

A FOREST OF PEARLS  
FROM THE DHARMA GARDEN  
VOLUME III

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**BDK English Tripiṭaka Series**

**A FOREST OF PEARLS  
FROM THE  
DHARMA GARDEN  
VOLUME III**

**(Taishō Volume 53, Number 2122)**

Translated

by

Koichi Shinohara

**BDK America, Inc.**

**2020**

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## **A Message on the Publication of the English Tripiṭaka**

The Buddhist canon is said to contain eighty-four thousand different teachings. I believe that this is because the Buddha's basic approach was to prescribe a different treatment for every spiritual ailment, much as a doctor prescribes a different medicine for every medical ailment. Thus his teachings were always appropriate for the particular suffering individual and for the time at which the teaching was given, and over the ages not one of his prescriptions has failed to relieve the suffering to which it was addressed.

Ever since the Buddha's Great Demise over twenty-five hundred years ago, his message of wisdom and compassion has spread throughout the world. Yet no one has ever attempted to translate the entire Buddhist canon into English throughout the history of Japan. It is my greatest wish to see this done and to make the translations available to the many English-speaking people who have never had the opportunity to learn about the Buddha's teachings.

Of course, it would be impossible to translate all of the Buddha's eighty-four thousand teachings in a few years. I have, therefore, had one hundred thirty-nine of the scriptural texts in the prodigious Taishō edition of the Chinese Buddhist canon selected for inclusion in the First Series of this translation project.

It is in the nature of this undertaking that the results are bound to be criticized. Nonetheless, I am convinced that unless someone takes it upon himself or herself to initiate this project, it will never be done. At the same time, I hope that an improved, revised edition will appear in the future.

It is most gratifying that, thanks to the efforts of more than a hundred Buddhist scholars from the East and the West, this monumental project has finally gotten off the ground. May the rays of the Wisdom of the Compassionate One reach each and every person in the world.

NUMATA Yehan  
Founder of the English  
Tripiṭaka Project

August 7, 1991



## Editorial Foreword

In the long history of Buddhist transmission throughout East Asia, translations of Buddhist texts were often carried out as national projects supported and funded by emperors and political leaders. The BDK English Tripiṭaka project, on the other hand, began as a result of the dream and commitment of one man. In January 1982 Dr. NUMATA Yehan, founder of Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai (Society for the Promotion of Buddhism), initiated the monumental task of translating the complete Taishō shinshū daizōkyō edition of the Chinese Tripiṭaka (Buddhist canon) into the English language. Under his leadership, a special preparatory committee was organized in April 1982. By July of the same year the Translation Committee of the English Tripiṭaka was officially convened.

The initial Committee included the following members: (late) HANAYAMA Shōyū (Chairperson), (late) BANDŌ Shōjun, ISHIGAMI Zennō, (late) KAMATA Shigeo, (late) KANAOKA Shūyū, MAYEDA Sengaku, NARA Yasuaki, (late) SAYEKI Shinkō, (late) SHIOIRI Ryōtatsu, TAMARU Noriyoshi, (late) TAMURA Kwansei, (late) URYŪZU Ryūshin, and YUYAMA Akira. Assistant members of the Committee were as follows: KANAZAWA Atsushi, WATANABE Shōgo, Rolf Giebel of New Zealand, and Rudy Smet of Belgium.

After holding planning meetings on a monthly basis, the Committee selected one hundred and thirty-nine texts for the First Series of the project, estimated to be one hundred printed volumes in all. The texts selected were not limited to those originally written in India but also included works composed in China and Japan. While the publication of the First Series proceeds, the texts for the Second Series will be selected from among the remaining works; this process will continue until all the texts, in Japanese as well as in Chinese, have been published. Given the huge scope of this project, accomplishing the English translations of all the Chinese and Japanese texts in the Taishō canon may take as long as one hundred years or more. Nevertheless, as Dr. NUMATA wished, it is the sincere hope of the Committee that this project will continue until completion, even after all the present members have passed away.

## Editorial Foreword

Dr. NUMATA passed away on May 5, 1994, at the age of ninety-seven. He entrusted his son, Mr. NUMATA Toshihide with the continuation and completion of the English Tripiṭaka project. Mr. Numata served for twenty-three years, leading the project forward with enormous progress before his sudden passing on February 16, 2017, at the age of eighty-four. The Committee previously lost its able and devoted first Chairperson, Professor HANAYAMA Shōyū, on June 16, 1995, at the age of sixty-three. In October 1995 the Committee elected Professor MAYEDA Sengaku (then Vice President of Musashino Women's College) as Chairperson, and upon the retirement of Professor Mayeda in July 2016, the torch was passed to me to serve as the third Chairperson. Despite these losses and changes we, the Editorial Committee members, have renewed our determination to carry out the noble ideals set by Dr. NUMATA. Present members of the Committee are Kenneth K. Tanaka (Chairperson), MAYEDA Sengaku, ICHISHIMA Shōshin, ISHIGAMI Zennō, KATSURA Shōryū, MINOWA Kenryō, SAITŌ Akira, SHIMODA Masahiro, WATANABE Shōgo, and YONEZAWA Yoshiyasu.

The Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research was established in November 1984, in Berkeley, California, U.S.A., to assist in the publication of the translated texts. The Publication Committee was organized at the Numata Center in December 1991. In 2010, the Numata Center's operations were merged with Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai America, Inc. (BDK America), and BDK America continues to oversee the publication side of the English Tripiṭaka project in close cooperation with the Editorial Committee in Tokyo.

At the time of this writing, in February 2017, the project has completed about sixty percent of the seven thousand one hundred and eighty-five Taishō pages of texts selected for the First Series. Much work still lies ahead of us but we are committed to the completion of the remaining texts in order to realize the grand vision of Dr. Numata, shared by Mr. Numata and Professor Hanayama, to make the Buddhist canon more readily accessible to the English-speaking world.

Kenneth K. Tanaka  
Chairperson  
Editorial Committee of  
the BDK English Tripiṭaka

## **Publisher's Foreword**

On behalf of the members of the Publication Committee, I am happy to present this volume as the latest contribution to the BDK English Tripiṭaka Series. The Publication Committee members have worked to ensure that this volume, as all other volumes in the series, has gone through a rigorous process of editorial efforts.

The initial translation and editing of the Buddhist scriptures found in this and other BDK English Tripiṭaka volumes are performed under the direction of the Editorial Committee in Tokyo, Japan. Both the Editorial Committee in Tokyo and the Publication Committee, headquartered in Moraga, California, are dedicated to the production of accurate and readable English translations of the Buddhist canon. In doing so, the members of both committees and associated staff work to honor the deep faith, spirit, and concern of the late Reverend Dr. Yehan Numata, who founded the BDK English Tripiṭaka Series in order to disseminate the Buddhist teachings throughout the world.

The long-term goal of our project is the translation and publication of the texts in the one hundred-volume Taishō edition of the Chinese Buddhist canon, along with a number of influential extracanonical Japanese Buddhist texts. The list of texts selected for the First Series of this translation project may be found at the end of each volume in the series.

As Chair of the Publication Committee, I am deeply honored to serve as the fifth person in a post previously held by leading figures in the field of Buddhist studies, most recently by my predecessor, John R. McRae.

In conclusion, I wish to thank the members of the Publication Committee for their dedicated and expert work undertaken in the course of preparing this volume for publication: Managing Editor Marianne Dresser, Dr. Hudaya Kandahjaya, Dr. Carl Bielefeldt, Dr. Robert Sharf, and Rev. Brian Kensho Nagata, Director of the BDK English Tripiṭaka Project.

A. Charles Muller  
Chairperson  
Publication Committee



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## Translator's Introduction

*A Forest of Pearls from the Dharma Garden* (*Fayuan zhulin*, T. 2122) is a large anthology of excerpts from Buddhist canonical sources and historical records, arranged by theme. The scriptural passages, with some exceptions, were taken from Indian Buddhist scriptures translated into Chinese; the settings of the narratives they offer are for the most part Indian. The historical records excerpted in the collection are of Chinese origin, and their settings are Chinese.

The collection is attributed to Daoshi, a seventh-century monk based at Ximing Monastery in the capital city, Chang'an. Ximingsi was completed in 658 (Xianqing 3) and the famous Vinaya specialist and historian Daoxuan (598–667) was invited to serve as monastic supervisor (*shangzuo*). Daoshi had studied under the same teacher as Daoxuan (*Fayuan zhulin*, T.2122:354b16) and was among the monks who were called to Ximingsi (*Song gaoseng zhuan*, T.2061:726c15–17). The monastery possessed a collection of canonical works and historical documents. Among the many works attributed to Daoxuan are a catalogue of the Buddhist canon, *A Catalogue of Buddhist Scriptures Known in the Great Tang* (*Datang neidian lu*, T. 2149), a collection of historical documents, *Extended Collection of Writings for Spreading and Illuminating the Way* (*Guang hongming ji*, T. 2103), and a collection of Buddhist miracle stories, *Collected Records of Three Jewels Miracles* (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu*, T. 2106), all of which are dated to 664. These works must have been drawn from the manuscript canon and other material preserved at Ximingsi. In compiling *A Forest of Pearls* Daoshi and his collaborators must also have relied on the same collection of canonical and historical sources at the monastery that Daoxuan had used. Daoxuan's collection of miracle stories includes a set of stories that also appear as a group in a section of *A Forest of Pearls*, and Daoxuan explicitly refers to this collection for further details.

The thematically grouped collection of scriptural excerpts attributed to Daoshi exists today under two titles, a more extensive *Forest of Pearls from the Dharma Garden* that covers one hundred topics, and a shorter *Collected Summaries of All*

*Scriptures* (*Zhujing yaoji*, T. 2123), which covers thirty topics. Virtually identical sets of excerpted scriptural passages appear in corresponding sections. In the preface to the *Collected Summaries* Daoshi speaks of reading through the entire canon during the Xianqing period (656–660) and preparing summaries (T.2123:1a19–20). This must refer to his compilation of the anthology of canonical sources that appear in both these collections.

In *A Forest of Pearls* a set of miracle stories is appended at the end of each chapter, devoted to one of the one hundred topics around which the collection is organized. These stories are missing in the *Collected Summaries*. In *A Forest of Pearls* these stories of miraculous occurrences (*ganying yuan*, “stories of cosmic responses”) about events reported in China correlate to specific scriptural accounts set in India, and they appear to carry the distinct message that the occurrence of such miraculous events illustrate the efficacy in China of the practices described in scriptures. The principal sources for these miracle stories were collections of monastic biographies and a variety of miracle story collections. Most of the latter are no longer extant and their contents are known only through *A Forest of Pearls*.

This collection offers a comprehensive and distinctive reading of the Buddhist canon. The focus of this reading is practice. An extraordinarily rich account of Buddhist practices is offered, though the rationale for the choice of the one hundred topics around which the discussion is organized is not always clear. The sections on overlapping topics appear in a different order in *A Forest of Pearls* and the *Collected Summaries*, suggesting that neither collection followed a rigid rationale in arranging these topics.

Still, the principal practice of “paying respect to,” or worshiping, the Three Jewels (Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha) occupies an important place in both. *A Forest of Pearls* begins with an extended explanation of Buddhist cosmology and a large section on the life of the Buddha. This is followed by chapters on paying respect to Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha and a separate chapter on the ritual of paying respect. At this point a focused discussion of Buddhist practice begins. The *Collected Summaries* begins with a section on the Three Jewels that closely matches *A Forest of Pearls*' sections on paying respect to Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Daoxuan's collection of Buddhist miracle stories in China is also organized around the scheme of the Three Jewels. The Three Jewels stood for Buddhism and Buddhist practices are summarized as “paying respect” to them, and their efficacy is demonstrated by Three Jewels–related miracles.

Daoshi's voice is heard throughout the anthology. He introduces each section with a short essay, identifies scriptural passages, frequently explaining their significance in comparative summaries, and concludes the section with a set of verses. It is generally also Daoshi's comments in the interlinear notes within quoted passages, commenting on specific details in light of other scriptural accounts.

### **Note on the Translation**

The translation of the complete text of the *Fayuan zhulin* will be published in multiple volumes. Volumes I–III have been translated by Koichi Shinohara. Volume I, which includes Fascicles 1–7, Chapters 1–4, and Volume II, which includes Fascicles 8–12, Chapter 5, have been published previously. The present Volume III includes Fascicles 13–20, Chapters 6–9.

### **Acknowledgement**

Many people kindly assisted in the preparation of this translation of *A Forest of Pearls from the Dharma Garden*, Volumes I–III. The translator particularly thanks Jinhua Chan, Marianne Dresser, Jeffrey Kotyk, Phyllis Granoff, A. Charles Muller, Jane Ulrich, and the Yale University Council on East Asian Studies.



**A FOREST OF PEARLS  
FROM THE DHARMA GARDEN  
VOLUME III**



## Chapter Six Paying Respect to the Buddha

(This chapter consists of seven sections:) (1) Introduction, (2) Reciting the Name of the Buddha, (3) Contemplating the Buddha, (4) Amitābha, (5) Maitreya, (6) Samantabhadra, and (7) Avalokiteśvara.

### 1. Introduction

The Perfect Being responds miraculously and comes to beings of appropriate capacity. His appearance is accompanied by rays of light and he confers his teaching, which is like sweet dew in a meadow. As he leaves his shadow behind in paintings and statues, his teaching is preserved in the ages when the sun has disappeared. Thus, when he had gone to Tuṣita Heaven for awhile his holy appearance was carved in sandalwood. In the longer period of darkness, how much more appropriate would it be to make certain that the experience of long-past days is not forgotten?

Thus, in the Western Region, where the images appeared, Udayana first produced an image; Emperor Ming of the [Later] Han dynasty (206 B.C.E.–7 C.E.) stands first in the transmission of the teaching to the eastern region (China). Following these first ones, artisans succeeded one after another in reproducing the Dharma body decorated with rare jewels. Decorated with gold, stones, pearls, or jade, all these images made of wood or plaster, embroidered, or painted most skillfully represented mental images. Therefore, they are most beautiful. In the old days, under the Jin dynasty (265–420 C.E.) the monastic community began to produce images of unparalleled beauty. Emperors of the Song (420–479 C.E.) and the Qi (479–449 C.E.) dynasties made images with constant innovations. Many of these images lack records and inscriptions. Fearing that knowledge of their origins may be lost, I now present records of the most superior examples. Through these models the benefits of these images are manifested.

## 2. Reciting the Name of the Buddha

The Great Sage has the mark of equanimity; the disciples have the virtue of praising the Buddha. Thus the buddhas of the ten directions all emerged from the impurities of mud and, enlightened in three bodies, they sit upon lotus flower pedestals. Whatever aspects of theirs that we might think of, they all bring benefits.

Thus in the period that began with renouncing the householder's life and ended with enlightenment, when events such as conquering Māra under the tree of enlightenment and preaching the sermon at the Deer Park occurred, [Śākyamuni] Buddha displayed perfect marks and was illumined by bright light. The color of his body was pure like molten gold, and his face was handsome, like a full moon. His teeth were as white as jade and snow, and his hair was like shining conch shells. His eyes were comparable to blue lotuses, his eyebrows were just like green willows that have grown densely. His voice, with its eight marvelous qualities, sounded clearly, and all the features of his appearance were gentle and calm. His five eyes saw penetratingly and his six supernatural powers reached far. His speech flowed like a rapid stream, and converts followed one after another. [The Dharma body, wisdom, and liberation, symbolized by] the three round dots [of the Siddham letter i,] constituted the Buddha's body, and the five items of the precepts, meditation, wisdom, liberation, and liberating knowledge formed the substratum of his body. Equipped with the two truths, one provisional and the other ultimate, to bring salvation to beings, he guided people appropriately, sometimes sending a massive wind of compassion and sometimes pouring down a heavy rain of teaching. He allowed his body to be used as a field of merit that sentient beings could cultivate, and left his teeth as supreme relics. When the tree of the mind bloomed, its leaves never withered. He approached without making any effort; he saw without making any effort to see. For the benefit of sentient beings, he appeared in response to their specific circumstances. Billions of beings in the ten directions all wished to attend him, and in the world-system consisting of threefold-thousand worlds, all succeeded in receiving instruction. These beings have long been accumulating merit by planting seeds in the merit field of the Buddha's body, offering services everywhere to attend to its needs.

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They pull out the roots of wrong views and cut down the trunk of greed and anger. Practicing recitation of the Buddha's name becomes the cause that produces the saving vision of the Buddha.

A verse in the *Lotus Sutra* (T.262:9a24–25) says:

If people, with their minds scattered, enter the stupa,  
And concentrate on reciting the name of the Buddha,  
They all will attain the Way of the Buddha.

Again, the *Piyu jing* says:

Once there was a king who had killed his father in order to ascend the throne. There was an arhat who knew that this king's life would soon end. He calculated the length of the king's remaining life span to be only seven days and learned that after his life had ended the king was certain to fall into the lowest hell and suffer for a period of one world age (*kalpa*). The arhat then went to see the king to teach him and urged him sincerely to utter the name of the Buddha for seven days without interruption. When he was about to leave, the arhat again told the king not to forget his instruction. The king then folded his arms in front of his chest and concentrated on uttering the name, throughout the day and night without stopping, and at the beginning of the seventh day his life came to an end. His spirit went to the lowest hell but before he mounted the vehicle he uttered the name of the Buddha, and when the vehicle reached the gate of hell and he realized that he had come to hell, he shouted loudly the name of the Buddha. The sinners in the jails of hell heard a voice uttering the name of the Buddha, and they all immediately uttered the name. The ferocious fires of hell then disappeared immediately, and all the sinners were liberated and reborn as human beings. Later the arhat taught the king again, and the king became a stream-winner. Thus, the merits of uttering the name of the Buddha are infinite and incomparable.

The *Guanfo sanmei jing* (T.643:660a29–661a13; ref. *Pusa bensheng man-lun*, T.160:342c21–343a25) says:

Once when the Buddha was in the world, for the benefit of his father, King [Śuddhodana], and members of the congregation, he preached the

*Scripture on the Buddha Contemplation Samādhi.* The Buddha has thirty-two primary marks and eighty secondary marks; his body is of the color of pure gold and emits infinite light. At that time five hundred sons of the Śākya clan were sitting before the Buddha's seat. Because of their sins the Buddha appeared to them like a wasted brahman [whose body was] the color of coal. When they saw this, they wailed aloud and pulled their own hair. They threw themselves on the ground, causing their noses to bleed.

The Buddha comforted them, "Do not wail aloud. I will speak for your sake. In the past there was a buddha whose name was Vipāśyin. After he entered nirvana, during the period of the counterfeit teaching (Dharma), there lived an elder called Riyuede ("Virtue of the Sun and Moon"). He had five hundred sons, all of whom were intelligent and well-educated. Their father had faith in the Three Treasures and frequently taught his sons the meaning of the Buddha's teaching. [Yet] the sons held wrong views and none of them had faith.

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"Some time later all the sons became gravely ill at the same time, and their father came where they were. Weeping, he joined his palms and said to them, 'You hold wrong views and do not have faith in the Buddha's teaching. Now the sword of impermanence is about to sever your bodies. On whom are you going to rely? There is a buddha, a world-honored one, whose name is Vipāśyin. You should utter his name.' When the sons heard this, out of respect for their father's words, they uttered the name of the Buddha. The father, the king, also taught them to utter the words 'Dharma' and 'Sangha.' When they had finished uttering these words their lives ended. Because they had uttered the Buddha's name they were reborn in the heavens of the four heavenly kings, but due to the wrong views they had held before their lives ended, they then fell down into hell. The demons who served as jailors pierced their eyes with heated irons. As they were experiencing pain, the sons remembered their father's lesson to utter the name of the Buddha, and they were reborn from hell into the human world, where they lived in poverty among lower-class people.

"Later Śikhin Buddha appeared in the world and these sons happened to meet him. They could hear the Buddha's name but they could not see his form. Later Viśvabhū Buddha, Krakucchanda Buddha, Kanakamuni Buddha, and Kāśyapa Buddha appeared; all the sons heard their names

but they could not see their forms. Because they heard the names of these six buddhas, they were reborn together as fellow Śākya clanspeople.

“My body is beautiful, like Jāmbūnada gold. You see only a wasted brahman whose skin is the color of coal because of the wrong views you held in your previous lives. You may now utter the names of the past buddhas, and the name of your father along with my name and the name of Maitreya Buddha. Having uttered these names, honor them, and turning to the congregation of virtuous monks, greet them by prostrating yourself and publicly repent your sins of holding wrong views.

“Having been taught thus, the sons repented and then saw the Buddha, who was like a golden Mount Sumeru. Having seen this, they said to the Buddha, ‘We now see the Buddha’s thirty-two primary marks and eighty secondary marks, illumined by infinite light.’ As they said this they became stream-winners. They renounced the householder’s life to seek the Buddha and attained arhatship, and were endowed with the three kinds of supernatural knowledge, the six kinds of supernatural powers, and attained the eight meditative states that lead to salvation.”

The Buddha told the monks, “After I enter nirvana, if you utter my name and the names of other buddhas, you will obtain infinite merits.”

The *Guanfo sanmei jing* (T.643:689a22–b10) says:

In a very distant past a buddha, whose name was Śākyamuni, appeared in the world. After he had entered nirvana, there was a prince called Jinchuang (“Golden Flag”), who was arrogant, followed wrong views, and did not believe in the Buddha’s teaching. There was also a monk called Dingzizai (“Free in Meditation”). He told the prince, “Images of the Buddha exist in the world. They are decorated beautifully with many jewels and are very attractive. Go inside a stupa and observe the buddha images.” The prince then went into a stupa and saw an image. He said to the monk, “If the image of the Buddha is as beautiful as this, how much more beautiful would the true body of the Buddha be?” The monk said to him, “You see the image now and yet you do not know how to pay respect to it. Join your palms and utter the name of the Buddha.” At that time the prince held his palms together and uttered the name of the Buddha. After he returned to the palace he kept thinking of the stupa, and for this

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reason at night he saw the buddha image in his dream. When the dream ended he was filled with joy and, abandoning wrong views, he took refuge in the Three Treasures.

Due to the merit gained from entering the stupa and uttering the name of the Buddha, when the prince's life ended he saw ninety billion *nayutas* of buddhas, and before each buddha he attained the deep *samādhi* of recitation of the name of the Buddha. Because of this *samādhi* buddhas appeared before him and predicted his future destiny. Ever since then, over the course of ten billion *asaṃkhyeya kalpas*, he was never reborn into lower realms of existence and today he has achieved the *śūraṅgama samādhi*. This past prince is the present Caishou Bodhisattva. In the light of this story those who are endowed with wisdom should practice recitation of the Buddha's name.

### **3. Contemplating the Buddha**

I have heard of the power of the Dharma King; the saving power of his Way is unlimited. From his great compassion the voice of his preaching resounds to the summit of the universe. Like a thick and dense cloud he rains down his teaching, benefiting each being according to their capacity. Bright as a clear mirror, he views sentient beings according to their categories. Therefore, when the Buddha, in his golden body, was born, the stars lost their brightness and the moon lovingly dimmed its light, thus allowing the brightness of the morning light to dominate. When the Buddha's voice, in eight different modes, sounded, the mistaken path of the Jains was disrupted. After the Buddha had taught for a short while in seven types of marvelous speech, Pūrṇa became a follower. Thus we know that the Buddha's power is divine and his benefits reach widely and deeply. Yet it is rare for someone to take part in the joy of attending the Buddha, seeing and hearing him in person. Therefore, it is recommended that practitioners constantly engage in Buddha contemplation, in which the mind maintains the marvelous appearance of the Buddha as if he were standing right in front of the practitioner. As the mind entertains the thought of the luminous appearance, it appears very close by. Although the Dharma body is one, the Buddha teaches the three vehicles according to circumstances. When the capacities of teacher and disciples match, there are many ways leading to the truth.

I now first record passages from the scripture. Later, I will relate stories of miraculous events. Detailed records not included here are found elsewhere.

The *Guanfo sanmei jing* (*Guanfo sanmeihai jing*, T.643:688b18–c4) says:

In a very distant past, going back for uncountable reigns, a buddha called Baoweide shangwang ([Bhaiṣajyaguru]vaiḍūryaprabharāja?) appeared in the world. At that time a monk, accompanied by nine disciples, went to the stupa of a buddha and paid respect to the buddha images. He noticed one jeweled image, strikingly attractive, and having paid his respects, he uttered verses in praise of the image.

Later, when their lives ended, the monk and his disciples were all reborn in the eastern buddha land of Baoweide shangwang. They were spontaneously born there, sitting cross-legged upon large lotus flowers. Ever since that time they have encountered buddhas all the time, and before each buddha they have engaged in pure practice and attained the ocean of the recitation of the name of the buddha *samādhi*. When they attained this *samādhi*, the Buddha predicted their future destiny: each monk will become the buddha of one of the ten directions. Shande Buddha of the eastern direction was that teacher. His nine disciples became the buddhas of the nine directions, namely: Wuyoude Buddha in the southeastern direction, Zhandande Buddha in the southern direction, Baoshi Buddha in the southwestern direction, Wuliangming Buddha in the western direction, Huade Buddha in the northwestern direction, Xiangde Buddha in the northern direction, Sanshengxing Buddha in the northeastern direction, Guangzhongde Buddha in the direction above, and Mingde Buddha in the direction below. Because in the past they paid respect at a stupa, and on viewing a buddha image had praised it in verse, these ten monks have now attained buddhahood in the ten directions.

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The *Guanfo sanmei jing* (*Guanfo sanmeihai jing*, T.643:688c24–689a12) says:

In the very distant past a buddha, whose name was Kongwang, appeared in the world. After he had entered nirvana, four monks were studying together, cultivating the Buddha's correct teaching. Their minds were obscured by passions and they could not uphold firmly the treasure house

of the Buddha's teaching. Having committed numerous evil deeds, they were about to be reborn in lower realms of existence. A voice was heard in the sky speaking to these monks, "The Tathāgata is in nirvana but your crimes are such that it is impossible to save you. You should now go into the stupa and observe the image. In form and illumination the image will be no different from the Tathāgata as he was in the world." When the voice in the sky ceased, they went inside the stupa and observed the image. When they saw the white hair between the eyebrows (*ūrṇabhṛū*), one of the thirty-two primary marks of the Buddha, they spoke aloud their thoughts, "Is there any difference between the illumined body of the Tathāgata when he was in this world, and this image? We request this mark of the Buddha as a great being to remove our sins." Having said this, they threw themselves on the ground, like a collapsing great mountain, and while prostrating they repented.

Due to going inside the stupa, observing the hair mark, and repenting, when these monks were reborn in lower realms of existence for eight billion *asaṃkhyeya kalpas*, in each of their rebirths they always saw the buddhas of the ten directions. Before each of the buddhas they practiced the deep *samādhi* of the recitation of the name of the Buddha. When they obtained this *samādhi*, the buddhas of the ten directions appeared before them and predicted their future destiny. They have now all become buddhas. In the eastern direction the name of the [buddha] land is Miaoxi ("Marvelous Joy"), and the buddha there is called Achu (Akṣobhya). He was the first monk. In the southern direction the name of the land is Huanxi ("Delight"), and the buddha there is called Shixiang ("True Reality"). He was the second monk. In the western direction the name of the land is Jile ("Extreme Joy"), and the buddha there is called Wuliangshou (Amitāyus). He was the third monk. In the northern direction the name of the land is Lianhua zhuangyan ("Lotus Flower Decoration"), and the name of the buddha there is Weimiaosheng ("Subtle and Marvelous Voice"). He was the fourth monk. In the light of this story, those who practice should contemplate the Buddha frequently.

The *Jiaye jing* (*Dabaoji jing*, *mohejiaye hui*, T.310:512c22–514a16) says:

In the very distant past, *asamkhyeya kalpas* ago, a buddha appeared in the world. His name was Guangming (“Light”). There was a bodhisattva called Dajingjin (“Great Effort”). He was sixteen years old, of brahman birth and very handsome. A monk had painted a buddha image on a white cloth and brought it to [Da]jingjin. When he saw the image his heart was filled with joy, and he uttered the following words, “The image of the Tathāgata is so beautiful. How much more beautiful must his body itself be! I vow that in a future life I too will obtain such a beautiful body.”

Having said this, he thought, “If I remain a householder it will not be possible to obtain such a body.” He then spoke to his parents, begging their permission to renounce the householder’s life. His parents replied, “We are now old. You are our only child. If you renounce the householder’s life [and leave us] we will die.” The son said to the parents, “If you do not give your permission, from this day on I will not eat or drink. I will not go to bed, nor will I speak.” Having made this vow, he did not eat all that day, and continued like this for six days. Friends of his parents and eighty-four thousand women all wept and paid respect to Dajingjin. Shortly thereafter his parents gave him permission.

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Having renounced the householder’s life, he took the buddha image and went to a mountain. Gathering grass for a seat, he sat cross-legged in front of the image and contemplated singlemindedly thus: “This painted image is no different from the Tathāgata; the image of the Tathāgata cannot be perceived; all dharmas are like this: without characteristics and transcending characteristics, their substance is empty and quiet.” Having contemplated thus, after one day and night he obtained the five supernatural powers, complete with infinite attainments. He obtained unobstructed speech and the *samādhi* of all-pervasive light.

Having obtained the great ray of light, with his divine eye he saw innumerable buddhas in the eastern direction. With his divine ear he was able to hear all the sermons preached by those buddhas. He continued in this manner for seven entire months. He took wisdom as food. All the gods scattered flowers and attended to his needs. He came down from the mountain and entering villages he preached the Dharma for the benefit of others. The first thought of seeking enlightenment (*bodhicitta*) arose in twenty thousand sentient beings. Infinite and innumerable numbers of people

performed meritorious deeds along the paths of the hearers (*śrāvakas*) and the *pratyekabuddhas*. His parents and other associates attained the stage of nonregression and supreme enlightenment.

The Buddha said to Kāśyapa, “I myself was this Dajingjin of the past. Due to the practice of contemplating the image, I have now attained buddhahood. If a person practices this contemplation, it is certain that they will realize the supreme Way in the future.”

### Miracle Stories

(Fifty-three stories are summarized here. [This fascicle contains fifteen stories; the remaining stories appear in Fascicle 14].)

The teaching of the Buddha was first brought to the Eastern Han and then slowly spread to the kingdom of Wu in the south. During this period miraculous images of the Buddha appeared everywhere in the empire; they were listed in numerous records. The stories included in these records differ but there are no discrepancies in the miraculous signs reported for each specific image. The presentation here is by specific images and is not chronological. This is because the stories about some images begin in the Jin period and continue into the Sui (581–618 C.E.) and Tang (618–907 C.E.) periods. In instructing people, the consequences are sometimes positive and sometimes negative. Therefore, it is impossible to establish a ranking of these images. The collection is organized in terms of the stories around specific images.

Eastern Han dynasty (25–220 C.E.): The story of the Śākyamuni painting in Luoyang. Southern Wu dynasty (222–280 C.E.): the story of the golden image discovered in the ground in Jianye. Western Jin dynasty (265–316 C.E.): the story of the stone images arrived floating in the Jiang River and the story of the auspicious golden image at Mount Tai sent by seven kingdoms. Eastern Jin dynasty (317–420 C.E.): the story of the golden image discovered on a beach in Yangdu, the story of the golden image in Xiangyang that walked in the mountains, the story of the golden image in Jingzhou that came down from afar, the story of the golden image that was discovered in the water in Wuxing; the story of the auspicious incense and the wooden image at Kuaiji, the story of the golden image in Wu Commandery, the story of the golden image dug out of the ground at Dongye Gate, and the story of the golden

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image of Mañjuśrī at Mount Lu. [Northern] Wei dynasty (386–534 C.E.): the story of the monastic robe that appeared at Mount Shixiang in Liangzhou. Northern Liang dynasty (412–439): the story of the clay images at the southern cliff produced by the Prince of Hexi and the story of Juqu [Mengsun]’s rock image, six *zhang* in height.

#### Eastern Han Dynasty

The *Mingxiang ji* (*Record of Miraculous Signs*), compiled by Wang Yan of the Southern Qi (479–502 C.E.), contains the following passage:

Emperor Ming of the Later Han dynasty (25–220 C.E.) saw a divine being in a dream that was nearly two *zhang* tall. Its body was golden in color and it carried a shining sun behind its head. [The emperor] asked his ministers about his dream. Someone answered, “There is a deity in the West who looks just like the being you dreamed about. Perhaps this is what you saw.” Thereupon, the emperor sent a messenger to India, who returned to the Central Kingdom (China) with copies of scriptures and images. The Son of Heaven, the princes, and the nobles all paid respect to them. They heard that when a person dies his spirit does not disappear. Everyone was frightened and dumbfounded.

First the messenger Cai Yin, with the Western monks Kāśyapa and Mātāṅga, brought a painting of Śākyamuni in a reclining position produced by King Udayana. The emperor treasured it. The figure was just like the one he had seen in his dream. He then ordered artisans to produce several copies. He placed these images on the Qingliang Terrace of the Southern Palace and at the Xianjieshouling Tomb near the Gaoyangmen Gate and worshiped them. Again, on the wall at Boma Temple there is a picture of a thousand chariots and ten thousand men on horses surrounding the stupa [in which a copy of this image was placed(?)]. The image is described in a number of records. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:413c2–11.)

#### Southern Wu Dynasty

A golden image was discovered in a flat area in the back garden of Jianye. An inquiry into its origin revealed that it was an image produced by King Aśoka that had been placed in this city near the Jiang River in the early years of the Zhou dynasty (c. 1100–256 B.C.E.). How was this known to be the case?

From the time of the Qin dynasty (221–207 B.C.E.) through the subsequent Han (206 B.C.E.–220 C.E.) and Wei (220–265 C.E.) dynasties, Buddhism had not yet reached Southern China. How then could an image like this have been buried in this place?

Sun Hao obtained this image but he lacked faith and did not particularly honor it. He placed it near a lavatory and left it covered up. On the eighth day of the fourth month Hao said in jest, “Today is the eighth day, when the Buddha is bathed,” and he urinated on the head of the Buddha in the image. Some time later his body erupted in tumors, and the condition was the most severe around his penis. He screamed uncontrollably from the extreme pain. The court astronomer conducted divination and said, “This is the result of an offense against a great divinity.” Immediately offerings were made to all the deities but they had no effect. A court lady who was a Buddhist said, “The Buddha is a great deity. You committed a polluting act in front of his image. Quickly ask for pardon now.” Hao believed her, prostrated himself while laying in his sickbed, and ardently apologized. After a while his condition began to improve. He then send a horse-drawn carriage to invite the monk Senghui to the palace and asked him to bathe the buddha image in fragrant water. The emperor repented deeply and performed a variety of meritorious deeds at temples in Jianye. The pain in his penis gradually disappeared. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T. 2106: 413c12–22; ref. *Gaoseng zhuan*, T.2059:326a1–10.)

#### Western Jin Dynasty

383c In the first year of the Jianxing period (313 C.E.), during the reign of Emperor Min, at the Hudu estuary of the Songjiang River in the Wu district of Wu Commandery, some people were seen to be floating on the water. The local fishermen suspected them to be ocean gods and they invited a medium and presented sacrifices to welcome them. The wind and waves became more powerful, however, and in terror they retreated. Then some followers of the Way of the Five Pecks of Rice and the School of the Yellow Emperor and Laozi said, “These are our teachers” and went into the ocean to welcome them. The wind and waves were still just as powerful. Layman Zhuying of the Wu district, who worshiped the Buddha, heard of this and said, “They must be the buddhas who have come down to us.” He purified himself, and

together with Boni of Dongling Temple and several other believers, he went to the Hu[du] estuary and bowed his head to the ground to welcome them. The wind and waves quieted, and the two people floating on the river were carried by the tide into the bay.

The closer they came the clearer they could be seen, and the people realized that they were stone statues. When the stone figures came to them, without exerting effort the people tried to lift them. The figures rose up lightly and the people carried them back to Tongxuan Temple. They saw inscriptions on the back of the figures: one said Vipaśyin and the other Kāśyapa. It was not known under which emperor's reign they had been produced but the writing was clear. The statues were seven feet tall. People prepared Dharma seats and placed the figures safely on them. Several dozens of people then could not move them. Yet when people spoke to them, requesting them to move, they quickly rose [of their own accord]. The discovery was reported to the court, and nine out of ten families, both from within the aristocracy and from among the commoners, paid respect to the figures.

The monk Fakai who came from the Western Region said, "According to a scripture two stone figures and Aśoka stupas exist in the eastern region; those who make offerings and worship them will have the sins they have accumulated through many world ages removed."

According to a different tradition, twelve Indian monks sent the images to the commandery. The stone figures stood upon the water without sinking but did not advance further. The matter was reported to the court and by imperial edict the figures were permitted to remain at Wu Commandery. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T. 2106: 413c23–414a12; ref. *Gaoseng zhuan*, T.2059:409c18–29.) (Note: Stories about these images appear in the *Gaoseng zhuan* [*Biographies of Eminent Monks*], the *Jingyi ji* [*Records of Extraordinary Events*], and elsewhere.)

Some time in the past, in the Yongjia period (307–312 C.E.), political chaos erupted in Central China. At this time on the mountain where the monk Senglang resided, Langgong Temple (Master [Seng]lang's temple) in Jinyu Valley on Mount Tai, had always been obscured by clouds. People marveled at this sign, which predicted the failure of the government, and his reputation as a monk who predicted political fortunes spread throughout the realm under

heaven. This was the time when the ruler was killed and powerful figures assisted the young successor. The ruling families of seven states honored this monk. Many states rushed to donate bronze images and other gifts. Senglang received these gifts with proper decorum, and each time auspicious signs appeared. At the present time these gifts are kept in one hall and the door and windows are always open, yet birds stay away and unclean substances do not mar them. Both those who live near the place and those from afar equally marvel at this. The temple now has a history of three hundred and fifty years. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:414a15–24; ref. *Gaoseng zhuan*, T.2059:354b16–25; *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T.2060:506c29–507a17.)

#### Eastern Jin Dynasty

During the Xianhe period (326–334 C.E.) the Governor of Danyang, Gao Li, while on his way to and from the palace, saw a strange light on the beach at Marquis Zhang's bridge. He sent officials there and obtained a golden image in the ancient Indian style, which lacked both the decorative halo and the base. Gao Li dismounted from his carriage and placed the image on it. When he came to the street leading to Changgan Temple, the ox pulling the carriage stopped. Gao Li told the driver to let the ox go wherever it wanted, and they ended up at Changgan Temple, so he placed the image there. A large crowd gathered in the capital city of Yangdu to have a look at and pay respect to the image. Many people were converted to Buddhism. In the middle of the night the image always emitted light.

384a Over a year later, a fisherman called Zhang Xishi who lived in the Linhai district saw in the ocean a copper image base decorated with lotus flowers. The image base floated around, emitting red light. The fisherman quickly moved his boat to the spot and picked it up. The image base was sent to the court, and when the emperor placed the image's feet on it, they fit perfectly.

Later, five monks from the Western Region visited Gao Li, and told him, "In the past we traveled to India and obtained a buddha image made by King Aśoka. When we came to the city of Ye in Northern China, we ran into political and military disturbances. We hid the image on the bank of a river. When the king's roads became passable we looked for the image again but were not able to locate it. Recently, we had a dream in which the image said, 'I went to the region east of the Jiang River and was obtained by Gao Li. I am

at the King Aśoka temple.' This is why we have made this long trip to come here. We wish to pay respect to the image." Gao Li led the five monks to the temple. When the monks saw the image they cried aloud and wept. The image emitted light for them and the light illumined the hall and all around the monks. The monks said, "Originally there was a decorative halo. It is somewhere far away now but it will also arrive here soon."

In the first year of the Xian'an period (371 C.E.) Dong Zongzhi, who was diving for pearls at Hepu in the Jiaozhou region in Nanhai, saw on each dive a light at the bottom of the sea. The light radiated up to the surface. He looked for the decorative halo of a buddha image and found it. He reported this discovery to the court. Emperor Jianwen ordered the halo to be restored to [Gao Li's] image. The holes fit; the image and the halo also had an identical luster. In the course of over forty years, auspicious miracles had occurred in places separated by great distances to restore the decorative halo and the base for the image. The base of the image, decorated with flowers, had an inscription in an Indian script. While there were many visitors none was familiar with the script. Only Guṇavarman (367–431 C.E.), master of all three categories of scriptures, said, "This is written in an old Sanskrit script. This image was produced by the fourth daughter of King Aśoka."

At one time a monk at Wagan Temple called Huisui wanted to produce a copy of the image. The monk who was the administrative head of [Changan] Temple feared that he might damage the golden color of the image, and said to Huisui, "If you can cause the image to emit light and turn to the West, the matter is beyond my control." Huisui prayed ardently. In the middle of the night he heard a strange sound and when he opened the doors of the buddha hall, he saw the image emitting bright light and it had turned to face west. Thereupon he was given permission to copy the image. He produced dozens of copies of the image, which circulated widely and still exist.

Emperor Wu (r. 502–549 C.E.) of the Liang dynasty (502–557 C.E.) added images of seven deities and two bodhisattvas to the halo.

In the second year of the Yongding period (558 C.E.) of the Chen dynasty (557–589 C.E.) Wang Lin encamped his soldiers on the shore of the Changjiang River, facing the capital city of Jinling. Emperor Wu ordered his soldiers to attack the encamped army. Just as the soldiers were about to leave the image moved and could not be stabilized. This strange development was

reported to the court and the emperor examined the image himself and found the report to be true. Suddenly, before the soldiers crossed swords, Wang Lin's army scattered, and Wang Lin fled north by himself. Emperor Wu's army followed him upstream and pacified the whole region.

During the Tianjia period (560–566 C.E.) there was a rebellion in the southeastern region. When the emperor prayed in front of the image, requesting that the rebels be repulsed, the image shone and illumined the hall. Shortly after that the difficulties in the region ceased.

Monk Huixiao headed Changgan Temple. His spiritual influences reached everywhere, like the wind. He constructed a multistoried hall [for the image]; it was painted with extraordinary patterns and from it the view reached as far as the eye can see.

384b In the course of the five dynasties, from the Jin to the Chen, [all based in the south,] all rulers and ministers paid respect to the image. In times of drought they poured oil over the image and had it brought to the palace on the emperor's carriage. While the image was en route to the palace rain would fall.

Rumors spread regarding the future of the Chen dynasty, and soon they came to be sung in vernacular songs. In the second year of Zhenming (588 C.E.) the image turned westward and even after people turned it to face the correct direction, it again turned westward by itself. This was reported to the emperor, who withdrew to the hall where he lived. He offered a vegetarian feast and engaged in other meritorious activities. The image originally had a crown of seven jewels, decorated with pearls and jade, and which weighed seven *jin*. A silken hat was placed above the crown. On the morning [of the next day] the jeweled crown was hanging from the hand of the image, although the silk hat was still on the head. The emperor burned incense and prayed, saying, "If inauspicious things are to happen to the state (i.e., if the dynasty is to come to an end), let the image take the jeweled crown off again as a sign of heavenly punishment." He then placed the jeweled crown back on the head of the image. In the morning the jeweled crown was again hanging from the image's hand, as before. Both the emperor and the ministers were frightened. When Chen state was conquered by the [northwestern] state of Sui, all the members of the ruling class were transported to the west, their headgear was removed and their hands were bound behind their back. It was just as the image had symbolically predicted.

Emperor Wen (r. 581–604 C.E.) of the Sui dynasty (581–618 C.E.) heard about this and brought the image to the palace. Since it was a standing figure, the emperor also stood and paid respect to it. He said, “I am old and unable to stand for a long time. The Office of the Right should be ordered to produce a sitting image with the same features.” The original standing image was sent to Daxingshan Temple. When the image reached the buddha hall [in the temple] it was first placed facing north to avoid exposure to the sun, but in the morning it was found to be facing south. People were amazed and moved it to face the north again, but the next morning it was again found turned toward the south, [the direction that the ruler faces]. Amazed, the people realized that they had failed to pay proper respect to the image. The image still exists today; there are many painted copies. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:414a26–c18; ref. *Gaoseng zhuan*, T.2059:409c1–18.)

On the eighth day of the fourth month of the third year of the Ningkan period under Emperor Xiaowu of the Eastern Chin dynasty (375 C.E.), Monk Dao’an of Tanqi Monastery in Xiangyang, whose virtues were manifest and whose reputation was unrivaled anywhere, forged a bronze figure of Amitābha Buddha, eight *zhang* tall, at the temple in the western suburb. In the last month of the following year the decoration was completed. When Hui[zhi], Defense Command General of Jin and Regional Inspector of Yongzhou, assumed his position in the Xiang region and supported the Buddhist teaching, this image moved at night of its own accord and traveled around numerous mountains. Its footsteps became patterns on rocks. Monks and laypeople in villages rushed to see this. Marveling at the feat, they brought the image back to the original temple and made offerings to it. Later, in the evening, the figure would again move from temple where it was housed. All the people were amazed. Hui[zhi] then changed the name of the temple to Golden Image Temple.

On the eighth day of the fourth month of the third year of Putong (522 C.E.) an edict was issued ordering that a bronze base [for the figure], five *chi* and nine *cun* tall and nine *chi* and eight *cun* wide, decorated with flowers, be forged at Jingxing Garden. When it was properly decorated, the base was shipped upstream to be placed under the figure. An inscription was made describing its remarkable power; Liu Xiaoyi composed the text and Xiao Ziyun did the calligraphy.

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In the third year of the Jiande period, [at the time of the persecution of Buddhism under the Northern Zhou (574 C.E.),] Wang Bing, Duke of Taiyuan, served as Regional Inspector of Xiangzhou. Assistant Commander Changsun Zhe was an unbeliever. He heard that the bronze statue had miraculous powers and he wished to destroy it. The laypeople in the villages and defrocked monks and nuns heard about his wish to destroy the image and their wailing filled the streets. When Zhe saw the monks, nuns, and laypeople mourning the decision, he became even angrier and pressed his underlings to move quickly to carry out the demolition. He first sent a hundred people who tied a rope around the figure's neck and pulled, but the image would not move. He then added three hundred more people. The figure still did not move. In increased fury he sent five hundred more to pull and the figure then tumbled. The sound shook the earth and all the people were terrified. Only Zhe was delighted and immediately ordered his men to melt down the bronze statue. Shouting triumphantly, he rode his horse at a gallop to report to the Regional Inspector. Before they had gone a hundred steps, however, he suddenly fell off. Unable to speak, staring blankly, he could not raise any of his limbs and when evening came he died. The monks, nuns, and laypeople shouted in great delight.

When Zhe's people had pulled down the statue an inscription was discovered inside the robe under the arm of the figure, which read:

In the nineteenth year of the Taiyuan period of Jin (394 C.E.), year *jiawu*, first month, second day, monk Dao'an produced in the western suburb of Xiangyang a golden statue eight *zhang* tall. After one hundred and eighty years, when the sixty-year cycle calendar has revolved three times, this figure will be destroyed.

Later, people calculated the number of years and learned that the dates of the construction and destruction of the image matched this prediction perfectly. It is true that Master Dao'an was a sage and never made untrue predictions. The temple where the figure used to be housed is now called Qifasi. The rocks on which the figure stepped have been cut out and placed in the temple.

Toward the end of the Sui the empire had fallen apart, but there were some who defended the old empire in certain locations. Royal Guardian of Xiangyang Du Lubao was in control of one area and followed Wang Shichong.

At Qifa Temple there was a monk called Dharma Master Xian, who was respected by a lay nobleman. This monk repeatedly advised Lord Du to submit to the Tang, but Du did not follow this advice. Monk Xian and local noblemen sent a messenger, and eventually armies were sent from the capital city to Xiangyang. Du [Lubao] defended his city firmly. Armies attacked three times but the city did not fall. Later, Xian's activity was exposed and he was killed in secret. When he was about to be killed, Xian said to his disciple Su Fulou, "Your father and I saw Dao'an's figure destroyed. From then on the tradition has not been resumed. After I die, you should remake the image." In the fourth year of the Wude period (621 C.E.), the government army's attack on the city intensified and Du surrendered. He then regretted not having followed Xian's advice. How deplorable it is for someone to be killed for no crime! This prevents those who may wish to make a contribution to the state from speaking up.

After the city had been conquered Fulou put on layman's clothes. He gathered the robes and other belongings of Xian, and then wished to produce a copy of [Dao'an's] figure, but he had no idea what to use as the model. Yet, as soon as he melted the metal, a perfect image formed. Fulou had a talent for business and became wealthy. He also produced a bronze figure of Maitreya, over one *zhang* tall, in his house. Later, he had a dream in which the monk Xian appeared and ordered him to produce more buddha images. Thereupon Fulou produced the large statue at Fanyun Temple, fifty-nine *chi* tall. The story of this figure is told elsewhere.

Some time earlier, at the beginning of Sui rule, Xiao, who is known as the Prince of Qin, was put in charge of the Xiang[yang] region. He heard that Master Dao'an's ancient figure had an extraordinary appearance. So he sent someone to make a drawing of it, and produced a copy at Yanxing Temple in Chang'an. On the evening the casting began great miraculous signs appeared; music was heard from heaven and flowers fell down like rain. This figure still exists at Yanxing Temple. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:414c19–415b7.)

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On the eighth day of the second month of the sixth year of the Yonghe period, under Emperor Mu of the Eastern Jin, an image appeared in the northern suburb of Jingzhou (the year is calculated as the third year of the same period

in the Universal Calendar System, 347 C.E.). The statue was seven *chi* and five *cun* in height, and together with the halo and the base it reached one *zhang* and one *chi*. Nobody had any idea where the figure had come from.

Earlier, in the fifth year of the Yonghe period (346 C.E.), a merchant ship was unloading its cargo in Guangzhou. The work was almost finished when the boat became too light. In the middle of the night people had sensed that someone had come running on board. Surprised, they looked for the person but could not find him. The load on the boat increased and no more cargo could be added. People were amazed but could not figure out what had caused this. The boat traveled under favorable conditions on its long journey and reached ports ahead of other ships. It soon reached Zhugong and docked at the harbor. At night people felt that a man had walked off the boat to the shore. The load on the boat again became very light. Then the figure appeared in the suburb of Jingzhou and people realized the meaning of these unusual signs.

At that time Huan Wen was Commander-In-Chief in charge of the western Shan region and he came in person to pay respect to the figure. The discovery of the statue caused a great stir in the cities and villages, and monks came rushing from all the temples, attempting to bring the figure to their own temple, but the figure stood firmly and could not be moved.

In the second year of the Yonghe period (343 C.E.), the governor of Changsha, called Teng Jun (or Teng Han in a variant version) donated his residence to be turned into a temple, which was called by the name of the commandery (Changsha). Having heard that Dharma Master Dao'an had taken charge of the monastic community in Xiangzhou, Teng Jun asked him to send a monk to look after his temple in Changsha. Dao'an said to his disciple Tanyi, "People in Jing and Chu have begun to be interested in the teaching. You are the very person who will make their faith bloom. You must go there."

Tanyi traveled southward and organized the temple. Though monks had arrived and the temple buildings were ready, there were no images. He frequently deplored this, saying, "King Aśoka's temples and images are spread about widely according to karmic conditions. Yet the intensity of our devotion has not reached the peak. Why should we worry that an image will never descend to here?" When he heard that an image had arrived at Jingcheng, he was delighted and, sharing his joy with his colleagues, he said, "This statue appeared in response to my earlier vow. It is destined to come to Changsha

Temple. We must seek for it in the mind. It is difficult to bring it through physical force.” The people at the temple all said, “We will do as you say. You will soon be proven correct.” Tanyi burned incense and respectfully invited the image to his temple. He let three of his disciples raise the image, which rose as lightly as the wind and was transported to the temple. Monks and laypeople joined in celebrating this event.

In the second year of the Xian’an period under Emperor Jianwen (372 C.E.) a base, decorated with flowers, was cast for the figure.

During the Taiyuan period (376–396 C.E.) under the reign of Emperor Xiaowu of the Jin dynasty, when Yin Zhongkan occupied the office of Regional Inspector, the figure walked out of the western gate of the temple. The night watchman thought it was a man and asked who it was, but the figure did not answer. When the night watchman struck it with a sword, it made a metallic sound. He looked closely and found that it was the statue and on the chest where he had hit it a pattern had appeared.

A Kashmiri monk, Sengquenanduo (Samghananda?), who was very learned, came from Shu to Jing and entered the temple to worship this figure. He sighed and remained silent for a long time. Tanyi asked why he was so moved. Sengquenanduo answered, “This image disappeared from India recently. Why did it come to this distant land?” When they checked the year and month, the two dates matched perfectly. The monk saw a Sanskrit inscription on the back of the image, stating that the statue was made by King Aśoka. When they learned about this inscription, people honored the figure with even greater respect.

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The statue proved the miraculous effect of Tanyi’s ardent request. When he became seriously ill, the figure’s halo suddenly disappeared. Tanyi said, “Since the buddha [figure] is showing this sign, my illness is incurable. The halo has gone elsewhere.” He performed further rites for the figure and after ten days Tanyi passed away. Monks later produced the existing halo, modeled after the original one.

During the reign of Emperor Xiaowu (r. 453–464 C.E.) of the Song dynasty the figure emitted light and Buddhism prospered greatly in the region south and downstream of the Jiang River.

Toward the end of the Taishi period (465–474 C.E.), under the reign of Emperor Ming (r. 465–472 C.E.) of the Song dynasty (420–479 C.E.), the

statue suddenly wept tears. Shortly after this Emperor Ming died. His successor was immoral and crazy, thus causing the transfer of the mandate from the Song to the Qi dynasty (479–502 C.E.).

Regional Inspector of Jingzhou Shen Youzhi originally did not follow the Buddha's teaching and persecuted monks and nuns. There were over one thousand monks in Changsha Temple alone, and Shen Youzhi was about to [forcibly] disrobe several hundreds of them. The entire community was panic-stricken and everyone, both old and young, cried in distress. The figure sweated for five days without stop. News of this incident reached Shen Youzhi's ear, and Shen invited the great master of the temple, Xuanyang, and inquired about the cause of this event. Xuanyang said, "The Holy One is not far and everything reaches him. The buddhas of the past, present, and future are connected in the continuing thought of the Buddha. Can we think of all the buddhas without thinking of this present buddha? In order to reprimand you for your lack of faith, the buddhas are giving this sign." Shen asked for the scriptural source for this idea and was given the answer that it is found in the *Wuliangshou jing* (T.360:266c6). Taking up the scripture and finding the passage, Shen was delighted and immediately stopped the persecution.

In the second year of the Yongyuan period of the Qi dynasty (500 C.E.), Defense Commander Xiao Yingzhou and the founding emperor of the Liang dynasty (502–557 C.E.) collaborated with Baorong, Prince of Nankang, who was the Regional Inspector of Jingzhou, to stage a successful coup d'état. The figure moved outside of the hall in which it was housed and looked as if it wished to go down the stairs. The two monks who saw this were taken aback and called the others. The statue then turned around and went inside the hall. In the third year of the same period (501 C.E.) Xiao Yingzhou died suddenly. Baorong, who had been installed as the emperor, was removed from the throne, and instead the founding emperor of the Liang dynasty enjoyed good fortune.

Toward the end of the Tianjian period (502–519 C.E.), Abbot Daoyue cleared the weeds around a stupa with the help of a layman. When he opened the door of the stupa he saw the figure walking around the crypt. Daoyue worshiped the image quietly and did not mention this to anyone. Then he went to the hall where the figure was placed and opened wide the door. The statue was again sitting on its base.

When the Prince of Poyang was in charge of Jingzhou he frequently requested the figure to come into the city so that he could perform meritorious ceremonies. When he became ill he sent people to bring the statue with great care and respect. More and more workers were employed to lift it but the statue could not be raised. After a few days the prince passed away.

When the Founding Emperor, Emperor Wu, was once in the Jing and Shan region he sincerely and repeatedly invited the figure, but in the end failed to cause it to come to him.

In the third month of the fourth year of the Zhongdatong period (532 C.E.), the emperor sent Sengjin of Boma Temple and the scribe He Si to offer from a distance incense and flowers to the statue and express his sincere sentiments. At night the figure emitted light and looked as if it would go and accompany the messengers. When the messengers were brought to the image in the morning, however, the figure seemed to wish to stay. After repeated requests the statue consented to accompany the messengers. The congregation of the temple was greatly attached to the figure and they all went to give it a send-off at the port situated on the Jiang River.

On the twenty-third day the image reached the capital city, Jinling. The emperor traveled to a place eighteen miles away from the capital and greeted the statue's arrival. The figure emitted light continuously without interruption when it came to the end of the route of its travels. Monks and laymen expressed pleasure over the auspicious event. The figure stayed at the palace for three days and received sincere worship and offerings. (One source says that it stopped at Zhongxing Temple.) The emperor hosted a major vegetarian feast, open to everyone in the land.

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On the twenty-seventh day the statue left the city through the Datong Gate and entered Tongtai Temple. During the night the figure emitted strong light. By imperial order a hall, three *jian* long with two wings, was built northeast of the great hall of Tongtai Temple, and a curtained throne, decorated with seven jewels, was set up there for the miraculous image. Two bronze bodhisattva figures were also produced. An artificial hill was constructed and a pond dug; there were unusual trees and strange rocks, and gracefully tall bridges; balustrades connected the two staircases at the end of the hall. A pair of copper pots, each large enough to contain thirty gallons, was donated. Various layered roofs formed beautiful patterns on three sides of the building.

In the third month of the second year of the Zhongdatong period (547 C.E.), the emperor visited Tongtai Temple, setting up a banquet and arranging lectures. The emperor visited the many temple buildings, one by one, and dusk had set in when he arrived at the hall where the miraculous figure was housed. When the emperor went up the stairs of the hall, the figure emitted a great deal of light, and the bamboo, trees, and scenery around the hall all turned a golden color. This miraculous phenomenon lasted through half the night.

There was a fire at Tongtai Temple and all its buildings were burned down; only the hall where the figure was housed was spared.

In the second year of the Taiqing period (548 C.E.) the statue again sweated greatly. In the eleventh month of the same year Hou Jing's rebellion occurred. In the third year of the Dabao period (552 C.E.) the rebels were pacified. The monk Fajing and others of Changsha Temple came and took the figure back to Jiangling, returning it to its original temple.

In the seventh year of the Dading period of the Later Liang dynasty (561 C.E.), the statue sweated again. In the second month of the following year Emperor Zhongzong (posthumous name Xuan, r. 555–562 C.E.), died.

In the third year of the Tianbao period ([of the Later Liang dynasty] 576 C.E.), a fire in the neighborhood reached Changsha Temple. The entire temple became like a tunnel and smoke and flames poured in from the four directions. The people wanted to rescue the miraculous figure but they feared that they did not have the means to move it. In order to move this statue previously it had always taken one hundred men. On that day, however, six people were able to move it.

On the fifteenth year of the Tianbao period ([of the Later Liang dynasty], 576 C.E.), Emperor Ming (r. 562–585 C.E.) invited the statue to the palace in order to worship it and repent his sins before it; miracles occurred.

In the twenty-third year (584 C.E.) Emperor Ming died. His successor, Xiao Zong, moved the figure to Renshou Palace. The statue again sweated heavily. In the second year of the Guangyun period ([of the Later Liang dynasty], 587 C.E.) Liang state was terminated.

In the seventh year of the Kaihuang period (587 C.E.) the monk Faqian and others of Changsha Temple brought the statue back to the temple.

In the fifteenth year of the Kaihuang period (595 C.E.) Tian Zongxian, Regional Inspector of Qianzhou, came to the temple to worship and the figure

immediately emitted light. Inspired to follow the Buddhist path, he constructed the Great Northern Hall, which was thirteen *jian* long. The wood used for constructing the hall was cut in a place over five thousand miles upstream along the Jiang River. People transported the lumber to the river and threw the logs into the water at random. The logs flowed downstream and when they reached Jingzhou they spontaneously stopped at the riverbank and would not go any further, even when buffeted by strong winds and waves. In the end the people took the logs out of the river and constructed the building. The pillars were three feet in diameter and the foundation stones were eight feet wide. This basic structure would never require any repair work any time in the future. The great hall was planked with fragrant wood. Thirteen treasure curtains, decorated with gold and jewels, hung securely inside the hall. Garlands of decorative flowers were hung on every beam, crossbeam, and from the painted ceiling. The two wings to the east and west served as the residence for the miraculous statue. These wings were planked with rosewood and there were decorative curtains and lamps with flower decorations, all made of pure gold. This hall was foremost in the entire world in its spaciousness and beauty.

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In the twelfth year of the Daye period (616 C.E.) several drops of sweat appeared on the miraculous figure. In that year Zhu Can raided several regions. He arrived at the city of Jingzhou and camped inside the temple grounds. The Great [Northern] Hall stood high in the northern suburb of the city. Bandits climbed to the top of the hall and shot arrows at the defending army in the city. The defending army was troubled by this, so at night they shot back with flaming arrows and burned the temple down. The monks and laypeople in the city were greatly distressed by this, mourning the destruction of the miraculous figure. During the night, without alerting anyone outside, the figure crossed over the city wall and stood outside the gate of Baoguan Temple. When morning came, everyone in the city was delighted to see the statue standing there. After the bandits had left, the townspeople inspected the place where the figure used to stand and discovered that nothing had burned there; the ashes and cinders did not reach that place. A hall now stands there but it is not as impressive as the one that existed before this fire.

In the fifth year of the Fengming period of the illegitimate Liang dynasty established by Xiao Xian (621 C.E.), Yang Daosheng, the illegitimate Prince of Song, and others came to the temple to worship. The statue sweated heavily;

the moisture came down like rain and flowed all over its head and torso, and did not cease all day. In the ninth month of the same year Tang soldiers and horses advanced down along the river from the Shu area.

On the twentieth day of the same month the monk Fatong of [Changsha] Temple believed that the empire was about to be unified by the Tang. He circumambulated the figure, requesting a miracle. That night the statue emitted light that filled the hall, and the light remained until the twenty-fifth day, when it began to dim slowly. On that day the [Tang] soldiers and horses of the Prince of Zhao's commandery entered the city. Because the figure wished to congratulate the arrival of the world of great harmony [under the Tang] the light flowed from it as an auspicious sign.

During the months of drought there was always a response if the prime minister and the regional governor sincerely prayed to the figure. In the sixth month of the sixth year of the Zhenguan period (632 C.E.) there was a great drought. Wu Wa, Duke Yingguo, and the area commander-in-chief sent for the statue to be brought to their quarters, sponsored a vegetarian banquet, and circumambulated the figure for seven days. Higher- and lower-ranking officials stood before the statue and concentrated their minds, and rain poured down. That year's harvest was excellent. The commander-in-chief donated gold to repair the giltwork of the miraculous figure. Carriages, banners, flowers, and other decorations were also provided for the statue. At the present time the figure is in Changsha Temple in Jiangling.

In that temple there is also a foreign-made copper image, over seven feet in height. It is ancient and unusual but it has been neglected. This is the figure that was sent from Chang'an to Dharma Master Dao'an, who was at Mount Shicheng. He ordered a disciple to look for a piece of relic in its topknot. Light emanated from this figure. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106: 415b8–416b26; ref. *Gaoseng zhuan*, T.2059:355c29–356a12.)

Zhou Ji of the Eastern Jin, styled Xuanpei, was from Yangxian in Yixing. He was the second son of the General for the Pacification of the West, [Zhou] Chu. He attained the rank of Governor of Wuxing. For generations his family had worshiped the Buddha, and his daughter was particularly pious. Servants went fishing and suddenly saw the river filled with golden light. Following the light upstream and dropping a net, they obtained a golden figure, over

three feet tall. Austere in appearance, it floated upright on the water. The people pulled and pushed but could not move it. They returned quickly to report the event to Zhou Ji. He spoke to his daughter and then ordered that his daughter be taken on a boat to welcome the image. Seeing the figure from a distance, her heart was filled with joy. She paid respect and then made a gesture of pulling the figure with her hand; in this way she was able to bring the statue onto the boat. She brought it home and made offerings to it. At night she dreamed that the Buddha had an ache in his left knee. When she woke up, she examined the statue's knee and found a hole. She repaired the spot with gold metal from her hairpin.

Later, Zhou Ji arranged for his daughter to marry Zhang Cheng in Wu Commandery. The statue followed her by itself; people said that it followed Lady Zhang. She later died and at that time she was seen on top of the city wall, looking even more beautiful than usual. Many people, both within and outside the city, saw her. Suddenly a purple cloud came down to her and she went upward in the sky beyond the reach of the eye. 386b

The great grandson of Zhang Cheng took part in the military expedition to pacify Sun En's rebellion. Religious matters had long been neglected at home, and no one noticed that the figure had disappeared and only the halo was left behind. When they discovered this, the entire family repented, praying for the statue's return. An old woman came and sold them an image, offering it for a very low price. Realizing that it was the figure that used to be in the family's home, they wished to employ the woman but she had disappeared. The statue eventually got lost and only the halo remains with the Zhang family. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:416b27–c13.)

The wooden image at Lingbao Temple in Shanyin in Kuaiji was made by Dai Kui, a critic of the state who refused to serve in government. Dai Kui thought that the images made in the recent past were almost all clumsy and failed to move the hearts of those who wished to honor them. He had always maintained spiritual purity and was also very clever. To produce a new design, he compared a wide range of examples and thought it through very carefully, and after many years he succeeded in producing this statue. None of the images that were produced in China matched the beauty of this figure. When they looked up and saw it, the monks, nuns, and laypeople suddenly felt as

if they had encountered the living Buddha. Chi Xibin of Gaoping picked up some incense and uttered a spell “If life is permanent, let me see the holy face of the living Buddha; if impermanent, I wish to meet him in Maitreya’s presence.” The incense he had picked up spontaneously began to burn in his hand, and the fragrant smoke rose straight up, as far as the eye can see, reaching the very edge of the clouds. The fragrance remained everywhere in the temple. The monks, nuns, and laypeople at that time were all inspired by this. At the present time the image is at Jiaxiang Temple in Yuezhou. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:416c14–23.)

In the second year of the Taiyuan period (377 C.E.) the monk Zhi Huihu made a golden Śākya[muni] image, six *zhang* tall, at Shaoling Temple in Wu Commandery. He carved out a hole high up on the south side of the temple to serve as the mold for casting the figure. He finished casting and was about to remove the statue from the hole. In the middle of the night the hole had become illuminated and six flowers appeared. They were bright white in color and their petals fluttered everywhere as they fell, but before they reached the ground they gathered together and rose up. At dawn a white cloud, like smoke, came out of the hole. Inside the cloud a white dragon appeared. It was ten *zhang* long, brilliantly colored, and moved slowly around the hole. Every time it came before the figure it looked up at it and moved deliberately, as if paying respect to the image. At that time there was a lull in the wind and the sun was shining, yet a fine rain came down, adding to the fragrance of the air. When the figure was placed on its seat the dragon rose up into the sky.

In the first year of the Yuanjia period (424 C.E.) Dai Yong, a critic of the state who refused to serve in government, disliked the old and clumsy style of the figure, so he altered the hands and face to make it look like the living Buddha. He is said to have shortened the part above the shoulder by six inches and the part below the feet by one inch. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106: 416c24–417a5.).

386c In the first year of Yixi period of the Eastern Jin (406 C.E.), Minister of Education Wang Mi was staying at the Dongye Gate. Someone at the office saw a five-colored light appearing on the ground to the east of the gate. Surprised, he dug and found an old-fashioned copper plate, and under the plate there was a golden figure, four feet tall, and both the halo and base were there. The

statue was also like Sun Hao's Aśoka image. Consequently, the figure was brought inside the palace and worshiped. The founding ruler of the Song dynasty originally was quite unsympathetic to the Buddhist faith, but when he obtained this statue he paid respect to it with great joy, and himself performed rites for it. The figure was originally at Waguan Temple and was said to have been later moved to Longguang Temple. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:417a6–11; ref. *Gaoseng zhuan*, T.2059:410b5–10.)

