

Who Created the World?

IBDSCL, Oct. 20, 21, 2018, by Nancy Yu

Good morning! Welcome to the International Buddha Dharma Society for Cosmic Law to listen to today's Dharma talk! Today is our last topic on Cause and Effect. Last week, we talked about what we should do when retributions come. Keep still and know that there is a cause for it. Everything is illusion, and just be still. No rising thoughts and let it be. Then is there any way to resolve the result? Of course, there is. Everything relies on the mind and when the mind changes everything will change. There is a saying: A butcher becomes a Buddha the moment he drops his cleaver. The way to change the result is: bringing out the resolve for Bodhi, holding precepts, repenting, keeping vegetarian diet, chanting the name of the Buddha, reciting sutras, holding mantras and transferring merits and virtues.

As we talked about before, everything we sense is karma. One same thing, for different beings, could mean different things. For example, water to humans is water; to heavenly beings is sweet dew; and to ghosts is iron juice. Today, I will talk about the world, the universe. Is there anyone who created the world? First, I will make several points:

1. The universe has neither a beginning nor an ending;
2. Everything in the universe that we sense is illusion. They are results of false thoughts, discrimination and attachment of sentient beings. They are in the Law of Cause, Condition and Effect.
3. Since everything is illusion, time is also illusion; directions, sizes, are all illusions. They are results of sentient beings' discrimination.
4. There is no a creator of the universe.

Today, I would like to share with you the dialogues between the Buddha and King Brahma. From their dialogues, you can come to understand the world, the universe. Their dialogues are from the Chapter of Brahma in the Mahākaruṇā Paurāṇika Sūtra (the Great Sorrow Sutra).

Dialogues between the Buddha and King Brahma

During the night when the Buddha was going to enter Nirvana, all the trees, herbs and bushes, all the big rivers, small rivers, lakes and ponds, all the animals and birds, all the suns, moons and stars, were all different from the past. Even Brahma King who thought that he was the master of the Three Thousand Great Thousand World was not fond of his palace, bed and seat any more. Brahma looked over the Three Thousand Great Thousand

World and knew that all those inconceivable things that never happened before were because that night the Buddha was going to enter Nirvana.

So, the King of Brahma came to see the Buddha in a hurry. After he bowed to the Buddha he said, "World Honored One, please teach me how to cultivate and what to rely on to live? The World Honored One asked Brahma, "Brahma, did you say 'I am the master of the Three Thousand Great Thousand World. No sentient beings are beyond me and I am better than all sentient beings. I created all things and all sentient beings, and I manifested in all of them.'?"

Brahma answered, "Yes, World Honored One, I said so."

The World Honored One asked, "Brahma, then who created you? Who manifest in you?" Brahma was silent, and he did not know how to answer.

The Buddha asked, "When the whole Three Thousand Great Thousand World is burned by the fire of kalpa, do you also create that? Is that also your manifestation?"

Brahma answered, "World Honored One, that is not what I create and that is not my manifestation."

The Buddha asked, "Brahma, the mountains, rivers and earth exist because of water, water exists because of wind, wind exists with void. The ground is 6.8 million yojana thick and it won't split or fall apart. Brahma, is it also what you created? Is it also your manifestation?"

Brahma answered, "No, World Honored One."

The Buddha then said, "Brahma, in this Three Thousand Great Thousand World, there are 10 billion suns and moons. They all move in their own orbits in order. Brahma, is this also what you created? Are they also your manifestation?"

Brahma answered, "No, World Honored One."

The Buddha said, "Sometimes, Sūryaprabha and Candra-prabha are not in their own palace. Their palaces are empty. Brahma, is this also your creation, your manifestation?"

Brahma said, "No, World Honored One."

"Are the four seasons, spring, summer, fall and winter, your creation, your manifestation?"

"No, World Honored One."

