

THE
SUTRA OF FORTY-TWO
SECTIONS,

AND
OTHER TWO SHORT SUTRAS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE CHINESE ORIGINALS.

THE
BUDDHIST PROPAGATION SOCIETY.

K. JAPAN.

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天請問經

五大施經

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PREFACE.



In the present work, I intend to present the reader with the English translations of the three short sutras from the Chinese. The first of them is one named the Forty-two Sections Sutra, which seems to be a collection of the answers, given by Buddha himself to the questions his disciples (Bikshus) asked him at several times. In the Tenth year of the Ei-hei period, in the reign of the Emperor Ming of the Latter Kan dynasty, i.e. 67 A.D., the two Indian priests, Kasyapa Mātāṅga and Chiku Hōran, bringing with them an image of Buddha and some sacred books, arrived in Raku-yo, the capital of China. A new monastery which took the name of White Horse, then, was built for them by the order of the Emperor; and they translated some Sutras into the Chinese from the Sanskrit originals, which they brought from India. This was the first time that Buddhism was introduced into the Far East. The Forty-two Sections Sutra was one of them, and an English translation of this Sutra has already appeared in Mr. Beal's Catena of Buddhist Scriptures from the Chinese. I have revised this translation, by carefully comparing it with

the Chinese version. Some alterations, made in it, are mostly from a fact that the text, taken for the present translation is different from that of Mr. Beal's; because in China and Japan, there exist several texts of this Sutra, which are partly or wholly different in some sentences and sections.

M. MATSUYAMA.

KIOTO, JAPAN.

1st. December, 1892.

M (atsutaro)

THE SUTRA OF FORTY-TWO SECTIONS.

Now it came to pass, when the worshipful Buddha had arrived at the condition of complete enlightenment, he thought thus with himself: 'The perfect peacefulness which results from the extinction of desire, is the highest attainment of all the living.' Fixed in deep meditation, he conquered the devils. Then at once he began to preach, in the Deer Park, on the subject of the four great truths, for the sake of Koundinya and other four companions, and brought them deliverance. There were, moreover, certain Bikshus, who thought of some subjects that perplexed them, and requested Buddha to explain them, on which he proceeded to resolve their doubts one by one; while they, with closed hand, respectfully entertained their master's instructions, and followed them. At this time it was that the worshipful one himself delivered this Sutra, which consists of forty-two sections.

1. Buddha said: The man who leaves his parents, and quits his home for the sake of spiritual enlightenment (Bodhi), is called a Sha-

man. Such an one, continuing in the 250 Rules, and persevering, with a pure motive, in pursuance of the four paths of holiness, shall attain to the state of a Arhat.

2. Buddha said : The Arhat is able to fly through the air, change his appearance, fix the years of his life, shake heaven and earth. The successive stages towards this condition of being are—The Anâgamin who at the expiration of his life, ascends in a spiritual form to the nineteen heavens, and becomes a Arhat. Next is the condition of a Sakradagamin, who becomes a Arhat, after two births, one in the above region, and one on the earth. Next the condition of Srotâppanna, who becomes a Arhat, after seven births and deaths. A Arhat, having entirely freed themselves from all desire, is like branches of a tree cut off.

3. Buddha said : He who receives the Tonsure, and becomes a Shaman, entertaining the Law of Buddha must forego all worldly wealth, and beg whatever he wants, take one meal in the middle of day, and sleep under a tree only once in a day. It should be borne in mind that lust and desire are the sole causes of all the folly and confusion in the world.

4. Buddha said : All the living become good by ten things, and by ten things, become evil. What are these ten things? Three of them belong to the body ; four to the speech ; three to the mind. Killing, stealing, committing adultery, are the first three. The speech which shows discord, slandering, lying and words without sincerity, are the four. Envy, anger and folly, are the three. Absence of belief in the three objects of veneration, is the highroad to error. The Upasakas who, continuing in the five things, progresses so far as to be able to observe the ten things, shall become enlightened.

