

FLOWER ADORNMENT SUTRA

Prologue by Tang Dynasty National Master Ch'ing Liang

with commentary of TRIPITAKA MASTER HUA

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(end of Prologue for last section of previous issue).

IT IS FURTHERMORE BECAUSE IN THE *SHRIMALADEVI SUTRA* it, too TAKES THE Dharma of the ONE VEHICLE AS EXPEDIENT Dharma.

PROLOGUE:

IN ROLL FIVE HUNDRED NINETY-THREE OF THE *GREAT PRAJNA SUTRA*, WHOLESOME COURAGE BODHISATTVA SAYS, "I ONLY HOPE THE WORLD HONORED ONE WILL HAVE PITY UPON US AND FULLY PROCLAIM FOR US THE THUS COME ONE'S STATES AND WISDOM. IF THERE ARE SENTIENT BEINGS WHOSE NATURES ARE FIXED UPON THE SOUND HEARER VEHICLE, WHEN THEY HEAR THIS DHARMA THEY WILL QUICKLY BE ABLE TO CERTIFY TO THEIR OWN GROUND OF NON-OUTFLOW. THOSE WHOSE NATURES ARE FIXED UPON THE VEHICLE OF THOSE SOLITARILY ENLIGHTENED, UPON HEARING THIS DHARMA, WILL QUICKLY, RELYING UPON THEIR OWN VEHICLE, ATTAIN ESCAPE. THOSE WHOSE NATURES ARE FIXED UPON THE UNSURPASSED VEHICLE, UPON HEARING THIS DHARMA, WILL QUICKLY CERTIFY TO UNSURPASSED PROPER AND EQUAL BODHI. ALTHOUGH THERE MAY BE BEINGS WHO HAVE NOT YET ENTERED A NATURE PROPER FOR LEAVING PRODUCTION, AND WHOSE NATURES ARE NOT FIXED UPON ANY OF THE THREE VEHICLES, UPON HEARING THIS DHARMA, THEY WILL ALL BRING FORTH THE MIND FOR UNSURPASSED PROPER AND EQUAL ENLIGHTENMENT."

COMMENTARY:

IN ROLL FIVE HUNDRED NINETY-THREE OF THE *GREAT PRAJNA SUTRA*, WHOLESOME COURAGE BODHISATTVA SAYS, "I now ONLY HOPE that you, THE WORLD-HONORED ONE, WILL HAVE PITY UPON all of US living beings AND FULLY PROCLAIM FOR US the Dharma doors of THE THUS COME ONE'S STATES AND WISDOM. IF THERE ARE SENTIENT BEINGS WHOSE NATURES ARE FIXED UPON and who should cultivate THE SOUND HEARER VEHICLE--Fixed-Nature Sound Hearers--WHEN THEY HEAR THIS DHARMA of the Thus Come One's states and wisdom spoken, THEY WILL very QUICKLY BE ABLE TO CERTIFY TO the attainment of THEIR OWN GROUND-position of the fruit of NON-OUTFLOW. THOSE WHOSE NATURES ARE FIXED UPON THE VEHICLE OF THOSE SOLITARILY ENLIGHTENED--those Enlightened to Conditions, Pratyekabuddhas--UPON HEARING THIS

DHARMA of the Thus Come One's states and wisdom--WILL QUICKLY by RELYING ON THEIR OWN VEHICLE, ATTAIN ESCAPE from the Three Realms. THOSE beings WHOSE NATURES ARE FIXED UPON THE UNSURPASSED Bodhisattva VEHICLE, UPON HEARING THIS wonderful DHARMA of the Thus Come One's states and wisdom, WILL very, very QUICKLY be able to CERTIFY TO UNSURPASSED PROPER AND EQUAL Right Enlightenment—Anuttarasamyaksambodhi. That makes three Vehicles. But ALTHOUGH THERE MAY BE BEINGS WHO HAVE NOT YET ENTERED A NATURE or made a firm resolution upon a Dharma door PROPER FOR LEAVING PRODUCTION--casting off birth and death--AND WHOSE NATURES ARE NOT FIXED UPON ANY OF THE THREE VEHICLES of Sound Hearers, Those Enlightened to Conditions, or Bodhisattvas, UPON HEARING the Buddha speak the wondrous DHARMA of the Thus Come One's states and wisdom, THEY too WILL ALL BRING FORTH THE great Bodhi MIND FOR UNSURPASSED PROPER AND EQUAL right ENLIGHTENMENT.

