

Flower Adornment Sutra

*Prologue by Tang Dynasty National Master Ch'ing Liang
with commentary of Tripitaka Master Hua
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PROLOGUE:

IN ROLL FIVE OF THE ADORNMENT THERE ARE ALSO TWO KINDS OF LACK OF THE NATURE: ONE, THAT BOUNDED BY TIME, AND TWO, ULTIMATE. THAT BOUNDED BY TIME IS TEMPORARILY NOT HAVING IT, MEANING THE PREVIOUSLY MENTIONED ICCHANTIKAS, THE ULTIMATE IS FOREVER NOT HAVING IT, MEANING THE GREATLY COMPASSIONATE BODHISATTVAS.

COMMENTARY:

IN ROLL FIVE OF THE *ADORNMENT--Alamkara---Shastra*, it says that THERE ARE ALSO TWO KINDS OF LACK OF THE seed-NATURE for Buddhahood. ONE, the first kind, is THAT BOUNDED BY TIME, which is what is in the middle between the boundaries of beginning and end, not having reached them; AND TWO, the other kind, is ULTIMATE, the way it is in the final analysis. THAT BOUNDED BY TIME IS TEMPORARILY just NOT HAVING IT for awhile during that period, but having it after the boundary is passed. For example, the boundary might be the end of this year, so one wouldn't have it this year but would have it the next. Or the boundaries might be the beginning and end of next year, so the following year one would have it. For example, now we have 24-hour days, with 24 boundaries, during any of which periods one could bring forth the Bodhi mind and regrow good roots. This is how it is for those temporarily lacking the nature, MEANING THE PREVIOUSLY DISCUSSED ICCHANTIKAS. THE ULTIMATE IS FOREVER NOT HAVING IT, the seed-nature for Buddhahood, MEANING THE GREATLY COMPASSIONATE BODHISATTVAS who are of one and the same substance with living beings. They won't split up from them, so if beings don't become Buddhas they won't either. However, living beings never get used up. One goes another comes. That one goes and another is born. You could never count the multitude of births involved in living beings, and they can't all become Buddhas. Therefore, the Bodhisattvas remain with them, and do not enter Nirvana.

PROLOGUE:

FROM THIS ONE KNOWS THAT THE ABOVE QUOTED GREAT PRAJNA, *DEEP SECRET*, AND OTHER SUTRAS ALL WERE SPOKEN BEFORE THE SPEAKING OF THE *DHARMA FLOWER*. AND BECAUSE IT WAS A LONG TIME BEFORE, HE TERMED THEM "FIXED NATURE" AND "WITHOUT THE NATURE." YET THEY WERE NOT FOREVER FIXED OR FOREVER WITHOUT IT.

COMMENTARY:

FROM THIS preceding discussion in the *Prologue* text ONE KNOWS THAT THE ABOVE QUOTED passages from the *GREAT PRAJNA Sutra*, the *DEEP SECRET Sutra*, and OTHER SUTRAS ALL WERE SPOKEN BEFORE THE SPEAKING OF THE *DHARMA FLOWER Sutra*.

The Agamas took twelve years, the Vaipulya eight.
Prajna was discussed for twenty-two years.

Twelve plus the eight years it took the Buddha to speak the Vaipulya teachings makes 20 years. Add on the 22 in which the Prajna Sutras were spoken and there are 42 years. AND BECAUSE IT WAS A LONG TIME BEFORE he was still employing expedients. The *Great Prajna Sutra* and the *Deep Secret Sutra* were spoken during that time before the *Dharma Flower Sutra* was spoken. Even if we subtract a year and consider it 41, that still was a long period of time. And so he spoke of Fixed Nature Sound Hearers who during that 41 year period just wanted to be self-ending Arhats, who feared being disturbed and didn't want to do anything. They just sat there and waited. When it was time to eat, they opened their mouths and ate. When it was time to sleep they closed their eyes and slept. It was not a bad deal--they didn't have to do anything at all. That went on for 41 years while the Buddha spoke Sutras and watched them, saying to himself, "It's incredible how you can hope to get away with that!" So he called them "Fixed-Nature Sound Hearers" and "Sound Hearers without the seed-nature," to tell them not to be Sound Hearers who just open their mouths at mealtime and close their eyes at bedtime, and sit there like blocks of wood the rest of the day, differing only by inhaling and exhaling. That's why HE scolded them and TERMED THEM "FIXED NATURE" AND "WITHOUT THE NATURE." YET THEY WERE NOT FOREVER going to be FIXED-Nature Sound Hearers OR FOREVER WITHOUT IT, the seed nature. So you see, it's as was said before: in the future icchantikas will become Buddhas too. The first half of the *Nirvana Sutra* said icchantikas lack the Buddha nature, but the last half said they have it. When the time-boundary had been reached, they had it.

