we have encountered the Buddha Cloud Thunder Sound Constellation King Flower Wisdom, we want to leave home and cultivate the Way."

**The mother then said, "I permit you to leave home. Why? Because the Buddhas are difficult to get to encounter."**

**Sutra:**

**The two sons then said to their parents, “Good indeed, Father and Mother! It is time, if you please, to go to the Buddha Cloud Thunder Sound Constellation King Flower Wisdom, to draw near to him and make offerings. Why is this? The Buddhas are as difficult to meet as the udumbara flower. It is also as difficult as it would be for a one-eyed tortoise to meet with a hole in a floating log. But our blessings from former lives are deep and thick, and so in this life we have encountered the Buddhadharma. herefore, Father and Mother, hear us and allow us to leave the home-life. Why? The Buddhas are difficult to get to meet, and such a time is hard to encounter.”**
Outline:

E3. Urging them once again to see the Buddha.
 **Commentary:**

**The two sons then said to their parents, "Good indeed, Father and Mother!** You are fine parents! You are being very compassionate in allowing us to leave home. **It is time, if you please, to go to the Buddha Cloud Thunder Sound Constellation King Flower Wisdom.** Let us all go together **to draw near to him and make offerings. Why is this? The Buddhas are as difficult to meet as the udumbara flower.** It is not a simple matter to meet with the Buddhas in the world; it is like seeing the auspicious flower, the udumbara flower. **It is also as difficult as it would be for a one-eyed tortoise to meet with a hole in a floating log.** A tortoise with 20/20 vision would have a hard enough time finding such a log to live in, how much more so for a one-eyed tortoise!

**But our blessings from former lives are deep and thick.** We have amassed abundant merit and virtue, **and so in this life we have encountered the Buddhadharma. Therefore, Father and Mother, hear us, and allow us to leave the home-life. Why?** Because **the Buddhas are difficult to get to meet, and such a time is hard to encounter.**

**Sutra:**
 **At that time, eighty-four thousand women in the palace of King Wonderful Adornment all became capable of receiving and upholding The Dharma Flower Sutra.

The Bodhisattva Pure Eye had already long ago penetrated the Samadhi of the Dharma Flower. The Bodhisattva Pure Storehouse had already, for uncountable hundreds of thousands of myriads of kotis of eons, penetrated the Samadhi of Separation from All Evil Destinies, because he wished to cause all living beings to leave the evil destinies.

The king’s wife obtained the Samadhi of the Buddha’s Accumulation and was able to know all the secret treasuries of the Buddhas.

The two sons, using the power of such expedients, skillfully taught their father, leading his mind to belief and understanding, and causing him to take delight in the Buddhadharma.**
Outline:

E4. Description of the merit and virtue.
 **Commentary:**

**At that time, eighty-four thousand women in the palace of King Wonderful Adornment,** maids-of-honor and concubines, and such, **all became capable of receiving and upholding the Dharma Flower Sutra.** They all brought forth the Bodhi mind.

**The Bodhisattva Pure Eye had already long ago penetrated the Samadhi of The Dharma Flower,** which is the samadhi of the Dharma Flower Sutra, and also the Dharma-door of the non-duality of the provisional and the real.

**The Bodhisattva Pure Storehouse had already, for uncountable hundreds of thousands of myriads of kotis of eons, penetrated the Samadhi of Separation from All Evil Destinies, because he wished to cause all living beings to leave the evil destinies.** He was able to manifest in all kinds of physical forms to lead living beings out of the three evil paths--the hells, the realm of the hungry ghosts, and the animal realm.

**The king's wife,** Queen Pure Virtue, **obtained the Samadhi of The Buddha's Accumulation.** While one is in this samadhi, all the Buddhas manifest to speak the Dharma. **And** she **was able to know all the secret treasuries of the Buddhas.** She understood all the secret, un-transmittable Dharmas of the Buddhas.

**The two sons, using the power of such expedients, skillfully taught their father, leading his mind to belief and understanding, and causing him to take delight in the Buddhadharma.** They caused him to believe in the proper Dharma instead of deviant dharma.

