

## **One Hundred Fables Sutra**

(Taisho Tripitaka 209)

**Translated into English by Tetcheng Liao**

### **PROLOGUE**

Thus have I heard. Once upon a time Sakyamuni, The Enlightened One, was staying in a park called Karanda Bamboo Grove, near Rajagriha City. He held a meeting with thirty six thousand men including great monks, Bodhisattvas, Mahasattvas and the eight groups of supernatural beings. On that occasion, there were five hundred Brahmans in the assembly. One of them rose from his seat and said to Sakyamuni, the Buddha:

"We have learned that Buddhism is so profound that there is no parallel to it. So we have come to ask you to explain it to us."

"Very well," The Enlightened One said.

"Is the universe existent or non-existent?" The Brahman asked.

"It is both existent and non-existent," the Enlightened one replied.

The Brahman said, "How can you say non-existent of what is now existent? How can you say existent of what is now non-existent?"

The Enlightened One replied, "The living say it is existent, but the dead say it is non-existent. Consequently, I say it is both existent and non-existent."

He asked, "What does man live on?"

The Enlightened One replied, "Man lives on cereals."

He asked, "Where do the five cereals come from?"

"They come from the four elements, fire, wind, water and earth," The Enlightened One replied.

"Where do the four elements come from?" the Brahman asked.

"They come from void." The Enlightened One replied.

"Where does the void come from?" He asked.

"It comes from nothingness." The Enlightened One replied.

"Where does nothingness come from?" He asked.

"From the nature." The Enlightened One replied.

"Where does nature come from?" He asked.

"From Nirvana." The Enlightened One replied.

"Where does Nirvana come from?" He asked.

"Why do you ask about such profound things. Nirvana is the law of non-birth and immortality." The Enlightened One replied.

"Have you attained Nirvana?" He asked.

"I haven't reached Nirvana yet." The Enlightened One replied.

"If you haven't reached Nirvana yet, how do you know Nirvana is an eternal bliss?" He asked.

"Now let me ask you whether the life of the sentient beings in the world is happy or miserable," the Enlightened One said.

"I view it as very miserable." He replied.

"What do you mean by miserable?" The Enlightened One said.

"After seeing all the dying men whose pains are unbearable. I know death is miserable." He replied.

"Now you are not dead, nevertheless, you know death is miserable. I have seen all Buddhas of the ten directions in space having neither rebirth nor death. I know, therefore, Nirvana is an eternal bliss." The Enlightened One said.

Those five hundred Brahmans were satisfied and thus understood what the Enlightened One had said. They were then willing to accept the five commandments and asked to be disciples of Gauthama Buddha. Finally, they obtained enlightenment of the Sotapanna's degree. They sat down as before. The Enlightened One said, "You all listen carefully to me. I'll give you an extensive talk of fables."

### **(1) THE STUPID MAN TAKES SALT**

Once upon a time there was a stupid man who went to another man's home. The host gave him something to eat. After he complained that the food was insipid, the host added a little salt to it. The stupid guest tried again, found it better, and thought that it was tasteful, because of the salt. To his thinking, the food would be so much better, if he took a great deal of salt. Then this stupid and ignorant man ate it on an empty stomach. Afterwards, he had his palate out of order and fell ill.

The heretics, having learned that abstaining from food and drink might lead to the path of Enlightenment, immediately fasted for seven or fifteen days. They merely got fatigued and famished, accomplishing nothing in terms of Enlightenment. Those heretics are just like that stupid man, who, on account of the pleasant flavor that the salt enhanced, ate salt on an empty stomach only to lose all tastes (and get sick afterwards).

### **(2) THE STUPID MAN STORES UP MILK**

Once upon a time there was a stupid man who was about to give a party. He wanted to store up milk for his guests.

"If I milk the cow beforehand every day, he thought, little by little, there will be too much of milk and will not be enough space to store it and it may even spoil. It would be better to let it remain inside of the cow. I'll milk the cow right away at the time of the party."

He then separated the cow from the calf and tied them up apart. A month later, he actually gave the reception. He tried to milk the cow, but the milk had run dry. Some guests got annoyed and others laughed at him.

So are the idiotic fellows who want to give alms at once but prefer to wait until they possess great wealth. It usually happens that, before they can scrape together enough money, it is seized by the country officers or taken away by robbers and thieves or by fire and flood. It also happens that, due to their sudden demise, they are not in time for giving alms.

This is just like the story of the stupid man who stored up milk.

### **(3) THE HEAD IS BROKEN WITH PEARS**

Once upon a time there was a bald-headed man who was bit in his head by a few pears thrown at him. He forbore taking the blows without knowing that he should have tried to dodge them. A bystander asked the man, "Why didn't you dodge the blows that wounded your head?"

The man answered, "Proudly relying upon doing violence to others and being short of intelligence, he, the attacker, took my baldhead for a stone. That's why he struck me with pears and broke my head like that."

The bystander retorted, "It's you who are indeed short of intelligence. How can you call him stupid? Haven't you been stupid enough to get injured without the sense to run away?"

So is the monk who, unable to abide discipline, meditation and wisdom, keeps only a good appearance to expect support. He is just like that stupid man who got as far as wounded on the head without knowing to run away and called the attacker stupid into the bargain.

#### **(4) THE WIFE PRETENDS TO BE DEAD**

Once upon a time there was a stupid man who loved very much his beautiful wife. However, she had no true love for him. In the meantime, she associated herself surreptitiously with another man. Burning with lecherous passions, she wanted to leave her husband to be with her lover. She secretly told an old woman, "After my departure, I would like you to place a woman's corpse in my house. You then tell my husband that I'm dead."

The old woman did what she was told. She told the husband shortly after his return that his wife passed away. He went to see the corpse and believed it was that of his own wife. He grieved and wept bitterly. He gathered a great deal of wood and oil together for the cremation. Then he put the ashes into a bag and had it with him day and night.

Shortly after, the wife got tired of her lover. She came back and told her husband, "I'm your wife."

The husband answered, "My wife died a long time ago. Who are you to lie to me that you are my wife?"

The husband refused to believe her, in spite of her repeated explanations.

So are the heretics who, having learned the heretical doctrine, confusedly stick to it with all their soul and take the doctrine to be the right one without altering their mind forever. Thus they will be unable to believe, accept or keep any other creed even it is an orthodox one.

#### **(5) GETTING THIRSTY ON SEEING WATER**

Once there was a fellow desperately in need of water for his thirst. On seeing the blazing fog, he mistook it for water. He pursued it until he reached the Indus River. But he only looked at it without drinking. A bystander asked, "You are suffering from thirst. How that you have found water, why don't you drink it?"

The fellow answered, "If I could drink up all that water, I would do it. Since there is more water than I can finish, I would rather not drink it at all."

As soon as people heard this, they laughed aloud at him. The heretics, acting against all senses and reasons, think since they are unable to keep all the Buddhist commandments, they refuse to accept any of them. They will never attain the path of Enlightenment and thus subject to transmigration in time to come. They are just like that stupid thirsty fellow who gets laughed at by his contemporaries.

#### **(6) THE DEAD SON IS ABOUT TO REMAIN IN THE HOUSE**

Once upon a time there was a man who brought up seven boys, one of whom died. Finding the son dead, he intended to leave the body in the house and moved out himself. A bystander said to him, "You know the living and the dead go separate ways. Since your son is dead, he

should be quickly buried in a far away place with all due solemnity. Now why do you want to leave your house and let your dead son remain here?"

When the man heard this, he decided to bury his son and not let the corpse lie at home. He then thought he would have to kill another son to hang one body on each end of the pole to keep in equilibrium and carry them for burial in a long way off the forest. That seemed the only thing possible for him to do and he did it. His contemporaries laughed aloud at his unprecedented eccentricities.

A monk, who secretly broke one commandment, felt afraid to confess it. He would pretend that he had scrupulously kept all commandments and led a life free from evil and defilement. Some wise men might then tell him, "A monk should keep the commandments just like brilliant pearls should be protected from being damaged. How can you break what you have accepted? Now you are reluctant to confess them."

The offender would answer, "Now that I have to confess, I might as well do more breakings. Then I'll confess all my sins at once."

Consequently, he broke more commandments by doing many evil things before his confession. This monk is just like that stupid man who kills another son when one dies.

#### **(7) ONE RECKONS ANOTHER MAN TO BE ONE'S ELDER BROTHER**

Once upon a time, there was a man endowed with a respectable appearance and intelligence as well as wealth. All these evoked feelings of admiration and praise from the people around him. Another man then claimed this man to be his elder brother. He did so, because of the man's wealth. When he needed money, he called the man elder brother. After the rich man paying his debt, he stopped calling him elder brother. A bystander asked, "You are a strange man. When you are in need of money, you call him elder brother. When he is in debt, you will not. Why?"

The man answered, "When I want to get at his money, I'll call him elder brother. As a matter of fact, he isn't my own elder brother. When he is in debt, I will not call him elder brother." Hearing these words, people laughed at him.

The heretics, who have heard the good words of Buddhism, purloin and make use of them as their own. When people try to teach them how to practice the good words, they do not want to listen. They declared that they use the good words of Buddhism to instruct the other people in order to earn a living. There is no need that they should bother to know how to practice it.

Those heretics are just like the stupid man who calls the rich man elder brother for his money.

#### **(8) A RUSTIC STEALS CLOTHES FROM THE PALACE TREASURY**

Once upon a time there was a rustic who stole garments from the palace and then escaped to a remote place. The king sent men to search for him in all directions. Finally, he was arrested and taken to the king who accused him of theft and asked him where he had got the clothes. The rustic answered that they belonged to his grandfather. The king then ordered him to put them on. He did not know how to wear them. He put on his arms what should be worn on his legs. What he ought to have on his waist, he put on his head. Seeing this, the king summoned his ministers for consultation on the matter.

"If the clothes belonged to your grandfather, you should know how to wear them. How can you wear them in all wrong ways? It's certain that they are not your old clothes. You have stolen them," said the king.

Figuratively speaking, here the king is like Buddha; the valuable clothes, the Buddhist teachings; the stupid rustic, the heretic.

A heretic, who has eavesdropped on Buddhism, makes it for his own. He then misinterprets it, because he does not know the real meaning of its teachings.

This heretic is like the rustic who stole the king's valuable clothes without knowing how to wear them properly and put them on in all the wrong ways.

### **(9) THE FATHER'S VIRTUES ARE PRAISED**

Once upon a time there was a man who praised his father's virtues before everybody.

"My father is compassionate. He neither kills nor steals. He speaks earnestly and gives alms," said the man.

At the time, it so happened that a stupid man heard those words and declared, "My father is more virtuous than yours."

The others asked, "In what way he is more virtuous! Please tell us about him."

The man answered, "Undeclared as my father was, he gave up completely his sexual desires when he was young".

The others said, "If your father had done so, how could he have brought you into the world?"

This aroused the sardonical laugh from all those around him.

There are those ignorant people in the world who want to extol the merits of others without knowing how to be realistic and get ridiculed instead. These people are just like that stupid man who wanted to praise his father but turned out to speak fatuously.

### **(10) THREE - STORIED HOUSE**

Once there was an ignorant rich man who, one day, went to another rich man's three-storied house. Struck with admiration by the imposing, spacious, airy and well - lighted building, he said to himself, "I'm no less rich than he. Why don't I have the same house built as this one?" Thereupon, he sent for a carpenter and said, "Can you construct an imposing house exactly like that one?"

That carpenter replied, "It's I who built that one."

He went on, "Now you may build a house like that one for me."

The carpenter began first to level the ground, afterward laid the foundation stones and then drove in piles for walls. The stupid man could not make it out when he saw the worker doing all these. He asked, "What are you doing now?"

The carpenter replied, "I'm building three floors."

The stupid man went on, "I don't want the two floors below. You had better start building from the third floor for me."

The carpenter answered, "It's impossible. If I don't begin with the ground floor, how can I build the second? If I don't build the two below, how can I build the third floor?"