PROLOGUE:

ALL THE SHASTRAS ARE SIMPLY ESTABLISHED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE BUDDHA'S EXPEDIENTS AND SO TERM THEM "FIXED" AND "WITHOUT." THEREFORE, SUCH SHASTRAS AS THE *JEWELLED NATURE* AND THE *BUDDHA NATURE* ALL SPEAK OF THE CAUSE OF ICCHANTIKAS HAVING SLANDERED THE GREAT VEHICLE, AND BASED UPON LIMITLESS TIME SAY THEY ARE WITHOUT THE BUDDHA NATURE. YET THESE SHASTRAS ARE NOT STATING THAT ICCHANTIKAS ULTIMATELY LACK THE PURE NATURE.

COMMENTARY:

ALL THE doctrines spoken by the SHASTRAS ARE SIMPLY ESTABLISHED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE BUDDHA'S dharmas of EXPEDIENTS, AND SO they TERM THEM, the "FIXED-Nature Sound Hearers, the Sound Hearers of Overweening Pride, and icchantikas, those "WITHOUT" the Buddha nature. THEREFORE, SUCH SHASTRAS AS THE *JEWELLED NATURE Shastra* AND THE *BUDDHA NATURE Shastra*. ALL SPEAK OF it this way. They talk about THE CAUSE OF ICCHANTIKAS--those of insufficient faith who forget what's lectured and forget the vows they've made, the good roots they've planted, and what they've said they'd do --that's the meaning of not having sufficient faith. Here the cause is there HAVING SLANDERED THE GREAT VEHICLE

Sutras. Some people, for example, say, "The *Shurangama Sutra* is inauthentic." People who claim "The *Dharma Flower Sutra* isn't authentic either" are doing the same thing, and people who protest, "The *Earth Store Bodhisattva Sutra* is a forgery" are slandering the Great Vehicle Sutras too. You also find people saying, "When you translate the *Wonderful Dharma Lotus Flower Sutra* and the *Great Means Expansive Buddha Flower Adornment Sutra*, you should leave out all those Bodhisattvas. Why keep them in? Don't translate them." That's like a certain scholar-translator who recommends leaving out the entire chapter on the "Coming Into Being of Worlds" in the *Flower Adornment Sutra*. Doing that is just like leaving off a person's head, cutting it off. Those kinds of things constitute the cause which is slandering the Great Vehicle. AND those Shastras are BASED UPON LIMITLESS TIME--a very long time. For example, the 42--or rather 41--years from the time the Buddha accomplished Buddhahood and started speaking Dharma--during that long a time--the Fixed-Nature Sound Hearers didn't change their way of thinking or go forward to make progress. That's why the Shastras SAY THEY ARE WITHOUT THE BUDDHA NATURE. YET THESE SHASTRAS ARE NOT STATING THAT ICCHANTIKAS ULTIMATELY till the end of time are going to LACK THE Buddha's clear, PURE NATURE. That's not what they mean.

PROLOGUE:

IF ONE MAINTAINS THAT THE *DHARMA FLOWER* IS TEACHING OF THE SECOND PERIOD, WHICH, IN ORDER TO DRAW IN THOSE NOT FIXED IN THE TWO VEHICLES, SPEAKS OF ALL ACCOMPLISHING BUDDHAHOOD, NOT YET STATING THAT THOSE OF FIXED NATURE WILL NOT ACCOMPLISH IT; AND IF ONE THEREFORE CALLS IT OF INTENT, AND NOT THE FINAL MEANING, WHY WOULD ONE ALSO DETERMINE THE *DHARMA FLOWER* WAS TEACHING OF THE THIRD PERIOD? WHO INDEED WOULD DARE DECIDE THE *DHARMA FLOWER* WAS NOT FINAL!?