The story of the image of Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva at Mount Lu is as follows. Once there was a famous minister called Tao Kan, styled Shixing. In Nanhai in Jianyü a fisherman saw light near the seacoast and reported it to Tao Kan. Tao Kan sent someone to look for the light who saw a golden image suddenly come riding on the waves and it arrived at the side of the boat. When the inscription was examined, it said that the image was of Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva and had been produced by King Aśoka. According to an ancient tradition, when King Aśoka governed the Indian subcontinent, he ordered a ghost king to set up a very cruel prison. Mañjuśrī appeared in the [boiling] cauldron and even though the fire was blazing, the boiling water became clear and a blue lotus flower appeared. King Aśoka, moved by this sight, destroyed the hellish prison on that very day. He built eighty-four thousand stupas and produced the same number of images.

The image discovered by the fisherman was one of those produced at that time. Although Tao Kan did not believe in the Buddhist teaching of karmic retribution, he was greatly pleased with the discovery and sent the image to Hanqi Temple in Wuchang.

Later, Tao Kan was transferred to Jingzhou and sent for the image. Dozens of strong men could not move the image, even though earlier it had taken only several people to lift it. More people were added and the image was dragged by a special carriage, but as soon as the image was moved aboard the boat, it capsized and sank. Tao Kan's messenger related these events to him and he permitted the image to be returned to the temple. Two or three people could then move the image.

The monk Huiyuan honored the image and with proper ceremony invited it to Mount Lu; the image was moved there without any difficulty. This was because of the miraculous spirit that had descended on Huiyuan. A popular

saying resulted from this: “Tao Kan is a hero of the sword. The image is marked by spirit. The one soars like a cloud, while the other dwells in mud. How great is the distance between them.”

387a At the end of the Sui period rebels appeared and the monks of the community on Mount Lu were dispersed. An old monk, whose name has now been lost, went to the miraculous image to take his leave, and the image spoke to him, saying that the monk was old and that he should stay. The monk followed the order and stayed. When the rebel soldiers led by Dong Daochong attacked Jiangzhou, some of the soldiers entered the temple to look for valuable objects. They caught the old monk and demanded objects made of gold. The monk refused to give anything to them, so they were about to punish him by roasting him alive. The monk said, “I have lived seventy years and never disobeyed the Buddha’s teaching. Wait until I enter the meditative state and stretch my neck, and then you can let fall your sword.” The soldier agreed, and when he saw the old monk stretch out his neck to receive the sword, he lowered the sword but instead of cutting the monk’s neck, the sword pierced the soldier’s heart and its point penetrated through his back. The other soldiers fled in fright and went to Huiyuan’s grave. At that time the sky was clear and the sun was bright, but suddenly clouds covered the sky and it darkened; thunder roared, lightning struck all around, and six soldiers were killed. Many people in the Jiangzhou area had hidden their valuable household objects on the mountain but because of this incident the rebel soldiers did not dare to go into the mountains any more, though they plundered mercilessly in the suburbs of Jiangzhou.

At the present time the image is housed in a multistoried pavilion in Donglin Temple. During the Wude period (618–626 C.E.) a strong wind caused the building to lean toward the north. The usual methods for restoring the balance of the building were of no avail. The monks at the temple then requested the mountain deity to blow a strong wind that would correct the building’s balance. Shortly afterward, a strong wind blew from the north and restored the original and correct form of the pavilion. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:417b4–c5; ref. *Gaoseng zhuan*, T.2059:358c3–15.)

[Northern] Wei Dynasty

The story of the image that appeared on a mountain that opened in Liangzhou is as follows. In the first year of the Taiyen period, under Emperor

Taiwu of the Northern Wei dynasty (435 C.E.), a monk of Lishi, Master Liu Sahe, whose biography is found in the biographical collection, traveled in the region south of the Jiang River and paid respect to the stupa in the Mao district. When he reached the capital city, Jinling, he discovered the relics distributed by King Aśoka. (Ref. *Gaoseng zhuan*, T.2059:409b11–410a7.)

Having completed his work, Liu Sahe traveled westward to a place one hundred and seventy miles west of Liangzhou, east of the border of Fanhe Commandery. He looked toward the valley and mountain, and bowed toward it from a distance. People did not understand the meaning of this act. Liu Sahe said, “An image of the Buddha will appear at this cliff. If the image is complete, there will be peace in the world; if some part is missing, people will suffer from disorder in the world.”

Eighty-seven years later, in the first year of the Chengguang period (520 C.E.), strong winds, rainstorms, and thunder shook the mountain and a stone image appeared, one *zhang* and eight *chi* tall. Its appearance was appropriately awe-inspiring but the head was missing. People selected an appropriate piece of rock and had a stonemason carve a separate head which they placed on top of the body of the stone figure, but the head would always fall off. Buddhism declined steadily under the Northern Wei, as predicted by Liu Sahe.

In the first year of Northern Zhou rule (557 C.E.), in a creek seven *li* east of the city of Liangzhou, a piece of rock emitted light and illumined both the dark and light areas around it. Those who saw this found it extraordinary. The rock was the head of Liu Sahe’s figure. When they placed it on the stone statue, the head and the body matched perfectly. The figure stood without a head for over forty years, and its head and the body were found over two hundred *li* apart. When the part of its form that had been missing was restored, flowing light appeared and the sound of bells was heard, but nobody knew where they came from. In the first year of the Baoding period (561 C.E.) a temple called Ruixiang (“Temple of Auspicious Image”) was established at this site.

During the Jiande period, as the persecution of Buddhism was about to begin, the head of the stone figure fell off again. Emperor Wu sent the Prince of Qi to confirm the sign. He placed the head back on the neck of the figure and stationed soldiers to guard it. When morning came the head had fallen off again. The sign predicting the persecution of the Dharma and the fall of the dynasty was thus received in this way. Details are found in Shi Dao’an’s

(Yao Dao'an, ca. 580 C.E.?) inscription. Even though the Northern Zhou persecuted the followers of the Buddhist teaching, no harm came to this figure.

During the Kaihuang period (581–600 C.E.) the teaching was promoted again, and the temple was reestablished as it was before the persecution. In the fifth year of the Daye period (609–610 C.E.) Emperor Yang led a military expedition to the west, and he came to worship the figure and changed the name of the temple to Gantong Daochang.

The stone figure still exists at the present time. Many people have attempted to draw it but its size changes constantly and its image cannot be captured in a copy. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:417c6–26; ref. *Xu Gaoseng zhuan*, T.2060:644c24–645a25.)

#### Northern Liang Dynasty

387b The story of the auspicious plaster image on a rock cliff in Liangzhou is as follows. At one time in the past, in the first year of the Long'an period (397 C.E.) during the reign of Emperor An of the Jin dynasty, Juqu Mengsun (r. 401–433 C.E.) occupied the region around Liangzhou for more than thirty years. Among the five kingdoms called Liang in the Longxi region, his was the most powerful, and the ruler devoted himself to merit-making construction projects. City buildings, temples and stupas do not last forever. Ancient palaces burn down in the end. This is bound to be the [eventual] outcome of building temples and palaces. Furthermore, treasures of gold and jewels are stolen in the end. Thinking thus, the king looked around him at the mountains that reached to the sky. One hundred *li* south of the city was a long line of cliffs, running in an east-west direction to points unknown. So Juqu Mengsun excavated caves and placed images, some of rock and some of plaster, of numerous different figures.

Worshippers were astounded by these images. There were holy monks made of clay that looked human. They constantly practiced walking meditation, never stopping to rest. If you saw them from a distance, they looked as if they were walking, but when observed up close they were stationary, yet their faces looked as if they were walking. There were also stretches of ground where people looked for footsteps. When observers were at a distance from them, the images walked on the grounds; footsteps were clearly visible, coming and going ceaselessly. These phenomena have now lasted for over

a hundred years. This is what the local people reported. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:417c27–418a9.)

[Juqu] Mengsun, Prince of Hexi, built a stone figure, six *zhang* tall, at a mountain temple and worshiped it. In the sixth year of the Yuanxi period of the Song (429 C.E.) he sent his heir, Xingguo, to attack Fuhun, but they suffered a massive defeat. When Xingguo was killed Mengsun directed his anger at Buddhism, accusing it of having no spiritual efficacy. He ordered the destruction of temples and expelled monks. Mengsun later went to Mount Yangshu, and many monks stood at the roadside [to greet him]. Seeing the monks from a distance, Mengsun became enraged and immediately slaughtered several of them.

At that time a soldier happened to enter the temple to worship the stone figure and saw it weeping, shedding copious tears. Taken aback, the soldier reported this. Hearing this, Mengsun hurried over to see, and when he reached the temple gate his body trembled in fear as if he was a criminal. He called his attendants to support him on both sides and proceeded. When he saw the figure weeping tears, like a spring, he bowed his head to the ground and asked for pardon, admitting his great crimes. He immediately held a great banquet, even more elaborate than those he had held before, and invited the monks to resume their practice.

If we observe Mengsun's faith, we see that it did not reach very deep. He engaged in warfare and murder in order to annex territory. The Buddha prohibited such activities. Mengsun had to transform his nature, but if left to his own devices he would not have stopped committing crimes. He initially honored the Buddhist teaching and when Dharmakṣema translated the *Great Nirvana Sutra*, he vowed to follow him in life and death, but then he became angry over a minor matter and sent an assassin to murder Dharmakṣema. Now he blamed the Buddha and the sangha for the failure of his military expedition, destroying temples and persecuting monks. Once excessive misconduct is committed, even if one later abandons it and returns to moderate behavior, he or she cannot entirely compensate for the sins of their former misconduct.

At Mount Sangui, thirty *li* southeast of present-day Shazhou (Note: This is the place to which the Four Evil Ones were exiled.), there is a cliff, two *li* high, which contains two hundred and eighty buddha images. The interior of the caves often light up. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:418a10–26.)



**Chapter Six**  
**(continued)**  
**Paying Respect to the Buddha**  
**(continued)**

[Continuation of the miracle stories begun in the previous chapter, Fascicle 13.]

Song dynasty (420–479 C.E.): The story of the golden image of Mañjuśrī in the capital city; the story of the bronze image that was dug out of the ground in Dongyang; the story of the golden image that appeared in the riverbed; the story of the golden image that appeared at the Shangming marsh in Jiangling; the story of the mural painting in Jingzhou that was painted over but reappeared; the story of the golden image in Zhijiang in Jiangling, before which a daughter had made a vow; the story of the halo made of paulownia wood that was produced under miraculous circumstances. Qi dynasty (479–502 C.E.): The story of the stone image at Fanyu that could easily be lifted when a fire occurred; the story of the golden image in Pengcheng that sweated as an omen; the story of the golden image of Avalokiteśvara in Yangdu. Liang dynasty (502–557 C.E.): The story of King Udayana’s sandalwood image in Jingzhou; the story of the golden image in Guangzhai Temple in Yangdu; the story of the Founding Emperor’s life-size gold and silver image of the Buddha. Yuan (Northern) Wei dynasty (386–550 C.E.): The story from the *Gaowang jing* of the Avalokiteśvara image in Dingzhou. Chen dynasty (557–589 C.E.): The story of Chongyundian Hall and its image flying into the ocean. [Northern] Zhou dynasty (557–581 C.E.): The story of the stone image in Lingshi Temple in Jinzhou; the story of the Beishan iron-ore stone image in Xuanzhou; the story of the walking image at Huayan Temple on Xianshan in Xiangzhou. Sui dynasty (581–618 C.E.): The story of the image that moved when Xinghuang Temple in Jiangzhou burned; the story of the shadows in the auspicious piece of transparent rock at Riyan Temple in the capital city; the story of the four-faced image in Shahe Temple in Xingzhou; the story of the image made of

388a layered linen at Ningguan Temple in Yongzhou. Tang dynasty (618–907 C.E.): The story of the discovery of the rock image at Fangzhou; the story of the Buddha’s footprint that was miraculously illuminated in Jianzhou; the story of the rock discovered in a mountain in Liangzhou that had an inscription containing the characters for the word “Buddha”; the story of the piece of rock that was discovered near the Buddha’s footprints at Xiangsi in Yuzhou; the story of the Buddha’s footprints at Lingkan Temple in Xunzhou; the story of the bronze image that saved the life of Li Da’an in Yongzhou; the story of the fire in the Yuyang district that spared buddha images; the story of the miraculous light emitted by the great image at Dongzi Temple in Pingzhou; the story of the theft of the golden image at Qingchan Temple in the Western Capital; the story of the walking image that appeared in Fuzhou and Tanzhou; the story of the golden image that appeared among the rocks in Lantian in Yongzhou; the story of the golden image that was discovered at the Li River in the E district in Yongzhou; the story of the stone image on a mountain in Qinzhou that emitted light and illuminated the valley; the story of the painted image of Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva at Fazhu Temple in Yizhou; the story of the painted miraculous image in Jingzhou that emitted light; the story of the image that appeared miraculously and the sound that was heard.

#### Song Dynasty

In the second year of the Yuanxi period (425 C.E.), Liu Shizhi produced a golden image of Mañjuśrī and worshiped it every day and evening. Shortly thereafter the image disappeared. Discouraged, he prayed for its return diligently, from early morning to late at night. Five years later, at dawn he saw a light at the buddha image’s seat that reached to the ceiling beams. Shizhi then burned incense, opened the curtain around the seat, and saw the lost image gravely sitting there. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:418a27–b1.)

In the twelfth year of the Yuanxi period (435 C.E.), Liu Yuanzhi, a man from Changshan in Dongyang, whose family farmed potatoes, was burning the ground to prepare it for planting. He noticed that every time he set the fire the grass in one corner did not burn. After a while he became curious and stopped the work to clear the field for planting. Later he carefully dug around and obtained a bronze sitting image, over three *cun* tall. He looked up the history of the area; it had not been a part of any city in the old days. He thus

had no idea where the image had come from. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:418b2–6.)

In the fourteenth year of the Yuanxi period (437 C.E.), Sun Yanzeng’s family had followed the Buddhist teaching for generations. His wife, Wang Huicheng, had been an ardent believer since she was young. Her faith strengthened as she grew up and she recited the *Lotus Sutra*. Once she saw a light of mixed colors at the beach and ordered the ground to be dug up there. Two feet deep in the ground she found a golden image, which was two *chi* and one *cun* tall including its halo and base. The inscription on the base read, “Produced by Faxin and Sengxing, both monks at an official monastery, in the sixteenth year of Jianwu, cyclical designation *gengzi* (39 C.E.)” (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:418b14–19.)

In the fifteenth year of the Yuanxi period (438 C.E.), when Luo Shun was the Arbiter General of the West, he camped at Shangming. In the twelfth month he released a hunting eagle in the field, and his attendants saw the eagle catch a pheasant and both came down. Then a fire started and burned everything in the field, but the fire left untouched a spot three *zhang* long. When they examined the unburned spot they found a golden image of a sitting bodhisattva, one *chi* tall including the base, of exceptionally high-quality craftsmanship. At that time the Director of Dingxiang said that it was something a thief must have hidden, and he looked for a temple from which an image had been stolen, but no temple had lost an image. Eventually, he brought the image in and provided care for it. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:418b20–25.)

When Prince Kang of Linquan, of the Inner Guard, was stationed in the city of Jingzhou, he constructed a hall with three chambers to house images for worship. Graphic representations of bodhisattvas were painted on many of the walls in the hall. When Prince Wen of Hengyang replaced him in that office, he turned the hall into sleeping quarters and the paintings were plastered over. When the plaster dried, however, the paintings appeared through the plaster in clear and bright colors. The plaster was reapplied but the result was the same. The prince, who was not a follower of Buddhism, said that it was merely an accident and ordered the plaster to be reapplied thickly once

more, yet the paintings came through clearly again. The prince then ordered the old wall to be destroyed and reconstructed thoroughly. Shortly afterward Prince Wen fell ill, and as soon as he closed his eyes he saw the images standing crowded together everywhere. For this reason he gave up the idea of turning the buddha hall into his sleeping chamber, and generously sponsored vegetarian feasts and lectures. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:418b26–c3.)

388b During the Yuanxi period (424–453 C.E.) the younger sister of Zhang Sengding, who lived on a tributary of the Changjiang River in Jiangling, honored the Buddha’s teaching even as a young child and she wished to renounce the householder’s life. She constantly made offerings to a small golden image, considering it the support on which she would rely in her future monastic life. The parents pressed her to marry but she remained firm in her resolve. Nevertheless, her parents secretly arranged for her to marry someone with the surname Bing. The daughter was at first unaware of this arrangement but when the gifts of a lamb and a goose, part of the ceremonial invitation for a new wife, arrived, she screamed in despair and refused to go. As she burned incense and prostrated herself on the ground, saying that she would rather take her own life, the image emitted golden light which increased in brightness to fill the entire village. Her father and elder brother were taken aback by this miracle, and gave up their plan to marry her off. Both the Zhang and Bing families became great supporters of Buddhism. Because of this event, Sengding became a monk. The Prince of Nanchun, Counselor-in-Chief under the Song, who was based at Shan, turned his residence into a temple for him. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:418c4–11.)

During the Taishi period (465–471 C.E.) He Jingshu of Tonghai, who had honored the Buddha’s teaching from his youth, followed Liu Yun, Regional Inspector of Xiangzhou, to his assigned post to serve as a district supervisor. He accidentally came into possession of some sandalwood and had it carved into an image. The image was nearly completed but it lacked a halo. He looked hard for suitable material [to finish the image] but could not find it. As he sat leaning against a desk, seemingly haven fallen asleep, he saw a monk, dressed in a monk’s robe of rags and holding a zinc staff, who said, “Sandalwood is unobtainable and coarse wood is not suitable for this purpose. There is a shield made of paulownia wood in the He family residence behind

the district office. This can be used to make the halo. Though they will be unwilling to part with it, if you are persistent you can obtain it.” When He Jingshu woke up he asked his attendants and learned that what the monk had said was true. So he offered to buy the paulownia-wood shield. The head of the He family said, “We do have this shield, which we love dearly. Out of fear of it being stolen, we have never shown it to anyone. How did you learn about it and immediately come to buy it?” Jingshu told him the story. The head of the He family was delighted and offered the shield to be turned into the halo [for the buddha image]. Later, when Jingshu worked in the regional office of Xiangzhou, the image appeared in the middle of the night in a dream and said, “A mouse bit my foot.” At dawn he returned home quickly and found that this had happened to the image. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:418c12–21).

#### Qi Dynasty

During the Jianyuan period (479–482 C.E.) the Piyeli (Vaiśālī) Temple in Fanyu had an old stone image from the state of Funan (Cambodia). Its origin was unknown and its appearance was quite unusual. Seventy or eighty people were needed to move it. This temple had a thatched roof. A fire broke out and came near the temple, which happened to be downwind [of the fire]. The smoke and flames almost reached the temple. Over a dozen nuns at the temple looked at each other, not knowing what to do. Among them were some who could not bear standing by helplessly, and three or four of them attempted to lift the image. The image rose easily, seeming to weigh less than the stone weight of the scale. After the image had been moved elsewhere, the temple building burned down. The image often emitted light. When the area was about to be invaded by soldiers, the image would suddenly emit tears and sweat would flow all over its body. People in the Lingnan area took these signs as reliable oracles. Later Regional Inspector Liu Quan sent the image accompanied by a memorial to the capital city. The image likely is now in a temple in Jiangzhou, or the former southern capital Jiankang. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:418c22–29.)

#### Song Dynasty

Wang Zhongde, Regional Inspector of Xuzhou, built a golden image, eight *zhang* tall, at Songwang Temple in Pengcheng. Its features were beautiful.

This was one of the most marvelously crafted images in the region upstream of the Jiang River. At times when barbarous soldiers appeared along the northern border, or when catastrophes afflicted the monastic community, the image would sweat. The amount of sweat corresponded to the gravity of the difficulty. People in the commandery relied on these signs of the image as oracles.

388c In the beginning of the Jianyuan period of the [Southern] Qi (470–482 C.E.) the image again sweated. In the winter of that year [Northern] Wei soldiers appeared above the Huai River. At that time private armies were organized in several commanderies around Yanzhou, and a very large number of soldiers gathered. Monks were also forced to participate in the war against the Wei army. The Wei army destroyed their defenses and was about to wipe out the opposing army. In its report to the Wei court, the Wei army criticized the monks for their role in assisting in the rebellion and the monks were soon to be executed.

At that time the image sweated greatly and the floor of the image hall became damp. The Prince of Liang, who was serving as the regional inspector of Xuzhou under the Wei, was a pious Buddhist. He came to the temple himself and ordered his attendant to wipe the image with a cloth. The sweat poured forth ceaselessly even as the image was being wiped. Even when several dozens of people joined in drying off the image the sweat still kept pouring forth. The prince then burned incense and, taking up a piece of cloth, said, “The monks are not guilty and I swear to protect them, so that they will not be harmed. If there really is a miraculous response to this oath, the sweat will cease when I wipe the image.” Having spoken, the prince wiped the image, and indeed as he touched the image with the cloth it became dry. The prince presented a detailed report of this to the court and the monks were all pardoned by imperial edict. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:419a1–14.)

#### Qi Dynasty

At the beginning of the Jingyuan period (479–482 C.E.), Wang Yan of Taiyuan, still a young boy, received the five precepts from Dharma Master Xian at Jiaoji, and was given a golden image of Avalokiteśvara to take care of. He took the image with him when he returned to the capital city Yangdu and stayed at Nanjian Temple. Yan took a nap and saw the image standing at the corner of its seat. Alarmed, he ran quickly to it and brought it to his

room. In the evening of that day over ten images were stolen from Nanjian Temple, destined to be melted down and turned into coins.

In the fall of the seventh year of the Daming period (463 C.E.) the image emitted light that reached beyond three feet. It shined brilliantly in golden color, and everyone saw this.

Later the image was kept at Duobao Temple. [Wang] Yan went to the Jing and Chu areas and spent nearly ten years there. He did not know of the image's location [in that time]. When he returned to Yangdu he dreamed he saw the image clearly among the small images in the eastern part of the buddha hall. Early the next morning he went to the temple and found the image in the place where he had seen it in his dream. This took place on the thirteenth day of the seventh month of the first year of the Jianyuan period.

For this reason, in the Author's Preface to the *Mingxiang ji* (*Record of Miraculous Signs*), [Wang] Yan says:

I myself take care of this image all the time forever as a guide. As I tell this story again, I am deeply moved. Because of this miracle, I compiled this record. In mirroring reality and making it accessible to ordinary emotions, nothing surpasses the image. The source of image miracles can for the most part be attributed to this fact. The scripture says, "Molten, or carved, or drawn, painted on silk, the images that reproduce the form [of the Buddha] all can move and emit light." In the Western Region images of Śākyamuni and Maitreya emit light miraculously. Is it because they reproduce the Buddha's form? In China light gathers as a clear sign of cosmic responses. Furthermore, in recent years people, affected by cosmic responses, have seen marvelous effects in [images made of] wood and stone. These effects cannot necessarily be attributed to the [outward] appearances of the images. Thus, when the heavy stone [images] floated on [the surface of the] deep [ocean], this marked the beginning of the Buddhist teaching in the Min and Wu areas. [The image] made of molten gold dust predicted calamities at Song[wang] Temple in Peng[cheng]. There are numerous other examples. Although it is difficult to discuss this in detail, the main message [of these images] may be reduced to this. The meaning of stupa miracles is also similar. The subjects differ but the message is consistent. Therefore I appended them at the end [of this record]. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:419a15–b6.) (389a)

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### Liang Dynasty

On the eighth day of the first month of the first year of the Tianjian period (502 C.E.), Emperor Wu, founder of the Liang dynasty, had a dream in which a sandalwood image entered his kingdom. As a consequence an announcement was made calling for volunteers to go on an expedition to seek for the image.

According to the *Fo you tianzhu ji* (*Records of Buddha's Travels in India*) and the two-fascicle version of the *Youtianwang jing* (*King Udayana Scripture*), the Buddha ascended to the Heaven of the Thirty-three Gods and preached to his mother. King Udayana sent thirty-two carpenters and some sandalwood and requested Mahāmaudgalyāyana to use his supernatural power to produce an image of the Buddha. Mahāmaudgalyāyana accomplished the mission and returned with a sitting image, five *chi* in height, which was placed in Jetavana Temple and is still worshiped now.

Emperor Wu wanted to bring this image to his kingdom. General He Qian, Xie Wenhua, and others, altogether eighty people, responded to the announcement calling for volunteers. When they arrived and presented the request, the king of Śrāvastī said, “This is a heavenly image. It cannot be sent to a distant region.” He then ordered the thirty-two carpenters to carve another image. The carvers and the image became one, and the work that began at six o'clock in the morning was completed by noon. All [thirty-two] primary and [eighty] secondary marks of the Buddha were there and the crown of the image emitted light. A fine rain came down and an extraordinary fragrance pervaded the air. The *Fo you tianzhu ji* says, “When the Buddha disappeared, two images appeared one after another and widely and greatly benefited sentient beings.”

He Qian and others brought the second image across tens of thousands of miles, overcoming many difficulties that are difficult to report in detail. Again they crossed the great ocean, going through wind and waves. Sometimes the waves were like mountains, and their food supply was exhausted. Many of the people who had come to look for the image, as well as those who were sent to accompany them, died. Once they encountered ferocious beasts and they concentrated their minds on the Buddha. They then heard the sound of armor behind the image. They also heard the sound of a bell. There was a monk on the side of a rock, sitting straight under a tree. Qian climbed up, carrying the image, and placed it before the monk. The monk rose and paid

respect to the image. Qian and the others paid respect to the monk. The monk handed them a container of water, and let them drink from it. All were satisfied. The monk said, “This image is called the Correctly Enlightened One. King Kumbhīra will accompany it from here to the destination, performing this service for this Buddha. That night everyone dreamed of a god, and in the morning they all drew his picture together.

On the fifth day of the fourth month of the tenth year of the Tianjian period (505 C.E.), He Qian’s group arrived at Yangdu. The emperor, accompanied by a large number of officials, traveled forty miles outside of the city and welcomed the image to Daijidian Hall in the palace. A vegetarian feast was held, new monks were ordained, and a large number of criminals were pardoned. Weapons were transformed into lotus flower decorations around stupas. The emperor ate only vegetarian meals.

Emperor Wu passed away in the third year of the Taiqing period (549 C.E.). The Prince of Xiangdong reestablished the dynasty in Jiangling, changing the era name to Chengsheng. The new emperor sent for the image in Yangdu, and placed and worshiped it in Chengguangdian Hall in the new capital city of his dynasty, Jingdu. In the eighth year of the Later Liang dynasty, Daming Temple was built in the Jingling cemetery north of the city. The image was then sent there, where it still exists. Many copies of this image are circulated in the capital city. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:419b7–c5.)

At the beginning of the Tianjian period (502–520 C.E.), when Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty donated his residence to be turned into Guangzhai Temple, he produced a golden image, eight *zhang* in height. The drawing for the image was completed with correct measurements, but when the casting was about to begin people feared that there would not be enough copper. They thought to present a request to the court when suddenly a messenger accompanied by fifteen carriages filled with copper arrived, saying that the emperor was presenting them to the temple. Immediately they melted the metal and the image was produced in one casting. It was the most marvelous in the entire kingdom, but it seemed to grow larger. When the people measured it it was taller by two *zhang* and two *chi*. This was reported to the court. The casting had been done and the mold had not been changed. All the copper that was sent had been used. They measured the figure’s height again and it

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had increased by four *chi*. The [imperial] edict read, “We did not sent any more copper. How could this happen? The image must have miraculously shown its mysterious quality. Produce a base, decorated with flowers, and record this miracle.” Thereupon, the story of this miracle was composed and carved below the feet of the image. The inscription still exists today.

Emperor Wu, the founding ruler of the Liang dynasty, also produced for his father the large image at Daaijing Temple on Mount Zhong. Supernatural signs appeared. Further details of the image are found elsewhere.

Many image miracles occurred under the reign of the Liang dynasty. The large rock image in Shan district originated during the Song dynasty. It was produced by a prince. Earlier Meditation Master Tanguang had come from the north, where he dwelled in seclusion, following the mountains and rivers. He saw the beauty of the mountains and built a small grass hut on a peak. He heard heavenly music and a voice in the sky, saying, “This place belongs to the Buddha. Why have you planted a kitchen garden here?” Tanguang then moved southward to Mount Tiantai. Later he began to carve a buddha image. He worked for many years but could not complete it. At one time Prince Jian’an of the Liang became ill, and he dreamed he was told that his illness would be cured if he completed carving the rock image in Shan district. Then Vinaya Master Sengyou was asked to carry out this work. He came to the mountain but was displeased with the earlier design of the image, considering it to be crude. While he was still thinking about this, at night the mountain suddenly collapsed, burying over two hundred people. An image appeared inside the mountain. The image was still buried inside the rock up to its chin, but when a chisel was applied the pieces of rock over the image came off easily and eventually the body of the figure was uncovered. When all the pieces were removed, all the image’s features were shown to be there. Thus the image must have existed all the time and had reappeared when the chisel was briefly applied. Liu Xie, Secretary to the Heir Apparent of the Liang, composed the inscription in front of the image. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:419c6–420a3.)

After he ascended the throne, Founding Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty honored Buddhism and neglected Daoism, frequently inviting eminent Buddhist monks to lecture on the profound teaching. He also produced two images in gold and silver and placed them in Chongyundian Hall, worshiping

them from morning to evening for over fifty years. From winter to summer, he kept up this practice at all times of the day. The pattern of his ten toes appeared on the places where his feet touched the stone. Even after he lost his throne, usurped by Hou Jing, he continued to make offerings to the images.

Defender-in-Chief Wang Sengbian removed Hou Jing and repaired the capital city. At that time Emperor Yuan was conquered in Jiangling, and the region south of the Jiang River was left without the ruler. Wang Sengbian then contacted the kingdom of Q'i and brought the Marquis of Zhenyang, Xiao Yuanming, and made him emperor. At that time the region around the lower part of the Jiang River was unsettled, and conflicting powers sought advantages over each other. Wang Sengbian had a son-in-law, Du Kan, who guarded the palace gate. 389c

Du Kan was cruel in nature and was not concerned about future rebirths. He wanted to destroy the two images and turn them into sheet metal. He first sent several dozens of people to climb the Sanxiu Pavilion and chisel at the base of the images' necks. When they started pounding the chisel the two images simultaneously turned their heads to look at the workers. The workers' arms fell to their sides and they could not raise them. They were dumbfounded, and it was as if they were drunk. Du Kan was also in the same condition. After a long while they woke up. They were then beaten up and their bodies were covered with bruises. They saw frightening guardian deities come rushing toward them to strike them. Screaming from pain, they got up but their bodies had rotted. Pus and blood flowed out through their skin and with their bones exposed, they died. This was a recent occurrence, known to monks and nuns as well as to laypeople. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106: 420a4–18).

Yuan (Northern) Wei dynasty

In the Tianping period (534–537 C.E.), Sun Jingde, a volunteer soldier in Dingzhou, produced a golden image of Avalokiteśvara while he was stationed at the garrison in Beichui. When his term of service ended he returned home but continued to worship the image. Later, he was [wrongly] accused of extortion and imprisoned in the capital city. He could not stand the torture and questioning and confessed to the false charge. He was immediately sentenced to death. The night before the execution he paid respect to the image, shedding tears that poured down like rain. He said, "It must be because I

have wronged others in previous lives that I am now unjustly punished. I vow to make amends for past sins and promise not to repeat them.” He is also said to have made the great vow [to follow the Buddhist path] and spoke many more words.

A short while after he finished speaking, he saw vaguely, as if in a dream, a monk who taught him to recite Avalokiteśvara’s *Salvation Scripture*. If he recited the name of the buddha that appears in this scripture one thousand times he would be saved from suffering. Jinde suddenly woke up. Sitting up, he recited without error the scripture, and recited the buddha’s name one hundred times before dawn broke. When the officials bound him up and took him to the marketplace, he kept on reciting, and by the time the execution was to take place he had completed reciting the name one thousand times. Just as the sword was lowered it broke into three pieces and did not harm his body. They got another sword and tried to behead him again. The sword had to be replaced three times but all of them broke just like the first. Officials witnessing the execution marveled at this, and reported the events to the court. Prime Minister Gao Huan presented the matter to the emperor, who stayed the execution and ordered the scripture to be copied for transmission. The scripture is now known as the *Avalokiteśvara Scripture of King Gao* (*Gaowang jing*). After his release [Sun] Jinde hosted a vegetarian feast. He brought out the image he had made at the garrison and saw that there were three sword marks on it. His relatives and others from his village all saw this too and marveled at the miracle. (Note: This appears in the *Gazetteer of Qi* and other records, such as the *Presentation of Extraordinary Occurrences*.) (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:420a19–b5.)

#### Chen Dynasty

When Emperor Wu (557–559 C.E.) died, his elder brother’s son Chen Qian succeeded him. Chen Qian wished to conduct the funeral and had to make the vehicle on which the deceased emperor would be transported. The reign had changed recently and it was not yet firmly established. Earlier Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty had built Chongyundian Hall and the scriptures and images in this hall were decorated with rare treasures, unparalleled in other states in their beauty. Although the mandate had shifted to the Chen dynasty, the images were still in the hall. Qian wanted to use the curtains and other jewels presented to these two images for the funeral of the deceased emperor.

Workers were found for the task and when they arrived at the hall from all four directions, they saw clouds gather and circle around the buddha hall, even though there were no clouds elsewhere. People found this very strange and came running to see it. Shortly after a heavy rain fell, with thunder and lightning strikes. Smoke rose from the decorative tiles of the roof and lightning illuminated the cloud. The light floated up and down like a flame. Suddenly people saw a vision of Chongyundian Hall and the two images rose up high, along with the guardian deities and the treasure seat, and flew up into the sky amid the smoke and fire. The large gathering of people who saw this became believers. After the storm, people went back to the site of the images and discovered that only their stone foundations remained. Several months later people came from Dongzhou and reported that on that day the figures were seen flying in the sky over the ocean. Sometimes people still see the images when they look across the ocean.

It is also said that the pagoda of Yongning Temple in the Northern Wei capital rose one thousand *chi* above the ground and was shaken by gods. Roughly the same thing also happened to its image. Some people are said to have seen them in the Eastern Sea. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106: 420b6–20.)

#### Northern Qi Dynasty

Toward the end of the Northern Qi dynasty, the monk Senghu of Lingshi Temple in Jinzhou was singleminded in following the Way, but rather than cultivating the path of wisdom he made a vow to build a stone image eight *zhang* in height. The other monks all wondered how such a massive project could be carried out. Later, in a valley to the north of his temple Senghu found a large rock, eight *zhang* long. He hired a stone carver who began the work of carving the image. The carver worked around the rock and finished roughly carving the front of the torso of the figure, but the back was still uncarved, and was sitting on the ground. The carver used six implements to try to lift the rock but he could not move it. Overnight the rock turned itself over. Seeing this in the morning, Senghu was delighted. When the carving was finished he moved the image to the buddha hall.

At the time that Jingzhou was about to fall (in the year 576 C.E.), the image sweated and the water flowed to the ground. The [Northern] Zhou soldiers

entered [Northern Qi] and burned down many Buddhist temples, and this figure was also burned but its color did not change. Only two fingers of the figure were damaged. Soldiers later wanted to tear it down but even though more than sixty people and oxen pulled it would not move. Suddenly a strange monk appeared and built an uneven structure out of bricks and wood around the image. The monk completed the work quickly and then disappeared. The image later appeared in the dream of a pious layman and said, “I have pain in two fingers.” They realized what the figure meant and repaired the its damaged fingers.

When the Sui dynasty (581–618 C.E.) came to power, state support of Buddhism resumed. In the tenth year of the Kaihuang (590 C.E.) a thief stole the flag and parasol that decorated the image. The thief then dreamed that an eight *zhang*-tall man came into his room and accused him. Frightened, the thief apologized for his crime. The figure still exists. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:420b21–c4.).

#### Northern Zhou Dynasty

In the third year of the Jiande period (574–575 C.E.) Emperor Wu (r. 561–565 C.E.) began the persecution of Buddhism and darkness descended on the realm under heaven. A man called Jiangming in Xuanzhou, who was out patrolling at night, saw light at the top of the mountain he was walking on, located over one hundred *li* north of [Xuan]zhou. Puzzled, he went to the source of the light and found a piece of rock [roughly] shaped like a figure on the ground. He dug out the rock, which turned out to be iron ore. It had resisted carving and therefore looked like a piece of ore, three *zhang* tall, and it could not be polished either. Jiangming dug further down and found an image base made of stone. The holes in the base fitted the figure. He then gathered villagers to help raise the image, which quickly floated up into the  
390b air and then came to rest on top of the base. People considered this to be a miracle and reported the discovery to the court. At that time the movement of heaven had reached the point where the calendar needed to be changed. So the name of the year was changed to the first year of the Daxiang (“Great Image”) period. The image was placed in Daxiang Temple.

When the Sui dynasty renewed imperial support of Buddhism Jiangming renovated the temple and changed its name to Xianchusi. People went back

to the place where the figure had originally been discovered and saw that neither large rocks nor metal ore existed in that remote location. It must have been the miraculous power of King Aśoka that had brought the image there.

Consequently, the name of the temple was kept by the great Tang dynasty (618–907 C.E.). Toward the end of the Zhenguan period (627–649 C.E.) a Daoist shrine called Yuhua was established west of the temple. The image was in its original location, in a garden thirty *li* east of the temple. Emperor Taizong (r. 626–649 C.E.) once went to worship the image but, displeased by its lack of ornamentation, he made donations to have it adorned. During the Yonghui (650–656 C.E.) period the Daoist shrine was turned into a Buddhist temple but its name was kept as Yuhua.

At the present time the temple belongs to Fangzhou. At dusk in the evening miraculous light appears frequently. The monks and laypeople see this light all the time and are not surprised by it. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:420c5–21.)

The origin of the old wooden walking figure at Huayan Temple in Mount Xian in Xiangzhou is unknown. Its head is particularly beautiful, and people never tire of gazing at it in admiration and worship. The image was over five *zhang* tall. I will not repeat here the ancient stories of its miracles. During the persecution of Buddhism under the Northern Zhou someone removed and hid the head of the figure, and it was brought out again when the pro-Buddhist Sui dynasty came into power. The head was adorned [as a part of] a [new] sitting figure. [The new statue] was named Vairocana Buddha was constructed for it. Prayers were offered every year and where the figure stood became a place where people took refuge in Buddhism.

Just before Emperor Wen of the Sui died, the image's nose started emitting mucus that ran down its chest; gold leaf began to peel off and the flowing mucus emitted light. When people went to wipe away the mucus they could not find any, yet seen from a distance the mucus still appeared to be there. In the fourth month of the twenty-third year of the Zhenguan period (649 C.E.), the figure's nose again started emitting mucus that ran down over its chest. The figure was about one *chi* wide and its shape was neither square nor circular. Emperor Taizong later died, and then the people knew that the phenomenon had been an omen. In the sixth month the same thing occurred and everyone in the region was frightened, not knowing what calamity was

to follow. In the seventh month the Hanshui River flooded and the floodwaters came inside the city wall, over one *zhang* deep; many people drowned. The image is still in the original temple at the present time, and many offer prayers to it. (Note: People in Xiangyang who have few children go to the image to pray, thinking of a boy or a girl as they do so, and there is a miraculous response.) (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:420c22–421a5.)

### Sui Dynasty

390c During the Kaihuang period (581–600 C.E.) the buddha hall of Xinghuang Temple in Jiangzhou burned down. In the hall were a large bronze figure [of the Buddha], six *zhang* tall and facing south, and two bodhisattva images, both six *zhang* tall, produced after Dai Yong's model. The fire was so powerful that people watched helplessly, crying out in grief, "The figure is melting away!" Suddenly the image rose up and took one step to the south, just as the building collapsed. The figure was undamaged. Tiles and charred pieces of wood surrounded it on all sides at a distance of five or six *chi*. Even though it had been touched by fire; the image's golden color was unaffected. There was an inscription at the bottom of its base. The congregation marveled at this miracle and the sound of their vocal admiration of this filled the roads. The figure has now been moved to Baima Temple. Birds never alighted on it. In the second year of the Yonghui period under the Tang (651–652 C.E.) a thief attempted to steal the copper from the figure. He sawed through the grille in the window and tried to pass through it but his arm got caught and he could not get through. In the morning the monks asked the thief what had happened, and he said, "A person wearing a white robe grabbed my hand from inside the hall and however hard I tried I could not get free." (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:421a6–16.)

The shadow image in the rock of Riyan Temple in the Sui capital city is octagonal in shape and the purple color of quartz. It is eight *cun* tall, five *cun* in diameter, and transparent. In the past, during the Taiqing period (547–550 C.E.) under the reign of Emperor Wu, a monk from the Western Region had brought it. Then Hou Jing's rebellion occurred and the rock was kept safely on top of the figure in Xilin Temple on Mount Lu in Jiangzhou. In the tenth year of the Kaihuang period (590–591 C.E.), when the future Emperor Yang (r. 604–618 C.E.) of the Sui dynasty was based in Yangzhou, he sought widely

for outstanding figures and images, and gathered all written records in the region south of the Jiang River. He came across the account of this rock among miscellaneous records. Immediately he sent Wang Yanshou to the temple to search for it and obtained the rock. The prince frequently moved from place to place as his assignments changed, and every time he traveled he always placed the rock in a black lacquered box and had it carried by horse-mounted soldiers at the front of the traveling party. When the prince was appointed as crown prince he sent the rock to Riyan Temple in the capital city, Chang'an, under order to have it sealed so that outsiders would not be able to see it. Riyan Temple had been founded by the [future] emperor.

Toward the end of the Daye (605–617 C.E.) period the realm under heaven was in turmoil. Monks in the capital city frequently came to the temple to view the image. [The monk Daoxuan,] was staying in the temple but he did not believe in its miraculous powers. Repeatedly he saw golden light shine inside the rock but it only vaguely looked like a buddha image to him. Then some eminent monks, of different persuasions, arrived and all said that they could clearly see the image in all its details, and that the vision never disappeared. Daoxuan often deplored that he could not see any of this. He underwent a seven-day period of purification and confession and then went to look at the rock. First he saw a silver stupa, and later he also saw a silver buddha. Monks, nuns, and laypeople who looked at the rock at the same time often saw different things in it—some saw buddhas, stupas, and bodhisattvas; some saw monks sitting in rows; some saw curtains, parasols, and banners; some saw mountains, forests, and the eight kinds of [supernatural] beings; some saw scenes of suffering in the three inferior realms of rebirth; and some saw the reigns of seven ancient rulers rise and fall. When one observes the image, sometimes it remains stable and sometimes it changes. While both evil and good visions appeared in mixed order, good images predominated. Therefore, those who came to pray in front of the rock all made a vow beforehand, asking in what form and in what realm they would be reborn in their future rebirths. As they requested, visions appeared, and the people considered the rock to be a karmic mirror of the unknown dark realms of rebirths. In the seventh month of the sixth year of the Zhenguan period (632 C.E.), by imperial edict the rock was brought to the palace and offerings were made to it. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:421b4–25.)

391a The story of the four-faced buddha figure in the Shahe district temple in Xingzhou [relates that] during the rule of the founding emperor of the Sui dynasty a man went into the mountains and saw a monk guarding a copper image, over three *chi* tall. When he asked the monk to give him the image, the monk obliged him and then disappeared. Monks in many places who heard about this image tried to bring it down from the mountain but they could not lift it. When some monks of Shahe Temple pulled the image, however, it followed their hands and came to the temple. Later, someone discovered a pile of gold near the temple; the gold had the mark of two crows on it and an inscription that read “For the purpose of plating the four-faced image.” The figure was covered with gold and the crow marks appeared all over it. The image later disappeared suddenly. In the small stream running alongside the temple a shining light often appeared; people looked for the source of the light and fished [the figure] out of the stream.

The last ruler of the Sui heard about the figure and sent metalworkers to make a copy of it, but in the end they were unsuccessful. After working for over two hundred days they produced a copy but they later discovered flaws in it and abandoned the project. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106: 421b26–c5.)

In the third year of the Kaihuang period (583–584 C.E.) the monk Faqing of Ningguan Temple began making a standing figure of Śākyamuni, one *zhang* and six *chi* tall. Faqing died before completing the image.

On the same day another monk at Baochang Temple, Dazhi, also died. After three days Dazhi came back to life and reported to the monks in the temple, “Before King Yama I saw the monk Faqing, who seemed to be very depressed. A little later I also saw the figure come before the king. The king ran down the steps with joined palms to pay respect to the image. The figure said to the king, ‘Faqing is creating me but the work is not yet complete. Why did you order him to die?’ King Yama turned to an attendant and asked, ‘Is it time for Faqing to die?’ The attendant answered, ‘His life should not end yet but the food has been exhausted.’ Yama said, ‘Give him lotus leaves [to eat] so that he can finish his meritorious work.’ Suddenly everything disappeared.”

After Dazhi had come back to life and related this story to the monks of his temple, he then told them to go to Ningguan Temple to have a look.

Shortly thereafter the monks saw Faqing come back to life. What he said matched perfectly with Dazhi's story.

After coming back to life Faqing always ate lotus leaves, saying that this was delicious food. If he put any other type of food in his mouth he could not swallow it. He died several years after the figure was completed. Its features are perfect, and it frequently emitted light. Although the temple has been abolished the figure still exists.

#### Tang Dynasty

During the Wude period (618–626 C.E.) a man called He Ji lived on the Ciwu River southwest of Fangzhou. This man had always been pious. He saw a group of deer on top of a mountain, moving away but then coming back. Thinking this strange, he dug under the spot where the deer had gathered and found a stone figure, over one *zhang* and four *chi* tall. He Ji moved it down from the mountain to the village, and the figure still exists at the present time. After it was moved the deer dispersed.

According to the tradition passed on by the elders, of the forty images hidden by the past Kāśyapa Buddha, two have appeared but the others still remain hidden in the mountains. The shape of these figures is like that of the iron ore image found to the east of Yuhua Temple. The iron ore figures should not be melted or cut apart. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:421c6–12.)

In the ninth month of the seventeenth year of the Zhenguan period (643 C.E.), Li Xiyu, Commander-in-Chief in Liangzhou, was out on patrol and reached the border of the Changquan district southeast of the regional center. He found a carving on a rock, altogether one hundred and ten characters, which included phrases such as “seven buddhas,” “eight bodhisattvas,” and “the buddha field of superior fruits.” He reported the discovery to the court. An edict was issued to have it examined, and the truth of Li Xiyu's report was confirmed. One year's tax income was returned to the local government in Liangzhou and prisoners were released. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:421c21–25.)

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Twelve sets of buddhas' footprints were discovered in the rocky mountains north of Xiangsi, one hundred miles west of Yuzhou. The footprints were all more than three *chi* long, one *chi* and one *cun* wide, and nine *cun* deep. Inside them were fish patterns. They were located over ten steps north of the buddha

hall, and there were resident monks at the temple. Suddenly, in the tenth month of the twentieth year of the Zhenguan period (646–647 C.E.), lotus flowers appeared inside the pool fed by a spring next to the temple. The flowers were bright red. The larger ones among them were three *chi* tall and faced each other, and the stems looked as if they were weeping. When their tears reached the surface of the water they turned into flowers. People, floating back and forth on boats, all marveled at the sight. The flowers did not disappear for months. The name of the temple, Xiangsi (“Pining for Each Other”), was chosen because of this.

According to one source this temple also existed in Fuzhou. The temple originally was impoverished but because of this miraculous gift it is now wealthy.

In the past, under the Qi dynasty, brocade material appeared in the emperor’s well in Jingzhou. At that time people used this cloth in the same way as ordinary brocade. After months the material stopped appearing. Thus the appearance of the lotus flowers is not considered to be incredible. (Note: This story is found in the *Qi chunqiu* of Wu Jun and the *Jingnan zhishuo* of Xiao Cheng.) (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:421c26–422a7.)

Thirty traces of buddha footprints were discovered in rock north of Lingkan Temple in Xingning Township, located northeast of Xunzhou. The larger ones among them was less than five *chi* long. Xunzhou was situated on a river, two hundred miles in the east-west direction and one hundred miles in the north-south direction. The temple was very wealthy. There was a copper mine in the neighborhood. A kiln, three *chi* square, could produce over a hundred bronze pots with lids. They bore inscriptions that read, “Meritorious if given to temples, calamities follow if given to secular establishments.”

According to ancient local tradition, during the Jin dynasty (265–316 C.E.) a northern monk lived on this mountain, and while roaming across the great peaks he came to the site of the Buddha’s footprints. There was a massive rock cave whose opening was covered thickly by beautiful flowering plants bearing fruit. He spent the night there. The mountain deity appeared as a monster to frighten him but the monk was lofty and remained unmoved. The deity said, “You cannot live here. Mountain ghosts come here frequently.” The monk looked far in the distance and saw a rocky mountain that reached

the clouds and blocked the sun. When he went there and climbed it, he saw that below it there was a cliff that was impossible to ascend from below. He returned to Xingning and told the people about the mountain.

During the Song dynasty two monks, who had heard that earlier attempts to reach the location had failed, courageously embarked on a search for it. These monks recited the *Lotus Sutra*, followed the precepts strictly, and were capable of overpowering supernatural beings. A supernatural being appeared and accepted the precepts from them, along with all the members of his clan. When they looked in the distance they saw an extraordinary light above a cliff. They were separated from it by a chasm over one *zhang* wide. The monks used a piece of wood to cross the chasm, and found ten pieces of the miraculous Buddha's footprint, in the color of human flesh, marked on the surface of the rock. In the third year of the Zhenguan period (629 C.E.) another footprint appeared, which emitted light and bore the sign of a wheel. Those who have seen them disagreed on the number of pieces. Therefore, shrines were built to house these miraculous objects. People visit the original sites. During the Song dynasty the royal family donated an orchard to be turned into a temple. This is now the old temple building that still stands at the site. 391c

(*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:422a8–24.)

Li Da'an, who was from the Longxi region, was the older brother of Daliang, who served as Minister of Works. During the Wude period (618–626 C.E.) Daliang was appointed Area Commander-in-Chief of Yuezhou. From the capital city Da'an went out to investigate the area. Daliang sent several servants to accompany his brother. On the way back they reached Luqiao in Guzhou and stayed at a hostel. Among his servants was a man who plotted to murder Da'an. This servant waited until Da'an was deeply asleep, after midnight, and he pushed a dagger through Da'an's neck. The blade of the dagger touched the floor. The servant then fled without pulling the dagger out. Da'an screamed, calling out for his servants. Those among the servants who were not against him were about to pull the dagger out. Da'an said, "As soon as you pull the dagger out I will die. I must first write something on a piece of paper." By the time he was finished writing the district official had also arrived. So they pulled the dagger out, cleansed the wound, and applied medicine. Then Da'an lost consciousness.

Suddenly, as if in a dream, a creature, over one *chi* long and four or five *cun* wide, shaped like a piece of pig's flesh, appeared. Floating over two *chi* above the ground, it came in through the door and went to [Li] Da'an's bed. A voice was heard from within the creature, saying, "Quickly return my flesh." Da'an said, "I do not eat pork. Why would I owe anything to you?" Thereupon, a voice was heard from outside the door, "There has been a mistake." The creature then went out the door.

Da'an then saw a pond in the front yard. It was clear and shallow and very beautiful. Above the western bank of the pond was a golden figure, about five *cun* tall. After a short while it slowly grew in size and turned into the form of a monk wearing a monastic robe, which was quite fresh and clean. The monk figure said to Da'an, "You have been injured. I will now take the pain away for you. When you have been restored, go back to your home and practice the buddha-name recitation and other good deeds." Then he rubbed Da'an's neck with his hand and the injury was removed. When Da'an recovered he saw that the back of the monk's robe had a red silken patch, one *cun* square. The patch was very visible.

Da'an woke up and revived. The injury no longer caused him pain and he was able to sit up and eat. After a dozen or so days passed people from the residence in the capital city came and took him home. People in the residence, relatives, and old acquaintances all came to see him, and Da'an told them the circumstances of his injury and his experience encountering the image. One female servant, sitting to the side, heard this and said, "When I first came to Da'an's family, his wife sent me to a carver of buddha images to have an image made. When the figure was made it was clothed in a beautifully patterned silken robe, but there was one red stain on the back of the figure and even though we asked the carver to remove it, he would not agree. The appearance of this image has remained the same until now, and it is just like the image the young master has described." Thereupon, Da'an, accompanied by his wife and others from the residence, went to see the image. The figure was exactly like the one he had seen. The spot in the back was the same red patch on the figure Da'an had seen. Marveling at this, Da'an was convinced of the efficacy of the holy teaching and became even more pious in following the Buddha's teaching. Honoring the teaching eagerly, he lived a long life.

All the stories of image miracles that occurred after Buddhism arrived in China cannot be told here. A selection of these stories have been given above. (Note: The last story is from the *Mingbao ji*.)

Over one hundred families lived inside Wuzhong Fort in the Yuyang district in Youzhou. In the fourth month, during the summer of the second year of the Longshuo period (661–663 C.E.), a fire inside the fortress destroyed the gate and all of the residential buildings. Inside the two temples and a pagoda were buddha shrines that all had paper curtains and other objects. Only the buddha images were not burned in the fire; the flames did not touch them and the figures stood tall by themselves. Everyone who saw this marveled at it and believed that the Buddha's power protected the images. Yuling, Gentleman-Attendant of Zhongshan, had already been appointed to that post. In addition, his elder brother Yuqing was well acquainted with civil officials and military officers in Qi Commandery. For these reasons, Yuqing was sent to Yingzhou and he himself observed the event. He told Yuling about it.

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There was a mountain temple west of the city of Bingzhou, called Dongzi Temple. It had a large sitting figure, over one hundred and seventy *chi* tall. The emperor honored the Buddhist teaching, and when he traveled to Bingzhou in the last year of the Xianqing period (660–661 C.E.), he visited this temple with the empress.

The emperor also visited Kaihua Temple on the northern side of the valley. Its figure was two hundred *chi* tall. Paying respect to this image, the emperor marveled at it as he observed it. He presented a large gift of rare treasures, expensive objects, and clothing. Various princesses and other members of the inner palace also made donations. In addition, the emperor ordered Dou Gui, the leading official of the region, and others to quickly arrange to have the figure elaborately adorned. He also gave instructions to secure a large area (for ceremonial gatherings?) in front of the shrines.

On the day the emperor returned to the capital city, which took place in the seventh month, autumn of the second year of the Longshuo period (662 C.E.), inner officials sent two monastic robes to the large figures in the two temples, Dongzi Temple and Kaihua Temple. On the day when the robe was put on the figure at Dongzi Temple it emitted five-colored light from dawn to evening, which shone on the caves in the rocky cliffs and illuminated

mountains and rivers. The light also entered the southern shrine where a small buddha image was installed, and brightly illuminated the hall. The monks and laymen who saw this occurrence numbered several millions. Among the noble and humble in the city who observed the event, seven or eight out of ten converted [to Buddhism]. Since everyone is familiar with this story, I will not describe it in greater detail.

Qingchan Temple in the western capital city once had an image made of pure gold, one *chi* and four *cun* tall, which weighed eighty *liang*. It had been produced by Emperor Wen of the Sui dynasty. In the fourteenth year of the Zhen-guan period (640 C.E.) a bandit by the name of Sun Dexin fabricated a document with the imperial seal and sent a eunuch who claimed to have been sent by an imperial order to take away the figure. The monks at the temple, hearing of the imperial order, did not dare refuse to obey it. Overnight the truth became known but the body of the figure had already been melted down and only the head remained undamaged. Emperor Taizong was furious and ordered the most severe form of punishment. While awaiting death Dexin's body began to rot and became covered by tumors. The monks at the temple added gold and had the figure recast properly.

(Note: The above three stories are from the *Mingbao shiyi*.)

392b In the fourth year of the Xianqing period (659 C.E.) the regional inspector of Fuzhou, surname Zu, prayed for an end to drought but his prayers had no effect. In the mountains to the east someone saw a walking figure. No one knew where it came from, but it had appeared suddenly because of the situation and would not go away. The news spread widely and many came from near and far to see it. A man from Tanzhou said that a figure that had disappeared from a temple there had reappeared here. When people examined the route that the figure had followed, two footsteps, each three *chi* long, were found five hundred *li* apart. Because the drought and heat had lasted for a long time, the regional inspector immediately went to the figure and prayed to it. Local officials and civilians all presented incense and flowers. They all walked over twenty *li* and explained the situation in tears. As their emotions intensified, they sent three messengers to return the figure to the Tanzhou city temple. The image rose easily and responded to the request. As the figure was returning to the city temple, while still on the road, the sky became covered

by clouds and by the evening a heavy rainfall came down. The harvest that year was abundant. At the present time the figure is in Fuzhou. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:423a25–b4.)

During the Yonghui period (650–656 C.E.), to the east of Lantian in Yongzhou, a temple called Wuzhen was situated on the western cliff of Langu Valley. It was a most beautifully constructed temple; amid the beautiful mountains it stood majestically. Some monks wanted to build another building near the stream north of the temple but a huge rock there hampered their efforts. They set a fire and released water to try to dislodge the rock but to no avail. Then they struck it with an iron hammer to break it up and found a gold figure within the rock. There were no seams on any of its sides [to indicate casting] and it appeared to have been miraculously produced in one piece. Its origins were unknown. The base was also there, though it was not something made by carpenters. It was also unknown what sort of treasure the five *cun*-tall figure was. It is currently housed in the same mountain temple.

In the same year in Yizhou one buddha image and two bodhisattva images appeared on a pillar in Guangming Temple. Even when the pillars were carved over, the images reappeared. The images were first placed in the Jiulong Buddha Hall but because of overcrowding Aide Zhang Xu moved them to Guangming Temple. The images are still there at the present time. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:422b5–14.)

At the Li Zhao bend west of the Fengshui River and east of E District in Yongzhou is a golden image, three *chi* and six *cun* tall, four *chi* tall with its halo. On several occasions the figure has emitted light. It bares its right arm and looks very fearsome. Having heard of this, I (Daoxuan) went looking for it and found it. The following inscription appears on the base of the image:

The image was produced in a temple in Chang'an on the eighth day of the fourth month of twentieth year of the Jianyuan period of the [Former] Qin (384 C.E.). Queen Huishao, moved by the Buddha's nirvana, said, "I am fortunate to encounter the figure [the Buddha] left to which one can entrust oneself. I will make a copy by casting on the basis of the divine mold. If I do so with sincerity there will definitely be [supernatural] responses. I vow to bring merit to beings in the ten directions."

This was the text of the inscription. When I asked about the circumstances under which the figure was obtained, I was told the following. In the past, when the two teachings of Buddhism and Daoism were persecuted, this figure had been hidden inside the whirlpool at Luoren on the Fengshui River. Someone walking on the riverbank heard a voice from within the whirlpool, and also saw light. He related this to the village elders, who immediately went to the whirlpool and looked inside the clean sand there. Light appeared in the water, and by digging at that place they obtained the previously hidden figure. This occurred during the [Northern] Zhou dynasty. Village families hid the image and worshiped it among themselves. The image was placed in a closed room but it emitted light that illuminated it. The figure still exists in the village. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:422b15–25.)

392c In the second month in the spring of the third year of the Longshuo period (662 C.E.), an image appeared in Qinzhou. Over sixty *li* north of the city, on the cliffs at Changgu Valley on the border of the Mianshang district, is an old buddha cave. Inside the cave are three stone figures. The middle one frequently emitted light, illuminating the forested valley. Villagers, finding this extraordinary, reported to the government office in the city, and a report of the incident was sent from there to the court. The court then sent Xuanxiu, a monk of Dacien Temple in the capital city, along with a secular messenger to look into the matter. Upon arrival they saw the light, which darted around endlessly like the flames of a fire. Then a cloud came over the cave shrine and the light was obscured for a while. When the cloud moved away the light reappeared. The messengers quickly reported this. The court ordered a number of detailed drawings to be made, and while this was being carried out the light appeared as before, frequently on and off for three evenings. The drawings have been handed down to today, and the light is still seen today. In the mountain forest in this beautiful location some places are covered in thick vegetation. There are many ancient remains of buddha figures in rock caves. While their origins are unknown, miraculous occurrences are frequently observed. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:422b26–c5.)

In the painting of Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva in Faju Temple outside the walled city of Yizhou, the bodhisattva, eight or nine *cun* tall, is portrayed in a sitting position with one leg pendant from the seat. The original drawing was made

by Zhang Sengyou. In the seventh month of the second year of the Linde period (665 C.E.) the monks of the temple obtained a copy of the drawing. Intermittently the drawing emitted light that looked like a golden ring. The light was just like that of the original painting. In this way, as copies of the paintings were made, they all emitted light. In the eighth month of the same year, the court ordered to have a copy of the painting made and presented offerings to it in the palace. At the present time monks and laypeople in the capital city and elsewhere make copies of the painting and make offerings to them. All of these copies emit light. This shows convincingly that the power of the Buddha is beyond our understanding (Note: There is a [different] copy in the household but I will not quote from its record.)

The event described below occurred in the second year of the Linde period (665 C.E.). Mount Sanxue, north of the Jinshui district in Jianzhou, was originally governed by Yizhou. Huiyu, a monk of the temple there, is according to the provisional precedents currently allowed to live in Konghui Temple outside the city wall of Yizhou. In the first year of the Linde period (664 C.E.) he traveled from the city to Changsha Temple in Jingzhou, where before the miraculous bronze image he prayed earnestly, making a vow to have paintings of the figure made and to take care of them properly and make regular offerings. He obtained the service of master artist Zhang Jingyan. After undergoing purification based on the proper rules, the artist had finished painting six copies without seeing any miracles, but when he began working on the seventh painting, the image emitted five-colored light that illuminated everywhere. People from near and far all saw it. After seven days the light began to fade. All the monks and laypeople were delighted but their reactions cannot be described in detail here.

Huiyu took the painting to Chang'an but it had not yet been properly decorated. He also wished that the figures of bodhisattvas and holy monks that would be placed on both sides [of the Buddha], as well as other shrine objects, be painted into the picture. At that time all the skillful artists in the capital city had been ordered to gather at the palace. Under the supervision of various officials and scholars, the artists were painting illustrations for the sixty-fascicle *Gazetteer of Western Kingdoms*, which included forty fascicles of pictures. Since there were no good artists outside the palace, Huiyu asked

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Fan Changshou at the palace to paint the features adorning the figure. The work was done inside the secretariat building at the court. On the seventh day of the sixth month, in the third watch at night, the figure began to emit five-colored light that illuminated the area outside the hall. Some guardians of the hall were staying outside, and seeing the light appear above the hall they thought that a fire had started inside the hall. Alarmed, they ran around shouting. Ten officials and over thirty soldiers were staying inside the hall. Because the weather was very hot, they were sleeping in the nude. When the light shone people could see each other's nakedness, and taken aback, they all got dressed. However, there was one official, Shi Huaizang, who until then lacked faith. He saw the light all around him but his own body was invisible. The light passed right through it. When the light dimmed toward dawn, Huaizang repented his lack of faith. He no longer saw the light around him but his body became visible again. Officials and soldiers from other branches of the court heard people shouting about the light and came to see it. They all converted and followed the prescribed way of life. All of these people obtained a copy of the painting and worshiped it at home. (Note: The monks and laypeople in the capital city all know about this. Therefore, I will not cite sources for this story here.)

In the first year of the Longshuo period (661 C.E.), by imperial edict the monk Sengze of Huichang Temple was ordered to go to Mount Wutai and repair temples and stupas there. This mountain was under the charge of the Wutai district office in the Taizhou region. It had five terraces, among which the middle terrace was the highest. From there one could see as far as a thousand *li*, and distant mountains and rivers looked as if they could rest in one's palm. On top of the terrace were thousands of stone stupas, constructed out of layers of bricks and rocks. These had been built by Emperor Xiaowen of the [Northern] Wei dynasty. On a rock to the north of the terrace were the footprints of humans and dogs. The patterns looked as if they were newly made. At the summit of the peak was a large lake, called Taihua Spring. There were also smaller springs that were connected to each other. On both sides of the springs were two stupas, within which were images of Mañjuśrī. According to the tradition, Mañjuśrī, accompanied by five hundred holy men, went to Mount Qingliang to preach the Dharma. The *Flower Garland Sutra*

(*Huayan jing*) also states that Mañjuśrī preached the Dharma at Mount Qingliang. It is very cold on the mountain and no trees taller than a pine will grow; forests of towering pines cover the valleys and peaks. The southern peak is called Qingliang Peak, and at its foot is the office of Qingliang. The ruins of old and new buildings are preserved there.

Over thirty *li* southeast of the terrace is the ancient Dafulingjiu Temple, with its east and west training halls. The resident monks attend to all matters necessary for following the Buddhist path. According to an ancient tradition, the temple was established by Emperor Ming of the Han dynasty. To the south is a flower garden over two *qing* in size, where unusual flowers emit light, dazzling beholders' eyes. The gardens are surrounded by trees, and when asked the elders admitted that they did not know the origins of the flowers. Every year from early spring to late autumn different flowers bloom, one after another. From ancient days monks and laypeople loved these extraordinary flowers that are not found elsewhere in the human world. They dug out their roots and planted them elsewhere, but the roots never sprouted. They then transplanted some of the flower plants just outside of the trees that surround the gardens, but again they failed to sprout. Only within the surrounded gardens would the flowers grow spontaneously. This was a miraculous manifestation resulting from the presence of the great sage Mañjuśrī, whose residence was located here. These extraordinary flowers had not been planted by human beings.

If those who have sincere faith enter this mountain, they see the many buildings where holy monks reside. Some fly in the sky, while others live at the bottom of valleys. Some live on the precipitous peaks, while others have their abodes in deep caves. Whether monks or laypeople, they seem no different from ordinary and ignorant human beings. After having visited the location once, visitors may look for it again but they will not be able to find it. The temple and its monks appear and disappear unpredictably, and only holy people can comprehend their secret.

In the second year of the Longshuo period (662 C.E.) the emperor again ordered Sengze to go to Bingzhou to repair old temples with resources provided by local officials. Accompanied by the official of Mount Wutai and more than twenty others, Sengze immediately went up to the central terrace and saw a stone figure on the cliff move and wave its hand. When they reached

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the place where the figure had been seen there was only a stone. Disappointed, the monk chastised himself for failing to see the true body [of the bodhisattva]. He remained disconsolate for a long time. He had the workers repair the two stupas and the figure of Mañjuśrī.

As he was lingering around the stupas, Sengze suddenly heard the sound of a bell being rung over and over endlessly. An otherworldly fragrance also reached him in repeated waves. Both the monk and laymen marveled at this unprecedented occurrence. Sengze also went to the western terrace and saw from a distance a monk riding a horse, galloping toward the east. Sengze and the others stood waiting for a long time for the monk to approach them but he never arrived. They then went to the place where they saw the monk earlier and the monk had turned into a stump. They could not get over their disappointment. However, in miraculous responses images appear and disappear unexpectedly. On such occasions the sounds of bells are heard and one perceives fragrance in the air.

This mountain range occupies a three hundred *li*-square area. The southeastern stretch reaches to Mount Heng. The northwestern part goes to the Heavenly Pond. In the middle are Mount Foguang, Mount Xianhua, the prince's stupa, and six temples. The caves in which Meditation Master Jietuo and Meditation Master Sengming sat are also there. Even after many decades have passed their bodies have not decayed, due to the power of their meditation. The attainments of such saintly figures are beyond our understanding. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* II, T.2106:422c9–423a7.)

In the second month of the second year of the Qianfeng period (667 C.E.), Vinaya Master Daoxuan of Ximing Temple, seeking quietude, had withdrawn to the Qinggong shrine, formerly Jinye Temple, located south of the capital, and was cultivating the Way there. The Vinaya master had accumulated immense virtue and had long embraced simplicity.

Suddenly a deity came to the Vinaya master and, paying respect to him, enquired about his well-being. The Vinaya master asked, "Where do you live? What is your name?" The deity answered, "My surname is Wang and my given name is Dang. I am the official in charge of the palace library in the great kingdom of Wu. When Kang Senghui first came to Jianye, the ruler of the kingdom, of the surname Sun, did not accept his authority, but after

he was exposed to miraculous occurrences he built an extraordinary shrine. At that time all heavenly and earthly deities offered support and after twenty-one days relics were obtained. When the ruler of Wu took the bronze jar in his hand and poured its contents onto a bronze plate, the plate split apart as soon as the relics touched it. They then burned the relics and struck them with a hammer but they remained intact. People like Kan Ze and Zhang Yu were also protected by deities who entered their bodies, kept their minds alert, and enabled them to always give the appropriate answer. Now they are both in heaven, charged with the task of protecting the Buddhist teaching. I am a messenger under General Wei, ruler of the Southern Heaven. The general is charged with a great deal of work, including the protection of the Buddha's teaching on three continents. If any conflicts or other difficulties arise within the community, he himself comes to resolve it. When I just now approached you the general had greatly wished to come himself, but he is occupied with the matters with which he is involved. He should come in the near future. He ordered us to come and talk to you."