5. Buddha said : A man guilty of every kind of sin, and not purging himself by repentance, his wickedness grows greater and greater by degree, as waters flow into the sea to make it deeper and wider ; but if he understands his being sinful, and gets rid of his evil ways, he will be set free from his sins, so that he may obtain Perfection.

6. Buddha said : If a man foolishly does me wrong, I will return to him the protection of my ungrudging love ; the more evil comes from him, the more good shall go from me ; the fragrance of goodness always comes to me, and the harmful air of evil goes to him. A foolish man, hearing Buddha observe the principle of great love, and return good to evil, came and abused him. Buddha was silent, pitying his folly. The man, having finished his abuse, Buddha asked him, saying : ' Son, if a man declined to accept a present one made to him, how would it be done?' He answered : ' In that case, it would be taken back to the hand of one who brought it.' ' Son, you have,' said Buddha, ' now railed at me, but I decline to entertain your abuse, and request you to keep it yourself ; a source of misery to you. For as echo belongs to the sound, and shadow to the substance, so misery will certainly overtake the evil doer.'

7. Buddha said : A wicked man who reproaches a virtuous one, is like one who looks up and spits at heaven ; the spittle soils not the heaven, but comes back and defiles his own person. So again, he is like one who flings dirt at another, when the wind is contrary, the dirt does but return on him who threw it. The virtuous man cannot be hurt, and the misery that the other would inflict comes back on himself.

8. Buddha said : A man who exercises charity from the principles

of his faith, has much merit. If he, at the same time, guards his motive in advancing the cause of Law, his merit will be very great. And when one sees a man, preaching Law with the spirit of love, and rejoices at it on the ground that he is advancing the cause of Truth, he also will obtain merit: not that the merit of the first becomes less on that account, but as many men lighting their fire from one torch, do not diminish the light from which they take their fire, so is it with the question of merit.

9. Buddha said: To feed crowds by the hundred is not to be compared to the act of feeding one really good man; to feed good men by the thousand is not to be compared to the act of feeding one who observes the Five Precepts; to feed such persons by the myriad is not to be compared to the act of feeding one Srotâpâna; to feed such persons by the million is not like feeding one Sakradagamin; to feed such persons by the ten millions is not like feeding one Anagamin; to feed such persons by the hundred millions is not like feeding one Arhat; to feed such persons by the thousand millions is not like feeding one Pratyeka Buddha; to feed such persons by the ten thousand millions is not like feeding one Buddha, and studying his Law from a desire to save all living beings. To feed one good man, however, is of a great merit. It is very greater in point of merit to discharge the filial duty we owe to our parents, than to worship Heaven and Earth, demons and spirits.

10. Buddha said: There are twenty difficult things in the world—difficult for the poor to be charitable; difficult for the rich and noble to be religious; to escape destiny; to get sight of the sutras of Buddha; to be born when a Buddha is in our world; to repress lust, and restrain desire; to see an agreeable object, and not seek to obtain it; to

bear insult without anger; to be powerful and not proud; not to condemn the ignorant; not to be disturbed by an event whatever it may be; to become a learned man; to thoroughly extirpate self-esteem; to be the same in heart and life; to avoid controversy; to see a competent spiritual teacher; to save men by converting them; to understand adequately the expedient manner of teaching; to know one's self, and understand supreme truth; to move in the world, without setting the hear on it.

11. Buddha said: There was a Shaman who asked Buddha, by what manner does a man acquire Bodhi (supreme wisdom), and how may a man know his previous modes of existence? Buddha said: Bodhi has no visible form by which it may be known: there is no profit in such inquiries. The requisite to acquire this knowledge is to cultivate your conduct with a determined resolution. We may compare it to the act of rubbing a mirror, and removing the dust; the lustre of the mirror is thus preserved, and you see clearly images on it. So if you banish desire, and keep yourself free from all attachment, you will at once obtain Bodhi, and correctly know your previous modes of existence.

12. Buddha said: Who is the good man? The religious man is good. Who is the most good? One whose will agrees with Truth is the most good.

