



THE GOSPEL OF BUDDHA

PAUL CARUS

The Gospel of Buddha

According to Old Records

PAUL CARUS

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PREFACE

This booklet needs no preface for those who are familiar with the sacred books of Buddhism, which have been made accessible to the Western world by the indefatigable zeal and industry of scholars like Beal, Bigandet, Bühler, Burnouf, Childers, Alexander Csoma, Rhys Davids, Dutoit, Eitel, Fausböll, Foucaux, Francke, Edmund Hardy, Spence Hardy, Hodgson, Charles R. Lanman, F. Max Müller, Karl Eugen Neumann, Oldenberg, Pischel, Schiefner, Senart, Seidenstücker, Bhikkhu Nyānatiloka, D.M. Strong, Henry Clarke Warren, Wassiljew, Weber, Windisch, Winternitz &c. To those not familiar with the subject it may be stated that the bulk of its contents is derived from the old Buddhist canon. Many passages, and indeed the most important ones, are literally copied in translations from the original texts. Some are rendered rather freely in order to make them intelligible to the present generation; others have been rearranged; and still others are abbreviated. Besides the three introductory and the three concluding chapters there are only a few purely original additions, which, however, are neither mere literary embellishments nor deviations from Buddhist doctrines. Wherever the compiler has admitted modernization he has done so with due consideration and always in the spirit of a legitimate development. Additions and modifications contain nothing but ideas for which prototypes can be found somewhere among the traditions of Buddhism, and have been introduced as elucidations of its main principles.

The best evidence that this book characterizes the spirit of Buddhism correctly can be found in the welcome it has received throughout the entire Buddhist world. It has even been officially introduced in Buddhist schools and temples of Japan and Ceylon. Soon after the appearance of the first edition of 1894 the Right Rev. Shaku Soyen, a prominent Buddhist abbot of Kamakura, Japan, had a Japanese

translation made by Teitaro Suzuki, and soon afterwards a Chinese version was made by Mr. Ohara of Otzu, the talented editor of a Buddhist periodical, who in the meantime has unfortunately met with a premature death. In 1895 the Open Court Publishing Company brought out a German edition by E.F.L. Gauss, and Dr. L. de Milloué, the curator of the Musée Guimet, of Paris, followed with a French translation. Dr. Federigo Rodriguez has translated the book into Spanish and Felix Orth into Dutch. The privilege of translating the book into Russian, Czechic, Italian, also into Siamese and other Oriental tongues has been granted, but of these latter the publishers have received only a version in the Urdu language, a dialect of eastern India.

Inasmuch as twelve editions of the Gospel of Buddha have been exhausted and the plates are worn out, the publishers have decided to bring out an *édition de luxe* and have engaged Miss Olga Kopetzky, of Munich, to supply illustrations. The artist has undertaken the task methodically and with great zeal. She has studied in the Ajanta caves the Buddhist paintings and sculptures and other monuments of Gandhāra. Thus the drawings faithfully reflect the spirit of the classical period of Buddhist art.

For those who want to trace the Buddhism of this book to its fountainhead, a table of reference has been added, which indicates as briefly as possible the main sources of the various chapters and points out the parallelisms with Western thought, especially in the Christian Gospels.

* * *

Buddhism, like Christianity, is split up into innumerable sects, and these sects not infrequently cling to their sectarian tenets as being the main and most indispensable features of their religion. The present book follows none of the sectarian doctrines, but takes an ideal position upon which all true Buddhists may stand as upon common ground. Thus the arrangement into a harmonious and systematic form is the main original feature of this Gospel of Buddha. Considering the bulk of the various details of the Buddhist canon, however, it must be regarded as a mere compilation, and the aim of the compiler has been to treat his material in about the same way as he thinks that the author of the Fourth Gospel of the New Testament utilized the

accounts of the life of Jesus of Nazareth. He has ventured to present the data of the Buddha's life in the light of their religio-philosophical importance; he has cut out most of their apocryphal adornments, especially those in which the Northern traditions abound, yet he did not deem it wise to shrink from preserving the marvellous that appears in the old records, whenever its moral seemed to justify its mention; he only pruned away the exuberance of wonder which delights in relating the most incredible things, apparently put on to impress while in fact they can only tire. Miracles have ceased to be a religious test; yet the belief in the miraculous powers of the Master still bears witness to the holy awe of the first disciples and reflects their religious enthusiasm.

