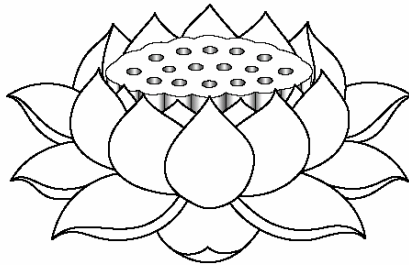


**THE SUTRA AS SPOKEN
BY THE BUDDHA ON
THE PROFOUND KINDNESS
OF PARENTS AND
THE DIFFICULTIES IN
REPAYING THEM**

佛說父母恩重難報經



Translated by the Chung Tai Translation Committee
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Translation Society and by Venerable Yifa and Peter Matthew Romaskiewicz
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Namo Fundamental Teacher Shakyamuni Buddha

南 無 本 師 釋 迦 牟 尼 佛

SUTRA OPENING GATHA

開 經 偈

The Dharma, infinitely profound and subtle,
Is rarely encountered even in a million kalpas.
Now we are able to hear, study, and follow it,
May we fully realize the Tathagata's true meaning.

無上甚深微妙法
我今見聞得受持

百千萬劫難遭遇
願解如來真實義

佛說父母恩重難報經

如是我聞：

一時，佛在舍衛國祇樹給孤獨園，與大比丘二千五百人，菩薩摩訶薩三萬八千人俱。

爾時，世尊引領大眾，直往南行，忽見路邊聚骨一堆。爾時，如來向彼枯骨，五體投地，恭敬禮拜。

阿難合掌白言：「世尊！如來是三界大師，四生慈父，眾人歸敬；以何因緣，禮拜枯骨？」

佛告阿難：「汝等雖是吾上首弟子，出家日久，知事未廣。此一堆枯骨，或是我前世祖先，多生父母，以是因緣，我今禮拜。」佛告阿難：「汝今將此一堆枯骨分作二分，若是男骨，色白且重；若是女骨，色黑且輕。」

THE SUTRA AS SPOKEN BY THE BUDDHA ON THE PROFOUND KINDNESS OF PARENTS AND THE DIFFICULTIES IN REPAYING THEM

Thus I have heard.

Once, the Buddha dwelt at Shravasti, in Jeta Grove, the Garden of Anathapindada, the benefactor of orphans and the solitary, together with a gathering of great bhikshus, two thousand five hundred in all, and with bodhisattvas and mahasattvas, thirty-eight thousand in all.

One day, the World Honored One led the great assembly on a walk toward the south. Suddenly, they came upon a pile of bones beside the road. The Tathagata then turned to face the bones, with head and four limbs to the ground, and prostrated to them respectfully.

Ananda placed his palms together and asked, “World Honored One, the Tathagata is the great teacher of the Triple Realm and the compassionate father of the four kinds of births; you are respected and revered by all. What causes you to pay respect to a pile of dried bones?”

The Buddha told Ananda, “Although all of you have joined the Sangha for a long time and are my foremost disciples, your knowledge is still not extensive. This pile of dried bones could have been my parents or ancestors in many past lifetimes. That is the reason I bow to them now.” Then the Buddha said to Ananda. “Now divide this pile of bones into two groups. If they are the bones of men, they are heavy and white in color. If they are the bones of women, they are light in weight and dark in color.”

阿難白言：「世尊，男人在世，衫帶鞋帽，裝束嚴好，一望知為男子之身。女人在世，多塗脂粉，或薰蘭麝，如是裝飾，即得知是女流之身。而今死後，白骨一般，教弟子等，如何認得？」

佛告阿難：「若是男子，在世之時，入於伽藍，聽講經律，禮拜三寶，念佛名號，所以其骨，色白且重。世間女人，短於智力，易溺於情，生男育女，認為天職。每生一孩，賴乳養命，乳由血變。每孩飲母，八斛四斗，甚多白乳，所以憔悴，骨現黑色，其量亦輕！」

阿難聞語，痛割於心，垂淚悲泣，白言：「世尊！母之恩德，云何報答？」

佛告阿難：「汝今諦聽，我當為汝，分別解說。母胎懷子，凡經十月，甚為辛苦！在母胎時，第一月中，如草上珠，朝不保暮；晨聚將來，午消散去！」

Ananda said to the Buddha, “World Honored One, when men are alive in the world, they adorn their bodies with robes, belts, shoes, hats, and other fine attire, so that we clearly see them as men. When women are alive, they put on cosmetics and apply fragrances from plants or musk; with these adornments we clearly see them as women. Yet, once they are dead, all that remains are a pile of bones. What makes them different?”