13. Buddha said: Who is the strongest? He who is strongest in the exercise of patience. He who patiently endures injury, maintains a blameless and respectful life. Who is the wisest? A man who has obtained universal knowledge. Such a man keeps his mind free from all pollution, and is pure and calm within, having got away all

wickedness ; he knows, sees and hears all things from the beginning to the present, and also all those things that have not yet transpired. This may rightly be called Enlightenment.

14. Buddha said : A man who cherishes lust and desire, being ignorant of Truth, is like a vase of dirty water, in which all sorts of beautiful objects are placed—the water being shaken up, men can see nothing of the objects therein placed ; so lust and desire, producing disorder and confusion in the mind, prevent our seeing Truth. But the mud of the water being removed, all is clear and pure. So also when a fire is placed under a pot over which a piece of cloth is spread, and the water within it made to boil, whoever looks down upon it will see no shadow of himself. So the three poisons which rage within the mind, and the five obscurities which embrace it, render us unable to see Truth.

15. Buddha said : A man who devotes himself to the search after wisdom, is like a man who takes a lighted torch into a dark room ; the darkness is at once dissipated, and there is light ! So when a man gets the perception of Truth, preserving in the search after wisdom, error and delusion will be rooted out, and perfect enlightenment obtained.

16. Buddha said : What is the subject on which I do always meditate ? Truth. What is the practice to which I devote myself ? Truth. What is that of which I am used to speak ? Truth. My thoughts are always in Truth.

17. Buddha said : Let one behold heaven and earth, and think, these are all impermanent ;—the mountains and rivers, the rank and multitudinous productions of nature, all impermanent. Let one not forget that all is of the passing, transient nature. Continuing in this

notion, one shall quickly obtain spiritual illumination.

18. Buddha said : Let one think of the four constituents of which the body is made. Each of the constituents is merely name, and therefore there is no personal reality. That which one calls self, is but a passing guest, and its concerns like the mirage in a desert.

19. Buddha said : If a man, in a single day, keeps his thoughts on Law and observes the precepts, he shall get the root of faith. This is indeed blessedness without measure.

20. Buddha said : a man who, following the bent of his carnal desires, is desirous to gain an illustrious name may be compared to the burning incense, the fragrance of which people perceive, but in its burning it is self-consumed ; so it is foolish for man to covet a temporal fame, and not look after his spiritual interests ; for a brilliant name will bring misery to its possessor, who has to endure repentance, which must come afterwards.

21. Buddha said : A man who rudely grasps after wealth or pleasure, is like a little child eating honey with a knife ; scarcely has he had one taste of its sweetness, before he perceives the pain of his wounded tongue.

22. Buddha said : A man, bound by the love-cords of wife and children, has to endure misery greater than that caused by the chains and bonds of a prison, for these have a beginning and a termination ; but the bonds of love are so strong that the heart ever clings to them, even though in the danger of approaching the tiger's mouth. What release, then, can there be to the ill effect which such attachment will bring forth ?

23. Buddha said : Of all the sensual passion, there is none so

powerful as sexual inclination. It is so strong that there is no other worth comparing to it. But most happy, there is but one passion of this description ; for, if there were two, not one man in the whole world would be able to follow the precepts of truth.

24. Buddha said : The carnal desire, in respect of a man, is like one who takes a lighted torch, and runs with it against the wind. O foolish man ! let go the lighted torch, or your hand must be burnt. So with respect of the poisons of covetousness, lust, anger, envy and folly, dwelling in a man ; if he does not quickly take off these ill principles by learning and practicing Law, these will bring misery to him, just as a torch will inflict pain on the hand of the man, bearing it.

25. Buddha said : A Deva offered a woman of pleasure to Buddha desiring to try his inclination, and so have proof of his heavenly goodness. Buddha said : A leather bag, full of all filths ! Thou comest but to find thee disappointed ; such a common one as thou, is impossible to delude one who is possessed of the six kinds of transcendental knowledge. Go away, thou ; I can make no use of thee. The Deva overpowered with awe on this, asked Buddha to explain his doctrine, on which Buddha entered on an enquiry, which resulted in his attaining at the condition of a Srotāpāna.