In cultivating the Way and studying the Buddhadharma, it's not useful simply to listen to the Dharma; you have to go on to cultivate the Dharma you have heard to obtain benefit from it. If you don't practice according to it, no matter how much Buddhadharma you listen to or understand, it will have no use. The way to practice is first of all to clean up your emotional attachments, all the emotions you can't give up, can't see through, and are inseparable from. You have to see through what you can't see through and put down what you can't. That's the way to gain freedom. You need to bring forth the resolve of a Bodhisattva to benefit all living beings. Don't imitate the self-ending Arhats of the Small Vehicle who just watch out for themselves, and pay no attention to anyone else, who are always afraid of trouble and are unwilling to walk the Bodhisattva path. That's a mistake. When you're cultivating the Way and there isn't any trouble, you don't want to look for some. Your self-nature is originally pure, but then you insist upon striking up some unclean false-thinking, wouldn't you say that's a lot more trouble than anything that could arise from outside? Don't make trouble for yourself and find something to do when there's nothing to do. But when trouble does come along, don't be afraid of it and say, "No, no, no, no--it's too much trouble!" The more you fear it the more trouble it will be. Why? Because you're attached. If you had no attachments, you'd be like a mirror:

When a matter (trouble) comes, it reflects it.
When a matter goes, it is still.

After it's done with one is empty--like a mirror which reflects the image of an object when it's there, and no longer has it once the object's gone, shining with perfect brightness.

As it's said in the *Sixth Patriarch's Sutra*,

Unsurpassed, great Nirvana,
Whose perfect light shines to the utmost,
The commoners take for death,
And externalists consider annihilation.

If you could be like a mirror:

With no deliberations and no considerations,
With no consciousness and no knowing,

then you would have neither afflictions nor trouble--you would simply be totally pure. Be careful, though, not to let the mirror of your inherent wisdom become coated with the dust of your unclean false-thinking.

It's important not to look for trouble when there is none, or fear it when there is. In cultivating the Bodhisattva Way and undertaking doors of practice to benefit living beings, you need to let others have the good things and take the bad ones on yourself. Advantageous situations should be passed on to others, keeping non-advantageous ones for oneself. All of you who have received the Bodhisattva precepts should be aware of this point.

PROLOGUE:

ROLL TWO OF THE *DEEP SECRET* IS LARGELY THE SAME AS THIS. IT ALSO SAYS, "ALL THOSE WHOSE PUDGALA IS OF THE SEED-NATURE OF SOUND HEARERS TENDING TOWARDS STILLNESS, ALTHOUGH THEY RECEIVE ALL BUDDHAS' ESTABLISHMENT OF ALL KINDS OF AIDING PRACTICES FOR COURAGEOUS VIGOR AND INSTRUCTIVE GUIDANCE THROUGH EXPEDIENTS, IN THE END CANNOT BE CAUSED TO TAKE THE SEAT IN THE WAY PLACE AND ACCOMPLISH ANUTTARASAMYAKSAMBODHI.

COMMENTARY:

The doctrine in ROLL TWO OF THE *DEEP SECRET Sutra* in its overall outlines IS LARGELY THE SAME AS THIS, the passage quoted above. IT ALSO SAYS, "ALL THOSE WHOSE PUDGALA IS OF THE SEED-NATURE OF SOUND HEARERS TENDING TOWARDS STILLNESS..." The Sanskrit words "pudgala" is variously translated, sometimes as "person," sometimes as "numerous grasping at destinies." It means what is repeatedly reborn among the six destinies on the wheel of rebirth--suddenly in the heavens, suddenly on earth, now a person, now a ghost then abruptly becoming an animal or falling to the hells. Here it refers to those whose disposition is that of Sound Hearers who want to reach a still and quiet place. ALTHOUGH THEY RECEIVED the kindness and compassion of ALL the ten direction BUDDHAS' Thus Come Ones', ESTABLISHMENT OF ALL KINDS OF expedient Dharma doors...The Buddhas set up AIDING PRACTICES FOR COURAGEOUS VIGOR, encouraging them to make even more heroic progress than before, AND a wealth of INSTRUCTIVE GUIDANCE THROUGH skillful and clever EXPEDIENTS to teach them.

But even so, IN THE END those kinds of living beings CANNOT BE CAUSED in this lifetime TO TAKE THE SEAT IN THE Bodhi WAY PLACE AND become Buddhas. They won't be able to ACCOMPLISH the position of Unsurpassed Right and Equal Proper Enlightenment -- ANUTTARASAMYAKSAMBODHI--this time around.