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Shortly thereafter another deity came, and said that his surname was Luo and that he was a man of Shu. In the Shu accent he spoke extensively on matters concerning monastic rules. When he first saw the Vinaya master he greeted him according to secular custom. He discussed a number of topics in an orderly fashion and then suddenly disappeared.

Then another deity appeared, surnamed Fei, and greeted Vinaya Master Daoxuan in the same way as the earlier ones. He said, "At the time of Kāśyapa Buddha I was born in the first heaven under General Wei. All the gods were intoxicated with heavenly desires, but due to the power of the vow I had made in my previous life I had nothing to do with heavenly desires, and maintained pure conduct, meticulously observing the Vinaya rules. Novices who serve General Wei devote themselves to religious practice and are not affected by heavenly desires. There are eight generals under one ruler. There are thirty-two generals under four rulers, and they go back and forth in the four realms under heaven guarding the monks and nuns who have renounced the householders' life. Among the four realms under heaven, in the continent under the Northern Heaven the Buddha's teaching hardly exists. In the three other realms under heaven the Buddha's teaching prospers. Yet monks and nuns who have renounced the householders' life frequently violate the precepts

and seldom live according to the teaching. In the realm under the Eastern and Western Heavens people are less cunning and crafty but it is difficult to teach them how to remove their defilements. In the southern continent, where offenses are frequently committed it is easier to teach people to turn to the good way of life and their minds are more easily tamed.

“At the time the Buddha entered nirvana, I was personally entrusted with the task of guarding his teaching and preventing Māra from distracting people. If we do not guard [the teaching] and if we violate the precepts, who will be left to provide instruction on my teaching? Thus, we must obey the Buddha’s holy instruction. Even when I see those who violate prohibitions, I still take pity on them and protect them. If I see them perform one good deed, I forgive ten thousand faults. I overlook their flaws and do not dwell on their past failures. However, when the bad odor that pervades the human world goes up to the fragrant heaven, forty thousand *li* away, all the pure deities find it unpleasant. Yet ever since the Buddha entrusted the task of protecting his teaching, we still stay in the same realm as human beings. No deity would dare not to come.

“General Wei does more than any other among the thirty-two generals to protect the teaching. Often the sons and daughters of Māra taunt monks, and those whose spiritual powers are limited become confused. Thereupon, the general comes quickly and removes the source of their confusion. Therefore, when an important matter arises, he always goes to the four rulers of the heavenly realms and when they see him, they all rise. This is because General Wei observes the rules for novices and guards the right Dharma. By nature I take pleasure in observing precepts. I sat in the audience and heard and accepted all the monastic rules the Tathāgata established during his lifetime.”

394a Having heard this, Daoxuan asked about hidden meanings in the Vinaya literature, and the deity answered fluently. In the eastern land of China the Buddhist teaching of the Three Jewels frequently caused miraculous objects to appear in mountains, oceans, waters, and among rocks. While these objects are worshiped, no one knows their true origins. For this reason, Daoxuan asked about them. The explanation [he received] was very mysterious, so it is here summarized in intelligible terms. Without an extensive overview the matter could not have been put into words. (*Daoxuan lüshi gantong lu*, T.2107:435b24–436a4.)

The *Daoxuan lüshi gantong ji* (*Record of Master Daoxuan's Miraculous Communication*) says:

Daoxuan asked, “When did the stone figure of Duobao Temple in Chengdu in Yizhou appear from the ground?” The deity answered, “The capital of Shu originally was on the summit of Mount Qingcheng. Present-day Chengdu was in the middle of the great ocean. The figure was made at the time of Kāśyapa Buddha at Xierhe. It is modeled after the entire body of Prabhūtaratna Buddha (Duobao). It used to be at Jiushan (Mount Ḡḍhrakūṭa) Temple along the Xier River. Someone from Chengdu went there to trade and requested to take the image back with him. When he came to the place where the present Duobao Temple is, the boat was capsized by the ocean god. Earlier, the man who brought the image had seen a child of the ocean deity climb up onto the bank and walk around and, mistaking it for a miraculous mountain mushroom, he had killed the child. The ocean deity was angry and capsized the boat, drowned both the man and the figure that were on it.

“This figure of Prabhūtaratna Buddha used to be at Jiutoushan (Mount Ḡḍhrakūṭa) Temple. The ancient remains of the location still exist. There is also a stupa (at Jiutoushan Temple) that constantly emits light. Traveling toward India, past Langzhou and numerous larger and smaller towns, after more than three thousand *li*, one reaches the Xier River. The river is very wide—sometimes one hundred *li* and sometimes five hundred *li* across. In the middle of the river is a mountain where there is also an ancient temple. Scriptures and images are still there, but no monks live there. The scripture also mentions this temple. From time to time the sound of a bell is heard. The people there are wealthy and twice yearly they present offerings to the ancient stupa. The stupa is like an ordination platform, consisting of three stone platforms. At the top are numerous pot-shaped structures. People there simply call it the grave of a deity, and it frequently emits light. People make vegetarian offerings to seek benefits. This land is located over two thousand *li* northwest of Suizhou.”

Daoxuan asked, “Is the place not far from India? Do people frequently go there?”. . .

The deity continued, “At the time of Jin dynasty (265–419 C.E.) a monk found an earthen grave at that location (Duobao Temple). Every time he

went there he removed some soil but he could not level it. Later he opened up the grave and found it very strange. He dug deeper for several *zhang* and obtained the figure and a human skeleton inside a boat. The skull and arm and leg bones were very large, several times larger than those of human beings today. This is because at the time of Kāśyapa Buddha people lived until the age of twenty-thousand years in this Jambudvīpa world, and these were the bones of people from that period. Now the world age has changed and people have shorter life spans and are smaller. There is nothing wondrous about the size of the bones. When the figure was first discovered it resisted being taken away. I then appeared in the form of an old man and directed the efforts to move the figure. Shortly thereafter the Northern Zhou persecution of Buddhism occurred, and people hid the image for awhile. When the Sui dynasty resumed support of Buddhism, the figure was brought out again. The people of Shu only know that this miraculous figure had sprung out of the ground, but they have no idea of its origin. They saw in many places on its halo and base the word “Duobao” (Prabhūtaratna), and consequently gave it that name.”

Daoxuan asked, “The characters for “Duobao” are written in the ancient *li* script, which was invented under the Qin dynasty. How could the people who lived at the time of Kāśyapa Buddha already have had this Chinese script?”

394b The deity answered, “The *li* script was adopted by Li Si in more recent times, but it was widely used in the ages of ancient buddhas. It is used now in over one thousand continents on all four sides of our southern continent. In over ten thousand one hundred kingdoms that adorn the Jambudvīpa world, the same script and pronunciation as in our kingdom of Tang have been adopted. It is only because they are situated far away across the ocean of a hundred thousand *li* that they stubbornly preserve earlier practices. There is nothing strange about all this. Have you not heard of Gu Yewang of Liang? He was the great erudite of the National University. He investigated the etymology of characters extensively, though he did not discuss all characters. In the preface to his work *Yupian* he says that he opened the grave of Lord Chun Shen and obtained the inscription. It was written in the *li* script. Chun Shen is a contemporary of King Wu of Zhou and the Six Kingdoms. The *li* script thus did not originate at the

time of the unification of China. The origin of various ancient scripts in this country of China is not entirely clear. How can we know of the situation at the time of Kāśyapa Buddha? History is not confined to matters that can be confirmed by what the eye can see and the ear can hear.” (*Daoxuan liushi gantong lu*, T.2107:436a9–b16.)

Question: “On a hill to the west of today’s Western Capital are the Gaosi (“Tall Four”) earthen platforms. According to local lore these platforms were made by Cang Jie to serve as his writing table. How could it be that the *li* script existed at such an early time?”

Answer: “Cang Jie piled more soil on the platform and made it into his table. The story that he observed the marks made by birds’ feet and invented the writing system from them is true. Cang Jie’s background is hardly known here, however. Some say he was a minister of the Yellow Emperor. Some say that he was an ancient ruler. The scripts based on the footprints of birds have evolved extensively over time, and the original scripts are now lost. I would not take the trouble of speaking about things that are of no benefit.”

Another deity, with the surname Lu and personal name Xuanchang, appeared and after greeting the Vinaya master said, “I was once born as a god at the time of King Mu of the Zhou dynasty. Originally, I am a deity from the time of Kāśyapa Buddha. Because I can appear in any time and place, I appeared briefly in the time of the Zhou. The Gaosi platform about which you asked was originally the place where Kāśyapa Buddha preached his third sermon and ordained people. At the time of King Mu, Mañjuśrī and Maudgalyāyana came to teach there. King Mu obeyed them. The phantom men mentioned in the book *Liezi* refer to them. The phantom men indicated to King Mu that the Gaosi platform was the place where Kāśyapa Buddha had preached. Therefore, the king established Third Sermon Temple there.

“At the time of Duke Mu of the Qin dynasty a cyclone deposited a stone figure. Duke Mu did not recognize its identity and placed it inside the stable, where the image was soiled. The deity that protected the image was angered and caused the duke to fall ill. The duke had a dream in which he traveled up to heaven and was severely reprimanded by the Supreme Ruler. When he awoke, he asked Attending Minister Youyu about the

meaning of his dream. The minister answered that they had heard of the phantom man who came to this land at the time of King Mu of the Zhou dynasty. The figure must be the same Buddhist deity. Duke Mu believed him, and built a heavenly platform at Mount Zhongnan that was over one thousand *chi* tall. Its foundation is still preserved. He also built a shrine at Cang Jie's platform, called Third Sermon Temple.

394c "Hearing that his illness had been caused by the Buddha, the duke was frightened and said to Youyu, 'Recently I obtained a figure, made of stone. He wears a robe and crown that have not been produced in our time. I threw it in the stable. I wonder whether this was the Buddha deity.'

"Upon hearing this, Youyu went there to inspect it, and responded to Duke Mu, 'It is the true Buddha deity. You should take the figure, bathe it, and place it safely in a clean place. The image then emitted light. The duke was again frightened, fearing that the deity was angry. He made an offering of an ox, a sheep, and a boar. Various good deities took these sacrifices away to distant places and discarded them. The duke was even more frightened and asked Youyu about this, who answered, 'I have heard that the Buddha deity lives a pure life and one should not offer wine or meat to him. The deity loves living creatures' lives in the same way that we protect our own children. Offerings should be confined to burning incense. One may also present cakes and fruits.' Duke Mu was delighted.

"The duke also wanted to make an image of the Buddha but that was beyond the artisans' abilities. He again asked Youyu about this, who answered, 'There should be suitable artisans living next to the temple that King Mu built in the distant past.' The duke found an old man in the village south of the Gaosi platform. His surname was Wang, his personal name was An, and he was one hundred and eighty years old. He said, 'Once at Third Sermon Temple, I observed someone make an image, but I am now old and unable to make such a figure. Four brothers live north of my village. They used to work in the temple. Please let them make the image together.' This suggestion was followed and a bronze figure was completed, equipped with all marks of the Buddha. The duke was delighted and rewarded the workers generously. With the wealth thus acquired, the brothers made another very meritorious act. On top of the earthen platform they built a multistoried building, three hundred *chi* tall. Their contemporaries called

it the Gaosi (“Tall Four”) platform, or Gaosi Tower. Their surname was Gao and the oldest among them had the personal name Si. Some say that the name of the building contains the expression *si* (“four”), because the four brothers collaborated to build it. Others say that the name of the oldest brother was incorporated into the name of the building. Thus the building was called Gaosi, and it has been called by that name to today.” (*Daoxuan lüshi gantong lu*, T.2107:436b17–c23.)

Question: “Maudgalyāyana and Śāriputra ended their lives while the Buddha was still in this world. How could Maudgalyāyana have appeared again?”

Answer: “There are six people with the same name of Maudgalyāyana. This one is not the same Mahāmaudgalyāyana. At the time of the Northern Zhou dynasty of the Yuwen clan, Mañjuśrī transformed himself into an Indian monk and came to this land of China, saying, ‘I would worship at the place where Kāśyapa Buddha preached and also the place where Mañjuśrī lived, called Mount Qingliang.’ He asked the monks and laypeople everywhere he went but no one knew where these places were. At that time Dharma Master Zhimeng, who had just turned eighteen years old, returned the question to the Indian monk, ‘How do you know about the existence of these two holy locations?’ The Indian monk answered, ‘Twenty *li* south of the Qin capital city is the writing platform built by Cang Jie. That is the location.’ He also said, ‘[If you go] fifty *li* south of the Sha River and forty *li* north of Mount Qing [you will get there].’” (*Daoxuan lüshi gantong lu*, T.2107:436c24–437a2.)

[Zhimeng] asked: “To what do the Sha River and Mount Qing refer?”

Answer: “They refer to the [present-day] Weishui River and Mount Zhongnan. The Indian monk then went straight southward from the Weishui River, and after walking a long distance he reached the Gaosi [platform]. He then said, ‘This is the location where the ancient buddha preached.’ At that time Dharma Master Zhimeng was accompanying the Indian monk and he worshiped the site. Shortly thereafter he could not tell where the Indian monk had gone. After he grew older, Zhimeng told this story to the Chamberlain for Ceremonials Wei, and asked him to establish a temple at the platform like the one that had existed originally. A memorial was presented to the ruler of the Northern Zhou and the temple was named Third Sermon

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Temple. During the Daye period of the Sui (605–617 C.E.) smaller temples were merged with larger ones and this temple was incorporated into Bodhi Temple. The head of the buddha figure at Bodhi Temple, located east of the southern gate to the Pinggangfang section, west of the eastern market in the present capital city, is that of the buddha of Third Sermon Temple.

“Twelve years after he brought salvation to Mahākāśyapa, Śākya[muni] Tathāgata came to this platform. Under the platform are Kāśyapa Buddha’s relics. King Mu traveled himself to the kingdom of Daxia. The Buddha told him that in the land of China there is an ancient stupa and that the king should return and worship it. The king asked about the location of the stupa. The Buddha answered that it was southeast of Hao Hill. There is a detailed account of this exchange in a Western (i.e., Indian) record.

“In the previous year Changnian, a Sri Lankan monk, who had spent ninety-nine years in the monastery and had attained the rank of nonreturner (*anāgāmin*), heard of this superior site and visited and worshiped it. He also memorialized, requesting permission to go to the place where Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva sat on Mount Qingliang in northern Daizhou. The emperor was delighted and ordered that he be supplied with a horse for transportation and a special messenger. The monk’s disciples and government officials, altogether over twenty people, accompanied him to attend to his needs. These officials and disciples all rode government horses. From the time he was very young Changnian had diligently practiced austerities, refusing to ride on any animals, so he walked on foot. When they arrived at Mount Qingliang in Daizhou, the monk crawled on his elbows and knees, climbing to the buddha hall on the middle terrace. This buddha hall was the shrine for Mañjuśrī. The distance from the bottom to the top of the mountain was over thirty *li*. The rocks on the mountain were sharp and cut bone-deep into his flesh, but no blood flowed from the wounds, only milk. For seven days he lay on the ground in the worship position, on his stomach with his limbs stretched out, and he would not rise or eat. After seven days he suddenly jumped up and pointed in all directions in the sky. Everywhere Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva, as a holy monk and arhat, appeared and disappeared, accompanied by several tens of monks and laypeople. A snake, several *li* long, came from the north straight toward Changnian, who was delighted. After grasping Changnian’s leg in its

mouth the snake turned into a monk. People were frightened and scattered to the four directions. Only Changnian remained calm. His various miraculous accomplishments cannot be described in detail here. Having fulfilled his vow, he returned to the capital city. At the present time he resides at Huadu Temple. Sometimes he responds to requests for ordination in the inner palace. Sometimes he travels around various mountains.”

Vinaya Master [Daoxuan] asked the deity, “According to an ancient tradition Mañjuśrī is at Mount Qingliang, and as the leader of five hundred holy ones he preaches the Dharma. The scriptures make clear, however, that Mañjuśrī is a bodhisattva who lives forever in the *sahā* world. *Sahā* 395b refers to the whole world-system. How could his activity be confined to this small location of Mount Qingliang?”

The deity answered, “Mañjuśrī is commander-in-chief among all buddhas. He appears quickly in response to appropriate conditions, and transforms himself in different ways. His achievement transcends the human realm. There is no point in speculating about his conduct. We should know enough to believe that for the most part he stays at the Five Terraces on Mount Qingliang, which at the present time belongs to northern Daizhou. To the west is the government office of Qingliang in the Wutai district. (*Daoxuan lüshi gantong lu*, T.2107:437a2–b5.)

“From the time the Tang dynasty was established there is a story of a monk called Jietuo. He had died in a rock cave over thirty years ago but the flesh of his body did not rot, and he appeared only as if he had gone into an advanced meditative state in which all mental activities have ceased. There was also a nun who entered a meditative state and stopped all movements. Both of them stayed in this state for many years. On this mountain there are many holy sites, temples, bodhisattvas, and supernatural monks. People frequently see immortals and the flowers of immortals. Detailed accounts are found in other works. How could one not believe them?”

[Daoxuan] again asked, “Thirty *li* southeast of the Central Terrace of the present Mount Wutai is Dafulingjiu Temple. Its two halls are separated by a valley. To the south is a flower garden, over two *qing* in size, where flowers of different colors bloom in all four seasons. The garden is surrounded by trees on all four sides. When people transplant the flowers

elsewhere they never take root. These flowers can grow only inside the garden. People investigated the garden's origin but were unable to determine it. Some say it was established by Emperor Ming of the Han dynasty. Others say that the flowers were planted by Emperor Xiaowen of the Wei dynasty. The stories that elders transmit do not agree with each other. What is the truth?"

Answer: "The garden was made by both emperors. As far back as the time of King Mu of the Zhou dynasty, Buddhism already existed. The mountain where Mañjuśrī lived was a place filled with miracles. King Mu built a temple here to make offerings to him. King Aśoka also built a stupa. At the beginning of the reign of King Ming of the Han dynasty, the arhat Mātāṅga saw the stupa with his divine eye and requested the emperor to build a temple. The shape of the mountain was like that of Mount Gṛdhrakūṭa. The phrase *dafu* in the name Dafulingjiu means 'faith.' The phrase is used here because the emperor had faith in Buddhism, built a temple, and recommended the teaching to others. Emperor Xiaowen of the Yuan (Northern) Wei dynasty had his palace not far from the Northern Terrace of the mountain and came frequently to pay respect. The footprints of people and horses are clearly preserved there. These extraordinary facts can be proven. Such miraculous facts are not confined to Mount Wutai. In all such famous mountains as Mount Zhongnan, Mount Taibo, Mount Taihua, and the Five Peaks, holy people live, upholding the Buddha's teaching to ensure its survival. If people make offerings to them, they respond miraculously. Details are found in other works, so I do not reproduce them here." (*Daoxuan lüshi gantong lu*, T.2107:437a21–b12.)

Daoxuan asked again, "In the Panhe district, west of present-day Liangzhou, the mountain split and a rock image appeared. Of what was the image made?"

Answer: "At the time of Kāśyapa Buddha, Libin Bodhisattva observed that the people who lived on this mountain did not believe in the principle of karmic retribution and engaged in occupations that required killing creatures. At that time there were several tens of thousands of families in the inhabited part of this mountain, but none among them honored the teaching of the Buddha. In order to bring salvation to them, the bodhisattva

built a temple. The divine king Great Brahmā fashioned the image with his own hands. When it was completed, with his supernatural power Libin Bodhisattva turned the figure into a real buddha that walked around and preached the Dharma. Even though the people received this teaching, they still did not believe in it. Then the bodhisattva performed a frightening gesture: holding a huge piece of rock in his hand, he threatened to throw it down on top of them. When Libin Bodhisattva gave this threat, people quickly converted and believed in the Buddha. All the weapons and tools they used to kill creatures were transformed into lotus flowers. The street corners were filled with these flowers as if they had been planted there. Other miraculous signs followed from here, serving as a way of teaching people and demonstrating the supernatural powers of the Buddha's teaching.

“The bodhisattva also urged lay followers to build seven temples, covering the land one hundred and forty *li* in the north-south direction and eighty *li* in the east-west direction. Over the mountains and valleys residences for monks and buddha halls were built. The work was completed in thirteen years. At that time twenty thousand people renounced the householder's life simultaneously and they resided in the seven temples. After three hundred years they became very powerful because of the karma created in the present life. They willingly accepted in this life the consequences of the evil deeds they had committed in the past and they did not fall into hell. Those who had been harmed lived in inferior realms of existence and made the following vow: ‘Those who harmed me have not yet become holy people. We must kill them now. If we do not harm them now their bad karma will soon be exhausted and we will not be able to exact revenge on them.’ Together they spat out fire and burned down the temple buildings. The villages were burned down at the same time. Those who survived then drowned in a flood. Not one person survived. On that occasion, before the temple building was destroyed, the mountain deity took the figure and kept it high in the sky. After the temple had been destroyed, he brought it back down and placed it safely inside a rock cave and looked after it. Many years and months later the rock grew and the cave disappeared.

“When Master Liu Sahe paid respect to the mountain, he indicated that the figure would reemerge. In his previous life Sahe was Libin Bodhisattva.

The head and the body of the figure were located in two different places. The story of this image is also told in another record.” (*Daoxuan lüshi gantong lu*, T.2107:437b13–c5.)

[Daoxuan’s] Question: “Concerning the miraculous image at Longguang Temple south of the Jiang River, people say that it had been brought to China by Kumārajīva, but others say that it had been obtained in Funan. How can we determine which account is correct?”

Answer: “Kumārajīva did not obtain this image; rather it was obtained when Emperor Xiaowu went on an expedition to Funan. For a three hundred-year period after the Buddha disappeared, a great arhat in North India, called Youbozhina, with his supernatural powers worked with the artisans. For three hundred years they carved out a buddha cave in a large rocky mountain. From bottom to top there were five levels, and the height of the cave was over three hundred *chi*. Upon request, Maitreya Bodhisattva directed the workers to build a sandalwood chamber inside the cave.

“According to Xuanzang’s record the image is over one hundred *chi* tall. According to the *Record of the Holy Traces*, the image is eight *zhang* tall, and its feet and base are eight *chi*. On the six vegetarian feast days the image always emits light. At the time the image was made, arhats led the artisans up to the heavens and the work was completed after they had gone up three times. The second figure is made of oxhead sandalwood, the third one is of gold, the fourth of jade, and the fifth of bronze. Ordinary people today can only see the one at the lowest level. The four levels above are closed. When they are inside the cave people can see through each other’s bodies to their internal organs. In the six-hundredth year after the Buddha’s nirvana there was an arhat called Fuonazhe. His mother lived in the kingdom of Funan. Thinking of his mother’s love, he ascended to an upper level of the cave and brought down a small sandalwood figure, and he let his mother make offerings to it. After the mother died she was reborn in Yangzhou and, renouncing the householder’s life, she resided at Xinxing Temple. She attained the third fruit (i.e., nonreturner). It was also due to the supernatural power of this arhat that Emperor Xiaowu of the Song was able to obtain this figure on his expedition to Funan. Fuonazhe’s mother is still alive and occasionally goes to Luofu and Tiantai, and various places to the west.

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“In the past Fasheng and Tan Wujie traveled to the west, one after the other. There is a five-fascicle record that briefly describes this figure. How could one say suddenly that Dharma Master Kumārajīva brought this image on his back?” (*Daoxuan lüshi gantong lu*, T.2107:437c6–22.)

In this connection, Master [Dao]xuan asked, “Why is it that people particularly love the scriptures that Master Kumārajīva translated in his lifetime, upholding them and circulating them?”

Answer, “This man was very intelligent and understood the Great Vehicle clearly. Those who assisted him in his translation work were also superior; they were jewels of their generation. Later efforts failed to attain the same level. For this reason the translations they produced show the highest degree of understanding, and preserve the meaning of the teaching that the Buddha left behind.”

Another question: “Under pressure from Yao Xing of the [Later Qin], Kumārajīva violated a major precept. How could this be said to follow the meaning of the Buddha’s teaching?”

Answer: “This is not something that ordinary people can understand from a remove. How could we pass critical judgment on it? Master Kumārajīva’s virtues and conduct rank at the level of the three kinds of accomplished holy ones. He spread the teaching in the place he happened to be, deleting repetitions and adding new material for missing sections. He wrote in a way that took account of his readers’ capacities. Thus, the *Great Treatise* is divided into ten sections, of which nine are presented in summary. The situation with other scriptures is also similar. [After the scriptures were translated, when they are recited sincerely] miraculous responses occur. This happens generation after generation. These occurrences enable us to understand and deeply appreciate the holy intentions [of the Buddha]. After all, it is very rare that even a few of us can encounter the Buddha himself. Kumārajīva also received instruction from Mañjuśrī and then revised his translations. Kumārajīva was an extraordinary person, different from those around him. We should not let criticism about the concubines disparage his attainments on the matter of mysterious metaphysics.” (*Daoxuan lüshi gantong lu*, T.2107:437c23–438a5.)

Another question: “When was the rock figure that appeared from the mountain near Xianji Temple in Fangzhou produced?”

Answer: “The image was made by Duke Mu of Qin (r. 660–621 B.C.E.). The location where the image appeared is that of the temple established by King Mu of Zhou. After the Buddha left the world the fourth daughter of King Aśoka also made images and stupas, and made offerings to them here. At that time there was one person who had attained the first, second, or third fruits (i.e., stream-winner, once-returner, nonreturner), whom Minister Youyu of Qin always honored. In the past, at the time of the Kāśyapa Buddha, a temple was built here. The monk Xianji built the temple and it was named after him.” (*Daoxuan lüshi gantong lu*, T.2107:438a6–11.)

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Another question: “Today on the summit of the mountain near the Southern Platform Terrace of the Yuhua shrine there is a brick stupa. Each side is about forty steps long. The lowest level is decorated very elaborately. On all four sides are cave shrines. Broken bricks are found nearby and there are also over thirty brick kilns. Elders do not know when this stupa was built. Frequently the sound of a bell is heard.”

Answer: “This is King Mu’s temple, called Mount Ling. At the time of King Aśoka the mountain deity was ordered by imperial edict to build a temple here.

“During the confusion toward the end of the Western Jin dynasty (265–316 C.E.) five barbarian groups dominated the struggle. Liu Yao, who made Chang’an his capital, had several dreams. The buddha of this mountain appeared inside the brick stupa and in the sitting position said to Yao, “You must drink less and do not indulge in licentious behavior. Remove evil ministers and promote honest ones.” Yao did not obey this instruction. Later while in Luoyang he got drunk and fell off a horse, and was captured by Shi Le. Yao realized the meaning of his dream and sent someone to the mountain looking for the buddha figure. The man found it sitting within a small stone stupa. This fit the dream perfectly. Thereupon, Yao destroyed the small stupa and built a big one consisting of nineteen levels. He also built a beautifully elaborate temple building, and called it Fadeng. Three hundred monks were newly ordained and lived in the temple.

“After Yao had died, thirty-two people who had attained the third fruit (nonreturner) lived in the temple. Behind the present stupa the mountain deity built another temple, and offered it to monks who had attained the

second fruit (once-returned). The deity went to Mount Taibo and collected miraculous mushrooms and plants. He offered them to supernatural monks so that they could prolong their lives.

“The temple still exists today but ordinary people cannot see it. The sound of the bell you mentioned is that of the bell of this temple. As for the base of the stupa, though it was laid by Liu Yao the location was that of the temple established by King Mu. It was also the location of Kāśyapa Tathāgata’s ancient temple.”

During the Zhenguan period (627–649 C.E.) in a mountain near the Ciwu River north of the Yuhua shrine a herd of deer was frequently seen. Even when they were chased away they returned again and again. Someone thought that this was strange and dug into the ground where the deer gathered. At the depth of one *zhang* he obtained a stone figure, over one *zhang* long. Offerings are made to this image at the present time. (*Daoxuan lüshi gantong lu*, T.2107:438a12–29.)

Another question: “The sandalwood image of the former Daming Temple in Jingzhou is said to have been made by King Udayana. According to the tradition a copy of the image was brought from there to China under the Liang dynasty. There is also a copy of the image in the present capital city [Chang’an]. Which one is the original?”

Answer: “The copy at Daming Temple is the original. When the founding emperor of the Liang dynasty died the figure was brought to the shores of Jingzhou. In the third year of the Chengsheng period (554–555 C.E.) under Emperor Yuan [of Liang], the [Northern] Zhou dynasty conquered the Liang dynasty. Afterward all treasures were taken by the Northern Zhou. As for the sandalwood image, a Dharma master called Sengzhen hid it in his cell and by offering large bribes to the messenger, he managed to keep the figure from being taken away with the other treasures.”

In the ninth year of the Kaihuang period (589 C.E.) the founding emperor Wen of the Sui dynasty sent messenger Liu Guyan to bring the figure to the capital city. The monks of the temple again pleaded that the image should remain in the Jing and Chu areas. Guyan was originally from this area and agreed to this request. He ordered another copy of the image carved from sandalwood and took the copy to the capital. At that time a brahman monk called Zhenda was hired as the woodworker and he produced

the copy. This is the image that is in Xingshan Temple today. This figure also caused many miraculous occurrences.

396c “The original image stayed at Jingzhou. Monks there covered it in lacquered cloth and the features have become different from the authentic ones. (Note: The image originally reproduced the body of the Buddha seven days after birth. Now the image represents the Buddha in adulthood. Thus, the present appearance of the figure differs greatly from the way it looked originally.)

“Daming (Jetavana) is a place where ancient buddhas lived. For this reason the image refused to be moved north. Recently Dharma Master Yi of Changsha, whom the gods praise secretly, became inspired and removed the lacquered cloth. The true appearance of the image became visible again, greatly increasing the piety of those who observe it. When people opened the cover and saw the miraculous image, it was carved entirely from one piece of sandalwood; no part of it is from a different piece of wood that has been attached to it. The halo and the base are remarkable. They are made of carved ivory and could not possibly have been made by humans. The body of the Xingshan [Temple] figure is different from the original in many ways.” (*Daoxuan lüshi gantong lu*, T.2107:438b1–17.)

Another question: “Near Xiangsi in Fuzhou are many ancient traces of the Buddha’s activities. The traces are marked by inscriptions in ancient scripts but they do not describe their origins. What story lies behind them?”

Answer: “At the time of the Kāśyapa Buddha there was a mountain deity, whose surname was Luo and personal name Ziming. He was a man of Shu. In the past he was a monk who observed precepts. Hating those who violated the precepts, he made many evil vows, including vowing to be reborn as a great evil demon to eat those who violated precepts. Because of this vow he was reborn as the mountain deity. He was accompanied by numerous followers and the territory he ruled over covered over five thousand *li* in the east-west direction, and over two thousand *li* in the north-south direction. Each year he consumed more than ten thousand people. This deity originally was an elder brother of Kāśyapa Buddha. Later, he became his disciple. That buddha took pity on him and therefore came to teach him. Kāśyapa Buddha had to perform many miracles before he could convert him. He conferred the five precepts and taught freely on his previous lives. For this reason the mountain deity stopped killing

people. Fearing that he might change his mind later, Kāśyapa Buddha left traces. King Aśoka built a stupa on top of the summit of the mountain. The deity then hid inside the stone stupa. It was made of white jade. The deity still exists. The temple and the stupa outside of the city were also built by King Aśoka. These buildings are discussed in the *Essay on Transmission*.” (*Daoxuan lüshi gantong lu*, T.2107:438b24–c5.)

Another question: “Lingkan Temple, inside the boundary of the Xingning district on a mountain north of Xunzhou in Nanhai, has many miraculous traces.”

[Answer:] “Because the mountain deity committed many acts with negative karmic consequences, Mañjuśrī, the disciple of the Holy One, took pity on him and came to instruct him. Having learned of karmic retribution, the deity requested Mañjuśrī to leave some traces so that he could worship them and stay away from evil deeds. Mañjuśrī caused the traces to appear for him. These are the traces that we see today. In the third year of the Zhenguan period (629 C.E.) the life of the mountain deity ended and he was reborn in Tuṣita Heaven. Another ghost came to live here, a relative of the previous deity. This new deity committed numerous evil deeds. The old deity who had been reborn in heaven took pity on him and came down to request Mañjuśrī to manifest minor traces in order to teach the deity who had come after him. This deity also became a follower of the right Dharma. For this reason there are major and minor traces on this mountain, and these traces are not there for no reason. They are discussed in the *Essay on Transmission*.” (*Daoxuan lüshi gantong lu*, T.2107:438c5–13.)

Another question: “The buddha figure in the rock cave in a mountain north of Qinzhou frequently emits light. Is the origin of this image recent or far in the past?”

Answer: “This cave existed at the time of both Kāśyapa Buddha and Śākyamuni Buddha. A long time ago the second son of King Mu of Zhou built the figure of Kāśyapa Buddha.” (*Daoxuan lüshi gantong lu*, T.2107:438c14–16.)

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Daoxuan also asked about Buddha Face Mountain and Seven Buddha Canyon on Mount Zhongnan in Weizhou. The deity answered, “This question is answered by the explanation given above. The Kugutian storehouse was built by Kāśyapa Buddha with his own hands. At the present time thirteen *pratyekabuddhas* live in the valley.” (*Daoxuan lüshi gantong lu*, T.2107:43817–19.)

Another question: “According to widely quoted traditions here in China, the Buddha is attributed variously to different periods, such as the time of the Yin dynasty, King Shao of Zhou, and Duke Zhuang of Lu. How can we determine the correct chronology?”

Answer: “Each theory has its own justification. I was born in heaven at the time of King Jie, and observed in detail how the Buddha came down and taught. The Buddha has three bodies. Ordinary people do not see the Dharma body (*dharmakāya*) or the retribution body (*sambhogakāya*), and in these bodies he teaches beings who have reached the final ten bodhisattva stages. Only in his transformation body (*nirmāṇakāya*) does the Buddha cover the threefold–thousand world-systems. Ten billion Śākyamuni Buddhas appear in response to people at different points in time. It may be toward the end of the Yin dynasty, or during the reign of Duke Zhuang of Lu. Whatever the location and time, the tradition reports the same teaching activity of the Buddha. He teaches differently according to the capacities of the recipients. How can we fix the date of his activities? If we speak in terms of the Dharma body or the retribution body, then he is constantly in quietude. There is no difficulty that cannot be explained.” (*Daoxuan lüshi gantong lu*, T.2107: 439b1–8.)

Another question: “Many of the miraculous images found in China are said to have been produced by the fourth daughter of King Aśoka. The circumstances surrounding their origins are obscure and it is difficult to know whether this explanation is reliable. What were the circumstances?”

Answer: “There is no doubt about this matter. The fourth daughter of King Aśoka was not beautiful and could not be married for a long time. She always hated her ugliness. Then she drew a picture of the Buddha with features that were just like her own. After drawing the picture she made a vow, “The Buddha’s features are far superior than those of human beings. How could they be identical to mine? [Let mine be changed so that the Buddha’s features can properly be like mine].” She made this request passionately. After years and months she felt that the Buddha appeared miraculously and suddenly her features changed. [Finding her appearance changed,] her father asked detailed questions about the cause. The daughter told him about her vow.

“The images at Yuhua Temple on this mountain, Changsha Temple in Jingzhou, Gao Li’s temple in Yangdu, and Chongjing Temple in the capital city were all made by the fourth daughter of King Aśoka. Some of these images have inscriptions on their halos and bases, which are written in Sanskrit, and few among the Chinese can read them. King Aśoka made gods and ghosts take these figures to many places, miraculously responding to earnest requests. Those who look at these images see that they have female features.

“The grounds of Chongjing Temple were once a battlefield. Toward the end of the Western Jin dynasty five barbarian groups were active and their soldiers killed each other. Many of them died in this particular location. Human bones are still found today by people when they dig up the soil. Numerous innocent people were murdered cruelly here. Therefore, the gods and ghosts brought the figure here to pacify their spirits and allow them to give rise to good thoughts. When the Northern Zhou dynasty persecuted Buddhism the gods took away the image. When the founder of the Sui dynasty restored support for Buddhism, the figure was raised again.” (*Daoxuan lüshi gantong lu*, T.2107:439b9–22.)

Another question: “Frequently, among worldly people some journey to hell and return. Their spirits disappear and the bodies decay. How could they be restored when they return? Some are gone for seven days and others for even longer, yet, when they return, they are restored to their previous condition.”

Answer: “Human beings are endowed with seven consciousnesses. Each consciousness has a deity. The mind consciousness is the master. Even though the master moves away the other deities are left guarding what remains. This is not strange. In the case of the five precepts, each precept has five deities. For five precepts there are twenty-five deities. If one precept is violated five deities leave but the others remain. When a monk receives full ordination, each precept has two hundred and fifty deities. These two hundred and fifty deities miraculously protect the monk. When one major precept is violated two hundred and fifty deities leave but others remain.” (*Daoxuan lüshi gantong lu*, T.2107:439–439b29–c9.)

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## Fascicle 15

### Chapter Six (*continued*)

## Paying Respect to the Buddha (*continued*)

### 4. Amitābha

(1) Introduction, (2) The Name, (3) Location, (4) The Vision, (5) Karmic Causes, and (6) Scriptural Support.

#### 1. Introduction

It is the unwavering desire of living creatures to avoid pain and seek pleasure. This is a principle that living spiritual beings have followed in the past, namely to abhor impurity and delight in purity. Conduct may be beautiful or evil; the land may be crude or refined. In the *sahā* world, filled with the five kinds of impurities, evil accumulates and forms hills and caves. In the Pure Land, filled with the seven kinds of treasures, good deeds are practiced and bloom into beautiful flowers. Karmic causes define the three main categories of birth; retributions determine the nine subcategories. Because of superior thoughts, treasure terraces and wonderful pavilions stand high. Due to good intentions jade marshes and jeweled ponds shine in purity. Lotus flowers blooming together testify to the substantiality of fatherly compassion. In undulating waves the words of the teaching reach our ears. Through diligent work carried out with firm resolve and through the perfect realization of the necessary karmic causes we can follow the three ways of cultivating the mind, ascend the Golden Terrace, and by means of the ten thoughts ascend to the Land of Happiness.

#### 2. The Name

[Compiler's Comment:] [If] the world shines in cleanliness, it is regarded as "pure." The location where the purity resides is called the "land."

The *She lun* says, “In the land where [the Buddha] resides there are none of the five kinds of impurities. It is like crystal and gold and so is called the land of purity.”

397c The *Fahua lun* (*Miaofa lianhuajing youbotishe*, T.1519:3c11–12, T.1520:13a29–b1) says, “The place where sentient beings without afflictions live is called the ‘pure land.’”

There are four kinds of “pure land.” The first kind is the “Dharma-nature land,” so called because it takes true reality for its substance. Thus, the *Liang She lun* (*She dasheng lun shi*, T.1595:264a6–20) says:

The king of the lotus flower is the basis on which the Pure Land depends. [The king of the lotus flower] is a metaphor for the thusness of the Dharma realm. The Pure Land depends on it as its substance.

The second kind is the “the land of real retribution.” According to the *She lun* (ref. T.1593:131c15–16; T.1596:318a15–16):

The teaching of the two kinds of emptiness is the gate. The three kinds of wisdom form the entrance and exit. Cessation (*śamatha*) and contemplation (*vipaśyanā*) constitute the vehicle. The fundamental nondiscriminatory wisdom is the function.

These refer to the merit of retribution and describe how [the function derive from] the substance.

The third kind is the “phenomenal Pure Land.” This refers to the most beautiful seven jewels, and the land manifested in terms of the five kinds of sense objects: color (form), sound, smell, taste, and touch. Thus, the *She lun* (T.1593:131c5–6) says, “The Buddha resides in the place adorned by all pervading light and seven jewels.”

The *Huayan jing* (T.261:871c14–15) says, “The buddhas’ realms are variously decorated.”

The *Jingtu lun* (*Wuliangshou jing youbotishe*, T.1524:231c13) says, “[The Pure Land] has many rare treasures and is decorated beautifully.”

In addition, the newly translated *Pusazang jing* (*Dabaoji jing, pusazang hui*, T.310:213b14–16) says:

Even if in such a world a great fire blazes, if the Tathāgata is there, whether

walking around, standing, sitting, or lying down, the water of eight superior qualities will spring forth spontaneously from the ground.

The fourth kind is the “the Pure Land of transformation.” This means that the seven jewels and other objects of the five senses produced by the Buddha have been miraculously transformed into the substance of the land. Thus, the *Niepan jing* (*Nirvana Sutra*, T.374:371b22–24, T.375:611a7–9) says:

Because of the Buddha’s supernatural powers the [entire surface of the] ground is soft and there are hills, soil, or pebbles . . . it is like the Pure Land of Amitāyus Buddha in the West.

The *Da zhuangyan lun jing* (T.1604:600a4–5) says, “Because his wisdom is free and realizes whatever it wishes, it manifests the world of purity that is like crystals and beryl.”

Furthermore, the *Weimo jing* (T.474:520c7–11) says, “By touching the ground with his toe the Buddha makes manifest the world of purity and other similar conditions.”

Again, the *Shidi jing* (T.1522:139c22, 140a5–6) says, “As sentient beings wish to see them, so do objects appear.”

These scriptures and treatises all clarify how the Pure Land is produced through transformation. It exists because the Buddha’s supernatural powers manifest it. When this power is withdrawn the Pure Land no longer exists. For this reason it is called “the land of transformation.”

### 3. Location

[Compiler’s Comment:] I have explained above the four kinds of pure lands, but two of these are more important: first, the land of retribution, and second, the land of transformation. These two lands refer to the land on the level of principle and the land on the level of phenomena.

The teaching of the land of retribution refers to the fact that as the Buddha Tathāgata appeared in the world, the substance of all good deeds he performed is pure and is not confined to the three realms. Thus, the *Jingtu lun* (T.1524:230c21, 231c8–9) says, “As we observe that world, it is superior to the three realms.”

Also, the *Zhidu lun* says:

The wondrous Pure Land is beyond the three realms.

Wherever the Buddha resides, he takes “no location” as “location.” Thus, he is beyond the worlds in the ten directions. Or with his Dharma body he abides securely in the Pure Land.

The same treatise also says (*Zhidu lun*, T.1509:302c6–7):

398a Śākyamuni Buddha also has a pure world like the kingdom of Amitābha. Amitābha Buddha also has pure and impure worlds like [those of] Śākyamuni Buddha.

Also, the *Niepan jing* (*Nirvana Sutra*, T.374:508c21–22, T.375:752c12–13) says, “In fact I do not go outside of the Jambudvīpa world.”

Again, a verse in the *Lotus Sutra* (T.262:43c5–8) says:

I am always at Mount Gṛdhrakūṭa,  
And at other locations.  
When for sentient beings the world age comes to the end  
And the world burns up in massive fire,  
This land where I am is safe and secure,  
Always filled with gods and humans.  
Gardens, forests, and various buildings  
Are decorated with many different kinds of treasures.

Again, the *Huayan jing* says:

The Pure Land of the Tathāgata is located in the Tathāgata’s jeweled crown, or in his earring, or in his necklace, or inside the folded pattern of his robe, or in a follicle of his hair. Thus, a hair follicle can contain the entire world.

From this we learn, as it is said in the *Shizhu* [*piposha*] *lun* (T.1521:72a14–15), “With one step the Buddha crosses over cosmic systems as numerous as grains of sand in the Ganges River.”

These comments contribute to our understanding of this land.

As for the land of transformation it is where the Buddha resides; this land is not a specific separate location. It is dependent on the land of retribution; it gives that land a more tangible, though crude, appearance. Sometimes it extends everywhere throughout the ten directions. Sometimes it is limited

to one world. It guides sentient beings such as gods and human beings of the three vehicles just as Amitābha Buddha guided the ordinary beings in this world and led them to dwell in peace in the Kingdom of Purity. Sometimes the Tathāgata turns what is polluted into something pure, as when he touches the ground and makes it pure, comparable to a heavenly palace. These examples illustrate [how the land of transformation works].

To put it another way, to sentient beings, depending on the responses of their karmic seeds, the common characteristics of the outside world appear differently [to them] as pure or polluted. Thus, beings in six different realms of existence see the world differently. These differences are all due to the external perfuming by language. Consciousness forms the seeds, and as these seeds respond to the external world, images appear. These images fundamentally are the phenomenal aspect of the fundamental consciousness. The common characteristics [of the objective world] and the seeds make the images appear. The consciousness that manifests images is the cause and condition. When the common characteristics are combined with the supplementary condition of inner karmic retribution, because of this supplementary condition the common characteristics are perceived differently, either as pain or pleasure.

#### 4. The Vision

[Compiler’s Comment:] Ordinary beings and the followers of the two vehicles see Amitābha Buddha in the polluted world; bodhisattvas see Amitābha Buddha in the Pure Land. These two statements indicate that the land of retribution is simply pure; the land of response contains both impurity and purity. Thus, the *Jingtu lun* says:

There are five kinds of lands. The first is the “simply pure land.” This is attributed only to the fruit of buddhahood. The second is the “pure and impure land.” Here purity dominates impurity. This is attributed to bodhisattvas of the eighth stage and above. The third is the “land of balance between purity and impurity.” This is attributed to bodhisattvas of the first to seventh stages. The fourth is the “impure and pure land.” Here impurity dominates purity. This is attributed to beings at the stage of nature, [the second of the ten stages shared by the inferior three vehicles], which is lower than the bodhisattva’s ten stages mentioned above. The fifth is the

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“impure land.” This is attributed to those who have not entered the stage of nature. Those in the fifth land see this last land but do not see the first four. Those in the fourth land see the last two lands but do not see the first three. Those in the third land see the last three lands but do not see the first two. Those in the second land see the last four but do not see the first. The buddhas in the first land know and see thoroughly all the five lands above and below.

## 5. Karmic Causes

[Compiler’s Comment:] Scriptures and treatises disagree with each other. There are ten theories. According to some, one practice leads to rebirth in the Pure Land. Thus, the *Nirvana Sutra* (374:384a6–14, T.375623c26–624a4) says, “King Youde and the monk Juede are reborn in the Kingdom of the Immovable (Akṣobhya Buddha) due to their efforts to guard the teaching.”

Also, the *Weimo jing* (T.475:538a29–b2) says:

The straightforward mind is the bodhisattva’s pure land. When the bodhisattva attains buddhahood he does not speak falsely, and sentient beings are reborn in his buddha land.

According to some, two practices lead to rebirth in the Pure Land. According to the Liang *She lun* (T.1597:377a10–11):

Good dharmas that lead one beyond this world refer to the good roots produced by nondiscriminating knowledge and by subsequently obtained knowledge.

They are named as the cause of good dharmas that lead one beyond this world.

Sometimes meditation and wisdom are said to constitute the vehicle.

According to some, three practices lead to rebirth in the Pure Land. The *Nirvana Sutra* says, “Thinking in the three concentrations of ‘emptiness,’ ‘noncontrivance,’ and ‘no characteristics’ leads to rebirth in the Pure Land.”

The *Guan wuliangshoufo jing* (T.365:341c7–13) says:

For all future ordinary beings to be reborn in the Pure Land they must cultivate three works. First, they must look after their parents with love, serve their teacher, avoid killing, and practice the ten good deeds. Second,

they must receive the Three Refuges and the complete precepts for monks and nuns and not violate ritual rules. Third, they must produce the mind of seeking enlightenment (*bodhicitta*), and believing deeply in the relationship between causes and consequences and reciting Mahayana scriptures, they must be diligent in practice. These three things are called the work of purity.

According to some, four practices lead to rebirth in the Pure Land. The *Weimo jing* (T.475:538b12–15) says:

The four limitlessly selfless minds (*apramāṇas*) are the bodhisattva's pure land. When the bodhisattva attains buddhahood he [achieves the four limitlessly selfless minds of] loving-kindness (*maitrī*) compassion (*karuṇā*), empathetic joy (*muditā*) and equanimity (*upekṣā*), and sentient beings are reborn in his buddha land.

The four methods of guiding others are the bodhisattvas' pure land. (These are giving, kind words, benefits, and participation.) These are the bodhisattva's pure land. When the bodhisattva attains buddhahood he liberates the sentient beings under his guidance, and they are reborn in his pure land.

According to some, five practices lead to rebirth in the Pure Land. The *Jingtu lun* (T.1524:231b12–13) says, “The first is worship, the second is praise, the third is making a vow, the fourth is contemplation, and the fifth is redirecting merit.”

According to some, six practices lead to rebirth in the Pure Land. The *Weimo jing* (T.475:538b4–12) says:

Giving is the bodhisattva's pure land. When the bodhisattva attains buddhahood he can make the gift of everything, and sentient beings are reborn in his pure land.

The passage continues listing each of the six perfections, and ends with the following:

Wisdom is the bodhisattva's pure land. When the bodhisattva attains buddhahood he is endowed with every kind of wisdom, and sentient beings are reborn in his pure land.

According to some, seven practices lead to rebirth in the Pure Land. The *Weimo jing* (T.475:549c13) says:

[The pool is] covered with the flowers of seven purities, and those who bathe there are free of impurities.

398c First is the purity of precept, second is the purity of meditation, and third is the purity of insight. Fourth is the purity of being free from doubts about salvation, fifth is the purity of distinguishing the right path from the wrong path, sixth is the purity of practice, and seventh is the purity of the knowledge that leads to the destruction of bonds. The first two refer to the path of expediency. The next three refer to the path of insight. The next refers to the path of practice. The last one refers to the path that transcends learning. Through these seven purities the four paths are realized. When the four paths are realized one dwells through karmic retribution in the Pure Land.

According to some, eight practices lead to rebirth in the Pure Land. The *Weimo jing* (T.475:553a28–b7) says:

[Question:] Which dharmas do bodhisattvas practice perfectly to be reborn in the Pure Land?

Answer: “Through realizing eight dharmas they are reborn in the Pure Land: (1) To benefit sentient beings generously without expecting rewards; to suffer various pains in place of other sentient beings. (2) To donate all the merits that one has acquired. (3) To treat others equally, readily humbling oneself. (4) To view all bodhisattvas as if they were buddhas. (5) To be free of doubt when hearing scriptures that one has not heard before. (6) Not to disagree with hearers (*śrāvakas*). (7) Not to be envious of offerings given to others and to promote one’s own gains; to gain control over one’s mind. (8) To always reflect on one’s faults and not accuse others of their failings; to always seek merit singlemindedly.

According to some, nine practices lead to rebirth in the Pure Land. The *Wuliangshou jing* (ref. *Guan wuliangshoufo jing*, T.365:344c9–346a26) says, “To speak in outline, there are three categories; to speak in detail, there are nine levels [of persons].”

According to some, ten practices lead to rebirth in the Pure Land. The *Weimo jing* (T.475:538b23–26) says:

The ten good deeds are the bodhisattva's pure land. When the bodhisattva attains buddhahood sentient beings who enjoy long lives, are wealthy and who follow the path of purity, who speak truthfully, always with gentle words, and who do not abandon their congregation, who are good at resolving conflicts, and whose words always are beneficial, who are not jealous nor angry, and who hold correct views, will be born in his pure land.

The *Mile fawen jing* says:

Those who wish to be reborn in the Pure Land cultivate the ten thoughts that will enable them to be reborn there. (1) To constantly maintain compassion for all sentient beings. (2) To never disparage other people's practices; those who do so will never be reborn in the Pure Land. (3) From the depth of their hearts to form the sentiment of loving-kindness toward all sentient beings and abandon the sentiment of cruelty. (4) To produce the commitment to protect the teaching (Dharma) and to be willing to sacrifice one's life for it; to never revile any item of the teaching. (5) In enduring [hardships] to remain firmly convinced [of the truth of the Dharma]. (6) To keep one's mind deeply pure and not be defiled by profits. (7) To produce in one's mind the wisdom that knows everything in its particularity; to constantly meditate and to never neglect meditation. (8) To entertain toward all sentient beings the sentiment of honoring them, and to abandon arrogance; to be humble in speech. (9) To never form attachment to [idle] conversation. The mind that is close to enlightenment produces a variety of conditions that form roots of goodness and does not produce disturbing and distracting thoughts. (10) To contemplate the Buddha constantly in thought and remove all other objects that appear in the mind.

You should know, Maitreya, that if one keeps these ten thoughts arising one after another, one will certainly be reborn in the Pure Land.

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It is also said [in the *Weimo jing*, (T.475:538b17–19)]:

The thirty-seven auxiliaries of enlightenment are the bodhisattva's pure land. When the bodhisattva attains buddhahood, sentient beings who understand the four applications of mindfulness, the four right efforts, the four bases of psychic power, the five dominant faculties, the five powers,

the seven limbs of enlightenment, and the eight limbs of the path (i.e., eightfold path) will be reborn in his Pure Land.

Or, as the *Wuliangshou jing* (ref. *Guan wuliangshoufo jing*, T.365:345c4–5) says, “Through uttering the ten great vows one is reborn in the Pure Land.”

(Note: The views presented above differ from each other in that some give detailed accounts while others are only summaries. Yet through following one and the same teaching and being in accord with the mysterious principle, every practitioner is able to be reborn in the Pure Land.)

Verses from the *Wuliangshou jing youbotishe* (T.1524:230c21–24) say:

Observing the universe, I go beyond the three worlds.  
The highest state is like empty space, wide and limitless.  
The correct path is filled with great compassion.  
By renouncing the world, [the Buddha] planted the root of goodness  
that brings benefits.  
Accompanied by the light of purity, he shines light like a mirror,  
like the sun and the moon.

[Compiler’s Comment:] In order to be reborn in the Pure Land on the basis of real retribution, one must renounce the householder’s life and produce the correct cause that is undefiled. Only when one’s practice accords with the true principle will a person achieve rebirth in the Pure Land. If people in the lowest of the three categories of human beings who have never engaged in the correct practice accidentally perform one practice, or on the day of their death entertain the thought of the Buddha ten times, they are reborn in the provisionally manifested Pure Land but they are unable to see the retribution Pure Land. Details of the methods of contemplation are found in the ten-fascicle essay on Great and Small Vehicle methods of meditation.

## 6. Scriptural Support

The *Amituo guyinshengwang tuoluoni jing* (T.370:352b11–28) says:

At that time the World-honored One told the monks, “At the present time a buddha has appeared in the Western World of Happiness. He is called Amitābha. If a member of the congregation correctly upholds the name of this buddha, due to the merit produced by this when he faces death

Amitābha, accompanied by a large group of attendants, will go to him and will enable [the dying person] to see him. When the person sees the Buddha and his attendants, he will be filled with joy and his merit will double. Because of this development, his rebirth will never take the defiled form [of birth from a womb]. He will be spontaneously born in the pure and colorful location of a lotus flower decorated with jewels. Endowed with six supernatural powers and shining brilliantly, Amitābha Buddha is accompanied by hearers. He is the Tathāgata, One Worthy of Receiving Offerings (Arhat), and has obtained universal wisdom.

His kingdom (buddha land) is called Qingtai. This is the location where a holy king resides. The city is ten thousand *yojanas* wide and long and is filled with descendants of warrior clans. Amitābha Buddha's father is called the Holy and Universal Monarch Yueshang ("Above the Moon"). His mother is called Shusheng miaoyan ("Exceptionally Beautiful Face"). His son is called Yueming ("Moon Brightness"). The disciple who looks after his daily needs is called Wugoucheng (Vimalakīrti). The disciple of wisdom is called Xianguang ("Light of Wisdom"). The disciple who is diligent in practicing supernatural powers is called Dahua ("Great Transformation"). At that time King Māra is called Wusheng ("No Victory"). Devadatta is called Jijing ("Quietude")."

The *Wuliangshou jing* (T.360:279a3–4) says:

The Buddha told Maitreya, "Due to the name of Amitābha Buddha it will be easy even to pass through the middle of a ferocious fire in the large cosmic system."

399b

The *Huayan jing* (T.278:589c2–19) says:

At that time the bodhisattva *mahāsattva* Xinwang said to the other bodhisattvas, "Sons of the Buddha, one world age in Śākyamuni Buddha's land in this *sahā* world is one day and one night in Amitābha Buddha's land in the World of Happiness. One world age in the World of Happiness is one day and one night in the diamond buddha land in the Shengfuchuang ("Holy Robe and Banner") world. One world age in the Shengfuchuang world is one day and one night in the Shangle guanming qingjing kaifu

(“Opening of the Pure Light of Good Pleasure”) buddha land in the Butuizhuan yinsheng lun (“Wheel of the Voice of Nonretrogression”) world. One world age in the Butuizhuan yinsheng lun world is one day and one night in the Fachuang (“Dharma Banner”) buddha land in the Ligou (“Free of Defilement”) world. One world age in the Ligou world is one day and one night in the Shizi (“Lion”) buddha land in the Shangdeng (“Good Lamp”) world. One world age in the Shangdeng world is one day and one night in the Lushenazang (“Vairocana Buddha Storehouse”) buddha land in the Shanguangming (“Good Light”) world. One world age in the Shanguangming world is one day and one night in the Faguangming qingjing kaifu lianhua (“Pure Light of Dharma Opening as a Lotus Flower”) buddha land in the Chaochu (“Going Beyond”) world. One world age in the Chaochu world is one day and one night in the Yiqie guangming (“All Lights”) buddha land in the Zhuangyanhui (“Adorning Wisdom”) world. One world age in the Zhuangyanhui world is one day and one night in the Jueyue (“Enlightenment Moon”) buddha land in the Jingguangming (“Mirror Light”) world. Son of the Buddha, continuing in this way for millions and billions of worlds, one world age in the last of these worlds is one day and one night in the Xianshou (“Wise Head”) buddha land in the Sheng lianhua (“Superior Lotus Flower”) world. This buddha land is filled with great bodhisattvas, such as Samantabhadra Bodhisattva.

The *Amitufo jing* (T.364:331c3–8) says:

The Buddha said to the community of monks (sangha), “This Crown Prince Ajātaśatru and these sons of five hundred wealthy householders, after an innumerable number of world ages, will all become buddhas comparable to Amitābha Buddha.”

The Buddha continued, “This Crown Prince Ajātaśatru and these sons of five hundred wealthy householders, after having stayed on the bodhisattva path for an innumerable number of world ages, and having made offerings to forty billion buddhas, have now returned to make offerings to me. At the time of Kāśyapa Buddha in the previous age, Crown Prince Ajātaśatru and these sons of five hundred wealthy householders were my disciples. Mutual acquaintances are now gathered together.”

## Miracle Stories

(Note: Ten miracle stories are summarized.)

Song dynasty (420–479 C.E.): Monk Senglian; Layman Ge Jizhi; Nun Huimu; Wei Shizi; Monk Tanyuan. Liang dynasty (502–557 C.E.): Monk Fayue. Sui dynasty (581–618 C.E.): Fifty images of the fifty bodhisattvas; Monk Huihai. Tang dynasty (618–907 C.E.): Monk Dao'ang; Monk Shangzhou. 399c

### Song Dynasty

The monk Sengliang of Changsha Temple in Jiangling was passionate in his commitment and firm in his observation of the precepts. He wished to be reborn in the Western Pure Land and made a vow to produce a six *zhang*-tall Amitābha image. He made immense efforts but even after many years he could not fulfill the vow. He heard that the shrine at Mount Guqi in Xiangzhou had a great number of bronze vessels. He wanted to convert the deities [of this shrine] and use the metal there to fulfill his vow.

The monk went to Regional Inspector Zhang Shao and explained the situation to him, asking him to make available several boats and a hundred strong men. Zhang said, “This shrine has miraculous powers. Those who violate it are killed immediately. Furthermore, barbarians guard it. It would be difficult to accomplish your goal. [Seng]liang said, “I will share the benefit with you, my Lord. The death will be only mine.” Zhang then offered the monk the men and the boats.

Even before the night had passed the deities learned of what was to take place. Strong winds shook the mountain and it became dark with heavy clouds. Birds and animals made strange sounds. When [Seng]liang arrived suddenly the mist cleared and the sun shone. As they approached the shrine they saw two large bronze vessels, each several hundreds of *hu* in size, about twenty steps in front of it. They saw a large snake, over ten *zhang* long, jump out of a vessel and stretch across their path. The hundred men accompanying the monk all retreated. [Seng]liang straightened his robe and proceeded. Shaking his staff, he said to the snake, “The karmic effects of your sins in previous lives caused you to be reborn as a snake. As you have not heard of the Three Treasures, why did you pull yourself out of the vessel? I am making a six *zhang*-tall Amitābha image and heard that this place has many bronze

vessels. So I have come from afar to visit it. Will you please not block the road and allow me to proceed?" The snake then raised its head, looked at [Seng]liang, and withdrew.

[Seng]liang then led the men to remove all the [bronze] vessels, which they loaded onto hand-drawn carriages. At the end of the hall there was one vessel, four *sheng* in capacity, which served as a spittoon. A lizard, over two *chi* long, was jumping in and out of it. This vessel was not taken. Of the vessels that were large and heavy, fewer than one in ten was taken. They filled the boats with the small vessels of high quality and started back. The guardians of the shrine did not dare stand in their way.

[Seng]liang returned to the city and cast the image. The work was completed in the ninth year of the Yuanjia period (432 C.E.). Handsome and austere, the image shone in dignity. The story of the miraculous circumstances around the miraculous production of the image spread widely to the capital city. Emperor Wen of the Song dynasty (r. 424–453 C.E.) respectfully brought the image to the capital city and since it lacked the flaming halo he ordered a gold leaf halo to be made for it. He wanted to house the image at Anle Temple, but many recommended the pagoda at Pengcheng, named after its location and placed in a prominent place near the gate. The image was sent there. At the beginning of the reign of Emperor Ming (r. 465–472 C.E.) the emperor's previous residence was turned into a temple and a request was made to move the image there. Thus, the image used to reside in the great hall of Xianggong Temple. (Note: This miracle story is from the *Gaoseng zhuan*, T.2059:411a3–22, compiled under the Liang dynasty.)

400a Ge Jizhi was a man from Jurong, and a descendent of Zhichuan. His wife was from the Ji family of the same commandery. She was very elegant in appearance and possessed womanly virtues. Jizhi devoted his life to the study of immortals. His wife also did the same but her mind found delight in the Buddha's teaching. She never tired of constantly cultivating the virtue of sincerity. In the thirteenth year of the Yuanjia period (436 C.E.), while she was working at her loom, she realized that the clouds had suddenly dispersed and the sun was shining brightly. The sky was clear. So she put down the handle of the loom and looked around in all directions. In the western direction she saw the true form of the Tathāgata, while decorated canopies and banners

glittered throughout the Milky Way. Delighted, she said to herself, “This must be Amitābha Buddha of whom the scripture speaks.” She immediately lowered her head and paid respect to the Buddha. Seeing her pay respect in this way, [Ge] Jizhi went to her. His wife took his hand and pointed to where the Buddha was [in the sky]. Jizhi could also see half of the Buddha’s body and the banners and canopies. Suddenly, the vision disappeared. The clouds and the sun shone brilliantly with five-colored light. Neighbors and relatives all saw the bright sky. After a while the light slowly disappeared. Many in this village took refuge in the Dharma.

The surname of the nun Huimu was Fu. She renounced the householder’s life at age eleven and upheld the precepts of the Small Vehicle. She stayed at the temple in Zhuyi Village in Liang Commandery. When she began reading the *Larger Perfection of Wisdom Scripture* she read two fascicles each day.

Her teacher Huichao once built a scripture hall. [Hui]mu went there to pay respects and saw a monk in the northeastern corner inside the building. He was golden in color and wore a black robe. His feet did not touch the ground.

Again, when she was reciting the scripture while lying down in the middle of the night, she dreamed that she saw in the western direction lotus flowers in a bathing pool. Beings who had reached there by transformation sat in these flowers. There was one large flower, the only flower in which no one was sitting. [Hui]mu wanted to climb into the flower. As she pulled herself, without thinking, she began to recite the scripture. Her voice was loud and [Hui]mu’s mother, thinking that she was having a nightmare, woke her up.

[Hui]mu’s mother was very old and had lost all her teeth. [Hui]mu always chewed food for her mother to feed her. Because she had chewed food for her mother after midday she thought that she could not be entirely pure, and even though she had reached the appropriate age she refused to accept the complete set of precepts for full ordination.

After her mother passed away, [Hui]mu removed weeds from around the temple and opened the altar. She requested her master to confer on her the complete set of precepts. Suddenly at the altar she saw heaven and earth appear in brilliant light. Everything was golden in color. When she looked up and turned her head to the west, she saw a deity wearing a many-layered silken robe. The color of the robe was reddish-yellow. The deity approached

[Hui]mu and then moved away, and then disappeared after a while. She kept these miraculous visions to herself and did not speak of them to others.

[Hui]mu's elder brother was a monk and, having heard something of these visions, he wanted to know the details. He provoked her, "You have been cultivating the Way for many years and yet nothing extraordinary has happened to you. You should now grow out your hair and leave the convent." When she heard this [Hui]mu was frightened, thinking that he meant what he said. So she told him in rough outline about the visions. Only the nun Jingcheng had heard of [Hui]mu's attainments. [Jing]cheng went to her, and becoming friendly with her, skillfully managed to ask questions about her visions. [Hui]mu told her the story in detail.

400b Later, when [Hui]mu was worshiping Amitābha Buddha in the company of her colleague, she prostrated herself on the ground and did not get up again. Everyone thought she had fallen asleep. Her colleagues nudged her and asked her questions but [Hui]mu did not answer. Jingcheng alone was distressed and asked persistently. [Hui]mu said, "When I prostrated myself on the ground I dreamed I went to the Pure Land and saw the Buddha, who preached to me the *Shorter Perfection of Wisdom Scripture*. When I had obtained the first four fascicles I was nudged and awakened. I regret this greatly." [Hui]mu died in the fourteenth year of the Yuanjia period (437 C.E.). She was sixty-nine years old.

Wei Shizi was a man from Liang Commandery. He was diligent in serving the Dharma, and his son and daughter also honored and cultivated it. Only his wife was misguided and did not believe in Buddhism. At the beginning of the Yuanjia period (424–453 C.E.), Wei Shizi's daughter, who was fourteen years old, died of illness but after seven days she revived and said, "Prepare a high seat and place on it a copy of the *Wuliangshou jing*." Shizi immediately set up the scripture seat. The daughter first purified herself and worshiped it. Even though she had never read Buddhist scriptures before, she then sat on the seat and began to chant the scripture. Her voice was clear and beautiful. After coming down from the seat, she said to her father, "As soon as I died I went to the Pure Land and saw that inside the pond there were already three large lotus flowers for you, my elder brother, and myself. We will be reborn there later by transformation. Only a flower for my mother was missing. I could not bear this, so I came back to report on this." Having said this, she lost consciousness again. Thereupon the mother began to honor the Dharma.

Ho Tanyuan was a man from Lujiang. His father, Wanshou, served as Palace Aide to the Censor-in-Chief. [Tan]yuan served the Dharma most diligently and upheld the bodhisattva precepts. At the age of eighteen, in the ninth year of the Yuanjia period (432 C.E.), his father died and out of extreme grief Tanyuan became ill and almost died. In addition to the ritual shouting and dancing practiced on such occasions, in his mind he took refuge in the Pure Land and prayed for a miraculous response. At that time [Tan]yuan invited monks to his residence and several monks, including his teacher Senghan, were always there. [Tan]yuan constantly expressed repentance for his past karma toward [Seng]han, fearing that these conditions would in the end prevent a miraculous response from happening. Every time Senghan urged him to practice diligently and not slacken in his efforts.

On the sixteenth day of the tenth month the monks went to sleep after the scriptural recitation. During the fourth watch Tanyuan suddenly began to speak, chanting verses. Senghan was taken aback and questioned him. [Tan]yuan said, “I see the body of the Buddha, golden in color and shaped like the walking image here. Golden light surrounds the body and shooting flames reach higher than nine *zhang*. Banners and flowers are all around the Buddha, filling the entire sky. It is beautiful beyond words.” At that time [Tan]yuan was in the western anteroom. Saying that the Buddha comes from the West, he turned toward the western direction and lingered there, calling to the vision as it quickly receded.