**Sutra:**

**Then, King Wonderful Adornment, together with his assembled ministers and retinue; Queen Pure Virtue, together with her maidservants and retinue; and the king’s two sons, together with forty-two thousand people, all went to the Buddha. Upon arrival, they bowed with their heads at the Buddha’s feet, circumambulated him three times, and withdrew to one side.

That Buddha then spoke the Dharma for the king’s instruction, bringing him benefit and delight, and the king rejoiced greatly.

Then King Wonderful Adornment and his wife removed their pearl necklaces, valued in the hundreds of thousands, and scattered them over the Buddha. In space, the necklaces transformed into a jeweled terrace with four pillars. In the center of the terrace was a large jeweled couch upon which were spread hundreds of thousands of myriads of heavenly garments. And on top of them was a Buddha seated in full lotus, emitting great light.

Then King Wonderful Adornment had this thought, “The Buddha’s body is rare, upright, splendid, and distinguished.”**
Outline:

E5. Visiting the Buddha, hearing the Dharma, making offerings, and seeing the portents and rejoicing.

**Commentary:**

**Then, King Wonderful Adornment, together with his assembled ministers and retinue**--all the officials of the court; **Queen Pure Virtue together with her maidservants and retinue; and the king's two sons, together with forty-two thousand people, all went to the Buddha. Upon arrival, they bowed with their heads at the Buddha's feet, circumambulated him three times,** to show their single-minded respect, **and,** they **withdrew to one side.**

**That Buddha then spoke the Dharma for the king's instruction, bringing him benefit and delight, and the king rejoiced greatly.Then King Wonderful Adornment and his wife removed their pearl necklaces, valued in the hundreds of thousands, and scattered them over the Buddha. In space, the necklaces transformed into a jeweled terrace with four pillars.** The four pillars represent the four vast vows of a Bodhisattva:

1. I vow to save the limitless living beings.
2. I vow to cut off the inexhaustible afflictions.
3. I vow to study the endless Dharma doors.
4. I vow to realize the supreme Buddha Path.

**In the center of the terrace was a large jeweled couch upon which were spread hundreds of thousands of myriads of heavenly garments.** The garments represent gentleness and patience. **And, on top of them was a Buddha seated in full lotus, emitting great light.

Then King Wonderful Adornment had this thought, "The Buddha's body is rare, upright, splendid, and distinguished.** Endowed with the thirty-two marks and the eighty subsidiary characteristics, the Buddha’s form is of utmost subtlety and wonder."

**Sutra:**
 **The Buddha Cloud Thunder Sound Constellation King Flower Wisdom then told the four assemblies, “Do you see King Wonderful Adornment who stands before me with his palms joined? This king shall become a Bhikshu within my Dharma. Diligent in his cultivation of the Dharmas that Aid the Buddha Way, he shall become a Buddha by the name of Sala Tree King. His country shall be called Great Light. His eon shall be called Great Lofty King. The Buddha Sala Tree King shall have a host of uncountable Bodhisattvas as well as uncountable Hearers. His country will be flat and even. Thus shall be his merit and virtue.”**
Outline:

E6. The Buddha bestows a prediction upon the king.

**Commentary:**

**The Buddha Cloud Thunder Sound Constellation King Flower Wisdom then told the four assemblies** of Bhikshus, Bhikshunis, Upasikas, and Upasakas, **"Do you see King Wonderful Adornment who stands before me with his palms joined? This king shall become a Bhikshu within my Dharma.** He is going to leave the home-life. **Diligent in his cultivation of the Dharmas that Aid the Buddha Way,** and never lazy, **he shall become a Buddha by the name of Sala Tree King. His country shall be called Great Light. His eon shall be called Great Lofty King. The Buddha Sala Tree King shall have a host of uncountable Bodhisattvas as well as uncountable Hearers. His country will be flat and even. Thus shall be his merit and virtue."

Sutra:**
 **The king then immediately conferred his country upon his younger brother, and, together with his wife, his two children, and his retinue, left home within the Buddhadharma to cultivate the Way.