The Buddha answered Ananda, “When men are alive, they enter temples, listen to teachings on the sutras and precepts, make obeisance to the Three Jewels, and recite the Buddha’s name, therefore when they die, their bones will be heavy and white in color. Many women in the world are lacking in knowledge and easily swayed by emotion. They give birth to and raise children, feeling that this is their natural duty. Each child relies on its mother’s milk for life and nourishment, and that milk is a transformation of the mother’s blood. Each child drinks eight hundred and forty liters of its mother’s milk. The mother becomes haggard and worn because of this, and therefore her bones turn dark in color and light in weight!”

When Ananda heard these words, pain pierced his heart as if he had been stabbed and he wept bitterly. He said, “World Honored One! How can we ever repay our mother’s love and devotion?”

The Buddha told Ananda, “Listen well, and I will explain it to you in detail. The mother bears the fetus in her womb for ten months. What a great hardship that is! In the first month of pregnancy, the life of the fetus is as precarious as a dewdrop on grass, for it may not last from dawn to dusk, there in the morning, evaporated by mid-day!

母懷胎時，第二月中，恰如凝酥。母懷胎時，第三月中，猶如凝血。母懷胎時，第四月中，稍作人形。母懷胎時，第五月中，兒在母腹，生有五胞。何者為五？頭為一胞，兩肘、兩膝，各為一胞，共成五胞。母懷胎時，第六月中，兒在母腹，六精齊開。何者為六？眼為一精，耳為二精，鼻為三精，口為四精，舌為五精，意為六精。母懷胎時，第七月中，兒在母腹，生成骨節，三百六十；及生毛孔，八萬四千。母懷胎時，第八月中，出生意智，以及九竅。母懷胎時，第九月中，兒在母腹，吸收食物，所出各質，桃梨蒜果，五穀精華。其母身中，生臟向下，熟臟向上，喻如地面，有山聳出。山有三名，一號須彌，二號業山，三號血山。此設喻山，一度崩來，化為一條，母血凝成胎兒食料。母懷胎時，第十月中，孩兒全體，一一完成，方乃降生。若是決為孝順之子，擎拳合掌，安祥出生，不損傷母，母無所苦。

“During the second month, the embryo congeals like curds. In the third month it is like coagulated blood. During the fourth month of pregnancy, the fetus begins to assume a slightly more human form. During the fifth month in the womb, the five appendages: head, two knees, and two elbows start to take shape. In the sixth month, the fetus begins to develop the six sense faculties: eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind. During the seventh month, three hundred sixty bones and joints and eighty-four thousand pores are formed. In the eighth month of pregnancy, the mental faculty and the nine apertures are developed. By the ninth month, the fetus is able to assimilate the nutrients originally coming from peaches, pears, other fruits, vegetables, and the five grains. Inside the mother's body, the raw-transport organs push (food) downward (for digestion), while the ripe-transport organs move (nutrients) upward. This is like the great mountain standing on the surface of the earth, which has three names: Mount Sumeru, Karma Mountain, and Blood Mountain. This mountain is analogous to the mother's blood congealing to form the child's food. During the tenth month of pregnancy, the fetus is fully developed and ready to be born. If the child is destined to be a filial child, it will emerge with hands joined together and the birth will be safe and peaceful. The mother will remain uninjured by the birth and will not suffer.

倘兒決為忤逆之子，破損母胎，扯母心肝，
踏母胛骨，如千刀攪，又彷彿似萬刀攢心。

如斯重苦，出生此兒，更分晰言，尚有十恩：

第一、懷胎守護恩；第二、臨產受苦恩；

第三、生子忘憂恩；第四、咽苦吐甘恩；

第五、迴乾就濕恩；第六、哺乳養育恩；

第七、洗濯不淨恩；第八、遠行憶念恩；

第九、深加體恤恩；第十、究竟憐愍恩。

第一、懷胎守護恩，頌曰：

累劫因緣重，今來托母胎；

月逾生五臟，七七六精開。

體重如山岳，動止劫風災；

羅衣都不掛，妝鏡惹塵埃。

“However, if the child is going to be defiant and heartbreaking to its parents, then it will injure its mother’s womb, pull on the mother’s heart and liver, and straddle her pelvis. The birth will feel like a thousand knives churning inside or like ten thousand blades piercing the mother’s heart. These are the agonies the mother bears in childbirth. To explicate further, there are ten types of kindness bestowed by the mother on the child: The first is the kindness of providing protection and care while the child is in the womb. The second is the kindness of enduring the pain during childbirth. The third is the kindness of forgetting all the pain once the child is born. The fourth is the kindness of swallowing the bitter and saving the savory for the child. The fifth is the kindness of lying in dampness while keeping the child dry. The sixth is the kindness of suckling and raising the child. The seventh is the kindness of washing away the child’s filth. The eighth is the kindness of always being concerned and worried when the child travels afar. The ninth is the kindness of deep caring and sacrifice. The tenth is the kindness of enduring love and devotion.