Lest the fundamental idea of the Buddha's doctrines be misunderstood, the reader is warned to take the term "self" in the sense in which the Buddha uses it. The "self" of man translates the word *ātman* which can be and has been understood, even in the Buddhist canon, in a sense to which the Buddha would never have made any objection. The Buddha denies the existence of a "self" as it was commonly understood in his time; he does not deny man's mentality, his spiritual constitution, the importance of his personality, in a word, his soul. But he does deny the mysterious ego-entity, the *ātman*, in the sense of a kind of soul-monad which by some schools was supposed to reside behind or within man's bodily and psychical activity as a distinct being, a kind of thing-in-itself, and a metaphysical agent assumed to be the soul.

Buddhism is monistic. It claims that man's soul does not consist of two things, of an *ātman* (self) and of a *manas* (mind or thoughts), but that there is one reality, our thoughts, our mind or *manas*, and this *manas* constitutes the soul. Man's thoughts, if anything, are his self, and there is no *ātman*, no additional and separate "self" besides. Accordingly, the translation of *ātman* by "soul", which would imply that the Buddha denied the existence of the soul, is extremely misleading.

Representative Buddhists, of different schools and of various countries, acknowledge the correctness of the view here taken, and we emphasize especially the assent of Southern Buddhists because they have preserved the tradition most faithfully and are very punctilious in the statement of doctrinal points.

"*The Buddhist*, the Organ of the Southern Church of Buddhism," writes in a review of *The Gospel of Buddha*:

"The eminent feature of the work is its grasp of the difficult subject and the clear enunciation of the doctrine of the most puzzling problem of *ātman*, as taught in Buddhism. So far as we have examined the question of *ātman* ourselves from the works of the Southern canon, the view taken by Dr. Paul Cams is accurate, and we venture to think that it is not opposed to the doctrine of Northern Buddhism."

This *ātman*-superstition, so common not only in India, but all over the world, corresponds to man's habitual egotism in practical life. Both are illusions growing out of the same root, which is the vanity of worldliness, inducing man to believe that the purpose of his life lies in his self. The Buddha proposes to cut off entirely all thought of self, so that it will no longer bear fruit. Thus Nirvāṇa is an ideal state, in which man's soul, after being cleansed from all selfishness, hatred and lust, has become a habitation of the truth, teaching him to distrust the allurements of pleasure and to confine all his energies to attending to the duties of life.

The Buddha's doctrine is not negativism. An investigation of the nature of man's soul shows that, while there is no *ātman* or ego-entity, the very being of man consists in his karma, his deeds, and his karma remains untouched by death and continues to live. Thus, by denying the existence of that which appears to be our soul and for the destruction of which in death we tremble, the Buddha actually opens (as he expresses it himself) the door of immortality to mankind; and here lies the corner-stone of his ethics and also of the comfort as well as the enthusiasm which his religion imparts. Any one who does not see the positive aspect of Buddhism, will be unable to understand how it could exercise such a powerful influence upon millions and millions of people.

The present volume is not designed to contribute to the solution of historical problems. The compiler has studied his subject as well as he could under the circumstances, but he does not intend here to offer a scientific production. Nor is this book an attempt at popularizing the Buddhist religious writings, nor at presenting them in a poetic shape. If this *Gospel of Buddha* helps people to comprehend Buddhism better, and if in its simple style it impresses the reader with the poetic

grandeur of the Buddha's personality, these effects must be counted as incidental; its main purpose lies deeper still. The present book has been written to set the reader thinking on the religious problems of to-day. It sketches the picture of a religious leader of the remote past with the view of making it bear upon the living present and become a factor in the formation of the future.