Tanyuan suffered chronically from asthma and had difficulty breathing. Yet on that evening he was vigorous and moved about jauntily. He then raised his hand, doused it with perfume, and taking flowers from the garden, he scattered them around the Buddha.

His mother said to [Tan]yuan, “If you go now, will you not think of me?” [Tan]yuan did not reply. Suddenly he took to bed. People in the household had been believers and when they heard about this miracle they were delighted. They were not greatly distressed. At the fifth watch [Tan]yuan died. The residence was filled with a fragrance that lasted for several days.

(Note: The above four stories are from the *Mingxiang ji*.)

#### Liang Dynasty

Fayue of Zhenjue Temple in the capital city was a monk who followed simple precepts. Toward the end of the Qi dynasty (479–502 C.E.) he was

400c appointed head monk and stayed at Zhenjue Temple, engaged in the work of building temples. All four divisions of the Buddhist community (monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen) followed him willingly. [Fa]yue had heard of the eight *zhang*-tall golden image at Songwang Temple in Pengcheng, which had been produced by Wang Zhongde, Chariot and Horse General and Regional Inspector of Xuzhou under the Song dynasty (420–479 C.E.). In the craftsmanship of its beautiful features the image stood out as the best in the region north of the Changjiang River. Whenever there were disturbances around the border of the region or irregularities in the monastic community, the image sweated; the amount of the precipitation corresponded to the severity of the catastrophes.

At the beginning of the Taishi period (465–471 C.E.) under the Song dynasty Pengcheng belonged to the north. Barbarians tried to move the statue yet even ten thousand workers could not move it.

At the beginning of the rule of the Qi dynasty several commanderies belonging to Yanzhou rebelled and joined the south, and monks were forced to assist in the defense of a fortress. At that time the Duke of Lanling, who led the barbarian troops, conquered the fortress and took many monks as prisoners. He then proceeded to imprison all the monks in the two rebel regions and reported to the illegitimate [northern] court that they had abetted the rebellion. At that time the image sweated and the entire hall became wet. Qian, the illegitimate prince of the Liang, was in Pengcheng at the time. Not knowing whether to believe the report, he went himself to the location of the statue and had it cleaned off, but as people wiped the figure the sweat came pouring out and could not be stopped. The prince then burned incense and, worshipping the image, sincerely pledged, “The monks are innocent. I myself will protect them and not allow harm to come to them. If the miraculous power of the image is real, let the sweat stop pouring out when I wipe it.” Thereupon he wiped the image with his own hand. As he did so the spot he touched became dry. The prince reported this in detail to the court and all the captured monks were released. [Fa]yue took delight in seeing miraculous images and vowed to go to see this statue and worship it, but it was sheltered in an inaccessible place and in the end he did not succeed in fulfilling this vow.

Emperor Ming (466–472 C.E.) of the Song dynasty had previously tried to make a golden image, eight *zhang* in height. After four unsuccessful

attempts to cast the figure he reduced its height to four *zhang*. [Fa]yue and Zhijing, a monk at Baima Temple, gathered supporters and wanted to recast the image as an eight *zhang*-tall image of Amitābha. Having declared this intention, they began collecting the metal. This was toward the end of the rule of the Qi dynasty, when the world was in disorder. The project had to be abandoned. At the beginning of the succeeding Liang dynasty the project was presented to the court again and permission was granted. Assistance was offered as well for making the halo and the base of the image. Competent administrators and skilled artisans would be provided as needed.

On the third day of the fifth month of the eighth year of the Tianjian period (509 C.E.) at Xiaozhuangyan Temple a buddha image in the original size (i.e., eight *zhang*) was cast. Forty thousand *jin* of copper were melted and used yet this did not fill the mold even to the height of the chest [of the figure]. Many prominent families sent immeasurable amounts of copper, which was melted down and poured, but the mold was still not completely filled. The difficulty encountered earlier appeared to have recurred. This was reported to the court. The emperor issued an edict to send three thousand *jin* of copper as a spiritual donation. When they began to make the preparations for this gift at the court, a beautiful carriage, used at the palace, appeared at the side of the furnace. The attendant brought the edict; the copper was on the carriage. The container of the copper flew up and as the metal was melted down the mold was filled at once. Both the carriage and its attendant soon disappeared. When the copper sent by the court arrived, it became known that copper had been received earlier from a different source. This was truly a miraculous occurrence. Artisans danced in delight and monks, nuns, and laypeople uttered praises. When the mold was opened and the size of the image was measured, the image had expanded to nine *zhang* tall, yet the halo fitted it perfectly. Two large coins, which had not been melted down, were found in the folds of the robe. Nobody could figure out how this could have happened. Forty thousand units of copper were first calculated to be more than sufficient. The three thousand used later should not have been sufficient to cover the shortfall. Yet miraculous occurrences are not guided by designs of the mind. Thus, the mysterious working of divine principles is beyond human comprehension.

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When the [gathering of] the material for the image was first completed, the monk Daoshao happened to be practicing repentance rites through the

night. Suddenly where the material had been placed he saw a brilliant light. Looking at it closely and for a long time, he realized that it was a miraculous manifestation of divine light. Three days after the casting took place, when the mold had not yet been opened, Meditation Master Daodu, a noble and strict monk, donated his seven-piece robe to cover the cost of opening the mold around the crown on the head of the image. Suddenly, he saw two monks kneeling down and opening the mold around the image's hair knot. When he came closer to look at them, they suddenly disappeared.

When the monks [Fa]yue and [Zhi]jing passed away one after the other, the court issued an edict entrusting the care of the image to Sengyou of Dinglin Temple. On the twenty-sixth day of the ninth month of the same year, the image was moved to Guangzhai Temple. There was no rain that month and dust was everywhere. On the night before the image was to be moved, light clouds filled the sky above and a gentle rain provided moisture to the area. Sengyou was performing walking meditation at the place where the image was, thinking of the weather. From a distance he saw the light of flames darting up and down around the image. The light looked like lamps or candles. He also heard voices uttering words urging repentance and worship. He entered through the door to investigate the matter closely. Everything immediately disappeared. Jiang Xiaosun, the guard of the temple, also saw this at that time. That night merchants on the Huai River all heard voices from under a large ship, urging that the bridges be repaired. Several hundreds of people seemed to have been there. Thus, people realized that the image had miraculously become so heavy that it could not be moved by human beings. Later, the halo and base were cast, both of which were also extraordinary. This statue is the best of golden images east of the Cong River. (Note: This story about two miraculous images is from the *Liang gaoseng zhuan*, T.2059:412b17–413a9.)

### Sui Dynasty

The images of Amitābha Buddha and fifty bodhisattvas that existed at the time of Sui rule were miraculous images from the Western Region of India. According to tradition, a bodhisattva of Kukkuṭārāma Temple who possessed five supernatural powers went to the Pure Land and presented a request to Amitābha Buddha, “Sentient beings in the *sahā* world make vows to be

reborn in the Pure Land but they do not have a representation of the Buddha as an image from which they might draw the power to uphold the vow. Please confer an image on them.” The Buddha said, “You should return first; the image will soon appear there.” When the bodhisattva returned the image was already there: one buddha and fifty bodhisattvas each sitting on a lotus flower had appeared on a tree leaf. The bodhisattva took the leaf and copied what was on it. These copies circulated widely.

Emperor Ming of the Han had a miraculous dream and sent messengers in search of the proper way to pray to the deity; the messengers successfully brought Kāśyapa and Mātāṅga to Luoyang. Later, a son of Mātāṅga’s sister who had become a monk brought this same miraculous image painting to China and had copies of it made. After a short while he took the image painting back to the West. The copies were preserved but not circulated widely. Many years passed, through the times of the Wei (220–265 C.E.) and Jin dynasties (265–419 C.E.). During persecutions of the Buddhist teaching copies of scriptures and images were destroyed. Miraculous occurrences around this painted image almost disappeared.

When Emperor Wen of the Sui dynasty restored support to Buddhism, a monk called Mingxian obtained from Dharma Master Daochang of the Northern Qi dynasty (550–577 C.E.) a copy of a painting. The explanation of the origin of this painting agreed with the existing tradition [of the Kukkuṭārāma Temple bodhisattva image]. Therefore, he made copies of the painting and circulated them everywhere throughout the empire. At that time there was a Northern Qi painter called Cao Zhongda, originally from the state of Cao, who was good at applying colors and very skilled in the Indian style of painting. His copies of miraculous paintings of the West enjoyed a high reputation among people in the capital city. Thus, the painting on the southern wall of the present temple is an authentic copy of this painting. (Note: This story is from the *Xiyu zhuanji* [*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu*, T.2106:421a17–b3].)

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The monk Huihai of Anle Temple in Jiangdu, whose secular surname was Zhang, was from Wucheng in Qinghe Commandery. He studied scriptures and treatises extensively, but specialized in Pure Land practices. His single-minded cultivation brought miraculous responses. Unexpectedly, the monk Daoquan of Qizhou brought a [painted] Amitābha image, saying, “This is

the image that the bodhisattva of Kukkuṭārāma Temple, who possessed five supernatural powers and flew in the sky to the Pure Land, drew of the buddha there. [Huihai] was always filled with a deep sense of piety and when it became dark he saw a supernatural light shine brightly and auspiciously, as he had wished. Thereupon he diligently copied the image and made the vow for rebirth in the Pure Land his constant thought throughout his life. He would suddenly get up in the middle of the night, prostrate, and face the West as he always did, then sit with crossed legs until dawn. He looked happy and austere, as if the spirit dwelled within him. On the fifth month of the fifth year of the Daye period (609 C.E.) he became mildly ill but as usual he faced the West and sat with legs crossed. When dawn came he passed away. He was sixty-nine years old.

#### Tang Dynasty

Dao'ang of Hanling Mountain Temple in Xiangzhou (his original clan name is unknown), was a man from Wei Commandery. Firmly committed to the faith and upholding its principles, he was penetratingly pure in spirit. Alone, driven by unusual ambitions, he stood nobly outside the world. He had cultivated wisdom and understanding but feared that they did not lead to awakening, and so he formed the aspiration to be reborn in the Western Pure Land. Later, he learned that his life was about to end and reported this in advance to his acquaintances. He was to leave at the beginning of the eighth month. When the time came, he was not at all ill. He asked whether it was time for the meal, and when the sun was at the midpoint in the sky he ascended the high seat. There was something extraordinary about his appearance and the incense burner produced a strange fragrance. Calling members of the congregation toward him, he conferred on them the bodhisattva precepts. His words were incisive and cut through to the hearts of the listeners. At that time the congregation surrounded him to receive his last instructions. [Dao']ang raised his eyes, looked up high, and saw large numbers of deities everywhere, performing on string and wind instruments. A mournfully beautiful tune was heard clearly from a distance. Gods spoke loudly to the monks gathered there, "Deities of Tuṣita Heaven, playing music, have come down to welcome him." [Dao']ang said, "Karmic retribution is the foundation of life and death. This is not what I have sought all this time. I have always prayed for the Pure

Land. Why is my wish not heard in spite of the sincerity of this practice?" When he finished speaking he saw the gods playing music rise up higher, and they soon disappeared.

Then he saw the western sky filled with incense, flowers, and performers playing music. Like a cloud, this vision flew over and circled above his head. All the monks saw it. [Dao']ang said, "Monks, do not be alarmed. Now the spiritual beings from the West have come to welcome me. I should now go to them." When he finished speaking, the incense burner dropped from his hand and his life came to an end on the high seat. He died at Baoying Temple, at the age sixty-nine, in the eighth month of the seventh year of the Zhenguan period (633 C.E.). Both monks and laymen lamented aloud; a crowd as large as a mountain gathered to observe them. When the body was moved for temporary burial [people saw that] on the bottom of his feet characters such as "hall of universal light" had appeared. The body was sent back to Mount Hailing, where a cave was carved in which to place it. After the spring the body had not decayed, still sitting upright firmly, just as when it was placed there.

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Furthermore, once when Dao'ang was to give a lecture it was as usual dark in the hall, since there was no lamp. He raised his hand high and it emitted a strange light, illuminating the whole building. Seeing this, the audience wondered where the light had come from. [Dao']ang said, "This light is always inside my hand. What are you wondering about?" If his ways did not match the numinous models and his practice did not fit those who are close to sagehood, such miraculous occurrences could not have taken place.

The monk Shanzhou of Jingying Temple in the Western Capital was from Yingzhou. He was learned in the scriptures and treatises, and was particularly well versed in the *Nirvana Sutra*. He was foremost in the country in his ability to bring out enlightenment in informal discussion. When he was seventy-one years old he became ill; facing death, he said to his disciples, "All my life I have followed the correct faith in my heart and I never took lightly the Buddha's teaching of principles. I expect to be reborn in the Pure Land." He then ordered his chamber swept clean and burned incense, solemnly waiting for the event. Many days had passed since he had become ill and he could not sit up in bed but suddenly he sat up by himself and said to his disciples, "Please let the World-honored One take a seat safely." He uttered,

“The World-honored One came. [Shan]zhou must now repent.” This continued for a while, and then he said, “The World-honored One is leaving.” He bowed as if sending someone off.

Having lain down, he said, “The person who just came was Amitābha Buddha. Did you not see him? I will soon depart.” When he had finished speaking these words he passed away.

(Note: The above three stories are from the [*Xu*]gaoseng *zhuan* compiled during the Tang, T.2060:515c6–23; 588a26–c3; 519a27, c16–24.)

**Chapter Six**  
*(continued)*  
**Paying Respect to the Buddha**  
*(continued)*

**5. Maitreya**

(1) Introduction, (2) Receiving Precepts, (3) Praise, (4) Karmic Causes, and (5) Vows.

**1. Introduction**

The Great Enlightened One, the Hero of the World, benefits beings according to their capacities. He is skillful in manifesting the provisional teachings, adapting them to circumstances in order to bring salvation in the light of future crises, which are appearing quickly. The time has reached the last ages and our lives are like a flame exposed to wind. Nothing is more effective in seeking to benefit beings than seeing a buddha. Therefore, Śākyamuni left the instruction; those who cultivate his teaching are entrusted to Maitreya so that they will awaken and realize the result of the holy path. The Great Sage carefully made the arrangement; the truth is naturally free of delusion. By thinking of Maitreya even once people are able to meet him and thus be forever separated from the four streams of mental defilements (desire, existence, wrong views, ignorance); to form the supreme vow of appearing in the Flower Forest of Maitreya's preaching; and to miraculously see Maitreya's face in Tuṣita Heaven, in this way stimulating the mysterious mechanism of the coming together of cloud and dragon.

Thus, the *Shangsheng jing* (ref. *Xiasheng jing*, T.455:427c6–7) says: “These people have planted good roots in the Dharma. Śākyamuni Buddha entrusted them to me.” Contemplate this one word; it is indeed a firm ground for prayer. This scripture was transmitted to China toward the end of the Jin dynasty (265–419 C.E.). By the time of Song dynasty (420–479 C.E.)

Maitreya gatherings clearly began to form; images of a thousand *chi* were built; taking the ten thousand *ren*-tall tree of enlightenment as a model, a forest of the imperial palace was set up and a huge assembly gathered. Thereupon, the fourfold assembly of the monastic community was delighted, and respectfully engaged in the task of spreading the teaching. Every year on auspicious days, three Maitreya gatherings were held without fail. From the [Northern] Qi dynasty (550–577 C.E.) the calendar was brought under control and the fortune of the Dharma improved. Emperor Wenxuan (r. 550–559 C.E.) valued the teaching and supported it widely. Since then, however, the great gatherings have seldom taken place and practitioners have become rare. Even those who wish to cultivate the path do not have the teaching for pacifying the mind.

Excerpts from various scriptures are collected here. It is hoped that those who cultivate in reliance on them will be led to the eightfold path, and the fragrance [of these teachings] will reach the Purple Palace; that the effects of the teaching will include the teaching of the ten good deeds and the brightness of the light will reach Tuṣita Heaven; and that the result will be the descent of Maitreya, bringing the benefit of the first of his three sermons.

## 2. Receiving Precepts

402b Comment: If a layperson who has not received the monastic precepts first turns away from evil ways and takes the Threefold Refuge in each of the six periods of the day, accepts and openly takes refuge in the Three Jewels, and commits to never to turn away from them, he will certainly be reborn in heaven. A member of the fivefold monastic community who has received the monastic precepts needs only to keep their practice. They do not have to accept separate precepts. If they fail to obey the precepts and seek the empty thought of good deeds they will not be reborn there.

Therefore, the *Dazhidu lun* (T.1509:159c17–19) says:

I, So-and-so, take refuge [for all my life] in the Buddha, take refuge in the Dharma, and take refuge in the Sangha (repeated three times). I, So-and-so, have taken refuge [for all my life] in the Buddha, have taken refuge in the Dharma, and have taken refuge in the Sangha (repeated three times).

The *Chutai jing* (ref. T.384:1025c27–1026a3) says:

The Buddha spoke to Maitreya in verse:

You who preach on three occasions.  
 It is I who taught you earlier. . . .  
 Ninety-six million people receive my teaching of the five precepts  
 [from you].  
 Then there are those who receive the Three Refuges—  
 Ninety-two million in number.  
 They all praise the Buddha together,  
 And obtain the Buddha’s path.

Comment: The *Jingfu lun*, in three fascicles, discusses the merits of the Three Refuges extensively. Once one has received the Three Refuges they then receive the precepts of the ten good deeds. If one does not perform the ten good deeds he or she is not certain to be reborn in the heavens.

One should perform the proper ceremony: before a monk who has renounced the householder’s life, disciplining one’s mind, sincerely repent. One then receives the precepts, saying, “I, So-and-so, throughout my life, will not entertain the thought of murder against any sentient being, high or low, whether an ordinary person or a saint”; in this way up until the tenth, “I, So-and-so, throughout my life, will not entertain wrong views against any sentient being, high or low, whether an ordinary person or a saint (repeated three times).

The ten good deeds protect against the three bodily faults of murder, theft, and licentiousness; the four faults of speech: lying, using empty words, divisive words, and false words; and the three faults of the mind: greed, anger, and wrong views (ignorance). These ten are the foundation of all good deeds. To stop these ten faults is good. To commit them is the source of the ten evil deeds. All catastrophes come from this.

### 3. Praise

The *Pusa benxing jing* (T.155:122a1–8) says:

If someone taught an infinite number of people to become *pratyekabuddhas*, or if someone made offerings of the four provisions for over one hundred years, the merit would be great. Yet this merit would not be

as great as the merit of someone who delights in uttering the four-phrase praise of the Tathāgata, who will acquire an infinite amount of merits.

402c The *Shanjie jing* (T.1488:1052a21–23) says, “To offer the treasures of the four realms under heaven and to praise the Tathāgata—there is no difference between the merits acquired by these two.”

Again, the *Dabei jing* (ref. T.380:958b3–4) says, “Praising the Buddha even once—the root of goodness from this enables one to enter nirvana. Its merits are inexhaustible.”

Again the *Dabei jing* (T.380:956b13–17) says:

If with sincere mind one contemplates the Buddha’s merits, throwing one flower into the sky, in a future world one will become a heavenly king or a king of the Brahmā heavens. The merits of this are inexhaustible and lead one ultimately to nirvana.

The *Niepan jing* (*Nirvana Sutra*, T.374:466b17–24) says:

Kāśyapa praised the Buddha in verse:

The Great Compassionate One takes pity on sentient beings.  
Therefore, he lets me take refuge.  
He skillfully removes the poisonous arrow.  
Therefore, he is called the Great Physician.  
Those who have been treated by worldly physicians,  
Though cured, will be reborn again.  
Those treated by the Tathāgata  
Will never again be reborn.  
The World-honored One takes the medicine of immortality  
And gives it to sentient beings.  
Having taken it, sentient beings will  
Neither die nor be reborn.  
The Tathāgata now, for me,  
Has preached the [teaching of the] great nirvana (*parinirvāṇa*).  
Sentient beings, having heard the secret teaching,  
Immediately achieve the condition of neither coming into being  
nor going out of being.

The *Dafangdeng tuoluoni jing* (T.1339:642a24–b1, 648c29–649a1) says:

At that time Puṣpajāta Bodhisattva praised the Buddha:

The color of the World-honored One is like that of the golden mountain.

Like sunlight he illumines the world.

He removes all suffering.

Now I worship the great Dharma King.

The rulers of the world, Dharma Kings are extremely rare.

But a marvelous Dharma like this is even more rare.

It is difficult to see, hear, or encounter.

Those who see it achieve true enlightenment.

At that time the *asura* praised the Buddha in verse:

The face of the World-honored One is like the sun and moon.

It can destroy all kinds of darkness.

Now he has brought salvation to us.

We take refuge in the Honored One among gods.

The *Wenshushili wen jing* (T.468:494b9–20) says:

I worship all the buddhas,

Incomparable guides,

Six *zhang* in height, a true Dharma body.

I also worship the buddhas' stupas,

In the places of their births and where they attained enlightenment,

[In the place where they] turned the Dharma wheel and in the places of nirvana.

In the places they walked, stood, sat, and lied down—

In all these places I worship.

The buddhas transcend our thought.

The marvelous Dharma is also like that.

If you believe, the fruit ripens—

This too is beyond thought.

Those who praise the Tathāgata with these verses,

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Over billions of *kalpas*,  
Will not fall into inferior realms of rebirth.

The Buddha said, “Mañjuśrī, Well done! Well done! The tathāgatas are beyond thought.” Then he said in verse:

The Buddha was born in the Ikṣvāku clan;  
He disappeared and will not be reborn.  
If people take refuge in him,  
They need not fear suffering in hell. (repeated three times.)

The *Huayan jing* (T.278:443c29–444a3) says:

Rather than receiving all forms of pain,  
It is better to be able to hear the Buddha’s voice.  
Not receiving all forms of happiness  
And not hearing the Buddha’s name,  
For this reason, for an infinite number of *kalpas*  
One receives this pain.  
One cycles in the realm of births and deaths  
Due to not hearing the Buddha’s name.

The *Mile pusa sowen benyuan jing* (T.349:187c25–188b19) says:

The Buddha said to Ānanda, “Maitreya is not alone in praising me in verse. In the past, ten times an infinite number of *kalpas* ago, there was a buddha called Yanguangxiangzuo wang (“King Blazing Light Sound-maker”) Tathāgata. There was [also] a brahman householder called Xianxing (“Superior Practice”). He went to the Buddha’s place and achieved recognition of the nonarising of dharmas. Brahman Xianxing from that time is the present Maitreya Bodhisattva.”

Ānanda said to the Buddha, “If Maitreya achieved recognition of the truth about dharmas a long time ago, why did he not quickly reach [the next ultimate stage of] the path of the unsurpassed truth and realize highest enlightenment?”

The Buddha said to Ānanda, “A bodhisattva refrains from achieving true enlightenment for four reasons. What are the four? First, to purify lands; second, to protect lands; third, to purify all; and fourth, to protect all. These

are the four reasons. At the time Maitreya originally sought buddhahood he refrained from achieving buddhahood for these four reasons.”

The Buddha said to Ānanda, “When I originally sought buddhahood, these four reasons also existed. Maitreya gave rise to this intention [of seeking buddhahood] for forty-two *kalpas* before I did. In this world age of the wise (*bhadrakalpa*), with great effort, skipping nine *kalpas*, I achieved the unsurpassed truth and realized highest enlightenment.”

The Buddha said to Ānanda, “It is for ten reasons that I realized highest enlightenment. What are the ten? First, to not be attached to possessions; second, [to not be attached] to wives; third, [to not be attached] to children; fourth, [to not be attached] to one’s head and eyes; fifth, [to not be attached] to one’s hands and feet; sixth, [to not be attached] to territory; seventh, [to not be attached] to rare jewels and treasures; eighth, [to not be attached] to one’s marrow and brain; ninth, [to not be attached] to one’s blood and flesh; and tenth, to not be attached to life. For these ten reasons I quickly attained the Buddha’s path.

The *Dabei jing* (T.380:960a27–c10) says:

The Buddha said to Ānanda, “Observe that when the Tathāgata walks on a road, he causes the raised places of the ground to become lower and the sunken places to rise. The risen and sunken places all become level. After the Tathāgata has passed by the ground returns to its original condition. All trees bend toward the Buddha. Tree deities appear and worship [him], lowering their heads. After the Tathāgata has passed the trees return to their original positions. All hills, holes, toilets, filth, bushes, and broken bricks and tiles become level and swept clean. Strong fragrance fills the air and the ground is covered with flowers. The Tathāgata steps on these flowers as he walks. Even insentient things lean toward him. No sentient beings fail to pay respect to him. What is the reason for this? When I practiced earlier [in my previous lives] as a bodhisattva, I bowed and paid respect before everyone. I took pure, fine, and agreeable objects and sincerely offered them to sentient beings with my own hands. As a karmic reward for all this, wherever I, as a tathāgata, walk the ground becomes level and swept clean, the broken tiles and bricks are removed. In the places of an infinite number of saints, as I walked on the road I swept it

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clean and I repaired buildings with mud; with an equitable heart I removed raised and sunken spots and swept and purified [the ground]. At all times I sought to obtain wisdom and to benefit other sentient beings. Due to these roots of good deeds, wherever I, as the Buddha, walk and come [or contemplate coming] to the beginning of a road, the road spontaneously becomes clean and level like the palm of one's hand. The king of mountains, Mount Sumeru, eighty-four thousand *yojanas* in height, the great ocean, of equal depth, and the Cakravāḍa mountain range, one hundred and sixty-eight *yojanas* high and also as hard as diamond, all bend, lower themselves, and worship at the time of the Buddha's nirvana.

Because of praising the Buddha—Śāriputra heard others praise the Buddha in verse, and obtained the fruit of the path.

The *Puyao jing* (T.186:3.534a9–16) says:

The monk Aśvajit spoke [of his teacher] with these verses:

My teacher is the god among gods,  
The highest in the three realms.  
His body has marks and is six *zhang* tall.  
With supernatural powers, he travels through space,  
His teaching enables us to transcend the five *skandhas*  
And put an end to the twelve sensory realms.  
Not seeking greedily the ranks of the gods,  
The mind is purified and the Dharma gate opened.

403c When Śāriputra heard this he was happy and delighted, as if what was dark had become bright. He said, “Good! For a long time I have had doubts. I love learning and at the age of eight took a teacher; by the time I was sixteen I had covered everything. I have traveled in sixteen major kingdoms and thought I had mastered learning, but now I have heard that I was wrong. This is the unsurpassed truth and I have realized my original wish.”

Because the Tathāgata in the past purified the mind, freeing it of attachments, and stopped harming other sentient beings, wherever he walks his feet do not defile, nor does he harm insects [on the ground].

The *Chuchu jing* (T.730:524a2–12) says:

The Buddha does not wear shoes for three reasons. First, to reduce the desire of the one who walks; second, to make visible the [mark of the] wheel on the sole of his foot; and third, to bring delight to those who see this. When the Buddha walks his feet are four inches above the ground, for three reasons. First, he sees that insects live on the ground; second, grasses grow on the ground; and third, to make the supernatural [marks on his] feet visible. The ground on which the Buddha walks becomes level for three reasons. First, he practiced in his earlier lives the four minds of compassion (*apramāṇas*), hoping to bring peace to all. Gods who live on the ground, above or in the water, and all the insects that happen to be under the Buddha's feet—they were all at peace and stabilized their minds. For this reason what is low becomes raised and what is high is lowered. Second, gods and other supernatural beings perform meritorious deeds, clearing the ground for the Buddha. For this reason, what is low is raised and what is high is lowered. Third, when the Buddha was a bodhisattva he made roads and bridges passable for people. For this reason he obtained merits, and thus what is low is raised and what is high is lowered.

[In a passage describing the Buddha's marks] the *Zhidu lun* (T.1509:90c10–13, 91a4–6) says:

His skin is very thin; dust and dirt do not attach to it. His body is like a lotus leaf, which rejects dust and water. When the Buddha is on dry ground and walks around in the mountains, his feet do not touch the ground. When a sudden gust [of wind] comes up, breaking up an earthen mound into dust, even then not even a single particle of dust becomes attached to the Buddha's body. When the Bodhisattva puts food in his mouth, from two spots in his mouth the dew of immortality comes out and mixes all the tastes. The new taste is pure, and for that reason it is called the superior taste among all tastes.

The *Zengyi ahan jing* (T. 125?) says:

Those who fail to pay respect to the Buddha will be reborn among dragons and snakes. Having been reborn there previously they still show lack of respect and mental alertness.

The *Sifen lü* (T.1428:940a22–24) says:

Those who respect the elders,  
These people protect the Dharma.  
In this world they attain fame and  
In the future they are reborn in superior realms of birth.

The *Zan mile siliwen* (translated by Dharma Master Xuanzang) says:

Taking refuge with sincere mind, I worship the future Maitreya Buddha.  
All the buddhas equally realize the unconstructed substance.  
True suchness, principle, and reality fundamentally transcend conditions.  
Guided by them, the gods appear in Tuṣita Heaven.

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Like a magician, they produce many illusory forms.  
Human beings and horses, originally nonexistent, are taken as existent.  
The accomplished know that they are illusory and have never been as  
they appear.

The buddhas' bodies are originally pure and like this.  
Those who are stupid, failing to understand, say that they are like  
ordinary beings.

When we know that the buddhas do not come, we see the true buddhas.  
In this way without fail we achieve eternal enjoyment.

Therefore, I pay respect to Maitreya Buddha,  
Wishing only that Maitreya, the Compassionate One, will bring  
salvation to sentient beings.

I vow that together with sentient beings I will be reborn in Tuṣita  
Heaven, and respectfully see Maitreya Buddha.

Taking refuge with sincere mind, I worship the future Maitreya Buddha.  
The Buddha has supernatural power that is difficult to comprehend,  
And is able to appear in the dust of many buddha lands.

Not to speak of appearing now in Tuṣita Hall,

Sitting cross-legged on the lion seat,

His body like incomparable gold,

And his marks shining brightly like jewels.

Bodhisattvas of supernatural powers, infinite in number,

Assist the Buddha in saving living beings.

Sentient beings can only worship with a sincere mind.  
 For him the karmic effects of sins from the beginningless past  
 do not arise.

Therefore, I pay respect to Maitreya Buddha,  
 Wishing only that Maitreya, the Compassionate One, will bring  
 salvation to sentient beings.

I vow that together with sentient beings I will be reborn in Tuṣita  
 Heaven, and respectfully see Maitreya Buddha.

Taking refuge with a sincere mind, I worship the future Maitreya Buddha.  
 Maitreya's jeweled crown appears in many manifested buddhas,  
 Surpassing several hundred thousands in number.

In this land and elsewhere, in assemblies of bodhisattvas,  
 He manifests supernatural feats inside jeweled windows.  
 From the Buddha's body the rays of the white hair appear, eighty  
 thousand in number.

He preaches constantly and tirelessly, turning the Dharma wheel.  
 By cultivating works of merit, sentient beings,  
 In the instant it takes to stretch out one's arm, encounter Maitreya,  
 the Compassionate One.

Buddhas as numerous as grains of sand in the Ganges River then appear,  
 Not to speak of my original teacher, Śākyamuni.

Therefore, I pay respect to Maitreya Buddha,  
 Wishing only that the Compassionate One will bring salvation to  
 sentient beings.

I vow that together with sentient beings I will be reborn in Tuṣita  
 Heaven, and respectfully see Maitreya Buddha.

Taking refuge with sincere mind, I worship the future Maitreya Buddha.

All the buddhas reside in pure lands,  
 Receiving karmic rewards, infinite in quantity.

The physical eyes of ordinary beings have not been able to see.  
 The buddhas manifest a golden torso measuring one thousand feet—  
 So that sentient beings will never tire of seeing it,  
 And realize how the fruits of karma appear in Jambudvīpa.  
 Only by listening to scriptures and diligently reciting,

Traveling freely, we reach the palace in Tuṣita Heaven.  
The three realms of inferior births will then be removed forever.  
In the future we will all realize the one Dharma body.  
Therefore, I pay respect to Maitreya Buddha,  
Wishing only that the Compassionate One will bring salvation to  
sentient beings.

404b I vow that together with sentient beings I will be reborn in Tuṣita  
Heaven, and respectfully see Maitreya Buddha.

#### 4. Karmic Causes

The *Weizengyou jing* (T.754:580c5–6) says:

For those of inferior capacities, for one thought-moment; for those of middle capacities, for the period of one meal; and for those of superior capacities, for the period from dawn to noon—if for these periods of time one entertains in one’s mind thoughts of the ten good deeds and stops thoughts of the ten evil deeds, one will be reborn in the Pure Land. Even foxes, if they entertain thoughts of the ten good deeds and do not eat for seven days, will also be reborn in Tuṣita Heaven.

The *Shangsheng jing* (T.452:420b21–25) says:

After my *parinirvāṇa* those in the four divisions of the congregation and the eight groups of supernatural beings who wish to be reborn in the fourth [Tuṣita] Heaven should, from the first to the seventh day, think of that heaven, uphold the Buddha’s prohibitions, perform the ten good deeds, and dedicate the merit toward rebirth before Maitreya Buddha. [Then,] following their thoughts, they will be reborn there.

(Note: The passage speaks of seven days to use familiar terms. If one feels the effects of that heaven, how would one not succeed in doing so through one whole life span?)

Again the *Shangsheng jing* (T.452:420b28–c1) says:

Worship of Maitreya Buddha removes the sins acquired through birth and death over a period of ten billion *kalpas*, and then one is reborn in the future under the *pumṇāga* tree and can also meet the Buddha.

The *Shangsheng jing* (T.452:420b6–9, 17–20) also says:

If, after my *parinirvāṇa*, those in the four divisions of the congregation and the eight groups of supernatural beings hear my name and worship, after their lives end they will be reborn in Tuṣita Heaven. If those men and women who have violated the precepts and committed many evil deeds hear of this great bodhisattva's name of great compassion, throw their bodies and limbs onto the ground, and sincerely repent, all their evil deeds will quickly be purified. If a person takes refuge in Maitreya Bodhisattva, know that they achieve the stage of nonretrogression. After Maitreya has attained buddhahood, by looking at the Buddha's halo one obtains the prediction of future enlightenment.

The *Shangsheng jing* (T.452:420a10–24) also says:

After the Buddha's *parinirvāṇa*, if some people diligently cultivate various meritorious works, do not lack in proper conduct specified in the Vinaya, sweep the stupa and paint the ground, offer flowers and incense, perform various *samādhis*, and recite the scriptures, such people, even if they do not succeed in cutting off all karmic bondage and achieving the six kinds of supernatural powers, should concentrate, think of the image of the Buddha, and recite Maitreya's name. If they accept even for a period of one thought-moment the purification of the eight precepts and cultivate various pure practices, when their life ends they will be reborn on the lotus terrace in Tuṣita Heaven. Then they will see the light coming out of the Buddha's mark of the white hair, which takes them beyond the sins of birth and death for a period of ten billion *kalpas*. According to the respective conditions of their previous lives, the Buddha will preach the superior Dharma to them, not letting them regress.

Again, the *Zengyi ahan jing* (T.125:725a29–b2) says:

Sentient beings who have committed evil deeds of body, speech, or mind yet who, at the moment of death, think of the Tathāgata's merits will certainly avoid the three realms of inferior rebirth and be born in heaven. Even the most evil person can be reborn in heaven through meditation on the Buddha.

Again, the *Daji jing* (T.397:166c18–20) says:

If those who cultivate compassion see at the time of their death the buddhas of the ten directions rub their heads, as the buddhas' hands touch them their minds are pacified and filled with pleasure, and shortly thereafter they will be reborn in the pure buddha land.

Again, the *Puxianguan jing* (T.277:393c5–10) says:

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If during the six periods of the day and night one worships the buddhas of the ten directions, recites Mahayana sutras, and thinks of the ultimate and profound teaching of emptiness, in the time it takes to snap one's fingers the sins of births and deaths acquired over as many *kalpas* as there are grains of sands in ten billion Ganges Rivers will be removed. Those who perform this teaching are the true children of the Buddha. They will follow all buddhas, and the buddhas and bodhisattvas of the ten directions will be their *upādhyāya* teachers; this is called the complete bodhisattva precepts. It does not require an ordination ceremony; it happens naturally. They should then receive offerings from gods and people.

The *Fahua jing* (*Lotus Sutra*, T.262:61c8–14) says:

If a person receives, recites, correctly remembers, and interprets the meaning [of this scripture], when that person's life comes to an end one thousand buddhas extend their hands to them to keep them away from fear and from being reborn in inferior realms of birth. That person will immediately be reborn in the place of Maitreya Bodhisattva in Tuṣita Heaven. Maitreya Bodhisattva has the thirty-two marks and is surrounded by great bodhisattvas with hundreds of thousands of billions of heavenly maidens in attendance. That person will be reborn in their midst. These are the merits. Therefore, a wise person should singlemindedly copy this scripture himself, or cause others to copy, receive, recite, and memorize it, and practice according to what is taught in it.

The *Zhidu lun* (T.1509:619a15–26) says:

If a good person practices the profound Perfection of Wisdom, we should know that he will be reborn in the human realm or in Tuṣita Heaven. Why

is this so? In the three inferior realms of rebirth sins and suffering are too strong, and therefore it is impossible to practice the teaching of the Perfection of Wisdom. In the heavens of the realm of desire the gods are attached to the five desires, pure and subtle as they are, and so their minds are deranged and they cannot practice [his] Perfection of Wisdom. In the heavens in the realm of form the gods are deeply attached to meditative states, and so it is impossible [for them] to practice it. In the heavens of the formless realm the gods are formless and therefore they cannot practice it. In Tuṣita Heaven there is always a bodhisattva who will be reborn as the future buddha. There the gods constantly preach and hear the Perfection of Wisdom. Even though the power of the five desires is strong there, the power of the Dharma is even stronger. For this reason it is said that these two realms are superior. Sentient beings come from other buddha lands and are reborn here.

These are the realms that serve as turning points toward the good. Again, the *Chuchu jing* (T.730:524c17–25) says:

There are four reasons why Maitreya does not descend. First, sometimes his merits assign him to Tuṣita Heaven. Second, people here may be too coarse, incapable of receiving scriptures. Third, the merits are not sufficient. Fourth, there are others who can preach the scriptures in this world. For these reasons Maitreya does not descend.

There will still be five billion seventy thousand and six hundred thousand years before Maitreya will decide to descend. At the time Maitreya descends all human eyes can see four thousand *li* in the distance. This is because [the Bodhisattva] in previous lives established ten reasons. First, he did not obscure the clarity of the human eye. Second, he did not damage the human eye. Third, he did not cover the human eye. Fourth, he did not hide the good deeds of other people. Fifth, he did not witness murder. Sixth, he did not witness theft. Seventh, he did not witness licentious conduct. Eighth, he did not look into people's secrets and weaknesses. Ninth, he did not witness any kinds of evil deeds. Tenth, he lit lamps at temples.

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Again, the *Foshuo milelaishi jing* (T.457:434b22–435a26) says:

The Buddha said, “When Maitreya Buddha is about to appear the grasses and trees on the ground and in the mountains of Jambudvīpa will all be dried out. At present the circumference of the ground of Jambudvīpa is six hundred thousand *li*. When Maitreya appears Jambudvīpa will be four hundred thousand *li* long from east and west and three hundred and twenty thousand *li* from north and south. Five kinds of fruits will grow on the ground, and [on the continents] within the four seas there will be no hills or valleys, the ground will be as level as a whetstone. Trees will grow tall and people are free from the three evils of greed, anger, and ignorance. People live in many communities. In a city called Fanluonayi a brahman named Xufan lives. He will become Maitreya’s father; his mother’s name is Moheyueti. Maitreya will be born as their son. All the marks of a buddha are present in him, and he will be sixteen *zhang* tall. He will be born on the ground in the city. His eyes will see as far as ten thousand *li*. The sun inside his head illuminates four thousand *li*. When Maitreya is enlightened and becomes a buddha, he will be sitting under the *pum̐nāga* (*longhua*, “dragonflower”) tree. The tree will be forty *li* tall and wide. (Note: According to the *Da chengfo jing* [ref. T.456:430b27] the flowers and branches of this tree are shaped like a dragon’s head, thus the tree is called the dragonflower tree; another tradition says that because it comes from the dragon’s palace, the tree is called the dragonflower tree.) On the eighth day of the fourth month, when the morning star appears, Maitreya will achieve enlightenment. Five hundred sixty million years after [Śākyamuni] Buddha has withdrawn [from the world] he will descend.

The *Xiguoxing zhuang* by Wang Xuance says:

In the second year of the Xianqing period (657 C.E.) the imperial emissary Wang Xuance traveled to the western kingdoms and sent the Buddha’s robe. Southwest of the kingdom of Nīpoluo (Nepal) he came to the village of Poluodu. On the bottom of the low ground was a water-fire pond. If someone puts fire to the surface of this pond the flames rise above the water; these flames come out of the water. If someone pours water to exterminate it, the fire becomes even more powerful. The Chinese messenger and members of his group cooked rice in a pot on it. The messenger asked the king of the country about this. The king answered the messenger,

“Once people pierced a golden casket with a spear and pulled on it. The more they pulled, the deeper the casket went. According to tradition this was the gold of the heavenly crown to be worn by Maitreya Buddha when he achieves enlightenment in the future. A fire dragon protects it. The fire of this pond is none other than the fire of this fire dragon.”

The *Zhidu lun* (T.1509:273a24–27) says:

When Maitreya Bodhisattva was a layman his teacher’s name was Bhāvarī. [Maitreya] possessed three marks: first, the white hair between the eyebrows; second, a [long and wide] tongue that could cover his entire face; and third, the penis sheathed inside the body. Even though he was not yet a bodhisattva he had these marks.

Again, the *Xinposha lun* (the newly translated [*Abhidharma*]mahāvibhāṣāśāstra, T.1545:698b12–c6) says:

It is heard that Venerable Mahākāśyapa entered Rājagṛha and begged for almsfood for the last time. Not long after he had eaten his meal, he climbed Cock’s Foot (Kukkuṭapaḍa) Mountain. The mountain has three peaks, which make it look like a cock’s foot. The Venerable One went into the mountain, sat cross-legged, and made the following vow: “I vow that this body, along with my robe, bowl, and staff, will remain intact until fifty-seven *koṭī* and sixty hundred thousand years have passed, [when] Maitreya Tathāgata, Arhat, All-knowing One, will appear in the world and do the things that buddhas do.”

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Having made this vow, Kāśyapa entered *parinirvāṇa*. At that time the three peaks [of Kukkuṭapaḍa] merged into one, covering the Venerable One sitting in meditation. When Maitreya appears in the world he will be accompanied by an innumerable number of people and gods and they will all come to this mountain. He will say to the assembly, “Do you want to see Kāśyapa, first among Śākyamuni’s great disciples, whose *dhūta* (ascetic) practice produced a great deal of merit?” All the people will say, “We wish to see him.” Maitreya Tathāgata will then touch the top of Cock’s Foot Mountain with his right hand and the mountain will break into three parts. Then Kāśyapa, with his robe, bowl, and staff, will emerge from within the mountain and rise up into the sky. Infinite numbers of gods and

people will observe this miracle, marveling at this unprecedented occurrence. Their minds will be brought under control and as they hear the World-honored One Maitreya preach they will see the truth.

If there is no possibility of the survival of the transformation body [beyond nirvana], how could such a thing be possible?

Some say that this possibility exists. To those who hold this view, the question is posed: If this is the case, why did the World-honored One (Śākyamuni) not remain in his transformation body after nirvana and continue preaching?

Answer: What he had to do had already been done. Therefore, all those whom the Buddha should have saved had already been saved. Those who were not saved were meant to be saved by the holy disciples.

Some say that no such possibility exists. To those the question is posed: If that is the case, how could such an event as that attributed to Kāśyapa actually occur?

Answer: Faithful and respectful gods taught in this way. [They would have taught incorrectly.]

Some say that at that time Kāśyapa had not entered nirvana; he enters nirvana only at the [future] time of Maitreya Buddha. This is incoherent. Why [then insist on] saying that one cannot teach [after nirvana] and not [just] say [in all cases] that one remains silent for a long time? Thus, to conclude, teaching [beyond nirvana] is possible. Therefore, Mahākāśyapa has entered nirvana.

## 5. Making Vows

The powers of ordinary beings are weak; the evil deeds they are accustomed to committing are many. Because they live in the *sahā* world their minds are weak and fearful. Beginners on the path fear that the Dharma may decline and be destroyed, and so they make the great vow to support this practice. Then, even when their lives come to an end their minds are free of obstruction. Following the roots of good deeds, they vow, along with other sentient beings, to be spontaneously reborn among the inner assembly of Maitreya and to be able to appear before the Buddha, to remember and study, and to realize the stage of nonretrogression. They do not vow to be born among the outer assembly, fearing that attachment to the five desires may prevent them from achieving salvation.

The *Zhidu lun* (T.1509:108b21–25) says

If someone who has cultivated a modest amount of merit hears of the auspicious place and constantly vows to be reborn there, when their life comes to an end they will be reborn there.

The *Da zhuangyan lun* (ref. *Dazhidu lun*, T.1509:108b27–c3) says:

The buddha land is a large-scale matter. If someone practices alone his merit will not be sufficient to accomplish the goal. The power of the vow is required. When a strong ox is pulling a carriage a driver is needed in order to reach the destination. The pure buddha land is realized through the vow. Because 405c  
of the power of the vow, its auspicious and meritorious features increase and are not lost or destroyed. One sees the Buddha there all the time.

Again, the *Shizhu lun* (T.1521:54c18–19, 103b1–4) says:

For a person to give rise to the thought of following the path and seeking the Buddha ceaselessly—[this is very difficult]. If someone were to hold on [the tip of] his finger the large cosmic system in the sky, this would not be as difficult [in comparison]. Such people who utter the vow aloud, saying that they will become a buddha, are rare. Why is this? It is because people's minds are inferior and lack great ambition.

Again, the *Faputixin lun* (T.1659:510b7–c3) says:

There are ten great vows that all should cultivate.

1. I vow to donate the good roots that I have planted in previous lives and in the present body to all sentient beings so that they will turn to the Buddha's path. Let this vow of mine increase in strength from moment to moment, let me not forget it in subsequent lives, from one to the other, and let the vow be always protected by a *dhāraṇī*.

2. I vow that by this good root in the place where I will be reborn I will encounter the Buddha and constantly make offerings to him, and that I will not be born in a kingdom where there is no buddha.

3. I vow that I will be near the Buddha all the time, attending him on the left and the right sides, just as a shadow accompanies an object.

4. I vow that because I am near the Buddha he will preach for me and cause me to obtain the five supernatural powers.

5. I vow that I will master worldly truth and the provisional names that circulate in the world, understand ultimate truth, and obtain the truth of Dharma wisdom.

6. I vow that I will tirelessly preach and instruct sentient beings so that they will open the door of understanding.

7. I vow that through the Buddha's supernatural powers I will go to all the worlds in the ten directions, make offerings to the Buddha, hear and accept the true Dharma, and widely bring salvation to sentient beings.

8. I vow that I will turn the wheel of the pure Dharma according to the capacities of the audience, and that all sentient beings who listen to my Dharma or hear my name will immediately be able to abandon all defilements.

9. I vow that I will follow sentient beings to protect them and bring them pleasure, giving up my life and wealth, bearing the true teaching, which produces beneficial rewards.

10. I vow that even though I practice the true Dharma there will be nothing in my mind that practices, nor nothing that does not practice. I will teach widely to sentient beings, not abandoning the correct vows. I vow that with these ten great vows I will widely teach sentient beings. These vows contain all vows, as many as there are grains of sand in the Ganges River. If the number of sentient beings can be counted exhaustively, my vows will be exhausted; but as the realm of sentient beings is inexhaustible, so too my great vows are also inexhaustible.

406a In order to save sentient beings widely the good roots cultivated in an infinite number of Dharma realms are all turned together toward ultimate enlightenment. Born before Maitreya Buddha and hearing the pure Dharma, one realizes ultimate enlightenment. If one takes the good roots cultivated through one's life, while walking, standing, sitting, or lying down, and along with sentient beings in the Dharma realm offers them to Maitreya Buddha, one will quickly attain the stage of nonretrogression.

Dharma Master Xuanzang said:

In the West (i.e., India and Central Asia) monks and laypeople are engaged in the cult of Maitreya. Because Maitreya belongs to the same realm of

desire as we do, the work can easily prove successful. Both Mahayana and Hinayana teachers approve of this practice. For ordinary defiled beings it is more difficult to make Amitābha's Pure Land work successfully.

According to the old sutras and treatises bodhisattvas of the ten *bhūmis* (stages) can, according to their capacities, see the Pure Land of the reward body of [Amitābha] Buddha. According to the teaching of the new treatises only bodhisattvas of the [highest] three *bhūmis* can see the Pure Land of the reward body of the Buddha. How can sentient beings of lower ranks be reborn in the Pure Land? This is a teaching for a different time period. There is no consensus on this question yet; thus, in the West Mahayana teachers approve of this but Hinayana teachers do not. For this reason Dharma Master [Xuanzang] cultivated the cult of Maitreya all his life. At the time of his death he uttered the vow to be reborn and see Maitreya Buddha, and asked the assembly to utter the following verses together. (Ref. *Datang Daciensi sanzangfashi Xuanzang zhuan*, T.2052:219c7–10; T.2053:277a21–23.)

Praise to Maitreya Tathāgata,  
Arhat and All-knowing One. Please show your compassionate face  
to sentient beings!

Praise to Maitreya Tathāgata,  
Its inner assembly—having given up this life, I wish to be born  
among them!

### Miracle Stories

(Note: summaries of six stories are given here.)

Jin dynasty (265–420 C.E.): Jiaoguo Dai Kui; Monk Shi Dao'an. Song dynasty (420–479 C.E.): Nun Shi Huiyu. Liang dynasty (502–557 C.E.): Monk Shi Senghu. Sui dynasty (581–618 C.E.): Monk Shi Linggan. Tang dynasty (618–907 C.E.): Monk Shi Sengzhou.

The appearance of the Most Superior One is incomparably marvelous. His figure has not been copied in direct light, and naturally the features have not been transmitted. To produce the most perfect form with the fingers and nails of worldly beings is, to take numbers as a metaphor, like reducing ten thousand

to one. It has been a thousand years since the [Buddha's] *parinirvāṇa*, and images made in the West (India) have come to China. Figures were cast on the basis of scriptures, and all efforts were made to produce a resemblance. Famous personages and extraordinary craftsmen competed with each other in this project. Yet the measurements were secret and no one has succeeded in producing perfect images.

#### Jin Dynasty

Under the reign of the Jin dynasty there lived a man called Jiaoguo Dai Kui, styled Andao. He carried the air of purity and aspired to distant things. Enjoying the life of a hermit, he stayed away from worldly noise. Staying with principles, he let his mind roam among the Buddha's teaching. Skillful and well versed, he cleverly measured cosmic processes.

406b Shadowing the characteristics of the Dharma, and closely copying the response body of the Buddha, he produced [a figure of] Amitābha Buddha and his two bodhisattva attendants. Based on close investigation it was made with great precision. He hid behind curtains and secretly listened to what others said, and taking their criticisms into account he carefully refined the image. From thorough measurements of details through investigation of shades of light, to its harmonizing coloration and carving techniques, [this statue] was unsurpassed even by the people of Zhou, who used all possible methods to get minute details, and the guests of Song, who used brushes [to paint] beautifully on paper. Dai Kui devoted his efforts for three years before completing the figure, unparalleled in history. Everytime someone looked at the statue it appeared just like the Buddha himself. It was then brought to Lingbao Monastery in the Shangyin area. All the monks and laypeople who looked at the image made up their minds to seek wisdom.

Chi Chao of Gaoping heard about the figure and came to worship it. He took a pinch of incense and made a vow, "If this is the eternal reality [of Amitābha Buddha], let me see his face again [in this buddha's land]. If not, let me see Maitreya Buddha." The incense he held in his hand then began to burn by itself and the smoke rose straight up, reaching the clouds in the sky. Its powerful fragrance filled the street. All who saw or heard about this miraculous event were filled with joy. The *Xuanyan ji*, compiled by Prince Kang of Linchuan, also records this event.

Master Tai lived only a hundred steps or so away from Lingbao Monastery. Once Tai rose in the middle of the night and saw a light above the temple. It was extremely bright and he thought it was fire. Alarmed, he went running to the temple; neighbors who heard also came rushing there. When they got to the temple gate, however, they saw that it was closed and everything was quiet. The image was emitting the light. In the morning the monks heard people knocking on the gate and came out to observe. They all saw that the buddha hall was illumined in flames that rose up to the sky. All the observers straightened their postures and paid respect, marveling at the infinitely varied ways of the Buddha's teaching.

Emperor Wen (r. 424–453 C.E.) of the Song dynasty welcomed the statue [to the palace (?)] and made offerings to it. It was installed in the back hall [of the monastery] permanently.

Emperor Gao (r. 479–482 C.E.) of the Qi dynasty constructed Zhengjue Monastery. He wanted to have a superior miraculous image to pacify the temple buildings, and he moved the statue there. So the figure stayed at Zhengjue Monastery.

[Jiaoguo Dai] Kui also made five walking images, after an effort that lasted for ten years. These figures used to be at Waguan Monastery.

The second son of [Dai] Kui, whose name was Yong, styled Zhongruo, had the habitual air of calmness and still water, and he enjoyed life in his hermitage. Having inherited the ancestral life of quietude and the correct quest, he also wished to continue his quest for artistic skills. Every time [Dai] Kui crafted an image he carefully examined it with Yong.

A childhood friend of Yong, Jiang Yi of Jiyang, once asked Yong to make an Avalokiteśvara image. Dai worked hard on it, thinking of everything; he wanted it to be most beautiful. Nevertheless the features were not perfect and the image was not completed for many years. Later, someone told him in a dream, "Jiang Yi has no karmic connection with Avalokiteśvara. You should change the figure to that of Maitreya." Dai [Yong] immediately stopped work and wrote to Jiang to report this but before he had sent his letter, a letter arrived from Jiang. Both men had had the same dream on the same evening. The words spoken in their dreams matched. Delighted by this miracle, Dai [Yong] changed the figure to Maitreya. Thereupon, wherever his hands

touched remarkable effects resulted, unlike anything he had expected. A perfect shining face suddenly appeared. When informed the people all marveled at this, realizing that the prediction of the dream was realized without fail. This image used to be at the Longhua Monastery in Kuaiji.

406c The figures made by the two Dai men (Dai Kui and Dai Yong) are unparalleled in history. They produced many images that are found in many monasteries. It is difficult to record the stories of them all.

At Wuji Monastery in Chang'an, under the Jin dynasty, there was a monk called Dao'an. Though he was physically unimpressive he was unusually intelligent. At age seven he could read, and after going over a text twice he could recite it from memory. At age thirteen he left the householder's life. Everyday he recited ten thousand words without making a single mistake. His teacher marveled at him, conferred on him the complete set of precepts, and allowed him to travel for further study. Dao'an came to Ye and in a temple he met Fotudeng. When [Fotu]deng saw Dao'an he marveled at his exceptional qualities and talked with him all day. Because of this, Dao'an took [Fotu]deng as his teacher. Whenever [Fotu]deng gave a lecture [Dao']an went over it in review. Many doubts and criticisms were raised but [Dao']an answered them with ease. Contemporaries said, "The black lacquer monk surprised his neighbors."

Later, [Dao']an moved south to Xiangyang to escape disturbances. With his disciple Huiyuan and over four hundred others he crossed the Jiang River. They traveled at night, encountering thunderous storms and lightning. The leading group came to a house. Inside the gate was a horse stable in which a food container, large enough to contain one *hu* of grain for horses, was hanging. [Dao']an called out the name "Lin Bosheng." The master of the house was surprised and came running. His surname turned out to be Lin and his personal name was Bosheng. Seeing that this was a divine visitor, the master treated him courteously. Then, the disciples asked Dao'an how he had known the man's name. [Dao']an said, "Two trees make the character for 'forest' (*lin*); the container held one hundred (*bo*) *sheng*."

When he arrived at Xiangyang, Dao'an found a foreign bronze figure in an old and unusual style. People did not value it greatly but [Dao']an said, "The features of this figure are very good. Only the shape of the beard is not

perfect.” He ordered his disciples to repair the beard. [When they began to work on it, however,] a bright light appeared that filled the room. Looking closely inside the beard they found a piece of a relic. Everyone felt ashamed and was overcome. [Dao’an] said, “The image has miraculous power as it is. Do not bother to change it,” and stopped the work. When informed the people all said, “[Dao’an] knew that there was a piece of relic. He deliberately brought it out to show it to the congregation.”

At that time in Xiangyang there was a man called Xi Zuochi, whose unparalleled debating skills had captured the attention of his contemporaries. He had heard of Dao’an’s reputation and sent a letter to him, which read:

I have heard that you, an arhat, follow the correct path. The luminous nature is made manifest in your mind. Your compassionate teaching illumines monastics and lay followers equally. More than four centuries have passed since the great teaching came to the East. Although sometimes there were rulers in the border regions or private individuals who became devotees, yet it was the ancient teachings of China that former generations practiced. The Way has moved and times have changed, yet not everyone in the world understands the Buddhist teaching. Recently, the prospering of Buddhist activities has been unparalleled. It is said that Prince Moonlight will appear in China and that the Buddha’s almsbowl will come here. You, Dharma Master, took charge of the ancient teaching of the Great Model; your teaching reaches all. Monks in China all look up to you with affection. As the auspicious cloud moves eastward *maṇi* jewels turn and shine, and you ascend and sit upon the seat of seven jewels and immediately manifest the lamp of wisdom, rain down the sweet dew of immortality on the flourishing grass, and plant sandalwood on the banks of the Jiang River, the teaching of the Tathāgata is again honored today and the profound waves and superior echoes will wash and purify this world. . . . (The text [of the letter] is long and is not reproduced in full here.)

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When Xi heard that [Dao’an] had come to stay [in Xiangyang], Xi came to pay respect to him. Sitting down, he said, “[All from throughout] the four oceans learn (*xi*) from [Xi] Zuochi.” [Dao’an] said, “All heavens [follow] the interpretation (*shi*) of [Shi] Dao’an.” Contemporaries considered this to be an excellent answer.

[Dao']an constantly wrote commentaries on scriptures, yet feared that some of his views may not agree with truth. So he made a vow, "If what I say is not very far from truth, let me see an auspicious sign." Then in a dream he saw an Indian monk with white hair and long eyebrows, who said, "Your commentaries on the scriptures quite agree with truth. I am not to enter nirvana and live in the Western Region. I will help you spread your teaching. From time to time set up an offering of a meal." Later, when the *Sarvāstivāda-vinaya* was brought to China, Master Huiyuan realized that the monk Dao'an had dreamed of was Piṇḍola-Bharadvāja. So he set up a seat and offered food. This became the rule everywhere.

Benefiting others was the principle of [Dao']an's virtue. His learning covered all three *piṭakas* (i.e., *Tripitaka*). He established the model of monastic behavior and the principle of the Buddha's teaching. It contained three items: (1) the instructions for presenting incense, preparing the seat, presenting the scripture, and giving the lecture; (2) the instructions for the practices at the six daily time periods and at times of eating, drinking, and chanting; (3) the instructions for *upavasatha*, sending messengers, and repentances. Temples everywhere came to follow these norms.

With his disciple Fayu and others, before the Maitreya figure [Dao']an made a vow to be reborn in Tuṣita Heaven. Later, on the twenty-seventh day of the first month of the twenty-first year of the Jianyuan period of the Qin dynasty (385? C.E.) a strange monk, quite ordinary and rustic in appearance, came to the temple and asked for lodging. Since the monastic quarters were already crowded, he was housed in the lecture hall. At that time the temple administrator's quarter faced this building, and at night the administrator saw the monk go in and come out from the window. He quickly reported this to [Dao']an. [Dao']an, taken aback, came to pay respect to the monk and asked the reason for his visit. The monk answered, "I came to help you." [Dao']an said, "My sins are so deep. How can I be saved?" The monk answered, "Certainly you can be saved. If you bathe holy monks soon you will definitely obtain what you seek." The monk taught him the procedure for bathing in detail. [Dao']an asked where he would be born in his next life. The monk then circled an area in the northwestern direction in the sky. Immediately the clouds cleared and [Dao']an saw in detail the Tuṣita Heaven of superior karmic reward. That evening dozens of members of the assembly all saw this. [Dao']an

later prepared bathing implements. He saw extraordinarily small children, accompanied by dozens of people, come to the monastery and after a while take a bath. This indeed was a miraculous response.

On the eighth day of the second month of the same year he suddenly told the assembly, “I am about to depart.” On that day, after the meal, he died without illness. He was buried at Wuji Temple. The year was the tenth year of the Taiyuan period of Jin (385 C.E.). His age was seventy-two.

Before he died, [Dao’]an had heard that Kumārajīva was in a western kingdom. He wanted to share in his lectures and discussions and repeatedly advised [Fu] Jian to (357–387 C.E.) to go and invite him. Kumārajīva had also heard of [Dao’]an from afar, saying that he was the eastern sage to whom he frequently used to pay respect from a distance.

When [Dao’]an was born he had a piece of skin, over one *cun* wide, attached to his arm. It could be moved up and down but could not be removed from the hand. Because of this people called him “Seal-hand Bodhisattva.” 407b

Sixteen years after [Dao’]an’s death Master Kumārajīva arrived. Kumārajīva was greatly disappointed not to be able to see him and deplored this fact endlessly.

[Dao’]an greatly valued scriptures; his ambition was to spread the Dharma. He invited the foreign monks Saṃghadeva, Dharmānanda, and Saṃghabhadra, who translated numerous scriptures in over ten million words. With the monk Fahe he always checked the characters and examined the meaning of the translated text. The newly translated scriptures, for this reason, are reliable.

Sun Chuo wrote the *Essay on Virtuous Monks (Mingde shamen lun)*. He described Dao’an by saying, “Shi Dao’an is versed in a wide range of topics and talented in interpreting the letters and underlying principles of scriptures.” He also praised him in verse:

Widely bringing salvation to others,  
 He naturally was in charge of many people.  
 Deep and quiet is Shi Dao’an.  
 He can double [the efficacy of his teaching through cosmic response (?)].  
 His reputation flies over the valleys and hills.  
 His fame reaches the Huai River and the ocean.  
 Though his body has undergone transformation,  
 It is as if he is still with us all the time.

According to another record, there was another Zhu Dao'an in Hebei, who shared the same [personal] name as Shi Dao'an. Xi Zuochi is said to have sent his letter to this Zhu Dao'an. When Dao'an had first become a student of his teacher he adopted the surname of Zhu; later he changed it to Shi. Thus, references to these two surnames exist. Therefore, it is a mistake to think that the men were two different people.

(The above two stories are from the *Liang gaoseng zhuan*, T.2059:351c3–354a17.)

#### Song Dynasty

The nun Shi Huiyu of Chang'an practiced diligently and was thoroughly informed in the teachings of the scriptures and vinayas. Once while she was staying at the temple of Minister Xue she saw a red and white light for over ten days. On the eighth day of the fourth month a monk of Liuchong Monastery came to this temple, and at the place from where the light emerged he discovered a golden image of Maitreya, over one *chi* tall. Later Huiyu moved south to Ying and lived at Lingshou Monastery. One evening in the tenth month of the fourteenth year of Yuanjia (433 C.E.) she saw a bright purple light in a tree east of the temple; the light illuminated the entire forest. She told her fellow student Miaoguang and others but none of them could see the light. For over twenty days [Hui]yu saw the light constantly. Later the head of the monastery, Shi Fahong, was building a place for meditation under the tree; he looked up and found a golden seated image among the branches. It is also said to have been over one *chi* tall. (This story is found in the *Mingxiangji* [*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu*, T.2106:418b7–13].)

#### Liang Dynasty

Shi Senghu at Mount Shicheng in Shan was originally from Shan in Kuaiji. He renounced the householder's life at an early age and trained vigorously, upholding the precepts with rigor. Later he moved to Yinyue Monastery at Mount Shicheng in Shan. There was a cliff of green rock north of the monastery. The cliff went straight up to a height of dozens of *zhang*. In the middle of the cliff was a pattern that looked like the flame and light of buddha images. There were bushes and trees on top of the cliff and their twisting trunks covered the cliff. In the course of his meditation Senghu frequently walked to the wall, saw bright light illuminating it, and heard instrumental

music and songs of praise. He then held an incense burner up to it and made a vow to carve a stone image into the mountain cliff, ten *zhang* tall. This image would represent the one thousand *chi*-tall Maitreya figure so that those with appropriate karmic affiliations would gather to see this buddha preach on the three future occasions.

407c

During the Jianwu period (494–497 C.E.) of the Southern Qi dynasty, Senghu gathered monks and laymen to form a group to support this project and began carving the image. After several years, when only the rough outline of the face of the image had been carved, Senghu fell ill and died. Just before his death he made a vow that his project was not something that anyone could finish in one lifetime, and that he would complete the project in his next incarnation. Later another monk called Sengshu resumed the project, but lacking resources he was unable to bring it to completion.

In the sixth year of the Tianjian period of the Liang dynasty (507 C.E.) Lu Xian of Wu Commandery, the former director of Shifeng, had left his assigned post and was returning to the capital. While he was spending the night near a stream in Shan the wind began to blow and it started to rain; it became very dark. Lu Xian was frightened. In a half-asleep state he had a dream. Three monks came and said to him, “If your faith is correct and firm you will naturally be safe. The honorable one of Jian’an is suffering from illness and is not yet cured. If you can arrange to have the stone image begun by Senghu brought to completion, the prince will regain his health. Miraculous communication is not unreal. You should get started on the work.”

[Lu] Xian returned to the capital but after a year he forgot about this dream. Later, when was departing out of a gate, he saw a monk and invited him to give a lecture and stay overnight at his residence. The monk said, “Don’t you remember the matter about the Prince of Jian’an, which I entrusted to you last year near the stream in Shan?” Frightened, [Lu] Xian said, “I don’t remember.” The monk said, laughing, “You should think about it carefully,” and took his leave. [Lu] Xian realized that this was no ordinary monk and immediately went after him, but after a hundred steps the monk disappeared. [Lu] Xian suddenly understood the meaning of the monk’s statements and remembered his earlier dream. The monk was the third of those whom he had seen near the stream in Shan. [Lu] Xian then went to the Prince of Jian’an. The prince reported the story to the emperor. The emperor then ordered

Vinaya Master Sengyou to take charge of the matter of completing the figure. Overjoyed, the prince strengthened his faith, made offerings, and vowed to complete the work of carving the image.

The day before Sengyou arrived, a monk at [Yinyue] Monastery had a dream in which a great deity wearing a black robe, accompanied by an army of powerful soldiers, stood at the site of the cave in which the figure was being carved, discussing measurements. The next day Vinaya Master [Seng]you arrived. Such was the miraculous nature of this event. The cave Senghu had carved for the image was too shallow and had to be excavated further to a length of five *zhang*. Then the headdress was carved. After that, the torso was carved and the polishing of the torso was about to be completed. In the middle of the night the place of the character *wan* changed its color to red and became raised. On the chest of the present figure the place of the character *wan* is still not covered with gold leaf and the red color remains.

408a Work on the image began in the twelfth year of Tianjiang (513 C.E.) and ended in spring of the fifteenth year of Tianjiang (516 C.E.). The figure is in a sitting position and is five *zhang* tall; standing up it would be ten *zhang* tall. In front of the cave where the figure was carved a three-story platform was built; a temple gate and other buildings were also constructed, and a community of monks was established for the purpose of attending the image. Laypeople came from great distances in all directions to offer incense and flowers. Stories about donations accumulated. After the image was completed, the Prince of Jian'an's illness slowly abated. The prince was given a different territory than the present Nanping.

(Note: This story appears in the *Liang gaoseng zhuan*, T.2059:50.412a8–b16.)

