

# **FLOWER ADORNMENT SUTRA**

*Prologue by Tang Dynasty National Master Ch'ing Liang*

*with commentary of Tripitaka Master Hua*

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## PROLOGUE:

THE SECOND, FOURTH, AND SEVENTH ROLLS OF THE *LANKAVATARA* ALL IDENTICALLY SAY THAT THE TWO VEHICLES HAVE NO ACTUAL NIRVANA; THAT IT IS ONLY DUE TO THE POWER OF SAMADHI, AND THAT AFTERWARDS THEY WILL CERTAINLY OBTAIN UNSURPASSED BODHI. THE DOCTRINE IN THE *DHARMA FLOWER SHASTRA* IS ALSO THE SAME AS THIS. ALL ARE FALSE SPEAKINGS OF NIRVANA, AND SO SAY SAMADHI. THE *SHRIMALA SUTRA* ALSO SAYS: "WHEN ALL THOSE OF THE TWO VEHICLES ARE SAID TO OBTAIN NIRVANA, THAT IS EXPEDIENT ON THE PART OF THE BUDDHAS." MOREOVER, THE *UNSURPASSED RELIANCE SUTRA* AND THE *JEWELLED NATURE AND BUDDHA NATURE SHASTRAS* ALL SAY OF THE TWO VEHICLES' ENTRY TO EXTINCTION THAT BEYOND THE THREE REALMS THEY UNDERGO FURTHER CHANGE. IN THE *SECRET ADORNMENT SUTRA*, THE TWO VEHICLES ULTIMATELY ARE WITHOUT THE UTTER SEVERANCE OF EXTERNAL EXTINCTION.

## COMMENTARY:

THE SECOND, FOURTH, AND SEVENTH ROLLS OF THE *LANKAVATARA Sutra*, which the Buddha entered the capital Lanka City to speak, ALL IDENTICALLY SAY THAT THE people of the TWO VEHICLES HAVE NO real achievement of the fruit of ACTUAL NIRVANA. Then what do they have? Those passages in the Sutra say THAT IT IS ONLY DUE to borrowing THE POWER OF being able to enter SAMADHI and extinguish their bodies and put an end to knowing that they make their persons as if non-existent, and get rid of knowing and awareness. AND those passages also say THAT the Sound Hearers and Those Enlightened to Conditions have not actually entered nirvana without residue but have just stopped and taken up residency in the transformation city, not going on to the treasure trove. Yet nevertheless, AFTERWARDS THEY in the future WILL CERTAINLY be able to OBTAIN unsurpassed Bodhi--great nirvana. For now, however, they can't do it.

That's what the *Lankavatara Sutra* says, and THE DOCTRINE IN a work called THE *DHARMA FLOWER SHASTRA* IS ALSO THE SAME AS THIS just described in its overall outlines. ALL ARE FALSE SPEAKINGS OF NIRVANA. Even though called "nirvana," it's not true and actual nirvana without residue. The name "nirvana" is falsely borrowed and applied to nirvana with residue, called "nirvana" to encourage people. But it's just the attainment of a kind of power of concentration so there is a very free and easy, comfortable state within samadhi which is very blissful. Nonetheless it's not true entry to the four virtues of the Buddha's Dharma body which are four great perfections of permanence, bliss, true self, and purity.

Then there is THE *SHRIMALAdevi SUTRA* WHICH ALSO SAYS: "WHEN ALL THOSE OF THE TWO VEHICLES ARE SAID TO OBTAIN NIRVANA, THAT kind of talk IS an EXPEDIENT Dharma Door established ON THE PART OF THE BUDDHAS of the ten directions and the three periods of time, and is not ultimate." MOREOVER, THE *UNSURPASSED RELIANCE SUTRA* (T. 669) AND THE *JEWELLED NATURE Shastra* (by Ratamati, T. 1611) AND the *BUDDHA NATURE Shastra* (by Vasubandhu Bodhisattva, T. 1610) those two SHASTRAS ALL SAY OF THE TWO VEHICLES' adherents' ENTRY TO the EXTINCTION of Nirvana that it is not the attainment of ultimate Nirvana. They say THAT BEYOND THE THREE REALMS--the Desire Realm, the Form Realm, and the Formless Realm--THEY UNDERGO FURTHER CHANGE. "Change" is another name for birth and death. Arhats have ended share-section birth and death which is that of each person's own share (a body) and section (allotted lifespan). However, they haven't ended change birth and death: the continual production and extinction of thought after thought in the mind, in which every shifting thought is an instance of birth and death. To say they further undergo change birth and death indicates they have not yet obtained the virtue of the fruit of ultimate Nirvana. IN THE *SECRET ADORNMENT SUTRA* (*Ghanavyuhasutra*, T. 681 and 682) it says that THE people of the TWO VEHICLES ULTIMATELY ARE WITHOUT THE virtue of UTTER SEVERANCE, like fire without a trace of ashes, OF ETERNAL EXTINCTION. They can't obtain the fruit of ultimate Nirvana in which there is no more birth and death or production of false thinking.