PROLOGUE:

MOREOVER, THE NINTH ROLL OF THE *TEN WHEELS* ALSO SPEAKS OF THREE VEHICLES EACH HAVING FIXED DIFFERENCES, ALL BECAUSE OF FIVE FIXITIES OF NATURE. THEREFORE, IN THE *LANKAVATARA* THE BUDDHA TELLS GREAT WISDOM, "THERE ARE FIVE KINDS OF SEED-NATURES: ONE, THE NATURE FOR THE SOUND HEARER VEHICLE; TWO, THE NATURE FOR THE PRATYEKA-BUDDHA VEHICLE; THREE, THE NATURE FOR THE THUS COME ONE VEHICLE; FOUR, THE NATURE NOT FIXED AS TO VEHICLE; FIVE,

NOT HAVING THE NATURE. THE GREAT *ADORNMENT SHASTRA* AND THE *YOGACHARYABHUMI SHASTRA* BOTH SPEAK THE SAME AS THIS.

COMMENTARY:

MOREOVER, in the NINTH ROLL OF THE *TEN WHEELS Sutra* (T.410), it ALSO SPEAKS OF THREE VEHICLES, EACH HAVING their own FIXED DIFFERENCES. The reason for that is ALL BECAUSE OF FIVE kinds of FIXITIES OF NATURE. THEREFORE, IN THE *LANKAVATARA Sutra* it is talked about in the same way. In that Sutra, THE BUDDHA Shakyamuni TELLS GREAT WISDOM Bodhisattva, "THERE ARE FIVE KINDS OF SEED-NATURES of living beings. ONE, the first kind, IS living beings who have THE NATURE FOR THE SOUND HEARER VEHICLE and cultivate the Dharma doors of Sound Hearers. TWO is THE seed-NATURE FOR THE PRATYEKABUDDHA VEHICLE--that of Those Enlightened to Conditions who cultivate the Twelve Links of Conditioned Co-Production. THREE is THE seed-NATURE FOR THE THUS COME ONE VEHICLE, that of Bodhisattvas, for it is they who can become Tathagatas. FOUR is those with THE seed-NATURE NOT FIXED AS TO VEHICLE: some are suddenly enlightened and others gradually cultivate. Seed-nature number FIVE is NOT HAVING THE NATURE, which is the Vehicle of Humans and Gods. THE GREAT *ADORNMENT SHASTRA* (*Mahayanasutra-lamkarashastra*) AND THE *YOGACHARYABHUMI SHASTRA* BOTH SPEAK THE SAME principle AS THIS.

The Sanskrit word "Lanka" is a place either Lanka Mountain or Lanka City. Translated, "Lankavatara" means "Cannot be Gone to," so we don't know the exact locale. How can there even be such a name then? It's also translated "Unreachable" for you can't get there--if you're a common person, that is. Ghosts and spirits can go and so can Arhats and Bodhisattvas. Buddhas are even more able to. The Buddha, therefore, constantly speaks the *Lankavatara Sutra* there, and the Sutra takes its name from the Mountain. Three different Dharma Masters translated it into *Chung Kuo Hua* (Chinese.) The first was Dharma Master Gunabhadra (T. 670) in the Sung Dynasty. Then there was Bodhiruchi's translation (T. 671), and another by Dharma Master Shikshanandi(T.672). Each translated the title and the terms somewhat differently, but they are by and large the same. Besides being the name of a place, "Lankavatara" also refers to the Lanka gem which comes from that mountain and is unobtainable among people--hence the further translation "Unobtainable." Then there's no hope of reaching it. Nonetheless, the Buddha spoke the Sutra there, which ennobled the area. It is Unreachable, Unobtainable, and Cannot be Gone to, yet the Buddha reached it, obtained and went there, so those became its names. But now you can reach, go to, and obtain Lanka City and Mountain with its Lanka gem if you want to. They are located in Shri Lanka (formerly called Ceylon) and were inaccessible before the advent of helicopters. These days you can fly and visit them--if you have the time.