1. The Kindness of Providing Protection and Care While the Child Is In the Womb:

The deep karmic bonds from past kalpas
Have led to conception in the mother’s womb;
As the months pass, the five organs develop;
The six senses are formed in seven weeks.
The mother’s body feels as heavy as a mountain,
All her movements tear at her
Like the hurricane that destroys the world
The mother’s fine clothes are no longer worn,
While her vanity mirror gathers dust.

第二、臨產受苦恩，頌曰：
懷經十箇月，難產將欲臨；
朝朝如重病，日日似昏沉。
難將惶怖述，愁淚滿胸襟；
含悲告親族，惟懼死來侵！

第三、生子忘憂恩，頌曰：
慈母生兒日，五臟總開張；
身心俱悶絕，血流似屠羊。
生已聞兒健，歡喜倍加常；
喜定悲還至，痛苦徹心腸。

第四、咽苦吐甘恩，頌曰：
父母恩深重，顧憐沒失時；
吐甘無稍息，咽苦不顰眉。
愛重情難忍，恩深復倍悲；
但令孩兒飽，慈母不辭饑！

2. The Kindness of Enduring Pain During Childbirth:

The pregnancy lasts for ten months,
As a difficult labor approaches;
Each morning the mother feels seriously ill,
Each day she is drowsy and sluggish.
Her fear and agitation are difficult to describe,
Tears of worry fill her heart.
In sorrow she tells her family,
That she dreads death will overtake her!

3. The Kindness of Forgetting All the Pain Once the
Child Is Born:

On the day the loving mother gives birth,
It's as if her internal organs were torn open;
She nearly faints from exhaustion of body and mind,
Blood gushes as from a slaughtered lamb.
But upon hearing that the child is healthy,
She is overcome with boundless joy;
Yet the joy soon ceases and grief returns,
As agony wrenches her heart and guts.

4. The Kindness of Swallowing the Bitter and Saving the
Savory For The Child:

The kindness of parents is deep and profound,
Their care and affection never cease;
Tirelessly the mother feeds the savory to the child,
While swallowing the bitter herself without complaints.
Her love is immense and difficult to contain,
Her kindness is profound and so is her compassion;
Only wanting the child to be nourished,
The loving mother ignores her own hunger!

第五、迴乾就濕恩，頌曰：
母願身投濕，將兒移就乾；
兩乳充饑渴，羅袖掩風寒。
恩憐恆廢枕，寵弄纔能歡；
但令孩兒穩，慈母不求安！

第六、哺乳養育恩，頌曰：
慈母像大地，嚴父配於天；
覆載恩同等，父母恩亦然。
不憎無怒目，不嫌手足攣；
誕腹親生子，終日惜兼憐！

第七、洗濯不淨恩，頌曰：
本是芙蓉質，精神健且豐；
眉分新柳碧，臉色奪蓮紅。
恩深摧玉貌，洗濯損盤龍；
只為憐男女，慈母改顏容！

5. The Kindness of Lying in Dampness While Keeping the Child Dry:

The mother is willing to lie in dampness,
Moving the child so he can be dry;
Her breasts satisfy his hunger and thirst,
Her sleeves protect him from the wind and chill.
Her head rarely touches the pillow,
Constantly pampering to make the child happy;
Wishing the child to be safe and secure,
The mother seeks no comfort for herself!

6. The Kindness of Suckling and Raising the Child:

The compassionate mother is like the great earth,
The stern father is like the heavens;
One shields from above; the other supports from below,
Such is the immense kindness of parents.
Never angry or impatient,
They don't complain even when their limbs cramp.
The children are their own flesh and blood,
All day long they care for and cherish them!

7. The Kindness of Washing Away the Child's Filth:

Once beautiful with delicate features,
Her spirit was vibrant and strong;
Her eyebrows were like fresh willows,
Her complexion put a red lotus to shame.
In her devotion she neglects her lovely face,
As endless cleansing chafes her delicate fingers.
With concern solely for her sons and daughters,
A mother lets her own beauty fade.