#### Sui Dynasty

Shi Linggan, secular surname Li, of Dachanding daoizhan in the Western Capital, was a foreign monk from Jincheng. Firm in his commitment, he diligently and constantly cultivated practices of purity. Following the *Huayan jing* he carried out contemplation of the ocean of the world of the lotus flower storehouse, as well as that of Maitreya's heavenly palace. In the seventeenth year of the Kaihuang period (599 C.E.) he became violently ill and suffered greatly. His heart was still warm so people did not dare put him in a coffin. He later awoke and related the following story:

“First, I saw two people who held documents in their hands, standing in front of the door. They said the government official must see you. In a moment I was going with them, as if I was walking in the sky. My feet did not touch anything. I came to a large garden, with trees of seven jewels lined up as if in a painting. When we arrived there the two people who had brought me took leave and withdrew. By myself I went into the garden. It was most beautiful everywhere; I saw only forests, fields, mountains, and ponds, all made of rare jewels, so colorful and bright I could not gaze long at them. Under each tree was a seat. People were sitting on some of the seats, while others were not occupied.

“Suddenly I heard a man calling me, ‘[Ling]gan, have you come here?’ As I looked for the source of the voice, it was Dharma Master Huiyuan. I greeted him and asked, ‘What is this place?’ He answered, ‘This is Tuṣita Heaven. Both myself and Sengxiu were born here. The one sitting next to me toward the south is Dharma Master [Seng]xiu.’ The bodies of [Hui]yuan and [Seng]xiu were not their original ones. They had heavenly crowns on their heads and were wearing red and purple robes; the light [emitted by their bodies] was unworldly. Only their voices remained like those of their previous lives and could be recognized.” [Huiyuan] also said to [Ling]gan, ‘You and other disciples of mine are reborn here after death.’”

[Linggan] then woke up. He intensified the practices he had been doing previously, engaged in meditation, and rejected all contact with others.

In the third year of Daye (607 C.E.) Chanding Monastery was completed. By imperial edict [Ling]gan was called to serve as the head monk of the monastery. The monastery was populated with monks and the work of salvation began. In the eighth year [of the same period] (612 C.E.) [Ling]gan’s illness had become serious and he was in his monastic cell, about to die. The pupils of his eyes were turned upward; they did not face out. After a while his pupils turned downward and his face looked as it used to look. Having seen this, the monk Dongzhen asked about his illness. [Ling]gan said to [Dong]zhen, “I saw two youths wearing blue robes had come to take me. I followed them to outside of the heavenly palace in Tuṣita. Before entering the city, I stood on tiptoe and looked in but I only saw the umbrellas of jewel trees, forming a flat surface, and I could not see anything underneath within the city.” The monk who was attending [Ling]gan in his illness said, “You

408b raised your eyes at that time.” [Dong]zhen said, “If you are reborn there you would have realized the original vow.” [Ling]gan said, “The pleasures in heaven do not last forever. Eventually you fall back into the cycle of rebirth. What I aim at is the ocean of the lotus flower storehouse.” After a while [Ling]gan lost consciousness. Quickly Dongzhen asked again, “What do you see?” [Ling]gan said, “I see a great body of water filled with flowers, like the wheel of a chariot. I am sitting upon it. My original vow is fulfilled.” Shortly thereafter he passed away. (Note: Dharma Master Dongzhen was the abbot of Western Dachanding Monastery. He died in the beginning of the Wude period [618–626 C.E.]). Linggan died on the twenty-ninth day of the first month of the eighth year of Daye at his temple, at the age of seventy-eight.

#### Tang Dynasty

Shi Shanzhou of Jingying Monastery in the Western Capital of the Tang dynasty, secular surname Huai, was from Yingzhou. He was very intelligent and quick in understanding. He was quiet yet engaged in sharp discussion. His debating skills reflected the nature of his mind. His reputation reached far.

Toward the end of the Renshou period (601–604 C.E.) under imperial order he established a relic stupa. He took the relics to Hualin Monastery on Mount Niutou in Zizhou. When the heavily guarded carriage was about to reach its destination, eight wild pigs miraculously went under the carriage then quickly ran out from underneath, went to the government office, and then came right back. As the carriage came closer, four black bees, ferocious in appearance, followed the carriage, circling around it. After going around it several times, they flew away. After the carriage had finally arrived at the office building, at night [the relics] emitted a bright light, which penetrated the roof and appeared as if fiery flames were shooting up. After a while the light disappeared.

When they dug to a depth of over one *zhang* to lay the stupa foundation, at the exact place the relic box was to be placed they found an ancient jar. It had no cover but contained clear and fragrant water. So they placed the jar inside the box. The monastery had a nine-story stupa. A light appeared from the second story at the southwest corner and illuminated the wheels on top, making them look like a [massive] five-*shi* jar. The color of the light was yellowish-red, like a flame. After a while the light disappeared. Inside the

temple building the figure of Maitreya Buddha also emitted purple light from between its eyebrows. The two attendant bodhisattvas also emitted red light. These lights illuminated the temple everywhere. They appeared seven times and many saw them, except those who had not come to the temple. In the eighth month of the third year of Wude (620 C.E.) Shanzhou died at his temple at the age of seventy-one.

(Note: The above two stories appear in the *Tang gaoseng zhuan*, T.2060: 518a27–c12; 519a27–28, b24–c6, c16–17.)



## Fascicle 17

### Chapter Six (*continued*) Paying Respect to the Buddha (*continued*)

#### VI. Miracle Stories of Samantabhadra

(We have entered the latter age of the Dharma and visualization of this bodhi-sattva is seldom practiced. Therefore, we do not record scriptural passages here. There are four miracle stories:) Song dynasty (420–479 C.E.): Consort Dowager Lu Shao; Monk Daowen; Monk Daojing. Qi dynasty (479–494 C.E.): Monk Puming.

408c

#### Song Dynasty

In the fourth year of the Daming period (460 C.E.) Consort Dowager Lu Shao produced an image of Samantabhadra sitting upon a jeweled seat on a white elephant. She placed it in the meditation chamber of Zhongxing Monastery. On that occasion she held a lecture retreat at the monastery. The retreat was concluded on the eighth day of the tenth month of the same year. Two hundred monks attended. This took place when the temple building had just been built, and the emperor paid a great deal of attention to it, visiting it as many as four times over a ten-day period. The monks were disciplined and orderly; the imperial guards were awe-inspiring. On the day of the lecture the names of the attending monks were determined and they took their seats accordingly. After a while a monk appeared and was about to join the ranks of the other monks. This monk's appearance was striking and everyone in the gathering took notice. He exchanged over one hundred words with the host of the feast (namely, the dowager empress). Suddenly, the monk disappeared. All the participants saw this and realized that the monk was a supernatural person.

During the Daming period of the Song (457–464 C.E.) the monk Daowen, an abbot who resided in the Moling district, had an audience with the Empress Dowager [Lu Shao]. The empress was a mirror of deep wisdom, in harmony with the profound truth that nourishes all, having cleansed her thoughts in a place of purity and polished her mind in a realm of highest attainment; consequently her reputation was widespread both in China and India. [Under her patronage] Daowen produced an image representing Samantabhadra's arrival. When the lecture and feast commemorating the installation of the image, which was decorated with remarkable jewels of extraordinary beauty, was completed on the eighth day of the present [tenth] month, [according to the entry above describing the same event,] the ceremony of conferring gifts to monks was held. The list of monks to be honored had been established ahead of time, and they took their seats following the fixed order. The number of monks who attended tallied perfectly with the list. While the scriptures were recited, at noon a strange monk appeared in the area where the monks were seated. His appearance and conduct were impressive and there was a general air of superior qualities about him. Everyone took note of him but no one recognized him.

The host of the feast asked him, "What is your name?" He answered, "My name is Huiming." [He was then asked] "In which monastery do you reside?" [He answered,] "I came from Tian'an ("Heavenly Peace") Monastery."

While this exchange was taking place, the monk suddenly disappeared. Everyone in the hall was astounded and awestruck, considering this to be an auspicious sign. The purple mountains [of the buddha land] were seen and lotus flower pedestals [for the buddhas] appeared not far away. It is said that sincere devotion can cause landscapes to shift location, and a purified mind can cause a spring to issue forth from a stone. The emperor's virtue nourishes the universe; benevolence governs over distant countries and the principle reaches obscure places. Therefore, the kingly hero (Samantabhadra) chose the Daming reign era court in which to manifest his remarkable form, appearing in the chamber from which the dragon flies up. His intention was for the lamp of the emperor's wisdom to illumine all corners of the ocean and shine like the flowerlike sun and moon. For this reason, the monk was named Huiming ("Wisdom Shining").

For transmitting heaven's will, causing the ruling house to prosper and its laws to be strong, the monastery was named Tian'an ("Heavenly Peace").

The dynasty's divine foundation goes far back and the effects of its moral government will soon be realized. The nine regions of the country will be at peace and myriad residences will be filled with joy. Announcements have been made in districts under the dynasty's rule in praise of heaven. (Ref. the entry for Daowen in the *Gaoseng zhuan*, T.2059:372b28–373a15.)

The monk Daojing was from Haozhi in Fufeng. His original surname was Ma. He was singleminded in studying the unmixed truth and became widely known at an early age. In the ninth month of the second year of Yuanxi (425 C.E.) he was at Luoyang and performed the Samantabhadra ceremony in which more than forty people, some monastics and others lay followers, participated. After seven days, at the time of the midday meal, a person wearing riding pants suddenly entered the precinct on horseback and, dismounting from the horse at the front of the hall, he paid respect to the Buddha. Not thinking of him as anyone unusual, Daojing failed to pay special attention and greet him with proper decorum. The man then mounted the horse, and spurring it on he suddenly disappeared. People saw a ray of bright red light reaching up to heaven. After a while the light disappeared.

409a

Later, in the twelfth month of the third year (426 C.E.) Daojing again held a Samantabhadra ceremony at a lay supporter's residence. On the day of the ceremony, as it was about to be concluded, two ordinarily dressed monks appeared to pay respect to the Buddha. Participants thought that they were ordinary monks and did not treat them with proper respect. They casually asked the monks where they lived. The monks answered that they lived in a nearby village. At that point a layman called Zhang Dao sensed something extraordinary in the monks and earnestly paid respect to them. The monks departed from the temple gate and after a few dozen steps they suddenly shot up straight to heaven. People tried to catch sight of them but they quickly disappeared.

In the seventh year (430 C.E.) Daojing went to the capital city with some fellow students. At that time the Minister of Works He Shangzhi had just finished the construction of Nanjian Temple. Daojing was staying there temporarily. Suddenly in the middle of the night he saw four people riding in a new carriage enter the room and call out to him, telling him to join them on the carriage. Surprised, Daojing was so confused he was unable to speak. He could not see in the darkness and got into the carriage without realizing it.

He was quickly taken to Shen Bridge behind the government office building. He saw a nobleman wearing a silk cap and a single-layered coat of finely woven cloth, sitting on a stool under an umbrella. The umbrella was shaped like the emperor's flower umbrella, and there were several hundred guards lined up, all wearing yellow robes. Seeing Daojing, the nobleman was surprised and said, "Practitioner of the buddha-vision meditation (*pratyutpanna samādhi*)! I have sincerely paid respect to you from a distance. I only wished to know where you were. They should not have brought you here!" The man immediately ordered that Daojing be taken back to his room. When Daojing reached the outer gate of his monastery, the person who had accompanied him there suddenly disappeared. The gate was closed as usual. He knocked and shouted loudly for a long time. The monks inside were amazed when Daojing told them who he was. They opened the gate and let him in. Then they checked his chamber: the door was locked from inside as usual.

(The above three stories come from the *Mingxiang ji*.)

#### Qi Dynasty

The surname of the monk Puming of Upper Dinglin Monastery was Zhang; he was from Linwei. He left the householder's life as a youth. Puming was gifted and dedicated to a life of purity, taking only simple vegetarian meals and wearing plain clothes. He specialized in repentance rituals and recited the *Lotus Sutra* and the *Vimalakīrti Sutra*. When reciting scriptures he sat on a separate seat, wearing a special robe, to keep impurities away. Every time he came to the chapter "The Encouragements of Universally Worthy (Samantabhadra) Bodhisattva," he saw before him Samantabhadra riding on an elephant. When he recited the *Vimalakīrti Sutra*, he heard chanting and music in the sky. He was also skilled in magical spells; everyone he tried to help was cured.

The wife of the villager Wang Daozhen became ill. The villager asked Puming to come and perform the spell cure. As Puming entered through the gate, the villager's wife lost consciousness. Suddenly a creature that looked like a raccoon, several feet long, appeared and left through a hole in the wall [that had been made so that dogs could come in and go out of the house]. The villager's wife then was cured.

Once Puming walked by a shrine near the water. The medium said to himself, "When gods see him, they all run away."

Puming died during the Xiaojian period (454–465 C.E.) at the age eighty-five. (This story appears in the *Tang gaoseng zhuan*, ref. T.2059:407b10–19.) 409b

### **Miracle Stories of Avalokiteśvara**

(Twenty stories are given here:) [Former] Qin dynasty (351–394 C.E.): Imperial Secretary Xu Yi; Layman Bi Lan. Jin dynasty (265–420 C.E.): Monk Zhu Fayi; Monk Zhu Fachun; Monk Shi Kaida; Layman Guo Xuanzhi; Layman Pan Daoxiu; Layman Luan Xun; Monk Shi Fazhi; Nangong Zi’ao; Monk Daotai; Layman Sun Daode; Layman Liu Du; Layman Dou Zhuan; Monk Zhu Fachun. [Liu] Song dynasty (420–479 C.E.): Layman Zhang Xing; Layman Wang Yan. [Northern] Wei dynasty (386–534 C.E.): Monk Shi Daotai; Layman Sun Jingde; Monk Shi Fali.

[Former] Qin Dynasty

Layman Xu Yi was from Gaolu. From the time he was very young he honored Buddhism. He became the Imperial Secretary under Fu Jian (338–385 C.E.). Toward the end of Fu Jian’s reign armed rebellions occurred in many places. Xu Yi was captured by rebels and was about to be killed. With his feet buried in the ground and his hair tied to a tree, he prayed singlemindedly to Avalokiteśvara during the night. After a while he fell asleep. In a dream a person said to him, “Things are happening quickly. It is no time for sleep.” Xu Yi, taken aback, got up and saw that the guards were all tired and asleep. He then tried to move. His hair had already been untied and his feet were also free. He fled, running over one hundred steps and then hid under a small bush. He heard his pursuers running in all directions with torches that illuminated everywhere. They circled around the bush but no one saw him. As morning broke the rebels went away. Xu Yi sought refuge in a Buddhist temple and was thus able to escape.

[Layman] Bi Lan was from Dongping. From the time he was still very young he honored Buddhism. Following Murong Zhui (326–396 C.E.) he went north and was captured. He escaped alone on a horse and just at the point of being recaptured by the pursuing horsemen he fervently recited the name of Avalokiteśvara and managed to escape. He then went far up into the mountains and lost his way. Again, he singlemindedly meditated. In the middle of the

night a monk dressed in robes and holding a staff showed him the way out. He was able to find his way back and returned home safely.

#### Jin Dynasty

Zhu Fayi lived on Mount Shining. He became a monk during the Xingning period (363–365 C.E.). He read widely through many scriptures but was especially familiar with the *Lotus Sutra*. He always had more than a hundred students studying under him. In the second year of Xian'an (372 C.E.) he became ill. He meditated on Avalokiteśvara continuously and had a dream in which a person opened up his belly and washed his intestines. When he woke up he was cured. Fu Liang (364–426 C.E.) used to say, "My father used to travel with Master [Fa]yi and heard him say that whether major or minor, Avalokiteśvara's miracles are awe-inspiring."

409c

The monk Zhu Fachun was the abbot of Xianyi Monastery in Shanyin Commandery. During the Jin Yuanxing period (402–404 C.E.) he traveled to Lanzhou to purchase building materials for the construction of temple walls. The route included a part crossing over a lake. The owner of the materials was a woman and she agreed to accompany him to the place where the materials were found. Having agreed on the price, they traveled together on a boat. As the boat set out on the great lake, the sun set and a violent wind arose, driving waves as high as a mountain. Fachun's boat was small and began to take on water. His life seemed about to come to an end. He reflected that his conduct had lacked merit and as a consequence he had unexpectedly encountered this catastrophe. In addition, he was traveling with a woman. For these reasons he was frightened and singlemindedly recited the *Avalokiteśvara Scripture*. Suddenly a large ship approached Fachun's boat. By then it was nighttime and no one else was traveling. Fachun thought to himself, "There should not be such a ship on the water now. This must be a [sign of some] supernatural power." When they boarded the larger ship, the small boat immediately sank. The large ship traveled through high waves and they were able to get to the other shore.

In the second year of Longan (398 C.E.) the monk Shi Kaida climbed a hill to collect herbs and was captured by Qiang barbarians. This was during the year of great famine and the Qiang and Hu people were cannibalizing each

other. They put Kaida inside a cage, planning to kill and eat him. There were more than ten other people inside the cage and the Qiang barbarians said, “We will have a feast in the evening.” [After that] only Kaida was left [in the cage]. Since his capture Kaida continuously recited the *Avalokiteśvara Scripture* without a break. He was to be killed the next day. When morning broke a large tiger suddenly appeared, blocking the way to Kaida’s cage, howling angrily at the Qiang barbarians. They were frightened and fled. The tiger then chewed at the bars of the cage, making a small hole just big enough to allow a person to crawl through, then the animal left. At first, when Kaida saw the tiger chewing on the cage, he was sure that he would be harmed. When the tiger did not come into the cage he was puzzled. Kaida attributed this to Avalokiteśvara’s power, and assuming that the barbarians would eventually return, he crawled through the hole in the cage and fled. He walked at night and hid during the day. In this way he was able to escape unharmed.

[Layman] Guo Xuanzhi was from Taiyuan. In the fourth year of Yixi (408 C.E.) he served as a garrison commander at Liangzhou under Yang Siping. Yang was killed and Fan Yuanzhi and others were put on trial. Guo Xuanzhi was imprisoned. He singlemindedly prayed to Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva. Later in the evening, when he was about to fall asleep, he suddenly saw the bodhisattva and light filled the prison. Seeing the bodhisattva, Guo Xuanzhi paid respect to him, made a request, and offered a vow. After awhile the light disappeared. Guo Xuanzhi alone was then released. After his release, he made an image of the bodhisattva, just as he had seen in the vision. He also established a temple. He later served as an officer in Lingling and Hengyang.

410a

[Layman] Pan Daoxiu was from Wu Commandery. When he was some twenty years old he went on an expedition to the north due to a military disturbance. His army was small and Daoxiu lost the battle. He tried to escape alone but was captured. In several places in foreign lands he served as a slave. He wished to return home but he could not find a way [to escape]. From his youth he had honored Buddhism. He constantly meditated on Avalokiteśvara. He often had a dream in which he saw an Avalokiteśvara image. He later fled toward the south but lost his way. Deep in the mountains he suddenly saw the deity himself (“the true form”), who looked just like the walking image known today. Daoxiu paid respect to him and after he had finished,

the deity suddenly disappeared. Daoxiu then found his way and returned home. After this he practiced even more diligently. He died shortly before reaching the age of sixty.

[Layman] Luan Xun's origins are unknown. From his youth he honored Buddhism. He once served as the acting director of Fufuping. Earlier, on an expedition to conquer Lu Xun, he had run into difficulties. A fire was destroying the boat and enemies were pressing close. Right in the middle of the Jiang River he saw only fierce winds and tall waves. Terrified, Xun recited the name of Avalokiteśvara. Suddenly he saw a person standing upright in the middle of the river all alone, and the water reached the level of his waist. Xun realized that this was in response to his prayer. As the threatening fire came closer, he jumped into the water. His body floated and his feet touched the bottom. The main army soon sent boats to pick up the defeated soldiers. Luan Xun was thus able to survive.

Once, when the monk Shi Fazhi was still a layman, he was walking through a large marshland when a fire broke out simultaneously in all four directions. All paths of escape were cut off, so he earnestly worshiped Avalokiteśvara and recited his name. Quickly the fire passed over. Every blade of grass on the field had been completely burned but at the place where Fazhi stood a space large enough for his body was left untouched. After this incident he began to honor the great teaching. Later, as a commander under Yao Xing (366–416 C.E.) he took part in an expedition to the north. When the army was in retreat he fell off his horse inside the enemy camp. He hid near the ditches and in a nearby bush; covering his head he meditated on Avalokiteśvara very intensely. Someone across the ditch called out to the enemy army, instructing them to kill Fazhi, but when soldiers came to look for him they could not find him. In this way Fazhi escaped. Later he renounced the householder's life.

Nangong Zi'ao was from Shiping. While garrisoned in Xinping City he was defeated by the barbarian Qifu's son, the Prince of Changle (or the son of Fofu, Helian Bobo). Altogether several thousand people inside the city were executed. Zi'ao was separated from them but was slated to die. He meditated earnestly on Avalokiteśvara. When the time for his execution came and the

executioners lowered their swords, some from high up and some from lower, they suddenly were overcome by exhaustion and could not move their limbs. The Prince of Change, present at the execution, was taken aback and questioned Zi'ao. Afraid, Zi'ao said, "I can serve as a horse saddle [to carry the image]." The prince then released him. Zi'ao also did not know what made him give this answer. He later became a hermit. He made a small image [of Avalokiteśvara] and placed it in an incense box. Whenever he walked about he carried this box on top of his head.

Shi Daotai was a monk at Hengtang Monastery in Changshan. During the Yixi period of Jin (405–418 C.E.) he had a dream in which a man said, "Your life will end in six or seven years." At that time Daotai was forty-two years old. He subsequently became very ill. Fearing that he could not be saved he donated almsbowls and robes to the monastery, and instructed others to recite Avalokiteśvara's name. The diligent recitation continued without abating for four days and nights. There was a curtain in front of the bed on which Daotai was sitting. Suddenly from under the curtain he saw someone cross the door's threshold and enter the room. His foot was golden in color and the light from the figure illumined the room. Daotai raised the curtain to take a peek. Suddenly the man disappeared. Daotai was surprised and delighted. He sweated a great deal and after that his body felt light and the disease was cured.

[Layman] Sun Daode was from Yizhou. He was a follower of Daoism and served as a libationer. He was over fifty years old and yet still did not have a son. He lived near a Buddhist temple. During the Jingping period (423–424 C.E.) a monk told Daode that if he wished to have a son he should earnestly recite Avalokiteśvara's name and by doing so he could hope for a positive outcome. Thereupon Daode stopped following Daoism and single-mindedly took refuge in Avalokiteśvara. After a few days he had a dream. Then his wife became pregnant and gave birth to a son.

[Layman] Liu Du was from Liaocheng in Taiyuan. The village had over a thousand households and all honored the great teaching, creating images and making offerings to monks and nuns. At the time when Muwei ruled over the barbarians, a prisoner from the district escaped. Angered, Muwei was about to exterminate everyone in the city and they feared that all the villagers

as well as criminals would be killed. Liu Du underwent purification and led the multitude to take refuge in Avalokiteśvara. After a while [Mu]wei saw something descend from the sky and go around the pillar inside the building where he was staying. Surprised, they looked closely: it was the *Avalokiteśvara Sutra*. Muwei instructed someone to recite it. Delighted, he then stopped the massacre. The entire city thus escaped harm.

410c Layman Dou Zhuan was from Henei. During the Yonghe period (345–356 C.E.) the Regional Inspector of Bingzhou, Gao Chang, and the Regional Inspector of Jizhou, Lü Hu, established private armies and threatened each other. Dou Zhuan served as an official for Gao Chang. Lü Hu sent cavalry to capture him. He was shackled to the six or seven people who were with him and put into a jail cell, in heavy shackles and fetters. The date of his execution was fixed. At that time the monk Zhi Daoshan was staying in the camp. He was acquainted with Dou Zhuan and, hearing of his imprisonment, he came to see him in jail. They spoke through a door. Dou Zhuan said, “Today I am in a great difficulty and my life will come to an end in a matter of hours. How can I get out of this?” Zhi Daoshan said, “If you earnestly pray there should be a response.” Dou Zhuan had often heard of Avalokiteśvara, and after hearing Zhi Daoshan’s suggestion he wholeheartedly meditated on the bodhisattva. For three days and three nights he earnestly took refuge in Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva. When he looked at the shackles and fetters he felt that they had become looser. Something extraordinary seemed to be happening. As he tentatively pushed at them the shackles fell open and his body was free.

Dou Zhuan then earnestly implored, “Thanks to Avalokiteśvara’s compassionate assistance the fetters broke apart on their own. But there are still many companions [in chains] and I do not intend to leave them behind. Avalokiteśvara’s supernatural power saves all. Please let all be released!” As he said this, he pulled others away from their shackles and fetters, which fell away as if they had been cut off. Freed, they opened the door and ran through the area under heavy security. No one detected their escape right away and together the prisoners passed beyond the city limit. They traveled through the night and covered a distance of four or five *li* before dawn. When it became light they did not proceed further but together hid under a tree. Soon the prisoners’ escape was discovered. Mounted soldiers were dispatched in

all four directions to recapture them. Search parties were everywhere, burning grasslands and walking through the forests, but no one came to the small patch of land where Dou Zhuan was hiding; he was thus able to escape and return home. He became extraordinarily passionate in his faith in Avalokiteśvara. Later Zhi Daoshan came [south] across the Jiang River and told this story to the layman Xie Fu.

(Note: The above fourteen stories are from the *Mingxiang ji*.)

The monk Zhu Fachun was at Xianyi Monastery in the Shanyin district. His origins are unknown, except that he had renounced the householder's life as a youth and went to stay at Xianyi Monastery. He specialized in austerities and was skilled at reciting the earlier translation of the *Vimalakīrti Sutra*. During the Yuanxing period (402–404 C.E.) of the Jin dynasty he served as the head of the monastery, and he went to Lanzhou and bought an old building. He was on his way back at sunset, traveling in a boat across a lake, when suddenly a wind came up and the boat was about to capsize. Zhu Fachun singlemindedly sought help from Avalokiteśvara, reciting the bodhisattva's name incessantly. Suddenly a large ship appeared. He got on the ship and was saved. When he reached shore he looked for the ship's captain everywhere but could not find him on the ship and after a short while the large ship disappeared. Everyone, monastic or layperson, marveled at this miracle. Nothing is known of the circumstances of his death. (Note: This story [a more detailed version of this from the *Mingxiang ji* is reproduced above] appears in the *Liang gaoseng zhuan*, T.2059:406c21–26.)

#### Song Dynasty

Layman Zhang Xing, from Xinxing, was a strong believer in the Buddhist teaching. At one time he followed the monks Sengrong and Tanyi and received the eight [lay] precepts. Zhang Xing was once arrested; he managed to escape but his wife was kept in prison and was beaten and whipped for many days. At that time a fire broke out at the district office and prisoners were taken outside to the road. Sengrong and Tanyi happened to pass by the captives. Surprised, Zhang Xing's wife called out to them, "Teachers, what brought you here to rescue me?" Sengrong answered, "I do not have the power to rescue you. Just pray diligently to Avalokiteśvara. You should then be able

411a to escape.” The wife prayed day and night. After more than ten days she had a dream in which a monk stepped on her, saying ‘Get up.’” Taken aback, she got up and her shackles and fetters fell open. She ran toward the door but it was locked and guarded securely. She could not get out. Fearing that someone might wake up, she went back and put the restraints back on. She soon fell asleep again and had another dream. The same monk appeared and said, “The door is now open.” Zhang Xing’s wife woke up again and ran out. The guards were both fast asleep and she then walked quietly past them and left. The night was very dark, and after walking several *li* she ran into a person. Frightened, she fell down on the ground. The two people asked each other who they were. The man she had run into turned out to be her husband, Zhang Xing. Overwhelmed by joy, the couple went to the monk Tanyi in the middle of the night and he hid them. In this way they managed to escape. This event took place at the beginning of the Yuanxi period (424–453 C.E.).

As a child [Layman] Wang Yan visited Jiaozhi, where Dharma Master Xian, a virtuous monk, lived. Yan received the five precepts from this monk and was given a golden image of Avalokiteśvara to worship. Neither contemporary nor ancient in appearance, the image had been cast during the Yuanjia period (425–453 C.E.). It was of superior craftsmanship and showed a remarkable likeness to the deity. Wang Yan brought the image back to the capital city. When he was at the age of losing one’s milk teeth he and his two younger brothers practiced Buddhism diligently.

Later, while his residence was being repaired, Yan could not find a suitable place to keep the image and took it to Nanjian Monastery in the capital city. At this time people were rushing to mint coins, and some stole buddha images to melt them down for metal. After the Avalokiteśvara image had been at the monastery for several months, Yan dreamed during a nap that the image was standing at the edge of its base. Puzzled, after sunset Yan went to bring the image back from the monastery. That same day, later in the evening, more than ten images were stolen from Nanjian Monastery.

A long while later, at dusk near sunset, Yan’s image emitted light that illuminated the area around it to a distance of over three *chi*. The light was beautiful and ravishingly bright. Yan and his brothers and servants, altogether more than ten people, saw it. At that time he was still young and did not

record this incident, and by the time he got around to recording the incident he had forgotten the exact date. It was sometime in the autumn of the seventh year of the Daming period (463 C.E.).

Toward the end of the Taishi period (465–471 C.E.) [Wang] Yan moved to Wuyi. He arranged to have a monk look after the image, and the monk placed it temporarily at Duobao Monastery. While Yan was staying for a while in Jiangdu, the monk [to whom he had entrusted the image] left for the Jing and Chu areas. Yan thus lost track of the figure. The location of the image remained unknown for almost ten years, and Yan feared that he had lost the karmic bond with this divine treasure. Toward the end of the Shengming period (477–479 C.E.), while traveling in the Three Gorges area, Yan passed through the Jiangling district [in the Jing and Chu areas]. There he saw the monk to whom he had entrusted the image, and learned that the figure was [at Duobao Monastery].

The same year Yan returned to the capital city and immediately went to Duobao Monastery. The head of the monastery, Master Ai, said, “No such image has been entrusted here.” Yan returned home, thinking that the monk’s inattention had led to the loss of the image, and he was deeply distressed. That night he dreamed that someone appeared and said, “The image is at the monastery. Master Ai just forgot. I will find it for you.” He saw the man arrive at the monastery and open the door of the buddha hall with his own hand. Yan saw the image vividly and clearly, standing among the smaller images placed on the eastern side of the hall. Early on the next morning Yan went back to the monastery. He reported in detail what he had seen in his dream and requested Master Ai to look for it again. Master Ai then opened the buddha hall for him, and indeed they found the image on the eastern side of the hall, just as he had seen in the dream. He was thus able to recover the figure. This was on the thirteenth day of the seventh month in Jianyuan 1 (479 C.E.).

411b

[The Author’s Preface to the *Record of Miraculous Signs (Mingxiang ji)*, compiled by Wang Yan, from which the above story is taken, says:]

I take care of this image myself all the time forever as a guide. As I tell this story again, I am deeply moved. Because of this miracle I compiled this record. In mirroring reality and making it accessible to ordinary emotions, nothing surpasses the image. The source of image miracles can for

the most part be attributed to this fact. The scripture says, “Molten, or carved, or drawn, painted on silk, the images that reproduce the form [of the Buddha] all can move and emit light.” In the Western Region images of Śākyamuni and Maitreya emit light miraculously. Is it because they reproduce the Buddha’s form? In China light gathers in a clear sign of cosmic responses. Furthermore, in recent years people affected by cosmic responses have seen marvelous effects in [figures made from] wood and stone. These effects cannot necessarily be attributed to the [outward] appearances of the images. Thus, when the heavy stone [statues] floated on the surface of the deep [ocean], this marked the advent of the Buddhist teaching in the Min and Wu areas. [The figure] made of molten gold dust predicted calamities at Song[wang] Temple in Peng[cheng]. There are numerous other examples. Though difficult to discuss in detail, their main message may be reduced to this. The meaning of stupa miracles is also similar. The subjects differ but the message is consistent. Therefore I appended them at the end. (Ref. Fascicle 14 of the *Fayuan zhulin*, T.2122:388c18–29, translated above.)

(The above two stories were taken from the *Mingxiang ji*.)

[Northern] Wei Dynasty

The monk Daotai of Hengtang Monastery on Mount Changshan lived during the last years of the Yuan Wei dynasty (Northern Wei, 386–534 C.E.). In a dream he heard someone predict that he, Daotai, would die in such-and-such year at the age of forty-two. Upon waking Daotai was afraid. When that year came and he became ill, he was greatly distressed and donated everything he owned to accumulate merit. A friend told him, “Making offerings to sixty-two myriad bodhisattvas produces no more merit than reciting Avalokiteśvara’s name just once. Why don’t you singlemindedly take refuge in this bodhisattva? You could then prolong your life.” Daotai realized the truth of this advice and for four days and nights he recited the name of Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva without a break. Suddenly, from under the curtain surrounding his seat he saw light come in from outside the door. He then saw bright and golden light emitting from the base of the Avalokiteśvara image. The image said to Daotai, “Are you reciting the name of Avalokiteśvara?” When Daotai opened the curtain, the light was no longer there. Greatly moved, Daotai sweated profusely, then he felt his body become lighter as the illness

was cured, and his life span was prolonged. This was due to the effect of the power of the holy being.

During the Tianping period (534–537 C.E.) the militiaman Sun Jingde of Jingzhou produced an image of Avalokiteśvara and worshiped it himself. He was later captured by rebels; unable to withstand torture he confessed [to crimes of which he was not guilty]. Consequently, he was sentenced to be executed. In a dream a monk told him to recite the *Life-saving Avalokiteśvara Sutra*; if he recited it one thousand times he would escape execution. The officials bound him and took him to the marketplace. He kept reciting the scripture. The number of recitations reached one thousand just at the moment he was to be executed. When the sword fell on him it broke spontaneously into three pieces, and he was not harmed. The executioner changed his sword three times but they all broke in the same way. People then found the three traces of sword strikes on the head of the image. This was reported to the court, and Prime Minister Gao Huan (496–547 C.E.) memorialized the granting of Sun Jingde’s pardon; the court ordered the scripture to be copied and circulated widely. This is the *Gaowang guanshiyin jing*. From the Jin through the Song, Liang, Chen, Qin and Zhao periods the country was divided among sixteen states. During this period innumerable people recited the names of Avalokiteśvara, Kṣitigarbha, Maitreya, and Amitābha and achieved salvation. Since the details are found in various biographies and records, they are not reproduced here.

411c

During the Last Years of the [Northern] Wei Dynasty

The origins of the monk Shi Fali of Lu Commandery is unknown. His ambition was to build temple buildings. He wished to build a temple in Lu Commandery but did not have enough lumber. With the novice Mingchen he went to Shanggu to ask for a supply of hemp. Having loaded the cart with the material, they started on their way back. While traveling through a vacant marsh they encountered wildfire. Since the cart was downwind [of the fire], they were afraid they wouldn’t be able to escape. Fali was exhausted and fell asleep. When he woke up the fire was very close. He raised his voice and asked Avalokiteśvara for help. As soon as he recited the bodhisattva’s name, as if responding to his voice, the wind shifted and the fire died down. They were able to safely return to the monastery.

There is also the case of the monk Fazhi. While still a layman he was traveling alone through a large marshland when a fierce fire appeared on all four sides simultaneously. He realized that he was going to die and, bowing his head to the ground, he kept on reciting the name of Avalokiteśvara. Puzzled that he was not burned by the fire, he raised his head. The grasses of the marshland were all completely burned; only a small area enough to accommodate Fazhi's body was left untouched. Moved by this miracle, he renounced the householder's life and became a monk.

The monk Daoji was captured by bandits while traveling through Xishan in Shouyang. They bound him to a tree with a rope and were about to kill him. He kept on reciting Avalokiteśvara's name, determined to continue without stopping until death. The swords they wielded all broke and he could not be harmed. The bandits were frightened and fled, and Daoji escaped.

While traveling through the mountains the monk Fachan encountered some thieves. Fearing that he was to be killed, he kept on reciting the name of Avalokiteśvara. The bandits drew their bows and shot arrows at him but they all missed. The bandits were then converted and threw their weapons on the ground. Recognizing him as a man of spiritual power, they fled.

(The above three stories are from the *Tang gaoseng zhuan*, T.2060:654c8–24.)

[Concluding] verses say (ref. Zhi Daolin's "Verses in Praise of Śākyamuni Buddha," *Guang hongming ji*, T.2103:196b3–18):

Śākyamuni's teaching is benevolent.  
He observes the capacities of sentient beings and descends from heaven.  
Superior to all [other] saintly beings,  
He is truly the guide of rulers.  
He nourishes all in happiness.  
Beautiful and pure, drawing from the deep source,  
He compassionately teaches sentient beings and  
Guides them to the profound teaching of the Middle [Way].  
He kindly spreads the lamp of wisdom,  
Illuminating one's progress in the darkness.

His teaching adapts to circumstances.  
Who recognizes reality in darkness?  
From a distance it looks like rising mist—  
It is the ferry across the clouds.  
[The Buddha's teaching] attaches to physical forms,  
But it also rises up high above them in spirit.  
The teaching of the three vehicles [as expedient means] has spread widely.  
Among the two *śāla* trees he left his physical body.  
The nirvana [of Śākyamuni] was also [an example of] provisional  
    designation.  
The true teaching is the permanent [and unchanging] reality.



## Chapter Seven

### Paying Respect to the Dharma

(This section consists of six parts:) [(1) Introduction], (2) Listening to the Dharma, (3) Seeking the Dharma, (4) Meritorious Response, (5) Dharma Masters, (6) The Sin of Reviling [the Dharma]. 412a

#### [1. Introduction]

It has been heard: While [the Buddha ultimately] remains in quietude (nirvana) and is unmoving, and there is no form or speech, yet because he responds and communicates he uses names and teaching, It is difficult to hear the fourfold formulation [of truth that the Buddha teaches (affirmation, negation, both affirmation and negation, neither affirmation and negation)]. [Yet, without it] one easily [finds oneself] entering into fire in [any of the] three thousand [realms].

In the cold and quiet night, during a long evening with a bright moon, one may sit alone in an open and restful space and chant scriptures. As the melody comes and goes, following the correct notes, the words become clear and the speech beautiful. Words and music match and please people's minds. Their benefits are sufficient to delight mysterious spirits. After study and practice the meaning of the sentences is clear. As one recites with a respectful heart, miraculous responses appear. One truly knows that upholding [even] one verse brings a great deal of benefit; copying [even] one word produces merit greater than the practices of many *kalpas*. For this reason Kāśyapa willingly offered his skin to be flayed [and used to copy scripture], and in delight Sadāprarudita happily shed blood [to be used as ink].

This [practice of paying respect to the Dharma] is the first gate of the sweet dew of immortality; it is [also] the ultimate virtue that results from entering the Way.

#### 2. Listening to the Dharma

The *Fufazang jing* (T.2058:321c26–322b27) says:

The Buddha said, “Any sentient being, who wishes to escape from the great ocean of life and death in the three realms must rely on the boat of the Dharma; salvation is possible only by this. The Dharma is cool and removes the heat of desires. The Dharma is the marvelous medicine that can cure the illness of bondage. The Dharma is the truly good friend of sentient beings; it brings great benefits and transports them over all suffering. The reasoning behind this may be explained as follows.

Sentient beings lack stability in their inner orientation and are affected by circumstances. Under circumstances that are good, they become good. Under circumstances that are bad, they become bad. When they are near evil friends they commit evil deeds, going from births to deaths endlessly. When they are near good friends they develop faith and a respectful mind; listening to the marvelous Dharma they will without fail escape from the three realms of suffering, and from the merit acquired in this way they will come to enjoy utmost happiness.

The king of Kapilavastu owned a white elephant, which destroyed his enemies; criminals were brought before the elephant and trampled by it. Later a fire burned the elephant’s stable down. The animal was moved near a Buddhist temple where it heard a monk recite a verse of Dharma: “Good deeds lead to rebirths in heavens; evil deeds to rebirths in [lower realms].” When the elephant heard these words of Dharma, its heart became gentle and it developed a feeling of compassion. After this, whenever criminals were brought before the elephant it would only sniff at them with its trunk and lick them with its tongue, then it would move away, refusing to kill them. Seeing this, the king became frightened and called his ministers together to discuss the matter. One wise minister said to the king, “Having been brought near the temple the elephant must have heard the marvelous Dharma, and that has led to this result. It should now be taken near a slaughterhouse.” The king adopted his advice. When the elephant saw the domestic animals being slaughtered, evil sentiments flared up fiercely and it became even more violent and cruel than before.

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We should take this as a confirmation of the fact that sentient beings lack stability in their inner orientation. Even an animal on hearing the Dharma develops the feeling of compassion, while witnessing slaughter increases its harmful mental states. How much more would this be the

case with human beings? How could they not be affected by their circumstances? For this reason, wise ones should know to abandon evil when they see it and approach good when they perceive it. They should diligently listen to the Dharma scriptures.

One time a brahman, carrying a large number of human skulls, came to Kapilavastu and went all over the city trying to sell them, but even after a long time no one would buy them. The brahman became angry and shouted, “The people in this city are stupid and ignorant. If they don’t buy these skulls from me I will spread a bad reputation about them.” Several *upāsakas* (laymen) heard this and fearing that they would be reviled and abused, they brought money to buy the skulls. They [tested the skulls by] piercing them with a copper chopstick; if the chopstick passed through they offered a lot of money. If it went in halfway, they offered a small amount of money. If it did not go in at all, they did not offer any money for them. The brahman said, “These skulls are all the same. Why are you offering different payments for them?” The *upāsakas* answered, “If the chopstick passes through, it shows that while he was alive that person heard and accepted the marvelous Dharma and his wisdom was superior. Because he valued the Dharma so much, we are willing offer a lot of money for his skull. If the chopstick goes through only halfway, it means that even though that person heard a Dharma scripture he did not understand and appreciate it. For this reason we offer only a small amount. If the chopstick does not go in at all, that person did not hear the Dharma at all; therefore we offer no money for it.” The *upāsakas* then took the skulls outside the city, built stupas [in which to enshrine them], and made offerings to them. When their own lives came to an end they were all reborn in heaven.

This story illustrates the great deal of merit the marvelous Dharma possesses. The *upāsakas* took the skulls of those who had listened to the Dharma, built stupas for them, and worshiped them, and for these acts they were reborn in heaven. How much better would the reward be for those who listen to the Dharma scriptures, worship them, and respectfully carry the scriptures with them? The reward for meritorious deeds is indeed unlimited. In a future life one will achieve the supreme path. Therefore, if a wise person wishes to obtain supreme peace and happiness, he or she must listen to the Dharma scriptures with utmost sincerity.

The *Xianyu jing* (T.202:436c8–437a26) says:

412c In the past, while the Buddha was in this world, there was an elder whose name was Anāthapiṇḍada living in the kingdom of Śrāvastī. He had faith in the Buddha's Dharma and honored it. Serving the Buddha's community as a donor, he provided for all the monks' needs. In Anāthapiṇḍada's house there were two parrots; the first was named Lüti and the second Shelüti. They were very intelligent and understood human speech. When they saw a monk arrive, they told those in the house to come out to welcome him. Some time later Ānanda came to the elder's house. He saw the parrots and preached to them the Four Noble Truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the [eightfold] path. There was a tree in front of the gate, and when the birds heard the Dharma they flew up to the top of the tree, delightedly reciting the teaching. They stayed around the tree at night and were eaten by wild foxes. For this reason they were reborn in the heaven of the four heavenly kings; after their life span there ended they were reborn in Trāyastriṃśa Heaven; after their life span in Trāyastriṃśa Heaven ended, they were reborn in Yama Heaven; after their life span in Yama Heaven ended, they were reborn in Tuṣita Heaven; after their life span in Tuṣita Heaven ended, they were reborn in Nirmāṇarati Heaven; after their life span in Nirmāṇarati Heaven ended, they were reborn in Paranirmitavaśavartin Heaven; after their life span in Paranirmitavaśavartin Heaven ended, they were again reborn in Nirmāṇarati Heaven. In this way they came down to the heaven of the four heavenly kings. After their life span in the heaven of the four heavenly kings ended, they went up and were again reborn in Paranirmitavaśavartin Heaven. In this way they went up and down among the six heavens of the realm of desire seven times. They enjoyed pleasure at their will and reached the utmost limit of life spans in heaven, never experiencing untimely deaths. After this, when their lives came to the end, they were reborn among humans. They left the householder's life and became *pratyekabuddhas*, one named Tanmo and the other Xiutanmo.

The *Xianyu jing* (T.202:437b2–20) says:

Once while the Buddha was in this world a monk recited scriptures very beautifully in the forest. At that time a bird, which loved hearing the Dharma, was in a tree and listened to the monk's recitation. The bird was

later shot by a hunter and died. Because of the good karmic cause [of its having listened to the Dharma] the bird was reborn in Trāyastriṃśa Heaven. He was handsome and beautiful; endowed with a halo, he was incomparable. He knew his own former lives. Realizing that because he had heard a monk recite a scripture he had been reborn in that heaven, he brought heavenly flowers to the monk. He paid respect to the monk, asking about his well-being, and made an offering of heavenly incense and flowers. The monk, having questioned and learned the details of the story, asked the god to sit and then preached the Dharma to him, which made the god attain the status of stream-winner (*srota-āpanna*). Having attained this status, the god returned to heaven. If even a bird who hears the Dharma can obtain such boundless merits, how could a human being who believes and listens to the Dharma not receive good rewards?

The *Shanjianlü* (*Samantapāsādikā*, T.1462:697c1–21) says:

In the past when the Buddha was still in the world he preached in the Campā kingdom, near Gargarā Pond. At that time a frog in the pond heard the voice of the Buddha preaching at the side of the pond. The frog immediately came out of the pond and running through the grass it came to listen to the Buddha's sermon. At that time a man herding a cow with a stick nearby saw the Buddha sitting down, preaching to an assembly. The man wanted to go to where the Buddha was right away to hear the Dharma. He stuck his stick into the ground and hit the frog's head by accident. The frog died immediately and was reborn in Trāyastriṃśa Heaven. As the reward for the merits accumulated earlier, his palace was twenty *yojanas* long and wide and he enjoyed pleasures with heavenly women. Then riding upon the palace as a vehicle, he came to the Buddha's place and paid respect to him, bowing his head to the Buddha's feet. The Buddha knew his circumstances and asked [him to explain them to others], "Who are you? You suddenly come to pay respect to me. Surrounded by miraculous light, your features are incomparably beautiful. The light illumines everywhere here." The frog deity answered in verse:

Once I had a frog's body.  
 I looked for food in water.  
 Hearing the voice of the Buddha preaching the Dharma,

413a I came out and was among the roots of the grasses.  
A man herding a cow came with his stick to listen to the Buddha.  
With the stick he struck my head, and  
I died and was reborn in heaven.

The Buddha used the verse the frog deity had uttered and preached to the fourfold assembly. At that time eighty-four thousand people in the assembly obtained the Way. The frog deity attained the status of stream-winner and with palms joined, he departed.

### 3. Seeking the Dharma

The *Zabaozang jing* (T.203:494c3–16) says:

There was once a woman who was very intelligent and deeply committed to the Three Jewels. She used to invite two monks at a time, following the monastic ranking, to her house to offer them a meal. Later one monk had his turn and came to her house; he was old, dumb, and quite ignorant. When the meal was over the woman earnestly asked the monk to preach a sermon. She spread a mat for the preacher and sat quietly with her eyes closed in front of it. The monk knew that he could not preach. As soon as the woman's eyes were closed he ran from her house and returned to the monastery. Nevertheless, the woman earnestly meditated that all constructed entities are impermanent and ultimately lead to suffering; they are empty and do not exist on their own. Contemplating this deeply, she achieved the status of stream-winner.

Having achieved this status, she went to the monastery looking for the monk in order to thank him for his kindness. The old monk, admitting his ignorance, left her and fled. He became even more ashamed and continued to hide from her. Still the woman looked for him ceaselessly. When he finally came out of hiding, she saw him and told to him in detail how thanks to him she had obtained the spiritual status [of stream-winner], and offered him a meal to repay his kindness. The old monk was greatly embarrassed and due to his self-reproach he too obtained the status of stream-winner.

This illustrates how practitioners should earnestly and diligently seek the Dharma. Those who earnestly seek the Dharma will attain the goal without fail.

The *Dapanniepan jing* (*Nirvana Sutra*, T.374:449b9–451b1) says:

The Buddha said, “I remember that in the past I was a brahman, cultivating bodhisattva practices in the Himalayas. At that time there was no buddha present in the world, nor was there any Dharma taught in scriptures. Then the god Śakra saw a bodhisattva practicing austerities alone in the mountains and immediately came down to test him. The god changed his form into that of a truly terrifying *rākṣasa*, stood before the bodhisattva, and uttered the following half-verse: ‘All dharmas are impermanent. This is the truth of samsara, of [all dharmas] coming into being and going out of being.’ Having uttered this verse, the *rākṣasa* looked around everywhere in the four directions.

“When the bodhisattva heard this verse he was delighted. He rose from his seat and, holding his hair in his hand, looked around in the four directions. He saw no other human beings; he saw only the *rākṣasa*. He then approached the *rākṣasa* and asked him, ‘Great being, where did you obtain the verse? The correct way of the buddhas of the three ages (past, present, and future) is expressed in this half-verse.’ The *rākṣasa* answered, ‘Do not ask. I have not eaten for many days. I have looked everywhere for food but could not get any. Hungry and thirsty, my mind became disturbed and I spoke the wrong words. These words are not what I know in my own mind.’ The bodhisattva said, ‘If you complete the verse for me, I will become your disciple for the rest of my life.’ The *rākṣasa* answered, ‘Your wisdom is too great. I worry about my body and cannot think of anything else. Right now I am so hungry that indeed I cannot even speak properly.’ The bodhisattva said, “What do you eat?’ The *rākṣasa* answered, ‘I only eat warm human flesh and drink hot human blood.’ As soon as the bodhisattva heard this, he said to the *rākṣasa*, ‘If you will complete this verse, I will offer you my body [as food].’ The *rākṣasa* answered, “Who could believe you? You would offer the body you cherish for the eight characters of the remaining verse?’ The bodhisattva answered, “I will call witnesses. The gods Brahmā, Śakra, the four heavenly kings, and all the buddhas and bodhisattvas will be my witnesses.’ When he heard this, the *rākṣasa* agreed. The bodhisattva was delighted. He slipped out of his robe and laid it down to serve as the preacher’s seat. The bodhisattva said, ‘Master, please

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sit here and preach the Dharma for me.’ Then the *rākṣasa* said, ‘When the samsara of coming into and going out of being ceases, there will be the happiness of nirvana.’ When the rest of the verse was uttered the bodhisattva fell into deep thought. He wrote the verse on the surfaces of rock and trees, then climbed up a tall tree and threw himself from it. Before he hit the ground, however, he heard voices in mid-air. At that moment the *rākṣasa* changed his form back to that of the god Śakra, caught the bodhisattva, and placed him safely on the ground. Śakra repented, apologized, and after having made his greetings departed. Because [the bodhisattva was willing to] give up his body for a half-verse [of Dharma], after twelve *kalpas* he will achieve the supreme Way before Maitreya Buddha.”

The *Dapanniepan jing* (*Nirvana Sutra*, T.374:497a20–b18) says:

The Buddha said, “I remember that incalculable numbers of thousands of *kalpas* ago, a buddha called Śākyamuni appeared in this *sahā* world and for the benefit of sentient beings he preached the *Great Nirvana Sutra*. At that time I was at a good friend’s place and heard the Buddha’s *Great Nirvana Sutra* recited. I was delighted and immediately wished to make offerings, but I was poor and had nothing to offer. So I offered my body for sale, but due to lack of merit I could not find a buyer. On my way home I saw someone on the roadside and said to him, ‘I want to sell my body. Will you buy it?’ The man answered, ‘There is something that the servants in my house are not able to do. I have a bad disease, for which a good doctor prescribed medicine. I must take three *liang* of human flesh everyday. If you agree to provide me with three *liang* of your flesh every day, I will give you five pieces of gold.’ Hearing this, I was delighted and said, ‘Give me seven days to take care of my affairs. I will then return and get to work.’ The man said, ‘I will give you one day.’ I then took the coins, went to the Buddha, paid respect to him, and presented the gold to him. Then I listened to this scripture earnestly. I am ignorant and stupid and could memorize only one verse, ‘The Tathāgata realized nirvana, stopping the cycle of birth and death forever. If a person listens earnestly [to this teaching] he will achieve unlimited happiness.’ Having received this verse, I went to the house of the ill man. I gave three *liang* of flesh every day, but because I thought of this one verse I did not experience

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any pain. I did this every day without fail, and after a month the man's illness was completely cured. I then saw that my own body had also been restored to its original form. Thereupon, I made the vow to seek enlightenment and achieve buddhahood in a future life. I also vowed that at that time I would also be called Śākyamuni. This is the story behind my present attainment of the buddhahood."

The *Ji yiqiefude sanmei jing* (T.382:995c7–996c18) says:

In the past, incalculable numbers of *kalpas* ago, a holy man called Zuisheng lived in a forest. He possessed the five supernatural powers and was constantly practicing compassion. Later, he thought, "Compassion by itself cannot save sentient beings. Only those who have learned widely can destroy the impure desires and wrong views of sentient beings and lead them to the correct view." Having thought this, he traveled around the cities and villages seeking everywhere for a teacher who could teach the Dharma. At that time the god Māra appeared to the holy man and said, "I have here a verse uttered by the Buddha. Now if you are willing to write the verse down, peeling skin off your body to serve as paper, drawing blood as ink, and using your own bone as the pen, I will tell you the verse."

When he heard this, the holy man Zuisheng thought, "In the course of an uncountable number of thousands of *kalpas* I constantly cut myself for the benefit of others. I have experienced suffering beyond measure, yet without any benefits. I will now give up this impermanent body in exchange for the permanent and real Dharma." He was delighted with this thought and with a sharp knife peeled off some skin to use as paper, drew blood to use as ink, and broke off a bone to use as a pen. With palms joined, he turned to the god and asked for the verse. Seeing this, the god Māra became depressed and fatigued, and quietly disappeared.

When the holy man saw this, he said, "I now am happy to offer parts of my body for the sake of the Dharma, peeling off my skin to use as paper, drawing blood to use as ink, and breaking off a bone to use as a pen. With my mind utterly sincere, free from any falsehood, I pray that if in any other world a being is present who can preach the Dharma, let him appear right before me." As soon as these words were spoken, from a buddha land called Puwukou ("Everywhere Free of Defilement"),

thirty-two buddha lands east of here, a buddha called Jingmingwang (“King Pure Name”) suddenly appeared before him and cast a bright light over Zuisheng’s body. His pain was immediately removed and his body was restored to its original condition. [Śākyamuni] Buddha then preached the *samādhi* of gathering all merits and virtues. When he heard this, Zuisheng acquired the ability to speak eloquently without hindrance. Having given this sermon, the Buddha disappeared.

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The holy man Zuisheng, who had acquired the ability to speak eloquently without hindrance, preached the superior Dharma widely to sentient beings and caused an incalculable number of sentient beings to dwell on the path of the three vehicles. One thousand years later his life ended and he was reborn in the Puwukou buddha land of Jingmingwang Buddha. Because he had honored the Dharma, he was then able to achieve buddhahood. [Jingmingwang] Buddha said to Jingwei [to whom the Buddha teaches in this scripture], “I myself was Zuisheng in the distant past.” From this we know that if someone honors and seeks the Dharma, for the benefit of that person the Buddha does not enter nirvana and the Dharma does not disappear. Such a person will be able to see the Buddha face to face, even if in a different land, and obtain the correct Dharma.

#### 4. Meritorious Responses

The *Puyao jing* (T.186:537a11–b9) says:

If a wise person listens to this scripture and with palms joined takes refuge in it, he will abandon the eight conditions that constitute the foundation of laziness and will realize the eight virtues. What are the eight virtues? First, becoming handsome in appearance; second, becoming powerful and prosperous; third, increasing the number of attendant relatives; fourth, becoming infinitely eloquent; fifth, learning quickly and renouncing the householder’s life; sixth, being able to keep one’s practice pure; seventh, achieving *samādhi* in meditation; and eighth, acquiring the wisdom that illumines everything.

If a Dharma master sits on a mat and recites this scripture, he will obtain eight seats of merits. What are the eight? First, obtaining the elder’s seat; second, obtaining the seat of a *cakravartin* (universal monarch); third,

obtaining the seat of the heavenly ruler; fourth, obtaining Maheśvara's seat; fifth, obtaining the seat of an arhat; sixth, obtaining the seat of a bodhisattva; seventh, obtaining the seat of a tathāgata; and eighth, obtaining the seat for turning the Dharma wheel and leading all sentient beings to liberation.

If a Dharma master announces this Dharma widely and receives the response of praise, he will obtain eight pure conducts. What are the eight? First, his words and conduct will match without any discrepancies; second, his speech will be utterly sincere and free of any falsehood; third, he will speak only truth and no lies will be uttered in an assembly; fourth, people will have faith in his speech and not neglect or distance themselves from it; fifth, his speech will be gentle with nothing crude in it from the beginning; sixth, his voice will be melancholic, like the cry of a sorrowful phoenix; seventh, his body and mind will be in tune with the proper time, his speech will sound like the voice of the god Brahmā, and no one in the assembly will refuse to accept his instruction; and eighth, his speech will sound like the voice of the Buddha, agreeable to the minds of sentient beings.

A person who studies this scripture will secure eight great storehouses [of teaching]. What are the eight? First, the storehouse of the meaning that never is wrongly abandoned; second, the storehouse of the receptive mind that understands everything and makes proper distinctions in the scriptural teachings; third, the storehouse of the past and the future with which one understands the teachings of all buddhas, fourth, the storehouse of *dhāraṇīs*, with which one remembers everything that one has heard; fifth, the storehouse of eloquence with which one propagates the scriptures among sentient beings, who accept it with delight; sixth, the storehouse of the profound Dharma, in which the teaching of the Three Jewels will never be lost; and eighth, the storehouse of honoring the Dharma, which leads immediately to the insight of the truth of nonarising.

The *Huayan jing* (T.278:691b20–23) says:

Good friends, even with as much ink as [would fill] the great ocean and as many pens that together would form [a mountain as high as] Mount Sumeru it would still not be possible to exhaustively copy this scripture, covering each chapter, each teaching, each story of skillful

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means, each teaching of [the emptiness of] all that rises, and the meaning of each phrase.

The *Dasheng zhuangyan lun* (T.1604:659c12–6) says:

There are ten kinds of correct practices for bodhisattvas with regard to the Mahayana teaching: (1) copying [scripture], (2) making offerings to it, (3) circulating it, (4) listening to it, (5) reading it, (6) teaching it to others, (7) reciting it, (8) interpreting it, (9) reflecting carefully on it, and (10) cultivating it. These ten correct practices produce incalculable merit.

The *Zhongbian fenbie lun* (T.1599:461a28–b3) says:

There are ten ways of cultivation in the Mahayana: (1) copying [scripture], (2) making offerings to it, (3) giving gifts to others, (4) listening single-mindedly to what others recite, (5) reading [the scripture] oneself, (6) choosing the right expressions and meanings that accord with the truth, (7) explaining clearly the spiritual truth and meanings of its expression, (8) listening to recitation with the correct mental attitude, (9) reflecting truthfully on the teaching of emptiness, and (10) having understood the teaching, practicing it so as not to regress.

The *Pusazang jing* (*Dabaoji jing*, *pusanzang hui*, T.310:315a28–b19) says:

Furthermore, Śāriputra, these good men and women receive this scripture, respectfully listen to it, recite it, understand its meaning, and preach it widely to others. You should know that these people gain ten kinds of meritorious and praiseworthy benefits. What are the ten? First, achieving the wisdom of quickness of wit; second, achieving eloquent wisdom; third, achieving sharp wisdom; fourth, achieving the wisdom that works rapidly; fifth, achieving the wisdom that is broad in scope; sixth, achieving the wisdom of profound depth; seventh, achieving the wisdom that penetrates all phenomena; eighth, achieving the wisdom of nonattachment; ninth, constantly seeing the Tathāgata before oneself and, having seen him, praising him with beautiful verses; and tenth, being able to ask the Tathāgata intelligent questions and being able to explain and resolve doubts and criticism. Śāriputra, this is called gaining ten kinds of meritorious and praiseworthy benefits.

Furthermore, Śāriputra, these good men and women receive this scripture, recite it, understand its meaning, and preach it widely to others. You should know that these people gain another ten kinds of meritorious and praiseworthy benefits. What are these ten? First, to take pleasure in always avoiding unwholesome friends; second, to take pleasure in always being close to wholesome friends; third, to be able to loosen all bondage to Māra; fourth, to destroy Māra's army; fifth, to be able to effectively reject all defilements; sixth, to maintain in all practices the constant attitude of giving; seventh, to turn away from all teachings that lead to rebirth in inferior realms; eighth, to turn toward all teachings that lead to nirvana; ninth, to preach well about all pure deeds of giving that lead beyond life and death; and tenth, to skillfully study and follow all the rules that bodhisattvas should follow, and to honor the commands of all the buddhas. These are called the ten kinds of meritorious and praise-worthy benefits.

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The *Niepan jing* (*Nirvana Sutra*, T. 374; ref. *Dafangbian fobaoen jing*, T.156:157b12) says, "The Dharma is the mother of the Buddha. The Buddha is born from the Dharma." All tathāgatas of the three ages worship the Dharma. The *Duwujiji jing* (ref. *Liuduji jing*, T.152:35b22–6a24) says:

There was once a monk who diligently practiced and guarded the Dharma. The scripture he could recite was the *Perfection of Wisdom*. Everyone who heard him recite [the scripture] was filled with joy. A young boy, seven years old, who was herding sheep outside the city, heard from a great distance the sound of the monk reciting the scripture. The boy immediately came to the temple, paid respect, and listened to the words of the scripture. When the teaching on the emptiness of form was given, he immediately understood it. The boy asked the monk a question but the monk could not answer. The boy then explained the meaning of the teaching to the monk. This was a teaching that was heard only rarely and in the distant past. The monk was puzzled by the extraordinary wisdom of the small boy. The boy then left, but while herding an ox in the mountains he came across a tiger and was killed. The boy was then reborn in an elder's family. When the elder's wife became pregnant she could recite aloud the *Perfection of Wisdom*, and continued to do so ceaselessly from morning to evening. People

in the elder's household became suspicious, saying that the wife suffered from an illness caused by possession by a ghost.

A monk then came to the house and, delighted by the elder's wife's voice, said, "This is not a case of ghost possession. She is reciting a scripture." The wife came out and paid respect to the monk, and then preached to him. She was able to resolve all doubts and difficulties and explain everything completely. The monks present were delighted. When the time came, the wife gave birth to a boy. At birth he knelt with palms joined and preached the *Perfection of Wisdom*. After giving birth the wife recovered to how she was before she became pregnant. The monk said, "This child is truly a disciple of the Buddha. Raise him with great care. The child will later become a great teacher for all people. We will all follow him and receive his instruction."

By the time the boy was seven years old he had mastered all the teachings of the Way; standing high above all others, his wisdom was limitless. Where mistakes had occurred in the copies of scriptures he corrected and established the correct edition. Wherever the boy went he converted and taught people. At the house of the elder five hundred people, young and old, all learned from the child. Eighty-four thousand people decided to seek the unsurpassed and true Way. Five hundred monks heard the sermon given by the boy and, having removed defiling desires, achieved liberating understanding. They were determined to seek the Great Vehicle and obtain the purity of the Dharma eye. The boy at that time was none other than myself. The monk was Kāśyapa Buddha.

The *Shelifu chutai jing* (ref. *Zhidu lun*, T.1509:137c10–11) says, "While the mother was pregnant with Śāriputra she also became intelligent." The *Gaoseng zhuan* (T.2059:330a18–9, b2; 331a8) says:

While his mother was pregnant with Kumārajīva she became intelligent. She [used to be able to] recite one thousand verses. After she became pregnant, she acquired two thousand [additional] verses each day. She first achieved the status of stream-winner; later she became a once-returner.

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## 5. Dharma Masters

The *Shengtianwang jing* (T.231:725b29–c3, c4–8) says:

The place where a Dharma teacher circulates this teaching is the place where the Tathāgata walks. One should mentally treat that Dharma teacher as a good spiritual friend, honoring him as if he were the Buddha. If you see this Dharma teacher, joyfully pay respect to him, honor and praise him.

Also: Even if I (the Buddha) lived in the world for one world age, or nearly one world age, [I would] not be able to describe exhaustively the merits of the Dharma teacher who circulates this scripture. Even if a good man or woman [were to go to the extreme of] shedding blood on the ground where this Dharma teacher walks so that dust does not arise, this would not be adequate to honor him. It is so difficult to receive and practice the Tathāgata's Dharma wheel [of teaching].

The *Huayan jing* (T.278:626b1–10) says:

Take the *garuḍa* king in comparison. The bird flies around the empty sky and stays safely there. He observes with eyes of purity the great palace of the dragon king of the ocean. He powerfully moves his two wings and divides the water of the ocean water into two parts. He knows which of the male and female dragons is about to die and snatches them away. The Tathāgata, Arhat and Correctly Enlightened One, compared with the *garuḍa* king, is also like this. He safely stays in the empty sky and observes with eyes of purity all the sentient beings inside the palaces within Dharma realms to see whether there are sentient beings whose good karmic roots have reached maturity. Powerfully mobilizing his ten powers and with the two wings of cessation and contemplation [the Tathāgata] divides the water of the great ocean of the desires and in accordance with the needs of these sentient beings leads them out of the ocean of birth and death, establishing securely [for them] the Tathāgata's unobstructed path.

The *Niepan jing* (*Nirvana Sutra*, T.374:384c28–29, 406b18–21, 417b15–16, 496c19; T.375:624c21–22, 647b6–8, 658b17–18, 740b5) says:

A man or woman of a good family who hears the name of this scripture will never be reborn in any of the four lower evil realms of birth. . . . If [the sound of] this scripture enters the ear of a sentient being, then all evil Avīci Hell karma is removed. . . . If [the sound of] this scripture enters the ear of a sentient being, then for the period of seven world ages that

sentient being will not be reborn in a lower evil realm of birth. . . . If one learns that the Tathāgata is eternal and does not undergo change, or if the sound of the two characters for “eternity” enters one’s ear even once, one will be reborn in heaven. After liberation he or she can achieve realization of the truth of the Tathāgata’s eternity and immutability.

The *Huayan jing* (T.279:187c28–188a1; ref. T.1522:155b21–23) says:

Hearing one phrase of the rarely heard Dharma is superior to receiving [all] the rare jewels of the trichiliocosm universes. If a bodhisattva hears one verse of the correct Dharma, he gives rise to the thought of the [most] superior possession and obtains a superior rank to that of a universal monarch.

The *Fahua jing* (*Lotus Sutra*, T.262:47c3–7) says:

415b If a man or woman of good family receives and practices this *Lotus Sutra*, reading it, reciting it, explaining its meaning, and copying it, that person will obtain eight hundred kinds of merit of the eyes, one thousand two hundred kinds of merit of the ears, eight hundred kinds of merit of the nose, one thousand two hundred kinds of merit of the tongue, eight hundred kinds of merit of the body, and one thousand two hundred kinds of merit of the mind.

The *Niepan jing* (*Nirvana Sutra*, T.374:398a9–12, 398c9–399a5; T.375:638b18–20; 639a20–b19) says:

After I entered nirvana, if people hear this wonderful Mahayana scripture and believe and honor it, they will not be reborn in the lower evil realms in future for a hundred thousand myriad world ages.