PROLOGUE:

IN CONTRAST, THE *WHOLESOME PRECEPTS* AND THE *BHUMI* ONLY TALK ABOUT TWO SEED-NATURES, THEY ARE: ONE, EXISTENCE OF THE SEED-NATURE, AND TWO, LACK OF THE SEED-NATURE--ALSO CALLED THOSE WITHOUT THE SEED-NATURE. THAT IS BECAUSE THEY DO NOT HAVE THE SEED-NATURE AND SO, IN SPITE OF REPEATEDLY EXERTING THEMSELVES TO CULTIVATE WITH VIGOR, IN THE END THEY CANNOT OBTAIN UNSURPASSED BODHI. THEY ONLY ACHIEVE MATURATION THROUGH GOOD ROOTS OF HUMANS AND GODS, BEING WITHOUT THE NATURE. THE *YOGA* ALSO SAYS THE SAME THING.

COMMENTARY:

IN CONTRAST, by comparison with the discussion of the natures in the *Lankavatara Sutra* THE *WHOLESOME PRECEPTS* (*Bodhisattvacaryanirdesha Sutra*, (T. 1583) and the *Bodhisattva BHUMI Sutra* (T. 1581) ONLY TALK ABOUT TWO SEED-NATURES, THEY ARE: EXISTENCE OF it on the part of living beings who have THE SEED-NATURE for Buddhahood. The second category is ALSO CALLED THOSE WITHOUT THE SEED-NATURE. THAT IS BECAUSE THEY DO NOT HAVE THE SEED-NATURE for achieving Buddhahood. AND SO, IN SPITE OF REPEATEDLY EXERTING THEMSELVES TO CULTIVATE WITH great VIGOR and not being the least bit lazy, IN THE END THEY CANNOT ever OBTAIN UNSURPASSED Right and Equal Proper BODHI THEY are ONLY able to ACHIEVE the MATURATION and reap the harvest of future rebirth in the heavens, or as good or rich and honored people, brought about THROUGH GOOD ROOTS OF HUMANS AND GODS. That is due to their BEING WITHOUT THE NATURE for accomplishing Buddhahood. THE *YOGA* *acharya-bhumi Shastra* ALSO SAYS THE SAME THING as this.

We who study the Buddhadharma and listen to the Sutras should become smarter the more we study, and less stupid--yet we should also become more stupid and less smart as we study. What is meant by that? To become smarter with study means having no ignorance, which is not to have a fiery temper or get mad. That's because during the time when you are learning the Dharma you should not without reason develop a larger temper and heavier ignorance, but instead should get smarter as you study. To get more stupid means you should to benefit others, not yourself, and not be selfish. That looks idiotic to others, but in fact is very intelligent on your part. But you should also get less smart as your studying progresses, and less stupid as you go along. This is the same principle as before. You feel that one day is pretty much the same as the day before, but really, although you are unaware of it, your state has changed a great deal so you don't have the same kind of intelligence--or stupidity--as before. For that reason you should toss your afflictions and ignorance out beyond cloud nine, further off than 108,000 miles away, and not continue to run after them day after day.

I remember the first time we held a Ch'an session here, one of my disciples said as she sat there, there was lots of garbage in her brain, and that her most important thought was when would the bell be hit. We're having a session now too, and maybe there are people like that again. If so, you can ask the cultivators of the Way from before how they cleaned up the garbage, and how they managed to get so they didn't simply wait for the bell to ring. You can clear that up.

PROLOGUE:

IF IT'S THE DHARMA NATURE SCHOOL, THEN THE THREE VEHICLES ARE PROVISIONAL AND THE ONE VEHICLE IS ACTUAL. THE *DHARMA FLOWER* SAYS: "IN THE LANDS OF THE BUDDHAS OF THE TEN DIRECTIONS, THERE IS ONLY THE DHARMA OF THE ONE VEHICLE, WITHOUT TWO AND WITHOUT THREE--UNLESS THE BUDDHA SPEAKS EXPEDIENTLY." IT ALSO SAYS: "I FIRST USE THE THREE VEHICLES TO GUIDE LIVING BEINGS, AND AFTERWARDS ONLY WITH THE GREAT VEHICLE SAVE AND LIBERATE THEM."