The stupid man persisted saying, "But I don't need the two floors below, only the top."

Hearing those words, his contemporaries sardonically laughed at him. They all said how could one have the top floor done without building the lower floors?

Sakyamuni's four degrees of disciples who are unable to practice earnestly Buddhism and respect the Three Precious Ones, wanted to attain the path of deliverance by leading an idle life. They said, "We don't need the first three degrees below, but seek only that of Arahant's." There was no difference between the stupid rich man and those disciples who were also laughed at by their contemporaries.

### **(11) THE BRAHMAN KILLS HIS SON**

Once upon a time, there was a Brahman who prided himself on his erudite knowledge of astrology and various arts. He was such a conceited man that he claimed to be learned in everything. To show his ability, he went abroad carrying his son in his arms and cried. The Brahman was asked, "Why are you crying?"

He replied, "This baby is going to die within seven days. I'm grieved at his inevitable death. That's why I can't help crying."

The contemporaries said, "It's difficult to know a man's life. It's easy to make a miscalculation. He may not die seven days. Why should you weep in advance?"

The Brahman said, "The sun and the moon may set and the stars may fall, but I have never had a miscalculation on my record."

To prove his self-claimed knowledge, he killed his son on the seventh day, for the sake of fame and gain. The contemporaries heard the news of his son's death at the foretold time. They marvelled that he was indeed an erudite man who could prove true of what he had said. They all came to pay him homage, and were heartily convinced that he deserved respect (as a prophet).

This is also true with those of Sakyamuni's four degrees of disciples who claim to have attained the path of Enlightenment for the sake of the material offerings from others. They would try to fool people by killing an innocent man in order to deceitfully show the virtue of compassion. Such disciples would be certainly doomed to limitless suffering in time to come, just like the Brahman who wanted to prove the accuracy of his prophecy by killing his son and thus deceived people.

### **(12) THE BOILED BLACK ROCK - HONEY SYRUP**

Once upon a time, a man was boiling black rock-honey syrup, when a rich man came to his house. He thought he would give the syrup to the rich man. He poured a little water into it and put it on a slow fire. He then fanned it with a fan in the hope of cooling it.

A bystander addressed to him, "If you don't put out the fire below, how can you cool it even though you keep on fanning?"

People began to laugh at him.

This is like the heretics who will practice a little mortification by sleeping on thorny brambles without putting out the flames of annoyance. As the five passions are still blazing within them, there is no way for such people to become cool and quiet. As a result, they sardonically laughed at by the wise. Moreover, they will suffer affliction in their present lives and transmigration in the future.

### **(13) COMMENTING ON SOMEONE'S QUICK TEMPER**

Once a group of people sat in a house commenting on someone as being of good virtue except for two faults:

First, he was quick-tempered. Second, he was impulsive.

At the time, this man happened to pass by the door and heard the comment. He entered the house, grabbed the man who had criticized him, and started to beat him.

Thereupon one bystander asked why he beat the man.

He replied, "When did I ever lose my temper or act impulsively? This man said: I often did so. That's why I have beaten him."

The bystander pointed out, "Your action at once demonstrates that you have often lost your temper and acted impulsively. Why do you still want to conceal your character from others?" This man who resents to having his faults exposed, often leads people to lay all the blame for the stupidity and foolishness on him.

People, who are addicted to drinking and other debaucheries, when scolded by others, strongly hate their critics in turn. Moreover, they try desperately to justify themselves by bringing forward all sorts of excuses. Those men are just like that stupid man who disliked hearing about his faults discussed.

#### **(14) OFFERING THE GUIDE UP AS SACRIFICE TO GOD**

Once upon a time there was a group of merchants who wanted to go to the sea. A guide was required. They set out in quest of such a man. After finding such a man, they started the trip and saw a temple when they reached a land of wilderness. A man had to be immolated to cross it.

After consultation, the group of merchants said that they could not choose anyone in the company to be killed, for they were all related. The only one fit to be sacrificed was the guide. So they killed him. After performing the rites, they soon lost their way and knew not which direction to go. They then died one after another.

So are the people in general.

Those who seek to fish for treasure in the sea of Dharma should keep the commandments of doing good deeds as their guide. If they break them, they will end their lives in the wilderness and can never be rescued. Furthermore, they will have to go through the Three Evil Paths of Transmigration and suffer forever and ever.

Such men are just like the group of merchants who killed the guide and died in a body as a result.

#### **(15) THE PHYSICIAN GIVES MEDICINE TO THE PRINCESS TO MADE HER GROW UP FAST**

Once upon a time there was a king who brought a daughter into the world. He sent for the doctor and asked him, "Could you prescribe some drugs for my daughter in order to make her grow up faster?"

The physician replied, "I have a good prescription for her. However, I don't have the medicine on hand. I should look for it. Your Majesty must not see her at the time of my searching for the medicine. I'll present her to your Majesty after she has taken it."

Then the physician went to a remote region in search of the medicine. He found it and came back twelve years later. Having taken the medicine, the daughter was led to the king who was happy to see her. Then he said to himself, "He's a good physician. My daughter has indeed grown after taking his medicine."

The king then ordered his attendants to reward the doctor lavishly with gems. All the courtiers derided the king for his ignorance to such an extent that he did not know to think of

the year in which his daughter was born. The king believed that her growing was due to the effect of the medicine.

So are the people in general. They will visit a wise man and say, "We should like to attain the path of Enlightenment. Please instruct us that we may immediately receive the transcendent wisdom."

By means of expediency, the master will guide them to practice meditation and contemplate the Twelve Links connected with the causation of rebirth. After gradually accumulating all kinds of merits, they reach the Arahant's degree. Then they will jump with joy and exclaim, "How fast it is! Our great master, you have made us obtain so quickly the quintessential truth."

### **(16) WATER THE SUGAR - CANE**

Once upon a time two men who cultivated sugar-cane, pledged that the one who had a good harvest would win prizes, while the one with a bad harvest would be heavily penalized. One of them thought, "The sugar-cane itself is very sweet. It will be more delicious if I water it with its compressed juice. Then I will get the upper hand over him."

Immediately, he began to press the juice from the sugar-cane. He watered the plant with the juice in the hope of making it more delicious. Instead, he destroyed the seedling and lost his entire plantation.

So are people at large. Those who wish for the comforts of life use their high positions and great influence to oppress the mass. They steal others' possessions as their own wealth to do good works with a view to enjoy better life afterwards. However, they are unaware of the calamities, which are to come upon them. Those people are just like the man who, pressing the sugar - cane, lost everything.

### **(17) A DEBT OF HALF A CENT**

Once a merchant lent half a cent to a man who then took a long time repaying him. The merchant went to the man to ask him to clear the debt sooner. To go there, he had to pay two cents as ferry fare to cross a wide river. The debtor was not at home when he arrived there. On his trip back, he had to pay as much again. It amounted to four cents in total.

For a debt of half a cent, the merchant lost four cents. Moreover, he got very tired from his journey. He lost a great more than what he stood to gain. As a result, he was sardonically laughed at.

So are the people at large.

To seek a little fame and gain, people will spare no pains to bring ruin upon what should be their greater concern. They seek self-preservation at the expense of morality. Consequently, they will earn a bad name in this life and suffer retribution in the hereafter.

### **(18) GRIND A KNIFE UPSTAIRS**

Once upon a time there was a poor man who had to work very hard in the king's service. As time went on, he became emaciated. Out of pity, the king gave him a dead camel. Having received it, the poor man began to flay it. His knife being very blunt, he looked for a whetstone to grind it. At last, he found one upstairs where he sharpened the knife.

He then went back downstairs to skin the camel. He ran up and down the stairs doing the sharpening and skinning frantically for a while and finally he felt so tired that he could not go

on any longer. Then he had to hang the camel upstairs to be closer to the whetstone. People guffawed at him.

A stupid man who, by breaking the strict commandments gathers plenty of money and uses it on offering in the hope that he will be born in Heaven. This stupid man is just like the poor man who worked hard for little gain in hanging his camel upstairs and sharpening his knife.

### **(19) LOSS OF A SILVER BOWL BY BOAT**

Once upon a time there was a man who dropped a silver bowl into the sea while crossing it. He pondered, "I'm going to make a mark on the water. I'm carrying on my journey now. But I'll come back for it later."

After two months' travel during which he visited Ceylon and many other countries. On seeing a river, he jumped into the water looking for the bowl he had lost before.

"What are you doing there?" people asked.

He replied, "I have lost my bowl. Now I would like to get it back."

People went on, "When did you lose it?"

He answered, "I lost it crossing the sea."

Again people asked, "How long ago did you lose it?"

He answered, "I lost it two months ago."

People asked, "Since you lost it two months ago in the sea, why are you looking for it here in the river?"

He answered, "I made a mark on the water where I lost the bowl. This water looks the same as the other. There seems no difference. That's why I'm doing this."

People went on, "Though all waters are identical, the place that you have lost it is there. How can you find it here?"

Everybody jeered at him.

The heretics, who do not practice the right religious belief, but a fallacious one, suffer from their useless mortification in seeking deliverance. Those men are just like the stupid man who has lost his bowl in the sea and looked for it in the river.

### **(20) THE KING WAS SAID TO HAVE GIVEN REIN TO CRUELTY**

Once upon a time a man pronouncing his king's crimes, said, "Very cruel is the king. He is incapable of governing."

On hearing this, the king lost his temper without making sure who it was that had said it. He took his deceitful attendant's advice by holding an eminent minister under arrest. He ordered to have his backbone flayed and have his body cut to one hundred ounces of flesh for punishment.

Soon afterwards, a man testified the minister's innocence to the king. To his regret, the king ordered one thousand ounces of flesh is given to the minister to make up for what was cut off from his body.

Later, when the minister gave a groan with pain at night, the king asked, "What's wrong with you? I have given you back ten times more than I had taken from you. Are you not satisfied with it? Why are you still moaning?"

A bystander replied, "Oh! My great king! If anyone cut your Majesty's head and gave back one thousand other heads, could you Majesty keep out of the way of death? How could getting ten times of the flesh the minister relieve himself the pain?"

So is the stupid man who is greedy for the present pleasure but not afraid of the consequences for the hereafter. He makes people around him miserable and puts them into requisition trying to make a fortune. On the other hand, he hopes to redeem his sins and obtain blessedness.

This stupid man is just like the king who first flayed and punished someone and then tried to give him back the flesh. It is impossible that the pain can be eased.

### **(21) A WOMAN LONGS FOR A SECOND CHILD**

Once there was a woman who longed for a second child. He asked other women, "Who could bring me another child?"

An old lady told her, "I can find a way for you to give birth to another child, on one condition that you should offer a sacrifice to God."

She asked, "What have I to offer as a sacrifice?"

Thereupon, the old lady replied, "Kill your son and use his blood as a sacrifice to God. Thus you'll certainly get many other children."

Subsequently, she tried to follow the old lady's instructions. A wise man nearby heard the story first jeered and then scolded the woman, "How so stupid and ignorant you are! To kill your son that you have now! Are you sure that you'll have another one whose birth is unknown?"

So is the stupid man who in order to get uncertain happiness, plunges into the burning pit and does all, sorts of wrong-doings in the hope of entering Heaven after death.

### **(22) GET SIGNALOES FROM UNDER THE SEA**

Once upon a time there was a merchant who was getting signaloes from under the sea. He did not gather enough of them to fill up a cart to bring back home until several years later. He then transported them into the market. However, there were no buyers, due to their high price. Unable to sell them after several days, he got bored and tired.

While he saw some other dealers selling out quickly their charcoal, he said to himself that it is better to burn the signaloes into charcoal in order to get them sold quickly.

After he burnt them, he went to the market again, but the value of the burnt signaloes was less than half of that of the charcoal.

So are the stupid in the world. To attain Buddhahood, it requires them to practice diligently and zealously through various methods. However, they draw back from encountering difficulties. They would resolve reaching Sravaka stage by destroying quickly the Karma of reincarnation in their hope of becoming Arahant.