COMMENTARY:

ONE may MAINTAIN THAT THE *Wonderful DHARMA Lotus FLOWER Sutra* IS TEACHING OF doctrine spoken by the Buddha during THE SECOND PERIOD WHICH was spoken IN ORDER TO DRAW IN THOSE NOT FIXED IN nature as of THE TWO VEHICLES--those Who were neither Fixed-Nature Sound Hearers nor Sound Hearers of Overweening Pride. It SPEAKS OF ALL living beings having the Buddha Nature and having the capacity for ACCOMPLISHING BUDDHAHOOD, But NOT YET STATING THAT THOSE Sound Hearers OF FIXED NATURE WILL NOT be able to ACCOMPLISH IT. ONE may THEREFORE CALL IT a Teaching OF SECRET INTENT, AND NOT a clear statement of THE FINAL MEANING, not ultimate doctrine, in that case WHY WOULD ONE ALSO DETERMINE THE *DHARMA FLOWER Sutra* WAS NOT Teaching of the FINAL meaning!?!? Who would have the gall!?!? That's how National Master Ch'ing Liang shows what he thinks of all the erroneous fixings of time periods he's discussed up to now. He means the way they set up the Teachings was not reasonable and not in accord with the Buddhadharma.

PROLOGUE:

IN THE *WONDERFUL WISDOM SUTRA* AND THE *LIANG COMPENDIUM SHASTRA*, WITHIN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PROPER DHARMA BOTH PLACE THE ONE VEHICLE AFTER THE THREE VEHICLES. THEREFORE, AMONG THE WORKS OF TRIPITAKA MASTER PARAMARTHA, THE *NOTES ON DISCREPANCIES* SAYS, "AFTER THIRTY-EIGHT

YEARS, SUCH SUTRAS AS THE *RELEASING THE DEEP SECRET* WERE SPOKEN." THE *LIMITLESS MEANING* SAYS, "AFTER FORTY YEARS HE SPOKE THE *DHARMA FLOWER SUTRA*." FROM THIS ONE CLEARLY KNOWS THAT THE *DHARMA FLOWER* CAME AFTERWARDS. THEREFORE THAT SUTRA SAYS IT IS AT THE TIME RIGHT BEFORE HIS END.

COMMENTARY:

THE *WONDERFUL WISDOM* SUTRA--the Prajna Sutras, "Prajna" being "Wonderful Wisdom-- AND THE LIANG Dynasty COMPENDIUM SHASTRA--the *Mahayanasamgraha Shastra* written by "Unattached"--Asanga--Bodhisattva, (T. 1593)--WITHIN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PROPER DHARMA, BOTH PLACE THE ONE VEHICLE as having been spoken AFTER THE THREE VEHICLES, and not the other way around. THEREFORE, AMONG THE WORKS OF TRIPITAKA MASTER PARAMARTHA there is one volume called THE *NOTES ON DISCREPANCIES* in which he brings up some particular points. That work SAYS, "AFTER THIRTY-EIGHT YEARS, SUCH SUTRAS AS THE *RELEASING THE DEEP SECRET* (*Sandhinirmochana Sutra*, T. 677) WERE SPOKEN by the Buddha." THE *LIMITLESS MEANING Sutra* (T.276) also SAYS, "AFTER FORTY YEARS HE SPOKE THE *DHARMA FLOWER SUTRA*." Forty years went by before the Buddha spoke the *Dharma Flower Sutra*, which he spoke at the very end along with the *Nirvana Sutra*. FROM THIS ONE CLEARLY KNOWS, based on those statements in the Sutras, THAT THE *DHARMA FLOWER Sutra* CAME AFTERWARDS, at the very end of the forty-year period. And the *Dharma Flower Sutra* sets forth the principle of the One Vehicle, which had not been stated prior to the speaking of that Sutra. THEREFORE, the very text of THAT *Dharma Flower SUTRA* itself SAYS IT IS being spoken by the Buddha AT THE TIME RIGHT BEFORE HIS END; and after it he speaks the *Nirvana Sutra*.

A NOTE ON THE FIVE EYES

Some people don't understand the opening of the Five Eyes, and say it's just a state. The Five Eyes can open if one applies one's efforts to the utmost while investigating dhyana. When those eyes are open, there are no obstructions and nothing blocks them. You can see through walls and look inside and see how the four elements of earth, air, fire, and water falsely combine into the heart, liver, spleen, lungs, and kidneys, the skin, blood, flesh, sinews, and bones that make up the body. Then you can realize that the body is basically unreal so you won't be attached to it, which is to obtain liberation. Once liberated, you have no impeding obstructions.

Inside there is no body and mind,
Outside there is no world.

One contemplates the mind inside and there is no mind.
Outside one contemplates the appearances and there are no appearances.
One contemplates objects afar, and there are no objects.

But most people don't understand, and when it happens just call it a "state." Actually, it's the opening of the Five Eyes. When you understand that, then there aren't any problems. If you don't understand, you think, "Oh, those are just states." *What* states? For example, when you sit in meditation and see

what's inside your flesh and bones, so what? There's nothing at all. It's a false combination of the four elements.