After leaving the home-life for eighty-four thousand years, the king was always diligent and vigorous in his cultivation of the Wonderful Dharma Flower Sutra. Afterwards, he obtained the Samadhi of the Adornment with All Pure Merit and Virtue.**
Outline:

E7. Leaving home to cultivate.

**Commentary:**

**The king then immediately conferred his country upon his younger brother.** After hearing the Dharma, he thought, "Being a king is just too much trouble. I am going to give up my kingdom and leave home." **And,** he, **together with his wife, his two children, and his retinue, left home within the Buddhadharma to cultivate the Way.** Even a king could put everything down to cultivate the Way. We are not minor kings, or even governors, and yet we cannot put things down. We keep thinking about leaving home, but we cannot put things down. We cannot let go of this, cannot let go of that. But the king gave up his whole country!

**After leaving the home-life for eighty-four thousand years, the king was always diligent and vigorous in his cultivation of the Wonderful Dharma Flower Sutra.** He was vigorous during the six periods of the day and night for eighty-four thousand years. Here we cultivate for a few months or a few years and then retreat. How do we measure up? **Afterwards, he obtained the Samadhi of the Adornment with All Pure Merit and Virtue,** which adorned his Dharma body.

**Sutra:**
 **He immediately rose up into space to the height of seven tala trees, and said to the Buddha, “World Honored One, my two sons have already done the Buddha’s work. With spiritual penetrations and transformations, they have turned me away from deviant thought and caused me to abide securely within the Buddhadharma and to meet with the World Honored One. These two sons are my Good and Wise Advisors. Wishing to arouse in me the good roots planted in former lives and to benefit me, they came to be born in my household.”**
Outline:

E8. Praising the two sons.

**Commentary:**

King Wonderful Adornment left the home-life to cultivate the Way. After he obtained the Samadhi of the Adornment with All Pure Merit and Virtue, **he immediately rose up into space to the height of seven tala trees, and said to the Buddha, "World Honored One, my two sons have already done the Buddha's work. With spiritual penetrations and transformations, they have turned me away from deviant thought and caused me to abide securely within the Buddhadharma,** to understand the Buddhadharma, **and to meet with the World Honored One. These two sons are my Good and Wise Advisors,** my true mentors. **Wishing to arouse in me the good roots planted in former lives and to benefit me, they came to be born in my household."**

**Sutra:**
 **At that time the Buddha Cloud Thunder Sound Constellation King Flower Wisdom told King Wonderful Adornment, “So it is, so it is, just as you say. If good men or good women have planted good roots, in life after life, they may gain a Good and Wise Advisor. The Good and Wise Advisor can do the Buddha’s work, instruct, benefit, and delight them, and cause them to enter anuttarasamyaksambodhi.”

“Great King, you should know that a Good and Wise Advisor is a great causal condition, for he teaches and guides people, and causes them to see the Buddha and to bring forth the resolve for anuttarasamyaksambodhi.”

“Great King, do you see these two children? In the past, these two children made offerings to Buddhas equal in number to the grains of sand in sixty-five hundred thousand myriads of kotis of nayutas of Ganges Rivers, drawing near them with reverence. In the presence of those Buddhas, they received and upheld the Dharma Flower Sutra. Pitying living beings with deviant views, they led them to abide in proper views.”**
Outline:

E9. The Buddha tells of their lofty practices.
 **Commentary:**

**At that time the Buddha Cloud Thunder Sound Constellation King Flower Wisdom told King Wonderful Adornment, “So it is, so it is, just as you say. If good men or good women have planted good roots** in former lives, **in life after life, they may gain a Good and Wise Advisor. The Good and Wise Advisor can do the Buddha’s work** with his spiritual penetrations and transformations, **instruct, benefit, and delight them, and cause them to enter anuttarasamyaksambodhi.”**

**Great King, you should know that a Good and Wise Advisor is a great causal condition.** There must certainly be a great causal condition. Otherwise, there is no way one can meet a Good and Wise Advisor. And, if you do not meet with a Good and Wise Advisor, you are likely to meet with an "evil advisor." An evil advisor does not want you to understand anything. The stupider you are, the better he likes it. When you get so stupid that you cannot even feed yourself, then he will get to eat your share! Evil advisors are selfish. Good and Wise Advisors are open and unselfish--just the opposite. Evil advisors always want to benefit themselves. Good and Wise Advisors always wish to benefit living beings. This is a very simple criterion for judging them: Good and Wise Advisors are unselfish; evil advisors are selfish.