26. Buddha said ; A man, devoted to the Law of Buddha is like a piece of wood that floats down a running stream touching neither the left nor the right bank ; not being interrupted by a man or a devil, nor yet standing still or rotting in the middle of the revolving eddies. It shall, I tell assuredly, enter the ocean. The man, engaged in the practice of Law, not indulging the deceitful pleasures of sense, nor engrossed

by the vain speculations of the different heretical schools ; earnestly progressing, without any unbelief, such men shall certainly be enlightened.

27. Buddha addressed a Shaman thus : Beware, oh man, of following your own feelings. You should not consider your mind safe to trust on. Be careful to keep away from sensual delight, or you shall at once bring yourself misery. When you are in the state of a Arhat, then, you will be free to follow your promptings.

28. Buddha adressed all Shamans :—Guard against looking on a woman. If you see one, let it be as though you saw her not, and be sure to have no conversation with her. If you must need speak to her, let it be with pure heart and upright conduct ; and say to yourself—I a Shaman, placed in this sinful world, must be as the spotless leaf of the lotus, unsoiled by the mud in which it grows ! Is she old ? Regard her as your mother. Is she older than you ? Regard her as your elder sister. Is she younger ? Regard her as your younger sister. Is she a child ? Regard her as your daughter. Treat her reverently. Fix your thoughts on spiritual truth ;—and if you see only within the body from head to foot, what vileness and impurity ! So enough to drive away your evil thoughts !

29. Buddha said : Passions are like the dry straw, ready to be burnt when the fire comes. In order to become perfected in the spiritual advancement, therefore, one man must keep himself away from the objects of sensual pleasure.

30. Buddha said : There was once a man, who had grief because his lusts could not be appeased, and so seated himself on a sharp axe, in order to free himself from the cause of his sin. Buddha addressed

him and said : You would have better get rid of the lustful inclination, than to cut off the external cause. The heart is the busy contriver of these lusts ; purify the heart, and all the evil thoughts will be still. But if the heart continue in wickedness, what benefit will self-mutilation bring? Presently, on his death, Buddha said : ' So it is that men commonly think in a wrong manner ! ' There was a lewd woman, who had made an engagement to meet her lover. At the appointed time, he came not ; on which, she repented of her sin, and said : ' Lust ! I know thy source and thy principle ; the lustful inclination is but the offspring of my own thoughts. Let me but stifle these thoughts, and at once thou will disappear ! ' Buddha, going along the road, and hearing her speak thus, addressed the Shamans, and said : ' Remember that this is one of the verses of Kasyapa Tathagata, which has come to be told as a common saying.'

31. Buddha said : A man engenders sorrow from passion, and from sorrow, comes fear. Banish passion, and there will be no sorrow, and if there is no sorrow, there will be no fear.

32. Buddha said : A man who is in pursuance of spiritual perfection, may be compared to be a single warrior opposed to ten thousands in the field. The well armed and disciplined soldier comes forth from the gate desiring to engage. The thought possesses him that his strength may fail, and he begins to withdraw ; or he comes back when in half way ; or he obstinately fights to death ; or he, having defeated the enemies, is highly honoured as a victor returning his country. The man who is able to govern his heart and keep it pure, and persevering against all obstacles advances onward, not entrapped by any enticing words of foolish worldliness, will surely obtain Enlightenment.

33. There was a Shaman who recited a scripture at a night with a plaintive voice, because he had some remorse, and the worldly thoughts brought him the desire of returning home. Buddha in a gentle voice, addresses him thus : ' Tell me, my son, when you were living in your house, what did you study yourself ? ' He replied, ' I was always playing on my lute.' Buddha said : ' And if the strings of your instrument were lax, what then ? ' He replied, ' they would not sound.' ' And if they were too tight, what then ? ' He replied, ' the sound would be too sharp.' ' But if they were tuned to a just medium, what then ? ' He replied, ' All the sounds would then be harmonic and agreeable.' Buddha addressed the Shaman—the way of learning is even so. Keep the mind well adjusted, and you will be able to acquire Enlightenment.