COMMENTARY:

So far we've been discussing the Dharma Marks School, which considers the One Vehicle to be provisional and the Three Vehicles to be actual. However, IF IT'S THE DHARMA NATURE SCHOOL, which we're going to discuss now, THEN THE THREE VEHICLES ARE PROVISIONAL Teaching, AND THE ONE VEHICLE IS ACTUAL Teaching--the exact opposite of the way it is in the Dharma Marks School. IN THE *DHARMA FLOWER Sutra* there are some passages of text which support the outlook of the Dharma Nature School as being right. In that Sutra it SAYS, "IN THE LANDS OF each and every one of THE BUDDHAS OF THE TEN DIRECTIONS, THERE IS ONLY THE DHARMA OF THE ONE VEHICLE that is true." That's why the Dharma Nature School maintains the One Vehicle is actual, "WITHOUT TWO AND WITHOUT THREE." It has no second or third--only the one and foremost. Another explanation is that "without two" means without the Two Vehicles of Sound Hearers and Those Enlightened to Conditions; and that "without three" means not only are the Vehicles of Sound Hearer and Enlightened to Conditions provisional, even the Bodhisattva Vehicle is. So there's also no Dharma of Three Vehicles--just the one Buddha Vehicle with no further Vehicle. Then why did the Buddha talk about Two and Three Vehicles? That's explained in the next line: "UNLESS THE BUDDHA SPEAKS EXPEDIENTLY" of the Two and the Three Vehicles. If you make that exception, then there are also two and three. But this is just, as it's said:

There are not two roads for returning to the source,
But expedients have many doors.

When you become a Buddha, there is only the one road, not more, yet there are numerous expedient Dharma doors. So, if Dharma is spoken expediently, there can be two, or three, or four, or five. You can speak as many expedient Dharma doors as you are able to distinguish.

IT ALSO SAYS, "I (the Buddha) FIRST USE THE THREE VEHICLES of Sound Hearers, those Enlightened to Conditions, and Bodhisattvas to GUIDE all of those LIVING BEINGS so they won't be so an-xious and scared and will feel like being vigorous. AND AFTERWARDS, after speaking of Three Vehicles, ONLY WITH THE Dharma of the GREAT VEHICLE SAVE AND LIBERATE THEM, so every last living being becomes a Buddha." The Buddha's original intention was that all living beings accomplish Buddhahood.

PROLOGUE:

BECAUSE THE NATURE IS ONLY ONE, IT THEREFORE SAYS: "ALL BUDDHAS, DOUBLY COMPLETE HON-ORED ONES, KNOW THAT DHARMAS ARE CONSTANT AND WITHOUT

A NATURE." FURTHERMORE, THE THIRD ROLL SAYS: "OF ONE MARK AND OF ONE FLAVOR, ULTIMATE NIRVANA CHARACTERIZED BY CONSTANT STILL EXTINCTION."

COMMENTARY:

BECAUSE THE Buddha NATURE IS ONLY ONE, single nature, and

All living beings have the Buddhanature,

All are capable of becoming Buddhas, IT, the *Dharma Flower Sutra* THEREFORE also SAYS: "ALL BUDDHAS, DOUBLY COMPLETE HONORED ONES, KNOW THAT DHARMAS ARE CONSTANT AND WITHOUT A NATURE." "Doubly Complete Honored Ones" will be explained below. All Buddhas know that all dharmas are empty--characterized by emptiness--which is what "without a nature" means. FURTHERMORE, in THE THIRD ROLL of the *Dharma Flower Sutra* it SAYS: "OF ONE MARK--not characterized by duality--AND uniformly OF ONE FLAVOR. That is ULTIMATE NIRVANA which is CHARACTERIZED BY CONSTANT, STILL EXTINCTION," meaning it is without marks, be they worldly or world-transcending characteristics. It is the Pure Land of Constant Stillness and Light.

Buddhas are called "Doubly Complete Honored Ones" because they are complete in blessings and complete in wisdom. It is their cultivation of blessings that makes them complete in blessings, and their cultivation of wisdom does the same for wisdom. One cultivates blessings by benefiting others, and cultivates wisdom by benefiting oneself--which is benefiting self and benefiting others. If you are interested in cultivating wisdom I'll tell you how. Printing Sutras, propagating the Buddhadharma, turning the great Dharma wheel are all examples of ways to cultivate it. An example would be if when the *Sixth Patriarch's Sutra* is about to be printed, you decide, "I'll sponsor the printing of 50 copies." No matter what, you have to stay out in front of people and not lag behind. If there are, say, 500 people and you are out ahead of them all, then in the future your wisdom will surpass all of theirs.

In cultivating blessings, if there are 1000 people involved in a meritorious action and you are ahead of them all in doing it, in the future your reward of blessings will be greater than that of all the 1000 people.