A Good and Wise Advisor is a great causal condition **for he teaches and guides people, and** he **causes them to see the Buddha.** He leads them to see the Buddha, to hear the Dharma, **and to bring forth the resolve for anuttarasamyaksambodhi.**

**Great King, do you see these two children? In the past, these two children made offerings to Buddhas equal in number to the grains of sand in sixty-five hundred thousand myriads of kotis of nayutas of Ganges Rivers, drawing near them with reverence. In the presence of those Buddhas, they received and upheld the Dharma Flower Sutra.** We see that the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of the past received and upheld the Dharma Flower Sutra. If we do not uphold the Dharma Flower Sutra, aren't we cheating ourselves out of great benefit? **Pitying living beings with deviant views, they led them to abide in proper views.** The two sons made vows to pity living beings who had improper views and to find a way to cause them to give rise to proper knowledge and proper views.

**Sutra:**
 **King Wonderful Adornment then came down from space and said to the Buddha, “World Honored One, the Thus Come One is extremely rare. By means of his merit and virtue and wisdom, the flesh cowl atop his head dazzles brightly. His eyes are long and broad, violet in color. The hair-mark light from between his eyebrows is as white as the glistening moon. His teeth are white and even, always shining. His lips are a fine red color like the bimba fruit.”

Having thus praised the Buddha for his uncountable hundreds of thousands of myriads of kotis of meritorious virtues, King Wonderful Adornment then, in the presence of the Thus Come One, single-mindedly placed his palms together and further said to the Buddha, “World Honored One, the Thus Come One’s Dharma is unique, perfect in the accomplishment of inconceivable, subtle, and wonderful merit and virtue. His teachings on the practice of morality lead to security, joy, and goodness. From this day forward, I shall never again follow the course of my own mind. I will never give rise to deviant views, arrogance, anger or any other evil thoughts.”

Having said that, he bowed to the Buddha and left.**
Outline:

E10. Praising the Buddha and making vows.

**Commentary:**

**King Wonderful Adornment then came down from space and said to the Buddha, "World Honored One, the Thus Come One is extremely rare.** You are one of a kind. It is very difficult to meet with a Buddha. **By means of his merit and virtue and wisdom, the flesh cowl atop his head dazzles brightly** throughout all worlds. **His eyes are long and broad, violet in color. The hair-mark light from between his eyebrows is as white as the glistening moon,** the full moon. **His teeth are white, even, and always shining.** Even the Buddha's teeth emit light. **His lips are a fine red color like the bimba fruit."** The Buddha's lips are a beautiful red color.

Bimba, a Sanskrit word that means “thinking of each other,” is the name of a bright red gourd.

**Having thus praised the Buddha for his uncountable hundreds of thousands of myriads of kotis of meritorious virtues, King Wonderful Adornment then, in the presence of the Thus Come One, single-mindedly placed his palms together and further said to the Buddha, "World Honored One, the Thus Come One's Dharma is unique, perfect in the accomplishment of inconceivable, subtle, and wonderful merit and virtue.** The Buddhadharma spoken by the Thus Come One is perfect in all respects, and brings about the realization of inconceivable merit and virtue. **His teachings on the practice of morality lead to security, joy, and goodness.** Practicing the precepts, doing no evil and doing all good, one gains inner happiness and always feels really good.