Also:

Even if one decides to seek the path under buddhas as numerous as the grains of sand in the Ganges River, thereafter never reviles the Dharma in evil worlds, and loves and delights in this scripture, that person [still] cannot teach it clearly and extensively to others. Even if one decides to seek the path under buddhas as numerous as twice the number of grains of sand in the Ganges River, thereafter never reviles the Dharma in evil worlds, and understands, believes, practices, and recites the scripture, that person still cannot teach it extensively. Even if one decides to seek the path under

buddhas as numerous as three times the number of grains of sand in the Ganges River, thereafter never reviles the Dharma in evil worlds . . . and copies the scripture in scrolls, even then that person would not be able to explain to others the deep meanings they do not understand. If one decides to seek the path under buddhas as numerous as four times the number of grains of sand in the Ganges River, thereafter never reviles the Dharma in evil worlds . . . and copies the scripture in scrolls, that person will be able to teach others [only] one-sixteenth of the meaning of the scripture. If one decides to seek the path under buddhas as numerous as five times the number of grains of sand in the Ganges River . . . in the evil world that person will be able to teach others eight of the sixteen parts of the meaning of the scripture. If one decides to seek the path under buddhas as numerous as six times the number of grains of sand in the Ganges River . . . in the evil world that person will be able to teach others twelve of the sixteen parts of the meaning of the scripture. If one decides to seek the path under buddhas as numerous as seven times the number of grains of sand in the Ganges River . . . in the evil world that person will be able to teach others fourteen of the sixteen parts of the meaning of the scripture. If one decides to seek the path under buddhas as numerous as eight times the number of grains of sand in the Ganges River . . . in the evil world copies the scripture in scrolls and encourages others to copy it, listens to the Dharma and encourages others to listen and practice accordingly, that person will be able to understand fully the complete meaning of the scripture.

## **6. The Sin of Reviling [the Dharma]**

We now [live] in the age of decline. The Dharma follows human corruption. Religion is adulterated by worldly concerns. The transmission has diverted from the truth. Different kinds of teachings are mixed up and practiced simultaneously. People do not study the Buddhist scriptures but concentrate exclusively on worldly books. Even when they copy scriptures, their hearts are not in it. They do not observe the rules of purity and also make many mistakes. They place scriptures in domestic residences. Sometimes the scriptures are placed near the entrance. People are not concerned even if the scriptures are damaged by wind, rain, and insects. Consequently, the scriptures lose their

415c miraculous powers. Even when people recite them the scriptures do not bring the benefits of relieving suffering. This is because our hearts are not in what we do, and because people grow increasingly more arrogant.

The *Jingfu jing* says:

The instruction for students [who copy] scriptures is that they cannot reverse the order of two characters or duplicate dots [incorrectly]. If they do so, they will fall into realms of delusion for five hundred lives and not be able to hear the correct Dharma.

The *Daji jing* (T.397:290c19–22) says:

If sentient beings commit evil deeds [such as] damaging the Dharma, reviling holy beings, place obstructions in the path of those who teach the Dharma, skip characters in copying scriptures, destroy other people’s teachings, or hide other people’s scriptures, for these deeds they will be reborn blind.

The *Dabanruo jing* (*Greater Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*, fascicle 440, T.220:215c28–216a3) says:

The Buddha said, “Good men and women, if when you are copying the profound sutra of the *Perfection of Wisdom*, if you yawn frequently and laugh uncontrollably, despise others, become unsettled and irritable both physically and mentally, mix up the order of phrases and get confused about the teaching, fail to get the meaning, or unexpected interruptions occur and the copying is not completed, [in such cases] you should know that Māra is causing this for the bodhisattva.”

The *Dasheng lianhuazang jing* says:

If one has received the Buddha’s precepts and fails to protect them in the future, [yet] claims to be a [follower of the Buddha], this person will be [unable to find his way] in the Mahayana, just as when someone tries to find his way in the dark of the night. If [such a person] claims, “I have gotten the Buddha’s teaching,” [he or she] will undergo suffering beyond description in the hell of steel spears. After coming out of that hell the person will be dumb and blind and will not be able to encounter the correct Dharma.

The *Anan qing jielü lun* (ref. *Datang neidian lu*, T.2149:336a9) says:

If while reading sutra, vinaya, and Abhidharma texts monks, nuns, and lay followers handle the rolls of the scripture while talking, in the calculation of the number of years in the Heaven of the Thirty-three [Gods] they will have committed a grave *duṣkṛta* offense and will receive the punishment of rebirth as an animal for the period of two myriad years. They will be reborn among deer; they will be dragged around and whipped; the pain will be unbearable. If they touch the scripture, sutra, vinaya, or Abhidharma [text] while joking harmlessly, they will receive the same punishment as above. If they place a scripture, sutra, vinaya, or Abhidharma [text] under the awning outside the scripture and image hall, they will have committed the grave *duṣkṛta* offenses for a period of eight hundred years in the calculation of the Heaven of the Thirty-three [Gods], and will receive the punishment of rebirth as an animal for a period of two myriad years. They will be reborn among pigs and dogs. Even if they are reborn as a human, for a period of myriad years they will live among refuse and will not be free.

The *Daping jing* (*Greater Perfection of Wisdom Scripture*, T.223:304c10–25) says:

These people spoke disparagingly about the omniscience of the buddhas of the three ages. The karmic effects of damaging the Dharma created causes and conditions and they fell into great hells for incalculable numbers of years. These destroyers of the Dharma are moved from one great hell to another. If a *kalpa* fire breaks out they are reborn in a great hell in another world and move from one great hell to another there. If a *kalpa* fire breaks out there they are reborn in a great hell in yet another world and move from one great hell to another there. In this way they travel through hells everywhere. When a *kalpa* fire breaks out they die, but because their karmic causes and conditions are not yet exhausted they are reborn in a great hell in another world, where they move from one great hell to another, receiving an incalculable amount of suffering. When the *kalpa* fire [in the last of these worlds] breaks out, they are taken to a different land elsewhere and are born among animals. They are punished for

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the crime of destroying the Dharma there as in the hells described above. As the gravity of sin lessens they are sometimes reborn in human bodies, or in a household of blind people, or in a *caṇḍāla* family, or in the families of various kinds of lowly people, such as lavatory cleaners or carriers of corpses. They are born with no eyes, or with one eye, or blind; they may be without a tongue, without ears, or without arms. Where they are born there will be no buddha, no Buddha's Dharma, nor disciples of the Buddha. This is because by committing the destruction of the Dharma they accumulated heavy [negative] karma.

The *Niepan jing* (*Nirvana Sutra*, T.374:399a23–b14) says:

Those who do not have faith in this scripture will suffer incalculably from illnesses in this life, and frequently be abused by other sentient beings. After death, others will despise them. Their facial features will be ugly. They will have a hard time securing livelihood. Even the little that they get will be of very poor quality. They will be reborn in poor and lowly families that revile the correct Dharma. At the moment of death they will encounter political disturbances. Armed groups will compete with each other and rulers will be tyrannical and violent. Vengeful enemies will invade. Even if they have good friends they won't be able to see them. What they need of livelihood they won't be able to obtain. Even if they manage to get some gains they will still constantly suffer from hunger and thirst. These people will only be known among the lowest. Kings and ministers will not include them in their lists of [officials]. Even if they hear any teaching they will not accept its truth. These people will be like birds whose wings are broken and are unable to fly. Similarly, these people will not be reborn in the future in the benevolent realms of human beings or gods.

If people believe the Mahayana sutras, even if they were originally born with an ugly appearance, due to the merit of the sutras they will become handsome. Their appearance will improve day by day, and eventually they will become [so attractive] that human beings and gods will take pleasure in seeing them. People and gods will pay respect to them, become attracted to them, and will find it difficult to leave them. Kings and ministers and members of their family will all love to hear what they teach and respectfully accept it. If any of my hearer (*śrāvaka*) disciples

wishes to carry out the foremost and rare practice, they should widely teach these Mahayana scriptures.

People of good families, the fog may be so encompassing that one may think that it will not allow the light of the sun to come through, yet when the sun comes out the fog dissipates completely. People of good families, the evil karma of sentient beings is like this. It may be so powerful that it seems impossible to see the great sun of nirvana through it. Yet, when the sun comes out it will remove all evil karma.

416b

The *Fahua jing* (*Lotus Sutra*, T.262:15b25–c2, c27–28, 16a8–9) says:

While the Buddha is in this world, or after his extinction, if one reviles this scripture, or on seeing those who recite, copy, and practice it they despise, hate, or hold grudges against them, the sin of that person is as follows. When the person dies, he will be reborn in Avīci Hell for the period of one world age. When the world age ends that person will be reborn, and in this way [he or she] will undergoes lives through an infinite number of world ages. When they come out of hell they will fall to the realm of animals. In rebirths through an innumerable number of world ages, they will be born deaf and dumb, without any sense organs.

[The Buddha] said to Śāriputra, “If I were to speak of the sins of those who revile this scripture, I would not be able to exhaust the topic for [the duration of] one world age.”

Concluding verses say:

The teaching is transmitted in the three storehouses [of scriptures and]  
Teaches compassionately the eight causes.

It reaches widely all sentient beings.

In showing the mysterious path to those with the capacity for  
enlightenment,

It displays its power like the summer’s heat, or

Gently, like the warmth of spring.

After days of decay and drying up,

Its luster is pleasant.

Rolled up, [the scripture] holds auspiciousness within;

Extended, it presents wisdom.

As one thinks of its content ceaselessly,  
The content expands and renews itself.  
We truly call it our kind father, and  
Skillfully title it “Capable of Benevolence” (i.e., Nengren; Śākyamuni).  
How could the teachings of Confucius and Laozi  
Match it as a way of governing the world,  
Just as a potter shapes pots on a wheel?

## Fascicle 18

### Miracle Stories

(Forty-one stories are selected:) Miracles [related] in the *Han fa[ben] neizhuan jing*. Jin dynasty (265–419 C.E.): Layman Ding Dezhen; Layman Zhou Min; Layman Dong Ji; Layman Zhou Dang; Layman Xie Fu; Monk Shi Dao'an; Shi Sengsheng. Wei dynasties (220–265; 386–534 C.E.): Zhu Shixing; Shi Zhizhan; a monk of Wuhou Temple; the castrated servant of the inner quarter of Taihe period (477–499 C.E.). Song dynasty (420–479 C.E.): Monk Shi Huiyan; Nun Shi Zhitong; Monk Shi Huiqing. Qi dynasty (479–494 C.E.): Monk Shi Huishi. Liang dynasty (502–557 C.E.): Layman He Gui. Zhou dynasty (557–581 C.E.): The ancestral ruler Emperor Wu (560–578 C.E.). Chen dynasty (557–589 C.E.): Yan Gong of Yangzhou. Early Sui dynasty (581–618 C.E.): An unknown monk in Yangzhou. Sui dynasty (581–618 C.E.): Monk Shi Huiyi; Monk Shi Fazang; an unknown visiting monk. Tang dynasty (618–907 C.E.): Monk Zhiyuan; Monk Shi Daoji; Monk Shi Daosu; the magistrate of Longzhou, Gu Yuangui; Shi Heshi of the Southern Suburb; a student in Yizhou, surnamed Gou; Monk Shi Tanyun; Commissioner of Waterways Su Chang; Madame Toulou; Adjutant of Xingzhou Liu Jian; Zhao Wenxin of Suizhou; the Vice Magistrate of Pengzhou, Liu Bi; Gu Daoxian of Luozhou; Lu Huaisu of Wu Commandery; Adjutant of Henei Ma Qiaoqing; Sun Shou of Pingzhou; Li Qian of Zhengzhou; a miracle in the Jiyin district of Caozhou. 416c

The *Han faben neizhuan* says:

Emperor Ming of the Han (r. 57–75 C.E.) sent Cai Yin, Qin Jing, Wang Zun, and others, altogether eighteen people, to India and they brought back Mateng (Mātāṅga?) and Falan (Dharmaratna?) as well as Buddhist scriptures and buddha images. The emperor asked, “If a Dharma King appeared in the world, why did the influence of his teaching fail to reach here?” Mātāṅga answered, “The kingdom of Kapilavastu in India is the center around which ten billion suns and moons of the threefold-thousand great cosmic systems turn. The buddhas of the past, present, and future

all first appear there. Among the gods, dragons, human beings, and ghosts, all those who are capable of making vows will be born there and receive the correct teaching of the Buddha and attain enlightenment. Beings in other places lack the proper karmic conditions to be affected by the Buddha's teaching. The Buddha therefore does not go to those places. Even though the Buddha does not go [to other places] his halos [of his images] reach these places, and after five hundred years or one thousand years or more than a thousand years, holy beings will transmit the Buddha's teaching in all these places and carry out conversions." The emperor was delighted [on hearing this].

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On the first day of the first month of Yongping 14 of Han (71 C.E.) six hundred and ninety Daoist monks of the Five Peaks presented a memorial to the court: they petitioned that a public debate with Buddhist monks from the Western Region be held to determine the relative superiority of [the Daoist and Buddhist] teachings. The court ordered the Director of Imperial Secretariat Song Xiang to call the parties in and announce the following: on the fifteenth day of the same month there would be a large gathering at the southern gate of Baima Monastery. Three altars would be set up. Daoist monks of the Five Peaks and the Eight Mountains would bring three hundred and sixty-nine rolls [of their scriptures] and place them on the western altar. Works of the twenty-seven philosophers, three hundred and thirty-five philosophical works, would be placed on the central altar. Food offered to one hundred deities would be on the eastern altar. Emperor Ming set up a temporary residence west of the road leading to the monastery, and placed there relics of the Buddha and scriptures.

The Daoist monks burned branches and twigs around their altar. They wept tears in front of the scriptures, saying, "The ruler has placed his faith in wrong teachings and the influence of the profound Daoist teaching has been lost. We challenge this by spreading our scriptures on the altar and setting fire to them to prove their authenticity." They then set fire [to the scriptures]. The texts turned into ashes. The Daoist monks turned to each other in embarrassment. Wishing either to fly up to heaven or to disappear into the ground, they tried a variety of magical tricks but none worked. They were greatly humiliated. Grand Mentor Zhang Yan said, "You could not demonstrate anything today. You should follow the Buddhist teaching

of the Western Region and shave your head.” The followers of non-Buddhist teachings Chu Shanxin and others had no answer. The Daoist monks of Nanyue, Fei Shucai and others, died of rancor.

The relics of the Buddha emitted five-colored light that covered the sky like an umbrella over the sun and illumined all who were gathered. Mātāṅga flew up high into the sky and performed miraculous deeds. Then heaven rained down flowers miraculously. Dharma Master Dharmaratna preached to the assembly, carrying out conversions on an unprecedented scale. Minister of Works Liu Jun, Lady Yin of the Inner Palace in the capital city, the Daoist monk of the Four Mountains, Lü Huitong, and others, altogether over a thousand people, chose to renounce the householder’s life [and become Buddhist monastics]. The emperor approved their requests and established ten monasteries: seven monasteries outside the city wall for monks and three monasteries inside the city wall for nuns. After this the Buddhist teaching was promoted widely, and many monasteries continue to be established to the present time. (Note: The above passage is found in the *Han faben neizhuan*.)

#### Jin Dynasty

A person from Jiyin with the surname Ding and the personal name of Dezhen served as Director of Ningyin during the Jian’an period (Jianyuan 343–344 C.E.?). At that time a woman who lived in the northern district went outside to collect water from a well. A foreigner with a long nose and deep-set eyes passed by the well and asked the woman for a drink of water. As soon as he drank the water he disappeared. The woman was attacked by stomach pain and her body twisted as she screamed in pain. After a while she suddenly sat up and began to give instruction in a foreign language. People from dozens of families in the village saw this. The woman asked for paper and pen, wishing to write down what she wanted. Given a pen, she produced writing in a foreign script. It was written horizontally; some letters looked like the character *yi* and others looked like the character *si*. She filled five sheets and then threw the papers on the ground, ordering people to read them. Nobody in the village could read them.

A boy, over ten years old, was there. The woman pointed to the boy and said that he could read what she had written. When people gave the papers

417b to the boy, he immediately read them in the foreign language. Those who saw this were taken aback and did not know what to say. The woman told the boy to get up and dance. The boy immediately stood up and raised his legs and clapped hands along with them. After a while he stopped. People reported this right away to [Ding] Dezhen, who then called on the woman and the boy to inquire about it. By then they did not remember anything. Dezhen wished to test the validity of this miraculous turn of events, so he sent the document to a monastery, where it was shown to an old foreign monk. The foreign monk was amazed, saying, “There is a missing section in a Buddhist scripture. Because I brought it from such a long distance, I was distressed that we wouldn’t be able to recover it. Even though we recite the scripture the recitation remains imperfect. This document is the original text [of the scripture].” He kept and copied it.

Zhou Min was from Runan and served as Protector-General of Jin. His family honored Buddhism over many generations. At the time Su Jun rebelled (327 C.E.), people in the cities and villages fled in all directions. Min’s family owned a copy of the *Larger Perfection of Wisdom Scripture*. It was written on a sheet of silk, half-length in width and eight *zhang* long. There were several bags containing other scriptures as well and the copy of the *Larger Perfection of Wisdom Scripture* was mixed in among them. When the time came for him to flee he was alone and could not carry all the bags with him. Zhou Min particularly valued the *Larger Perfection of Wisdom Scripture*, but he did not know which of the bags contained it. The man in charge of the storehouse also had to leave, and he refused to look for it. As Zhou Min looked in the bags in distress suddenly the *Larger Perfection of Wisdom Scripture* appeared outside of the bags. Bin was delighted and took it with him. The Zhou clan subsequently treated the scripture as its family treasure, and it is said to still exist.

According to one tradition, the wife of Zhou Song of the Humu clan owned a copy of the *Perfection of Wisdom Scripture* written on silk. The piece of silk was five *cun* wide, and the entire *Larger Perfection of Wisdom Scripture* was written on it. She also owned a piece of a relic contained in a silver jar. Both were sealed inside a deep box. When the disturbances of the Yongjia period (307–313 C.E.) occurred the Humu woman tried to flee southward to

escape the invading soldiers. Both the scripture and the relic spontaneously came out from the box [where they had been stored]. She took them and crossed over to the eastern side of the Jiang River. Later there was a fire. She did not have time to get the scripture out and the house completely burned down, yet she found the scripture beneath the ashes in exactly the same condition as before.

The Prince of Kuaiji, Daozi, is said to have asked [Zhou] Song [to show him] his copy of the scripture so that the prince could worship it. Later it is said to have been kept at Xinzhu Monastery. Liu Jingshu said, “I myself once saw this scripture. It was written very neatly and legibly in small characters the size of flax seeds.” Xinzhu Monastery is the present Tian’an Monastery. A copy of this scripture was made by the monk Shi Huize. According to one tradition this scripture was once at Jianjing Monastery and the nun Jingshou recited from it.

Dong Ji was from Yuqian. For three generations his family had honored the Buddhist teaching, and Ji was particularly diligent in practice. Always careful in thought and conduct, he recited the *Shoulengyan jing* (*Śūramgama-sutra*, T. 642). Whenever there was sickness in the village Ji was asked to read the scripture and many of the ill were cured.

He Guang of the same district was also one who honored the Buddhist teaching. In the Xianhe period (326–334 C.E.) he suddenly became ill from mountain poison and was in distress. Guang’s elder brother came quickly to [Dong] Ji to ask for help. The distance between Dong [Ji]’s house and that of He [Guang] was sixty to seventy *li*, and a large mountain valley also lay between them. Heavy rain fell during the fifth month. The water had not yet reached the valley when Guang’s elder brother crossed it. Ji agreed [to help] and came around the time of the midday meal, but [by then] a massive volume of water was rushing down violently and they could not cross the valley. Unable to swim, Ji paced about, sighing. He sat on the riverbank for a long time, wanting to go on but not daring to cross the river. Ji was a man of strong faith, determined to get to the destination. Taking pity on the ill, he made a vow, “In coming to rescue the acute suffering of others, I do not care about my own life. I sincerely wish that the great being Tathāgata will truly protect me.” Then, he took his clothes off, wrapped the scripture in the clothing,

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placed the bundle on his head, and walked into water. Measuring its depth, the water should have come up to his neck, but when Ji actually entered the stream and began to cross it, it reached only to his knees. When he got to the other side of the river he realized that he had lost the wrapped scripture. Greatly distressed, he went on to [He] Guang's house. Expressing repentance to heaven, earth, and human beings, he wept, blaming himself. Then he looked up and saw the bundle containing the scriptures on a high seat. Torn between sorrow and joy, Ji took it and looked: the bag was wet but when he opened it, the scripture inside was dry. Everyone in the village then chose to honor the Dharma.

Northwest [of the village] where [Dong] Ji lived there was a tall peak; many monsters lived there and harmed the villagers. Ji decided to vanquish them through the power of the scripture and the precepts. At a place on the side of the mountain, four or five *mu* in size, Ji built a hut, cutting down trees for lumber with his own hands. He set up a high seat where he recited the *Shoulengyan jing*. For over a hundred days he sat in quietude; no sound was heard. The harm to the villagers stopped. Later several people came to Ji's place and were talking among themselves for a long while. Ji thought that the people were not hermits and wondered why they had come to this remote spot on the mountain. Suspecting that they might be ghosts, Ji said to them, "Are you the ghosts who live here?" They answered, "Yes, having heard about the purity and loftiness of your virtue and conduct, we came to see you. There is also one thing that we wanted to propose to you. We have had this mountain entrusted to us over generations. Since you came here, however, we have been worried about running into conflict with you and cannot live in peace. We now want to divide the territory and mark the boundaries by felling some trees." Ji said, "I enjoy the quietude of this place and read scriptures. I shall not commit offenses against you. I shall be a friend to you and offer my help." The ghosts said, "We will count on your promise to not attack us." So saying, they left. Overnight the trees on all four sides of the field of grass [where Dong Ji had built a hut] died. It was as if they had been burned in a forest fire. Ji died at the age of eighty-seven.

Zhou Dang was from Shan in Kuaiji. His family had honored the Dharma for generations. As soon as he reached the age of sixteen Dang became a

vegetarian and took all his meals before noon [like a monk]. He chanted the *Chengju* (T. 630). At one time he arranged for the reading of scriptures. When the long period of retreat in the first month of the year ended, he invited the monks to a meal. He went to the monastery in town and extended an invitation to his teachers Zhu Fomi and Zhi Fajie. Zhu Fomi had a copy of the *Shorter Perfection of Wisdom Scripture* brought out for the abbreviated reading on the day of the feast. When the day arrived, three monks came to the meal but they forgot to bring the copy of the *Shorter Perfection of Wisdom Scripture* with them. They realized this only when the meal was finished and they were about to start reading. [Fomi] was despondent.

Zhou's house was located in Fanyi village, thirty *li* from the monastery. It was not possible to send someone to fetch the scripture. By the time people offered incense, everyone in the household was unhappy and Zhu Fomi was in even greater distress. Then someone knocked on the gate, saying that he had brought the *Shorter Perfection of Wisdom Scripture*. Zhou Dang was amazed and delighted. Opening the gate, he saw a youth dressed in single-layered clothes and a cap. He did not recognize him, and it was not a time [of the day] when people typically walked about. Suspecting a miraculous visitation, Zhou Dang kneeled and received the scripture. He urged the youth to sit in the front row but the youth would not proceed to the front, [mentioning] his young age. He promised that he would come back in the evening to listen to the recitation of the scripture. When this young man of the Way went out of the gate he suddenly became invisible. Fragrance filled the entire residence. Upon closer examination, the copy of the scripture that he had brought proved to be Zhu Fomi's own copy. Everyone, both monks and laypeople, were surprised and delighted. This copy of the scripture had been locked up in the kitchen [of the monastery]. When the monks returned they found the lock untouched. As a consequence, all the families in the village, more than ten altogether, came to honor the Buddha's teaching and love Zhou Dang. Zhou Dang eventually left the householder's life and took the monastic name Tanni. He chanted numerous scriptures, twenty thousand characters in all.

418a

Xie Fu, personal name Jingxu, was a man from Shanyin in Kuaiji. He was the son of elder brother General You. From his youth he had a spiritual temperament and sequestered himself in the eastern mountains. Possessing strong

faith in the great teaching, he was diligent and tireless in religious life. A copy of the *Shoulengyan jing* (*Śūramgama-sūtra*) that he had copied with his own hand was in Baima Monastery. A fire destroyed everything in the monastery, including copies of other scriptures, yet only the cover and edges of this copy of the scripture were burned. The writing was not damaged at all. When Fu died his friends were skeptical about his spiritual attainments, but when they heard about this miraculous scripture they all marveled.

In Yuanxi 8 (431 C.E.) there was a massive fire in the city of Pufan in the Hetong region. The fire crossed the Yellow River and nothing escaped destruction. The residences of local barbarians were all burned down; only the monasteries and stupas remained untouched by fire. Many small buildings in the villages that housed scriptures and images also escaped the fire. Sometimes intact pages of the scripture were recovered from among the ashes of destroyed buildings. Everyone in the city marveled at this and joined together in paying respect to the teaching.

(The above five stories are from the *Mingxiang ji*.)

#### Eastern Jin Dynasty

Before the reign of Emperor Xiaowu (372–396 C.E.) the monk Dao'an of Changshan fled to Xiangyang to avoid the disturbances caused by the Shi clan of Chao. There he wrote commentaries, altogether over twenty rolls, on the *Perfection Wisdom* scriptures, the *Daoxing* (T. 224), and the *Miji jingang* (T. 310), resolving doubtful points and explaining the meaning [of scriptural passages]. Fearing that he may have departed from the truth he made an oath, "If what I have said does not deviate from the truth, let there be an auspicious sign." He then had a dream in which a foreign monk, with white hair and a long beard, told Dao'an, "Your commentaries agree with the truth of the Way. Not being able to enter nirvana I remain in the Western Region. Let us work together to spread the teaching. You should set down food for me at specified times." Later the *Sarvāstivāda-vinaya* was brought to China and Huiyuan (334–416 C.E.) said, "The monk our teacher saw in his dream a long time ago was Piṇḍola-Bharadvāja." Because of this, Huiyuan set up a seat and served food to Piṇḍola. This became a permanent practice. (*Ji shen-zhou sanbao gantong lu*, T.2106:426b28–6; ref. *Gaoseng zhuan*, T.2059:353b17–23; *Datang neidian lu*, T.2149:338b26–c4.)

## Western Jin Dynasty

The monk Sengsheng of Shu Commandery left the householder's life at an early age and, having undergone austerities, became the head of Sanxian Monastery in Shu. He recited the *Lotus Sutra*. He did the practice of reciting the scripture on a mountain. At night a tiger came and crouched in front of him, listening to the recitation. When a section was finished, the tiger would leave. Whenever Sengsheng chanted four attendants were seen on both sides. Even when he grew old he is said to have practiced diligently until the end of his life. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu*, T.2106:426c7–10; ref. *Gaoseng zhuan*, T.2059:406c27–407a4; *Datang neidian lu*, T.2149:338c6–9.) 418b

## Former Wei Dynasty

In the year Ganlu 5 (260 C.E.) of Emperor Feidi, the monk Zhu Shixing lectured on the *Shorter Perfection of Wisdom Scripture (Daoxing)*. Dissatisfied with the abbreviated nature of this scripture, he left that same year to travel to the Western Region and obtained [the more extensive version of the scripture]. He encountered obstacles and was not permitted to leave for the East (China). Shixing took the scripture and declared in the king's courtyard, "If the great teaching is not to be transmitted [to China], let [this scripture] be burned by fire!" Then he took the palm-leaf scripture and threw it into the fire but the scripture was not harmed at all. Everyone in the country marveled. Shixing was immediately allowed to travel eastward to China. This was the *Fanguang jing* (T. 221).

Zhu Shixing passed away at the age eighty. His corpse was committed to fire but did not burn. Monks, nuns, and lay supporters were all amazed. They pronounced a spell, "If [this monk] has truly attained the Way, let the corpse break up!" As soon as the spell was uttered the corpse began breaking apart. The pieces were collected and a stupa was raised [in which to enshrine the relics]. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu*, T.2106:431b25–c3; ref. *Gaoseng zhuan*, T.2059:345b15–c12.)

## Toward the End of the Later Wei Dynasty

Shi Zhizhan of Qizhou stayed at Xiancao Monastery, located in a deep valley on Mount Rentou north of Mount Tai. He minimized his activities and spoke little, not disturbing other people and birds. He [occupied himself with] reciting the *Lotus Sutra*, and others had little idea about his earlier life. When

he was approaching death the miracle-working monk Baozhi said to the Liang Emperor Wu, “In the north a holy monk, a stream-winner, is about to achieve extinction today.” While dying Zhizhan experienced no suffering. One finger of each hand was extended. A foreign monk said, “This is a sign of a person who has achieved the first fruit [of stream-winner].” He was buried on the mountain. Later his tomb was opened and people saw that only his tongue was unchanged.” So, a stupa was raised and a memorial was presented to the court. The stupa still exists. Birds and animals do not disturb or soil it. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu*, T.2106:427b9–15; ref. *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T.2060:686a2–17; *Datang neidian lu*, T.2149:339b5–11.)

#### Later Wei Dynasty

A monk (name unknown) at Wuhou Monastery in Fanyang recited the *Lotus Sutra* as his regular practice. When he died, his corpse was first exposed on a riverbank and was then buried. [By then] his skeleton and bones had dried up but his tongue was unchanged. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu*, T.2106:427b16–17; *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T.2060:686a13–15; *Datang neidian lu*, T.2149:339b12–13).

There was also a monk in Yongzhou who recited the *Lotus Sutra*. He lived as a hermit on Mount Bailu. A miraculous youth appeared and tended to his needs. When he died his corpse was left under a cliff. The whole skeleton dried out but the tongue did not decay. (*Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T.2060: 686a15–17; *Datang neidian lu*, T.2149:339b13–15).

[Northern] Qi Dynasty, Under the Reign of Emperor Wuling (Wucheng, 561–565 C.E.)

Someone visiting a mountain east of Bingzhou dug in the ground and found yellowish-white soil. He also found an object that looked like lips; inside was a tongue of fresh pink color. He reported this to the court. The emperor questioned the monks, nuns, and lay Buddhists. The monk Fashang said, “This is from a *Lotus Sutra* practitioner, whose six sense organs are intact. This is a sign that he had recited the sutra one thousand times.” Practitioners of the *Lotus Sutra* gathered around and recited the scripture. When they began their recitation the [disembodied] lips began to move at the same time. Observers’ hair stood on end and they memorialized this miraculous event at court. The object was placed and sealed in a stone box. (*Ji shenzhou*

*sanbao gantong lu*, T.2106:427b19–25; *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T.2060:686a17–28; *Datang neidian lu*, T.2149:339b16–21.)

(Note: The above six stories are found in the *Liang gaoseng zhuan* and other miscellaneous records.)

Later [Northern] Wei Dynasty

During the Taihe period (477–99 C.E.) of Emperor Gaozu (Xiaowen, r. 471–499 C.E.) a palace eunuch deplored the punishment he had received and requested the court for permission to go into the mountains as a hermit. The court agreed. He brought the *Huayan* scripture with him and recited it day and night, and performed repentance rites ceaselessly. Before the summer was over, toward the end of the sixth month, his beard grew out and he acquired a masculine appearance. This was reported to the court and [thereafter] the emperor respectfully assigned important duties [to him at court]. Everyone in the country paid respect to the *Huayan* scripture. (Recorded in Hou [Bai]’s *Sujing yiji*; *Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu*, T.2106:427b26–c1; *Datang neidian lu*, T.2149:339b24–26.)

418c

Song Dynasty

Shi Huiyan was a monk at Dong’an Monastery in the capital city. He disliked the verbosity of the *Great Nirvana Sutra* and produced an abbreviated version, in several rolls, and prepared two or three copies to show to like-minded friends. Then, while asleep he saw a man, over two *zhang* tall, who had a powerful presence; the man said to him, “The *Nirvana Sutra* is the source of canonical scriptures. Why did you casually revise it according to your petty understanding?” Huiyan was despondent but did not fully understand. He was still committed to his project and sought [help from] learned scholars. The next evening he went to sleep and again saw the man from the previous night. The man was very angry and said to Yan, “If you make a mistake but correct it when you realize, that does not count as a mistake. I told you about your fault last evening but you still have not stopped. The truth is no longer in this [version of the] scripture. Calamities will come to you soon.” Huiyan was alarmed, realizing his mistake, and before dawn arrived he quickly sent out messengers requesting the return of the manuscripts. He burned all of the returned manuscripts. The monk Daoyan of Chenwai Monastery recollected and told this story in detail.

The nun Shi Zhitong was a nun at Jianjing Nunnery. She was young and attractive, and not firmly committed in faith and practice. When her teacher died in Yuanxi 9 (432 C.E.) she left the nunnery. She married Yuan Xifu of Wei Commandery and gave birth to one son. The boy grew up to the age of seven years old. The family was very poor and there was nothing that could be used to make clothing for the boy. Zhitong [acquired] several rolls of silk on which the *Pure Land*, *Lotus*, and other sutras had been written. She turned these rolls into clothing for her son. After a year the boy became ill. He was in a strange mental state and his pulse was irregular. His body was covered with ulcers, like burns. Small white worms came out, more than a *sheng* each day. The boy screamed day and night from extreme pain. A voice was heard in the sky, “For destroying scriptures to make clothing [you are] receiving this extreme suffering as punishment.” More than ten days later the boy died.

(Note: The above two stories come from the *Mingxiang ji*.)

The monk Shi Huiqing was from Guangling. After renouncing the householder’s life he stayed at the monastery on Mount Lu. He studied the sutras and vinayas and maintained purity following the precepts. He could recite the *Lotus*, *Daśabhūmika*, *Siyi*, and *Vimalakīrti* sutras. He would chant them every evening, and the sound of snapping fingers and voices of praise were often heard in the darkness. Once while traveling on water he encountered wind and waves. Huiqing just continued reciting a sutra without a break. He felt as if someone was pulling the boat through the waves, and suddenly it reached the shore. Thereafter he continued practicing Buddhism even more diligently. Huiqing died at the end of the Yuanjia period (424–453 C.E.), at the age of sixty-two. (*Gaoseng zhuan*, T.2059:407b4–9.)

#### Qi Dynasty

419a The family background of the monk Shi Huibao of Taiyuan is unknown. He recited two hundred rolls of scriptures. His virtues were superior to those who preceded him, and he was widely known in his time. In Wuping 3 (572 C.E.), while traveling from Pingzhou to Ye, he lost his way at Aizhou. Looking for a path he went into a mountainous area and spent the night under a rock ledge. It looked as if someone lived in the cave but he did not see anyone in the whole area. Huibao sat in front of the cave and looked up into a pine tree.

He saw the musical instrument *qing* hanging down from a branch, more than a *zhang* high above the ground.

In the second watch of the evening (11:00 P.M.) a man clothed in grass came in from outside, saying, “Why is there worldly air here?” Huibao immediately spoke up and paid respect, and they talked together. [The man] asked Huibao, “Which clan is in power today?” Huibao answered, “The Gao clan. The dynasty is called Qi.” Huibao asked, “When did you, Honored Teacher, come to reside on the mountain?” [The man] answered, “I came during the time of the Later Han. What scriptural practice have you acquired?” Huibao could recite [scriptures] extensively and he was very proud of this accomplishment. The mountain monk said, “The cultivation of the Way should not be like this. Which scripture do you want me to recite?” Huibao said, “I take pleasure in listening to the *Huayan* scripture.” The monk recited it for a short time. The melody of his chanting was otherworldly. Huibao asked him to recite other sutras and the chanting was similarly extraordinary.

Huibao marveled at this and asked, “How do you manage to recite lengthy scriptures so quickly?” The monk answered, “Mentally you try to do something. Mentally I do not try to do anything. If you forget yourself in the middle of the myriad things, both object and subject materialize spontaneously.” Huibao realized that this was a supernatural monk and requested permission to stay [with him]. The mountain monk said, “You are attracted by the material comforts of the world. How can [such a person] achieve spiritual peace? You have not let go of emotional bonds. Staying here won’t help you.” At dawn Huibao left, returning the way he had come. He did not know where the place [he had visited] was located. He reproached himself for his shortcomings. Later he reached Ye and told this story.

(Note: The above two stories appear in the *Liang gaoseng zhuan*; ref. *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T.2060:649a16–b4).

### Liang Dynasty

The following story is about He Gui of Nanhai Commandery in Guangzhou. The planet Jupiter was in the Xieqia constellation and the moon was in position matching the *huangzhong* musical note. On the twenty-third day of the tenth month of Tianjian 14 (516 C.E.), He Gui was collecting herbs on Mount Huyi in Yuzhang. Fortunately, he was not a rejected son or an

expelled minister but was among those who sought the immortals or hermits. He climbed and visited the hamlets around the ten peaks. Suddenly he felt that he had come to the right place. Following a winding path, he came to a creek in a valley. The [flow of] water seemed to be stopped in a pool. Then there was a clear stream, and he began to cross it, raising up the bottom of his clothing. Before he finished crossing, an elderly [monk] appeared suddenly and unexpectedly at the western corner of the valley and told [He] Gui not to cross. Gui stopped. The man's face was green, he was bare-footed, eighty or ninety years old, and his face was deeply wrinkled. His beard was five or six *cun* (inches) long, and his moustache was half the length of his beard. His ears stood higher than his eyebrows. The brows, two or three *cun* long, turned downward and flowed in the wind. His lips were bright red and his voice clear. His hands and nails were yellow, and the hair on his fingers was two to three *cun* long. He was wearing red clothes under his upper garment.

419b The monk took up a book in one roll, and threw it from a good distance to Gui. Gui held the book and paid respect toward the man. The man told Gui, "Give this book to Jian'an," naming the prince by surname and style, [and further,] "Anyone who receives this scripture should prepare a twenty-one day feast. Those not familiar with the ritual for the feast should ask Master Fu of Xialin Temple. Dharma Master Fu observes the precepts rigorously, dwells in quietude and nonaction, has let go of preferences and desires, and treats the powerful and humble equally. Fully satisfied with eating vegetables, he is diligent in practicing meditation." After saying this, the elder left; after he had walked ten steps or so he suddenly disappeared.

[He] Gui opened the scroll. It bore the title "Sutra of the Wisdom Seal." The message of the sutra was that the essence of the ultimate Dharma body is formlessness. The principle is derived from one hundred negations. The meaning transcends names and forms. Quietude is the form of the Dharma. The subtle reality is true thusness. One calls this wisdom illumination. This principle has the wholeness seal. The mind mysteriously coalesces in quietude. This is the reason the teaching is called *samādhi*. (Note: This story is found in the *Hongming ji* of Vinaya Master Sengyou of the Liang dynasty; ref. *Chu sansang ji ji*, T.2145:50c3–22.)

Zhou Dynasty

The ruler of the [Northern] Zhou, [Emperor Wu] (r. 560–578 C.E.), persecuted

Buddhism and burned Buddhist scriptures. Later [during his reign] five or six bundled objects were spotted in the sky. They were flying through the sky and were nearly invisible. They joined together and floated up and down in the wind. Members of the court watched them but had no idea what they were. Eventually they descended and fell onto a mud wall. Upon inspection they turned out to be the thirteenth roll of the *Greater Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu*, T.2106:427c2–5.)

#### Chen Dynasty

Yan Gong of Yangzhou was originally from Quanzhou and from a wealthy family. He did not have a brother and his parents loved him dearly, granting all his wishes. At the beginning of the Taijian period of the Chen dynasty (569–582 C.E.), at the age of twenty, Gong asked for fifty thousand pieces of coin to trade in Yangzhou. His parents agreed. Gong filled a boat with merchandise and went down the Jiang River. At a place several tens of *li* from Yangzhou he encountered a boat filled with turtles that were to be sold at market in Yangzhou. Gong realized that the turtles were about to die and wanted to redeem them. He said to the owner of the turtles, “I have fifty thousand pieces of coin. Let me purchase the turtles with it.” The owner was delighted, took the money, gave Gong the turtles, and left. Gong released all the turtles into the Jiang River and took the now-empty boat to Yangzhou. After taking leave of Gong the owner of the turtles had traveled over ten *li* when his boat sank and he drowned.

On that day Gong’s parents were at home. Toward the evening fifty people dressed in black visited them, requesting permission to stay overnight. They also handed over fifty thousand pieces of coin to Gong’s parents, saying, “Your son entrusted this money to be returned. Please count it and accept it.” The father feared that his son might have died, and questioned the people for details. They said, “Your son is fine. It is only that he did not need the money, so he is sending it back.” Gong’s father accepted the money. He recognized that it was the very same coins he had given Gong. The coins were all slightly wet. The father invited the guests to stay and prepared a meal. The guests left the next morning.

One day in the following month Gong returned home. His parents were overjoyed. When he was settled, they asked him about the money they had entrusted to him. Gong said that he did not have it. The parents described

419c the guests' appearance and when the money had been returned. It was the same day that Gong had saved the turtles. From this they learned that the fifty guests were the redeemed turtles. Father and son were amazed. Together they went to Yangzhou and set up a temple, and singlemindedly copied the *Lotus Sutra*. Eventually the whole family moved to Yangzhou and became very wealthy. They constructed a large building, setting it up as a hall for copying [the *Lotus*] scripture. The hall was beautifully adorned, clean, and richly provided for. There were always over ten scribes there. Monks, nuns, and lay Buddhists in Yangzhou honored the hall and called it Yan Fahua ("Yan's *Lotus Sutra* [Hall]").

Once a close acquaintance borrowed a thousand pieces of coin from the scripture fund. Gong reluctantly gave it. The borrower placed the money on a boat for its return trip. On the way the boat capsized and the borrowed money fell into the water. The boat sank but no one drowned. On that day Gong went into the treasury and found a thousand pieces of coin. They were all wet as if just taken out of water. Gong found this very strange. Later he saw the man to whom he had loaned the money and realized that the wet pieces of coin were what he had given the man.

Again, a merchant went to Gongting Lake and offered wine, food, and other gifts. That night in a dream a deity [appeared and] returned these gifts, saying "Take this money that you gave to me to Yan Fahua and offer it for his use." Then the deity placed everything that the merchant had offered earlier in front of him. The merchant found this extraordinary and sent the gifts to Gong's place, doubling the amount.

Later, Gong went to a market to buy paper but he did not have enough money. Suddenly he encountered a person who gave him the three thousand pieces of coin he had in his hand, saying, "To assist you in buying paper." Having said this, the person disappeared but the money remained.

There were many such miracles. Gong died at the end of the Kaihuang period (581–600) but his descendants continued his work [of copying sutras]. At the end of the Sui dynasty bandits reached Jiangdu but they made an agreement among themselves and they would not enter Yan Fahua's village. Consequently, the villagers escaped harm. Copying of the sutras continues even now. People all see it. This is also well known among prominent people

in the capital city. (Note: The above story comes from the *Mingbao ji*, T.2082:790b16–c22; ref. *Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu*, T.2106:429a6–22.)

### Sui Dynasty

At the beginning of the Kaihuang period of the Sui dynasty: A monk in Yangzhou whose name is unknown, made reciting the *Nirvana Sutra* his personal practice. At a village at the foot of a mountain in Qizhou a novice monk recited the *Avalokiteśvara Sutra*. Both died violent deaths. While the area under their hearts was still warm they were both taken to King Yama. The novice monk was placed on a golden high seat and treated with utmost respect. The monk who recited the *Nirvana Sutra* was placed on a silver seat and received less respect. They were questioned and both were found to still be alive and they were released. The *Nirvana Sutra*-reciting monk, who took pride in the larger amount that he could recite [since the *Nirvana Sutra* is much longer than the *Avalokiteśvara Sutra*], was filled with resentment [at the greater respect the novice monk had received]. He asked where the novice monk lived. Then the two were returned to their respective homes and were brought back to life. The *Nirvana Sutra* monk then came from the south to Qizhou. He visited the novice monk and questioned him in detail, seeking the reasons for his special treatment. The novice monk said, “When I recite the *Avalokiteśvara Sutra* I first change my clothing and in a special place offer incense, utter a vow, and then recite [the sutra]. I adhere to this procedure rigorously. There is no other special method.” The other monk thanked him, saying, “My sins go deep. In reciting the *Nirvana Sutra* I have not followed the proper ceremonial procedure. My body and mouth are impure; my recitation is nothing more than rote memory. There is an ancient saying: ‘Better to be good in doing something small than to be poor at doing a lot.’ I now see the proof for this.” Full of regret, the monk returned home. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu*, T.2106:427c6–20). 420a

The monk Shi Huiyi of Jinggong Monastery in Xiangzhou, secular surname Li, was from Linyuan. He traveled south and at Mount Xiancheng he shared the same teacher as Huiming. He sought the essence of the teaching and concentrated on the practice of meditation. Later he stayed at Jinggong Monastery and meditated in the old [meditation] hall of Master [Fa]cong (ref. *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T.2060:555b25–556a9). Even without the use of candles the hall was

well lit, day and night. A local figure who did not believe in Buddhism invited Huiyi to set up a meditation chamber and perform a one-hundred day rite. Every night the nonbeliever went there secretly to observe. Everyone in the family saw that the meditation chamber was brightly illuminated. The local nonbeliever converted and along with others accepted the Buddhist precepts. Huiyi knew the time of his death beforehand and died toward the end of the Kaihuang period (581–600 C.E.).

There was also Meditation Master Fayong of Kaihuang Monastery in Xiangyang. When his life was about to end music and an extraordinary fragrance filled the monastery for seven days and seven nights. He died while sitting upright [in meditation]. The body was taken to Mount Sangai and placed in the sitting position out in the open air. Vinaya Master Quan of the same monastery said to the corpse, “I request that you retain your spirit for seven days.” After seven days Quanlü died. His corpse was placed next to that of [Fa]yong. Yong’s corpse crumbled when exposed to the elements.

The *ācārya* Cen, whose surname was Yang, was also from Linyuan. He built a sutra recitation hall west of the monastery, next to the spring on Mount Sangai. Every time he recited the *Golden Light Sutra* the four heavenly kings miraculously came and listened. He later read canonical scriptures and memorized them all. Altogether he could recite more than three thousand rolls. He wore simple linen clothes and begged for almsfood. He fed the mice in his monastic cell what was left in the bowl, and tamed over one hundred of them. They would run around him. If a mouse got sick, Master Cen would rub its head and the mouse was healed every time.

He was close to Zhixiao, a monk of the same monastery, who gathered a community of meditation practitioners. This monk taught laypeople, providing instruction for the study of meditation. Knowing [miraculously] the date of his own death, [Zhixiao] quickly called Meditation Master Tai to entrust the teaching to him. He went up to the buddha hall and took leave of all the monks in the monastery, requesting them to rejoice [over his auspicious rebirth]. When the great communal feast at Chanju Monastery ended, [Zhixiao] told Cen, “I am going to Tuṣita Heaven to listen to the *Perfection of Wisdom*.” Cen said, “You, younger brother, go first. I will follow you seven days later.”

In the third watch at night (around 1:00 A.M.) Zhixiao died in the sitting position. In the fourth watch (3:00 A.M.) [his] spirit went to Bianxue Monastery [where Tai lived], ten *li* away from Zhixiao's monastery, and appeared at Meditation Master Tai's bed. The place became as light as during the daytime. The spirit said, "I, Zhixiao, am about to go far away. So I came to take leave. I cannot stay long." Master Tai said goodbye to him outside of the three-storied gate. After the spirit departed, Tai returned to his chamber and sat on the bed. Suddenly it became very dark.

Tai called the attendant disciple and said, "I heard the master speak with someone." He took a lamp and checked everywhere. The three gates [of the monastery] were all closed. He realized that spirits could enter even when no doorway was open. He then sent someone to inquire. He was told that Master Zhixiao had departed.

Seven days later Cen (who was not ill) died in the sitting position. There were no seams on his skull. Thus we know that when saintly and ordinary beings live together it is not possible to distinguish the two.

420b

(Note: The above two stories are from the *Tang gaoseng zhuan*; ref. *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T.2060:560b11–20; b22–c15).

In observing the precepts the monk Fazang of Baoshi Monastery in Zhengzhou was pure and sincere. In Kaiyuan 13 (593 C.E.) he built a monastery in Weichuan City in the Luoqiao district. The buddha hall was exquisite and the residence for monks was magnificent. Many banners and flowers were offered to the images. In Daye 5 (609 C.E.) the government merged monasteries; stupas were sent to [this] major temple in the regional capital. Some stupas were damaged. Master [Fa]zang repaired them and placed them in a newly constructed hall. He also produced a copy of the canon, in eight hundred rolls. Good scribes and paper and brushes were not available in the region, so he had the copying done at the former Yueai Monastery in the capital city.

In the intercalary second month of Wude 2 (619 C.E.) Fazang became ill. After twenty-some days he saw a person dressed in a beautiful green robe above a tall building. The man was holding a scroll of scripture, saying, "Ever since you became an adult you have acquired a great deal of merit, which is wonderful, but you appropriated [for your personal use] a small amount of the property that belonged to the Three Jewels and [thus] committed an

immeasurably great sin. What I hold here is the *Diamond Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*. If you copy it, in one roll, your sins of appropriating the property of the Three Jewels will be completely removed.” Master Fazang responded, “I will copy the scripture. I have copied other scriptures but not the *Diamond Perfection of Wisdom*. I wish to recover from the illness and will not disobey the order. When I wake up I will keep only my three robes, water pot, almsbowl, and *samghāṭī* [robe] and donate everything else to great monks and their disciples.” He copied the *Diamond Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*, producing altogether one hundred rolls. Within fifteen days [after the copying was finished], when he was about to die, Fazang saw Amitābha Buddha come to welcome him. Due to the power of copying scriptures he was reborn in the Western Pure Land and avoided falling into the three inferior realms after death.

During the Daye period (605–616 C.E.): A visitor came to the shrine at Mount Tai and requested permission to spend the night there. The shrine official said, “We do not have a separate hostel. You may spend the night under the shrine’s corridor, but someone who stayed there recently died.” The monk said, “No problem.” Having no other option, he followed instructions and set up his bed under the corridor. At night the monk recited sutras. Around the first watch (9:00 P.M.) he heard the sound of a belt of jewels. Shortly thereafter a deity appeared and paid respect to the monk. The [visiting] monk said, “I hear that those who stay overnight here often die, but how could you, a patron of the monastery, have harmed them? Please protect me.” The deity said, “Those who die hear my voice and die out of fear. I do not kill them. The master should not fear.” The monk asked the deity to sit down and they talked as if sharing a meal together. The monk soon asked, “I have heard it said that the realm of the ghosts of the dead is at Mount Tai. Is this true?” The deity answered, “I am of little merit but that is true. Do you wish to see someone who has died?” The monk said, “A couple of my fellow students have died. Could I see them?” The deity asked their names and then said, “One has already been reborn as a human being. The other is in hell. His sins are so grave that I cannot recall him. But the master can go and see him.”

420c

Hearing this, the monk was delighted. He got up and went out and at a place not far away he saw many shrine hell chambers, burning bright. The

deity led the monk into one hall. In the distance the monk saw a man inside the fire, screaming indescribably, his shape changed beyond recognition. The smell of burning blood and flesh was unbearable. [The deity said] “This is the man. Master, do you not wish to see all the scenes of hell’s torture?” The monk was distressed and asked to be allowed to leave. Immediately he was back in the shrine, sitting with the deity. The monk then asked, “Is there any point in asking that my fellow student be saved?” The deity answered, “Yes. Have the *Lotus Sutra* copied for his sake and he will then be released.” As dawn approached the deity took leave and the monk went into the hall. The shrine official, seeing that the monk was still alive, was mystified. So the monk explained [what had happened] to him.

The monk had a copy of the *Lotus Sutra* made. After the sutra was finished and decorated, the monk took it to the shrine and again spent the night there. That night the deity appeared as before. Delighted, he paid respect to the monk and asked what was the purpose of his visit. The monk explained the matter. The deity said, “The disciple knew that you, Master, had copied the sutra for him. As soon as the title of the sutra was inscribed he was released. He now lives among human beings. This place is impure and unsuitable for keeping the sutra. Please send it to a monastery.” After he said this, after a long while, toward dawn, the deity took leave and departed. The monk sent the sutra to a monastery. Zhang Deyan, Administrative Aide of the Hangzhou region, formerly held an office in Yanzhou and learned of this incident. (*Mingbao ji*, T.2082:791a22–b19.)

#### Tang Dynasty

The monk Shi Zhiyuan of Youzhou was advanced in practice and well-learned. During the Daye period of Sui (605–616 C.E.) he decided to carve the entire canon into stone in preparation for the approaching period of the destruction of the Dharma. He carved out a cave in a mountain west of Youzhou, polished its four walls, and copied the scripture on them. He also took square pieces of rock, polished them, copied scriptures onto them, and stored them in a rock chamber. Each chamber, when filled, was sealed with a rock. Zhiyuan then melted iron and sealed the cave. At that time Emperor Yangdi of the Sui dynasty (r. 604–618 C.E.) traveled to Zhuo Commandery [in the Youzhou region]. Vice Director of the Royal Secretariat Xiao Yu was

the younger brother of the empress. A pious Buddhist, he told the empress about [Zhiyuan's] project and she donated one thousand *pi* of silk and additional funds to support it. Yu [himself] donated five hundred *pi* of silk. Court officials and people outside the court heard about this and rushed to give donations. For this reason [Zhi]yuan's project succeeded.

Many [supporters], some monastics and some laypeople, arrived and rushed [to the site]. Zhiyuan wished to build a wooden buddha hall, a dining room, and sleeping chambers in front of the cave, but wood and tiles were difficult to secure. He was afraid of wasting funds that had been donated for copying sutras. With this thought, he hesitated to embark on the project.

421a One night a violent thunderstorm shook the mountain. The next morning the sky cleared and people saw below the mountain thousands of massive pine and cedar tree trunks, floating on the water and piled up along the road. Wooden construction material is scarce in Shandong; pine and cedar are particularly rare. People were amazed. They could not determine where the lumber had come from and followed the trail that the logs had left. A long distance to the west a mountain cliff had collapsed and the [uprooted] trees [from that place] had floated over [to the construction site]. Everyone far and near marveled at this. The power of merit must have inclined the gods to provide miraculous assistance. Zhiyuan instructed the carpenters to choose [what they needed]; the rest was distributed among local communities. The people of those communities were delighted and helped in the construction of the buildings. The work was soon completed, fulfilling [Zhiyuan's] original wishes. The stone scriptural tablets Zhiyuan produced filled seven chambers. He died in Zhenyuan 13 (639 C.E.). Disciples continued his work.

Palace Counselor Li Xuangjiang and Chamberlain of Law Enforcement Cai Xuanming are said to have told [Tang Lin] this story. In Zhenguan 19 (643 C.E.) Tang Lin traveled to Youzhou and personally asked the local people about it. They all confirmed the events. (*Mingbao ji*, T.2082:789c4–c23; ref. *Datang neidian lu*, T.2149:340c18–26.)

(Note: The above three stories are from the *Mingbao ji*.)

At the beginning of the Zhenguan period (627–649 C.E.) Shi Daoji lived at Fucheng Monastery in Yizhou. He recited the entire *Nirvana Sutra*, always putting on a clean robe and bathing first. Compassionate toward all, helping

everyone, his faith was deep-seated. He died in the fifth month. Even though it was extremely hot the corpse did not rot or smell. After more than one hundred days the body was sitting upright exactly as it was at the beginning. Everyone marveled at this and gave praise. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu*, T.2106:427c17–20; *Datang neidian lu*, T.2149:339c10–14; ref. *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T.2060:687c20–29.)

The monastery affiliation of Shi Daosu is unknown. He wandered around the mountains and fields of Liqian; recitation of the *Lotus Sutra* was his practice. He had recited it thousands of times. In the year of Zhenguan (627 C.E.) he became ill and died. He had told his friend, Meditation Master Huikuo, “I have constantly been reciting the sutra and I would like to see the miraculous efficacy of this practice. If someone lives a life of goodness the tongue does not rot. Bury [my tongue after death] and exhume it after ten years. If the tongue has rotted away, we will know that my recitation did not accomplish anything. If the tongue has kept its original condition, build a stupa and worship it.” Having said this, he died. In the eleventh year [of Zhenguan] (637 C.E.) the tomb was opened. The flesh of the body had all rotted away but the tongue was not affected. Everyone in the district marveled. The tongue was placed inside a box and a stupa for it was built above the Gangu cliff. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu*, T.2106:428a11–18; *Datang neidian lu*, T.2149:340a4–11.)

Shi village was situated south of Fushui in the Southern Suburb. Shi Heshi [of this village] recited the *Lotus Sutra*. His personal name was Chong. As a clerk [in the local government office] he traveled on foot and never rode on a horse. This was because the sutra spoke of having compassion for all sentient beings. He became ill and died in his native village. Fragrance filled the entire village and everyone was puzzled. No one could understand the reason. Ten years after his death his wife also died and the grave was opened for a joint burial. His tongue was seen to be in its original condition. The burial was properly carried out and many commemorative stones were set up. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu*, T.2106:428a19–24; *Datang neidian lu*, T.2149:340a12–17.)

In Zhenguan 5 (631 C.E.) Gu Yuangui, Magistrate of the Baxi district of Longzhou, a pious Buddhist, wished to copy the *Lotus, Diamond Perfection*

421b *of Wisdom*, and *Nirvana* sutras. Because he could not investigate himself he requested the meditation master elsewhere to do so. Shang kang then went to a monastery and, having undergone proper purification, copied the sutras, wrapped them, and returned to his hermitage in Qizhou. The sutras were kept there in the same location as the copy of the five-thousand-character book of Laozi. Unexpectedly, embers from a fire outside the hermitage drifted onto the thatch-roofed building and burned it down completely.

At that time Gu Yuangui was magistrate of the Pingyi district. Family members searched for and found a metal tube container in the ashes. When they cleared off the ashes and opened the container [they found] the sutras, exactly as they were originally. The color of the paper had not changed. Only the box and cloth in which they had been placed had burned to ashes. They also looked for the book of Laozi but it had been destroyed in the fire. People from villages near and far who heard of this all marveled [at the miraculous occurrence].

The title of the *Diamond Perfection of Wisdom Sutra* in one roll had been charred black. [Someone] asked what had caused this. [The answer was that] the calligraphy of the title had been written by a district official who did not observe a vegetarian diet, and in his haste he had not observed the rules of purity. He wrote the title while standing and then departed. For this reason the color of the title inscribed by him burned. That person is still alive and the auspicious sutra is preserved. The administrative head of Ximing Monastery in the capital city, the monk Shenji, witnessed this himself and testified to its existence. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu*, T.2106:428a25–b8; *Datang neidian lu*, T.2149:340a18–b1.)

Meditation Master Shi Tanyun was from Dingzhou and traveled to Xizhou; he died at the age of seventy. During the disturbances toward the end of the Sui dynasty he hid on Mount Qian north of Lishi. His regular practice was recitation of the *Lotus Sutra*. He had wanted to produce a copy of the sutra but could not find a like-minded companion, and he let many years pass. Unexpectedly and for no reason a student arrived, saying that he could help Tanyun carry out his wish of copying the sutra after performing the purification rites. The next morning, after the meal, they bathed, put on fresh clothes, and received the eight precepts. They then entered the chamber, placed sandalwood incense in their mouths, burned incense, set up banners, and carried

out the scripture copying in silence. They came out of the chamber in the evening and returned the next morning. Never tiring, they completed copying the sutra. After the gift was presented according to the proper rules, the monk accompanied the scribe to the gate and [as he departed from the gate] the student quickly disappeared.

[Tanyun] then arranged the copy [into the proper sutra format], and piously kept and recited from it. The sutra was wrapped seven times. He would wash his hands in fragrant water when opening each layer of the cover. He did not neglect [the recitation practice] at first, but later, during a barbarian disturbance, he put the sutra in a box and placed it high up on a cliff. Years later when the disturbance calmed down, he went looking for the sutra. He looked everywhere and eventually found the box under the cliff. The box and coverings had rotted away but he saw that the sutra itself was as fresh as it was originally. (Note: Vinaya Master Daoxuan of Ximingsi in the capital city visited the region in Zhenguan 11 [637 C.E.] and saw the sutra with his own eyes.) (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu*, T.2106:428b9–21; *Datang neidian lu*, T.2149:340b1–13.)

Wangli village was situated forty *li* west of the Xinfan district, northwest of Yizhou. A student, surname Xun, taught there. He was skilled in calligraphy but he was a secretive person. People wanted his calligraphy but he wouldn't agree to produce any. They pursued him [about the matter] but he still wouldn't produce calligraphy for them. He then took a pen, and at a place east of the village he inscribed the *Diamond Perfection of Wisdom Sutra* in the sky, in all four directions. After several days he said he had finished. He also said that the sutra was intended for the gods to read. People at first did not realize its supernatural character. Later there was a sudden downpour of rain and lightning. A boy cowherd was staying at the place where the sutra was written and did not get drenched by the rain and the ground remained dry for an area of more than one *zhang* [square]. The water flowed around that area. When the weather cleared the villagers marveled at this. Since then every time it rained the boy returned to the place and his clothes never became wet.

421c

In the year of Wude (618 C.E.) an unusual monk came and told the villagers, "In this place the *Diamond Perfection of Wisdom Sutra* is written in the sky. Villagers should not defile it. Gods placed an umbrella over it. Do

not debase the place.” For this reason a railing was set up around the place and people and animals were not allowed in. Even now when it rains the place remains dry. During festivals villagers from distant places in all directions come and set up offerings. Heavenly music is constantly heard, filling the place with the beautiful sounds of voices and bells. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu*, T.2106:428b9–21; *Datang neidian lu*, T.2149:341c11–22.)

(Note: The above five stories are from the *Sanbao gantong lu*.)

The wife of Duke Dachen of the Dou family, herself from the Doulu clan, was an elder sister of Guan, Duke Rui. The lady was a believer and frequently recited the *Diamond Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*. [One time] she did not finish the roll; one sheet remained and it would take a while to recite, so she stopped. The next day, toward evening, her head ached and she did not feel well all through her body. That night she went to bed but her illness worsened. The lady thought she was about to die. Thinking that she would not be able to finish the sutra, she was about to get up and recite but the light in the hall had gone out. She ordered the maidservant to light the lamp. Soon the maid returned; there was no live fire in the kitchen. [The lady] opened the gate and [sent the maid] to get embers from the main home. She was in distress. Suddenly she saw in the kitchen a lit candle, which then came up the stairs into the hall and then straight to her bedside, standing about three *chi* from the ground, even though no one was holding it. The light was as bright as daylight. The lady was delighted; her headache had also gone. She took up the sutra and began reciting it. After a while the servants started a new fire and brought a lamp into the hall. The light of the candle then disappeared. The lady was able to finish reciting that night. From that time on she made it a regular daily practice to recite the sutra five times. Later, when Duke Rui was about to die, the lady went to see him. The duke told his sister, “Because of the merit of reciting sutras you will live one hundred years and be reborn in the Pure Land.” The lady died in her residence at the age of eighty. (*Mingbao ji*, T.2082:795b27–c11; *Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu*, T.2106:429b18–25; *Datang neidian lu*, T.2149:341b7–14.)

During the Wude period (618–626 C.E.) Commissioner of Waterways Su Chang served as the Prefect of Bazhou. Chang took his family with him when he traveled to the place of his appointment. As the boat was crossing the

Jialing River, a storm arose and the boat sank midstream. More than sixty men and women drowned. One maidservant, who regularly read the *Lotus Sutra*, held the box containing the sutra on her head as the water came in, vowing to die with the sutra. She did not drown but floated over the waves. Shortly thereafter, she reached the shore. When she took the sutra out of the box [she discovered that] it was dry and unsoiled. This sutra text still exists in Yangzhou. The maid married and became even more pious. (*Mingbao ji*, T.2082:795a4–10; *Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu*, T.2106:429c1–5; *Datang neidian lu*, T.2149:341b19–23.)

422a

In Daye 10 of the Sui dynasty (614 C.E.) Liu Jian, Adjutant of Xingzhou, was appointed Supervisor of Qiyang Palace. In Yining 1 (617 C.E.) he was captured by Li Mi and imprisoned in Dalisi prison. Jian recited the *Diamond Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*. He had two more sheets to recite but he fell asleep. In a dream he saw a brahman monk who said, “If you finish reciting the sutra you will be released.” Jian quickly woke up and continued the recitation tirelessly. Two days passed. At noon he was unexpectedly called to court and was released. He was taken to a government office and freed according to an imperial order.

On a different occasion Jian was reciting a sutra outside of a house on a quiet evening. Toward the third watch (1:00 A.M.) he unexpectedly sensed an extraordinary fragrance. He noted the fragrance and asked the people in the house about it. He looked for the incense but could not find it. He recited the sutra ceaselessly day and night and completed more than five thousand rounds of recitation by the time he died.

In Zhenguan 1 (627 C.E.) Zhao Wenxin of Suizhou unexpectedly died but then returned to life three days later. He recounted the following story. On the day he died he had been forcibly escorted. There were ten companions and they all went together to the place of King Yama. There was a monk among them, and King [Yama] first called him. The king asked, “Master, since you were born, what meritorious deeds have you performed?” The master answered, “Since birth I have recited only the *Diamond Perfection of Wisdom*.” As soon as the king heard these words he was taken aback and stood up, and with palms joined he praised the monk, “How marvelous! The master is proficient in reciting the *Perfection of Wisdom*! You should have

risen up to heaven and left this world. Why have you come here?” Before the king finished speaking, a god clothed in a heavenly robe suddenly descended and took the master up to heaven.

The king then called forward the man from Suizhou. “Since you were born, what meritorious deeds have you performed?” Zhao Wenxin replied to the king, “Since I was born I have not cultivated Buddhist sutras. [I only] loved Yu Xin’s (513–581 C.E.) writings and collected records.” The king said, “Yu Xin is a great sinner and is now undergoing great suffering here. Are you personally acquainted with Yu Xin?” The man replied, “Although I have read his writings I am not personally acquainted with him.”

The king then sent someone to bring Yu Xin before the man. [Zhao Wenxin] then saw a multiple-headed turtle. Shortly after the turtle left a man appeared. He said, “I am Yu Xin. When I lived [in the world] I loved writing. I cited Buddhist sutras fallaciously, and mixed citations with material from worldly books. I reviled the Buddha’s Dharma, saying that it is inferior to the teachings of Confucius and Laozi. I am now receiving the punishment of suffering in the body of a turtle.”

422b After coming back to life, Zhao Wenxin told the story directly to me (i.e., Tang Lin). Many people in Suizhou loved hunting and fishing but all those from near or far who heard this story made a vow to give up killing. They became pious and practiced the Perfection of Wisdom teaching. This situation continues until the present time.

In Zhenguan 1 (627 C.E.) Liu Bi, Aide in the Yilong district of Pengzhou, while in an earlier appointment as Commandant of the Jiangnan district, suddenly heard a bird singing in a tree in front of his residence. Locals said this was the inauspicious sound of an evil bird, and that after encountering the bird the head of the family will without doubt be killed. Hearing this, Liu Bi was frightened. He thought of cultivating merit in order to remove the curse but he did not know what meritorious act would suffice. At night he dreamed that a monk praised the *Diamond Perfection of Wisdom Sutra* and ordered him to recite it one hundred times. He obeyed and recited it. When he finished reciting the sutra one hundred times a sudden gust of wind from the northeast uprooted the tree on which the bird perched and blew it far away from the residence. A one *zhang* and five *chi*-square hole was left where the tree had

stood. After the wind passed, it was seen that in the place from where the wind came small branches and long grasses twisted around, following the wind. When the wind stopped, it was as if nothing had happened. The power the *Diamond Perfection of Wisdom Sutra* is beyond our understanding.

Gu Daoxian of Luoyang was broadly learned, and he was particularly fond of Buddhist scriptures. In Zhenguan 5 (631 C.E.) he served as Revenue Management Administrator of Qingzhou. The official residence was small and lacked space for keeping sutras. So he attached ropes to the two legs of a desk and suspended it upside down from the ceiling. He [then] placed sixty rolls of sutras on it. He would sit or lie under it and read tirelessly. After a long time the ropes rotted and one broke, yet the desk did not fall nor even tilt to one side. It stayed like this for a long time before people took it down. The son of Daoxian became Revenue Manager of Xizhou and is said to have reported this.

Lu Huaisu's family lived in the Wu Commandery. In Zhenguan 20 (646 C.E.) a fire destroyed all the buildings, including the hut [for Buddhist practices]. Only the *Diamond Perfection of Wisdom Sutra* kept in a box was preserved. The box, the cover, and the shaft of the roll were all burned but the [paper on which] the sutra [was written] did not. People were amazed. Huaisu was the brother of the previous wife of Xu Renze of Gaoyang. Renze saw this at that time and later spoke of it.

(Note: The above seven stories are from the *Mingbao ji*.)