* * *

It is a remarkable fact that the two greatest religions of the world, Christianity and Buddhism, present so many striking coincidences in the philosophical basis as well as in the ethical applications of their faith, while their modes of systematizing them in dogmas are radically different; and it is difficult to understand why these agreements should have caused animosity, instead of creating sentiments of friendship and good-will. Why should not Christians say with Prof. F. Max Müller: "If I do find in certain Buddhist works doctrines identically the same as in Christianity, so far from being frightened, I feel delighted, for surely truth is not the less true because it is believed by the majority of the human race."

The main trouble arises from a wrong conception of Christianity. There are many Christians who assume that Christianity alone is in the possession of truth and that man could not, in the natural way of his moral evolution, have obtained that nobler conception of life which enjoins the practice of a universal good-will towards both friends and enemies. This narrow view of Christianity is refuted by the mere existence of Buddhism.

Must we add that the lamentable exclusiveness that prevails in many Christian churches, is not based upon Scriptural teachings, but upon a wrong metaphysics?

All the essential moral truths of Christianity, especially the principle of a universal love, of the eradication of hatred, are in our opinion deeply rooted in the nature of things, and do not, as is often assumed, stand in contradiction to the cosmic order of the world. Further, some doctrines of the constitution of existence have been formulated by the church in certain symbols, and since these symbols contain contradictions and come in conflict with science, the educated classes are estranged from religion. Now, Buddhism is a religion which knows of no supernatural revelation, and proclaims

doctrines that require no other argument than the "come and see." The Buddha bases his religion solely upon man's knowledge of the nature of things, upon provable truth. Thus, we trust that a comparison of Christianity with Buddhism will be a great help to distinguish in both religions the essential from the accidental, the eternal from the transient, the truth from the allegory in which it has found its symbolic expression. We are anxious to press the necessity of discriminating between the symbol and its meaning, between dogma and religion, between metaphysical theories and statements of fact, between man-made formulas and eternal truth. And this is the spirit in which we offer this book to the public, cherishing the hope that it will help to develop in Christianity not less than in Buddhism the cosmic religion of truth.

The strength as well as the weakness of original Buddhism lies in its philosophical character, which enabled a thinker, but not the masses, to understand the dispensation of the moral law that pervades the world. As such, the original Buddhism has been called by Buddhists the little vessel of salvation, or *Hīnayāna*; for it is comparable to a small boat on which a man may cross the stream of worldliness, so as to reach the shore of *Nirvāna*. Following the spirit of a missionary propaganda, so natural to religious men who are earnest in their convictions, later Buddhists popularized the Buddha's doctrines and made them accessible to the multitudes. It is true that they admitted many mythical and even fantastic notions, but they succeeded nevertheless in bringing its moral truths home to the people who could but incompletely grasp the philosophical meaning of the Buddha's religion. They constructed, as they called it, a large vessel of salvation, the *Mahāyāna*, in which the multitudes would find room and could be safely carried over. Although the *Mahāyāna* unquestionably has its shortcomings, it must not be condemned offhand, for it serves its purpose. Without regarding it as the final stage of the religious development of the nations among which it prevails, we must concede that it resulted from an adaptation to their condition and has accomplished much to educate them. The *Mahāyāna* is a step forward in so far as it changes a philosophy into a religion, and attempts to preach doctrines that were negatively expressed, in positive propositions.

Far from rejecting the religious zeal which gave rise to the *Mahāyāna* in Buddhism, we can still less join those who denounce Christianity

on account of its dogmatology and mythological ingredients. Christianity has certainly had and still has a great mission in the evolution of mankind. It has succeeded in imbuing with the religion of charity and mercy the most powerful nations of the world, to whose spiritual needs it is especially adapted. It extends the blessings of universal good-will with the least possible amount of antagonism to the natural selfishness that is so strongly developed in the Western races. Christianity is the religion of love made easy. This is its advantage, which, however, is not without its drawbacks. Christianity teaches charity without dispelling the ego-illusion; and in this sense it surpasses even the Māhāyāna: it is still more adapted to the needs of multitudes than a large vessel fitted to carry over those who embark on it: it is comparable to a grand bridge, a Mahāsetu, on which a child who has no comprehension as yet of the nature of self can cross the stream of self-hood and worldly vanity.