第八、遠行憶念恩，頌曰：
死別誠難忍，生離實亦傷；
子出關山外，母憶在他鄉。
日夜心相隨，流淚數千行；
如猿泣愛子，寸寸斷肝腸！

第九、深加體恤恩。頌曰：
父母恩情重，恩深報實難；
子苦願代受，兒勞母不安。
聞道遠行去，憐兒夜臥寒；
男女暫辛苦，長使母心酸！

第十、究竟憐愍恩，頌曰：
父母恩深重，恩憐無歇時；
起坐心相逐，近遙意與隨。
母年一百歲，常憂八十兒，
欲知恩愛斷，命盡使分離！」

8. The Kindness of Always Worrying When the Child Travels Afar:

The death of loved ones is truly hard to bear,
Separation in life also leaves a deep wound;
When the child travels afar, the mother agonizes over
How he is faring in a faraway land.
Day and night, her heart is with her child,
She sheds a thousand streams of tears;
Like an ape weeping for its beloved young,
Her heart is broken into pieces!

9. The Kindness of Deep Caring and Sacrifice:

The kindness and affection of parents are profound,
And truly difficult to repay;
They willingly suffer on their children's behalf.
If the child labors hard, the parents are distraught.
If they hear that he has traveled afar,
They worry he will lie in the cold at night;
Even a moment's pain of their dear children,
Will cause the mother prolonged distress!

10. The Kindness of Enduring Love and Devotion:

The kindness of parents is deep and profound,
Their mercy and concern never cease;
Sitting or standing, their hearts are with their children,
Near or far, the parents' thoughts follow them.
Even if a mother is a hundred years old,
She will still worry about her eighty-year-old child,
Do you know when this love will end?
It only ceases when her life is over!"

佛告阿難：「我觀眾生，雖紹人品，心行愚蒙。不思爹娘，有大恩德；不生恭敬，忘恩背義，無有仁慈，不孝不順。阿娘懷子，十月之中，起座不安，如擎重擔；飲食不下，如長病人。月滿生時，受諸痛苦；須臾產出，恐已無常；如殺豬羊，血流徧地。受如是苦，生得兒身，咽苦吐甘，抱持養育；洗濯不淨，不憚劬勞；忍寒忍熱，不辭辛苦；乾處兒臥，濕處母眠；三年之中，飲母白血。

嬰孩童子，乃至成年，教導禮義，婚嫁營謀，備求資業；攜荷艱辛，懃苦百倍，不言恩惠；男女有病，父母驚憂；憂極生病，視同常事；子若病除，母病方愈！

The Buddha told Ananda, “I see among the living, even though born as human beings, many who are foolish and ignorant in their thoughts and actions. They do not think of their parents’ great kindness and beneficence. They are disrespectful, ungrateful and unrighteous. They lack benevolence and compassion; they are neither filial nor compliant. During the ten months while the mother bears the child, she feels discomfort every time she rises and sits, as if she were carrying a heavy burden. Like a chronic invalid, she is unable to keep her food down. When it is time for the birth, she undergoes great pain and suffering. As the child is being born, her own life is at risk, as blood flows all over the floor, like a pig or lamb being slaughtered. After enduring these sufferings and the child is born, the mother swallows the bitter and saves the sweet for him; holding, carrying and nourishing the child, washing and scrubbing away its filth, enduring both cold and heat; she does not withdraw from any hardships nor reject any hard work. She lets her child lie on the dry spot and sleeps on the damp spot herself. For three years she feeds the baby milk, which is transformed from her own blood.

“As children grow to maturity, parents continually instruct and guide them in the ways of propriety and morality. They help with their marriage arrangements, and assist in acquiring assets and jobs. Bearing and bringing up children involve tremendous difficulty and hardship, but parents never speak of their own beneficence. When a child becomes ill, parents are worried and afraid. Frequently the mother is so worried that she becomes sick herself. Only when the child is well does she recover.

如斯養育，願早成人；及其長成，反為不孝。尊親與言，不知順從；應對無禮，惡眼相視。欺凌伯叔，打罵兄弟；毀辱親情，無有禮義。雖曾從學，不遵範訓；父母教令，多不依從；兄弟共言，每相違戾。出入來往，不啟尊堂；言行高傲，擅意為事。父母訓罰，伯叔語非，童幼憐愍，尊人遮護；漸漸成長，狠戾不調，不伏虧違，反生嗔恨。棄諸親友，朋附惡人；習久成性，認非為是。

或被人誘，逃往他鄉；違背爹娘，離家別眷。或因經紀，或為政行，荏苒因循，便為婚娶，由斯留礙，久不還家。

“In this way, parents raise their children, hoping that they will soon grow to be mature adults. Yet after the children grow up, they often are unfilial in return. When speaking with their elders and relatives, they display no obedience. They are impolite in their manner of speech, even glaring at them with hostility. They insult and bully their uncles and aunts, they scold and fight with their siblings, they disrupt family harmony, and have no respect or sense of propriety. Even though they are educated, they do not heed instructions or obey the rules; they seldom follow the guidance of their parents. They breach agreements with their own brothers. They come and go from home without even reporting to their parents. Their speech and actions are arrogant and they act on impulse without consulting others. When their parents admonish or punish them, or when their uncles point out their mistakes, children are often protected by elders who take pity on them because of their youth. Gradually, as they grow up, they become increasingly rebellious and abusive; they do not admit to wrongdoing and become defiant and hateful. They forsake family and friends and befriend evildoers; bad habits eventually become second nature, and they come to believe what is wrong to be right.

