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Location: Double Saltree Meditation Center

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Topics:

**1: Dharma Talk: The Biography of Sakyamuni Buddha Chapter 1**

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**1: Dharma Talk: The Biography of Sakyamuni Buddha Chapter 1**

Hello everyone! Welcome to Double Saltree Meditation Center, I am Hao Liu! Today, I would like to share the Dharma Talk topic: The Biography of Sakyamuni Buddha Chapter 1.

If we wish to understand a religion, to know whether or not a religion provides what we need, then we should first come to understand the founder of that religion. We should question whether that person's character or wisdom is worthy of our reverence and faith. If we revere this person and put our faith in him, what guidance can he offer to us? Can he liberate us from life's pain and suffering? I believe that these are the first questions people of faith must ask.

Faith should provide us with more than just repose for our spirit and peace for our minds. Faith should tackle the big problems: birth, death, and freeing us from suffering so that we can attain lasting happiness. That is why, when we are choosing a religious path, we should understand its founder. Has that person perfected himself? Is his nature pure? Is he free? These are vital questions that we must ask.

The founder of Buddhism, Sakyamuni Buddha, was born on the eighth day of the fourth month of the year 464 BCE, into a country which has come to be considered one of the world's four great cultural wellsprings: India. His birth is well documented in both Chinese and historical sources and others, so we should not view the Buddha as some spirit that appeared out of thin air, or as some intangible god. The Buddha was born in a specific time and place, and had parents who bore and raised him. He was a real human being who persevered through many years of hardship and austerity in order to become a perfectly enlightened person of great wisdom. Students and scholars across the world have recognized this fact.

Sakyamuni Buddha was born in this world, raised in this world, and became a Buddha in this world. He is the lamp of wisdom that shines for us through the long night and the raft which keeps us afloat in the turbulent sea of suffering. The Buddha's character has been perfected and his nature has been purified. He has liberated himself from the bondage of suffering and transcended the pain of life and death.

He taught us how to follow in his footsteps for more than forty years, guiding us along that great spiritual path. All the teachings he left us flow from the sea of great wisdom and deal intimately with the concepts of ending suffering and attaining happiness. People embrace the Buddha's teachings in different ways. Some see Buddhism as a religion or faith, while others treat Buddhism as a philosophy or a subject of study. Some also take the founder of Buddhism, Sakyamuni Buddha, as a role model, and aspire to become like him.

Sakyamuni Buddha is the greatest sage our world has known, and his teachings are the most profound. The teachings of the Buddha have survived until the present day and have spread across the globe, but they are still hampered by those who mystify the teachings and ignore the spirit of the Buddha coming into this world. When their philosophy transcends the practical, they fail to experience the Buddha's intention. Only when we transmit the spirit of the Buddha, to bring enlightenment and liberation to all beings, will Buddhism inspire great faith and accomplish its mission.

## **2: Buddhist Diet Health: Water Bamboo**

Water bamboo, also known as wild rice stem or jiao bai in Chinese, is the tender, edible stem of a special type of aquatic grass. Unlike ordinary bamboo shoots, water bamboo is juicy, sweet, and delicately crisp, making it a favorite in Buddhist vegetarian cuisine across Asia.

In the Buddhist diet — which emphasizes purity, balance, and compassion — water bamboo holds a special place. Valued for its clean taste and healthful qualities, water bamboo offers nourishment that aligns beautifully with the principles of mindful eating.

### **Health Benefits**

#### **1. Gentle on the Body:**

Water bamboo is light and easy to digest, making it suitable for those who seek a diet that promotes clarity of body and mind.

#### **2. Rich in Fiber:**

Its natural fiber content helps regulate digestion, supporting the Buddhist ideal of maintaining a healthy body for the purpose of spiritual practice.

#### **3. Low in Calories and Fat:**

Water bamboo is a nourishing food that does not burden the body, helping practitioners maintain moderation and avoid indulgence.

#### 4. Hydrating and Cooling:

Traditionally, water bamboo is seen as a cooling food, helping to balance inner heat, especially during warmer seasons.

#### 5. Subtle Source of Nutrients:

It provides small amounts of vitamins such as vitamin C, potassium, and B vitamins, contributing to overall vitality without overwhelming the body's natural balance.

### 3: Buddhist Diet Culinary: Fried Edamame with Water Bamboo



#### Ingredients:

- 1 cup shelled edamame (fresh or frozen)
- 2–3 stalks water bamboo (about 200g), peeled and sliced diagonally
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil (or sesame oil for extra flavor)
- 1 small red chili, thinly sliced (optional, for a hint of spice)
- 1 tablespoon light soy sauce
- ½ teaspoon salt (adjust to taste)
- ¼ teaspoon white pepper
- A splash of water (if needed)

#### Steps:

##### 1. Prepare the vegetables:

Peel the water bamboo to remove the tough outer layer. Slice it diagonally into thin pieces. If using frozen edamame, thaw them first.

2. Blanch edamame (optional):

Bring a small pot of water to a boil and blanch the edamame for 2 minutes. Drain and set aside. (This step keeps them bright green and tender.)

3. Stir-fry:

Heat the oil in a wok or large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the red chili. Stir-fry until fragrant, about 10 seconds.

4. Add water bamboo:

Toss in the sliced water bamboo. Stir-fry for about 2–3 minutes until they start to soften but stay crisp.

5. Add edamame:

Stir in the edamame. Season with soy sauce, salt, and white pepper. Stir well to combine. If it looks too dry, add a splash of water to help everything cook evenly.

6. Final toss:

Stir-fry for another 1–2 minutes until everything is heated through and nicely coated.

7. Serve:

Transfer to a plate and serve hot as a side dish or part of a light meal.