

## *Forbearance vs Forgetting Favors and Violating Justice*

“Forbearance” is the third task which must be cultivated by a bodhisattva who wants to reach the shore of liberation; “forbearance” is also the perfection [paramita] of patience. Perfection means leaving the cycle of births-and-deaths and reaching the opposite shore of liberation. The perfection of patience can be divided into four types. This includes the patience towards the living beings, the patience of dharma, the acquiescence to non-arising, and the acquiescence to the non-arising of dharma. The following is a story about the patience towards the living beings. It emphasizes that being able to patiently persevere with negative behaviors and unreasonable treatments from sentient beings. The following story is about a macaque which has an aspiration of patience not commonly possessed by ordinary people. Because of its patience, it eventually achieved the way to Buddhahood.

Once upon a time there was this macaque. It was brave and had tremendous strength more than its peers. Not only did its intelligence and wisdom surpassed mankind, it also had a compassionate mind, frequently thinking of helping sentient beings who are in trouble. The macaque lived deep in the mountains. One day it climbed up a tree to pick up some fruits. While collecting fruits, it noticed a person fell into a valley in a far-off distance. The person had been at the bottom of the valley for several days and piteously crying: “Help!” After hearing the cry, the macaque felt sad with tears coming down from its eyes. It thought: “The purpose of pledging to achieve the way to Buddhahood is exactly to

rescue sentient beings from trouble. If I could not help this person out today, he would be dead from exhaustion.” The macaque then climbed down to the bottom of the valley and carried the person on its back. Grabbing the wild weeds along the cliff as support, it slowly made its way up to the top of the mountain. It laid down the person on the ground and pointed out the path out of the mountain to him. It then said, “As you return to the place where you live, you must not do any bad deeds.” Because of exhaustion, the macaque tiredly laid down to rest. The person who had been rescued thought to himself: “I was starving while trapped in the valley. Now that I am out of it, I still feel very hungry and there is no difference from being trapped at the bottom of the valley. To save myself, I should kill this macaque for food.” He then picked up a piece of stone and used it as a hammer to hit the head of the macaque. Blood was immediately gushing out of the wound. The macaque was terrified and stood up. But it fell next to a tree again due to the impact from the blow. But having no hatred in its mind, it took pity on this person who had the evil thought. The macaque thought to itself: “This person is not the one I can save. I wish that he can encounter and save himself by having faith to follow the teachings of numerous Buddhas’ in the future and never have such an evil thought again.” The macaque at the time was Buddha Sakyamuni in the causal ground and the person trapped in the valley was Devadatta.

Disgrace is innately hard to endure by ordinary people, and without a broad compassionate mind and aspiration, it is impossible to patiently persevere with such negativity. However, one must constantly practice forbearance to achieve the way to Buddhahood.