“Such children may be enticed by others to run away to other towns, defying their parents and leaving home and family. In the course of time, they may work in business or politics, get married, and all these hinder them from returning home for long periods of time.

或在他鄉，不能謹慎，被人謀害，橫事鉤牽；枉被刑責，牢獄枷鎖。或遭病患，厄難縈纏；囚苦饑羸，無人看待。被人嫌賤，委棄街衢；因此命終，無人救治。膨脹爛壞，日暴風吹；白骨飄零，寄他鄉土；便與親族，歡會長乖，違背慈恩。不知二老，永懷憂念！或因啼泣，眼暗目盲；或因悲哀，氣咽成病；或緣憶子，衰變死亡；作鬼抱魂，不曾割捨。

或復聞子，不崇學業，朋逐異端；無賴粗頑，好習無益；鬥打竊盜，觸犯鄉閭；飲酒擲蒲，姦非過失。帶累兄弟，惱亂爹娘。晨去暮還，不問尊親，動止寒溫；

“Or, living in other towns, these children may not be prudent and find themselves plotted against, accused of doing evil, or involved in lawsuits. They may be unfairly punished or locked up in prison. Or they may encounter illness, become entangled in difficulties and hardships, be confined and suffer from starvation and emaciation, and have no one to take care of them. Or they may be scorned and disliked by others, and abandoned on the streets. Thus their lives may come to an end, and no one bothers to save them. Their bodies swell up, rot, decay, and are scorched by the sun and blown by the wind. Their bones are scattered in foreign soil. They will never again be happily reunited with their relatives and kin or be able to repay their parents’ beneficence. They will never know how their aging parents constantly mourn for and worry about them. The parents’ eyes become blurry and turn blind from weeping. Or, choked with grief, they become very ill. Constantly thinking of their children, they languish and pass away; but even when they become ghosts, their spirits are still unable to let go of the children.

“Some children may not aspire to learning, but instead become involved in gangs or improper endeavors. They may be villainous, crude, and stubborn, delighting in practices that are utterly devoid of benefit. They may become involved in fights and thefts, setting themselves at odds with the local community by drinking, gambling, and debauchery. They drag their brothers into their evil ways to the further distress of their parents. They leave home early in the morning and return late at night. They never ask about the welfare of their parents or whether they are warm or cold.

晦朔朝暮，永乖扶侍。安床薦枕，並不知聞；參問起居，從此間斷。父母年邁，形貌衰羸，羞恥見人，忍受欺抑。

或有父孤母寡，獨守空堂，猶若客人，寄居他舍；寒凍飢渴，曾不知聞；晝夜常啼，自嗟自嘆！應奉甘旨，供養尊親；若輩妄人，了無是事，每作羞慚，畏人怪笑。

或持財食，供養妻兒，忘厥疲勞，無避羞恥。妻妾約束，每事依從；尊長嗔呵，全無畏懼。或復是女，適配他人；未嫁之時，咸皆孝順；婚嫁已訖，不孝逐增。父母微嗔，即生怨恨；夫婿打罵，忍受甘心。

“They do not look after their parents either in the morning or evening, from the first day of the month to the last day. They never make the beds for their parents or know if they have slept well. They are not concerned about their parents’ daily needs, nor do they help them throughout the day. As the parents advance in age and their appearances become feeble and emaciated, they feel ashamed to be seen in public and have to endure abuse and oppression.

“Some parents are widowers or widows. They are left alone in empty houses, feeling like guests in their own homes. They may be cold and hungry, but no one takes heed of their plight. They often weep from day into the night, sighing and lamenting. It’s only right that children should happily provide for aging parents according to their wishes, but irresponsible children will do no such thing. Instead they feel embarrassed about their own parents and are afraid of being laughed at and ridiculed if they are seen with them.

“On the other hand, they lavish wealth and food on their own wives and children, not minding the toil and weariness involved. Without a sense of shame, they acquiesce with all the wishes of their wives and concubines, but when their parents and elders reproach them, they react with total disregard. It may be the case that daughters were quite filial to their parents while unwed, but become progressively less filial after they marry. If their parents show even the slightest signs of displeasure, the daughters become upset and resentful toward them. Yet if their husbands scold or beat them, they bear it willingly.