The Three Realms were just mentioned, and all living beings are found within them. To transcend the Three Realms is to reach the Pure Land of Constant Stillness and Light, and it is to enter Nirvana without residue. But even though the Fixed Nature Sound Hearers and the Sound Hearers of Overweening Pride get beyond the Three Realms, because the measure of their minds is small, they cannot obtain ultimate Nirvana, and so must further undergo change birth and death.

#### COMMENTARY:

THERE IS MORE THAN ONE SUCH PASSAGE OF SUTRA TEXT AND SHASTRA such as quoted above from the *Lankavatara Sutra*, the *Dharma Flower Shastra*, the *Unsurpassed Reliance Sutra*, the *Jeweled Nature Shastra*, the *Buddha Nature Shastra*, the *Shrimaladeva Sutra*, the *Secret Adornment Sutra*, and so forth. There is not just one place WHICH MAKES IT CLEAR THAT THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO SUCH THING AS ETERNAL STILLNESS, entry to Nirvana, FOR THE Fixed Nature SOUND HEARERS and those of Overweening Pride who are said to be tending towards stillness. It simply is not the case.

#### PROLOGUE:

THE NINTH ROLL OF THE *NIRVANA*, IN THE BODHISATTVA CHAPTER, CLARIFIES AT LENGTH THAT ICCHANTIKAS HAVE CUT OFF THE GOOD AND ARE NOT ABLE TO BRING FORTH THE MIND. RIGHT IN THAT TEXT SAYS: "ALTHOUGH THOSE ICCHANTIKAS HAVE THE BUDDHA NATURE, IT IS ENCASED IN THE FILTH OF LIMITLESS OFFENSES, AND UNABLE TO ESCAPE, LIKE A SILKWORM IN A COCOON. THERE-FOR THEY HAVE IT AS IF THEY DID NOT HAVE IT." FURTHERMORE IT SAYS: "OR THERE MAY BE POSSESSION OF THE BUDDHA NATURE ON THE PART OF PEOPLE WHO ARE ICCHANTIKAS, WHILE PEOPLE WITH GOOD ROOTS MAY BE WITHOUT IT," AND SO FORTH, FROM WHICH ONE KNOWS THAT NO PEOPLE LACK THE SEED-NATURE.

## COMMENTARY:

THE NINTH ROLL OF THE *NIRVANA Sutra*, IN THE BODHISATTVA CHAPTER, the doctrine spoken CLARIFIES AT LENGTH THAT ICCHANTIKAS HAVE CUT OFF THE GOOD. "Ichchantika" is a Sanskrit term which translates "one of insufficient faith," someone who has as much doubt as belief. If he has eight pounds of faith, for example, his doubts will also weigh eight pounds, and so cancel out his faith. The first part of the *Nirvana Sutra* talked in terms of icchantikas not having the Buddha nature, and said that those of insufficient faith lacked the nature for becoming Buddhas. At the time when only the first part of the Sutra had been translated into *Chung Kuo hua*, Dharma Master Tao Sheng was lecturing it in Su Chou. When he came to the passage that said icchantikas lacked the Buddha Nature, he didn't explain it that way, but said instead that they have it. His reasoning went: "Why is it that icchantikas have the Buddha nature? It's because all living beings have the Buddha Nature, and although icchantikas have insufficient faith, they are living beings. Therefore, how can one say they lack the Buddha Nature?" He lectured it the opposite of the Sutra, which outraged the Dharma Masters of his time. They protested, "What's the talk of demon kings! The Sutra which the Buddha spoke plainly says that icchantikas don't have the Buddha nature, yet he says they do. That's really messed up." No one would have anything to do with him after that, and when he lectured Sutras no one came. The Dharma Masters ganged up and told all the disciples and good people of faith, "If Tao Sheng lectures, don't go. Anyone who listens to his Sutra lectures will fall into the hells." Now, the whole reason the good men and women of faith were studying the Buddhadharma was so as *not* to fall into the hells. When they heard that they would fall to hell if they went to his Sutra lectures, they didn't dare go to listen.