### **(23) THE THIEF STEALS EMBROIDERED SATIN TO WRAP UP WORN CLOTHES AND RAGS**

Once upon a time there was a thief who sneaked into a rich man's house to steal a piece of embroidered satin. He used it to wrap up such objects as worn clothes, rags and sundry effects. He was laughed at by the wise.

So are the stupid in the world who have faith in Buddhism, who practice good teachings and who do meritorious works. Because of their basic greed for gain, however, they break the pure commandments and lose their various merits. They are also laughed at by the people at large.

#### **(24) TO CULTIVATE THE BOILED SESAME**

Once upon a time, a stupid man who, after eating the raw sesame, found it not as tasty as the boiled kind. He said to himself, "I would boil the sesame before cultivating it. This way I could produce better sesame."

He then boiled and cultivated it as he had planned. However, the attempt failed altogether. So are the people at large who consider it difficult to follow Bodhisattva's practice, due to the strict requirement of eternities of the strenuous efforts. Finding no pleasure, they think that it will be easier for them to become Arahant's by cutting quickly off the transmigration, without realizing that they would never attain Buddhahood that way, just as the boiled seed that would never grow.

This is just like the story of the stupid who tried to cultivate boiled sesame.

#### **(25) THE FIRE AND THE WATER**

Once upon a time, there was a man who needed fire and cold water in caring out his household duties. He built a fire in his room. He filled a kettle with water and put it on the fire. Afterwards, the fire went out and the cold water turned hot. He got neither fire nor cold water.

So are the people at large who, devoted to the attainment of Buddhism, seek the enlightened way by becoming monks. But afterwards, they still keep ties to their wives, children and relatives; maintain their concern with the worldly affairs and their enjoyment of the five desires as well. For these reasons, they lose their meritorious blessings like the fire. They also break their commandments like the cold water.

This is held to be true with greedy men.

#### **(26) THE KING'S BLINKING HABIT IS IMITATED**

Once upon a time, there was a man who wanted to please the king. He asked the others how to do it and was told, "If you want to please the king, you should imitate him."

He then went to the palace where he saw the king blinking. Thereupon, he imitated and the king asked him, "Do you have sore eyes? Is the wind disturbing your eyes? Why are you blinking?"

He replied, "Not at all on seeing your Majesty, I want to be just like you to please your Majesty."

Upon hearing those words, the king got very angry. The man was punished by hard blows and sent into exile.

So are the people at large. They wish to approach Buddha, king of the Law, to achieve advancement. Once there, Buddha reveals to them his human weaknesses for the welfare of all mankind. When they sometimes hear of using incorrect phrases in his teachings, they may be unable to understand Buddha and they start to ridicule and defame him. They imitate all his weaknesses. For this reason, they lose the benefit they have got from Buddhism forever and fall into Three Evil Paths of Transmigration accordingly.

This is just like the story of the man imitating the king's blinking habit.

#### **(27) DRESS WHIP WOUNDS**

Once upon a time, there was a man who was punished by the king by whipping and was wounded from it. He applied on the wounds horse excrement for quick recovery. A stupid

man nearby was pleased to see it. He said to himself, "I have just discovered the method to cure a wound faster."

As soon as he got home, he told his son, "You are going to whip me until I'm wounded. I have got a good method to cure wounds. I should like to try it."

Then, he was flogged by his son who dressed his wounds with horse excrement, believing it was a good method.

So are the people at large who hear that the practice of meditation on impurities could remove the evil corruption of the body. They say to themselves in these words, "We are going to meditate on vengery and the five desires."

They did not see the impurities of the body, but rather got deceitful and wrong ideas from the pursuit of sexual pleasure. Furthermore, they suffer from Transmigration and descend into Hell.

This is held to be true with the stupid at large dressing their wounds with horse excrement.

### **(28) CHANGE THE WIFE'S NOSE**

Once upon a time, there was a man whose wife was graceful except for her ugly nose. When he was out, he saw another graceful looking woman with a pretty nose. It came into his mind that "I would cut her nose and transplant it on my wife's face. Wouldn't that be nice?"

He then cut the nose off this other woman. Caring it home he hurriedly called out to his wife, "Come quickly! I got a pretty nose for you."

Once she came out, he cut off her nose and replaced it with the one he had cut off first. It did not fit; also the wife suffered a great pain.

So are the stupid in the world. They hear that aged monks and Brahmans with great fame and merit are respected and much supported. They say to themselves in these words, "There is no difference between them and us."

They falsely pretend to be virtuous. Not only do they gain nothing, they get a bad name for their misbehavior as well. Those people are just like the stupid man cutting other's nose only to injure his own wife.

### **(29) THE POOR MAN BURNS HIS COARSE WOOLLEN CLOTHING**

Once upon a time, there was a poor and weary man who wore a coarse woolen garment, which he had made for his customer. He was seen by a stranger who said to him, "Coming from an honorable family clan, you are the son of a man of high position. Why do you wear such coarse woolen clothing? Now let me teach you how to get some fine clothes. You should follow my instructions. I won't cheat you."

The poor man follows his instructions happily. The stranger immediately lit a fire before him and said in these words, "Now you may take off your coarse woolen garment and put it into the fire. You'll get some beautiful clothes out of the flame instead."

The poor man did as he was told. After his old clothes were burnt, nothing was left but ashes. So are the people at large.

Our being born as human beings must be attributed to the practice of a good religion from former lives. We should take good care of our beings and improve our virtue and do good deeds. We are sometimes cheated by the heretics, vicious men and seductive women, who said, "You should believe us that you will be reborn, after this life, in the Brahman Heaven and enjoy longevity and happiness, if you practice ascetics by jumping into the fire or rocks now."

This is just like the story of the poor man burning his clothing.

### **(30) THE SHEEP - FARMER**

Once upon a time, there was a shepherd who was skillful in raising as many as thousands of sheep. However, he was so stingy that he would not spend a penny.

At the time, a swindler found means to make friends with him and said, "Since you and I have become intimate friends united as one man, there should be no gap of any kind between us now. I know a pretty girl from a certain family. I should like you to ask her to be your wife."

The sheep-farmer was glad to hear those words. He gave him a flock of sheep and other precious things.

The swindler then said, "Now your wife has brought a child into the world."

The sheep-farmer was very delighted to learn about this, in spite of the fact that he had not met her yet. Again he gave him more things.

Then one day the swindler said, "Your child is dead shortly after birth."

On hearing those words, the sheep-farmer cried bitterly and sighed ceaselessly.

So are the people at large.

There are people who, acquiring much knowledge, put their creed into practice only for fame and gain. They keep secret its teachings, unwilling to preach or to teach the others. Indulging in mundane pleasures, they are cheated by the transience of their bodies like the poor man cheated by the illusion of getting a wife and a child. Consequently, they lose first their good faith, then their lives and finally their precious possessions. They can then only shed bitter tears by getting depressed and melancholy just like the sheep-farmer.

### **(31) MASON WANTED**

Once upon a time, a Brahman master intended to give a big party. He told his disciple, "I need earthenware for the party. Go to the market and fetch for me a mason."

On his way to the mason's home, the disciple came across a man whose donkey was loaded with earthenware for sale in the market. Yet all pottery was broken by the animal in the twinkling of an eye. On his return home, the man was crying and getting quite distraught. On seeing this, the disciple asked: "Why are you so sad and disappointed?"

The man replied, "I have been making earthenware with all my expedient means after toiling and moiling for many years. I was on my way to the market intending to sell them. But this dumb animal has broken all I had in no time. That's why I'm so distraught."

The disciple was glad to see and hear all this and said, "It's a good donkey. I should like to buy it."

The mason was delighted to sell it. When the disciple rode it back, the master asked, "Why didn't you come back with a mason? What's the idea of bringing a donkey here?"

The disciple replied, "This donkey is better than a mason, for it can break things in a split second what a mason has made over a long time."

The master said, "You are stupid and ignorant indeed. Although the donkey can break things in a second, it can't even make one pottery in a hundred years."

So are the people at large. Those who sometimes receive offerings from their benefactors for a hundred years, give nothing in return. On the contrary, they always do more harm than good.

This is held to be true with someone who shows ingratitude.

### **(32) A TRADER STEALS GOLD**

Once upon a time, two traders ran some business together. One was a seller of genuine gold, while the other, Tula cotton. A buyer of gold came along and asked for a fire test before buying it. The cotton trader stole the burnt gold and wrapped it with his Tula cotton, which got all burnt up by the red-hot gold.

Thus the stealing was revealed. Consequently, he lost both gold and Tula cotton.

Like them are the heretics, who steal from Buddhism and write in their own religion. They wrongfully claim Buddhism to be their own teaching and deny copying from it. For this reason, they burn and destroy their heretic scripture, which is disappeared from the world. This is just like the story of the disclosure of the stealing of gold.

### **(33) HACKING A TREE DOWN FOR FRUIT**

Once upon a time, there was a king who had a tremendously gigantic and beautiful tree. It always produced excellent fruit with fragrance and sweetness. One day the king told a guest who was visiting his palace, "Wouldn't you like to pluck some of the fruits?"

The man replied, "I wish to have some, but how Call I get them, the tree is so tall and large."

The king then ordered to have the tree hacked down to get the fruit. In this context, all hard efforts were made in vain. The king still tried to revive the tree, which had withered and died. So are the people at large.

Buddha, the king of the Law, possesses a "tree of keeping commandments" which bears wonderful fruit. It gives people happiness and makes their wishes come true. To get the fruit, one has to observe all commandments.

Those who do not know how to do good deeds by expedient means, do wrong things in breaking commandments instead. This is just like the king who ordered to have the tree hacked down and the unable to make it grow again. Those who break commandments are just like that.

### **(34) TO SEND PURE SPRING WATER**

Once upon a time, there was a village, which was located five Yojanas away from the city and supplied pure spring water. The king ordered the water to be sent to him in the palace every day by the villagers. Becoming utterly weary of the irksome task, they all wanted to move away to some remote place.

To them, the village chief said, "Don't go away. I'll talk with the king for you to alter the distance between here and the palace from five Yojanas into three Yojanas. It would be closer for coming and going without much weariness."

The chief hastened to report to the king who changed the mileage. People were delighted at knowing this. Some of them said that there was no difference whatsoever. Most still stayed on, because of their newly reassured confidence in the king.

So are the people in various walks of life.

Those who devote themselves to the right religion for crossing the Five Paths toward the Nirvana City, intend to abandon their faith when they are weary and exhausted. Traveling by the transmigration boat, they are unable to make their way toward the shore.

However, Buddha, the king of the Law, has many expedient means from the One Vehicle to the Three Vehicles. Those who follow the Hinayana sect are glad to hear those words and find it easier to practice. Therefore, they spare no effort to do good deeds and improve

themselves spiritually so as to make their way of transmigration toward the other shores. Afterwards, they realize that there is no Three Vehicles but ones. Because of the confidence in Buddha's words, they do not want to abandon their faith by then. This is just like the story of the villagers ending pure spring water.

### **(35) THE MIRROR IN A VALUABLE CASE**

Once upon a time there was a poor and weary man who was always in debt. Insolvent, he hid himself in the wilderness where he found a valuable case full of precious things. A crystal mirror covered them. The poor man was most delighted to see them. He did not hesitate to take them. But he was frightened when he discovered a man's image in the mirror. Twisting his hands, he said, "I thought it was nothing more than an empty case. I wasn't aware of your being in the case. Don't get angry with me!"

He then gave up the whole case. So are the people from all walks of life.

Those who are weary of countless annoyances in life and persecuted by the creditors of the Transmigration Devil, want to avoid them and free from them through their belief in Buddhism. They begin to practice their faith and do good deeds just as the valuable case to the poor man. Troubled by the man's image- in the mirror, they wrongly cling to the ego taken as the real. They fall decadent and lose all their merits acquired previously from meditation, monastic grade and good deeds. Furthermore, they fail in their attainment of the Nirvana from the Three Vehicles, just like the stupid man sticking to the prejudice of the ego and abandoning their precious findings in the case.