異姓他宗，情深眷重；自家骨肉，卻以為疏。或隨夫婿，外郡他鄉；離別爹娘，無心戀慕；斷絕消息，音信不通。遂使爹娘，懸腸掛肚；刻不能安，宛如倒懸。每思見面，如渴思漿；慈念後人，無有休息！

父母恩德，無量無邊；不孝之愆，卒難陳報！」

爾時，大眾聞佛所說，父母重恩，舉身投地，搥胸自撲；身毛孔中，悉皆流血；悶絕躡地，良久乃蘇，高聲唱言：

「苦哉，苦哉！痛哉，痛哉！我等今者深是罪人！從來未覺，冥若夜遊；今悟知非，心膽俱碎！惟願世尊，哀愍救援，云何報得父母深恩？」

“Even though their spouses are of other families and surnames, the love between them is deep and their attachment is strong, yet they hold their own flesh and blood at a distance. They may follow their husbands and move to other towns, leaving their parents behind and not even miss them. They cut off all communication with their parents, not sending them a word. The parents feel anxious as their hearts are left hanging without a single moment’s peace. In every thought they yearn to see their children, just as one who is thirsty longs for something to drink. Their loving concern for their offspring never ends.

The parents’ beneficence and virtue are boundless and limitless. If one has made the mistake of being unfilial, it is almost impossible to describe the retribution!”

Upon hearing the Buddha speak about the depth of one’s parents’ kindness, some in the assembly threw themselves on the ground, some beat their chests some struck themselves, some had blood flowing from all their pores, and some fell unconscious to the ground for a long time before they regained consciousness. The people lamented loudly,

“How terrible this is! How painful this is! Now we see that we are real sinners. Like those who travel in the dark night, we have been so blind. We now understand our wrongdoings and our very insides are torn to bits. We only hope that the World Honored One will pity us and save us. Please tell us how we can repay the profound kindness of our parents!”

爾時，如來即以八種深重梵音，告諸大眾：

「汝等當知，我今為汝分別解說：

假使有人，左肩擔父，右肩擔母，研皮至骨，穿骨至髓，遶須彌山；經百千劫，血流沒踝，猶不能報父母深恩！

假使有人，遭饑饉劫，為於爹娘，盡其己身，嚙割碎壞，猶如微塵；經百千劫，猶不能報父母深恩！

假使有人，為於爹娘，手執利刀，剜其眼睛，獻於如來；經百千劫，猶不能報父母深恩！

假使有人，為於爹娘，亦以利刀，割其心肝，血流徧地，不辭痛苦；經百千劫，猶不能報父母深恩。

At that time the Tathagata, in a profound and deep Brahma voice with eight pure qualities, spoke to the assembly.

“All of you should know this. I will now explain this matter to you in detail.

“If a person were to carry his father on his left shoulder and his mother on his right shoulder, until their weight bore through his skin to the bones and through the bones to the marrow, and if that person were to circumambulate Mount Sumeru for a thousand kalpas until the blood that flowed from his feet covered his ankles, that person would still not have repaid the deep kindness of his parents!

“If a person who, during a period fraught with famine and starvation, sacrificed his own body by slicing his flesh off into pieces as many as dust particles to feed his parents, and did this through hundreds of thousands of kalpas, that person still would not have repaid the deep kindness of his parents!

“If a person who, for the sake of his parents, took a knife and cut out his eyes and made an offering of them to the Tathagata, and continued to do this for hundreds of thousands of kalpas, that person still would not have repaid the profound kindness of his parents!

“If a person who, for the sake of his father and mother, used a sharp knife to cut out his heart and liver, unafraid of the pain even as his blood flowed all over the ground, and if he continued in this way for hundreds and thousands of kalpas, that person still would not have repaid the profound kindness of his parents!

假使有人，為於爹娘，百千刀戟，一時刺身，於自身中，左右出入；經百千劫，猶不能報父母深恩。

假使有人，為於爹娘，打骨出髓；經百千劫，猶不能報父母深恩。

假使有人，為於爹娘，吞熱鐵丸；經百千劫，徧身焦爛，猶不能報父母深恩。」

爾時，大眾聞佛所說，父母恩德，垂淚悲泣，痛割於心！諦思無計，同聲發言；深生慚愧，共白佛言：「世尊！我等今者，深是罪人！云何報得父母深恩？」

佛告弟子：「欲得報恩，為於父母，書寫此經；為於父母，讀誦此經；為於父母，懺悔罪愆；為於父母，供養三寶；為於父母，受持齋戒；為於父母，布施修福。若能如是，則得名為孝順之子；不作此行，是地獄人。」

“If a person who, for the sake of his parents, was stabbed by a hundred thousand swords all at once so that they entered one side of his body and came out the other, and if this continued for hundreds and thousands of kalpas, that person still would not have repaid the profound kindness of his parents!