You may say, "But what can I do? I don't have any money to give." Just do what others cannot do and are unwilling to do. For instance, if in the temple no one wants to sweep the floor and you do it, that is adorning your blessings. If no one wants to cook and you cook, that also augments your adornment of blessings, as does boiling water when no one else wants to. Those kinds of blessings are limitless and boundless, and cannot be reckoned in numbers. If you sweep the floor, and make everyone feel the Buddhahall is very clean and pure and adorned, so they give rise to a resolve for Bodhi, then invisibly you are adorning your blessings. On the other hand, if you read and recite the Sutras a lot, that will increase your wisdom and intelligence. Reciting Sutras, holding mantras, and bowing to Sutras are ways to cultivate wisdom, for wisdom comes from the Sutras which have Prajna in them to make you wiser. The reason "Doubly Complete Honored Ones" are mentioned at all is with the hope that we all become doubly complete honored ones as well. It's not that only the Buddha has a chance; all of us can do it too--but it has to be done completely. Otherwise you won't be a Doubly Complete Honored One, because you won't have enough. Enough, and you're doubly complete and honored. All should pay careful attention to this, and also be careful not to end up complete in crying and complete in stupidity.

PROLOGUE:

THE *NIRVANA* ALSO SAYS: "THE BUDDHA NATURE IS CALLED THE ONE VEHICLE. THE LION'S ROAR IS CALLED DECISIVE PROCLAMATION. IT DECISIVELY PROCLAIMS THAT ALL LIVING BEINGS HAVE THE BUDDHA NATURE, AND THAT ALL WHO HAVE MINDS WILL CERTAINLY BE BUDDHAS." IN CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE IT ALSO SAYS: "ALL LIVING BEINGS IDENTICALLY HAVE THE BUDDHA NATURE, IDENTICALLY THE ONE VEHICLE, IDENTICALLY ONE LIBERATION, ONE CAUSE AND ONE FRUITION, IDENTICALLY ONE SWEET DEW. ALL WILL ATTAIN PERMANENCE, BLISS, TRUE SELF, AND PURITY, WHICH IS CALLED "ONE FLAVOR."

COMMENTARY:

In THE *NIRVANA Sutra* it ALSO SAYS: "What's meant by THE BUDDHA NATURE? The Buddha nature IS CALLED THE ONE VEHICLE. The Dharma of the One Vehicle is just the Buddha nature; and it is true suchness, the basic substance of the Buddha nature. What is meant by THE LION'S ROAR? The Teaching of the lion's roar IS CALLED certain and DECISIVE--not unfixed--PROCLAMATION and clear declaration. IT DECISIVELY PROCLAIMS THAT ALL LIVING BEINGS HAVE THE BUDDHA NATURE and the seeds and qualifications for the One Vehicle. They are all endowed with the self-nature of true thusness; AND so it is stated THAT ALL living beings WHO HAVE MINDS--who have sentience--WILL CERTAINLY BE able to become BUDDHAS. It's stated as absolute fact. IN CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE IT ALSO SAYS something virtually the same: "ALL LIVING BEINGS IDENTICALLY HAVE THE BUDDHA NATURE. All are capable of becoming Buddhas. They are all IDENTICALLY endowed with the Buddha nature of THE ONE VEHICLE, and they IDENTICALLY will be able to obtain the sovereign comfort of ONE LIBERATION. Their cause is ONE and the same CAUSE, and their fruition is ONE and the same FRUITION. That they IDENTICALLY have ONE SWEET DEW means they identically have one and the same Buddha nature. ALL living beings should and WILL ATTAIN the four virtues of Nirvana which are PERMANENCE, BLISS, TRUE SELF, AND PURITY--for WHICH reason this IS all summed up in one name and CALLED "ONE FLAVOR."

PROLOGUE:

MOREOVER, THE THIRD ROLL OF THE *DHARMA FLOWER* SAYS: "AFTER MY CROSSING TO EXTINCTION THERE WILL FURTHER BE DISCIPLES WHO HAVE NOT HEARD THIS SUTRA AND WHO DO NOT KNOW AND ARE UNAWARE OF WHAT IS PRACTICED BY A BODHISATTVA. THEY THEMSELVES, WITH REGARD TO THE MERIT AND VIRTUE THEY HAVE OBTAINED, WILL HAVE THE THOUGHT OF CROSSING TO EXTINCTION, THAT THEY SHOULD ENTER NIRVANA. I, IN ANOTHER COUNTRY, WILL BE A BUDDHA, AND HAVE YET ANOTHER NAME. ALTHOUGH THOSE PEOPLE HAVE THE THOUGHT OF CROSSING TO EXTINCTION, OF ENTERING NIRVANA, STILL IN THAT OTHER COUNTRY THEY WILL SEEK THE WISDOM OF A BUDDHA, AND WILL COME TO HEAR THIS SUTRA, AND IT WILL BE ONLY THROUGH THE BUDDHA VEHICLE THAT THEY WILL OBTAIN CROSSING TO EXTINCTION," AND SO FORTH.