### **(36) TO BLIND AN IMMORTAL**

Once upon a time, there was a man who went to the mountains to learn Buddhist Priesthood. He succeeded in becoming an Immortal possessing five supernatural powers. His divine vision could perceive all hidden sundry treasures. Upon hearing it, the king said to one of his ministers excitedly:

"In order to add more valuable things to my treasury, could you make this man live permanently in our country?"

The stupid minister went to his man soon afterwards and took his eyes. He then went back to the king and said, "I have gouged out his eyes so he couldn't go away but stay in this country forever."

The king exclaimed, "What is important for his staying in this country is that he could perceive all hidden treasures. Now that you have gouged out his eyes, he is useless to me." So are the people at large. Upon seeing a monk making strenuous efforts to meditate on the Fourfold stage of Mindfulness and the impurities of the human body on mountain groves, among tombs, in the wilderness or under a tree, a layman invited him home to practice by making various offerings. But in so doing, he destroys the monk's good works done before and his chance of attaining Nirvana. Therefore, he makes him lose the benefit of the eyes of Enlightenment without obtaining anything.

This is just like the fatuous minister blinding the man with no avail. .

### **(37) TO KILL A HERD OF CATTLE**

Once upon a time, there was a man who owned two hundred fifty cows. He often took them to the pastureland for grazing. By accident, one day a cow was killed by a tiger. The cattle

owner said to himself, "Now that a cow is lost, it's no longer an even number. What's the use of having them at all?"

He then drove the cattle to a high cliff and killed them all by pushing them down the cliff.

So are the vulgar people in the world.

One who observes all of Buddha's commandments breaks one commandment without any sense of shame or repentance. On the contrary, he says to himself: "Now that one commandment is broken, I'm no longer perfect. What's the use of keeping any of the others?" All commandments are broken as a result of his ill logic. He is just like the stupid man killing all his cattle.

### **(38) YELLING AT WATER**

Once upon a time, there was a man who was tired and thirsty from traveling. He drank some fresh running water from the wooden bucket. After he had had enough, he raised his hands in front of the water and said, "I have had enough to drink. Stop flowing!"

The water went on. Losing his temper, he yelled, "I told you to stop. Why don't you listen?"

On seeing this, an onlooker said, "You are so ignorant. Why don't you just leave?"

Thereupon, the onlooker drew him away.

So are the people at large.

One who immerses himself in transmigrations and the thirst of desire drinks salty water of the five desires. After getting tired of them, he says in those words, "Disappear, thou Five Desires. Don't let me see you again, I've told you. Why are you still present?"

A wise man tells him, "You can keep the Five Desires away by controlling your six organs of senses<sup>2</sup> or by closing your mind and thought to them. Then illusions will not arise and consequently Enlightenment may be attained. Why do you need to tell "Desires" to be out of your sight and to disappear?"

This is just like the story of the man yelling at the water.

### **(39) HOUSE PAINTING**

Once upon a time, there was a man who went to another man's house, which had just been painted, and the floor made even. It was nice and clean. He asked the host, "With what paint did you make the wall so white and beautiful?"

The host replied, "I mixed rice bran with water and clay. The beauty is the result."

To himself, the guest said, "It would be better if he had used rice grain instead of bran. The wall would be more smooth and more beautiful."

He then used his own formula on his own house. The walls turned out to be concave and convex with cracks on them.

The stupid man thus wasted all his rice grain. It had better have done alms-giving to obtain any merits.

So are the common people. Those who have heard the Saints preaching that people who do good deeds may go to Heaven after death and consequently get deliverance, commit suicide to get there. They merely lose their lives in vain without getting anywhere just like that stupid man with his paint.

### **(40) TO CURE BALDNESS**

Once upon a time, there was a man who was completely bald. He felt very cold in winter and hot in summer. He was stung by gadflies and mosquitoes. He suffered from his baldness day

and night. One day, he went to see a specialist well known for his medical and surgical practice and said, "Great Master! Would you cure my baldness?"

Taking off his hat, the doctor revealed to him that he too was bald and said, "I have the same trouble as you. If I could cure it, I would have done so with myself long time ago."

So are the people at large. Suffering from the agonies of birth, old age, sickness and death, people seek for immortality. They hear Sramanas, Brahmans etc, are the best doctors in the world who know now to cure all kinds of diseases. They go to a Brahman and say, "Would you release us from the pain of impenitence and transmigration and help us live in happiness and immortality?"

The Brahman tells them, "I also suffer from those agonies that you feel. So I'm looking for immortality, which I can't find. If I was able to make you get it, I would get it first for myself and then for you too."

The Brahman is just like the bald man getting weary in vain for his healing.

#### **(41) PISACAH DEVILS**

Once upon a time, there were two Pisacah devils who conjointly owned a suitcase, a stick and a pair of wooden shoes about which they fought for their monopoly. They were quarreling all day long without reaching a settlement.

An onlooker came over and asked, "What are the particularities of those three things that you have been fighting for so angrily?"

The two devils replied, "This suitcase of ours turns out all sorts of things such as clothes, food, bed articles used on a bed, and other living necessities. One who takes the stick can conquer his hateful enemies without encountering resistance. One who puts on these shoes will be able to fly without a hitch."

Upon hearing it, the onlooker said to the devils, "Would you please stand further away! Let me equally apportion them to you both."

The two devils moved away. Immediately the onlooker flew off snatching their suitcase and stick with the shoes on. The two devils were startled at the loss of their share. To them he said, "I got what you have been fighting for. Now you need not are any more."

Here Pisacah refers to devils and heretics.

Almsgiving applies to the suitcase that turns out all the essential things to the needs of the Five Ways of Existence such as human beings, Devas, etc.

Meditation symbolizes the stick, which can disperse or submit devils, enemies and afflictions as thieves.

Commandments observing is like the shoes that ensure rebirth in the world of Devas and men.

As for the devils and heretics, coveting the suitcase, it signifies that they labor themselves to the seeking for the reward of Enlightenment in the imperfect way, which result in nothing to be obtained.

If one can perform acts of merit together with almsgiving, commandments observing and meditation practice, he will be rid of all suffering and in turn obtain Nirvana.

#### **(42) THE TRADER AND THE DEAD CAMEL**

Once there was a trader who was traveling on business. It so happened that the camel suddenly died on the way. The animal was loaded with valuable things such as jewels,

clothes, carpet of first quality and sundries. The trader then skinned the camel. He went away leaving it to his two apprentices and said, "Watch the camel's skin. Don't let it get damp." Later, when it started to rain, the two dull men covered the skin with all the fine carpet, which became entirely ruined. Obviously the skin and carpet differed much in price. They put the carpet to cover the skin out of ignorance.

So are the people at large.

Abstaining from killing refers to the fine carpet, the camel's skin, and wealth. To let the carpet get damp when it is raining means to undermine recklessly good merits.

The abstention from killing is the supreme motive to attain Buddhahood. Unfortunately, people do not effectively practice it. They merely adhere to build pagodas or temples and give alms to support monks. This is giving up the essential and pursuing the non-essential. In other words, people are not conscious of seeking the fundamental. Unable to go out of the vicious cycle, they lead their lives, through the Five Ways of existence. Therefore, the commandment of the abstention from killing should be earnestly observed by the followers.

#### **(43) TO GRIND A BIG STONE**

Once there was a man who ground a big stone with great effort. He made a small toy bull out of it after days and months of labor. The effort being made was strenuous, yet the gain expected was trivial.

So are the people from all walks of life.

Grinding a stone refers to learning seriously and diligently.

To make a small toy bull applies 'to the illusive fame and the inducement of the mutual criticism.

A scholar should endeavor himself to serious studying to get wide and extensive knowledge. Furthermore, he has to put his learning into practice so as to obtain some fulfillment. The goal must not be the illusive fame, complacency and arrogance, which breed only sins and calamities.

#### **(44) EATING HALF A PANCAKE**

Once there was a man who felt hungry and longed to eat seven pancakes. He was already full when he had eaten six pancakes and a half. He was so sorry for having ordered seven of them that he slapped his own face and said, "Half a pancake has filled me up. The other six are wasted. If only I had known that, I should have ordered only half a cake."

So are the people at large.

There is actually no pleasure in life. There are only illusions, just like the stupid man getting full illusion with half a cake.

Being ignorant, people view wealth and honor as pleasure. It is sometimes a painful process to get them. It is also sometimes hard to keep them. It is all the more painful when they have lost them. Therefore, they give no pleasure to people at all times.

It is just like people taken in by clothes and food as pleasure. They also bear illusions of the word "pleasure" when they are toiling and moiling. All Buddhas have it that the Three Worlds<sup>1</sup> has no peace but great suffering. Ignorant man with wrong views still clings desperately to illusions.

#### **(45) THE SLAVE GUARDS THE DOOR**

Once there was a man who was about to take a long trip. He gave orders to his slave and said, "Keep a close watch over the door as well as the donkey and the rope".

After his departure, the neighbor was playing music with drew attention of the slave. He put the rope and the door on the ass' back and went to the neighbor to listen to the music. The house was then ransacked by a thief after he had left it. On his return, the master asked the slave what had happened to his house.

The slave replied, "You told me to take care of the door, the ass and the rope. I know nothing about the rest."

Again the master said, "The whole idea of watching the door is for you to watch the house. Now that the house has been robbed, what's the use in having the door?"

Stupid men in the world cling to birth and death (or transmigration) by their lust for life like the slave to the door.

Buddha preaches to control the six sense organs (the door) without attaching to the six objective fields. In addition, he advises to keep watch on human folly (the ass) as well as all desires (the rope). However, most monks do not follow the teachings of Buddhism seeking enviously material offerings from others. Even when practicing meditation, they give an appearance to being pure and clean. But their minds are still unsettled by their attachment to the five desires and deluded by sight, sound, smell, taste etc. When ignorance takes over the mind and attachment to desires comes into being, all lost will be the right thought, the enlightened mind and the monastic grades (Just as the robbed house of the told story).

#### **(46) TO STEAL THE YAK**

Once there was a village whose people jointly participated in stealing a yak for food. The man who lost the yak followed their trail to the village. He called out to the villagers, "Do you all live in this village?"

The villagers replied, "We live in no village."

Again the man asked, "There is a pond in your village. Have you eaten the yak together on the side of the pond?"

Replied the people: "We know of no pond."

Again he asked, "Is there any tree near the pond?"

They answered, "We know of no tree."

Again he asked, "Were you on the east side of your village when you stole my yak?"

They answered, "We know of no east direction."

Again he asked, "Wasn't it at noon when you stole my yak?"

They answered, "We know of no noon time."

Again he asked, "Although it is possibly true of your first three answers, how can you say there is no direction and no time in all the world. Now I know you are lying. So I don't believe you at all. Sure enough, you have stolen my yak. Haven't you?"

Thereupon, the stealer could not but admit it.

So are those who break commandments. People who hide their sins are reluctant to disclose them. They will, however, go to hell after their death. Since Devas and good gods possess supernatural eyes, people should not even try to deceive them just like the villagers should not refuse to admit stealing a yak for food

#### **(47) THE POOR MAN CROWS LIKE A DUCK**

It happened once that a foreign country was celebrating its Religious Day for festivities. All women wore blue lotus flowers as ornament in their hair.

To her husband, a woman said, "If you can get blue lotus flowers for me, I shall remain as your wife. Otherwise, I'll walk out on you."

Her husband was capable of crowing like a duck. He then entered the king's pond to steal blue lotus flowers. He crowed when he was caught by the palace guard. The guard asked: "Who are you?"

With a slip of the tongue, the poor man replied: "I'm a duck."

He was arrested and was taken to the king. On the way, he crowed again. Thereupon, the guard said, "You didn't crow properly before, what's the use of doing so now?"

So are the stupid in the world.