“If a person who, for the sake of his parents, was beaten until his bones protruded and broke and the marrow came out, and this continued for hundreds of thousands of kalpas, that person still would not have repaid the profound kindness of his parents!

“If a person who, for the sake of his parents, had to swallow molten iron pellets and continued to do this for hundreds and thousands of kalpas, until his body was seared completely, that person still would not have repaid the profound kindness of his parents.”

At that time, upon hearing the Buddha speak about the kindness and virtue of parents, everyone in the assembly wept bitterly and felt piercing pain in their hearts. They reflected but did not know what to do, were deeply remorseful, and spoke with one voice to the Buddha, “World Honored One, we are all sinners! How can we repay the deep kindness of our parents?”

The Buddha told the disciples, “If you wish to repay your parents’ kindness, write out this sutra on their behalf. Recite this sutra on their behalf. Repent your transgressions and offenses on their behalf. For the sake of your parents, make offerings to the Three Jewels. For the sake of your parents, observe the precepts and fast. For the sake of your parents, practice giving and cultivate good deeds. If you are able to do these things, you will be known as filial children. If you do not do these things, you are people destined for the hells.”

佛告阿難：

「不孝之人，身壞命終，墮於阿鼻無間地獄。此大地獄，縱廣八萬由旬；四面鐵城，周圍羅網。其地亦鐵，盛火洞然；猛烈火燒，雷奔電爍、烱銅鐵汁，澆灌罪人。銅狗、鐵蛇，恒吐煙火；焚燒煮炙，脂膏焦燃。苦痛哀哉，難堪難忍！鉤竿、鎗槊、鐵鏑、鐵串、鐵槌、鐵戟、劍樹、刀輪，如雨如雲，空中而下；或斬或刺，苦罰罪人；歷劫受殃，無時暫歇。又令更入，餘諸地獄，頭戴火盆，鐵車碾身；縱橫駛過，腸肚分裂，骨肉焦爛；一日之中，千生萬死！受如是苦，皆因前身忤逆不孝，故獲斯罪！」

爾時，大眾聞佛所說，父母恩德，垂淚悲泣，告於如來：「我等今者，云何報得父母深恩？」

The Buddha told Ananda,

“If a person is not filial, when his life ends and his body decays, he will fall into the Endless Avici Hell. This great hell is eighty thousand yojanas in circumference; it is surrounded on all four sides by iron walls and covered by nets. The ground is also made of iron, with an immense fire burning fiercely. Thunder roars and bright bolts of lightning strike, molten brass and iron fluids are poured over the offenders’ bodies. Brass dogs and iron snakes constantly spew out fire and smoke, which burn the offenders, broil and char their flesh and fat. Alas, such suffering! Such pain! Difficult to take, difficult to bear! There are poles and hooks, spears and lances, iron halberds, iron chains, iron hammers, iron awls, trees of sword, and wheels of iron knives, like rain and clouds, falling from the air. The sinner is chopped, hacked, or stabbed, and undergoes these cruel punishments for kalpas without respite. Then they enter the remaining hells, where their heads are capped with fiery basins, while iron chariots roll over their bodies, passing both horizontally and vertically until their guts are ripped open and their bones and flesh are squashed and scorched severely. Within a single day, they experience thousands of deaths and rebirths. Such sufferings are a result of committing gross disobedience and not being filial toward parents when one was alive.”

At that time, upon hearing the Buddha speak about the virtue of parents’ kindness, everyone in the assembly wept sorrowfully and addressed the Tathagata, “How can we now repay the profound kindness of our parents?”

佛告弟子：「欲得報恩，為於父母，造此經典，是真報得父母恩也。能造一卷，得見一佛；能造十卷，得見十佛；能造百卷，得見百佛；能造千卷，得見千佛；能造萬卷，得見萬佛。是等善人，造經力故，是諸佛等，常來慈護；立使其人，生身父母，得生天上，受諸快樂，離地獄苦。」

爾時，阿難及諸大眾，阿修羅、迦樓羅、緊那羅、摩睺羅伽、人、非人等，天、龍、夜叉、乾闥婆，及諸小王、轉輪聖王，是諸大眾，聞佛所言，身毛皆豎，悲泣哽咽，不能自裁。各發願言：

「我等從今，盡未來際，寧碎此身，猶如微塵，經百千劫，誓不違於如來聖教！寧以鐵鉤，拔出其舌，長有由旬，鐵犁耕之，血流成河，經百千劫，誓不違於如來聖教！」

The Buddha said to his disciples, “If you wish to repay their kindness, then for the sake of your parents, copy and spread this sutra. This is truly repaying their kindness. If one can produce one copy, then one will get to see one buddha. If one can produce ten copies, then one will get to see ten buddhas. If one can produce one hundred copies, then one will get to see one hundred buddhas. If one can produce one thousand copies, then one will get to see one thousand buddhas. If one can produce ten thousand copies, then one will get to see ten thousand buddhas. From the power derived by copying sutras, buddhas frequently come to kindly protect these good people. These merits can immediately cause their parents to be reborn in the heavens, to enjoy all kinds of happiness, and to be free from the sufferings of the hells.”