34. Buddha said : The practise of religion is just like the process followed in an iron foundry. The metal being melted, is gradually separated from the dross and drops down ; so that the vessel made from the metal must needs be good. Our progress in the way of wisdom consists of the gradual separation of all mental pollution. When one too hurriedly applies himself to the accomplishment of wisdom, he has weariness of the flesh, and this results in mental sorrow, and leads to sin.

35. Buddha said : It is uneasy for us to acquire perfect wisdom, but it is also painful to live otherwise ; for from birth to old age, and from this through disease to death, how countless are the sorrows to be endured ! But when the painful disorder of mind, and the accumulation of guilt, result in endless births and deaths, this grief is indeed past description.

36. Buddha said : It is difficult for a man to avoid the three evil states of existence, and to be born as a human being. Having been born as a human being, it is difficult to be born as a man instead of a woman. This being so, to have every faculty of body and mind complete is difficult. This being so, it is difficult to be born in the central country of the world. This being so, it is difficult to meet with the Buddha's doctrine. This being so, it is difficult to be born in the reign of a virtuous ruler. This being so, it is difficult to be born in the family of a Buddhist. This being so, it is difficult to be born when there is a Buddha on the earth, and to take refuge, with hearty devotion, in the three venerable objects.

37. Buddha asked the Shamans : 'In what does the duration of one's life consist?' One replied, 'In the length of days.' Buddha said : 'Son ! you are not able to obtain supreme wisdom.' Again he asked a Shaman the same question. He answered, 'In the duration of eating and drinking' Buddha said : 'Son, you are not yet able to attain supreme wisdom.' Again he asked the same question of a Shaman, who replied, 'Man's life is but a breath!' Buddha answered : 'Well said ! Son, you are able to attain supreme wisdom.'

38. Buddha said : A disciple removed from me by a great distance, yet thinking about me, and keeping my commandments, must in the end obtain Enlightenment. Whilst another who dwells with me and yet allows wicked thoughts, he shall not attain Enlightenment. If a man consorting with me does not conform his life to my commandments, what benefit will he gain ?

39. Buddha said : A man who devotes himself to the acquirement of wisdom, is like one eating honey, which is sweet throughout.

So my sutras are sweet throughout ; the doctrines, expounded in them, being all pleasant, those who practice them shall attain Enlightenment.

40. Buddha said : A man who is able to destroy the root of passions, for the sake of Enlightenment, may be compared to a person who counts over his beads. One by one he counts them, till the whole be finished. So when there is an end of wickedness, his final object is attained.

41. Buddha said : You, all Shamans, who are in the pursuit of supreme wisdom, ought to consider yourself as oxen, carrying loads and going through the deep mud. Tired out with their exertions, they dare not go to the right or left out of the way ; but they long to get out of the mud, and then to rest themselves. So the Shaman regarding his passions as worse than that mud, bends his whole soul in pursuance of the path of wisdom, that he may be able to avoid all sorrow.

42. Buddha said : I regard the dignities of kings and princes as the dust-motes in the sunbeam ; the value of gold and jewels as that of a broken platter ; dresses of the finest silk I regard as an tattered clothes ; I regard the universe as a berry ; the different paths of expediency I regard as a mere raft to transport the treasure. I regard the water of the Anavatapta lake as the oil that sweetens one's feet. I regard supreme truth as a golden leaf beheld in dream. To wish for the doctrine of Buddha, as the sky-flowers that dance in the sight ; to continue in the Dyana, as the support of Mount Smeru. To wish for Nirvana, as day and night wakefulness. I regard right and wrong, as the dancing of the six dragons. I regard universal sameness as the true ground ; to preach the doctrine in various forms, as the changes of vegetation during the four seasons.

BUDDHA AND A DEVA.