A comparison of the many striking agreements between Christianity and Buddhism may prove fatal to sectarian conceptions of either religion, but will in the end help to mature our insight into the true significance of both. It will bring out a nobler faith which aspires to be the cosmic religion of universal truth.

Let us hope that this Gospel of Buddha will serve both Buddhists and Christians as a help to penetrate further into the spirit of their faith, so as to see its full height, length and breadth.

Above any Hīnayāna, Mahāyāna, and Mahāsetu is the Religion of Truth.

Paul Carus

PRONUNCIATION

Pronounce:

a as the Italian and German short *a*.

ā as *a* in *father*,

e as *e* in *eight*.

i as *i* in *hit*.

ī as *i* in *machine*.

o as *o* in *home*.

u as *oo* in *good*.

u as ū in *rumor*.

ai as in *eye*.

au as *ow* in *how*.

ñ as *ny*.

jñ as *dny*.

ññ as *n-ny*.

ch as *ch* in *church*.

cch as *ch-ch* in *rich chance*.

Note that *o* and *e* are always long.

s, j, y, and other letters, as usual in English words.

Double consonants are pronounced as two distinct sounds, e.g., *ka'm-ma*, not *kā'ma*.

The h after *p, b, k, g, t, d* is audible as in *dub him, beg her, brick house, ant hill*. Pronounce *Tat-hāgata*, not *Ta-thāgata*.

To the average European it is difficult to catch, let alone to imitate, the difference of sound between dotted and non-dotted letters. All those who are desirous for information on this point must consult Sanskrit and Pāli grammars.

Lest the reader be unnecessarily bewildered with foreign-looking dots and signs, which after all are no help to him, all dotted *ṭ*, *ḍ*, *ṃ*, *ṇ*, and italicized *t*, *d*, *m*, *n* have been replaced in the text of the book by *t*, *d*, *m*, *n*, *ñ*, *ññ*, dotted *ṛ* and italicized *ś* have been transcribed by *ny*, *nny*, *ri*, and *sh*, while the Glossary preserves the more exact transcription.

We did not follow the spelling of the *Sacred Books of the East*, where it must be misleading to the uninitiated, especially when they write italicized *K* to denote spelling of the English sound *ch*, and italicized *g* to denote *j*. Thus we write "*rājā*," not "*rāgā*," and "*Chunda*," not "*Kunda*."

ABBREVIATIONS IN THE FOOTNOTES

- AN.**—Aṅguttara Nikāya in Warren's Buddhism in Translations.
- Bf.**—Burnouf, Introduction à l'histoire du Bouddhisme Indien, Paris 1844.
- Bgt.**—The Life or Legend of Gautama, by the R. Rev. P. Bigandet. [Pg 269]
- BL.**—Buddhist Literature in China by Samuel Beal.
- Bf.**—Buddhaghosha's Parables. Translated by T. Rogers, London, 1870.
- BSI.**—Buddhist Birth Stories or Jātaka Tales. Translated by Rhys Davids.
- C.**—The Jātaka edited by Prof. E.B. Cowell, Cambridge.
- CBS.**—A Catena of Buddhist Scriptures from the Chinese by Samuel Beal. London, 1871.
- ChD.**—[Chinese Dhammapada.] Texts from the Buddhist Canon, commonly known as Dhammapada. Translated by S. Beal, London and Boston, 1878.
- Dh.**—The Dharma, or The Religion of Enlightenment by Paul Carus. 5th ed. Chicago, 1907.
- DP.**—The Dhammapada. Translated from Pāli by F. Max Müller, Vol. X, Part I, of the Sacred Books of the East. Oxford, 1881.
- EA.**—Explanatory Addition.
- EH.**—Handbook of Chinese Buddhism, by Ernest J. Eitel. London, 1888.
- Fo.**—The Fo-Sho-Hing-Tsan-King. A Life of Buddha by Asvaghosha, translated from Sanskrit into Chinese by Dharmarakshsha, A.D. 420, and from Chinese into English by Samuel Beal. Vol. XIX of the Sacred Books of the East. Oxford, 1883.
- G.**—Reden Gotamo's by Karl Eugen Neumann.
- HF.**—Hymns of the Faith (Dhammapada) transl. by Albert J. Edmunds.