COMMENTARY:

MOREOVER, in THE THIRD ROLL OF THE *DHARMA FLOWER Sutra*, Shakyamuni Buddha himself also SAYS: "AFTER MY CROSSING TO EXTINCTION and entry to Nirvana THERE WILL FURTHER BE very many DISCIPLES of the Buddha WHO HAVE NOT HEARD THIS, the *Dharma Flower Sutra*. AND there will be people WHO DO NOT KNOW AND understand or have the wisdom to do so, AND who ARE UNAWARE OF, unenlightened to WHAT IS PRACTICED BY A BODHISATTVA--the doors of practice of the Six Paramitas and the ten thousand conducts which Bodhisattvas cultivate. THEY THEMSELVES, however, WITH REGARD TO THE MERIT AND VIRTUE THEY HAVE OBTAINED through cultivation, will think their merit and virtue is perfected. So they WILL HAVE THE THOUGHT OF CROSSING TO EXTINCTION, THAT THEY themselves SHOULD ENTER NIRVANA." "Nirvana" here is the stillness in "tending towards stillness." Shakyamuni Buddha goes on to say, "I IN ANOTHER COUNTRY..." This could also be interpreted as "in a country with residue," as in the second of the Four Lands.

The Four Lands

1. The Land Where Sages and Commoners Dwell Together.
2. The Expedient Land With Residue.
3. The Land Adorned with Actual Retribution.
4. The Pure Land of Constant Stillness and Light.

He says, "In another country--a land with residue--I WILL BE A BUDDHA, AND HAVE YET ANOTHER NAME. I won't be called Shakymuni Buddha but something else. And then ALTHOUGH THOSE PEOPLE HAVE THE THOUGHT OF their own merit and virtue being such for CROSSING TO EXTINCTION and think OF ENTERING NIRVANA, they nevertheless cannot become Buddhas. That's because they are Fixed Nature Sound Hearers who have stopped half-way down the road in the transformation city, and are no longer going forward to make progress. They don't intend to reach the treasure trove, and so although they think they enter nirvana, they don't obtain Nirvana's four virtues of permanence, bliss, true self, and purity. STILL, IN THAT OTHER COUNTRY THEY WILL go on to SEEK THE WISDOM OF A BUDDHA, AND WILL COME TO HEAR THIS *Wonderful Dharma Lotus Flower SUTRA*. AND IT WILL BE ONLY THROUGH having cultivated THE BUDDHA VEHICLE THAT THEY WILL be able to truly and actually OBTAIN the position of CROSSING TO EXTINCTION;" AND SO FORTH. There are many passages of Sutra text that make the same statement.

PROLOGUE:

ROLL NINETY-FIVE OF THE *WISDOM SHASTRA* ALSO SAYS THE SAME THING. IT MAKES CLEARLY KNOWN THAT THOSE TENDING TOWARDS STILLNESS WILL CERTAINLY TURN THEIR MINDS AROUND. IN THE *DHARMA FLOWER SHASTRA*, AMONG THE FOUR KINDS OF SOUND HEARERS, BECAUSE THE ROOTS OF THOSE IN THE TWO CATEGORIES OF THE FIXED AND THOSE OF OVERWEENING PRIDE HAVE NOT YET RIPENED, BODHISATTVAS BESTOW PREDICTIONS UPON THEM AND EXPEDIENTLY CAUSE THEM TO BRING FORTH THE MIND.

COMMENTARY:

ROLL NINETY-FIVE OF THE *Great Perfection of WISDOM (Maha-Prajna-Paramita) SHASTRA* ALSO SAYS THE SAME THING as the passage cited above. IT MAKES CLEARLY KNOWN THAT THOSE Sound Hearers TENDING TOWARDS STILLNESS WILL CERTAINLY TURN THEIR MINDS AROUND away from the small and towards the great, and bring forth the mind for Bodhi. There is also what it says IN a work called THE *DHARMA FLOWER SHASTRA* about two AMONG THE FOUR KINDS OF SOUND HEARERS.