Dharma Master Tao Sheng was not one to remain silent, but was determined to deliver Sutra lectures. He said, "Okay, you won't come to listen? Then I'll go lecture to the rocks and see what they do." So he went off to Hu Ch'iu Mountain, and collected several hundred rocks from all over the area. He set them up in front of him and said, "I invite you to a Sutra lecture. Be good rocks and sit there nice and still." It turned out the rocks were very obedient. They didn't run off or roll away, but stayed right where he put them and entered samadhi. But even in samadhi they had some idea of what was going on, and so he spoke Dharma for them. When he got to the passage about icchantikas not having the Buddha nature he said, "That isn't correct. Icchantikas too have the Buddha nature. 'Those with and without sentience identically perfect the wisdom of all modes. 'Ichchantikas will become Buddhas too. *I said Ichchantikas do have the Buddha nature! Do you agree or not?*"

What do you think the rocks did then? Probably although they were supposed to enter samadhi, they hadn't quite gotten into it, and had not yet fallen asleep although they were intending to. When they heard him say that question, they all woke up and got moving. This dull rock nodded its head, and that dull stone nodded its head. They all nodded in agreement, bumping into each other, because each would hit the rock in front of it.

I told this story while lecturing the *Shurangama Sutra*, and at the time I asked, "Who certified that it really happened? I could say that when I lecture Sutras the tables and chairs bow to me, but what proof would there be? There wouldn't be any witnesses, unless all of you lied and said, "It's true. When our teacher lectures Sutras the tables kneel down and then get up, then kneel down again, bowing their heads once for each line of Sutra lectured.' People on the outside still wouldn't believe it, because chairs and tables basically can't bow; so how can it be believed that the dull rocks nodded their heads? I'll tell you. It's not something the Venerable Sheng said himself. It was said by those who opposed

him. How did they end up saying such a thing? Well, the reason people were against him in the first place was that he lectured too well. His eloquence was unobstructed as if lotuses were blooming on his tongue. Just about everyone was jealous of the way he could come up with explanations that had never occurred to anyone, and could make Sutras come alive, as it were. That's the way people are. If someone is better than they are, they get jealous, and if they are better than someone, they look down on that person. Living beings have that kind of knowledge and outlook, so the people of his time formed a faction to protect against Dharma Master Tao Sheng. When he went to the mountains to lecture to the rocks, some of them followed him on the sly to see what he was up to. Then he lectured to that spot and all the rocks began to move, and without being blown by the wind or splashed by the rain, nodded their heads. The Dharma Masters watching from the sides who believed in him, and even those against him who were there as spies, were there to see it, and that is the origin of the saying that when the Venerable Sheng spoke the Dharma, dull rocks nodded their heads. Afterwards, when the *Nirvana Sutra* had been completely translated, it turned out that right in the Sutra it said icchantikas too have the Buddha nature. That proved Dharma Master Tao Sheng had completely understood the doctrine without having seen the entire Sutra, and showed the extent of his wisdom and insight. Then even those who had opposed him were no longer against him, and came to bow to him. So the meaning of the dull rocks nodding their heads is that those who had no faith in him were the dull stones--or how could they have failed to believe him? Yet even those who had been jealous and against him prostrated themselves before him.

Therefore, icchantikas, too, have the Buddha nature and will become Buddhas--it just takes them a little longer is all. It's as is said in the *Sixth Patriarch's Sutra*:

Dharma is neither sudden nor gradual, Delusion and awakening are slow  
and quick.