"Are images reflected in water mirror, seed oil, mani balls, crystals, and all other clean vessels your creation, your manifestation? Are all the forms, the earth, mountains, rivers, forests, gardens, palaces, houses, villages, cities, camels, donkeys, elephants, horses, roebuck, deer, birds, suns, moons, stars, Arhats, pratyekabuddha, Bodhisattvas, Buddhas,

King Sakka, humans, non-humans, and so on, your creation, your manifestation? Did you bless all of them?"

"No, World Honored One."

"Are all the different sounds, from the cliffs, valleys, drums, singing, dancing, playing, animals, birds, humans, non-humans, and so on, your creation, your manifestation? Did you bless all of them?"

"No, World Honored One."

"Are all the scenes seen, all the sounds heard, all the fragrances smelled, all the luxury food tasted, all the feelings experienced, all the methods known, all the games played, all the crying, all the groaning, all the terrors and fears, all the pains and joys, in the living beings' dreams, your creation, your manifestation? Did you bless all of them?"

"No, World Honored One."

"Are all the terrors, fears, pains, cares, anger and killings of all the sentient beings, flood, great fire, sharp knives, big wind, mountain cliffs, river bank, poison, evil animals, enemies, ghosts and gods, and so on, that the living beings afraid of, your creation, your manifestation? Did you bless all of them?"

"No, World Honored One."

"All the different kinds of diseases, diseases of wind, cold, warm, and others, metabolic diseases, disharmony of major parts of the body, all the pains due to past evil doings, all the sufferings and annoyances because of the diseases, Brahma, are these your creations, your manifestation? Did you bless all of them?"

"No, World Honored One."

"All the catastrophes, the wilderness, robbers, flood, that the living beings experienced, wars, plagues and famine, are these your creation, your manifestation? Did you bless all of them?"

"No, World Honored One."

"The sufferings of separation that the living beings experienced when they parting from their parents, brothers, sisters, clan relatives, wives, children, good friends, are these your creation, your manifestation? Did you bless all of them?"

"No, World Honored One."

"All the evil karma that the living beings did, such as selling cattle, wine, Butea, tools for extracting oil from bugs, or traveling to the ocean or mountainous wilderness, or telling

fortunes, Brahma, are these your creation, your manifestation? Did you bless all of them?”
“No, World Honored One.”

“Living beings do all kinds of karma. Due to these karmas, they are reborn as human beings, or are reborn to heavens, or fall into hells, or fall to be ghosts and animals. All these are due to their own kind deeds or evil deeds that they have done. If they don’t have compassionate heart, often harm others, do the ten evil deeds, they will fall into the evil realms. Brahma, are these your creation, your manifestation? Did you bless them?”
“No, World Honored One.”

“All the sufferings that the living beings experienced, head chopped, hands and feet cut off, body separated, being fried in oil pot, being burned by fire, being harmed by weapons, being prisoned, and fighting with others, Brahma, are these your creation, your manifestation?”
“No, World Honored One.”

“All the sexual misconducts of living beings and all other evil karma, Brahma, are these your creation, your manifestation? Did you bless all of them?”
“No, World Honored One.”

“All the killings done by the living beings, and all the other evil deeds that cause others to lose their lives, Brahma, are these your creation, your manifestation? Did you bless all of them?”
“No, World Honored One.”

“All the people in the world, rich or poor, all suffer from birth, aging, sickness, death, sorrow, lament, annoyance. All will be ruined by impermanence, all will die and will not live forever. Are these your creation, your manifestation and with your blessings?”
“No, World Honored One.”

“All the living beings are bond by their thoughts of greed, anger, ignorance, and so on. Because of this, living beings are deluded and create various of karmas. Brahma, is it your creation, your manifestation and with your blessings?”
“No, World Honored One.”

“All the living beings in the three evil realms, the hell realm, the ghost realm and the animal realm are suffering because of all the evil deeds they did. Brahma, is it also your creation, your manifestation and with your blessings?”
“No, World Honored One.”

“All the flowers, plants, fruit trees, with or without seeds, on all the mountains and ground, and in all the rivers, grow either on the ground or in the river. They produce either bitter, salty, sour or sweet or astringent taste. No matter living beings like it or not, and no matter they are profitable or not, are these all created by you? Are they all your manifestation and with your blessings?”