[Ma] Qiaoqing, Former Rectifier of Judicial Review and Adjutant of Henei, was pious by nature and inclined to religious practice. During the Yonghui period (650–655 C.E.) he served in the Revenue Section of the Yangzhou regional government. His mother died and he was deep in intense mourning. He drew blood from his heart with which he copied the *Diamond Perfection of Wisdom Sutra* in one roll. Shortly thereafter two stalks of grass appeared above the temporary hut at the grave. In nine days they grew to the height of nine *cun*. The stalks were green and covered in red at the top, and the plants produced one *sheng* of juice each day. Bystanders tasted it; it was sweet like honey. When the stalks were removed they grew back again. This was repeated four times. Qiaoqing had several colleagues and they all told Yu Ling. Many people came to know about this.

422c

During the Xianqing period (656–660 C.E.) a man in Pingzhou, surname Sun and personal name Shou, was hunting on a beach. He saw a fiercely burning wildfire that had destroyed all the trees and plants, but one bush was untouched by the fire. Suspecting that an animal might be hiding inside the bush, he [tried to] to set fire to it but the fire would not catch. Shou was mystified and looked inside the bush. He saw a golden box containing the *Diamond Perfection of Wisdom Sutra* and next to it was a deceased monk. The monk's face had not changed; the fire had not burned his body. Because of this Sun Shou came to believe that [the mystery of] sutras and images are beyond human comprehension. Sun Shou himself related this story.

Li Qianguan presently lives in Zhengzhou. In Xianqing 5 (660 C.E.) his father died. He drew his own blood with which to copy the *Diamond Perfection of Wisdom Sutra* and the *Heart Sutra*, each in one roll, and the *Suiyuan wangsheng jing* in one roll. After going out he would bathe before entering [the chamber]. Later, an extraordinary fragrance appeared in the courtyard. The fragrance was very strong. The neighbors all perceived and marveled at it. Yu Ling, Court Gentleman of Zhongshan, once passed through Zhengzhou and saw his close friend, who told him this story in detail.

There was a temple in a village twenty *li* west of the Jiyin district in Caozhou. In Longshuo 2 (662 C.E.), the tenth month in winter, a field fire broke out; it was very powerful and threatened to reach the temple and go further. The grass-thatched monastic residence of the temple burned down completely but the *Diamond Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*, in one roll, [that was kept in the residence] remained unchanged. Xi Wenli, Administrator of Caozhou, related this story.

(Note: The above four stories are from the *Mingbao shiyi*.)

## Fascicle 19

### Chapter Eight Paying Respect to the Sangha

(This section has four parts:) (1) Introduction, (2) Scriptural Support, (3) Benefits of Paying Respect, and (4) Damages for Disparaging [the Sangha Jewel].

#### 1. Introduction

Now I will discuss the Sangha Jewel (i.e., the monastic order). [The monks] observe the precepts and adopt an otherworldly appearance and demeanor; they aim at [goals] beyond this world and decide to seek them; they reject worldly [concerns] and follow the Dharma; they remain unaffected by official honors; their families cannot fathom their thoughts; they spread the Way and repay their four kinds of debts [namely, to parents, sentient beings, rulers, and the Three Jewels]; they nourish virtue to enrich the three modes of existence [namely, as sentient beings in the [three] realms of desire, form, and formlessness]; they aim higher than rebirth as human beings or gods and they value things greater than gold and jade. Such people are called monks. Thus, we know that the benefit of the Sangha Jewel is beyond recording. Therefore a scripture says that whether monastics observe the precepts or violate them and whether they rank as senior or junior, we must all pay deep respect to them and not despise them. If we do not follow this teaching we take on a grave sin. 423a

If we wait until another Taigongwang (Lü Shang, the great sagely minister who assisted King Wen of Zhou in ancient times) appears before appointing a minister, then there will be no minister for a thousand years. If you need Kumārajīva (the great translator of Buddhist scriptures) as your teacher, there won't be [another] Kumārajīva [even] in ten thousand generations. Why

should the failure of one monk [who does not observe the precepts] affect our treatment of the [entire] Buddhist school? Nor should the failure of one person in observing the precepts cause us to make light of a superior teaching. We should not “destroy people (or failed monks) because of the Way (or the precepts)”; then we would not be “letting people (i.e., monks) make the Way (the Buddhist teaching) greater.” We cannot “destroy the Way (the Buddhist school) because of people (failed monks),” because the Way (the Buddhist teaching) is the teacher of the people (the monks).

Śākyamuni and other buddhas constitute the true Buddha Jewel; the teaching spoken by the Buddha’s golden mouth constitutes the true Dharma Jewel; world-renunciants who have attained the spiritual fruit constitute the true Sangha Jewel. If we see a world-renunciant and pay respect even once, ten thousand [kinds of karmic] bondage melt away forever like ice. If we offer praise even once, a thousand calamities disappear like mist. If for lack of good fortune we fail to encounter the [Buddha’s own] right Dharma, we rely on the traces left of it and take shade beneath it. With gold, sandalwood, silk, lacquer, and linen, colored red and green, we make images of the Holy One and call them the Buddha Jewel. Writing down the profound speech [of the Buddha] on paper, silk cloth, and bamboo, we call it the Dharma Jewel. Those who shave their hair, dye their robes, and carry an almsbowl we call the Sangha Jewel. These three, though temporary in their embodiment, give expression to the true appearance [of the Buddha]. If we respect them we put an end forever to the long flow [of rebirth]. If we dishonor them we invite the retribution of suffering. Even if a piece of wood is not one’s own mother, paying respect to it brings responses that last more than a thousand years. Even if ordinary [monks] are not holy monks, paying respect to them brings luminous effects that go beyond ten thousand generations. Thus we learn that once this “wind” [of the teaching of the Three Jewels] is fanned, both the near and the far “bend” to it, honoring it accordingly. [The Three Jewels] mysteriously benefit [all] sentient beings. It is difficult to fathom [the working of] spiritual efficacy. Falling short in places, we commit great sins. Having renounced the householder’s life, [monks should] reform [their own] worldly practices in accordance with the true principle.

[The rulers of] the Song dynasty lacked knowledge and first believed in evil and deluded teachings, and they disturbed the order of things. The people,

both monastic and lay, were alarmed. Later they came to understand [the cruelty of] animal sacrifice (“coating bells with the blood of sacrificial animals”) and turned to the [compassionate] practice of paying respect. Consequently the house of Song was able to rule over the southern barbarians, the small groups that live in a narrow area, and the mountainous land of Yangzi and the Han River region. How much more powerful the effect of proper rites would be in a large kingdom under the rule of a Buddhist golden wheel-turning monarch (*cakravartin*).

The *Record of Rites*, on the other hand, says, “Soldiers wearing armor do not [observe the norms of] paying respect” (*Liji, Quli* 1). This should not be taken simply as the failure to observe the rites. [Now,] monastics who have renounced the world wear the armor of the Buddhist virtue of forbearance. They may seem to violate laypeople’s moral principles but monastics stand far above these principles.

The Three Jewels are identical [with each other]. We should pay respect to, or worship, them equally. It is wrong to onesidedly honor the Buddha and Dharma (i.e., the teaching) and reject monks and nuns (i.e., the Sangha). The Dharma does not spread itself; its dissemination depends on human beings. Because it is human beings who spread the Way, we should respect them (i.e., monks and nuns) [as much we do the Way itself].

## 2. Scriptural Support

The *Fanwang jing* (T.1484:1008c4–6) says:

The Dharma of renunciants is that they should not pay respect to a king, their parents, and the [other] six categories of relatives. They also should not pay respect to ghosts.

The *Nirvana Sutra* (T.374:399c12) says, “Those who have renounced the householder’s life should not pay respect to their family members.

423b

The *Four-part Vinaya* (*Sifen lü*, T.1428:940a26–29) says, “The Buddha ordered the monks to honor each other according to seniority. They should not pay honor to any layperson.”

The *Fo benxing jing* (*Fo benxing ji jing*, T.190:900c17–27) says:

King Śuddhodana and his retinue of one hundred officials paid honor to the Buddha one by one. The Buddha said, “You should now pay honor to

the monk Upāli and the other monks.” When the king heard the Buddha’s instruction, he rose and, bowing his head to the ground, paid respect to the five hundred monks who had renounced the householder’s life. He paid respect to each monk one by one.

The *Sazhe niqian jing* (T.272:336b3–5) says:

If one reviles the teaching for *śrāvakas* or *pratyekabuddhas* or the Mahayana teaching and places obstructions in the way of their practice, one commits a root offense. (Note: If monks and nuns follow the Small and Great Vehicle sutras and do not pay respect to rulers and parents, this would constitute honoring the Buddha’s teaching. If they disobey the Buddha’s teaching and make [monks and nuns] kneel and pay respect to laypeople [such as rulers and parents], this [would] mean not believing the Buddha’s words. Therefore, this constitutes a root offense.)

The *Shunzhenglilun* (T.1562:554c28–555a1) says:

Heavenly gods do not dare receive worship from those who have received the five precepts, just as the rulers of kingdoms do not seek worship from monks. This is for fear that [such acts of worship] will cause a loss of the merits [they have accumulated] and shorten [their] lives.

The *Nirvana Sutra* (T.374:399b28–c14; T.375:640a15–640b2) says:

The Buddha said to Kāśyapa, “If someone is to advocate and protect the right Dharma, such a person must from [the beginning] express [the wish to] sacrifice himself as an offering. As I taught in a Mahayana sutra, ‘If someone knows the Dharma, whether old or young, we must make offerings to them and reverently worship them, in the way the brahmins serve fire. If someone knows the Dharma, whether old or young, we must make offerings to them and reverently worship them, in the way the heavenly gods serve Śakra.’”

Kāśyapa said to the Buddha, “If a senior [monk] who has observed precepts for a long time receives from a junior [monk] something of [the Dharma] that he has not heard [before], should [the elder monk] pay respect to the junior monk? If [a senior monk] pays respect [to a junior

monk], then we could not call that observing the precepts. If a junior monk who observes the precepts hears from someone who has violated precepts in the past something of the Dharma that he has not heard [before], should the junior monk pay respect to that person? If a renunciant received from a layperson an instruction on something he has not heard [before], should the monk pay respect to that layman? [To the contrary: according to the Vinaya] a renunciant should not pay respect to a layperson. In the Buddha Dharma a junior monk should pay respect to an elder monk. Because the elder monk had previously received the complete set of the precepts and mastered the proper manner of conduct, the junior monk should pay respect and present offerings to the elder monk.”

The *Zhong ahan jing* (T.26:421c5–14) says:

What is [meant by knowing who is] superior [among people]? Monks know that there are two kinds of people, those who have faith and those who don't. Those who have faith are superior; those who don't are inferior. Among those who have faith there are two kinds, those who often go to see monks and those who don't. Those who often go to see monks are superior; those who don't are inferior. Among those who often go to see monks there are two kinds, those who pay respect to monks and those who don't. Those who pay respect to monks are superior; those who don't are inferior. Among those who pay respect to monks there are two kinds, those who ask about sutras and those who don't ask about sutras. Those who ask about sutras are superior; those who don't are inferior. 423c

The *Jiu zapiyu jing* (T.206:518c14–17) says:

Once there was a king who went hunting. Every time he saw a monk he dismounted from the carriage and paid respect to him. The monk would say, “Great king, stop! You do not have to come down from the carriage.” The king would say, “I go up and do not come down. The reason I say I go up is that if I pay respect to a monk now, after death I will go up to heaven. That is why I say I go up but do not come down.”

The *Shanjianlü* (*Samantapāsādikā*, T.1462:791a4–17) says:

King Śuddhodana paid respect to the Buddha and said, “Three times I paid respect by bowing to the Tathāgata’s feet. First, when the Buddha was born, Asita predicted that if the child remained a householder he would become a wheel-turning monarch (*cakravartin*), but if he left the householder’s life he would surely become a buddha. At that time the ground quaked. I recognized the [child’s] supernatural powers [in this way] and immediately paid respect to him. Second, I went out for an excursion in the middle of a cultivated field and saw the Bodhisattva sitting under a *jambū* tree. In the afternoon, when the sun had moved, the tree’s shadow did not move [from the position it had been earlier in the day] and still shaded the Bodhisattva’s body. I recognized his supernatural powers [in this way] and immediately paid respect to him. Third, I just now welcomed the Buddha to my kingdom. The Buddha ascended into the sky and performed eighteen miraculous demonstrations, conquering non-Buddhist teachers. I recognized his supernatural powers [in this way] and immediately paid respect to him.”

The *Zhong ahan jing* (*Za ahan jing*, T.99:293a5–b7, 293c3–6, 12–15, 293c18–294a6) says:

At that time the Buddha [who was staying in the Jetavana Garden] said to monks, “At one time in the past the god Śakra wanted to go to the garden [at Jetavana] and ordered the charioteer to ready a chariot [drawn by] a thousand horses. The charioteer prepared the carriage and addressed Śakra, “Kauśika, the carriage is ready.” Having been informed, Śakra then came down from Vajrayanta Hall [to Jetavana], and, facing east with palms joined, paid respect to the Buddha. When the charioteer saw this he was frightened, his hair stood on end, and he dropped his driving whip to the ground.

The god Śakra saw this and said in verse:

Which ghost frightened you?  
[You dropped] the horsewhip onto the ground.

The charioteer answered Śakra in verse:

I see the king of gods, Śakra,  
The husband of the [*asura*] Sujā.

I was frightened and  
 Dropped my horsewhip to the ground [for the following reason]. 424a  
 [I always see]  
 All beings of the earth,  
 Greater and smaller kings, human and divine,  
 And the Four Guardian Rulers  
 The gods of the Thirty-three Heavens—  
 They all pay respect to Śakra.  
 Where is there anyone who is worthy of greater respect?  
 [To whom he] now turns, facing east,  
 With palms joined, paying respect.

Then Śakra answered in verse:

I am indeed the most honorable among all kings  
 Of the world, greater and smaller,  
 The Four Guardian Rulers, and  
 The gods of the Thirty-three Heavens.  
 Therefore they all come to pay respect [to me].  
 Yet, there is also in this world,  
 [One who has achieved] the perfect supreme enlightenment [of  
 the Buddha].  
 He is called the perfect great teacher.  
 Therefore, I pay respect [to this master, the Buddha].

The charioteer responded again:

This [Buddha] must be the most superior in the world.  
 Therefore Heavenly King Śakra  
 Pays respect [to him] with palms joined.  
 I should now pay respect  
 To the being to whom the heavenly king pays respect.

The Buddha told the monks, “The heavenly deity Śakra is a supernatural king, yet he still pays respect to the Buddha and Dharma. Monks who have renounced the householder’s life and study the Way should also pay respect to the Buddha in the same manner. Śakra, who is the husband of Sujā, pays

respect to the Dharma and Sangha, and also praises the Dharma and Sangha. You who have correct faith, having renounced the householder's life and studied the Way, should also praise the Dharma and Sangha.”

Then Śakra came down from Vaijayanta Hall and with palms joined paid respect in all directions. At that time the charioteer saw Śakra come down from Vaijayanta Hall and in the middle of the courtyard [of the Jetavana Garden], with palms joined, pay respect in all directions. Seeing this, he was frightened and dropped the horsewhip to the ground. Then he said in verse:

Why, Kauśika, do you value the one who has renounced the  
householder's life?

Please explain this to me, who hungers and thirsts to hear [your  
explanation].

Then the heavenly deity Śakra answered in verse:

I pay respect to those who have renounced the householder's life  
[and live accordingly].

424b They travel freely everywhere, without calculating where to go  
and where to stop.

In cities, villages, and lands, nothing troubles their mind,

They do not accumulate material goods,

And only practice meditation free of desire,

Wherever they go, they do not seek anything;

For them only nonaction is pleasure.

When they speak, they speak of meditation as good;

When they refrain from speaking, they remain in quiet meditation.

People have conflicts among themselves, each differing from others.

Only those who have renounced the householder's life

Are free from conflict even in the midst of conflict.

Among all sentient beings they give up [the use of] swords  
and sticks.

In the midst of material goods, they transcend [attachment to] them,

They do not become intoxicated nor belligerent.

They keep away from all evils.

For this reason I pay respect to them.

Then the charioteer again said in verse:

Those to whom Heavenly King [Kauśika] pays respect  
 Must be superior [to any other] in the world.  
 Therefore, from today onward,  
 We should pay respect to them.

The *Pudawang jing* (T.522:794c7–795c5) says:

The king of the Bhoga kingdom, called Samantadatta, ruled over many kingdoms and received tributes from everywhere. The king himself honored the Buddha's Dharma and never deviated from it. Always compassionate, he took pity on ignorant subjects who did not know of the Three Jewels. Every time a vegetarian feast was held he ascended up a tall building, burned incense, and lowered his head to the ground to worship [the buddhas in all directions].

Ministers and subjects of the kingdom wondered about the king's behavior. They argued among themselves, saying, "The king is the most honorable among the ten thousand subjects. People both far and near pay respect to him, prostrating themselves. When the king speaks, people obey. What emotions and desires have caused him to debase and humiliate himself, departing from dignified conduct and bowing his head to the ground?" Ministers often discussed like this among themselves but no one dared to remonstrate the king directly.

The king ordered the carriage prepared for departure and then left the palace, accompanied by thousands of ministers and subjects. Before long, they unexpectedly encountered a monk. The king descended from his carriage, rejected the cover of decorative umbrellas, and joined the crowd that was following him. He then lowered his head to the ground and worshiped the monk. The king did not complete his journey but quickly returned [to the palace] to prepare a meal [for the monk]. Thereupon, his ministers reprimanded him, "Great king, worthy of the greatest honor, why on encountering a monk on almsround should you lower your head to the ground? Everyone in the world treats his or her head as the most valuable [part of their body]. In addition, you are a king, not like ordinary people."

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The king then ordered his ministers to look for a human head as well as the heads of a cow, horse, pig, and sheep. The ministers looked everywhere and after several days found all the heads. They reported to the king, saying that the heads of a corpse and the six animal heads they had been ordered to look for had been obtained. The king said, "Go to the market and sell them." The ministers then sent someone to sell them. The heads of the cow, horse, pig, and sheep were all sold but no one would buy the human head. The king said, "Lower the price and try to sell it. If it still doesn't sell, give it away to a beggar." Even following these instructions the human head had not been sold after several days. Beggars also refused to take it. The corpse head became bloated and smelled so badly that people would not come close to it. The king angrily remonstrated the ministers, "Earlier you criticized me, saying that a human head is the most valuable; that I should not humiliate myself by bowing my head to the ground! Now all six animal heads have been sold, yet [even] a beggar would not take the human head!" The king then ordered his ministers to prepare a carriage to go outside the city to the marsh field. The ministers who received the order were all frightened.

The king said to his ministers, "Do you remember the young boy who during the time of the previous king always held an umbrella for him? The ministers answered, "Yes, such a person indeed existed." The king said, "Where is that young boy?" They answered, "He died seventeen years ago." The king said, "What was the moral conduct of this boy like?" They answered. "We saw him serve the previous king. He observed the rules of purity reverently and maintained his faith. He did not say anything against the Dharma." The king told his ministers, "If you saw the clothes that the boy wore while he was alive, would you recognize them?" The ministers said, "Though it has been a long time we would recognize them." The king ordered his attendant to go to the inner storehouse and bring the clothes of the deceased boy, which soon arrived. [The king asked the ministers,] "Are these the clothes?" [They answered,] "Yes, these are indeed the clothes." The king said, "If you saw the boy's body now would you recognize it?" The ministers all fell silent and did not reply. After a while they said, "Our sight is inferior and we wouldn't be able to recognize it."

The king was about to begin telling the story of his earlier birth when the monk whom they saw earlier appeared. The king was delighted and bowed his head to the ground to worship the monk. All the ministers were delighted. The monk then took a seat. The king held his palms together [in worship] and explained what had happened. He then said, “Now you have come to tell us a story of karmic rebirths. Would you please tell the story to the ministers and subjects of his kingdom in order to enlighten these ignorant people?” The monk then told the ministers the story of the previous life of King [Samantadatta]: “If you wish to know who the king is, in an earlier life he was the young boy who held the umbrella and followed the previous king everywhere the king went. He never violated the precepts even for one day. Later, he left the world and his spirit was reborn as the son of the king. It is because of his conduct in the previous life that he is now greatly honored.”

The ministers, both higher ranking and minor, without exception, said, “We are fortunate to have met this monk. Please take pity on us and accept us as your disciples.”

The monk said, “My teacher is the Buddha, endowed with all the primary and secondary physical marks [of buddhas]. He walks alone in the three realms and what he teaches is not in vain. The Buddha is now six thousand miles away.”

Quickly, while he was speaking, the monk flew to the kingdom of Śrāvastī and addressed the Buddha, “The people of this kingdom are pitiable. They now all wish to see the Buddha. Will you show great compassion and teach the true Way to them?” The Buddha agreed. The next day the Buddha came to the kingdom of Bogha and taught the king and his subjects. . . .

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The Buddha asked them, “Do you wish to hear how the story of King Samantadatta and this monk began?”

Ānanda answered [for them], “They do.”

[The Buddha continued:] “In the past, at the time of Mohewen Buddha, there lived the son of a great family. His father worshiped the Three Jewels. The father ordered his son to offer incense [to them]. The father’s attendant at that time was contemptuous [of the son] and did not give the incense [to him]. Due to the karmic consequences [the attendant]

died young and was driven around [in his next births] for a period of time, yet he continued to honor the Dharma and kept himself free of delusion, and he has now become the present king.

“This monk was the [son] who did not get the incense from the attendant at that time. Though he did not receive the incense he did not resent that and made a vow that if he attained the Way he would bring salvation to this man, [namely, the attendant who did not give the incense]. This auspicious vow is fulfilled and he came to save the king and his subjects.”

When the king heard this story he understood its meaning [namely, the truth of karmic retribution], and he attained the spiritual status of stream-winner. People in the kingdom heard this sutra, received the five precepts, and practiced the ten good deeds regularly.

The *Ayuwang jing* (T.2042:128a27–129a7) says:

Once in the past King Aśoka met a seventeen-year-old novice. The king went into a screened area and paid respect to the novice. The king said to him, “Do not tell others that I paid respect to you.”

At that time there was a water bottle in that place. The novice went into the bottle and then came out again, saying, “The king should not tell others that I went inside the bottle and then came out.”

The king said, “I must tell others [about this]. I should not hide it.”

For this reason sutras all say, “Novices, even young, are not to be made light of. Sons of kings, even young, sons of dragons, even young, are not to be made light of. Novices, even young, can save people. Sons of kings, even young, can kill people. Sons of dragons, even young, can raise clouds. From rising clouds come rain, thunder, and lightning. These respond even to those who are young, who are not to be made light of.”

The *Fufazang yinyuan jing* (T.2058:307c18–19; 308c8–11; 309c28–310a15) says:

In the past, one hundred years after the Buddha’s *parinirvāṇa*, King Aśoka, who had faith in the Three Jewels, held a five-year feast (*pañcavārṣikamahāḥ*). On the day of the feast the king bathed in fragrant water, put on fresh clothes, ascended a tall tower, paid respect in the four directions,

and extended invitations to the community of monks. Holy monks, over twenty myriads altogether, came flying there. The king's faith was profound, beyond ordinary measure. Seeing the monks, some young, some old, some of ordinary rank and others of advanced saintly rank, the king welcomed them all, paying respect and worshipping them.

At that time there was a minister called Yaśas, who forcefully advocated non-Buddhist views and lacked faith and a respectful attitude. Seeing the king pay respect [to the monks], he said, "The king is extremely ignorant. He compromises his own nobility and virtues by paying respect to young children." 425b

When the king heard this, he gave an order to his ministers: each of them was to look for an animal that had died of natural causes and bring its head to the king. [As an exception,] the king instructed Yaśas alone to look for a human head. When they had secured the heads, the king instructed each minister to go to the market and sell the head he had obtained. [The animal] heads were all sold, but when people saw the [human] head Yaśas brought, they hated it and no one would buy it. After several days the head began to smell. People saw it and recoiled, saying, "If you are not a *caṇḍāla*, you [must be] a *yakṣa* or *rākṣasa*. Why have you taken a dead man's head and are trying to sell it?"

After he was so reviled, Yaśas came to the king and said, "I am offering a human head for sale but [instead of buying it, people] revile me. No one wants to even see it, why would anyone buy it?" The king replied, "If no one buys it, then give it away free."

Yaśas followed the instruction and again brought the head to the market, saying, "If you don't have the money to buy this head I will give it to you for free." When the people in the market heard this, they abused him even more, and no one would agree to take it.

Yaśas, ashamed, returned to the king. With palms joined, he said to the king, "This head is difficult to sell. Even when I offer it for free people won't take it; instead they abuse me. No one will buy it."

The king asked Yaśas, "What is most valuable?"

Yaśas answered, "Human beings are the most valuable."

The king said, "If they are so valuable why does this [human head] not sell?"

Yaśas answered, “Even though a human being is valuable alive, his remains when dead are vile.”

The king asked Yaśas, “If I were dead, would my head be base, just like this one?” Yaśas was frightened and dared not to reply.

The king said, “Don’t be afraid. Give the true answer.”

Frightened, Yaśas looked up at the king and answered, “If dead, the king’s head would be as base as this one.”

The king said to Yaśas, “If my head [is worthless] when dead like this one, why did you find it strange when I paid respect to the monks [by bowing my head to them]? If you were a true friend you might have advised me to exchange the fragile head [that I now have] with the solid head [that I will acquire when I achieve salvation]. Why do you today [tell me to] stop worshipping [monks]?”

When he heard the king’s words Yaśas repented. He reformed by turning away from evil non-Buddhist teachings to the true Buddhist teaching, and he took refuge in the Three Jewels. For this reason, sentient beings who hear this story should reverently pay respect to and worship the Three Jewels when they see them.

The *Four-part Vinaya* (*Sifen lü*, ref. T.1428:961b11–c1) says:

The arhat Piṇḍola was originally a minister of King Udayana. In view of his diligent practice and austerities, the king allowed him to renounce the householder’s life and Piṇḍola attained arhatship. Later the king frequently traveled from the city to worship him. His monastery was twenty miles outside of the city. A misguided minister, seeing that Piṇḍola did not rise [to greet the king], maliciously reprimanded the king. The king later heeded the minister’s reprimand and was about to murder Piṇḍola. When Piṇḍola saw the king come through the gate [of the monastery], he came down from his seat and walked seven steps to greet him. The king angrily said, “In the past you, Great Virtue, would not move. Now you leave your seat to welcome me. Why?”

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Piṇḍola answered, “Earlier you came with good intentions, so I did not rise to greet you. Now you have evil intentions. If I did not rise to welcome you I would have been killed.”

The king was moved and said, “Good! I, a disciple, stupidly and wrongly accepted malicious words. I failed to distinguish the saintly from the ordinary.”

The king asked for the permission to repent his wrongdoing. Even though the king avoided going to hell, Piṇḍola predicted that he would certainly lose the throne within seven days and this prediction proved correct. A neighboring state attacked and the king was captured. He spent twelve years chained in prison.

[Compiler’s] Comment: For these reasons it is particularly important that we pay respect [to monks and nuns]. We should not be arrogant, which will bring about negative [karmic] consequences. Worldly people, when given modest appointments, often lack faith and arrogantly abuse monks and nuns and humiliate them. Sometimes they stand in court, placing themselves on high seats and sending officials to drag monks and nuns [before them], and then they impose unreasonable and shameful punishments [on the monastics]. Nowhere else is goodness defeated and evil increases [more blatantly than here]. Even if we were to violate the king’s law, we must still follow the true principle. Even if we follow the [king’s] law externally, we would have something of which to be ashamed internally.

Either monastic or lay, we live within the three realms [of this world]. Not having reached the saintly ranks, who is [completely] free of faults? Those who have renounced the householder’s life may internally lack real practice, yet they shave their beards and hair and put on the monastic robes. This appearance produces goodness and those who see it reverently show respect. Even monks and nuns who have violated precepts may still sit on [the preacher’s] seat and teach in a variety of ways to benefit sentient beings. People who hear [these sermons] cultivate the six perfections and further teach others. If they cultivate good deeds, in the future they will be reborn as humans or gods at least, and they may even achieve the holy ranks [if they are fortunate]. If they achieve holiness they will further continue to benefit endlessly. This is just as [the flame from] one lamp may be transferred to a hundred thousand other lamps, and increase endlessly.

To estimate [the value of] this inexhaustible [spread of the Dharma], it is all due to the teaching mentioned above of a monk or nun who has violated

the precepts. That resulted in this great benefit. Since there is such benefit, everyone should be careful. Even if we manage to deceive a hundred thousand myriads of people who have renounced the householder's life [about this], that would achieve not even a hair's weight of benefits. We would only spread the bad reputation [of the monk in question] across the four oceans. In future rebirths we will repeatedly be punished. A scripture says, "The evil of one moment of thought can open the gate of five evil acts." This will be discussed further below.

The *Zabaozang jing* (T.203:484a12–b14) says:

The king of Yuezhi, named Kaniṣka, heard that an honorable arhat in Kaśmīra, called Qiyeduo, was famous and wanted to meet him. With his ministers he went to that kingdom, and on his way there he thought to himself, "I am now the king and rule over all people. None of them fail to pay respect to me. Only the [truly] virtuous deserve my worship." He proceeded, thinking in this way.

426a The people of that country said to the honorable one, "The king of Yuezhi and his ministers are coming from a great distance to see you. Please straighten your clothing and welcome them. The honorable one [Qiyeduo] said, "I heard the Buddha say that for people who have renounced the householder's life the Way is to be honored rather than mere worldly appearance. Virtue is their only concern. Why should I come out to meet [the king and his retinue] with proper clothing?" He sat quietly [in meditation] and did not go out.

The king of Yuezhi came to the residence and saw the honorable Qiyeduo. On seeing the monk's powerful presence the king doubled his respect, and after greeting the monk by bowing his head, he sat to one side. The honorable one needed to spit, and the king, without thinking, came forward and placed the spittoon before him. Then the honorable one [Qiyeduo] said to the king, "At the present time I am not worthy of becoming a field of merit for the king. Why did you go to the trouble of traveling here in person?"

The king was greatly ashamed, [remembering what] he had thought before and [thinking that] the monk knew his thoughts. How could the monk do this if he did not possess supernatural powers? The monk preached to the king briefly, saying, "The road was good when the king came. It will be the same on his way back as when he came."

Hearing this, the king started his return journey to his country. In the middle of the journey the ministers complained, “We traveled such a long distance to that country, and it seems that we are returning without having received any teaching.”

The king answered, “The honorable one preached to me, ‘The road was good when the king came. It will be the same on his way back as when he came.’ Did you not understand this? Because in the past I planted the seeds of kingship by upholding precepts, giving, and cultivating various meritorious deeds, I now enjoy this throne. If I again accumulate good deeds I will again receive good fortune in a future world. Therefore, [Qiyeduo] instructed me by saying, ‘The road was good when the king came. It will be the same on his way back as when he came.’”

When the ministers heard this, they bowed their heads to the ground and apologized, “We are lowly and ignorant, and misunderstood the situation on our own. The great king possesses supernatural powers and deciphered the mysterious meaning [of the monk’s teaching]. [The king] enjoys his throne because of the virtuous seeds he planted.” After speaking, the ministers were delighted and withdrew.

The *Shisong lü*, T.1435:242b15–c25) says:

At that time the World-honored One told the monks the story of one of his previous lives. Once in a past world, near the foot of the Himalayas, three [creatures,] a bird and [two] animals, lived together: a parrot, a monkey, and an elephant. At first these three animals despised each other, showing no respect, [but then] they all thought, “Why do we not show respect to each other? We should make offerings and honor the one born first, [and let him] teach us.” The parrot and the monkey asked the elephant, “What do you remember of the past?” Nearby was a large *biba* tree. The elephant said, “When I was small this tree fit under my belly and I could pass over it.” The elephant and the parrot asked the monkey, “What do you remember?” The monkey answered, “When I was small I could sit on the ground and grab the top of this tree and pull it down to touch the ground.” The elephant said to the monkey, “You are older than I am. I should pay respect to you. Teach the Dharma to me.” The elephant and the monkey asked the parrot, “What do you remember?” The parrot

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answered, “There used to be a large *biba* tree [in another place]. I ate its fruit and excreted the seed here. The seed then became this tree, growing tall like this. This is what I remember.” The monkey said to the parrot, “You are older than I am. I should make offerings to you. You should teach the Dharma to me.” Then the elephant paid respect to the monkey, heard his instruction on the Dharma, and taught other elephants. The monkey paid respect to the parrot, heard his instruction on the Dharma, and taught the Dharma to other monkeys. The parrot taught other parrots the Dharma. (Note: According to the *Sifen lü*, the bird rode on the monkey and the monkey on top of the elephant. They traveled everywhere and taught the Dharma.)

These three, a bird, a monkey, and an elephant, at first enjoyed killing, stealing, licentiousness, and lying, but they later stopped [these unwholesome activities], and after their lives [ended] they were reborn in heaven. At that time people, seeing animals performing good deeds and not attacking and killing human beings, said to each other, “Even animals pay respect [to each other], how much more should we?” Then people paid respect to each other and upheld the five precepts. After death they all were reborn in heaven.

The Buddha said to the monks, “The parrot at that time was I myself, the monkey was Śāriputra, and the elephant was Maudgalyāyana.” The Buddha said, “Animals are stupid and yet they still can pay respect [to each other], benefiting themselves and others. How much more so is this true for you, who have faith and left the householder’s life? And yet now you fail to show respect to each other.”

Then the Buddha spoke in verse:

If people fail to show respect to the Buddha and the Buddha’s  
disciples,  
In this life they will be reviled and after death they will fall into  
evil realms of rebirth.  
If people know enough to show respect to the Buddha and the  
Buddha’s disciples,  
In this life they will be praised by others and after death they will  
be reborn in heaven.

After relating various stories praising the practice of paying respect, the Buddha said to the monks, “From now on, the monk who received the complete set of precepts first, even if only by a very short period of time, will sit down and receive water and food first, before [those who received the precepts later].

### 3. Benefits of Paying Respect

The *Baoxinglun* (*Dasheng yizhang*, T.1851:654b7–19; ref. *Baoxinglun*, T.1611:826c9–20) says:

There are six ways in which one should pay respect to the Three Jewels [of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha]. First, the [Three Jewels] are rare. They can be compared to worldly jewels that poor people cannot obtain. The Three Jewels are like this. Sentient beings with little merit cannot encounter them even over a period of one hundred thousand myriad births. That is why [the Three Jewels] are called jewels. Second, they are free of defilements. They can be compared to the fact that authentic worldly jewels are free of blemishes. The Three Jewels are like this. They are completely separated from defilements. That is why [the Three Jewels] are called jewels. Third, they have [special] power. They can be compared to worldly rare jewels that have the power of removing poverty and getting rid of poisons. The Three Jewels are like this. They are endowed with six supernatural powers that are beyond understanding. That is why they are treated as jewels. Fourth, they are used for adornment. They can be compared with worldly rare jewels that can be worn around the neck to make one attractive. The [Three] Jewels are like this. They adorn the practitioner’s body by making it pure. That is why they are treated as jewels. Fifth, they are most superior. They can be compared to worldly rare jewels; they are most superior among all things. The Three Jewels are like this. They are the most superior among all things in all worlds. That is why they are treated as jewels. Sixth, they do not change. They can be compared to worldly gold; even if the metal is heated and pounded, or polished it does not change [from being gold]. The Three Jewels are like this. The eight categories of worldly matters [namely, gain, loss, praise, blame, contempt,

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honor, pleasure, and suffering] cannot change them. For this reason they are treated as jewels.

[Put another way:] One must pay respect to the Three Jewels for six reasons. First, the Buddha teaches that the Dharma is good medicine. Monks transmit [this medicine] and benefit us. In order to repay this debt we pay respect [to the Three Jewels]. Second, during the evil period of the last age it is not easy to transmit [the Dharma]; it needs protection. For this reason we pay respect [to the Three Jewels]. Third, in order to encourage people to have faith we pay respect to [the Three Jewels]. Fourth, [it is a way of] teaching the proper ritual procedure for paying respect to monks and nuns. Fifth, in order to let people take delight in making offerings and cause the Dharma to remain forever, we pay respect [to the Three Jewels]. Sixth, as a way of showing superior manners we pay respect.

The *Chengshi lun* (ref. T.1646:247a28–b2) says, “The Three Jewels are most auspicious. Therefore, I place them at the beginning of this sutra.”

#### **4. Damages for Disparaging [the Sangha Jewel]**

The *Xiangfa jueyi jing* (T.2870:1337b14–24) says:

And all laypeople, noble or humble . . . [s]hould not hit slaves and animals [that belong to] the Three Jewels, nor accept the worship of Three Jewels slaves (i.e., servants who belong to Three Jewels). This would lead to disasters.

The *Sazhe niqian jing* (T.272:336b2–21) says:

If one destroys stupas and monasteries, or steals property that belongs to the Buddha, or allows [others] to commit these offenses and take delight in them, or if one imprisons, beats, defrocks, or kills monks wearing dyed robes, regardless of whether they uphold the precepts or violate them—if one commits these fundamental and grave sins, he or she will certainly fall into hell and endure uninterrupted suffering. If a king carries out such evils inside his kingdom, the immortals and saints will leave the kingdom and go away. Powerful deities will not protect that kingdom. Conflicts among ministers will arise everywhere. There will be irregular floods and

drought; the winds and rains will come at wrong times. People will starve and bandits will roam everywhere. Those who die from epidemics will be innumerable. Yet [the king] will not know that [his evil acts] have caused this and will blame the gods.

The *Renwang jing* (T.245:833b19–25, b29–c1, c16–18) says:

Claiming themselves to be noble, kings and ministers will destroy my Dharma. They will set up laws to control my disciples, not allowing them to leave the householder's life, and not allowing them to make buddha images. They will set up government offices [to control the monastic order], making records of monks. Monks will be made to stand on the ground, while laypeople sit on high chairs.

Kings and princes make arbitrary rules and regulations; failing to heed the causes and conditions [that gave rise to] the Buddha's teaching and the causes and conditions that disturb the harmony of the monastic order, government officers control monks, and officials keep records of monastic registration. The suffering [of this worldly existence] is upheld, and the Buddha's Dharma will not survive for long.

The *Daji jing* (T.397:354a26–b5, c16–24; 359b9–c7) says:

The Buddha said, "All sentient beings, in the present world or in future worlds, should deeply believe in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. These sentient beings will [then] receive wondrous karmic fruits and soon enter the City of Fearlessness. Similarly, if someone makes offerings to a person who left the householder's life for my sake, or if a person who, following my [instruction], has shaved his beard and hair and put on a monk's robe but does not accept the [monastic] precepts, and if one makes offerings to this person, the donor acquires merit [and eventually] enters the City of Fearlessness. For this reason I now teach that if someone renounces the householder's life, shaves their beard and hair and puts on the monk's robe—[even if] they do not uphold the precepts—it is against the Dharma to trouble such a person. [To trouble him] would amount to destroying the Dharma body and reward body of the buddhas of the three ages, and will lead to filling the three inferior realms of rebirth [in repeated rebirths].

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The Buddha said the following, “If sentient beings renounce the householder’s life, shave their beards and hair and put on a monk’s robe, even if they do not uphold the precepts they are all stamped with the seal of nirvana. It is against the Dharma to trouble a renunciant who does not uphold the precepts, to abuse, hurt, beat, or cut them with one’s fists, swords, or sticks, or to take away their robe, almsbowl, or other means of sustenance. Anyone who does this destroys the true reward body of the buddhas of the three ages and gouges out the eyes of all gods and human beings. This is so because such a person would bury and cause to disappear the seeds of the Three Jewels of the true Dharma of the buddhas; such a person would prevent the gods and human beings from obtaining [spiritual] benefits and allow them to fall into hell—[in this way] they would cause the three realms of inferior rebirth to expand and be filled.”

Then the lord of this *sahā* world, Great Brahmā, said to the Buddha, “Suppose there is someone who for the sake of the Buddha renounced the householder’s life, shaved his beard and hair, and put on a monk’s robe [but either] did not receive the precepts or violated them after receiving them. If a *kṣatriya* king were to trouble, revile, beat, or bind that monk, how much sin would that constitute?”

The Buddha said, “Great Brahmā, I will now explain this briefly. Suppose someone in ten thousand myriads of buddha lands causes the buddhas’ bodies to bleed, how would that be? Would that person acquire a great deal of sin?”

Great Brahmā answered, “If someone causes even one buddha’s body to bleed, he or she acquires the sin of [falling into] the the Hell of Uninterrupted Suffering. Their sin would be so great that it is beyond calculation. They will fall into Avīci Hell. How much greater the sins of someone who caused ten thousand myriads of buddhas’ bodies to bleed. No one but a tathāgata could fully enumerate that person’s sins and punishments.”

The Buddha said, “If someone were to trouble, revile, beat, and bind a person who for my sake had shaved his beard and hair and put on a monk’s robe, and who either did not receive the precepts or violated them after receiving them, the resulting sin would be even greater. Why? Because the person [who became a renunciant yet violated the precepts] can still show the path to nirvana to gods and other human beings. He would have

[learned to] pay respect to the Three Jewels [and would know that the Buddha's path is] superior to any of the ninety-five [non-Buddhist] paths. Such a person can quickly enter nirvana. He is superior to all lay householders, except for householders who have attained the stage of patience. Gods and human beings should make offering to such a person. It goes without saying that they should also do so for those who uphold the precepts in all their acts [of body, speech, and mind].

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“When kings and ministers who issue judgments at court see a person who, following my Dharma, has left the householder's life and yet committed grave sins, such as murder, theft, defiling spiritual practice, lying, and other immoral deeds, they should expel that person from the country. They should not allow him to stay in a monastery and work with other monks. But they should not whip them, nor abuse or humiliate them verbally for their sins. If a king or a minister deviates from the Dharma and imposes such punishments, that king or minister will be excluded from salvation, will be reborn in inferior realms, and will be kept at a distance from the good realms of gods and human beings. [Such a king or minister] will necessarily go to Avīci Hell. [This is the case even for renunciants who have violated precepts.] It goes without saying that [kings and ministers] should not whip those who have left the householder's life for the sake of the Buddha and who uphold the precepts.

The *Shilun jing* (T.410:703a18–b12) says:

The Buddha said, “Sons of noble families, there are four kinds of monks. What are the four? First, the monks of the primary truth; second the monks of purity; third, the sheeplike dumb monks; fourth, unrepentant monks. Who are those called the monks of the primary truth? The buddhas, bodhisattvas, *pratyekabuddhas*, and those who have attained the four fruits (i.e., stream-winners, once-returners, nonreturners, and arhats)—these seven kinds of people are called monks of the primary truth. Laypeople who attain [these] holy fruits are also called monks of the primary truth. Who are the monks of purity? Those who uphold the complete set of precepts are called monks of purity. Who are the sheeplike dumb monks? Those who don't know the difference between violating or not violating the precepts, between minor and grave offenses and how to repent offenses, those

who are ignorant and lack good spiritual friends, and are unable to ask about the profound truth, about what is good and what is not good—such are called sheeplike dumb monks. Who are the unrepentant monks? Those who come to join the Buddha’s Dharma only to secure a means of livelihood, and [then] commit all kinds of violations, destroy the harmony of the sangha, do not fear future rebirths, and indulge in the six kinds of emotions (joy, anger, sorrow, pleasure, love, and hate) and are attached to the five kinds of desires [affiliated with the sense organs]—such people are called unrepentant monks. (Note: One should still pay respect to all four kinds of monks.)

The *Dabei jing* (T.380:958a24–b5) says:

427c The Buddha said to Ānanda, “In [the community of] my Dharma there are those who by status are monks and yet defile monastic practice. They call themselves monks, and they physically look like monks. In the world age of the wise [one thousand buddhas appear], [beyond the present Śākya-muni on] led by Maitreya and with Vairocana (Ruci?) at the end. Once they put on the monastic robes those monks are like these one thousand buddhas. In the realm of nirvana without remainder [established by] these buddhas, one by one those monks will be able to enter nirvana without remainder. Why is this? If those monks praise the name of the Buddha or give rise to faith even once, the merit [of such deeds] will never be in vain. Ānanda, I have the Buddha’s wisdom that knows the Dharma realm. There is nothing I do not know. Ānanda, all white karma gains white rewards. All black karma results in black retributions. If sentient beings with a pure mind say, “I pay respect to the Buddha,” due to this good karmic root he or she certainly comes close to nirvana. If someone meets the Buddha and personally makes offerings to him, that person definitely comes even closer to nirvana.”

The *Shilun jing* (T.410:693c20–694a1; 694a25–b3, b12–17, 23–25) says:

The Buddha said, “If monks have renounced the householder’s life in accordance with the Buddha’s Dharma, all gods, human beings, and demons (*asuras*) must make offerings to them. One must not impose punishment on monks who observe the precepts, imprisoning, cutting off

their arms and legs, or depriving them of life. There should be no exception. Monks who have violated the precepts are like ulcers. They do not practice the correct path but say that they do. They fall from the holy path and are deprived of its fruits. They are destroyed by the bondage of desire. Yet they still can teach the valuable treasure house of immeasurable merits to dragons (*nāgas*), human beings, and nonhumans. For this reason, I don't permit kings and ministers to punish any of those who followed me and renounced the householder's life, whether they uphold or violate the precepts, by imprisoning them, beating them with sticks and whips, cutting off their arms and legs, or depriving them of their lives. In cases of other lesser offenses, such as violating minor rules of proper conduct, this is even more obviously the case.

“Monks who have violated the precepts are like dead people, yet the precepts remain powerful. They are like [the medicine] *gorocanā* (cow's gallstone). Even though the cow has died people still take [this part of its body as medicine]. It is also like stone incense, which becomes useful after death and benefits all sentient beings greatly. Even though evil monks have violated the precepts, the power of their precepts still [remains] and benefits an infinite number of gods and human beings.

“This can be compared to burning incense. The substance of the incense is destroyed [by burning it] but it makes other objects fragrant. Monks who have violated the precepts are like this. They themselves fall into evil rebirths but they can still allow others to nourish their good karmic roots. For this reason, white-robed laypeople should never attack or despise monks who have violated the precepts. Laypeople should protect, honor, and make offerings even to monks who have violated the precepts. They are not permitted to impose punishment on them, imprison them, cut off their arms and legs, or deprive them of their life.”

Then the World-honored One spoke in verse:

The flowers of grapevines, even wilted, are superior to all other  
flowers.

Monks who have violated the precepts are still superior to  
non-Buddhist teachers.

The *Daji jing* (T.397:376a27–28, c10–18) says:

[Those] with a shaven head and wearing a monk's robe.  
Whether upholding the precepts or violating them—  
Gods and humans should make offerings to them, and  
Not leave them lacking [what they need].  
[Those who] make offerings to them in this way  
Make offerings to me, (the Buddha).  
[If someone] pays respect to the Dharma, and  
Takes refuge in it, shaves his hair,  
Wears the monastic robe on his body,  
428a [I] say that such a person is my son.  
Even if a [monk] has damaged the precepts,  
He still resides at the stage of nonretrogression.  
If [someone] beats him,  
That person beats my body.  
If [someone] abuses and humiliates him,  
That person abuses and humiliates me.  
In the mind of this one (the Buddha) desires are extinguished.  
The true Dharma is a great bright lamp [that shows the Way].  
[People] fight with other for the sake of material goods,  
*Kṣatriyas* all equally give rise to anger.

The *Shilun jing* (T.410:699a25–27, 29–b8) says:

For example, there was once a king called Fude (“Meritorious Virtue”). Someone committed a crime and was bound and fettered, but the king did not wish to take his life, so he gave him over to a crazed elephant. When the crazed elephant raised his two legs and was just about to crush the prisoner on the ground, he saw that the man wore the dyed robes [of a monk]. So the elephant put his legs gently back down on the ground. He would not harm the man. He squatted before the monk, touching and licking his foot with his nose and tongue, showing compassion. Sons of a noble family, an elephant is a mere animal. Even so, seeing someone wearing the monk's dyed robe, he would not entertain evil thoughts and harm him.

In the future a *caṇḍāla* king may see someone who has renounced the householder's life through my Dharma, who, while capable of becoming a vessel of the Dharma, still fails to become one. If the king oppresses

this monk or takes his life, that king, after his own death, will certainly fall into Avīci Hell.

[Concluding] verses say:

Walking in meditation under the trees in a forest,  
 [The monk's] will to seek the Way is firm.  
 Possessing supernatural powers,  
 Carrying a walking staff, the monk travels far [as if] riding on  
   [rising] smoke  
 Starting with the [bodhisattva's] four universal vows,  
 Such a person reaches the ultimate goal of the path before anyone else.  
 He does not covet a long life of many *kalpas*,  
 Not to speak of extending the years [of his present life].

### Miracle Stories

(Notes: ten stories are briefly cited:) [Northern] Wei dynasty (386–534 C.E.): Monk Shi Tanshi. Jin Dynasty (265–420 C.E.): Monk Shi Daokai; Eastern Jin dynasty (317–420 C.E.): Minister of Works He Chong; Jin dynasty (265–420 C.E.): holy monks on the seven peaks of Mount Lu; Monk Shi Senglang; Monk Shi Faxiang; Monk Shi Fa'an. Song dynasty (420–479 C.E.): Monk Shi Huiquan. [Southern] Qi dynasty (479–502 C.E.): Monk Shi Huiming; holy monks in the mountains in China.

[Northern] Wei Dynasty

The monk Tanshi in the time of Emperor Taiwu (423–452 C.E.) of Wei showed miraculous signs. He sat all the time and never lay down. For over fifty years his feet were never covered in shoes. After walking in mud he simply shook his feet and they became clean. His feet were as white as his face, so people called him White Feet Āraṇyaka. When Helian Chang (d. 434 C.E.) conquered Chang'an, he was not a follower of Buddhism and harmed monks and nuns. Tanshi was struck by a sword but was not injured. Because of this, many monks and nuns also escaped death. Emperor Taiwu treated him with great respect. For over ten years after his death his corpse did not decay. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu*, T.2106:434a22–26; ref. 428b *Gaoseng zhuan*, T.2059: 392b3–7.)

### Western Jin Dynasty

The monk Shi Daokai was from Dunhuang. He left the householder's life and lived in the mountains, eating pine [branches] and cedar [bark] for thirty years. Later he would only swallow small stones. He walked fast as if flying, avoiding people and enjoying quietude. He lived on Mount Baofu for many years. During the time of Shi Hu (r. 334–349 C.E.) he traveled from Xiping, walking seven hundred *li* in one day. When he arrived at Ye he walked around it, visiting the villages and fields and curing many people's illnesses. Whatever wealth he acquired he gave away, and he always traveled on foot. When the rule of the Shi clan, in the Later Zhao (319–351 C.E.), came to an end Daokai came to Jianye with his disciples. His life came to an end in a hut on Mount Luofu in the south. Yuan Yanbo climbed the mountain during the Xingning period (363–365 C.E.) and is said to have worshiped his corpse. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu*, T.2106:433a2–8; ref. *Gaoseng zhuan*, T.2059:387b2–c6.)

### Eastern Jin Dynasty

Minister of Works He Chong believed in the Dharma from his youth. Over many years he offered vegetarian feasts and invited holy beings. These gatherings were held at his residence and both monastics and lay followers came in great numbers. [At one time], among those sitting in the gathering was a monk. He was dirty and of lowly appearance. He emerged from among the crowd and sat on a seat [prepared for monks], remaining silent. Everyone in the hall found this strange and said there must be some mistake. He Chong's displeasure also was evident in his facial expression. When the time came for the midday meal, the monk took food at his seat. When he finished, he picked up the bowl and left the hall. As he departed, he turned to Chong and said, "Lord He, I thank you for the diligent hospitality." Then he threw the bowl into the sky and flew up into empty space. All the monks, lay followers, and He Chong looked at the [strange] monk as he disappeared into the sky. They all lamented and practiced repentance for many weeks. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu*, T.2106:433a9–15.)

(Note: The above three stories are from the *Liang gaoseng zhuan*.)

### Jin Dynasty

The seven peaks of Mount Lu meet in the east and form a lofty escarpment. No one could climb the extraordinarily sharp cliffs. During the Taiyuan period

(476–396 C.E.) Fanning, Governor of Yuzhang, planned to build a school and sent people to harvest wood [from the mountains]. A man wearing a monk's robe was seen on a cliff. He went straight up and on reaching the peak he turned around and appeared to be squatting on the summit of the peak. After a while a cloud formed and he disappeared into it. At that time several people who were collecting herbs saw this, and contemporary writers wrote poetry about the event.

The monk Shi Tandi's *fu* verses on Mount Lu say, "An arhat went above the clouds and squatted at the peak/Very small and disappearing in the scenery, this is someone who had entered the dark mystery." (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu*, T.2106:433a28–b3.)

The monk Zhu Senglang was strict in observing the precepts and both Chinese people and foreigners respected and marveled at him. Once he traveled with several others to attend a lecture on the Dharma. On the way he suddenly told his companions, "It appears that someone stole the robes and other things that you left at the monastery." The others immediately returned and indeed the items had been stolen. During the Taiyuan period (476–396 C.E.) Senglang built a stupa and a temple in Jinxing Valley in the Qinyu district, and he produced images [for them]. Fu Qian (r. 357–385 C.E.) persecuted monks toward the end of his rule, but he honored Lang's community alone as an exception and did not dare cause harm to it. At that time both monastics and lay followers had faith in the community and presented offerings to it. Every time people were coming to visit, Senglang knew the number of people the day before their arrival and let the monastery know, so that his disciples could prepare properly for the visit. Without exception his words proved correct. There were many tigers in Jinxing Valley that used to harm people. After the monastery was established there the tigers all became [tame], like domestic animals. Murong De of the Xianbei group (Southern Yan; r. 398–405) donated the taxes from two districts to Senglang's community. To the present day the valley is called Master Lang's Valley (ref. *Gaoseng zhuan*, T.2059:354b2–28; *Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu*, T.2106:433b4–13).

428c

The monk Shi Faxiang was from Hedong. He lived alone on a mountain, practicing austerities. Birds and wild animals gathered around him, as tame as domestic animals. In a shrine at Mount Tai there was a large stone casket

filled with treasures. Faxiang was traveling on the mountain and stayed in the shrine. He saw a man clothed in black, wearing a military crown, who told him to open the casket. As soon he said this, the man disappeared. The stone cover of the casket weighed more than a thousand *jun*. Faxiang went to lift it and it came up easily. So he took the treasures and distributed them among the poor. Later he crossed the Yangzi River and stayed at Yuecheng Monastery. All of a sudden he abandoned all conventions and began behaving like a comic actor. Once he appeared naked and taunted the court nobles. Sima Tian, Defender-General of the North, disliked Faxiang's unruly behavior and invited him in order to try to poison him. Even after emptying the cup with the poisoned liquid three times, he was unaffected and looked just the same. Faxiang died at the age of eighty-nine, toward the end of the Yuanxing period (402–404). (*Gaoseng zhuan*, T.2059:406c8–17; *Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu*, T.2106: 433b14–20.)

Shi Fa'an, a monk of Mount Lu, was a disciple of Dharma Master Huiyuan. Toward the end of the Yixi period (405–418 C.E.) violent incidents involving a tiger occurred frequently in the Yangxin district. A shrine had been built under a massive tree and more than one hundred residents lived in a nearby [village]. Every evening one or two of the villagers encountered the tiger and were killed.

Fa'an came upon Yangxin in his travels and [decided to spend the night] at the village. Fearing the tiger, the villagers had locked the village gate early in the day, and as they were not acquainted with Fa'an they refused to let him in. Fa'an then went to the tree [outside the village] straightaway, and sat in meditation under it all night. Toward dawn the tiger, carrying a human corpse, came by. The tiger dropped the corpse on the northern side of the tree and, delighted to see Fa'an, it came leaping over and lay down in front of him. Fa'an preached to the tiger and conferred the precepts, while the tiger remained crouched on the ground and did not move. After a while it left. In the morning villagers, looking for the dead man, came to the tree and they were amazed to see Fa'an sitting under it. They said that the tiger did not harm him because he was a holy man. From then on all the villagers' troubles with the tiger ceased. People honored Fa'an even more. Everyone in the district became a follower of the Dharma.

Later Fa'an wished to paint a [buddha] image on a rock wall on the side of a mountain. He did not have any blue pigment for painting the sky and wanted to use copper, but he did not have any copper either. At night a man appeared next to his bed in a dream, saying, "There are two bells [buried in the ground here]. You should take them." In the morning Fa'an dug up the copper bells and eventually he was able to complete the painting. Later, when Dharma Master Huiyuan produced a metal image, Fa'an sent one of the bells to assist with the project. As for the other bell, Xiong Wuhuan, Governor of Wuchang, borrowed it and kept it with him. (*Gaoseng zhuan*, T.2059:362b28–c14.)

### Song Dynasty

During the reign of Emperor Xiaowu (453–464 C.E.) the monk Huiyuan of Changsha Monastery in Jiangling, whose secular name was Huang Qian, was a disciple of Meditation Master Huiyin. Huiyin practiced meditation and obtained visions. [Another man called] Huiyuan [of Mount Lu] had been Huiyin's former teacher. Even though [Huiyuan] (the subject of this story) was only a servant, Huiyin chose him to ordain as his disciple. [The disciple Huiyuan] stayed at the Yang family residence and practiced *panzhou* (visualization) meditation. Practicing diligently for over a year, he frequently achieved miraculous responses. On a single day people saw Huiyuan in ten ritual sessions [in different places]. Yet at the place where he was performing the *panzhou* meditation nothing unusual occurred. He foresaw the day of his death and when the time came he died. After a long while he appeared at Duobao Monastery and told the monk Tanxuan, "Next year, on the twenty-third day of the second month, I will come to welcome you with heavenly beings." Then he disappeared. Tanxun held a large gathering, performing the feast of giving up one's body. On that day he did not feel well and realized that his life was about to end. At the third watch (after midnight) Tanxuan heard music in the sky and miraculous fragrant smoke appeared. He said, "The promise of Master Huiyuan is realized." Shortly thereafter he left the world mysteriously. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu*, T.2106:434a27–b7; ref. *Gaoseng zhuan*, T.2059:393c17–20.)

The monk Shi Huiquan was a meditation monk from Liangzhou. He opened a school there and had five hundred students. One disciple had a rough and violent temperament. Huiquan would usually not have anything to do with

him. Suddenly the monk claimed that he had attained the third fruit of the Way (i.e., that of nonreturner) but because that monk's practice was inadequate Huiquan refused to confirm his attainment.

Huiquan later became ill. The [difficult] disciple came to him at night to ask after him, and [even as he came in to the room] the door remained closed, as usual. Huiquan was amazed and wanted to test the disciple's supernatural powers, so he told him to come again the next evening. The window and the door [to the room] were secretly sealed and additional locks were installed. In the middle of the night the disciple arrived. Quickly coming before the bed he said to Huiquan, "*Ācārya*, you can now see that I actually came."

He continued, "*Ācārya*, after this life you will be reborn in a brahman household." Huiquan said, "I have done a lot of sitting in Buddhist meditation. How could I be reborn in such circumstances?" The disciple said, "Your faith, *ācārya*, is insufficient. You also have not completely given up non-Buddhist learning. Even though you have accumulated merit you cannot escape this world. If you offer a feast for all and [give almsfood to] one holy person, you will attain the fruit of the spiritual path."

Thereupon Huiquan set up the feast. The disciple had also said, "Make a donation of a *saṃghāṭī* (monk's) robe. If someone asks for the robe, whatever their monastic standing may be, donate the robe to the monastery as soon as the feast is over." A novice asked Huiquan to give him a robe. Huiquan thought that the novice was one of his own disciples and said, "I plan to offer this robe to a holy monk. How can I give it to you?" Then he remembered the earlier instruction that he was not to choose to whom to give the robe and then donated it gladly.

Later, on another day he saw the same novice and asked him, "Is the robe I gave you the other day not big enough for you?" The novice said, "For some good reason I did not get the robe. I also had another engagement and could not take part in the feast." Huiquan then realized that the novice he had seen earlier was the phantom appearance of the holy being.

Much later the disciple passed away. No miraculous signs appeared at the time but a white light was seen at the four sides of the tomb. In Yuanxi 20 (443 C.E.) Huiquan was still alive. He resided in Jiuquan. (*Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu*, T.2106:433c28–434a13.)

429b

(Note: The above stories are from the *Mingxiang ji*.)

## Qi Dynasty

Shi Huiming was at Mount Chicheng in Shifeng. His surname was Kang and he was from Kangju (Samarkand). His ancestors had fled from there and settled in eastern Wu. He stayed in a cave in Mount Chicheng, where he practiced meditation and recitation, [vowing to become like] a dried-up piece of wood when his life came to end. Later, while in meditation, he saw a female deity who called herself “Old Woman” and said that she would guard him at all times. At one time white monkeys, white deer, white snakes, and white tigers all played before the steps [in front of the cave], acting as if they were tame, rolling around on the ground. People were not afraid of them. The Qi dynasty Prince Wenxuan of Jingling heard of Huiming and paid respect. Three times he sent messengers to extend an invitation, so Huiming left the mountain for a short while and came to the capital city. Wenxuan respectfully treated him with the rites for a teacher. After a while Huiming took his leave and returned to the mountain. [The prince] earnestly urged him to stay but the [monk] did not consent. So provisions were offered to send back with the monk. [Huiming] died in the mountains toward the end of the Jianwu period (494–498 C.E.). (*Gaoseng zhuan*, T.2059:400b4–15).

If we look on the shores of the ocean and in the mountains in China for the monasteries, springs, rocks, and caves where people of the Way engaged in spiritual cultivation and dwelled in holy temples, there would be numerous examples. We can describe only several cases for the record. Others are not mentioned because it is impossible to give an exhaustive account.

In the past, at the beginning of the Taiyuan period of the Jin dynasty (376–396 C.E.), the monk Zhu Tanyou lived in Dunhuang. He begged for almsfood, sat in meditation, and was strong in his determination and diligent in practice. When he traveled to Mount Chicheng in the Shan district in Kuaiji, a group of tigers came to him and Tanyou preached the Dharma to them. When one tiger fell asleep, he took his staff and hit it on the head. A snake encircled him tenfold yet he showed no fear. The mountain deity offered its residence to him, turning it into a temple.

It is also said that Tanyou went to Mount Chicheng to sit in meditation. This mountain was part of the same mountain range as Mount Tiantai, with its waterfall, and the Siming Mountains. According to local elders, there was

a holy monastery on Mount Tiantai and Tanyou set out to look for it. There was a stone bridge over a valley, slippery with green moss and difficult to cross; a rock had been placed on it, blocking the road. It was impossible to get through. Tanyou spent the night in front of the bridge and heard the voice of someone walking about, chanting. He underwent purification and was eager to proceed. Suddenly he saw the rock that had blocked the crossing over the valley had been moved. Tanyou could then cross the bridge and was shown a monastery [on the other side of the valley]. Supernatural monks burned incense there. After the midday meal, the monk told him to come back after ten years had passed (ref. *Gaoseng zhuan*, T.2059:395c27–396b16).

429c Yuantong of Lower Dazhuangyan Monastery in Ye encountered a supernatural monk who was attending a lecture during the summer retreat. At the end of the retreat, and on the last day (*pravāraṇa*) the monk took his leave, saying that he resided at Zhulin (“Bamboo Forest”) Monastery. He earnestly urged Yuantong to come there. Yuantong asked how to get there in detail, and a year later he traveled there. On the eastern side of the mountain, situated northwest of Ye, the supernatural monk welcomed him. They saw the door of the monastery open, revealing beautiful buildings. Tall trees rose high up into the sky. Yuantong stayed overnight, visiting everywhere in the monastery. He found it perfect and thought of staying there for the rest of his life. The supernatural monk asked the abbot but he could not get his permission. Yuantong took the same route to return home. After traveling three *li* he looked back but he could not see the monastery. Later, others went there but they could not locate the monastery. (*Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T.2060:647c22–649a15.)

Recently (in the Tang period), there was a monk called Daoqin in Dengzhou. There was a rocky mountain north of the city. [This monk] went there and saw everything on the mountain. It was indeed a residential monastery, fully equipped with everything necessary, yet he did not see any people there. After coming down, he asked about the right way to return but could not find it. There are cave chambers at rest spots along the way that one can visit instead.

At Holding Belly Rock on Jieshan, southeast of Fenzhou, monks who live on the mountain repeatedly saw a monk flying in the sky, going back and forth.

There are also cliff caves south of Liangzhou, which were constructed by Juqu Mensun. The inscription remains. Holy monks lived there, constantly

engaged in walking practice. When people came they stopped, and after the visitors left they resumed walking. There are visible footprints still on the side of the road but the inhabitants of the monastery are nowhere to be seen.

([Compiler's] Comment: The *Mingseng zhuan*, in thirty fascicles, the *Liang gaoseng zhuan*, in fifteen fascicles, the *Tang gaoseng zhuan*, in forty fascicles, and historical records by many authors [preserve] records of ordinary or holy monks of great virtue, numbering over one thousand. Their merits are of diverse kinds. Both monastics and lay Buddhist practitioners admire them. Some [records] appear scattered in different parts [of the present collection]. Some are very long and have not been included here. A limited number of examples are given to illustrate the virtues of these monks.)



## Fascicle 20

### Chapter Nine Worship (Paying Respect)

(This section has six parts:) (1) Introduction, (2) Efficacy, (3) Paying Respect Widely, (4) Names, (5) Comparative Explanation, (6) The Sitting Mat, and (7) The Ritual Manual for Ceremony.

#### 1. Introduction

Holy beings are compassionate and the Perfected Ones benefit others. They desire to lead the four kinds of living beings to the treasure place and transport sentient beings in the three realms [of desire, form, and formlessness] in the great carriage. Teachers and disciples follow different roads but share the same end. Monastics and laypeople travel on different paths but they arrive at the same goal. We establish [buddha] images to give expression to the truth, and teach with unchanging rules to regulate worldly practices. We use a finger to point at the moon and eternal norms to give expression to the Way. Yet in being attached to the illusions of one's own self and other's selves people fall into the stream of illusion. Floating along [in the current of] the working out of karma, they do not think of reforming themselves. In this way, caught in delusions over many world ages, people do not recognize the Three Honorable Ones. Ignorant and stubborn, they seldom meet the Ten Holy Beings. For this reason "life is like the flame of a candle in the wind," difficult to preserve. Our body is like the spark of a flintstone. How could it be long-lasting? As the five defilements invade everywhere and the four snakes (i.e., the four elements of earth, water, fire, and wind) constantly oppress, how could these people find peace living in this world of illusion? Therefore, the Great Holy One, out of pity and compassion, taught and guided them.

Of all essential deeds nothing is more important than the practice of repentance. Thus in the *Shizhu lun* (*Daśabhūmika-vibhāṣā*, T.1521:40c–49b) Nāgārjuna says:

430a Bodhisattvas, day and night are each divided into three periods. During each of these six periods of time worship the buddhas of the ten directions, repenting, requesting, delighting, and transferring merit. The bodhisattva will then reach the stage of nonretrogression (*avaivartika*). This practice quickly produces the result of nonretrogression. Sentient beings meditate on Good Virtue Buddha of the eastern direction, or on [any of] the buddhas of the ten directions. Thanks to the power of the Buddha's original vow, if a sentient being had previously planted good roots in a buddha's place, [when] he or she hears the name of that buddha [in this life] they are able to accept him in faith. They then turn to seek nonretrogressive wisdom.

If even ignorant ones, used to hearing evil voices, now suddenly hear [the teaching] and call the Buddha's name, they are filled with delight. Their sins are destroyed and merits are produced. Therefore a sutra says, "If you worship this buddha you remove the grave sins [accumulated] in one hundred myriad previous births and deaths." It is also said, "You remove the grave sins [accumulated] in births and deaths over a thousand world ages." If you do not follow these steps of practice and instead activate worldly thoughts, then you pay for the sins you have committed by suffering over many world ages.

Upon hearing the Buddha's name we all dance with joy, [yet we ask,] "Because of what sins are we unable to see the true [physical] appearance [of the Buddha]?" We shed streams of tears and singlemindedly join the palms [of our hands], [saying,] "Because of what good deeds am I able to hear the Buddha's name?" We are delighted and worship the Buddha with increasing intensity. We look up at the holy face [of a buddha image] and yearn for him endlessly. Because of these sorrowful and joyful reactions our faith deepens, day by day. Through such emotional communication our minds become free of entanglements and we pay respect to and take refuge [in the Buddha].

