

Shunryū Suzuki-rōshi
LOTUS SŪTRA, LECTURE No. 13
Fall 1968
Zen Mountain Center

NOT VERBATIM

... bodhisattvas and arhats. Subhuti, the Venerable Rahula." Rahula is, as you know, Buddha's son. "With them yet other great disciples, as Venerable Ananda, still under training, and two thousand other monks, some of whom still under training with the other masters; with six thousand nuns having at their head Mahapragapati—" Mahāprajāpati is Buddha's aunt. "—and the nun Yasodhara." Of course she is Buddha's wife, the mother of Rahula. Rahula is Yasodhara's son and Buddha's son.

"Along with them, along with her train; further, with eighty thousand Bodhisattvas, all unable to slide back, endowed with the spells of supreme, perfect enlightenment, firmly standing in the ... in wisdom; who moved onward the never deviating wheel of law; who had propitiated many hundred thousands of Buddhas; who under many many hundred thousands Buddhas had planted the roots of goodness, had been intimate with many hundred thousands of Buddhas, were in body and mind fully penetrated with the feeling of charity;" and so on.

Devadatta. Devadatta is, you know, famous because he tried to kill Buddha. There were also famous King Ajatasattu. His father was King Bimbisāra. But his son, he, because he have for a long time no son, a prince; so he asked an old fortune teller—what do you say, "fortune teller"? Not fortune cookie, fortune teller, okay? Asked about his prince. He says, "Yes, you may have prince but he is now in the mountain but soon he may come."

So the king sent someone to kill him, you know, he was so eager to have prince if he is going ... his future life ... next life will ... is ... his prince, it maybe better to kill him. So that he can have his prince earlier. He sent someone to kill him. And he got beautiful boy. And he ... but ... again, the king asked his old fortune teller what will be his next life. And he said, "You killed him, you know, so, he maybe; he may kill you. Because you will him, he is very dangerous." So he wanted to kill him again, and he wanted to throw him from the high tower. But he couldn't kill him so he treated him very well so that he may not have any notion of killing him or he may not give him a chance to kill him. And so another name for him was Michorin. I don't know. A man who has in his mind bad feeling or, not revenge, but what you say ... "grudge?" Yeah. So, as the fortune, the old fortune teller said, when he became quite ... a good use ... he put his father in prison, and made him starve to death. And he took over his father's throne, and became a king.

And Devadatta, the Buddha's disciple, also wanted to take over Buddha's seat. Devadatta was also from the family of Shakya. Shakyamuni Buddha's family. So he wanted to take over Buddha's seat. And Devadatta helped Bimbisāra to kill his father, and ... not Bimbisara, Ajātasattu kill Bimbisāra, and Bimbisāra, after he became king, helped Devadatta to kill Shākyamuni Buddha. But he couldn't do so. Anyway, there is many stories, but he, Buddha get injured, his toe only, when Devadatta and his men throw a stone on the street when Buddha was passing the path. He is anyway famous for his, you know atrociously bad notion to kill Buddha. That is one of the worst violations of the precepts.

Ananda is Buddha's *jisha*—*jisha* for more, maybe 20 or more years. Twenty five. Some say twenty five, some say twenty. Anyway, for a long time. One day Buddha asked him—asked *jisha*, only one *jisha* without changing, because he was, became so old that he wanted to have someone always help him. And Ananda was—became a *jisha* at that time when he said, "I will take care of various people who come from remote countries to meet Buddha. I will introduce them without fail if they come from remote country. And I will remember all what Buddha say. If Buddha say something when I was not with him, I will ask him to tell it again."

Buddha was very pleased and he became his *jisha*. And there were some more things which he told him. "What I get from people is yours; and I will not take anything which was given to Buddha," or something like that. But the most impressive, most important point, maybe two points: he will remember what he said, and that he will be very good for the people who want to meet Buddha.

And Mahāprajāpati Buddha's aunt and who after his mother passed away, raised Buddha. Mahāprajāpati and Yasodhara, Rahula's mother, along with her train. And this sutra is described as if Buddha himself told this story, but actually it is not so. And this, as I said before, this sutra is told in such a from as Buddha himself told it, but actually two, maybe two, three hundred after Buddha passed away, this scripture was told by someone, we don't know who. But the thought is based on Mahāyāna teaching. And Buddha who is telling this story is actually Sambhogakāya Buddha, not Nirmānakāya Buddha. But here it says the are still under training; "along with her train; further, with eighty thousand Bodhisattvas." Bodhisattva is Mahāyāna, who practice Buddhism with Mahāyāna spirit, to help others rather than to help themselves. "Bodhisattvas are unable to slide back." Unable to slide back means if you really understand something, you know, you cannot forget it. What you attain, in its true sense, you know, you cannot lose it. Real attainment cannot be lost. So we say, "no slide black." "All unable to slide back, endowed with the spells of supreme, perfect

enlightenment." This is so called *dharani*. Do you know mantra? *Dharani*. A kind of spell—holy word which has mystic power. Or it means essence of the teaching, essential, you know—essential teaching. Chinese translation of it is *sogi*. *So* means "good merit," and *gi* means "to observe precepts." It means, anyway, the essence: essential teaching.