“No, World Honored One.”

“Out of ignorance, all the living beings, led by craving, transmigrate in the five realms. They are born and then they die. They either are born as humans, or born to the heavens, or they are born as the demon kings, or they become Sramanas, or brahmins. All these living beings often interact with each other and they don’t know to pursue liberation. Are these all what you created? Are these all your manifestation with your blessings?”

“No, World Honored One.”

“Then why would you say that all the living beings and the whole world are created by you, and they are all your manifestation and with your blessings?”

Brahma answered, “World Honored One, it is because I don’t have enough wisdom; I still have evil views and my heart is inverted. World Honored One, you often gave teachings while I did not come and listen, so I had all those sayings. Today, World Honored One, please tell me, who created all those in the world? Who manifests the whole world?”

The World Honored One answered, “All the things and all the living beings in the world are created by karma. They are manifestation of karma. Why? Brahma, because of ignorance, there are mental formations; mental formations generates consciousness; consciousness brings names and forms; names and forms involve the six senses (the eyes, the ears, the nose, the tongue, the body and the mind). The six senses contact with the environment and there are feelings. The feelings could be pleasurable or painful, so craving arises. Then cling follows craving. Craving is the cause for having, which brings birth. Where there is birth, there is aging, sickness and death, and all the sorrows, laments, annoyances and sufferings. Brahma, if there is no ignorance at the beginning, which is the cause for all those follow behind, there would not be others. So, there is not a creator or a settler. Under, karma and dharma, together with causes and conditions, living beings exist. If away from karma, dharma and causes and conditions, this person will be liberated from transmigration.”

“Brahma, if in this world, a person extinguishes all his karma, all his annoyances and all his sufferings, this person would be liberated from transmigration and this is called nirvana. How to obtain nirvana? No more karma, no more annoyances and no more sufferings. All those methods exist because of the awesome spiritual power and blessings of all the

Buddhas. Why? If it is not all the Buddhas coming to the worlds to proclaim dharma, how could these methods exist? Brahma, it's because all the Buddhas come to the worlds to proclaim dharma, living beings could have the chance to know all these dharma doors. Brahma, all the Buddhas often expound: All conditioned phenomena, like the light and shadow, are always in the impermanent, inconstant, unultimate state. They will disappear, and they will change. Wise people know that all things and creatures are impermanent and changing. Even those mountains, rivers, stars, those heavenly palaces, those kingdoms, villages and forests, they form, change, and will also go through birth and death, death and birth. Understanding these, wise people will abandon their worldly family, cultivate, obtain corresponsive fruit or are fully enlightened."

"Brahma, you should know that the Three Thousand Great Thousand World is not your land, nor land of the heretics. It's the Buddha's land. In the past, I practiced the Bodhisattva's way for countless hundreds of billions of nayutas of Asamkhyeyas of eons. In countless asamkhyeyas of Buddhas, I planted good roots, held strictly pure precepts, cultivated chastity diligently, and practiced countless hundreds of billions of nayutas of difficult practices, so today I could become a Buddha in this Buddha land, regulating and purifying it. I expound dharma according to the living beings' root so that they can get liberated. All of you are born in this Buddha land because you are responsive to my vows to come here to listen to dharma, take refuge in me and not other heretics."

Brahma was now awake and rose the thought: it is so rare to meet a Buddha and the Buddhas have limitless inconceivable and endless states. Brahma then took refuge in the Buddha.

The World Honored One said, "This Three Thousand Great Thousand World is my land and today I consign it to you. You should propagate Dharma, but not extinguish Dharma. In the future, Matreya Bodhisattva will become Buddha here and transform countless living beings. Now you follow me and should follow him also."

The King of Brahma deeply believed in the Dharma.

Amitabha! This ends our Cause, Condition and Effect subject. In everyday life, we shall all carefully contemplate on Cause and Effect. Break through our ignorance and open the wisdom inside. Only wisdom can help us get rid of transmigration. Next week, we will start a new subject, Transmigration in the Six Realms. Thank you! See you next week!