- HM.**—A Manual of Buddhism, by R. Spence Hardy.
- LKG.**—Die Legende von Kisāgotamī, by Jakob H. Thiessen. Breslau, 1880.
- LV.**—Lalita Vistara, translated into German by Dr. S. Lefmann. Berlin, 1874.
- MPN.**—The Mahāparinibbāna Suttanta. The Book of the Great Decease. Vol. XI of the Sacred Books of the East. Oxford 1881.
- MP.**—The Mahāvagga. I-IV in Vol. XIII; V-X in Vol. XVII of the Sacred Books of the East. Oxford, 1881-1882.
- MY.**—Outlines of the Mahāyāna as Taught by Buddha, by S. Ku-roda. Tokyo, Japan, 1893.
- OC.**—The Open Court, a monthly magazine, published by the Open Court Publishing Company, Chicago.
- OldG.**—German Edition, Buddha, sein Leben, seine Lehre und seine Gemeinde, by H. Oldenberg. Second Edition. Berlin, 1890.
- OldE.**—English translation, Buddha, His Life, His Doctrine, and His Order by H. Oldenberg. London, 1882.
- PT.**—Pantschatantra, translated into German by Theodor Benfey. Two vols. Leipsic, 1859.
- QKM.**—The Questions of King Milinda, translated from Pāli by T.W. Rhys Davids, Vol. XXXV of the Sacred Books of the East. Oxford, 1890.
- RB.**—The Life of the Buddha from Thibetan Works, transl. by W.W. Rockhill. London, 1884.[Pg 270]
- rGya.**—rGya Tchee Roll Pa, Histoire du Bouddha Sakya Mouni, by Foucaux. Paris, 1868.
- RHB.**—The Romantic History of Buddha from the Chinese Sanskrit, by S. Beal. London, 1875.
- RhDB.**—Buddhism, by T.W. Rhys Davids, in the Series of Non-Christian Religious Systems. London, 1890.
- S42S.**—Sutra of Forty-two Sections. Kyoto, Japan.
- SB.**—Sacred Books of the East.

SN.—Sutta Nipāta, translated from the Pāli by V. Fausböll. Part II, Vol. X of the Sacred Books of the East. Oxford, 1881.

SS.—A Brief Account of Shin-Shiu by R. Akamatsu. Kyoto, Japan, 1893.

SSP.—Sept Suttas Pālis by M.P. Grimblot. Paris, 1876.

TPN.—Buddhistische Anthologie. Texte aus dem Pāli-Kanon. By Dr. Karl Eugen Neumann. Leyden, 1892.

Ug.—Uttarādhyaṇa, translated by H. Jacobi. Vol. XLV of the Sacred Books of the East.

US.—The Udāna by Major General D.M. Strong.

V.—Visuddhi-Magga in Warren's Buddhism in Translations.

W.—Buddhism in Translations by Henry Clarke Warren.

The original Pāli texts are published in the Journal of the Pāli Text Society, London, Henry Frowde.