You may say, "But with my clothes on I can see my bones! What's that all about?" What's it all about? It's all about nothing. To ask what it's all about is to be busy about nothing. It's making trouble for yourself.

The eyes see shapes and forms, but inside there is nothing.
The ears hear defiling sounds, but the mind does not know.

What would you say that was all about?

PROLOGUE:

BUT IF ONE DOES NOT BELIEVE THE *DHARMA FLOWER* COMES LAST, IT IS, AT ANY RATE, BELIEVABLE THAT THE *NIRVANA* COMES RIGHT AT THE END --AND DOESN'T IT ALSO USE THE ONE VEHICLE AND ONE NATURE TO DEMOLISH THE THREE AND THE FIVE?

COMMENTARY:

The previous discussion was based upon the *Wonderful Dharma Lotus Flower Sutra's* having been spoken right before the Buddha entered Nirvana. BUT IF by some chance ONE DOES NOT BELIEVE THE *DHARMA FLOWER Sutra* was spoken at the very end and so COMES LAST, IT IS AT ANY RATE BELIEVABLE THAT THE *NIRVANA Sutra*, COMES RIGHT AT THE END, when the Buddha is on the point of entering Nirvana. That is certainly not wrong--AND DOESN'T IT, the *Nirvana Sutra*, ALSO USE discussion of how there is only the ONE Buddha VEHICLE AND the ONE Buddha NATURE TO DEMOLISH THE THREE Vehicles AND THE FIVE Natures, saying they do not exist? They are refuted in the *Nirvana Sutra* as well.

PROLOGUE:

IF ONE MAKES PRAJNA THE SECOND PERIOD AND THE *DHARMA FLOWER* PERIOD THREE, THAT MIGHT WORK IN PRINCIPLE. BUT IT WOULD IN TURN ENTAIL THE INTERNAL CONTRADICTION OF HAVING THE *DEEP SECRET*, WHICH UNIVERSALLY INTRODUCES TENDING TOWARDS ALL VEHICLES, IN THE THIRD PERIOD, WHERE-AS THE *DHARMA FLOWER* DEMOLISHES THE THREE.

COMMENTARY:

The *Nirvana Sutra* demolishes the Three Vehicles of Sound Hearers, Those Enlightened to Conditions, and Bodhisattvas, along with the Five Seed-Natures.

The Five Seed Natures

1. The Sound Hearers Seed-Nature.
2. The Conditionally Enlightened Seed-Nature.
3. The Bodhisattva Seed-Nature.

4. The Unfixed Seed-Nature.
5. The Lack of Seed-Nature.

But perhaps you'll say, "Well, in that case I have still another idea, IF ONE MAKES THE PRAJNA Sutras as having been spoken in THE SECOND PERIOD, AND THE DHARMA FLOWER Sutra spoken in PERIOD THREE, THAT MIGHT WORK IN PRINCIPLE. Doctrinally speaking you could do that, BUT even so another problem would arise. IT WOULD ENTAIL THE INTERNAL CONTRADICTION of what was said in the Third Period, refuting itself and destroying its own stated principles. IT would be that OF HAVING THE DEEP SECRET Sutra, WHICH UNIVERSALLY INTRODUCES TENDING TOWARDS ALL VEHICLES, tending towards Still Extinction, IN THAT THIRD PERIOD, WHEREAS THE DHARMA FLOWER Sutra DEMOLISHES THE THREE to reveal the One. The Dharma Flower Sutra breaks through the Three Vehicles to bring to light the One Vehicle, so it won't work to have it fall in the third period too.

PROLOGUE:

FROM THIS ONE CLEARLY KNOWS THAT THE DEEP SECRET'S THREE PERIODS ARE NOT ABLE DECISIVELY TO DETERMINE ALL THE SAGELY TEACHING BECAUSE IT DOES NOT YET COME AT THE VERY END. FURTHERMORE, IT MERELY IS REVEALING DOCTRINE FOR ONE KIND WHEN IT MAKES A DIVISION INTO THREE THE DOCTRINE BEING AS DISCUSSED BEFORE. LOOKED AT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE DHARMA FLOWER, THERE OUGHT TO BE FOUR PERIODS BECAUSE THE ONE VEHICLE DEMOLISHES THE PREVIOUS THREE VEHICLES.