One who in his lifetime does all kinds of evil deeds to the others, is reluctant to repent and subdue his mind. Only at the time of his demise, he says, "From now on, I shall start to do good deeds."

The guard will nevertheless send him to the King of Hell. It is too late for him to want to do good deeds, just as the stupid man who could crow like duck.

#### **(48) THE FOX WAS HIT BY A SNAP TO TWIG**

Once a fox who stood under a tree was hit by a twig fallen on his back. He then closed his eyes for he did not like to see the tree. Soon after, he went to an open space. He would not return even when night fell.

Later, however, when he saw the branches and the leaves of a big tree wavering up and down in the wind, he said to himself, "The tree must be calling me." He then went back under the tree where he had got hit earlier.

So is a stupid disciple.

In his attempt of becoming a monk, he has chances to approach a tutor from who he runs away at his first slight rebuke. Afterwards, he gets into a lot of trouble when he meets friends who have adverse influence over him. Only then does he begin to think of returning to his tutor. It is indeed stupid of him to go and come like that.

#### **(49) BOYS' ARGUMENT ON THE SUBJECT OF HAIR**

There were once two boys who dived in a river where they found at its bottom a bundle of feathers. One said that it was the beard of some spirit, whereas the other said it was the bear's hair. They argued without a right answer. A supernatural being nearby was then approached by the two and was asked to settle the argument. He put rice and sesame seeds into his mouth and chewed for a while, then he spat them into his hand and said, "What I have got here seems to me a peacock's excrement."

It is known his answer was beyond the question, which was put to him. So are the stupid in the world.

During the time of preaching, those who facetiously discuss the teachings of Buddhism do not give the answer to the right doctrine, just like the supernatural being not answering the question. People from all walks of life are made a laughing stock. So is the frivolous and empty gossip.

#### **(50) TO CURE A HUNCHBACK**

Once there was a man who suddenly became a hunchback. He went to a physician who treated him first with ointment smeared on his back, and who then squeezed the hunchback between two pieces of woodblock. The doctor pressed the woodblock so hard that the hunchback's eyes popped out.

So are the stupid in the world.

In seeking for wealth, people try their hands in every possible trade. What they don't realize is that even if they commit crimes most furtively, they will make more injuries than profits, just like the doctor made the hunchback's eyes popped. They will one day go to Hell.

#### **(51) A MAID AND HER FIVE MASTERS**

Once there were five men who together bought a maid to whom one of them said, "Get my clothes washed."

Another man also told her to do the same thing. But the maid said he would wash for whoever gave her clothes first. Angrily the second man said, "Since I have bought you with others, how can you wash only for the first one who gave the elder?"

Then he beat her ten strokes with a whip. Thus she was whipped as much by each of the five masters.

So are the five components of human bodies, which are the sources of annoyances. They whip the sentient beings with birth giving, old age, sickness, death and numerous other miseries.

#### **(52) THE MUSICIAN**

Once a musician played in the presence of the king who had promised him a thousand coins. Later, he asked the king for the money. The king refused to give it to him and said, "The music you played doesn't make me merry for a long time. Therefore, the money that I intent to give you is also to please you just for a while."

So is the wordy retribution.

While there is little pleasure in human lives and in Heaven, there is also little substance in them. Owing to impermanence and destruction, the pleasure does not last for long just like the music giving only a transient rejoicing.

#### **(53) THE MASTER'S ACHING LEGS**

Once a master told two of his disciples to take care of his aching legs. Each one had to massage continuously each of his two legs. The two disciples bear strong dislike of each other. When one left for a break, the other broke with a stone the leg that the first one had massaged out of spite. The first one, angry at his doings, broke the other leg that the second one had massaged.

So are the Buddhist disciples. The scholars of Mahayana criticize the Hinayana, and vice-versa. Therefore, these two schools' scriptures of the Great Saint, run the risk to be both vanishing.

#### **(54) THE SNAKE'S ARGUMENT**

Once there was a snake whose tail told its head, "I should lead the way."

And the head said, "I'm used to leading, why do you want to change positions so suddenly?"

When the head led the way, the tail knotted himself around a tree and was unwilling to move.

And when the tail led, the snake fell into a burning pit and was burnt to its death.

This is also true with teachers and disciples.

The disciples have a fancy that the young should lead the way, as they think teachers are too old to lead. Due to their youthful immaturity, they often break commandments without being aware of it. They end up dragging each other down to Hell.

#### **(55) TO BE A KING'S BARBER**

Once upon a time, a king's personal attendant risked his life to save the king at the battlefield. The king was so grateful that he gave his lifesaver whatever he wanted. The king asked, "What do you want? Your wishes shall be granted."

The man replied, "Allow me to shave you when you need a shave."

The king said, "If that is what you wish to do, I'll grant it to you."

Such a stupid man is laughed at by the people at large. It would be so much better for the barber to ask for half a country or to become prime minister or minister of State rather than to practice the mean profession. Only a stupid man would do so.

To attain Buddhahood, all Buddhas cultivate themselves with hardship during a long and painful period of time. What people do not realize is that Buddha Sakyamuni's bequeathed teachings are scarce to be heard and our human bodies are hard to be acquired as well. It is like a blind turtle's trouble in finding a log hole floating at the surface of the water.

Fortunately enough, once these two difficulties are overcome, people are self-complacent with their shallow mind and few commandments are observed without any ambition of ever attaining Nirvana, the perfect Enlightenment. They find themselves contented with no further improvement and instead end up doing evil deeds.

#### **(56) TO ASK NOTHING**

Once upon a time, two men walking together saw another fellow trying in vain to pull a chariot loaded with sesame out of a hole on the road.

To the two men, the fellow said, "Please give me a hand."

The two men replied, "What are our, rewards?"

The fellow said, "Nothing."

In spite of the answer, the two men helped to get the chariot out of the hole. They demanded, "Now give us something."

The fellow replied, "I'll give you nothing!"

Again the men said, "Give us 'Nothing' then!"

Half smiling, one of them said, "He doesn't want to give us anything. No use getting upset."

The other one replied, "He said he'd give us 'nothing'. We'll settle for that 'nothing'."

When one of them says 'nothing', that 'nothing' is composed of two words, which constitute an unreal name. If the vulgar and common people cling to 'nothing', they will be born in Space World of Formlessness.

Whereas the other says 'nothing' to signify no form, no vows and no Karma.

#### **(57) TREADING ON THE ELLDERS MOUTH**

Once upon a time there was an extremely wealthy elder whose attendants were eager to please him by paying him all due deference. When he spat, the attendants rubbed it with their feet. Among them J was this stupid man who said to himself, "When he spits on the ground, others rub it with their feet, Now I'm going to be the first one to render the service of rubbing it when he spits next time."

So when the Elder was about to cough and spit out, the man kicked up his foot and trod on the elder's mouth. He broke the old man's lips and teeth. To the stupid man, the elderly man said, "What did you do that for?"

The stupid man replied, "Though I would like to serve you, I have always fallen behind others. So I thought by kicking up my foot when you were about to spit out from your mouth, I would be the first to please you."

People have to pick the right time to do the right thing. They will get into trouble otherwise, even using every possible means to achieve a purpose. Therefore, they should know when it is right or wrong time.

### **(58) THE TWO BROTHERS AND THEIR INHERITANCE**

Once upon a time, there was a Ksatriya of the Makara Kingdom who fell seriously ill, and was aware of the fatal hour. To his two sons he ordered, "After my death, divide between the two of you evenly my effects and money."

After his death, the two sons followed their father's will. But the elder brother complained against the younger of unfairness in their shares. An old man nearby said, "Let me teach you how to divide equally your father's fortune."

"How!" they asked.

The old man replied, "Cut all the valuable garments into two parts. Then break everything else into two equal parts, such as tray, bottle, bowl, dish, money and so forth."

People laughed at his suggestion. Such folly is just like those heretics who use one-sided method of separate answer to all questions.

There are four ways to answer questions as follows:

1. Affirmative answer.

For instance: All human beings are mortal

2. Separate answer

For instance: The dead will be reborn.

This should be answered separately. Those who have no desires at all will not be reborn.

Those who have desires will be reborn.

3. Reversal question and answer.

For example, someone asks: "Are all human beings supreme ones?" This can be questioned reversely as follows: "Are you referring to the Three Paths of Transmigration or to the host of Devas?"

If you are referring to the former, I should say human beings are supreme. If the latter, I should say human beings are not equals to Devas.

4. No answers to questions

If you ask the fourteen difficult questions, such as whether the world has limit or whether human beings have any beginnings or ends.

Pretending to be wise, the ignorant heretics divide the four ways of answering questions by only using the separate answer, just like the stupid man giving advice to the two sons to divide all effects and money into two parts.

### **(59) WATCHING URN MAKING**

Once two men went to a potter's field where they watched a tread-wheel making urns. They were delighted at seeing the work without satiety. One then left for the great assembly where

he was well received with excellent food and got precious teachings as well. The other stayed on at the plant and said, "I'll get a good look at how urns are made."

Thus he stayed till the sun set without realizing how hungry he really was or how chilly it had gotten.

So are the stupid who engage themselves in their housework without being aware that all things are subject to change.

People are inclined to be very fickle nowadays.

Apparition of Buddhas and Great Dragons thunders all over the world.

The rain of Buddhist teachings fertilizes all beings, except for those who stick to trifles.

Being unconscious of death that could come any time, people miss the opportunity to attend to Buddhist assemblies.

They are unable to be inspired by the precious teachings as a treasure and always remain in misery.

Those who are abandoning the right doctrine and looking endlessly at the trifles of urn making lose the benefit of learning and will never get deliverance.

### **(60) SEEING THE SHADOW OF GOLD AT THE BOTTOM OF A POND**

Once upon a time, there was a man who went to a large pond where he thought he had seen the shadow of pure gold at the bottom of water. He gave a cry of joy and jumped into the water to feel about the mud and search for it.

A few moments later, he began to feel very tired. He could not find any gold and he then got out of the pond. But as soon as he was out of the water that became clear in no time, the golden shadow turned up again. Then he dived once again to do more searching. Still he found nothing. At this point, his father came looking for him. Seeing the state he was in, his father asked, "What have you been doing to get so tired?"

The son replied, "There is pure gold under water. I searched for it, but could find nothing."

The father could also see the shadow of pure gold in the water. But he soon realized that it was in the trees. So he knew what was in the water was mere reflection. Then he told his son that it was held by the bird's beak and brought it in the trees. Following his father's instructions, the son immediately got the gold from the trees.

So are the ignorant in the world. They hold on to tile thought of ego in the shadow of non-ego, just like the stupid man looking desperately for the gold without success.

### **(61) BRAHMA'S DISCIPLE CAN CREATE ALL THINGS**

Brahmans say that the Great Brahma was both father of the world and creator of all things.

One of the Great Brahma's disciples once said he also had the power to create things. He was too stupid to be wise.

To the great Brahma, he said, "I can create everything."

The Great Brahma replied, "Don't talk like that. You can't. Since you don't listen to me, I wonder how you do it."

After seeing what his disciple had creased, the Great Brahma said, "The man's head that you have made is too big and the neck too thin. The hands are too long and the arms too bony.

The feet are too small and the legs too fat. It looks like a Pisacah devil."

Through the Great Brahma's words, we should realize that human beings are created by their own deeds resulting from Karma and not by the power of the Great Brahma.

Buddha's preaching is not ambiguous. As they preach the Eightfold Noble Path, they cling neither to the view of total annihilation nor that of permanence. On the contrary, the heretics do cling to the view of annihilation and permanence. They cheat the world by performing ceremonies and creating images. What they preach really is not Buddhism.

### **(62) THE PATIENT EATS THE PHEASANT MEAT**

Once upon a time, there was a man who was seriously ill. A skillful physician prescribed that he could be cured by eating some pheasant meat. After he finished eating one, the patient did not eat it again. Afterwards, the doctor came to him and asked, "How do you feel now?" The patient replied, "You have told me to eat some pheasants. Now that I have eaten it, I dare not eat it again."