In the Bodhisattva chapter it talks about how icchantikas HAVE CUT OFF THE GOOD, their good roots and because they don't have good roots don't become Buddhas, AND ARE NOT ABLE TO BRING FORTH THE Bodhi MIND. RIGHT IN THAT Sutra TEXT IT SAYS: "ALTHOUGH THOSE ICCHANTIKAS HAVE THE BUDDHA NATURE and do not lack it, that Buddha nature IS ENCASED IN THE FILTH OF the LIMITLESS unclear karma of the evil OFFENSES they have committed. Their violations of killing are unclear as is their karma of stealing and sexual misconduct. How much of it is there? There's no way to reckon the amount in numbers. Fortunately the filth of their offenses doesn't have form and shape, for if it did it would fill all of empty space which would no longer be space but full. The dirt from that offense karma encases the Buddha nature so it doesn't emit light AND is UNABLE TO ESCAPE. The Buddha nature, is buried in that filth and can't get out, LIKE A SILKWORM all wrapped up IN A COCOON. It's not that the silkworm--which represents the Buddha nature in the analogy--doesn't exist; it's just encased by the cocoon and so can't be seen. THEREFORE, THEY, icchantikas, can't be said not to have the Buddha nature, even though they HAVE IT AS IF THEY DID NOT HAVE IT."

FURTHERMORE IT SAYS in that Sutra: "OR THERE MAY BE POSSESSION OF THE BUDDHA NATURE ON THE PART OF PEOPLE WHO ARE ICCHANTIKAS, WHILE PEOPLE WITH GOOD ROOTS MAY BE WITHOUT IT." You may even find people with good roots who lack the Buddha nature while icchantikas have it. The way it works is that there are five kinds of Buddha nature.

## The Five Kinds of Buddha Nature

1. Wholesome Buddha Nature.
2. Unwholesome Buddha Nature.
3. Indeterminate Buddha Nature.
4. Buddha nature in principle.
5. Buddha nature in fruition.

Ichchantikas having the Buddha nature while people with good roots do not refers to the unwholesome Buddha nature, AND SO FORTH. A lot of different principles are cited, FROM WHICH ONE KNOWS THAT there are NO PEOPLE who LACK THE SEED-NATURE for Buddhahood.

### PROLOGUE:

MOREOVER, THE ABOVE IN QUOTING THE *LANKAVATARA* ON THE FIVE NATURES ITSELF CONFUSES THAT PASSAGE. THE FIFTH NATURE IN THAT SUTRA SAYS: FIVE, NOT HAVING THE NATURE, WHICH REFERS TO ICCHANTIKAS. OF THESE THERE ARE TWO KINDS: ONE, THOSE WHO HAVE BURNED UP ALL OF THEIR GOOD ROOTS, MEANING THOSE WHO SLANDER THE BODHISATTVA STORE; AND TWO, THOSE WHO HAVE SYMPATHY AND PITY FOR ALL THE REALMS OF LIVING BEINGS, MEANING THE BODHISATTVAS WHO SAY, "IF THERE ARE LIVING BEINGS WHO HAVE NOT ENTERED NIRVANA, I MYSELF WILL NOT ENTER IT." GREAT WISDOM ADDRESSED HIM SAYING, "WHICH OF THESE TWO KINDS NEVER ENTERS NIRVANA?" THE BUDDHA REPLIED, "THE BODHISATTVAS NEVER ENTER NIRVANA, NOT THOSE WHO HAVE BURNED UP ALL OF THEIR GOOD ROOTS. THAT IS BECAUSE WHILE KNOWING THAT ALL DHARMAS BASICALLY ARE NIRVANA, THEY DO NOT ABANDON LIVING BEINGS."

### COMMENTARY:

MOREOVER, THE ABOVE, IN QUOTING evidence from THE *LANKAVATARA Sutra* ON how there are THE FIVE NATURES--those for the Sound Hearer, Conditionally Enlightened and Bodhisattva Vehicles respectively, along with the unfixed and those without the nature--ITSELF CONFUSES THAT PASSAGE from the original Sutra text and doesn't state it clearly. THE discussion of THE FIFTH NATURE IN THAT, the *Lankavatara SUTRA*, SAYS: FIVE, the fifth kind of nature, is NOT HAVING THE seed-NATURE, for Buddhahood, WHICH REFERS TO ICCHANTIKAS-- living beings of insufficient faith. OF THESE who lack the seed-nature for Buddhahood THERE ARE not just one but TWO KINDS. ONE, is THOSE WHO HAVE, as it were, BURNED UP ALL OF THEIR GOOD ROOTS with the fire of greed. If you weren't greedy, it would be very hard to get angry or be stupid. But when you don't get what you're greedy for, you lose your temper--which is just the fire of ignorance that makes you stupid so you don't pay any attention to what is right, wrong, good, bad, correct or incorrect, but just do whatever you feel like doing. That's how their good roots are all burned up--MEANING THOSE WHO SLANDER THE BODHISATTVA STORE. This is just as was explained before--how if you're not as good as someone else you become jealous, whereas if you surpass someone you feel arrogant. In this case, they themselves have burned up their own good roots, so upon seeing others with good roots they feel envious and want to slander and destroy those people. They think, "I don't have good roots, so how can you have so many?" and