A SUTRA, TRANSLATED FROM THE CHINESE,

BY

M. MATSUYAMA.

Thus I have heard. On a certain day the Blessed one (Buddha) dwelt at Sravasti, at the Jeta grove, in the garden of Anapindaka. When the night was far advanced, a radiant celestial one, (Deva) whose countenance was exceedingly sublime, and whose refulgent splendor illuminated the whole of the grove, approached the Bhagavat (Buddha), and worshiped him, standing aside. He then addressed the Bhagavat in verse—what is the sharpest sword? What the deadliest poison? What the fiercest fire? What the grossest darkness?

Bhagavat replied in verse—a harsh word is the sharpest word; covetousness, the deadliest poison; anger, the fiercest fire; ignorance, the grossest darkness.

The Deva asked: Who does gain the greatest benefit? Who does lose the most? What is the most invulnerable armor? What the most good weapon?

Bhagavat replied: He is the greatest gainer who gives to other

and he loses the most, who receives from other. Patience is the most invulnerable armor; wisdom, the most good weapon.

Deva: Who is a thief? What is the most precious treasure for the wise? Who is a robber? (not only on the earth, but also in the heaven).

Bhagavat: Evil thought is a stealer; virtue, the most precious treasure for the wise. Immorality is a robber, not only on the earth, but also in the heaven.

Deva: Who enjoys the greatest happiness? Who is the richest? Who is the noblest? Who the most ignoble?

Bhagavat: He whose desires are moderate, is most happy; he is richest, who is contented; the virtuous is noblest; the vicious is basest.

Deva: What is that which is attractive? What is that which is disgusting? What is the most horrible pain? What is the greatest enjoyment?

Bhagavat: Good is attractive; evil, disgusting. Of all the pains, the hell is the most tormenting; the deliverance from re-birth, is the height of bliss.

Deva: What wish is right and proper? What wish is wrong and improper? What is the most violent fever? Who the best physician?

Bhagavat: Emancipation from transmigratory existence, is right and proper to wish for; but not all the evil desires. Concupiscence is the most violent fever; Buddha, the best physician.

Deva: What power is able to ruin all the world? By what influence is all the world confused? What makes us forsake our friends? What does prevent our being born in the heaven?

Bhagavat: It is by ignorance that all the world is ruined, and by

sceptics that it is confused. A cruel, covetous heart, causes us to forsake our friends. Our attachment to agreeable objects, renders it impossible for us to be born in the heaven.

Deva: What is it that neither fire can burn, nor water corrode, nor wind crush down, but that is able to make good the whole world? What was secure from the attack of a malefactor who would come to take it away?

Bhagavat: Blessing!

Deva then asked and said: Now I have only one doubt left to be resolved; pray, clear it away for me:—Who has been, is and will be the greatest self-deceiver?

Bhagavat answered and said: Whoever possesses great riches, and yet fails to use them for promoting his blessings, has been, is and will be the greatest self-deceiver.

The Deva, having heard the words of the Bhagavat, was full of exceeding joy, and worshiped him, throwing himself down at his feet. And he disappeared suddenly from the presence of the Bhagavat.

THE FIVE GREAT BESTOWMENTS OF CHARITY.

A SUTRA TRANSLATED FROM THE CHINESE,

BY

M. MATSUYAMA.

Once upon a time, Buddha was residing in the garden Anapindada at Jetavana in Sravasti, with a great number of Bikshus. He thus addressed them :—There are five kinds of charity, of which now I will tell you. The first is abstaining from the taking of life. Bikshus, this is a great charity. But let us see, Bikshus, by what reason it is called a great charity. If there was no destroyer of life, all sentient beings then would be favored with the enjoyment of fearless living ; and when their mind was free from all fear, such evil as enmity, hatred and injury, would cease to make their appearance. Then all peace on earth and in heaven ! This is the reason why abstinence from the taking of life is a great charity. So also of the other four great bestowments of charity, which consists of abstaining from theft, adultery, falsehood and intoxication.