The physician said, "But why not? How can you expect to be cured with only one pheasant?" This is also true with all the heretics. They should understand what the mind means on hearing such wise and skillful doctors as Buddha's and Bodhisattva's preaching. However, they cling to the view of permanence thinking that there is only one mind from the past, present through future, which does not undergo any change. This is just like the patient eating only one pheasant that his illness of ignorance and worries cannot be cured.

All Omniscient Buddhas teach the heretics to abandon their prejudiced view of permanence.

For all phenomena are subject to change at the time of thought. How can the mind remain unchanged! This is just like the physician's telling the patient to eat more pheasants.

So is Sakyamuni Buddha's preaching to all men to understand all his teachings. Sakyamuni has it that things which can be ruined or destroyed are called impenitence.

Things which can be lasted are called continuity.

Once the context is understood, people will eradicate the wrong view of permanence.

### **(63) AN ACTOR WEARING A DEMON'S GARMENT**

Once upon a time, there was a troupe of actors from Cadhara Kingdom, rambling in different parts of the country giving performances due to a famine. They passed the Pala New Mountain where evil demons and men-eater Raksas had been found. The troupe had to lodge in the mountain where it was windy and cold. They slept with the fire on. One of them who were chilly wore Raksa demon's costume and sat near the fire when another actor awoke and saw him. He ran away without looking closely at him. In general panic, the whole troupe got up and ran away. The one who wore the Raksa garment, not realizing what was happening, followed them.

Seeing he was behind them, all the actors got more frightened to do them harm. They crossed rivers and mountains, and jumped into ditches and gullies. All got wounded in addition to the great fear they suffered. They did not realize that he was not a demon until daybreak. So are all the common people. Those who happen to be in the midst of the misfortune of famine, do not spare themselves trouble to go far away to seek for the sublime teaching of the Four Transcendental Realities of Nirvana, namely eternity, bliss, personality and purity. However, they cling to their egos which are nothing more than five components of a human being.

Because of this, they are flowing back again and again through transmigration. Pursued by temptation, they are out of sorts in falling into the ditch of the Three Evil Paths. Only when the night of transmigration is ended, does the wisdom appear once again. Also only at this moment can one perceive the five components of a human being have no real ego.

#### **(64) AN EVIL DEMON IN THE OLD HOUSE**

Once upon a time, there was an old house where the rumors had it that an evil demon often appeared. People were so frightened that no one would dare to be in it. A man claiming himself dauntless said: "I would like to spend a night in this house." So he did.

Upon hearing from the bystander that the house was frequently haunted by an evil demon, another man also wanted to do the same proving himself to be more intrepid than the first one. He tried to enter by pushing the door.

The one who had got into the house first thought the second one to be the demon and blocked the door to his entrance. The second, unable to open the door, thought the first one to be the demon. They first argued and then began to fight until dawn. When finally coming face to face, they realized that they were both mistaken.

So are the people at large.

Our ego is subject to the law of impermanence and cause-effect, and therefore there is no mastering power in our body. Considering and analyzing all in all, one can only ask who the ego is. However, human beings indulge in ill-natured gossip everywhere, and fight each other like those men in this told story.

#### **(65) FIVE HUNDRED HAPPY PILLS**

Once upon a time, there was a woman who led a promiscuous life. She hated her husband when she was burning with lascivious desires. However, there was no opportunity for her to carry out any of her schemes to kill him. It so happened that her husband was sent on an official mission to a neighboring state, the woman secretly prepared some poisonous pills. To the husband she said with a faked tenderness, "Now that you have been sent far away on this official mission, I have prepared for you five hundred pills both as food supplies and as something to cheer you up. You will take them when you are hungry, when you reach the border."

The husband did not take them when he crossed the frontier. It was dark then and he decided to rest in the forest. Afraid of wild animals, he climbed up a tree to spend the night. He left his pills under the tree.

On that same night, a group of five hundred thieves stopped at the same spot with five hundred horses and precious things stolen from their king. They were all hungry and thirsty from their narrow escape. Finding those pills under the tree, the thieves took them and, on account of the strong poisonous effect, died one after another in no time.

At daybreak, the man hiding in the tree saw the dead thieves. Then he deceitfully made as if he slew and shot the corpses with swords and arrows. Afterward, he got all the horses as well as the stolen goods together and rode towards the foreign country.

Meanwhile, the king was on his way with his guards trying to apprehend the thieves. They came across the man and asked, "Who are you? Where did you get these horses?"

The man replied, "I have come on a special mission. On the way, I encountered this band of thieves. I fought them and killed them all. Their corpses are under a tree over there. That's how I got these horses and precious things. If your Majesty doesn't believe it, you can inspect the casualties on the spot where we fought."

Immediately, the king sent his guards to inspect the spot. They found out what he had said was true. The king was overwhelmed with admiration for his unusual bravery. Later, when the man was sent back to his own country, the king bestowed him both a knighthood and treasures as well as a piece of land.

The king's old officials said with jealousy, "Why does your Majesty bestow him such rewards to a but stranger? Besides, the grant of his title of honors goes above the old officials."

Hearing those words the stranger said, "Who is intrepid enough to challenge me? Let's have a duel."

The old officials were startled and none would venture to accept the challenge. At the time, there was a ferocious lion in the wilderness of the country, which often disturbed the royal passages. The lion killed many travelers. The old officials conferred on the matter.

"The way this stranger brags so much about his fighting spirit, it will be wonderful if he is made to kill the lion for the sake of the country."

They then asked the king to give him a sword and spear, and sent him off to kill the lion. The lion attacked him with a roar as soon as it saw him. In great fear, the man climbed up the tree. The lion lifted its head towards him and roared. The man got so frightened that he dropped his sword right into the lion's mouth. The king of the forest died instantaneously. The stranger, delirious with happiness over his new conquest, came to report the news to the king who, in turn, multiplied his rewards. Furthermore, he got respect and praises from the whole court as well as the country.

In view of this story:

" The pills are referred to as an unclean almsgiving;

" The king's guards are referred to as good friends;

" The arrival at a foreign country is referred to as all Devas;

" Killing the band of thieves is referred to as obtaining the Sotapanna's degree resolving to cut the Five Desires together with other worries;

" Meeting the king is referred to as coming across the Sage and Saint;

" Other officials jealousy is referred to as the heretics who utter slander against the wise by saying there is no way that the wise are capable to cut off the Five Desires and other worries;

" The stranger's bragging is referred to as the heretics who can not resist him;

" Killing the lion is referred to as destroying all evil demons and thus obtaining the title of honors for the unattached way of Nirvana;

" The man's fear is referred to as the weak bringing the strong into Subjection.

People should earnestly do almsgiving out of kindness or compassion. They would gain so much more in reward considering how the man in this story gained out of an ill almsgiving, which later on turned into a good one, thanks to the good friends he met.

## **(66) READING THE SAILING METHODS**

Once upon a time, there was a young man from a respectable family who went to the sea with some merchants to look for pearls. He had read all about sailing such as to know how to steer the boat, how to take the right direction and how to hold in good position when they had to face whirlpools, countercurrents, or rocks during the, journey.

To everybody aboard, he said, "I know all about sailing."

Everyone believed him. It was not long before the captain of the boat fell ill and died soon after. He then took charge of the boat. When they came to whirlpools and rapid currents, he recited what he had read without knowing how to put those instructions into practice. The boat that was strolling and going round could not advance to the pearls place. Then they all drowned.

So are the common people. They have little knowledge of quiet sitting, of counting the breathings and of contemplating on the uncleanness of human body for the practice of meditation. Although they can read the scriptures, they do not grasp the meaning. In fact, they know really nothing about all the methods of meditation. They preach the wrong ways, pretending to be well acquainted with the right ways. Bewildered and diffident, the followers turn the characteristics of things upside down, getting nothing in return over the whole year or a number of years. They are just like those who drowned at sea by the stupid man in this story.

#### **(67) A BET OVER A CAKE**

Once upon a time, there were a man and his wife who shared three cakes. On the third, they made a bet, "whoever talks first loses his share of the cake." After this, they stopped talking. In no time, a thief forced his way into the house to rob valuable things. The couple saw that everything fell into the thief's hand without uttering a sound, due to the bet they had made previously. Seeing that they said nothing, the thief started to attack the wife in the presence of her husband who still would not utter a word. Then she shouted to her husband, "How stupid you are! You wouldn't shout only because of a cake."

Clapping his hand in joy, the husband said, "Oh! My girl. I'll get the cake. I won't give you any of it."

Upon hearing the story, everyone nearby laughed at them.

So are the common people.

For a little fame and gain, people deceptively appear to be quiet and silent. When they are disturbed with their false worries and all other evil thoughts, they are not afraid of losing their good teachings and falling into the Three Evil Paths of Transmigration. They do not try to seek to leave this world. When they have their five desires fulfilled, they do not think of the ensuing suffering. Therefore, they are in no way different from that stupid husband.

#### **(68) BEARING A GRUDGE AGAINST ONE ANOTHER**

Once upon a time, there was an unhappy man who bore grudges against another man. He was asked: "Why are you so unhappy?"

He replied: "Somebody speaks ill of me. I don't know how to do it. That's why I'm so upset."

He was told, "Only with the Vetala incantation can you hurt him. However, there will be a drawback. That is to say, instead of your hurting him, you will suffer from your boom rang."

Upon hearing these words, he cheered up and said, "Please show me the way. Even though I'll hurt myself, I still would like to hurt him."

So are the people at large.

Out of revenge, people seek the Vatala incantation to hurt others without realizing that to feel anger and hatred is to get hurt themselves and fall into the Three Evil Paths of hells, beasts and hungry ghosts. They are in no way different from the stupid man in this story.

#### **(69) THE MAN EATS QUICKLY**

Once upon a time, there was a man who went from North India to the South where he lived for a long time, got married and settled down. One day the wife prepared some food. The husband ate it in one mouthful while it was piping hot. She asked in shock, "There is no one here trying to take the food away from you. What made you eat so fast?"

The husband said, "That's a great secret that I have been keeping from you."

Upon hearing these words, the wife insisted on knowing the secret, thinking there might have some special reason for it. After a pause, the husband replied, "My ancestors made it a rule to eat quickly, I'm doing it nothing more than an act of observing the tradition. This is the reason of my eating in a hurry.

The same also holds true with the common people. People who are doing evil things have no sense of shame, because they do not know what is right or how to distinguish truth from falsehood. They say they observe the tradition. They accept and follow it to death, just like that stupid man making it a rule to eat quickly.

### **(70) TO TASTE APPLES**

Once upon a time, there was an elderly man who sent a servant to buy him some apples. He gave him orders as follows, "You'll buy some good and sweet apples for me."

The servant then went on an errand with money. The owner of the apple orchard said to him, "All my apples are good and sweet: There is not a single bad one. You'll know it when you taste one."

The servant said, "I'll buy some after I taste every single one of them. How do I know about the rest. If I only taste one?"

After tasting them one by one, he bought the apples. The master did not like the sight of all these half-eaten apples and he threw them all out.

This is also held to be true with the people at large.

Seeing that all those who keep almsgiving commandment, can acquire great wealth and happiness, physically at ease and mentally stable. People still remark in disbelief, "We'll believe it if we can get them for ourselves."

To see for yourself in noble and base, rich and poor of this World, you would attribute those people to retribution of the previous lives. But they hardly know to deduce the Law of Cause and Effect, which they are reluctant to draw a general rule from particular instances. It is to be regretted for their disbelief. For once death approaches them, they have to leave their worldly possessions just like the elderly man throwing out all the half-eaten apples.

### **(71) THE MAN WHO TURNED BLIND**

Once upon a time, there was a man who had two wives. Whenever he was with one of them, the other got very angry. Faced with such a dilemma, he decided one night to lie flat on the back between the two. It happened that it was raining so heavily that their house began to have a leak. Water and mud fell into his eyes, but he dared not get up and run away, due to the decision he had taken before. Finally he became completely blind.