try to steal the good roots of others thinking they will sprout good roots themselves by slandering them. What actually happens, though, is the more they slander others the fewer good roots they have themselves. Therefore, I tell you the most important thing in cultivating the Way is absolutely not to be jealous of others or fear other people are better than you are. Bodhisattvas want everyone to be better than they are. But icchantikas--living beings of insufficient faith who have burned up their good roots--slander the Bodhisattvas of the Bodhisattva Store, and so are unable to enter Nirvana. AND there is TWO, the second kind of person who although not having burned up all good roots also does not enter Nirvana.

So you see, everything in the world is rela-tive and paired. If there is a bright *yang* side, there will be a shady *yin* side. If there's a daytime, there will be a nighttime. Even though the sun doesn't rest and doesn't experience day and night, people dwelling on the planet go through day in which they work and night in which they sleep and rest. Basically the planet is one, but while it's daytime in Hong Kong, it's evening here, and vice versa --the exact opposite. We're all on the same planet, but the sun is shining some places, and not in others. We say the sun "sets," but it doesn't really. If it did, when it's not here it shouldn't be in Hong Kong-- but it is. It's just that the planet has revolved so we are in the shade, on the opposite side from the sun. Both sides are necessary. If people rest all the time and never do anything, their blood stops circulating, and so they need to be active after having sufficient sleep, so there are equal parts of *yin* and *yang*. As it is said:

One *yin* and one *yang* make up the Way.

One *yin* and one *yang* is illustrated in one day and one night, one man and one woman.

That reminds me of something very important--and very unimportant, all depending on how you look at it, for everything is made from mind alone. A retired Abbot in Asia stated to the five who went to Taiwan that the decline of Buddhism is all due to women. Of course, what he said was unreasonable, for how could just women destroy it? It took men for women to cause its decline, and women could blame it on the men for not following the rules. But he told them he had heard the precepts were to be transmitted in America, and told them no matter what not to transmit the Buddhadharma to women. When the five heard that they decided, "This is really important!" and scooped up that "important" excrement to take to Hong Kong with them. Now they've sent a letter which talks of nothing else. They found nothing else worth talking about in their entire travels but how they agree with this. This is a case of children who've never seen anything accepting other people's verdict since they don't know themselves. I don't have to be there to figure it out. He said that because he was a retired Abbot with no part in the precept platform, he came "unofficially" which just means on the sly to the newly precepted Bhikshus and tried to undermine the Dharma Masters who had charge of the proceedings. Even the "elder-precepted" Bhikshu among them was taken in, but the person in the first place should not have gotten involved with those new preceptees, and in particular should not have discussed the faults of elder precepted Masters, and he should not have made those who had just taken precepts look down on their elders. So he broke three precepts right then and there. HE also violated by talking about the offenses of the four assemblies, but they thought what he said was right and important and took the shit to Hong Kong, since they didn't have any wisdom. Not to speak of our Dharma Ending Age, even in the Proper Dharma Age you can't say you'll just save men and not save women. It occurred to me once to just do that, but then I thought, "My mother is a woman, and I can't not save my mother. Anyone who would not save his own mother is the most unfilial of people, someone who

has forgotten his origins." So when one of them gave me a call and started in about how there was a most important matter I said, "I know, it's that business about not saving women, right?"

He said, "Yes, yes, yes, and I'm totally in agreement!"

I said, "He's farting dog farts!" which considerably decreased the importance of his "important matter."

How, in this day and age, can you say you'll just save men and not women? That's too unbalanced, like the vow made by one of the men here not to talk to women: does he talk to them in his mind or not is the real question, and only he knows. Also, he gets really upset if a woman happens to talk to him, in his mind setting up a lot of ignorance that goes, "I don't talk to women, how can you talk to me!!!!???" What precept is that holding? He's the one who's not talking to women, but they haven't adopted a precept against talking. And even if a woman does talk to him, his precept would be real if he could not see or hear it. But instead he protests, " She *TALKED* to me!!!" How does he know? If he knows, he doesn't have sufficient skill. But he doesn't understand that, and makes a federal case of someone writing him a letter. Actually:

The Way is explained from one side  
Theories have two sides.