The Four Kinds of Sound Hearers

1. Fixed Sound Hearers.
2. Sound Hearers of Overweening Pride.
3. Sound Hearers Who Have Retreated from the Bodhi Mind.
4. Transformationally Responding Sound Hearers.

BECAUSE THE ROOTS OF THOSE IN THE TWO CATEGORIES OF THE FIXED Sound Hearers AND THOSE Sound Hear-ers OF OVERWEENING PRIDE HAVE NOT YET RIPENED, they cannot become Buddhas. Fixed Sound Hearers are simply withered sprouts and sterile seeds and are self-ending Arhats who only know about themselves and don't know about teaching and transforming living beings. Sound Hearers of Overweening Pride forever feel they are higher than anyone else. For example, the five thousand Bhikshus who withdrew when the Buddha spoke the *Dharma Flower Sutra* were all Sound Hearers of Overweening Pride. There are also Sound Hearers who once resolved their minds on Bodhi and practiced the Bodhisattva Way--for a while, but who then stopped and turned back, like Shariputra who decided to walk the Bodhisattva Path but met someone who wanted his eyes. He decided it was too hard, so he gave up his resolve for Bodhi. He brought forth the Bodhi mind 20,000 Buddhas ago, yet to this day he is still a Sound Hearer--one who has Retreated from the Bodhi Mind. You can find examples of this among Bhikshus right here in our Way Place; and so cultivation is not easy. There are several well-known examples of Transformationally Responding Sound Hearers who:

Inside conceal their Bodhisattva Conduct,
Outside manifesting Sound Hearer bodies.

One such is Purnamaitreyaniputra, who although a Sound Hearer Bhikshu on the outside, inside is walking the Bodhisattva Way. Another is the Venerable Ananda who has vowed to be the attendant to any of the limitless Buddhas who appear in the world. The vow made by Rahula is that he will be the

eldest son for anyone who becomes a Buddha throughout the ten directions and the three periods of time. The roots of the first two categories--Fixed Sound Hearers and those of Overweening Pride--are not yet mature, and so BODHISATTVAS instead of the Buddha BESTOW the PREDICTIONS Dharma UPON THEM AND EXPEDIENTLY CAUSE THEM TO BRING FORTH THE MIND for Bodhi.

PROLOGUE:

SINCE IT SAYS: "HAVE NOT YET RIPENED," IT MAKES CLEAR THAT THEY CERTAINLY WILL RIPEN. WHAT THEY EXPEDIENTLY CAUSE THEM TO BRING FORTH IS JUST THE BODHI MIND. ONE CANNOT BECAUSE IT DOES NOT ACCORD WITH ONE'S OWN SCHOOL DETERMINE THAT A SHASTRA IS WRONG.

COMMENTARY:

SINCE IT SAYS, "HAVE NOT RIPENED," they are like grains that have been planted in the earth, even though right now they are not ripe, they have been planted in the earth and in the future are sure to mature. IT therefore MAKES CLEAR THAT for the moment THEY may be Fixed Sound Hearers and Sound Hearers of Overweening Pride with roots that have not ripened, but in the future their roots CERTAINLY WILL RIPEN. WHAT THEY, the Bodhisattvas, EXPEDIENTLY with clever devices CAUSE THEM TO BRING FORTH IS JUST THE BODHI MIND. ONE CANNOT just BECAUSE IT DOES NOT ACCORD WITH the principles and teachings of ONE'S OWN SCHOOL DETERMINE and say THAT A SHASTRA IS WRONG. That's impermissible.

Teaching and transforming people is extremely hard. You think someone is going to cultivate, but then they just don't cultivate. You think someone will follow the rules, but then they don't. Occasionally they think something that violates the rules is in accord with them, and sometimes they think something that accords with the rules is against them.

-continued next issue.

FORTHCOMING FROM BTTS:

DHARMA FLOWER SUTRA, VOLUME 10, Chapters 12 & 13. Chapter 12, "Devadatta" contains two startling revelations. One concerns the past history and future hope of Devadatta, who insisted upon acting as Shakyamuni Buddha's mortal enemy in life after life. The second revelation is made by the young dragon girl, daughter of Dragon King Sagara. An unforgettable chapter! Chapter 13, "Diligently Upholding," tells of Shakyamuni Buddha's bestowal of predictions of Buddhahood on Bhikshuni Mahaprajnapati and Bhikshuni Yashodhara. AVAILABLE IN JANUARY '82.