

The audience assembled in Chapter 1 are four groups as follows:

1. **His disciples and followers** all have attained *arhatship* 阿羅漢, those who have already broken the cycle of birth and death. They are all in the realm of *sravaka* or *shomon* 聲聞, salvation only for themselves but not for others. They are ordained monks, nuns, lay men and women. Among them are Ajnata-Kauninya 阿若憍陳如 who is one of the five original companions, Kasyapa 迦葉, Sariputra 舍利弗, Maudgalyayana 目連, Nanda 阿難, Rauhula 羅睺羅 who is Siddhartha's son, Yasodhara 耶輸陀羅 who was Siddhartha's wife, and Maha-Prajapati 摩訶波闍沙提 who was Siddhartha's step-mother. They formed the Sangha or a group of Buddhists. There are twelve thousand of them.
2. **Bodhisattvas** 菩薩 could be ordained or lay priests who already have committed themselves in helping others attain Buddhahood, while *arahats* 阿羅漢 are only ordained people who renounced their ordinary lives. *Arahats* practice only in the Theravada teachings while bodhisattvas practice the Mahayana doctrines. Bodhisattvas never faltered in seeking Buddhahood, obtained *dharanis* 陀羅尼, turned the irrevocable wheel of the Dharma, and made offerings to many hundreds of thousands of Buddhas. They have already saved many hundreds of thousands of living beings. They included Manjusri 文殊, World-Voice-Perceiver 觀世音, Great-Power-Obtain 得大勢, Medicine King 藥王, and Maitreya 弥勒. There are eighty thousand of them gathered waiting for the Buddha to reveal the truth. Note: some Bodhisattvas do teach only Theravada doctrines for the sake of the listeners' level of understanding.
3. **Spiritual Beings** are twenty-thousand gods 天王, eight dragon-kings 龍王, four kimnara-kings 緊那羅王, four gandharva-kings 乾闥婆王, four asura-kings 阿修羅王, and four garuda-kings 迦樓羅王. Some of the spiritual beings are the moon, stars, and guardians of the North, East, West, and South. These supreme beings also gathered at Mt. Sacred Eagle to listen the Dharma which has yet to be revealed in over forty years. Many of them are not physical beings; but some appeared in the form of human beings or human-animals similar to many Greek Mythological Gods.
4. Lastly **King Ajatasatru** 阿闍世王 who tried to harm Buddha Sakyamuni with Devadatta 提婆達多. He repented his wrong doing and came to hear the teaching together with hundreds of thousands of his attendants.