**"From this day forward, I shall never again follow the course of my own mind.** I will not follow my own false thinking or confused ideas. **I will never give rise to deviant views, arrogance, anger or any other evil thoughts!"** The king made these solemn vows before the Buddha. **Having said that, he bowed to the Buddha and left.**

**Sutra:**

**The Buddha told the great assembly, “What do you think? Could King Wonderful Adornment have been anyone else? He was just the present Bodhisattva Flower Virtue. His wife, Queen Pure Virtue, was just the Bodhisattva Mark of Shining Adornment now in the presence of the Buddha, who, out of pity for King Wonderful Adornment and his retinue, was born among them.”

“The two sons are the present Bodhisattva Medicine King, and Bodhisattva Medicine Superior. The Bodhisattva Medicine King and the Bodhisattva Medicine Superior have accomplished such great merit and virtue as this. In the presence of uncountable hundreds of thousands of myriads of kotis of Buddhas, they have already amassed the roots of virtue and accomplished inconceivable wholesome merit and virtue.”

“If a person knows the names of these two Bodhisattvas, all the world with its population of gods and humans should do obeisance to him.”**
Outline:

D5. The conclusion, past and present.
 **Commentary:**

**The Buddha,** Shakyamuni Buddha, **told the great assembly, "What do you think? Could King Wonderful Adornment have been anyone else? He was just the present Bodhisattva Flower Virtue.** He just got involved in a lot of craziness, being a king and everything. Luckily, however, he had a fine wife.

**His wife, Queen Pure Virtue, was just the Bodhisattva Mark of Shining Adornment, now in the presence of the Buddha.** Why did he become the wife of King Wonderful Adornment? He felt sorry for him, "He has fallen to such a state. He once made offerings to me and now I have realized the Way. I should save him. How should I do it? If I become his father or mother, he might not listen to me. I know! I will be his wife! There are many men who are very obedient to their wives." So he went off to be the king's wife. Wanting some more people to back him up, he told the other two cultivators, "Let us go put on this play. You can be his two sons. All together we can put energy into teaching and transforming him." Therefore, it was he, Bodhisattva Mark of Shining Adornment, **who, out of pity for King Wonderful Adornment and his retinue, was born among them.

The two sons are the present Bodhisattva Medicine King, and Bodhisattva Medicine Superior. The Bodhisattva Medicine King and the Bodhisattva Medicine Superior have accomplished such great merit and virtue as this,** just described above. **In the presence of uncountable hundreds of thousands of myriads of kotis of Buddhas, they have already amassed the roots of virtue and accomplished inconceivable wholesome merit and virtue.**

**If a person knows the names of these two Bodhisattvas**--all he has to do is know their names, to say nothing of anything else. If he just keeps their names in mind--**then all the world with its population of gods and humans should do obeisance to him.**

"Well, I remember those two Bodhisattvas' names, why doesn't anyone bow to me?" you ask. "If people and gods suppose to bow to me, then where are they?"

If they don't, you cannot force them to. They should bow. However, that does not mean they will bow. It is like if you take refuge with your teacher, you should be filial to him and make offerings to him, but if you don't, I cannot say, "You must bow to me. You must be filial to me. You must make offerings to me!"

If you remember the Bodhisattvas' names, you should not expect that living beings will bow to you. Perhaps they do bow to you, and you do not know it. Perhaps the gods, or spirits, or ghosts see that you are recollecting the names of Medicine King and Medicine Superior Bodhisattvas, then bow to you, but since you do not have the penetration of the heavenly eye, you cannot see them! The best thing is not to force people to bow to you. Besides, if you do not have enough merit and virtue, then when people bow to you, you are not going to be able to take it.

**Sutra:**
 **When the Buddha spoke this chapter “The Past Deeds of King Wonderful Adornment,” eighty-four thousand people were removed from the dust and separated from defilement. They obtained the Purity of the Dharma Eye with respect to all Dharmas.**
Outline:

D6. Hearing this chapter and awakening to the Way.

**Commentary:**

**When the Buddha spoke this chapter, “The Past Deeds of King Wonderful Adornment,” eighty-four thousand people were removed from the dust**--the dust of involvement with the objects of the senses--**and separated from defilement.** Being far removed from filth, **they obtained the Purity of the Dharma eye with respect to all dharmas,** that is, they understood the causes and conditions underlying all worldly dharmas.