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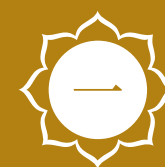
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覺悟之路



Part One:

The Path to Enlightenment



兜率下降

三十三天天外天，九霄雲外有神仙。
神仙本是凡人做，只怕凡人心不堅。

—— 古德

宇宙之大，豈止我們熟悉的這個世界？所謂天外有天、天有多重，我們所說的天界，通常是指比這個世界優越的境界，而能夠升遷到天界的，就必然是修得天福、天德的大善眾生。

釋迦牟尼佛成佛之前，生在兜率天 (Tuṣita)，成為一生補處的護明菩薩，為諸天說法，待因緣成熟時，就從兜率天降生人間，度化眾生。



◎ [佛教小知識]

• 為何佛教徒特別重視兜率天

根據佛教理論，每當佛陀降生人世之前，都要先在兜率天上為諸天講說佛法。兜率天宮分為內外兩院，外院為天人所居，內院為補處菩薩（即將成佛者）的住處，補處菩薩常由此天下生而成佛。釋迦牟尼佛為一生補處菩薩時，也曾在此天修行，然後由此處下生人間，現為補處菩薩的彌勒今也在此處說法教化。所以兜率天在一切天中，受到了特別的重視。

Descent from Tuṣita Heaven

Above the Thirty Three Heavens is yet one higher,
Over the loftiest clouds celestial deities reside;
Since these deities were originally humans,
Could it be that the ordinary minds are uncertain?

— An ancient sage

The universe is so vast that it is beyond the world we know. As the saying goes, there are many worlds and these worlds are multi-dimensional. The celestial realms we normally talk about refer to those that are superior to our own world. And those who are able to ascend to those realms are surely beings who have cultivated great virtues and are worthy of the joys and merits of the heavens.

Before he attained Buddhahood, Śākyamuni had been born in Tuṣita Heaven, as the Light-protecting Bodhisattva, in the Stage of One Life to Replacement. He preached the Dharma to the heavenly beings. When karmic conditions are mature, he will be born in the human world from the heavens and save all sentient beings.

❖ Basics of Buddhism: _____

• **Why do Buddhists attach so much importance to Tuṣita Heaven?**

According to the Buddhist doctrines, Tuṣita Heaven is where a Buddha teaches the Dharma before he descends to the human realm. It is divided into the inner court and the outer court. Celestial beings dwell in the outer court, while the inner court is the residence of a bodhisattva who will be born as a Buddha in the next life (a Buddha-to-be). The bodhisattva normally descends from this heaven to the human world and will then attain Buddhahood. When Śākyamuni Buddha was at the position of One Life to Accomplishment of Buddhahood, he had also practiced in Tuṣita Heaven, from where he then descended to the human world. Maitreya, the next Buddha, is living in Tuṣita Heaven, teaching the Dharma and guiding the celestial beings. As such, Tuṣita Heaven is given special attention among all the heavenly realms.



諸佛世尊，唯以一大事因緣故，出現於世，
欲令眾生聞、示、悟、入佛之知見。

——《法華經》

兩千六百多年前，古印度境內諸國林立，其東北部恆河邊有個迦毗羅衛國，國王叫淨飯，王后叫摩耶，淨飯王和王后摩耶夫人結婚多年，卻一直膝下無子。

住在天國兜率宮的護明菩薩，決定投生人間，成佛度化眾生。於是選擇了仁慈的淨飯王夫婦作為父母。

一天晚上，摩耶夫人於夢中清晰地見到菩薩騎着一頭六牙白象，從空中而來，從她的右肋進入胎腹。當時她的身心，均感到無比的清涼、爽快和愉悅。

摩耶王后醒來後，就去見淨飯王，告訴他夢中之事。淨飯王也很驚異，立即召集大臣們詢問王后之夢是何預兆，一名婆羅門占卜者回答說：「此夢甚佳！王后已懷孕，必生王子，這王子是千古聖人，定能光顯釋迦族！」淨飯王聽後不勝歡喜。