As for monastics and laypeople today, whenever they hear and chant the name of the Buddha, even as they perform the rite with their bodies their minds remain attached to external objects. Even if they stumble in the middle [of the ritual performance] they show no sign of regret. Such a shameful lack of faith is demonstrated by this! Sometimes monastics and lay followers worship in private. [At points in the rite when one is supposed to] rise or lower oneself, they are lazy both in body and mind and they fail to express alarm or fear [about these lapses in their practice]. The sin of disrespect

increases. Sometimes monastics and laypeople worship together in a congregation. A thousand monastics and ten thousand laypeople loudly chant together. The congregation moves quickly through the rite of worship but the monks and laypeople fail to physically bow down, and mentally they lack respectful thought. This is just as during roll call the presence of some soldiers is recorded even when they are not there. People go up and down like a pestle but the effort does not produce any benefit. Such sloppy practices should not escape blame. Practitioners seek fame and wealth yet sincerity and respect are missing. Through faith one enters the path, which produces wisdom. If faith is lacking, there is nothing on which to rely upon entering the path. Below I list five points, which are all based on the holy teaching. They demonstrate the difference between what is authentic and what is false.

I request that you remove delusions and turn to truth so that you may attain the final goal.

## 2. Efficacy

I look up [in gratitude] and think of the compassion of the Great Enlightened One, the Ultimate Sage. Due to the [karmic] help from previous lives and good fortune, this mysterious cosmic response occurs: we are able to hear the name [of the Buddha] and worship him, and our meritorious karma quickly begins [to produce results]. The mind undergoes transformation and the marvelous outcome is achieved in the course of a vastly long period. The sound of [chanting the names of] the fifty-three buddhas gathers strength before the fine dust [of desire]. The light of the three thousand Perfected Ones is bright behind the sands of the Ganges River. The accomplishments of the twenty-five buddhas bring rescue from suffering. A donation of the seven jewels of this *sahā* world does not measure up to the benefits of one act of worship. The cause of [worshiping by joining one's] palms appears to work slowly, yet the reward of the king of trees (i.e., the *bodhi* tree) steadily arrives. Therefore, we know that worshiping and praising [the Buddha] are not empty practices. Worshiping with humble sincerity mysteriously brings about benefits.

430b

The *Zhidu lun* (ref. T.1509:275c3–6, 275c24–276a2) says:

A bodhisattva who has not realized the truth of the Dharma keeps away from the Buddha Dharma, destroys good karmic roots, and in the midst

of afflictions cannot save even themselves. How could they save others? Therefore, you should not keep away from the buddhas, just as a baby should not be separated from its mother, or as one should not lack food when traveling on the road, or as one should not lack a cool wind in the heat, or as one should not lack a warming fire in cold weather, or as one should not lack a solid boat when crossing water, or as one should not lack a good physician when ill. The reason the bodhisattva should never be separated from the Buddha is that one's parents and friends, or the gods cannot help us cross over the ocean of suffering. Only the Buddha helps us escape from suffering. For this reason, always be concerned not to become separated from the Buddha.

The *Yaowang yaoshang jing* (T.1161:664a5–12, 17–29) says:

Śākyamuni Buddha said to the assembly, “An incalculable number of world ages ago, in the period of the decline of the Dharma of Miaoguang Buddha, I renounced the householder's life and studied the path. I heard the names of the fifty-three buddhas, and after hearing them I joined my palms and experienced joy. I also taught others to hear and uphold the names. After hearing the names, the others in turn taught still others, to the point that the worshipers numbered three thousand. These three thousand individuals all pronounced the buddhas' names, singlemindedly worshiped them, and due to the power of the merit acquired in this way they overcame the sins acquired through births and deaths in innumerable world ages. The first thousand of them, from Huaguang Buddha through Viśubhabhū Buddha, achieved buddhahood during the [past] world age of adornment. These are the one thousand past buddhas. The one thousand buddhas of the present world age [of the wise] begin with Krakucchanda and end with Ruci Buddha. They achieve buddhahood one by one during the world age of the wise. The one thousand buddhas of the future begin with Riguan Buddha and end with Xumixiang Buddha. They will achieve buddhahood in the [future] world ages of the lunar stations.

“The present buddhas in the ten directions, such as Shande Tathāgata, also heard the names of these fifty-three buddhas and thus achieved buddhahood in their respective worlds in the ten directions. If men and women of good families as well as all other sentient beings hear the names of

these fifty-three buddhas, they will avoid falling into inferior realms of birth for a hundred thousand myriads of innumerable world ages. Furthermore, those who hear these names of the fifty-three buddhas will meet the buddhas of the ten directions in the places where they are born. People sincerely worshipping the names of the fifty-three buddhas will become purified of [all their sins] except for the four grave sins, the five offenses, and the sin of reviling Mahayana sutras. This is due to the original vows of these buddhas. From moment to moment these sins are removed, except for those listed above. (Note: The names of the three thousand buddhas appear in the *Zhufo jijie jing* [ref. T. 446, T. 447, T. 448]. The buddhas' names, clan affiliations, and lands are listed in the *Xianjie jing* [T. 447]. Among the one thousand buddhas [of the world age of the wise] Śākyamuni is the fourth to achieve buddhahood.)

430c

The *Jueding pini jing* (T.325:38c17–39b18) says, “If a person sincerely worships the thirty-five buddhas, the merit that he or she acquires will be incalculable and infinite.”

The *Foming jing* (T.440:158c16–161c5) says:

If men and women of good families hear these names of the twenty-five buddhas and they sincerely accept, recite, and respectfully worship them, they will escape the suffering of the three inferior realms of hell, hungry ghosts, and animals. They will become free of anger and ignorance and destroy the grave sins they committed over one hundred world ages. They will always be reborn in the pure lands of the buddhas in the ten directions. Even if someone were to fill the universe with the seven jewels and used these jewels to offer donations throughout a lifetime of a hundred years, the merit acquired by this would not even reach the one-thousandth of the merit of receiving and worshipping the names of the twenty-five buddhas. These merits will be beyond calculation or comparison through suitable metaphors. Why is this? Sentient beings with few good karmic roots are unable to hear the names of these buddhas. If sentient beings hear the names of these buddhas, then [this indicates that] they had planted good karmic roots, not just in one or ten buddha lands but in one hundred thousand myriads of buddha lands. Only then are they able to hear the names of these buddhas. These people attain buddhahood before a buddha

after forty-eight world ages. People who do not believe in the merit of the names of these twenty-five buddhas will be reborn in Avīci Hell and spend the entirety of one hundred world ages there.

Śāriputra, when monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen repent their sins, they should bathe, put on fresh clothes, and clean their chambers; set up a high seat and place an image; hang twenty-five banners; offer various flowers and incense; and recite the names of the twenty-five buddhas. For a period of twenty-five days, through the six periods of practice throughout the day and night, they should repent. This will remove such sins as the four and eight grave offenses. This also applies to *śikṣamānās*, novice monks and nuns.

The *Wenshushili wen jing* (T.468:494b8–16) gives verses of praise for the Buddha:

I worship all the buddhas, unparalleled charioteer,  
The true Dharma body, one *zhang* and six *chi* in height.  
I also worship the Buddha's stupa  
At the place of his birth, where he attained the Way,  
Turned the Dharma wheel, and entered nirvana,  
The places where he walked, stood, sat, and lay down.  
At all these places I worship.  
The buddhas are beyond our understanding,  
The marvelous Dharmas are also thus.  
Having faith [in them] we receive the fruit—  
This too is beyond our understanding.  
Those who with these verses  
Praise the tathāgatas,  
During a period of a thousand myriads of world ages,  
Will not descend to evil realms of rebirth.

431a

The *Pusa benxing jing* (ref. T.155:122a1–8) says:

If an incalculable number of myriads of people were to become *pratyekabuddhas*, and if someone was to offer these *pratyekabuddhas* the four kinds of [requisites] for a hundred years, the merit [attained by that person] would be very great, yet it would not equal the infinite amount of merit

one acquires by reciting a single four-phrase verse (*gāthā*) of praise to the Tathāgata.

The *Shangsheng jing* (T.1488:1052a21–23) says:

To make the offering to the Tathāgata of [all the] treasures of the four realms under heaven and to praise the Tathāgata sincerely—there is no difference between the merits of these two.

The *Dabei jing* (T.380:958b3–5) says, “The merits acquired by reciting the Buddha’s name even once [enables one] to enter nirvana. This merit is inexhaustible.”

[Compiler’s] Comment: We now know that in the holy teaching [of buddhas] the merits [acquired by] worshiping the Buddha are beyond understanding. Therefore, practitioners should always be careful and should not fail. The fear is that death (“impermanence”) comes suddenly. [At that time] it is not possible to perform the rite of worshiping the Buddha. A mouse driven into a corner has nowhere to which to escape. For this reason, according to a scripture (ref. *Da zhuangyan lun*, T.201:270b17–27) the World-honored One taught in verse:

Life is like a lamp exposed to wind;  
 We do not know when it will go out;  
 Whether today or tomorrow,  
 Death quickly arrives when we are not aware.  
 [After death,] in darkness, following the effects of our karma;  
 We do not know in what realm we will be reborn.

The *Shangsheng jing* (T.452:420b28–c2; T.453:420a29–b4, b6–9, 17–20) says:

One who worships Maitreya Buddha is cleared of the sins [accumulated over] a hundred myriad lives and in a future birth will be able to see the Buddha under the dragonflower tree.”

Also:

[The Buddha said,] “After my extinction if a member of the fourfold community or one of the eight kinds of supernatural beings hears my name

and pays respect, when that person's life comes to the end they will be reborn in Tuṣita Heaven.

“If men and women who have violated precepts and committed many evil deeds hear the name of this bodhisattva of great compassion, and they throw their bodies to the ground to worship and sincerely repent, all their sins will quickly be cleansed.

“If someone takes refuge in Maitreya Bodhisattva, you should know that they will attain the stage of nonretrogression. When Maitreya achieves buddhahood, that person will see the light of [that] buddha and will receive the prediction of their future attainment of buddhahood.”

The *Zengyi ahan jing* (T.125:674a24–27) says:

The Buddha has five merits: first, attractiveness (Note: When [others] see the marks [of the Buddha] they look up to him.); second, possessing a good voice (Note: When [others] see the Buddha they spontaneously say three times, “*Namas, Tathāgata, Arhat, Enlightened One.*”); third, having material wealth (Note: Because [others] worship by offering flowers, incense, and lamps, according to their ability); fourth, having been born in a noble setting (Note: When [others] see him, their minds are free of defilement and they [spontaneously] kneel on their right knees and with joined palms worship him.); fifth, [he confers on others] rebirth in heaven. (Note: The merit of meditating on the Buddha accords with the Dharma.)

The *Jingang sanmei jing* (T.644:699a18–26) says:

431b If someone hears the Buddha's superior wisdom even briefly, and they sincerely find joy in it and do not revile it, that person will not fall into inferior realms of rebirth for as long as a hundred thousand world ages, and at the place of rebirth they will meet the Buddha. The merit [acquired by] meditating on the Buddha's Dharma body is unlimited.

The *Puxianguan jing* (T.277:393c5–10) says:

If one worships the buddhas of the ten directions in the six periods of worship throughout the day and night, recites Mahayana sutras, and meditates on the first teaching on the profound Dharma of emptiness, in as

brief a moment as it takes to snap one's fingers, all of their sins, acquired through lives and deaths of as many world ages as there are grains of sand in one hundred myriad *nayutas* of Ganges Rivers, will be removed. Those who practice like this are true sons [and daughters] of the Buddha. They are born from the Buddha, and take the buddhas and bodhisattvas of the ten directions as their preceptor (*upādhyāya*). They are called those who are fully ordained in the bodhisattva precepts. They do not require the formal *karman* ritual [of monastic ordination]. Their ordination is achieved spontaneously, and [those ordained in this way] are to receive offerings from all people and gods.

The *Niepan jing* (*Nirvana Sutra*, T.374:491a22–23, b5–8; T.375:734b11–12, 23–26) says:

If a person offers to the Buddha and Dharma one piece of incense or a lamp, or presents one flower, then that person will be reborn in the Kingdom of the Immovable. If a person guards property that belongs to the Buddha or the sangha, or sweeps and decorates the ground around a buddha image or a monastery, or even a buddha image or a stupa [as small as] a thumb, and they experience joy [in doing so], that person will also be reborn in the Kingdom of the Immovable.

This [Kingdom of the Immovable] is a pure land of the Buddha, always adorned and never affected by the three calamities.

### 3. Paying Respect Widely

The Dharma body is without form and yet manifests itself [in form everywhere] throughout the ten directions, namely, the four cardinal directions, the four secondary directions (between each of the four cardinal directions), and above and below. The teachings of worldly Confucians all focus on this world (i.e., “continent”), but there are other continents outside of this world. These worlds are never discussed in Confucian sources, either in the past or at present. Buddhist scriptures exhaustively discuss all of the worlds without limit, vertically and horizontally, covering all foreign worlds. Our *sahā* world [mentioned] in the Buddhist teaching is a world-system that contains ten thousand myriads of suns and moons and is surrounded on all four sides.

This is called a buddha land and it is the realm over which Śākyamuni Tathāgata rules.

The *Huayan jing* says:

The land over which Vairocana Buddha's reward body rules is even greater than this in number. It covers all the worlds in the ten directions, and [its scope is] beyond what ordinary beings can comprehend.

The *Fanwang jing* (T.1484:1003c29–1004a3) says:

I, Vairocana

Am about to sit upon the lotus flower seat.

Above the one thousand flowers surrounding it,

Again appear one thousand Śākyamuni Buddhas.

Each flower [contains] a hundred myriads of kingdoms,

In each kingdom, one Śākyamuni

Sits under a *bodhi* tree,

All simultaneously attaining buddhahood.

The scripture speaks of one thousand flowers and one thousand buddhas. Here one [flower] petal is counted as one flower. So, one flower has a thousand petals, [representing] the one thousand buddhas who appear in the world.

The *Puxianguan jing* (T.277:392c16–17) says:

The land in which Vairocana Tathāgata dwells pervades everywhere. [Yet] the [specific] place in which the Buddha dwells is called Eternal Light of Quietude.

This refers to the dwelling of no dwelling, to which all look up and worship with an empty mind. If we speak in terms of ultimate truth, however, there is no [specific and limited] place of dwelling. Thus, the buddha tathāgatas in an infinite number of worlds in the ten directions never cease to teach.

431c Throughout the past, present, and future [the buddhas] teach that [all dharmas] come into being and go out of being. In terms of [ultimate] reality, the holy teaching pervades everything and, in effect, it is identical to the Dharma realm [itself]. It is not possible to limit the discussion to one specific area or to [any single point] in the three periods of time (i.e., past, present, and future).

Now we speak in terms of the present manifestation of the one life of Śākyamuni. So, provisionally, [we speak of] his conception and the eight stages of his life that culminated in enlightenment. For the benefit of those of limited capacity, the Buddha taught the great teaching in gradual stages. Even his parents, relatives, and other worldly nobles worshiped the Tathāgata. How then could inferior beings [like us] fail to worship him?

The *Foshuo shierming shenzhou chuzhang miezui jing* (T.443:318a20–c28) says:

At that time the World-honored One said to Maitreya Bodhisattva, “Maitreya, to the east of this buddha realm [there are] ten times an incomprehensible number of buddha lands, as many as a hundred myriads of dust particles. Beyond these buddha lands is the buddha land called World of the Lord of Liberation. In that world is a buddha called King of the Dharma Realm of Unobstructed Release from Life, [Equal to] Empty Space, Whose Pure Merits are as Numerous as Minute Particles of Dust, Whose Eyes are Handsome, a Feature of True Merit, Emitting the Flower of Light, of the *Padma* Lotus Flower’s Lapis Lazuli Light, to Whom Offering is Made with Fragrance of the Essence of Jewels, Fragrances of Highest Quality, and Who is Adorned Variously, with the Hair Knot on the Crown of the Head Emitting the Unlimited Light of the Sun and Moon, Adorned with the Power of Vows, and Adorned with [Miraculous] Transformations Tathāgata.

“If a man or a woman of a good family commits [one of] the four grave offenses or the five crimes, or he or she has reviled the Three Jewels or committed one of the *pārājika* [offense]s, that person’s sin would be serious. Suppose the ground of this Jambudvīpa world is turned into minute dust particles, and each dust particle [is counted as a unit of time]—[all these units together] would form one world age. [Even if] that person has sins [accumulated] through several world ages, if he or she says the name of this buddha a single time or worships the Buddha even once, all their sins will be removed. If a person upholds, recites, and recalls without forgetting [the scripture], that person’s merit would be beyond our comprehension.

“In the world of that buddha is a bodhisattva called King Incomparably Free of Obstructions. The Buddha confers on that bodhisattva the prediction of attaining buddhahood in the future. He will become a buddha called

King with the *Ūrṇā* Flame of the Sun and Moonlight, [Sitting on] the Jeweled Lotus Flower [Seat], with a Body as Firm as *Vajra*, Who is Like Vairocana Illumining with Unobstructed Eyes the Ten Directions and Shedding Light on All Buddha Lands Tathāgata.

“To the east is the buddha whose name is Pure Light Adorning All Tathāgata.

“To the south is the buddha whose name is Eloquent Jewel Necklace of Thought Tathāgata.

“To the west is the buddha whose name is King Form of the Pure Moon [Tathāgata].

“To the north is the buddha whose name is Flower Decoration Turned into Light Tathāgata.

432a “To the southeast is the buddha whose name is One Who Makes Lamps Tathāgata.

“To the southwest is the buddha whose name is Form Superior to Jewels Tathāgata.

“To the northwest is the buddha whose name is Contemplation of Fearlessness Tathāgata.

“To the northeast is the buddha whose name is Fearless and Unafraid, Completely Calm Tathāgata.

“In the direction below is the buddha whose name is Root of Lion’s Resolve Tathāgata.

“In the direction above is the buddha whose name is One Who Resembles the Powerful King of Golden Light Tathāgata.”

At that time the Buddha said to Maitreya, “When men and women of good families, of correct faith, call the names of these twelve buddhas, they should repent all sins for ten days and take delight in the merit possessed by all sentient beings. They should request all the buddhas to remain in the world forever, and dedicate [the merit of] all good deeds to the Dharma realm. Then all sins will be immediately destroyed and all karmic obstructions will be purified. They will immediately attain full success [in what they seek] and [be able to] adorn all buddha lands. They will have fearlessness. They will have the bodily marks [of the Buddha]. They will be surrounded by bodhisattvas as attendants. They will have infinite [kinds

of] *samādhis*. They will freely adorn the buddha land, activate supreme wisdom, and receive delightful physical features.”

Then the Buddha said in verse:

If men of good families  
 Or women of good families,  
 Uphold the names of these buddhas,  
 In the series of lives in succeeding worlds  
 They will be beloved of others.  
 The power of light [emitted by these buddhas] will be great.  
 [These practitioners] will be respected by others in the places  
 where they are born,  
 And they will later realize buddhahood.

The *Shijialuoyue liuxiangbai jing* (T.16:250c14–251c19) says:

While the Buddha was in this world there was a son of an elder whose name was Śīṅgāḷaka, who rose early, bathed, put on clothes, and worshiped four times facing each of the six directions. The Buddha came into Rājagṛha and saw this from a distance. The Buddha came to this man’s house and asked, “Why do you worship the six directions? On which teaching is this based?” Śīṅgāḷaka said, “My father taught me while he was alive. I do not know why I am supposed to worship in the six directions.”

The Buddha said, “The rite your father taught you is not bodily worship.” Śīṅgāḷaka kneeled and said, “Would the Buddha explain to me the meaning of these six practices?”

The Buddha said, “Listen to this. If an elder who is intelligent observes the four precepts and does not violate them, they will be loved by people in this life and later be reborn in heaven. [The four precepts are:] first, do not kill; second, do not steal; third, do not desire other people’s women; fourth, do not tell lies. If someone who is greedy, angry, and stupid fails to control himself with these four, such a person is called “moon’s darkness”—he is like a waning moon that is about to disappear: its light is very dim. If a person controls his evil intentions [through these precepts], he is like waxing moon that has just reappeared, the light of which begins to shine brightly. On the fifteenth day the moonlight is brightest.”

432b

The Buddha said, “Worshiping facing east is about how a child should serve his or her parents. There are five items: first, the child should think of their livelihood; second, the child should get up early [in the morning] and let the servants prepare food [for the parents]; third, one should not increase their parents’ distress; fourth, the child should think of the gravity of their debt to their parents; fifth, when the parents are ill the child should be concerned and seek a physician’s help. There are also five items regarding the way parents view their child. First, the parent should constantly think of keeping the child away from evil and turning toward the good. Second, the parent should teach the child arithmetic and writing. Third, the parent should teach the child to observe [the teachings of] the sutras and the precepts. Fourth, the parent should arrange for a son to have a wife. Fifth, the parent should give the child everything that belongs to the household.

“Worshiping facing south is about how a student should serve his or her teacher. There are five items. First, the student should pay respect to and praise the teacher. Second, the student should think of their debt to the teacher. Third, the student should follow what the teacher has taught. Fourth, the student should think of the teacher tirelessly. Fifth, the student should follow the teacher [wherever he goes] and praise him. In teaching the student the teacher should be mindful of five things. First, the teacher should work so that the student learns quickly and does not forget [what is taught]. Second, the teacher should [cause] the student to be superior to other people’s students. Third, the teacher should not let the student forget what they have learned. Fourth, the teacher should explain fully whatever the student has doubts about and is difficult to understand. Fifth, the teacher should let the student’s wisdom be superior to the teacher’s.

“Worshiping facing west is about how a wife should serve her husband. There are five items. First, when the husband returns home from outside, the wife should rise and welcome him. Second, when the husband is out and away from home, the wife should cook and clean and wait for him. Third, the wife should not entertain any licentious thoughts outside the home. If the husband yells at her she should not respond angrily. Fourth, the wife should always follow her husband’s instruction. She should not hide any of her possessions from him. Fifth, when the husband goes to

sleep the wife should cover him and then lie down herself. There are also five items regarding how a husband should view his wife. First, the husband should inform the wife respectfully when he is going out and when he will return, Second, the husband should provide the wife with food and clothing as needed. Third, the husband should give the wife gold, silver, pearl, and jade [ornaments]. Fourth, the husband should entrust everything in the household to the wife. Fifth, the husband should not keep mistresses outside the household.

“Worshiping facing north is about how one should treat their relatives and friends. There are five items. First, if one sees any relative or friend committing an evil deed, he should lead that person to a secluded spot and reprimand him in order to make him stop. Second, if someone encounters even a minor danger, one should quickly come to their aid and offer rescue and protection. Third, one should never tell others what another person said in confidence. Fourth, one should treat others with respect, and vice-versa. Fifth, one should share a portion of whatever one cherishes with their friends and relatives.

“Worshiping facing the ground (i.e, the lower direction, the nadir) is about how a master should treat his male and female servants. There are five items. First, the master should provide food and clothing at appropriate times. Second, when a servant becomes ill the master should call a physician to provide treatment. Third, the master should not wrongly strike or spit at the servant. Fourth, the master should not confiscate their servants’ private property. Fifth, when the master gives things to his servants, he should give to all equally. There are also five items regarding how male and female servants should serve their master. First, the servant should rise early [in the morning], not waiting for the master to call him. Second, whatever task the servant does he or she should do it carefully. Third, the servant should value the master’s property; a servant should not give away their master’s property to someone who begs for it. Fourth, the servant should rise and greet their master whenever he goes out or returns home. Fifth, the servant should praise the master’s good deeds and not mention his evil deeds.

432c

“Worshiping facing the sky (i.e., the upward direction, the zenith) is about how one should serve a monk. There are five items. First, one should

face the monk with good intentions. Second, one should choose good words when speaking to the monk. Third, one should worship the monk with bodily gestures [of respect and veneration]. Fourth, one should think of the monk with affection. Fifth, one should view the monk as a hero among humans. One should respectfully offer services to the monk and question him regarding the teaching of going beyond the world. There are also six items regarding how a monk should treat ordinary people. First, the monk should teach them to offer donations [to the monastic community] (*dāna*), and not to be stingy. Second, the monk should teach them to observe the lay precepts (*śīla*) and not violate them. Third, the monk should teach them the practice of patience (*kṣānti*), and warn them not to become angry. Fourth, the monk should teach them to make vigorous effort (*vīrya*) [in practicing the path]; they should not be lazy [in practice]. Fifth, the monk should teach them singlemindedness (i.e., meditation, *dhyāna*), and how not to become distracted [in practice]. Sixth, the monk should teach them wisdom (*prajñā*), instructing them so that they do not remain ignorant.

“It is because of these [six] practices (*pāramitās*) that your father, while alive in this world, taught you to worship the six directions. Why worry about not being rich?”

Hearing this, Śiṅgāḷaka immediately accepted the five precepts, paid respect [to the Buddha], and departed.

#### 4. Names

The Way and the world are opposed. Name and reality diverge [from each other]. Attainment consists in meeting the truth in mysterious darkness. Why is this so? Whereas in worldly [Confucian] discourse it is not permitted to spell out the [former] names of deceased ancestors, the Buddhist scriptures name the buddhas. If we praise and worship them we will obtain infinite merit. The buddhas and tathāgatas have great compassion and take pity on beings [in the world], letting their spirits descend to the world and giving priority to the task of bringing salvation. If someone sincerely looks up to the buddhas he or she will receive benefits without fail. Saying the name [of the Buddha] aloud (speech), meditating on the name (mind), and physical acts of worship (body)—if one worships in these three ways (i.e., body,

speech, and mind), the three poisons [of worldly existence] will be purified and cooled; one will gradually uproot oneself from this world and become free of its bondage. Praising these Great Virtuous Ones (the buddhas), we acquire merit. Those who follow the worldly stream are different; they spend their whole lives hiding and shunning these names. How can one reach distant ancestors and later generations if we hide and shun their names? [The obscurity of Confucius' mother] Zhengzai illustrates this point.

In treatises different buddhas are [provisionally] named and assigned different categories. Each appears to have their own distinctive capacity. Let me illustrate briefly with the names of the buddhas. The buddha called Śākya[muni] in the West[ern Region] (India) is called Nengren (“Capable of Humaneness”) here (China), but how could any one buddha not be capable of humaneness? The buddha called Amitābha in the western direction is called Wuliangshou (“Infinite Life”) here, but how could any buddha not have a long life span? Similarly, regarding Shangde (“Good Virtue”) [Buddha] of the eastern direction and Guangzhongde (“Broad and Many Virtues”) [Buddha] in the direction below, how could any buddha not possess good virtue or have broad and many virtues? The same entity is named differently. In terms of their merit, power, and usefulness they are all the same. If we can only conceive in our mind the name of a single buddha, see with our eyes his golden appearance, and worship him with faith, we will acquire an infinite amount of merit.

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A verse praising the Buddha in the *Shizhu piposha lun* (T.1521:42a16–19) says:

A person who hears the names  
 And pronounces these names of the buddhas  
 Will immediately attain infinite merit—  
 This the Buddha explained to Ratnacandra.  
 As I worship these buddhas,  
 They now appear in the ten directions.  
 Those who pronounce their names  
 Immediately attain the stage of nonretrogression.

[Compiler's] Comment: “Establish the practice of ‘reverently (*gong*) paying respect (*jing*) to all (*yi*)’”: *yi* means reaching universally. *Qie* means beyond all limits. *Gong* means obediently looking up. *Jing* means having no other

thought in mind. If we do not chant these characters, our mind scatters in different directions. So, as we control our emotions and reverently pay respect, [the object of] the correct meditation actually appears before us.

“Respectfully worship the eternal (*changzhu*) Three Jewels”: the *Nirvana Sutra* says that if someone hears the two-character phrase *changzhu*, that person will never fall into the three evil realms of rebirth (the realms of hell, animals, and hungry ghosts) through successive births. The Dharma body [of the Buddha] is fixed and unchanging, so it is eternal (*chang*). The response body is continuous and unbroken, so it is eternal. The functioning of the transformation body is ceaseless, so it is unchanging. Furthermore, the buddha body is one in substance, and yet we speak of three [bodies] in different contexts.

Therefore, Śākyamuni says, “This body of mine is no other than the Dharma body.” As the [physical] basis for upholding this Dharma body, we make a sacred image out of wood and clay. If we pay respect and worship it we will obtain infinite merit. If we make light of it and abuse it, we will have committed sins and will receive punishment. After making the image, we offer incense and flowers and mentally perform worship of the Buddha everywhere. Whether the Buddha appears or not, all sentient beings must in equal measure make offerings of incense, flowers, clothing, food and drink, music, and so on. They must never allow these offerings to be stopped. In the *Huayan jing* bodhisattvas perform offerings; as one [physically] sees a large mountain, a large cloud, a large flower, or a large fire, so one visualizes a fragrant mountain, a fragrant cloud, water of eight superior qualities, seven pure and beautiful flowers. As one mentally forms the thought everything is realized. Similarly, for verdant forests and fruit trees, one practices accordingly.

Worshipping the Buddha: In accordance with proper rituals, worship the buddhas of the ten directions, the twenty-five buddhas, the thirty-five buddhas, the fifty-three buddhas, the one thousand buddhas of the world age of the wise, the ten thousand and five thousand buddhas, and so on. The practice of reciting their names and the mental discipline has been described above.

“Repentance”: For all acts of repentance, whether of grave or minor sins, as one repents or teaches others to repent, take delight in seeing it performed.

433b The truth must be exposed and thus one repents former offenses—in distress, with regret and sorrow filling one’s eyes. If one fails to be instructed they

necessarily undergo long suffering and death. Details of the instruction appear in the chapter on repentance below.

Requesting the Buddha to teach: In utmost sincerity we present the request. The buddhas see sentient beings, not discriminating between the great and the lesser, and wish to fulfill their requests. [Accordingly,] they do not abandon their present life [to enter nirvana]. They vow to remain [in the world] for many world ages and bring salvation to sentient beings.

“Joy”: One gives rise to the feeling of joy when others acquire merit.

“Redirecting karmic merit”: This means dedicating all the merit one has acquired toward realization of the supreme path.

“Making the vow”: “Vow” incites practice and activates it. If one has made a vow but there is no action, then the vow is empty. If there is action but no vow, then the action is abandoned. (When there is a vow, the action is not abandoned.) Because there is an action the vow is not empty. When vow and action assist each other, the fruit of realization will not be empty (absent). Therefore, even in repenting a sin, one makes a vow or wish that for certain one will not be reborn in inferior realms.

These are the universal features [of worshiping the buddhas]. Beyond these it is necessary to take into consideration the circumstances in putting these teachings into practice.

## **5. Comparative Explanation**

[Compiler’s] Comment (ref. *Shimen guijing*, T.1896:862a22–c7): I describe here the appearances of ritual, which vary according to locality and time. We practice in accordance with the custom of the country, while maintaining a spirit of reverence (“paying respect”) as the foundation. Beginners do not understand this practice without studying it. So I explain it here in detail in order to make clear what they have not yet heard. Learned virtuous people naturally would not ask for this. However, the practice of paying respect in Central India differs from that in China. There people worship less and understand more. Here people worship more and understand less. There people show reverence by wearing robes that expose their shoulders and going bare-footed. Here people pay respect with their bodies covered by clothes and wearing shoes. The different appearances of monastics and laypeople [in

India] can be compared to the extraordinary show of magicians [in China]. One knows the ritual in detail but applies it in accordance with circumstances. In ceremonies at court we are most diligent in the three aspects, bodily, verbal, and mental, of ritual performance. When time is limited we abbreviate some of the actions [that involve] the four limbs. What matters is the core essence. Wisdom emerges without thinking. Expressing reverence and extreme sorrow—this is what is common between ritual practice as done in India and in China.

The *Chuyao jing* (T.212:733a8–10) says:

The ritual for laymen, the ritual for renunciants, the ritual for greater people of the Way, the ritual for lesser people of the Way—these [rituals] are the foundations of the practice in which good deeds lead to rebirths [in better realms]. Through such acts one is reborn in superior realms.

This passage clearly shows that faith and proper ritual are the beginning of the path. This teaching should not be hidden. I therefore offer a preface prescribing it.

433c Among secular [Chinese] writings the *Rites of Zhou* speak of nine categories of worship, or greeting (*bai*). This is from the section on the office of *tazhu* (“ritual specialist”). This is not a Buddhist teaching. Nonetheless, in ritual the noble practice comes out of worldly customs. The first is called *jishoubai* (“holding head greeting”), with which subjects greet their ruler. They bow their heads [close to] the ground for a short while. The second is called *dunshoubai* (“hitting-head greeting”), with which princes that have gathered to make peace with their enemies greet each other. They bow their heads but do not let them touch the ground. The third is called *kongshoubai* (“empty greeting”), with which the ruler responds to his subjects. He bows his head to the level of his hands [held together in front]. This is called hand worship. The fourth is called *zhendongbai* (“greeting by hitting one’s two hands together”), in which grave respect is expressed in trembling movements. The fifth is called *jibai* (“auspicious greeting”), in which one greets and then bows the forehead [close to] the ground (*jisang*). This applies to the cases below *qishuai* (“sewn-linen mourning robe”) and *buzhang* (“without a cane”). It is called *ji* (“auspicious”) but it was the *xiongbai* (“inauspicious worship”) of [the preceding] Yin dynasty. Under the Zhou dynasty, because of its similarity with the practice of *dunshou*, [described above,] which is auspicious,

it is called *ji* (“auspicious”). One first performs *jishoubai* [as described above], and then *jisang*. *Sang* means “forehead.” If the forehead touches the ground then one has deviated from the proper rite. The sixth is called *xiongbai* (“inauspicious worship”). One first performs *jisang* and then *dunshou*. This is the worship of those engaged in the three-year mourning period. The seventh is called *qibai* (“singular greeting”). One bends one’s knees. It is today’s *yabai* (“elegant greeting”). According to one theory, this is the greeting the ruler gives once when he answers a subject. The eighth is called *baobai* (“return greeting”). *Bao* means “to return.” Returning a greeting means greeting twice. It is also said that *baobai* is the greeting used by today’s imperial messengers. They greet twice, both the deity and his medium. The ninth is called *subai* (“respectful greeting”). One only looks down at one’s own hands. It is called *yi* today. It is also a women’s greeting. *Subai* may be repeated up to three times. *Kongshoubai* and *qibai* are performed only once. Others may be repeated twice. The above is taken from the scriptural accounts of worldly rites. Zheng Kangcheng (Zheng Xuan) explained them in this way, on the basis of the status [of the people involved].

In the Buddhist teaching the rite of *jing* (“paying respect”) is given first. There are two broad categories, namely body and mind. The Buddha’s teaching considers the mind as fundamental and the body as secondary. Therefore, when [the Buddha returned from heaven, having given instruction to his mother,] Subhūti sat in a quiet room and the Tathāgata praised him, saying that Subhūti worshiped by seeing the Dharma body. When the nun Uṭpalavarṇā came to the jeweled staircase [where the Buddha had returned] earlier, the Tathāgata criticized her as worshiping the transformation body. For this reason we learn that by meditating in a quiet place we walk the path in every moment of thought. Observing forms and projecting appearances as in a mirror, changing again and again, belongs to the worldly. Unable to transcend the distinction between subject and object, which appear simultaneously in seeing, the wrong view of the self appears. This obstructs the Way.

Therefore, the Buddha made a distinction between bodily and mental acts of worship. One should identify forms as conditioned arising from emptiness and contemplate the realm of objects as the creation of mind, which arises chaotically and always pollutes the fundamental purity [of the mind]. In our worldly knowing and consciousness deluded thoughts remain impure.

When [such] thoughts are shown to be empty, these conditioned thoughts cease. Wherever one may reside now, exert utmost effort in controlling [the mind]. In this way, deluded thought may be stopped. Then from moment to moment the thought that arises gradually becomes pure spontaneously. One should always practice two kinds of contemplation [simultaneously], and never practice one of them alone. These are as follows: in knowing that [when we see] objects there is [in fact] no realm of objects [as the object]—this constitutes gradually departing from worldly [truth]; in knowing that when we have consciousness there is [in fact] no mind [as the subject of consciousness]—this constitutes gradually turning toward absolute [truth]. If one cultivates in this way for a long time, everything will become clear and all that one practices [to achieve] over three *asaṃkhyeya kalpas* (an innumerable number of world ages) will be accomplished.

The *Daci jing* (*Dabei jing*, T.380:957b6–9, 957b12–c17) says:

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The Buddha said to Ānanda, “Salutation to the Buddha” (*nanwu fo*; Skt. *namo ’stu buddhāya*) is the vocal sound that is definitively [connected] to the names of the buddhas. For this reason we recite “Salutation to the Buddhas.” In the past there was a great merchant [who was traveling on a boat]. When a massive *makara* fish was about to swallow a merchant’s boat he recited the salutation to the Buddha’s name and they all escaped the calamity. When the fish heard the Buddha’s name it entertained good thoughts and gave up its body. In a later rebirth the *makara* fish renounced the householder’s life and become a follower of the Buddhist path. If a person hears the Buddha’s name, listens to his preaching of the true Dharma, and personally plants good karmic roots at the Buddha’s place, he or she will necessarily receive benefits.

The *Shisong lü* (T.1435:280a21–23) says:

The Buddha said to Upāli, “One says ‘[I] worship’ (*henan*; Skt. *vande*) verbally, and if one bends one’s back, that is designated as mental purity. When a monk gives a greeting he rises from his seat, bares the right shoulder, removes his shoes, kneels with the right knee touching the ground, and with both hands gently touches the feet of the person seated above, and greets him.”

[Compiler’s] Comment: The passage speaks of *vande*, which is a Sanskrit word. [The term is] sometimes rendered as *namo* or *ponan*. These are not [strictly] correct. The original correct form [of the term] is *pandan/vande*, in Chinese “I worship (*li*).” Some render it as *guili*. *Gui* is one’s true feeling. *Li* is the ultimate aim of reverence (*jing*). Some give *guiming* (“entrust one’s life to”); its meaning is same as *nanwu/namas*. When *li* (principle) and *shi* (concrete manifestation) agree with each other, the expression of feeling is fully realized. When worldly people value [the Sanskrit] *namas* and neglect [the Chinese] *jing* (reverence) and *li* (rites), they show ignorance of the relationship between the original terms and their translations. Why then should one add [to the word *henan* [to the names of venerable teachers]? The buddhas will become confused and they will burst out laughing! *Nanwu/namas* is translated in the *Shanjianlü* (*Samantapāsādikā*, T. 1462) as entrusting one’s life (*guiming*) to the Enlightened One and as paying respect to great elders. *Henan* is translated in the *Zhuyao yili* as paying respect reverently; in the *Shanjianlü* it is translated as [requesting] that [someone] brings salvation to oneself. To speak on the basis of these explanations, since paying respect reverently and acknowledging that [someone] brings salvation to one would apply broadly to holy and worldly beings, how could *henan* be confined only to the venerable teacher? It should be used broadly for all saintly ones that rescue living beings. In the scripture, when one comes to the Buddha, one gives a salutation (*nanwu*; Skt. *namas*) to the One Who is Free From All Attachment, Arhat, who has achieved supreme enlightenment. Here one praises verbally the Tathāgata’s virtues.

## 6. The Sitting Mat

[Compiler’s] Comment: The sutras and vinayas do not speak of using a sitting mat [when worshipping the Buddha]. They speak only of “taking off one’s footwear and paying respect [by bowing] to [the Buddha’s] feet.” Here I examine the use of the sitting mat in light of concrete practical needs (*shi*) and in accordance with the [appropriate] principle (*li*). The *Sifen lü* says, “To protect the body, the robe, and the monk’s bedding, [the Buddha] permitted possession of a sitting mat” (ref. T.1428:694a24–25). Here it is made clear

that [the sitting mat] is permitted for the benefit of keeping one's body and robes neat and clean.

The sitting mat is originally a tool used when one sits [in meditation]. Therefore, for worshipping [the Buddha] one does not spread it out [to perform worship]. When the Tathāgata is about to sit down a mat is always spread out [for him]. Following this practice, a monk also spreads his own mat himself when he sits [down to practice meditation]. He must not allow others to spread the sitting mat for him. We now see that when Indian monks arrive to worship before a buddha [image], they shift the lower part of the robe, kneel with one knee to the ground, and then kneel completely with joined palms. They verbally praise the Buddha and then perform *dingli* (bowing the head to the ground). This is the ancient practice that still survives. We should reverently practice worship according to this model.

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Today, when monks and nuns come before a buddha [image], they allow others to spread their sitting mats [for them]. This is arrogant and falls short of reverently expressing respect. Waiting before the buddha [image] until one's seat is set up and only then performing worship—this too is not allowed. To first sit down on a chair and then worship—this also shows lack of respect. When one sees an honored elder, one should quickly greet him. How could one first look for a seat [before greeting]? When seeing a king, one should [immediately] worship him. How could one do so while [sitting] in a chair? Human kings are generally honored but do not stand high as objects of reverence. How can they be compared to a Dharma King? Even if one makes an excessive gesture of worshipping him, in the end such gestures become an expression either of arrogance or laziness. Therefore, the *Sanqianyi jing* says, “One should not pay respect (*li*) while sitting on a seat (T.1470:916b17).

## 7. The Ritual Manual for Ceremony

[Compiler's] Comment: This section treats five rituals. First, I explain [the ritual of] removing one's footwear. This expresses extreme reverence. In this land (China) when ministers take part in the morning audience at the court, they gather in the inner courtyard and do not take off their footwear. However on certain specific occasions when they ascend and enter the palace building, they remove both their swords and their footwear. This is the ancient practice,

not a recent invention. In India the land is large and the weather is hot. They make footwear out of leather and wear it according to regulations. When one meets a superior, one takes off one's footwear. In other cold countries, following this practice, people wear footwear and during ceremonies they take it off to show respect. Laypeople wear shoes when they come to worship. Inside the temple precinct they do not take them off but when they come into the buddha hall they remove their footwear.

Second, I explain [the ritual of] exposing one side [of the upper body] (*piantan*). The Vinaya instructs that monks should expose their "right shoulder," or that they should expose "one shoulder," or that they should expose "one arm." The word *tan* refers to exposing one's upper body. [This practice] indicates that in following the study [of the path] one also engages in [physical] labor. In everyday life (in China) people say, "If you roll up your sleeves [and get to work], everything is taken care of peacefully." This refers to the same thing. Today [in China] monks expose one shoulder but still wear an undershirt. This does not accord with the teaching of exposing a shoulder.

The *Da zhuangyan lun* (T.201:269b11) mentions that the right shoulders of Buddhist monks are "black." This refers to the practice in question. Non-Buddhist [naked ascetics] are black all over their body. [Buddhist] renunciants expose the right [side]. Herein lies the difference. The Vinaya allows only three robes. They are all worn over the shoulders. When one sees an elder, one exposes one side. To cover [both shoulders] with clothing and still speak of exposing a shoulder—this is laughable. Thus, one should know that one exposes the skin of the shoulder. This is the extreme form of paying respect.

In performing ceremonies, one must consider who is present. When one engages in a repentance rite or worship before the Buddha or monastic teachers, one must expose one's right shoulder as an expression of reverence. If one is outside of the monastery, walking through the streets, one should cover the shoulder with the robe and not expose the skin. The climate of the Western Region (India) is very hot and humid, so the practice [of exposing the shoulder] is not strange, but this country (China) is a cold place and people will laugh at monks [if they walk around with their right shoulders bare]. Therefore, the *Wufenlü* says, "In other places where [what has been instructed] in my words proves to be impure, it is not a fault if one does not observe it."

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Third, I explain the gesture of showing reverence. The Vinaya says, “Concentrate the mind, hold the ten fingers and the palms of one’s hands together, and worship the Lion of the Śākya Clan (i.e., Śākyamuni).” It also says, “When placing the hands together as one addresses the Buddha, one forms an expression of reverence and [this gesture] controls the mind and does not allow it to be distracted. It is difficult to prevent the mind from becoming attached to desires [and becoming distracted], so one presses one’s palms together in order to concentrate the mind.” Today people worship the Buddha often [cursorily] by holding the [corresponding] fingers [of both hands] together but they fail to hold the palms together, or they hold the palms together but leave the fingers apart. This causes the mind to become arrogant and unfocused. It is better to keep the fingers apart but hold the palms together. Do not hold the fingers together while keeping the palms apart. [If you do this] seeking merit, to the contrary you invite the fault of arrogance.

Having mastered the rite of concentrating the mind and holding the palms together, one must worship by touching the ground with the five wheels of one’s body (the two elbows, the two knees, and the head). The *Dichilun* says, “One should make the five wheels [of the body] touch the ground and worship.” The *Ahan jing* says:

The two elbows and the two knees, and the crown [of the head] constitute the five wheels. Wheels are round and these five places [of the body] are all round. They enable [the body] to move up and down and turn around, performing meritorious deeds. Because they turn a lot they are called wheels.

Today when Western (i.e., Indian) monks worship they lift [the lower part of their robe] to expose their knees and then touch the ground first with their elbows. They hold their palms upward in the gesture of touching [the superior’s] feet. Today [in China] we observe that [monks] push against the ground with two hands and place both legs behind them. The head does not touch the ground. This too constitutes arrogance.

After mastering the rite of touching the ground with the five wheels [of the body], one must learn the practice of kneeling on the right knee in the foreign style (*hugui*). Scriptures often describe kneeling in the foreign style. The expressions *hugui* and *zhangchi* both refer to the Indian rite of paying respect. There is nothing mysterious about them. They describe the posture

of kneeling with either one's right or left knee touching the ground. This is the rite for presenting requests or expressing repentance.

Fourth, I explain the rite of paying respect. The *Shenglun* speaks of *pan-namei* (Skt. *vandāmi*); it refers to what is called *li* ("to greet") in China.

The *Dazhidu lun* (T.1509:131a1, 495b9–11, 751a24–26) says:

There are three kinds of *li* ("ceremonial greeting"). One is called verbal greeting (Note: it entails simply saying *henan* [Skt. *vande*]; this is the lowest form of ceremonial greeting.) The second entails bending the knees but not touching the ground (Note: this is the middle form of ceremonial greeting.) The third entails touching the ground with one's head (Note: this is the highest form of ceremonial greeting.)

The lowest is bending. The middle is kneeling. The highest is lowering the head to the ground.

There are three ways in which bodhisattva greets the Buddha. One is discussed in the chapter on repentance, the second in the chapter on joyfully redirecting merit, and the third in the chapter on requesting the Buddha [to preach].

Question: Is ceremonial greeting (*li*) only an activity of the body, or is it an activity that includes all three types of acts [of body, speech, and mind]?

Answer: It involves all three types of acts. Placing the five wheels [of the body] on the ground is not performed well without physical action. Promoting the name [of the buddhas] and singing hymns are not performed well without the act of speech. Entertaining thoughts in the mind as if they are reflected in a mirror placed in front of oneself is not performed well without mental activity. For the Buddha's eyes physical worship of the body is needed. For the gods' ears verbal chanting through speech is needed. For other beings' minds the mental action of thinking is needed. From the verbal activity of chanting, wisdom attained through hearing is realized. From the mental activity of thinking, wisdom attained through reflection is realized. From the physical activity of worship, wisdom attained through spiritual cultivation is realized. From the physical activity of worship the study of precepts is realized. From the mental activity of thinking the study of meditation is realized. From the verbal activity of chanting the study of wisdom is realized. In this way [all forms of practices] can be neatly explained [in terms of the

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three kinds of activities of body, speech, and mind]. Generally speaking the three kinds of study [of precepts (*śīla*), meditation (*samādhi*), and wisdom (*prajñā*)] are subsumed under the three kinds of activities.

Fifth, I explain distinguishing the correct and incorrect forms of worship (ref. *Shimen guijing*, T.1896:865a2–c10). The origin of this teaching on worship (*li*) goes back to the beginning of the Qi period. An Indian monk called Lena observed that ordinary people here [in China], those who live in a peripheral land, are not skilled in rites and their emotions are no different from those of monkeys and horses. With compassion welling from his heart, he compiled an essay on the seven kinds of worship. The text of the essay was extensive, so I summarize it here. The discussion moves from the coarse to the fine, treating the coarse as the incorrect form of worship and the fine as the correct. So seven levels are distinguished; the emphasis is on the last three.

The first level is called the worship of an arrogant self. It is based on one's rank and lacks a sense of reverence and respect. The person is confident of his virtue and does not have the feeling of looking up to the teacher. He feels ashamed if he has to ask questions of an inferior, and does not accept advice. Mentally he does not depend on the Dharma, and even when he performs an act of worship his mind is preoccupied with external things, moving around like a pestle going up and down, without gaining anything. He performs the form [of worshiping] but his mind does not focus on any object [of worship]. Failing to take life seriously and making light of the path, his efforts are in vain. Externally he appears to be reverent but he is increasingly arrogant and deluded within. Like a man made of wood, emotion is neglected. The [five] wheels [of the body, the four limbs and the head] do not take part in the ritual action, and the three aspects of ritual action [of body, speech, and mind] are scattered. This is called the worship of one who is arrogant.

The second level is the worship of chanting for reputation. Even though this is free of arrogance, there is nothing pure in the person's thought. While roughly correct in his ritual deportment, both his body and mind are deceitful in pretending to be reverent. In public he appears to be busily performing worship but when other people have gone away his body becomes lazy and his mind tired. He appears to be reverent and may offer very limited assistance but acquires little merit from this worship. This is not a true offering of

respect. Because it involves a combination of verbal chanting and distracted mind, it is called the worship of chiming-in chanting.

The third level is worship with a reverent and respectful body and mind. [The practitioner] hears and chants the Buddha's name and visualizes the Buddha's body as if the Buddha was standing in front of him, endowed with all the primary and secondary marks, adorned, and emitting bright light. When the mental image is complete, the practitioner thanks the Buddha, who then rubs the crown of his head to remove sins. With this, both body and mind express reverence and respect. Free of other thoughts, the practitioner respectfully presents offerings. His feeling of reverence knows no limit. The [Buddha] appears before one as a mental vision and focuses on removing ignorance. The highest and supreme goal of this form of worship is to guide gods and humans [to better rebirths]. Its merit is great but it still falls short of realizing wisdom. [Those who practice this way] often later regress. This is called the worship of body and mind.

The fourth level is worship that produces wisdom and purity. Because it reaches the realm of the buddhas, the mind of wisdom [it realizes] is clear and sharp and brings about deep knowledge of the Dharma realm (or reality). Fundamentally there is no [such thing as] obstruction. Yet one ("I") has followed worldly conventions from the infinitely distant beginning, and for that reason one thinks of [things] as "existing" though [ultimately] there is no existence, and thinks of obstruction though there is no [such thing as] obstruction. Now [at this level of worship] one has reached the realization that one's own mind is empty and there is no obstruction. When one practices worship of the Buddha, one freely achieves clear insight.

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To worship one Buddha is to worship all the buddhas. All the buddhas are identical with one Buddha. Because the Buddha and the Dharma body are one reality, merged perfectly together, to worship one buddha is to worship the entire Dharma realm. The same can be said about offerings of incense, flowers, and other things. In worshipping the Dharma (the Buddha's teaching) and the Sangha (the monastic community), one acts in the same way. In spite of the distinction between the three (Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha), in essence there is no difference. Therefore, the names of the three vehicles differ but their essence, which is liberation, is the same. So, one [act of] worship is all

worship; all worship is one worship. Realizing access to the Three Jewels in this way, all sentient beings in the three spheres, the six realms of birth, and the four types of birth equally form the thought (vision) of the Buddha, make offerings, and worship the Buddha. If one purifies body and mind, one is free of obstruction anywhere. As one meditates on the Buddha's realm, the mind becomes clearer. If one treats each ritual gesture of greeting and rising as an act that expresses respect and recognizes the superiority [of the Buddha], then the effect of that ritual action will be endless, the karmic rewards will be unlimited. This is called worship that produces wisdom.

The fifth level is worship that enters everywhere in the Dharma realm. The practitioner meditates and visualizes his own body and mind as being equal to the Dharma (reality); from the infinitely distant beginning they have never been separated from the Dharma realm. He is located neither outside or inside of the Buddha's body, nor outside or within himself. His essential nature is ultimately nonexistent, free of increase and decrease. When he worships one Buddha now, he reaches all the buddhas. His body reaches all pure stages of the three vehicles. His body pervades everywhere, just as the Buddha pervades everywhere. The Dharma realm has two aspects: empty and existent; there are two kinds of karmic consequences: primary and secondary. One presents offerings for adornment regardless of expense and as extensively as is appropriate for the circumstances. He does not leave the Dharma realm and follow his mind without obstruction. He presents both [physical and mental] offerings and joyfully performs the worship of bowing his head to the ground.

Suppose there is a room filled with ten thousand mirrors and someone looks into one of the mirrors. The image [of the person] will appear in all the mirrors in that room. The body of the Buddha is more pure [and more reflective] than a mirror. As different figures appear one after another, the mirror always reflects them all and their images always appear in the mirror. These images are then captured in all the other mirrors. As different images appear in the mirrors, they are all separate. One body is reflected everywhere in this way; the same applies to the bodies of ordinary and saintly beings in all Dharma realms. Each object that is offered all contributes to the delight [of offering], and [with each object everything else is] equally offered. Those who have eyes see; those who don't fail to observe. If one practices and

studies in this way the ritual teaching of the Dharma realm will prove greatly beneficial.

Therefore, the *Dichilun* (T.1581:925c5–6) speaks of making offerings in the presence of the Buddha and making offerings without the presence of the Buddha. Making offerings without the presence of the Buddha is superior to making offerings in the presence of the Buddha, because it is harder to perform successfully. Knowing that my body is contained within the Buddha’s body, how can I in confusion and out of delusion commit evil deeds without feeling shame? The powers and efficacy of the buddhas are equal and their names are the same. Whatever name is recited, all names are recited. For example, if one recites the name Śākya[muni] and worships him, one invites all the buddhas without exception. In India they say Śākya[muni]; here (in China) we say Nengren (“Capable of Benevolence”). How could there be any buddha who is not capable of benevolence? In India they say Amitābha; here we say Wuliangshou (“Infinite Life”). How could there be any buddha who does not have a long life span? In India they say Maitreya; here we say Cishi (“Compassionate Surname”). How could there be a buddha whose surname is not compassionate? The *Dazhidu lun* says, “The power of one buddha is equal to the power of all the buddhas. The power of all buddhas is equal to the power of one buddha” (*She dasheng lun shi*, T.1595:254a10–11). Even if all the buddhas except for one buddha failed to teach sentient beings, due to the exception of that one buddha, the power and efficacy of his teaching will reach everywhere in the Dharma realm. This is called worship that enters everywhere in the Dharma realm.

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The sixth level is called worship of correct contemplation and sincere cultivation. This makes clear that one worships oneself as the Buddha. One does not depend on another reality or another self to worship the Buddha. Why is this so? All sentient beings inherently have buddha-nature, namely, the original enlightenment that does not make distinctions. In accordance with the Dharma realm the mechanism of dependent origination flourishes. It is through delusion that one worships only other selves (i.e., “bodies”). One’s self (“body”) is buddha-nature but one mistakenly perceives it as evil. If one practices mistakenly in this way, one turns the point of the practice upside down. Believing that one’s self is extremely evil and has nothing to do with buddha-nature, one mistakenly worships other people’s selves and no benefit

will result in the end. Sentient beings are deluded; even when minute amounts of goodness are activated they turn the Dharma realm and instruments of offering into the worship of other selves. From the infinitely distant beginning not even one lamp, one piece of incense, one greeting, or one meal is offered to the buddha-nature of oneself. If one reflects on one's own original enlightenment, liberation will follow for certain. Therefore, the *Vimalakīrti Sutra* (T.475:554c29–555a1) says, “As you contemplate oneself as the reality, contemplate the Buddha in the same way.” Also:

Do not contemplate the Buddha, do not contemplate the Dharma, do not contemplate the Sangha [as separate entities], because one should view oneself and other selves as the same, as the true essence of dharmas.

Because one's mind is pure, one's self-nature dwells in buddha-nature. To exert power to cultivate illumination means bringing out the buddha-nature [in oneself]. Attaining the perfect fruit [of cultivation] through three infinitely long *asaṃkhyeya kalpas* means attaining the perfect fruit, namely buddha-nature. The attainment of the marvelous goal is limited to great saintly beings, yet still ordinary beings that have not mastered the sudden cultivation must understand that when traveling over long distances one must depend upon oneself. If one wishes to see buddha-nature one must contemplate the Buddha of oneself; the same applies to the Dharma and the Sangha. The essence is one and nondual. This is called the worship of correct contemplation.

The seventh level is worship of true reality beyond distinctions. In broad outline it does not differ from the previous one, which still reifies worship and contemplation. It distinguishes self and others. Now, in this worship there is no distinction between self and other. Ordinary and saintly beings are one suchness. They are the same in essence and their activities merge together into suchness that is [ultimately] free of distinctions. There is no difference between the ancient and the present. Seeing a buddha, one honors and worships him. Seeing ordinary beings, one despises and treats them arrogantly. If you think in this way, you suffer from one-sided attachment. Thus, the *Perfection of Wisdom Scripture* (T.235:751c24–25; T.236:756a25–26) says:

The Dharma is free of distinctions. The distinction between high and low is absent. This is called *anuttarā samyaksambodhi* (“supreme, perfect enlightenment”).

Because true reality is separate from thought, it is not possible to grasp it with the mind. It is not proper to seek for it as [some kind of] appearance. It is not proper to worship it. It is not proper to despise it; one should go beyond high and low and transcend honoring and despising. Quietude and agitation share a common source; reverence and negligence are firmly equal. One pacifies one's mind with this understanding—this is called worship free of distinctions.

The *Wenshu liwen* (ref. *Rulai zhuangyan zhihui guangming ru yiqiefo jingjie jing*, T.357:247c17) says, “[Dharmas] do not come into being nor go out of being. For this reason in worship there is no contemplation [of a specific dharma].” When ordinary people, shallow in understanding, hear of this one [view of] worship they react by reviling it. People with superior wisdom practice freedom from distinction internally while following the cultivation of worship externally. The internal and the external fit together. This is called worship of freedom from distinctions.

The *Zengyi ahan jing* says in verse (T.125:707c24–27; 708a17–20):

If one wishes to worship the Buddha of the past, of the future, or  
Even of the present, one should contemplate him in the light of the  
emptiness of the Dharma.

If one wishes to worship the Buddha of the past, of the future, or  
of the present, and worship many buddhas,  
One should think in the light of the absence of self.  
First among good deeds is worship.

At the beginning there were no faults.  
[If all is] empty, then there is no teaching of liberation.  
This is the meaning of worshipping the Buddha.

If one wishes to worship the Buddha of the future, of the past,  
One should contemplate the emptiness and inexistence of dharmas.  
This is called the meaning of Buddha worship.

[Concluding] verses say:

I worship the Three Jewels, and  
Take refuge in [the buddhas of] the ten directions.  
I look up and honor them—  
This increases good fortune and removes misfortune,

The path of the working [of the Buddha's teaching] is unusual,  
But in his compassion [the Buddha] invites all to the fragrant [realm].  
Both the manifest and the hidden [workings of his teaching] are  
activated,  
And the effects of his teaching reach everywhere.  
Even if one is born in this land,  
One is miraculously invited to go to the remarkable land [of the Buddha].  
One receives the audience of the Buddha [there] and attains joy and  
happiness.  
One's fortunes are increasingly expanded.  
The nature of the Dharma transcends dual distinctions.  
What effect should arbitrary distinctions make?  
When one worships once reverently and sincerely,  
The effect pervades everywhere, over an incalculably wide area.

### Miracle Story

(One story is summarized here:) In the Tang dynasty (618–907 C.E.), Li Shanlong.

Li Shanlong of Pingyi, Commander of the Palace Guard of the Left, died suddenly during the Wude period (618–26 C.E.). The area above his heart did not turn cold but remained warm like the palm of a hand. His family did not dare bury him. After seven days he revived and told the following story. When he died he was arrested by an officer of the realm of the dead and taken to a government office. The building was very large, and there were thousands of prisoners in the courtyard. Some were put in the pillory and chained; others were handcuffed and shackled. They all stood facing north, and they filled  
436b the courtyard. The officer brought Shanlong to the lower end of the court.

A heavenly official sat in a high chair. Guards stood by him as if he was a king. Shanlong asked the officer [who had brought him there] where he was, and the officer answered, "This is the king [of the realm of the dead]." Shanlong proceeded to the bottom of the staircase. The king asked, "What meritorious deeds did you do while you were alive?" Shanlong answered, "Every time villagers held a vegetarian feast and a lecture, I always made donations." The king said, "What did you do yourself?" Shanlong answered,

“I [learned to] recite two rolls of the *Lotus Sutra*.” The king said, “Excellent. You may ascend the staircase.”

[Li] Shanlong went up. At the northeastern end of the room was a high seat, which looked like a lecturer’s seat. The king pointed to it and told Shanlong to sit on the high seat and recite the scripture. As Shanlong obediently approached the seat, the king stood up and declared, “I request the Dharma master to come up and sit upon the seat.” Shanlong went up and sat. The king then sat down facing him. Shanlong opened the scripture and said, “*The Sutra of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma*, roll 1, Introduction.” The king said, “Please come down from the seat.” Shanlong came down and again stood at the bottom of the staircase.

As he looked back, he saw that none of the prisoners remained in the courtyard. The king told Shanlong, “The merit of your recitation of the sutra did not only benefit you. All the prisoners in the courtyard heard it and have been pardoned. How could this not be good! Now you are released and may return.” Shanlong bowed and took leave, but after a dozen steps the king called him back, saying to the officer, “Let this person visit all the hells one after another.”

The officer then led Shanlong eastward. After a hundred steps or so, he saw a massive iron fort. A roof covered the fort. On the side wall were numerous windows of different sizes, some shaped like *ullambana* bowls. Shanlong saw men and women fly up from the ground and go in through the windows, and they did not come back out. Shanlong was puzzled and asked about this. The officer said, “This is the Great Hell. There are different sections inside, corresponding to different [degrees of] sin. In accordance with his or her original karma, each person goes to a different hell and receives punishment.” Hearing this Shanlong was distressed and said, “Praise to the Buddha (*nanwu fō*.)” He asked the officer to lead him outside.

At the gate of the complex he saw a large cauldron, with fire ablaze and boiling water. Next to it two people sat dozing. When Shanlong asked about it, the two explained, “As our retribution we entered this boiling water. Thanks to your saying “Praise to the Buddha,” all sinners in this hell have been given a day for rest and sleep.” Shanlong again said, “Praise to the Buddha.”

The official [taking Shanlong around] said, “There are several different government offices, which take turns carrying out government business. Now

the king has released you. You had better ask the king for a note. Otherwise those in the other offices, not knowing of the pardon, might arrest you again.” [Li] Shanlong immediately went to see the king and requested a note confirming his pardon. The king ordered a sheet of paper to be brought and he wrote a line on it. He gave it to the officer, saying, “Get signatures from the [offices of] the five realms of rebirth.” Following this order, the officer took Shanlong to two government sections. Each building was guarded in the same way. The officer sent by the king got the signatures from these government offices. The staff at each office wrote one line, and gave the document to Shanlong.

436c Shanlong brought the note to the gate. Three people [there] said to Shanlong, “The king released you. Would you leave something, large or small, for us?” Before Shanlong said anything the officer [who was accompanying him] told him, “This is not a condition for the king’s release, but these three are the messengers that arrested you before. One is master of ropes. He bound you with a red rope. One is the master of sticks. He hit your head with a stick. One is a master of bags. He sucks out your *qi* with a bag. Seeing that you have been released, they are begging for gifts.” Shanlong, frightened, said to the three, “I don’t know you. Please let me prepare the gifts when I return home. Only I don’t know where to send them?” The three said, “Burn them under a tree near a body of water.” Shanlong agreed. The officer then took him home.

Shanlong saw his relatives crying and arranging funerary implements. He went into the chamber and reentered the corpse, and then came back to life. Some days later he cut up paper in the shapes of money, food, and wine, and took them himself to a place near water where he burned them. Suddenly, the three people came to thank him, saying, “We are obliged that you did not betray our trust and sent us these gifts. We are grateful.” After saying this, they disappeared.

Shanlong himself told this story to the head of Zongchi Monastery, who in turn related it to Tang Ling. (This story comes from the *Mingbao ji* [compiled by Tang Ling], T.2082:795c12–796b4; ref. *Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu*, T.2145:341a13–22.)

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## BDK English Tripiṭaka (First Series)

### Abbreviations

<i>Ch.</i> :	Chinese
<i>Skt.</i> :	Sanskrit
<i>Jp.</i> :	Japanese
<i>Eng.</i> :	Published title

Title	Taishō No.
Ch. <i>Chang ahan jing</i> (長阿含經)	1
Skt. <i>Dīrghāgama</i>	
Eng. <i>The Canonical Book of the Buddha's Lengthy Discourses</i> (Volume I, 2015)	
<i>The Canonical Book of the Buddha's Lengthy Discourses</i> (Volume II, 2016)	
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Ch. Amituo jing (阿彌陀經) Skt. Sukhāvativyūha Eng. <i>The Smaller Sutra on Amitāyus</i> (in <i>The Three Pure Land Sutras</i> , Revised Second Edition, 2003)	366
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Ch. Dafanguang yuanjue xiuduoluo liaoyi jing (大方廣圓覺修多羅了義經)	842
Eng. <i>The Sutra of Perfect Enlightenment</i> (in <i>Apocryphal Scriptures</i> , 2005)	
Ch. Da Biluzhena chengfo shenbian jiachi jing (大毘盧遮那成佛神變加持經)	848
Skt. Mahāvairocana-bhīṣambodhi-vikurvitādhiṣṭhāna-vaipulyasūtreन्द्रa- rājanāma-dharmaparyāya	
Eng. <i>The Vairocana-bhīṣambodhi Sutra</i> (2005)	
Ch. Jingganding yiqie rulai zhenshi she dasheng xianzheng dajiao wang jing (金剛頂一切如來真實攝大乘現證大教王經)	865
Skt. Sarvatathāgata-tattvasaṃgraha-mahāyānā-bhīṣamaya-mahākālparāja	
Eng. <i>The Adamantine Pinnacle Sutra</i> (in <i>Two Esoteric Sutras</i> , 2001)	
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Eng. <i>The Susiddhikāra Sutra</i> (in <i>Two Esoteric Sutras</i> , 2001)	

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Ch. Shanjianlü piposha (善見律毘婆沙)	1462
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Ch. Miaofa lianhua jing youbotishe (妙法蓮華經憂波提舍)	1519
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Ch. Zhang suozhi lun (彰所知論) Eng. <i>The Treatise on the Elucidation of the Knowable</i> (2004)	1645
Ch. Putixing jing (菩提行經) Skt. Bodhicaryāvatāra	1662
Ch. Jingangding yuqie zhongfa anoduoluo sanmiao sanputi xin lun (金剛頂瑜伽中發阿耨多羅三藐三菩提心論) Eng. <i>The Bodhicitta Śāstra</i> (in <i>Esoteric Texts</i> , 2015)	1665

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Ch. Dasheng qixin lun (大乘起信論)	1666
Skt. *Mahāyānaśraddhotpāda-śāstra	
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Pāli Milindapañhā	
Ch. Banruo boluomiduo xin jing yuzan (般若波羅蜜多心經幽贊)	1710
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Ch. Mohe zhiguan (摩訶止觀)	1911
Ch. Xiuxi zhiguan zuochan fayao (修習止觀坐禪法要)	1915
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Eng. <i>A Guide to the Tiantai Fourfold Teachings</i> (in <i>Tiantai Lotus Texts</i> , 2013)	
Ch. Guoqing bai lu (國清百錄)	1934
Ch. Zhenzhou Linji Huizhao chanshi wulu (鎮州臨濟慧照禪師語錄)	1985
Eng. <i>The Recorded Sayings of Linji</i> (in <i>Three Chan Classics</i> , 1999)	
Ch. Foguo Yuanwu chanshi biyan lu (佛果圓悟禪師碧巖錄)	2003
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Ch. Liuzu dashi fabao tan jing (六祖大師法寶壇經) Eng. <i>The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch</i> (2000)	2008
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