I. — REJOICE!¹

- 1 – Rejoice at the glad tidings! The Buddha, our Lord, has found the root of all evil; he has shown us the way of salvation.
- 2 – The Buddha dispels the illusions of our mind and redeems us from the terror of death.
- 3 – The Buddha, our Lord, brings comfort to the weary and sorrow-laden; he restores peace to those who are broken down under the burden of life. He gives courage to the weak when they would fain give up self-reliance and hope.
- 4 – Ye that suffer from the tribulations of life, ye that have to struggle and endure, ye that yearn for a life of truth, rejoice at the glad tidings!
- 5 – There is balm for the wounded, and there is bread for the hungry. There is water for the thirsty, and there is hope for the despairing. There is light for those in darkness, and there is inexhaustible blessing for the upright.
- 6 – Heal your wounds, ye wounded, and eat your fill, ye hungry. Rest, ye weary, and ye who are thirsty quench your thirst. Look up to the light, ye that sit in darkness; be full of good cheer, ye that are forlorn.
- 7 – Trust in truth, ye that love the truth, for the kingdom of righteousness is founded upon earth. The darkness of error is dispelled by the light of truth. We can see our way and take firm and certain steps.
- 8 – The Buddha, our Lord, has revealed the truth.
- 9 – The truth cures our diseases and redeems us from perdition; the truth strengthens us in life and in death; the truth alone can conquer the evils of error.
- 10 – Rejoice at the glad tidings!

1. Sources: *EA* | Parallelisms: —

II. — SAMŚĀRA AND NIRVĀNA

- 1 – Look about and contemplate life!
- 2 – Everything is transient and nothing endures. There is birth and death, growth and decay; there is combination and separation.
- 3 – The glory of the world is like a flower: it stands in full bloom in the morning and fades in the heat of the day.
- 4 – Wherever you look, there is a rushing and a struggling, and an eager pursuit of pleasure. There is a panic flight from pain and death, and hot are the flames of burning desires. The world is vanity fair, full of changes and transformations. All is Samsāra.
- 5 – Is there nothing permanent in the world? Is there in the universal turmoil no resting-place where our troubled heart can find peace? Is there nothing everlasting?
- 6 – Oh, that we could have cessation of anxiety, that our burning desires would be extinguished! When shall the mind become tranquil and composed?
- 7 – The Buddha, our Lord, was grieved at the ills of life. He saw the vanity of worldly happiness and sought salvation in the one thing that will not fade or perish, but will abide for ever and ever.
- 8 – Ye who long for life, know that immortality is hidden in transiency. Ye who wish for happiness without the sting of regret, lead a life of righteousness. Ye who yearn for riches, receive treasures that are eternal. Truth is wealth, and a life of truth is happiness.
- 9 – All compounds will be dissolved again, but the verities which determine all combinations and separations as laws of nature endure for ever and aye. Bodies fall to dust, but the truths of the mind will not be destroyed.
- 10 – Truth knows neither birth nor death; it has no beginning and no end. Welcome the truth. The truth is the immortal part of mind.
- 11 – Establish the truth in your mind, for the truth is the image of the eternal; it portrays the immutable; it reveals the everlasting; the truth gives unto mortals the boon of immortality.
- 12 – The Buddha has proclaimed the truth; let the truth of the Buddha dwell in your hearts. Extinguish in yourselves every desire that

antagonizes the Buddha, and in the perfection of your spiritual growth you will become like unto him.

- 13 – That of your heart which cannot or will not develop into Buddha must perish, for it is mere illusion and unreal; it is the source of your error; it is the cause of your misery.
- 14 – You attain to immortality by filling your minds with truth. Therefore, become like unto vessels fit to receive the Master's words. Cleanse yourselves of evil and sanctify your lives. There is no other way of reaching truth.
- 15 – Learn to distinguish between Self and Truth. Self is the cause of selfishness and the source of evil; truth cleaves to no self; it is universal and leads to justice and righteousness.
- 16 – Self, that which seems to those who love their self as their being, is not the eternal, the everlasting, the imperishable. Seek not self, but seek the truth.
- 17 – If we liberate our souls from our petty selves, wish no ill to others, and become clear as a crystal diamond reflecting the light of truth, what a radiant picture will appear in us mirroring things as they are, without the admixture of burning desires, without the distortion of erroneous illusion, without the agitation of clinging and unrest.
- 18 – Yet ye love self and will not abandon self-love. So be it, but then, verily, ye should learn to distinguish between the false self and the true self. The ego with all its egotism is the false self. It is an unreal illusion and a perishable combination. He only who identifies his self with the truth will attain Nirvāna; and he who has entered Nirvāna has attained Buddhahood; he has acquired the highest good; he has become eternal and immortal.
- 19 – All compound things shall be dissolved again, worlds will break to pieces and our individualities will be scattered; but the words of the Buddha will remain for ever.
- 20 – The extinction of self is salvation; the annihilation of self is the condition of enlightenment; the blotting out of self is Nirvāna. Happy is he who has ceased to live for pleasure and rests in the truth. Verily his composure and tranquillity of mind are the highest bliss.