"Endowed with the spells of supreme, perfect enlightenment," it is translated in this way. Spells, you know, some words which has some important, essential words. "Spells of supreme, perfect enlightenment, firmly standing in wisdom." Wisdom is not knowledge, but more intuitive knowledge, which is his own. Wisdom which is not learned, which should be, could be learned from others but which comes out from himself. "Who moved onward never deviating wheel of the law." Wheel of the law, this idea came from the wheel of the, when the battlefield king, you know, when king turn the wheel of _____? It doesn't ... which is very strong and which never be pushed back. It will go always on and on. Buddha's teaching like a wheel of the _____?, or wheel of the horse? So it never deviating wheel of the law; who had propitiated many hundred thousands of Buddhas." Propitiate ... propitiation ... this is a kind of technical term. In Japanese, *ku yo*. If you consult with dictionary, you will find out the meaning of it. There are three ways of *ku yo*. One is to give teaching, to offer teaching. Like to recite sutra. One. And to pay respect is the second one. And to offer some materials: food or flowers or incense. Those are the three ways of making propitiation. "Who have propitiated many hundred thousands of Buddhas have planted the roots of goodness." This is Chinese also ... we have technical term. *Zenmon*. *Zenmon*—"good root." *Zen* is "good." *Mon* is "root." "Who have planted the root of goodness. Had been intimate with many hundred thousands of Buddhas." This is also, you know, technical term.

"Were in body and mind fully penetrated with the feeling of charity." And this is, you know: body and mind, this is ... one is missing here. Body, mind. You know, we say ... when we say body and mind, we usually say body and mind and mouth, you know. Talk. This is also important. Body. Mind ... even though you think something is good, it will be a merit—if you say something, that will also give you merit. And actually by body ... in Japanese or Chinese this is also technical term. Three karmic actions. Good karma or bad karma. Bad karma or good karma will be created by mouth and mind. So here one is missing but in some other translation ... some other origin text, the "word" is also here. "Were in body and mind fully penetrated with the feeling of charity; able in communicating the wisdom of the Tathagatas." Tathagata. Tathagatas is synonymous with Buddha, but this is ... I don't know what. Tathagata is the third person. Buddha himself do not call Tathagata. Tathagata is, you know, the third

person. Someone is Tathagata. Or second person ... you maybe Tathagata ... to myself. But anyway, Tathagata. Wisdom of Tathagata.

"Very wise, having reached the perfection of wisdom." This is also technical term, "perfection of wisdom." This is also technical term. "Perfection of wisdom." *Anata samya sambhodai* in Japanese. "Renowned in many hundred thousands of worlds; having saved many hundred thousand myriads of *kotis* of beings; such as the Bodhisattva Mahāsattva." No we have many names again. This is the ... it means that, you know, Sambhogakāya Buddha, within himself, he includes many things, you know. As he is one with every being. So there should be various names. This is many, those are not enough, but anyway we have here many names such as Bodhisattva Mahāsattva Mañjushrī. Mañjushrī and Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva are the most important Bodhisattvas. Those Bodhisattvas like Mañjushrī appeared two, three thousand ... tow, three hundred years after Buddha passed away, like Mañjushrī. " Mañjushrī as a royal prince is: in scripture, he told various teaching for Buddha instead of Buddha. Or, he discussed the holy teaching with Buddha, you know. So he is like a prince for Buddha. So we say prince. Royal prince, Mañjushrī. And there are many stories how he ... who was his father or mother, where he was born; but so many stories were told about him so we don't know which is right or which is wrong. You know. We don't know whether he is historical person or not. We don't know. But anyway, his character represents the Buddha, one of the Buddha's character. Wisdom. He is very much like Shāriputra. And he is sitting on his right, Buddha's right. Here, Mañjushrī is sitting. And the other side, Fugen Bosatsu is sitting. Mañjushrī is the symbol of wisdom, and Fugen is the symbol of practice.

"The Bodhisattva Mahāsattva Avalokiteshvara." This is the Bodhisattva of Mercy. There is a special chapter for him. [Tape is rumbled here, but S.R. goes on with sūtra.] "Mahāsthāmaprapta." [He says this name in Japanese.] The Bodhisattva who is always making a great effort. And next one, Nityodyukta. "Nityodyukta." This is Bodhisattva who does not rest. Who make constant effort. "Anikshiptadhura." This is Bodhisattva who make ... treasure in his hands. "Ratnapani." This is seventh one. Oh, excuse me. Ratnapani is the Bodhisattva who always [has?] treasure in his hands. And this is seventh one. By the way, there is, according to the translation of the original text ... they translated, there is some difference in number and order too. Here we have maybe twenty two, twenty three. Should be twenty four. Next one is Pradanasura. Pradanasura is Bodhisattva of to give you courage. Bodhisattva who gives you, who give us courage, or faith, or strong way-seeking mind. And next one, tenth, is Ratchanandra. Ratchanandra means the moon. The round, beautiful moon, Bodhisattva. Ratchanandra Bodhisattva, who