This is also held to be true with the common people of the world.

By keeping bad company and doing unlawful deeds, people create Karmas and fall into the Three Evil Paths of Transmigration. Not only will they remain in the round of existences forever, but also lose their eyes of wisdom, just like the stupid man who turned blind.

### **(72) AN OPERATION ON THE MOUTH**

Once upon a time, there was a man who went to his wife's home where he saw people removing the husk from rice. He stole some rice and hid it in his mouth. When the wife came to talk to him, he could not answer her with his mouth full. He disliked to leave it lest he would put her to shame. So he stood speechless. That aroused her curiosity all the more.

Looking at him and feeling him with her hands, she found his mouth swollen. Thereupon she said to her father, "On his way over, my husband suddenly got a swollen mouth and is unable to speak."

Immediately her father sent for a doctor who said, "Very serious is your illness. It will be cured by an operation."

Then an operation on his mouth was done and his act of theft was exposed.

This is also held to be true with the people at large.

In doing evil deeds to break the pure commandments and hiding sins, people descend to the Three Evil Ways of hells, beats and hungry ghosts. This is just like the stupid man, being reluctant to let out rice, on account of a trifling shame matter, and undergoing an operation on his mouth to reveal his sins.

### **(73) THE HORSE WAS DEAD**

Once upon a time, there was a man who rode on a black horse to a battle. Out of fear, he was incapable to combat. He daubed his face and eyes with blood and dirt. Pretending to be dead, he laid down in the midst of corpses. The horse on which he had rode was taken away. After the battle was through, he went home bringing with him the cut-off tail of a white horse that belonged to another soldier. Back at home, he was asked, "Where is your old horse?"

The man replied, "My horse is dead. I have brought back with me its tail."

People said, "But your old horse was black. How did its tail turn white?"

Speechless, the man was laughed at.

So are the people at large. Despite of their pretending to be good, pious, compassionate and restraining themselves to eat meat and drink wine, people indulge themselves in killing and injuring other sentient beings and thus raising to pain and cruelty. Furthermore, they boast that they do good deeds, but there is nothing they will not do to commit sins, just like the stupid man and his horse.

### **(74) BECOMING A COMMON MONK**

Once upon a time, there was a kingdom which had a law that all Brahmans in the country should keep their bodies clean and those who do not would be subject to all kinds of hard works.

There was a Brahman who was always holding an empty pot pretending that he was a clean man. When someone poured water into his pot, he spilled it and said in these words, "I don't want to wash myself. Let the king do it himself. I have been lying to shun hard labor, because of the king's law."

This is also held to be true with the common monks.

A monk, who has shaved his head and worn dyed gannets, could break commandments while pretending to be following them outwardly. Thus he wants to receive gain and offerings and avoids labor work, superficially he looks like a monk, but in reality, he cheats, just like the Brahman holding an empty pot and keeping up appearances.

### **(75) THE CAMEL AND THE JAR ARE BOTH LOST**

Once upon a time, there was a man who had a jar used to hold grain. A camel put its head into it to eat the grain, but it could not get its head out. The man became angry and worried.

An old man came up to him and said, "Don't be upset. I'll tell you how to get him out. It'll get its head out in no time if you listen to me. You should cut off its head and he'll be out."

The man followed his words. He killed the camel and also broke the jar. Such an idiot was jeered by the people at large.

This is also held to be true with the common stupid men. Those who hope for Enlightened minds through the Three Vehicles, must keep commandments and avoid doing evil deeds. However, they indulge themselves in the Five Desires, which will destroy them. Not only do they end up breaking commandments, but also giving up the Three Vehicles. In addition, they follow their own inclination and yield to their whims at the same time. There is nothing evil they will not do. Thus they abandon both the Three Vehicles and the pure commandments like that stupid man losing both the camel and the jar.

### **(76) THE FARMER LONGED FOR THE PRINCESS**

Once upon a time, there was a farmer who went to the city and saw the princess who was very graceful. He found she was quite a rare beauty. Afterwards he thought of nothing else but the princess day and night. Since he could not find a way to have a talk with her, he became yellow and fell very ill from his love-sickness. His parents and relatives asked him what had happened to him. He replied, "Yesterday I saw the graceful princess with whom I would like to get acquainted. But I've been unable to think of a way. This is why I have fallen ill. I'll die soon!"

The parents and relatives said, "We'll find a way. Don't be so upset."

Two days later, they said to him, "We have found away. Unfortunately, she didn't like it at all."

Upon hearing these words the farmer got very happy and said with a big smile to other people that she would come to him if he sent for her.

This is also held to be true with the stupid men of the world.

A stupid man knows of no seasons of spring, summer, autumn and winter. He sows the land with seeds in winter hoping that they will grow. He gains nothing except wasting his energy in vain. All are lost as buds, stalks branches and leaves.

Getting a little merit, the stupid of the world are satisfied with what they think are the attainment of Enlightenment, like the farmer who longed for the princess.

### **(77) TO MILK A DONKEY**

Once upon a time, there was a group of frontiersmen who had never seen a monkey before. Thus they could not identify it. They were told that its milk was delicious. It happened that they found a male donkey and they tried to milk it. They began their wrangling about apprehending it.

One seized its head; another, its ears; the third, its tail; the fourth, its feet; and finally the fifth, its penis. All wanted to be the first to drink its milk. The one who grasped the donkey's penis called out that he could get milk there from. Then he began to extract. Finally, this group of people felt tired and bored, for they could not get what they had wanted. They got nothing in return, despite of their effort. They were all laughed at by the people at large.

This is also held to be true with the common heretics.

The heretics who learn their religious faith from some inadequate sources, might lead to illusions giving rise to all kinds of heterodox views such as to go naked, to fast, to jump into precipice or go through fire. With all these kinds of heterodox views, they fall to the evil paths, like those stupid men seeking in vain for milk from a male donkey.

### **(78) THE SON'S TRIPS**

Once upon a time, there was a man who told his son one night, "Tomorrow I'll go with you to another tribe for some errands."

The son hastened to go there by himself at dawn without telling his father. On his arrival, he was so tired that he did nothing. Furthermore, he could not find food. He got very hungry and thirsty. After he came back, his father scolded him and said, "You are very stupid indeed. Why didn't you wait for me? You ran back and forth for nothing, only to suffer in vain." He was laughed at by the people at large.

This is also held to be true with the common people.

Those who have the opportunity to become monks and who shave off their mustache and have their hair cut, and who wear the monk's three robes, do not ask for guidance to obtain Nirvana from an imminent teacher. They will in the end, lose not only the meditation training, but also the merits of monastic grades. Finally, they will lose altogether the supreme results from the practices of monks, under the cloak of whom they virtually gain nothing. This is just like that stupid man casting his trip in vain, only to get tired and weary.

### **(79) CARRYING CHAIRS FOR THE KING**

Once upon a time, there was a king who wished to go to the garden named "Free From Care" for a good time. He ordered one of his ministers, "You'll drag a lounge chair to that garden for me to sit and take rest on."

The minister considered it a demeaning job for a minister to drag a chair. So he refused to do it and replied, "I would rather carry it on my back with a pole than dragging it."

Then the king put thirty-six chairs on his back and asked him to carry them to the garden. Such a stupid man was laughed by the people at large.

This is also held to be true with the common people.

Seeing hair fallen from a woman's head on the ground, people are reluctant to pick it up, in the name of keeping the commandments. However once disturbed by ignorance and desire, they do not mind picking up thirty-six unclean things at a time such as hair, capillary, nail, tooth, excrement, urine etc, without feeling shameful and even keep them as long as they live. This is just like that stupid man bearing chairs on his back.

### **(80) TO TAKE AN ENEMA**

Once upon a time, there was a man who had a pain in his rear. The doctor said it would be healed by giving an enema. He immediately went to fetch the instruments for that purpose. The patient took the drug before the physician came back. His belly became inflated beyond description. After his return, the doctor wondered what had happened to the patient and asked him the cause of it. To the physician, he replied, "I've just taken the drug for enema. That's why I'm dying."

After hearing these words, the doctor scolded him in following words, "You are the most stupid man I've ever met. You are acting against all senses."

Then he gave him other drugs. The patient vomited and was cured. Such a stupid man was laughed at by the people at large.

This is also held to be true with the common people.

The contemplation in meditation comprises many methods. Those who practice meditating on the uncleanness of the human bodies are not appropriate to practice on the counting of the breathings, whereas those who practice the counting of the breathings should not practice the

meditating on the six parts of a human body. To turn it upside down without following a fundamental principle will cause life itself. Those who bluntly practice the contemplation in meditation without consulting a good master are just like that stupid man taking the wrong thing for his illness.

### **(81) GETTING BITTEN BY A BEAR**

Once upon a time, there were a man and his son traveling together. The son got into the woods and was bitten by a bear. Scratches were all over his body. Being in a difficult situation, he fled to his father. Seeing his son's wounds, the father was astonished and asked, "How did you get wounded?"

The son replied, "There was a long-haired monster that bit me."

The father grasped bows and arrows and went to the woods where he saw a longhaired supernatural being. When he was about to shoot at him, a bystander said, "Why do you want to shoot at this, since he is innocent? You should punish the guilty."

This is also held to be true with the stupid of the world.

People offended by an immoral monk in his religious robe, are apt to do the worst harm to all good and virtuous monks. This is just like the father wanting to be revenged on the supernatural man for his son's bites by a bear.

### **(82) THE CULTIVATION OF THE LAND**

Once upon a time, there was a peasant who went to another farmer's property to examine his wheat plants. He asked the owner, "How do you make the wheat grow so well?"

The owner replied, "First, you have to flatten the field. Then you pour some liquid manure. That's why it has turned out so nicely."

The peasant then did what the other farmer had told him. He poured liquid manure to blend with the soil and scattered seed in land. Treading the field with his feet, he was afraid that the land would become too hard to be fruitful.

He said to himself, "I should sow sitting on a bed carried by others. That'll do."

He then ordered each of the four men to hold a leg of the bed to scatter seed in land which became all the harder. Initially he was afraid that his own two feet might be too heavy for the land. Then he added still eight of others to do the job. He was laughed at by others.

This is also held to be true with the common people.

To cultivate the field of commandments and wait the good yield of shoots, people, should consult a master to practice the Buddhist teachings, however, they break the commandments and do evil deeds. Thus the shoots of commandments do not grow, just like the peasant who was afraid of his own two feet and added still eight of others.

### **(83) A FEMALE MONKEY**

Once upon a time, a female monkey was beaten by a full-grown person. The animal had no other alternative than gave vent to its anger later on a small boy.

This is also held to be true with the common stupid men.

One who is offended by another person takes out his anger sometimes on a third person.

Human affairs are always in a state of transition without discontinuity. For things born in the past are bygone. What come after are different things. Thus the one wrongfully gets into a temper only gets deeper and deeper into hatred.

This is just like the monkey that has been beaten by a grown person vents its anger on a small boy.

#### **(84) DOGS WERE BEATEN WHEN THE LUNAR ECLIPSE HAPPENED**

Once upon a time, there was a king of Asuras who covered the moon with his hands when he thought it too bright. However, the stupid men laid the blame on innocent dogs, which were sometimes unjustly beaten.

This is also held to be true with the people at large. They often suffer from the desires, anger and ignorance. But they want to destroy them by sleeping on thorns and their bodies are burning with the five pains just like the dogs were beaten when the lunar eclipse happened.

#### **(85) THE WOMAN WHO HAD SORE EYES**

Once upon a time, there was a woman who had a bad case of sore eyes. Another woman told her, "Where there are eyes, there are some times pains. Although my eyes do not ache now, I want to gouge them out so that they will not ache later."

A bystander said, "Though it's true that when you have your eyes, they may sometimes ache to disturb you, yet when you don't have them, you'll be sure to suffer for lifetime."