In cultivating the Way you just keep an eye on yourself and don't see other people as being wrong.

So, icchantikas don't enter Nirvana, and neither do THOSE WHO HAVE SYMPATHY AND PITY FOR ALL THE REALMS OF LIVING BEINGS, MEANING THE BODHISATTVAS WHO SAY, "IF THERE ARE LIVING BEINGS WHO HAVE NOT ENTERED NIRVANA, I MYSELF ALSO WILL NOT ENTER IT." Earth Store Bodhisattva has made that kind of vow saying:

If the hells are not empty,  
I will not become a Buddha.  
When all living beings are saved,  
I will then certify to Bodhi.

His vow is that when all living beings become Buddhas only then will he accomplish Buddhahood. People like that don't enter Nirvana, but you can't say they have burned up their good roots, for they continue uninterrupted forever. That's how there are two sides to everything, a *yang* side and a *yin*, with good and bad to each. For instance, if the sun is too hot it scorches everything to death, but when its too cool, things die of the cold. What's needed is the Middle Way. The people who went to Asia should have recognized that American Buddhism has to summon up great energy and stand on its own. They even say as much, so why did they listen to such nonsense? But even though they made a lot of mistakes, we'll just forget it now that I've told you about it. Because I always say, "Everything's Okay," and if this were not "okay" it would contradict my motto.

GREAT WISDOM Bodhisattva ADDRESSED HIM, the Buddha, SAYING, "WHICH OF THESE TWO KINDS NEVER ENTERS NIRVANA?" THE BUDDHA REPLIED, "It's THE BODHISATTVAS who make the vow that they won't enter Nirvana until all living beings have, who NEVER ENTER NIRVANA; and definitely NOT THOSE WHO HAVE BURNED UP ALL OF THEIR GOOD ROOTS, the icchantikas. For, sometimes when the fire goes out, if they get a little

water, their good roots can grow back again. THAT IS BECAUSE WHILE KNOWING THAT ALL DHARMAS BASICALLY ARE identical with NIRVANA--

not produced, not destroyed, not defiled, not pure, neither increased nor diminished--

THEY DO NOT ABANDON LIVING BEINGS." The Dharma and the Buddha do not abandon living beings, so neither would the Bodhisattvas.

PROLOGUE:

THE MEANING THEN MAKES IT CLEAR THAT BODHISATTVAS ENTER AND YET DO NOT ENTER. SINCE IT SAYS THAT BODHISATTVAS NEVER ENTER, AND NOT ICCHANTIKAS, THAT MAKES CLEAR THAT ICCHANTIKAS LATER ON CERTAINLY WILL ENTER. FURTHER-MORE THE SUTRA ITSELF SAYS: "THROUGH THE SPIRITUAL POWER OF THE BUDDHA, A TIME MAY COME WHEN THEIR GOOD ROOTS WILL GROW AGAIN."

COMMENTARY:

THE MEANING of the doctrine in the passage just discussed THEN MAKES IT CLEAR THAT BODHISATTVAS who are full of faith are about the same as icchantikas who don't have enough faith and so don't enter Nirvana. It's because of the power of the Bodhisattvas' vows to vastly cross over living beings to become Buddhas before they do, and so they ENTER AND YET DO NOT ENTER, don't enter but do. It would be right for the Bodhisattvas to enter Nirvana, but they don't. Even so, they still possess the four virtues of the Thus Come One's Dharma Body which are permanence, bliss, true self, and purity--unlike the icchantikas. SINCE IT SAYS in the passage quoted above THAT BODHISATTVAS NEVER ENTER Nirvana, AND NOT that ICCHANTIKAS who don't, THAT MAKES CLEAR THAT although for now ICCHANTIKAS don't enter, LATER they CERTAINLY WILL have the opportunity to ENTER Nirvana. It's not that they never do.

FURTHERMORE THE SUTRA ITSELF also SAYS that although the icchantikas have burned up all of their good roots in the fire of greed, THROUGH THE inconceivable SPIRITUAL POWER OF THE BUDDHA, the Thus Come One, A TIME MAY COME WHEN THEIR GOOD ROOTS WILL come back to life and GROW AGAIN. They aren't gone forever. So you should realize from the Sutra's saying this that every single living being can become a Buddha. There aren't any who cannot be saved.