At that time, upon hearing the words of the Buddha, Ananda and the rest of the assembly—the asuras, garudas, kinnaras, mahoragas, humans, non-humans, and others, as well as the devas, dragons, yakshas, gandarvas, wheel-turning sage kings, and the lesser kings, felt all the hairs on their bodies stand on end. They wept grievously and were unable to control themselves. Each one of them made a vow saying,

“All of us, from now and endlessly into the future, would rather our bodies be pulverized into tiny particles of dust for a hundred thousand kalpas, than ever go against the Tathagatha’s noble teachings. We would rather have our tongues be pulled out by iron hooks extending for a full yojana, and that for a hundred thousand kaplas an iron plough would run over them and blood would flow like a river, than ever go against the Tathagata’s noble teachings.

寧以百千刀輪，於自身中，自由出入，誓不違於如來聖教！寧以鐵網，周匝纏身，經百千劫，誓不違於如來聖教！寧以剉碓，斬碎其身，百千萬段，皮肉筋骨，悉皆零落，經百千劫，終不違於如來聖教！」

爾時，阿難從於坐中，安祥而起，白佛言：「世尊，此經當何名之？云何奉持？」

佛告阿難：「此經名為《父母恩重難報經》，以是名字，汝當奉持！」

爾時，大眾、天人、阿修羅等，聞佛所說，皆大歡喜，信受奉行，作禮而退。

佛說父母恩重難報經

“We would rather have a hundred thousand bladed wheels roll freely over our bodies, than ever go against the Tathagata’s noble teachings. We would rather have our bodies be ensnared in an iron net for a hundred thousand kalpas, than ever go against the Tathagata’s noble teachings. We would rather that for a hundred thousand kalpas our bodies be chopped, hacked, mutilated, and chiseled into millions of pieces so that our skin, flesh, joints, and bones would be completely disintegrated, than ever go against the Tathagata’s noble teachings.”

At that time, Ananda rose calmly from his seat and asked the Buddha, “World Honored One, what name shall this sutra have so that we may accept and uphold it?”

The Buddha told Ananda, “This is called *The Sutra On The Profound Kindness Of Parents And The Difficulties In Repaying Them*. With this name you should follow and uphold it.”

At that time, the assembly, the gods, humans, asuras, and others, hearing what the Buddha had said, were filled with great joy. They accepted and followed the teaching faithfully; and they bowed and withdrew.

The Sutra As Spoken By The Buddha On The Profound Kindness Of Parents And The Difficulties In Repaying Them

THREE REFUGES

三 皈 依

I take refuge in the Buddha, may all sentient beings
Understand the Great Way profoundly,
and bring forth the bodhi mind.

I take refuge in the Dharma, may all sentient beings
Deeply enter the sutra treasury, and have wisdom vast as the sea.

I take refuge in the Sangha, may all sentient beings
Form together a great assembly, one and all in harmony.

自 皈 依 佛	當 願 眾 生	體 解 大 道	發 無 上 心
自 皈 依 法	當 願 眾 生	深 入 經 藏	智 慧 如 海
自 皈 依 僧	當 願 眾 生	統 理 大 眾	一 切 無 礙
和 南 聖 眾			

FOUR GREAT VOWS

四 弘 誓 願

Countless are sentient beings, I vow to liberate;
Endless are afflictions, I vow to eradicate;
Measureless are the Dharmas, I vow to master;
Supreme is the Buddha Way, I vow to attain.

眾 生 無 邊 誓 願 度	煩 惱 無 盡 誓 願 斷
法 門 無 量 誓 願 學	佛 道 無 上 誓 願 成

REPENTANCE

懺悔偈

All the harm I have ever done, since time immemorial,
Are caused by greed, anger, and ignorance,
And produced through my body, speech, and will,
Now I confess and amend all.

往昔所造諸惡業 皆由無始貪瞋痴
從身語意之所生 一切罪障皆懺悔

DEDICATION OF MERITS

回向偈

May the merits of our deeds
Reach every part of the world;
Sentient beings large and small
All attain enlightenment.
Maha-Prajna-Paramita

願以此功德 普及於一切
我等與眾生 皆共成佛道
摩訶般若般羅蜜



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