gives everything, who is giving always beautiful light. Anantavikramin. Anantavikramin who gives us endless, limitless power. And next one is missing in Chinese translation. Both old translation and new translation ... the original text look like different. But anyway this one is missing in Chinese translation. But his translation very similar to Chinese translation so it is ... for me it is easier. Fifteenth. The next one is Mahapratibhana. This is missing in Chinese translation. And I must find out ... I haven't found out what does it mean. Satanamasuri. [Sounds like "... is not in our translation."] He is also missing in Chinese translation. He is translated in other scripture—oh, in other scriptures translated as Bodhisattva who has virtue of flower, lotus. "Nakshatranga." Twenty five. This is also missing in Chinese translation. "Bodhisattva Mahasattva Maitreya." This is Miraku who appears after Buddha fade away. "The Bodhisattva Mahasattva Simha," it says. Bodhisattva Mahasattva Maitreya. And that ... for the first one, Bodhisattva Mahasattva Manjusri. And for the next one there is no [respect?]. But, the escaped, you know, to repeat same title over and over again, instead of giving same title for the first one and the last one. So some people say Bodhisattva Mahasattva Simha was added later. It may be so; I don't know. *Simha* means, anyway, "lion," so, but—Bodhisattva Mahasattva Maitreya looks like the last one. And Bodhisattva Mahasattva—it maybe same title again, here. I don't know. Anyway, this kind of study is very complicated study, still. But they are studying. They do not feel so good until they have some definite conclusion.

"With them were also the sixteen virtuous men to begin with Bhadrupala." Bhadrupala is the Bodhisattva who we bow, you know. Each time when we take a bath. We have sixteen ... fifteen of his friends all were enlightened in bathroom. I don't say enlightenment but in their previous lives they were good friends. And they took bath together. And this Bodhisattva—Badabara in Japanese—in Sanskrit, Bhadrupala—attained enlightenment in his former life. And under Shākyamuni Buddha they also appeared as good friend and studied under him, under Shākyamuni Buddha, and attained enlightenment.

There is in *Blue Cliff Records*, then is koan about him. When this Bodhisattva attained enlightenment he said: "*Myo jyako zen myo.*" "*Myo jyako zen myo*" means: "*myo*" his mind and body became clear and felt so good. And he realized the water ... he realized that water as well as various beings, has no self-nature. The koan is "What does it mean by "*myo jyako zen myo?*" How he, this Bodhisattva attained enlightenment? This is the koan in the *Blue Cliff Records*.

Water has, you know, a boat. Reverend Katagiri's father—teacher or master. I think he is—must be a very good teacher because people in that village—when—I don't remember exactly what Reverend Katagiri said, but, anyway, at that temple, he get water by pipe—by bamboo

pipe from a spring pretty far away from the temple, you know. Bamboo pipe. And for that they have a wooden pail. And they sent that pail to get mended. And when they get it back to the temple the pail was still leaking. Still—it was still leaking. And so Reverend Katagiri took it to the store or shop to make it perfect. And the old man who is working on it said, "Maybe water in the temple, in your temple, should be very different if that water—from the water we have in the village. [Rōshi can't stop laughing, but nobody gets the joke so far.] I think if you see Reverend Katagiri—the way he does it is very special, you know. The way he hit *mokugyō*, the way he recites *sūtra*. His manner is anyway very gentle and precise and gives us good feeling—special, I think, his teacher, in that way. So I think his father, his master should be like him, or must be like him. "So water you use is quite different, must be quite different, from the water we have in our village. That is why it leaks."

Anyway, I think that that kind of enlightenment he may have when he took bath. When Yasutani-rōshi came and took his bath, he enjoyed completely the hot spring bath. And he wrote some poem about *myo jyko zen myo*—about this *kōan*. You know, water penetrate, you know, everything with—with hole or without hole, it doesn't matter. Even through the stone—penetrate into even the hard stone.

Still, why water penetrates to everything is: it has not self-nature. You know. If you have self-nature you cannot penetrate into everything. That is, you know, the *kōan* study about this Bodhisattva.

"Sixteen virtuous men." This is also technical term. Sixteen virtuous men we call, we have to several renderings. *Kai shi juroku*. When we say *juroku*, sixteen men means sixteen men—fifteen friends of Bhadrāpala. And here we have also many names which I don't know, of which I am not so familiar. But Bhadrāpala is the Bodhisattva who is enshrined in our bathroom.

Thank you very much.

This transcript is a retyping of the existing City Center transcript. It is not verbatim. The City Center transcript was entered onto disk by Jose Escobar, 1997. It was reformatted by Bill Redican (7/17/01).