- 21 – Let us take our refuge in the Buddha, for he has found the everlasting in the transient. Let us take our refuge in that which is the immutable in the changes of existence. Let us take our refuge in the truth that is established through the enlightenment of the Buddha. Let us take our refuge in the community of those who seek the truth and endeavor to live in the truth.

III. — TRUTH, THE SAVIOUR

- 1 – The things of the world and its inhabitants are subject to change. They are combinations of elements that existed before, and all living creatures are what their past actions made them; for the law of cause and effect is uniform and without exception.
- 2 – But in the changing things there is a constancy of law, and when the law is seen there is truth. The truth lies hidden in Samsāra as the permanent in its changes.
- 3 – Truth desires to appear; truth longs to become conscious; truth strives to know itself.
- 4 – There is truth in the stone, for the stone is here; and no power in the world, no god, no man, no demon, can destroy its existence. But the stone has no consciousness.
- 5 – There is truth in the plant and its life can expand; the plant grows and blossoms and bears fruit. Its beauty is marvellous, but it has no consciousness.
- 6 – There is truth in the animal; it moves about and perceives its surroundings; it distinguishes and learns to choose. There is consciousness, but it is not yet the consciousness of Truth. It is a consciousness of self only.
- 7 – The consciousness of self dims the eyes of the mind and hides the truth. It is the origin of error, it is the source of illusion, it is the germ of evil.
- 8 – Self begets selfishness. There is no evil but what flows from self. There is no wrong but what is done by the assertion of self.

- 9 – Self is the beginning of all hatred, of iniquity and slander, of impudence and indecency, of theft and robbery, of oppression and bloodshed. Self is Māra, the tempter, the evil-doer, the creator of mischief.
- 10 – Self entices with pleasures. Self promises a fairy's paradise. Self is the veil of Māyā, the enchanter. But the pleasures of self are unreal, its paradisian labyrinth is the road to misery, and its fading beauty kindles the flames of desires that never can be satisfied.
- 11 – Who shall deliver us from the power of self? Who shall save us from misery? Who shall restore us to a life of blessedness?
- 12 – There is misery in the world of Samsāra; there is much misery and pain. But greater than all the misery is the bliss of truth. Truth gives peace to the yearning mind; it conquers error; it quenches the flames of desires; it leads to Nirvāna.
- 13 – Blessed is he who has found the peace of Nirvāna. He is at rest in the struggles and tribulations of life; he is above all changes; he is above birth and death; he remains unaffected by the evils of life.
- 14 – Blessed is he who has found enlightenment. He conquers, although he may be wounded; he is glorious and happy, although he may suffer; he is strong, although he may break down under the burden of his work; he is immortal, although he may die. The essence of his being is purity and goodness.
- 15 – Blessed is he who has attained the sacred state of Buddhahood, for he is fit to work out the salvation of his fellow-beings. The truth has taken its abode in him. Perfect wisdom illumines his understanding, and righteousness ensouls the purpose of all his actions.
- 16 – The truth is a living power for good, indestructible and invincible! Work the truth out in your mind, and spread it among mankind, for truth alone is the saviour from evil and misery. The Buddha has found the truth and the truth has been proclaimed by the Buddha! Blessed be the Buddha!²

2. Gospel: *Descent from heaven* omitted. Sources: *LV*; *rGya*, iii-iv | Parallelisms: Klopstock's *Messias Gesang I*.



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