

## Has Maitreya Come?

Maitreya (Pali, Metteyya), whom the Buddha prophesies will be the future Buddha in the distant future when his teaching are totally forgotten, is perhaps the most popular religious figure, adopted by numerous non-Buddhists. One of the latest claims is that this prophecy actually refers to the coming of Christ!

Since the Theosophist movement in the 19th century, many non-Buddhist religious groups and cults have used Maitreya's name and characteristics of Maitreya for teachers in their traditions. Another such innovator was Share International, formerly called the Tara Center; the Ascended Master Teachings (early 1930s-1956) which called him "Cosmic Christ." Some Ahmaddiyya Muslims claimed that their founder Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was Maitreya. Some Bahais believed that their prophet Bahauallah fulfilled the prophecy by appearing as Maitreya.

Since the 7th century, many had proclaimed themselves as Maitreya, such as the Xiang Haiming (613); the empress Wu (690); Gung Ye, the Korean warlord and briefly king of Taebong (10th century); Yiguandao patriarch, Lu Zhongyi, believed God mandated him as Maitreya (1905); L Ron Hubbard, founder of Scientology, in his poem, "Hymn of Asia" (1955), hinted himself to be Maitreya. In 1973, a 27-year-old Frenchman, Claude Vorilhon, a car racer and a sports journalist, claimed to have met Elohim (God) in a UFO and told him that Maitreya would arise in France. Claiming that he is the one, he called himself Rael. Some Koreans believed that Maitreya will arise in their country. A few leaders of rebellions in China and Thailand too proclaimed themselves to be Maitreya. And the list is growing.

What is the real story behind Maitreya? Maitreya (Pali, Metteyya) is mentioned only once in the early Buddhist texts: in **the Cakka,vatti Sha,nâda Sutta** (D 26), which was probably compiled during Asoka's times. Even then, it is not so much prophecy, as it is an inspiration to the emperor to be a truly good ruler. The Sutta closes with a teaching on the four focusses of mindfulness (satipatthana) and a reminder for the monks to practice lovingkindness, compassion, altruistic joy, and equanimity. In other words, it is a didactic (educational) discourse.

The Cakkavatti Sihanada Sutta opens with the Buddha's final teachings, that is, to dwell as island unto ourselves. This is a reference to the four focusses of mindfulness. Then follows a Jataka story of king Dalhanemi and the seven universal monarchs. All of them keep to the ancient way of ruling which keep everyone happy. The eighth monarch, however, breaks with tradition. As a result, poverty becomes bad, and when people begin to steal, then deviant lustful conduct, and finally disrespect for others.

In due course, the warring parties have had enough and stop killing. With that the human lifespan doubled. As each new generation begins to become more moral, their life-span doubles, until it reaches 80,000 years again.

The king decides to help those who steal by providing with their needs. This encourages others to steal, to the extent the king has to punish them with death. With such a killing, the lifespan of humans declined from 80,000 year to 40,000 years. Then lying becomes widespread; followed by slander, sexual misconduct, then harsh speech and idle talk

At each worsening stage, the human lifespan declined by half until the point where human lifespan is only 10 years, at which point a woman of 5 years is ready for marriage, In other words, the maturing process of human is speeded up dramatically. At that time, a terrible "seven-day war" breaks out. Many flee and hide in remote places. This is a time in the distant future when India and the world become such a crowded and prosperous world.

This is when the next Buddha Metteyya would arise, teach the Dharma and establish the Teaching. The Sutta closes with the Buddha teaching on the four focusses of mindfulness (satipatthana) and a reminder for the monks to practice lovingkindness, compassion, altruistic joy, and equanimity.

The following points should be noted:

- (1) The Sutta is a mythical story to remind the ruler to keep to the good ways of his predecessors,
- (2) The events described here have not yet happened, but will only occur at least thousands of years from now when the present Buddha's teachings are totally forgotten.
- (3) Metteyya is the future Buddha, not some cult leader or self-proclaimed religious guru.
- (4) The Sutta reminds Buddhist monastics to meditate and practise lovingkindness and other wholesome virtues.

The misuse and abuse of Maitreya's name by others is like a reflected light, but with the warmth, a light that appears dazzling in the dark for some. But for those with eyes will see true reality in the bright light of day. Let us leave the dark dusty corners of strange religions for the open fresh space of Buddhist liberation. Let go of the past, it is gone; let go of the future, it is yet to come. Live now with lovingkindness (metta): then you yourself are Maitreya at heart.

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[Link to Cakkavatti Sihanada Sutta <https://sites.google.com/site/dharmafarer/home/digha-nikaya>].

This troubling video was received through Kumara Bhikkhu:

[Prisoner of a White God](http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-5151512921334112942#) (link: <http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-5151512921334112942#>)

It's supposed to be an academic research by a Czech about the Akha people in Thailand and Laos. But it uncovered some very disturbing information about how supposed welfare organisation people (some in the name of Christian missionary) are exploiting the people there. It includes sexual abuse and human trafficking for prostitution.

(Warning: There are no sexual scenes. Only some scenes of topless tribal women.)

[See also <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fvfKi-YCZVc>]

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