This is also held to be true with the common stupid men. People have heard that wealth and fame are the sources of decadence. They are afraid of retribution in the hereafter for not doing almsgiving in their present lives. The more wealth they have, the more troubles they sometimes suffer afterwards. It is said that if you do almsgiving, you may be happy, or you may be not. But if you don't do it, you will surely be the most unhappy man.

This is just like that woman who could not bear the thought of having sore eyes, wanted to gouge them out to suffer forever.

#### **(86) THE FATHER AND HIS SON'S EARRINGS**

Once upon a time, there were a man and his son taking a business trip together. On their way, they came across robbers trying to rob the valuable things off them. The son had a pair of pure gold earrings on. When the father saw the robbers approaching, he tried to pull the rings off to hide them. As he did not succeed in doing that in a hurry, he cut his son's head off. When the robbers went away, he tried to put the son's head back on where it had been. No success came out of it.

Such a stupid was laughed at by the people at large.

For fame and gain, people argue with a joking expression on the following subjects:

- (1) There is the present life and the hereafter and there is not.
- (2) There is the intermediate existence between death and reincarnation and there is not.
- (3) There are several qualities of the mind and there are not.

Such foolish arguments are not real Buddhist teachings. According to the Law of Buddhism, there are no such sayings in the Buddhist doctrine, others refute.

Stupid men who tell stories in order to win a little fame and gain, lose the profit resulted from the practices of monks. Furthermore, they will fall into the Three Evil Paths of Transmigration after the decay of their bodies or at their death's door.

This is just like that stupid man who cut his son's head off for a pair of gold earrings.

#### **(87) THE ROBBER'S JOY**

Once upon a time, there was a band of robbers who divided their boot according to their different ranks. Among the belongings, there was a Benares Kambala, the color of which left much to be desired. It was considered as an inferior part to be given to one of the robbers of the lowest rank. The robber got angry and made a strong protest to the rest.

Afterwards, he brought it to the city for sale. An honorable elderly man paid him a high price. He ended up getting more money than any other robber in the band. He then leaped for joy.

This is held to be true with the almsgiving. People who are doing almsgiving, are usually not aware whether there will be a retribution. Be it ever so little they are doing it, they, after death, go to Heaven to enjoy an unlimited amount of happiness. The less they do, the more they get. They will then regret for not having done enough.

This is just like the robber who was happy after he had got a top price for his Kambala.

### **(88) THE FEMALE MONKEY AND A HANDFUL OF BEANS**

Once upon a time, there was a female monkey holding a handful of beans. After dropping to the ground a grain of bean, she dropped all the beans in her hands by looking for the first one. All beans were then eaten by chicken and ducks before long.

This is held to be true with the common monks. Those who break one commandment usually do not like to confess. Later, they break other commandments to such an extent that they end up breaking all of them.

This is just like the female monkey who loses all beans by looking for a grain of bean.

### **(89) THE GOLD WEASEL**

Once upon a time, there was a man who found a gold weasel while traveling. He put it inside of his shirt as he leaped for joy. Traveling on, he reached a river where he took off his clothes for crossing.

Subsequently, the gold weasel changed into a poisonous snake. Nevertheless, the man did not throw it out and kept it in the shirt. Deeply grateful, the snake changed back into pure gold.

A stupid man nearby who saw it with his own eyes, took it for granted that it should always turned out that way. He then put a poisonous snake inside of his shirt. He got bitten and died soon after.

This is also held to be true with the stupid of the world. On seeing those who have done good works and in turn have obtained benefit, people start to attach themselves to Buddhism. They are not motivated by faith but greed. They will finally fall into evil paths after death, like that man died of snakebites.

### **(90) PICKING UP MONEY**

Once upon a time, there was a poor man who picked up a sack of money in the streets. He was overwhelmed with happiness. Then he began to count the money. Suddenly, the real owner of the money showed up. He had to give back the whole sack. He regretted for not having gone off to a far away place sooner. He felt great pain for his loss.

This is also held to be true with people who come into contact with Buddhism.

Although people have the opportunity to meet the Three Precious One's Blessings, if they are not going earnestly good work's in time, they will fall into the Three Evil Paths of

Transmigration after their deaths. His is just like that stupid man who gave back the money that he had found. As the Stanza has it:

People, who are managing this business today, will plan another tomorrow.  
Only thinking of enjoyment without contemplation sorrow.  
Can make a man unaware of the impermanence of death.  
However, busily occupied in their worldly affairs.  
The common people always retard to get deliverance like that man counting the money.

### **(91) THE POOR WANT TO HAVE AS MUCH AS THE RICH**

Once upon a time, there was a poor man who had but few possessions. After meeting some rich men, he wanted to be like one of them. Unable to do so, he was about to throw the little he had into the water. Some bystander said, "What you possess may be little, but you can live on it for a while. Why do you want to throw it into the water?"

This is similar to what is done by the stupid of the world.

People who happen to be ordained men get offerings, which come way below their expectations. What they have cannot equal that received by the high and virtuous ones. They see that those old and virtuous ordained men are supported by the mass of famous people. They want to be on an equal footing with them. Unable to get equality, they feel sorrowful and painful to such a degree as to break their faith.

This is just like the stupid man who, wanting to be equal with the rich, casts out the precious possessions of his own.

### **(92) THE CHILD GETS HAPPY PILLS**

Once upon a time, a wet nurse was walking along the road with a child in her arms. She became also weary that she fell asleep on the way. Then a man appeared and gave the child some happy pills. Being gluttonous, the child was lured by the good taste and knew nothing about his intentions. The man forthwith stripped the child of his necklace, brooches and garments.

This is also held to be true with the monks.

Intent upon worldly interests and noisy places, those who are greedy for a little gain and support are drawn to temptation while a thief steals their spiritual credit and treasured commandments. They are just like that greedy child whose belongings are taken away by the thief, due to the enticement of some tasteful pills.

### **(93) THE OLD WOMAN CAUGHT A BEAR**

Once upon a time, there was an old woman who was resting under a tree when a bear came to attack her. She ran around the tree trying to get away, while the bear held the tree with one hand and tried to grasp her with the other. Thus hard pressed, the woman quickly hugged the tree and held fast the bear's two claws so that the bear could not move. Then a stranger came up to the spot. The old woman called out, "Let's catch and kill the bear together. We'll share its meat."

The stranger believed the old woman's words and began to help capture the bear. After seizing it, the old woman gave it up and ran away. Then he was leaving in the lurch and got injured by its claws.

This is also held to be true with the common people.

People progress heresy whose theories are far from good and whose phrases are tangled, complicated and full of errors. The successors want to continue and give an interpretation to

them. However, they are unable to grasp the meaning. There for they are enmeshed in trouble just like that stupid man catching the bear for another person and getting hurt instead.

#### **(94) THE MANI AND THE SEWER**

Once upon a time, there was a man who was having an affair with a married woman. They were together when her husband came back. He found out their affair and stopped outside the door waiting for the man to come out to kill him. To the lover the woman said: "My husband knows what is going on. There is no way out but the mani."

She wanted the man to escape by means of the sewer. The man misunderstood her to mean looking for the mani pearls. He looked everywhere but in vain. He said to himself: "I'll not leave here, if can't find the mani pearls."

He was then killed by her husband.

This is also held to be true with the common people.

It is said, between birth and death, we live a life of impermanence, suffering, emptiness and unreality of ego. We have to reject the two extremes of annihilation and permanence by holding fast to the golden mean in order to get deliverance. However, the common people, misunderstand the two extremes to refer to the universe being finite and infinite and the human beings having ego and having no ego. Therefore, they are unable to grasp the meaning of the middle way to avoid extremes. After being stricken with sudden death, they will be killed out of impermanence and falling into the Three Evil Paths of Transmigration. This is just like the stupid man getting killed looking for man pearls.

#### **(95) A DOVE**

Once upon a time, there were two doves, male and female, which lived together in a nest. They filled their nest with fruit seed that grew up during the fall. Later, the fruit dried and shrank to fill but half of the nest. The male was in a temper and said to the female, "We have been working hard together for the fruit. Now you have eaten it alone. It's half of what it was. The female replied, "I haven't eaten it alone. For the fruit has shrunk by itself."

Incredulous, the male angrily said, "If it has not been you alone who had eaten, how could it grow so much less now?"

Then he pecked the female to death. A few days later, it happened to rain heavily. The fruit got moist and grew to its former size. On seeing it, the male regretfully realized that she really had not eaten and that he had wrongly killed her. He then cried bitterly and called out to her: "Where have you gone?"

This is also held to be true with the common people. Leading a disorderly life, people indulge in wild pleasures. They think nothing of impermanence when breaking major commandments. It will be too late for them to repent afterwards. It only remains for them to give vent to their sadness with sighs like the stupid dove.

#### **(96) PRETENDING TO BE BLIND**

Once upon a time, there was a trained craftsman who worked for the king. He could not bear the hardship and deceitfully said he was blind in order to release himself from the hard work. On hearing it, another craftsman wanted to gouge out his own eyes so as to avoid the tiresome drudgery. Someone then asked him, "Why do you want to gouge out your eyes only to make yourself suffer more in another way?"

Such a stupid man was laughed at by the people at large.

This is also held to be true with the common people. For the sake of a little fame and gain, people are prone to tell wild stories and destroy their pure commandments. They will fall into the Three Evil Paths of Transmigration after their death, like that stupid man destroying his own eyes for a little benefit.

### **(97) THE WOOLLEN COAT WAS ROBBED BY THE WICKED THIEF**

Once upon a time, two friends were walking in the wilderness. On the way, one of them wearing a woolen coat was robbed of it by a thief. The other successfully escaped into a thicket. The loser of the coat had a piece of gold concealed in the collar. To the thief, he said, "This coat is worth one piece of gold. Now I beg you to let me redeem it at that value."

The thief asked, "Where's the gold?"

Opening up the collar, the man showed it to him and said, "Here's the pure gold. If you don't trust my words, you can go and ask a goldsmith who is hiding in the thicket now?"

After seeing the second man, the thief also took his clothing from him. Such a stupid man thus lost his woolen coat, gold and everything. Not only had he lost his own belongings, he also made his friend lose them.

This is also held to be true with the common people.

Pious, having monastic grades and possessing other merits, people are robbed by the thief of temptation. They lose their good teachings and their merit as well. They lose not only the gain of their own, but also make others lose their Karma leading to Buddhahood. They will fall into the Three Evil Paths of Transmigration on the dissolution of the body after death, like the two losing everything they had.

### **(98) A BOY CAUGHT A BIG TURTLE**

Once upon a time, there was a boy who was playing on dry land and caught a big turtle. He intended to kill it, but he did not know how to do so. Therefore, he asked someone and he was told, "You just throw it into the water and he'll be killed at once."

The boy believed the words and cast it into the water. Once in water, the turtle swam away.

This is also held to be true with the common people.

Hoping to protect their six sense organs and consecrating themselves to meritorious works, people do not know how to do so. Accordingly, they begin to ask others how to bring about deliverance. To them, the heretics, Maras, the evil ones and the wicked friends say in their words, "You just have to be fond of the six sense organs and indulge in the Five Desires. As I'm telling you, you'll get deliverance."

Such stupid men follow these words without deep thinking and fall into the Three Evil Paths of Transmigration on the dissolution of the body after death.

This is just like that boy throwing the turtle into the water.

## **EPILOGUE**

BY THE REVEREND SANGHA SUNA

I have compiled this sutra with joking words that may spoil the Truth.

The question here is whether they are in accord with the Truth.

Still, like the bitter medicine that blends with rock honey can cure the most severe diseases.

So also may this sutra.

As with strong medicine, the humorous joking words are used in the correct doctrine of the Buddha.

The correct doctrine of Buddhism and its deep meditation illuminate the world, like someone taking a purgative to cleanse the body.

The inspiration that I have developed is derived from my deep meditation.

Agada medicine is wrapped in tree leaves. The leaves should be dropped after the medicine is taken or smeared over the wound.

The humorous joking words are like the wrappings while the truth is inside.

The wise men will take the Truth, but discard the humorous joking words.

(End)