COMMENTARY:

FROM THIS, the previously discussed principles, ONE CLEARLY KNOWS THAT THE DEEP SECRET'S reckoning of THREE PERIODS ARE NOT ABLE DECISIVELY TO DETERMINE ALL THE SAGELY TEACHING spoken by the Buddha during his entire generation. The reason you can't base yourself upon the Deep Secret Sutra to make that judgement about the Buddha's Teachings is BECAUSE IT DOES NOT YET COME AT THE VERY END. That Sutra wasn't one of the last spoken by the Buddha. It was spoken before when a lot of the doctrines were expedient Dharma doors, not ultimate Dharma. FURTHERMORE, IT MERELY IS REVEALING DOCTRINE FOR ONE KIND of living being that requires a certain kind of teaching Dharma suited to its potential WHEN IT MAKES A DIVISION INTO THREE Periods. It was not intended as ultimate, THE DOCTRINE BEING AS DISCUSSED BEFORE. This has been talked about already in the Prologue. LOOKED AT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE DHARMA FLOWER, if you compare the Dharma Flower Sutra and the Deep Secret Sutra, THERE OUGHT TO BE FOUR PERIODS. Those two Sutras cannot be placed in the same period, BECAUSE THE ONE VEHICLE TEACHING DEMOLISHES THE PREVIOUS THREE VEHICLES. The Dharma Flower Sutra states that there is only the One Buddha Vehicle, besides which there are no other Vehicles, that is, that all living beings have the capacity to become Buddhas. Prior to it, that had not been said. By revealing that doctrine, it demolished the previous Three Vehicles of Sound Hearers, Those Enlightened to Conditions, and Bodhisattvas as being expedient Dharmas and not ultimate.

The Buddha spoke a great many Sutras during his generation of teaching, and right now it's the T'ien T'ai Teachings established by Great Master Chin Che, "Wise One," that accord best both with

principles and with the potentials of living beings. And he based himself upon the *Dharma Flower Sutra* in establishing them, for that Sutra was spoken by the Buddha at the very end so its doctrines are most perfect and complete. Prior to it the Sutras he spoke were expedient Dharma, but the *Dharma Flower Sutra* opens the provisional to reveal the real. There are also the Teachings established by National Master Hsien Shou (Dharma Master Fa Ts'ang), which are based upon the *Flower Adornment Sutra*. Although the Buddha spoke that Sutra at the very start, its doctrinal principles are most vast, and so the Five Teachings he established are also very total and full and the doctrines all-encompassing. But doctrines like those of the *Deep Secret Sutra* herein discussed do not cover the full range, and so National Master Ch'ing Liang makes a special point of analyzing those principles.

PROLOGUE:

IF ONE MAINTAINS THAT THERE ARE TWO BUDDHA NATURES, ONE BEING THE NATURE IN PRINCIPLE, AND THE OTHER BEING THE NATURE IN PRACTICE, AND THAT THE NATURE IN PRINCIPLE IS DEFINITELY POSSESSED, WHEREAS THE NATURE IN PRACTICE MAY PERHAPS NOT BE POSSESSED, IT IS POSSIBLE TO SPEAK THAT WAY. THEREFORE, THE *NIRVANA* SAYS: "OR THERE MAY BE POSSESSION OF THE BUDDHA NATURE ON THE PART OF PEOPLE WITH GOOD ROOTS, WHILE PEOPLE WHO ARE ICCHANTIKAS DO NOT HAVE IT--WHICH IS JUST THE NATURE IN PRACTICE. OR THERE MAY BE POSSESSION OF THE BUDDHA NATURE WHICH THE TWO KINDS OF PEOPLE BOTH POSSESS, WHICH IS JUST THE NATURE IN PRINCIPLE."

COMMENTARY:

The *Prologue* has discussed the *Dharma Flower Sutra* which was spoken at the very last, and demolishes the preceding Three Vehicles revealing how there is only the One Buddha Vehicle and no other Vehicles. But IF ONE MAINTAINS THAT THERE ARE TWO kinds of BUDDHA NATURES; ONE BEING THE Buddha NATURE IN PRINCIPLE, AND THE OTHER BEING THE Buddha NATURE IN PRACTICE. AND if one says THAT THE Buddha NATURE IN PRINCIPLE IS DEFINITELY POSSESSED by all living beings, WHEREAS THE NATURE which is cultivated IN PRACTICE MAY PERHAPS NOT BE POSSESSED, IT IS POSSIBLE TO SPEAK THAT WAY. THEREFORE, THE *NIRVANA Sutra* SAYS: "OR THERE MAY BE POSSESSION OF THE BUDDHA NATURE ON THE PART OF living beings who are PEOPLE WITH GOOD ROOTS, WHILE PEOPLE WHO ARE ICCHANTIKAS DO NOT HAVE IT--WHICH IS JUST THE Buddha NATURE cultivated IN PRACTICE. Icchantikas don't cultivate so they don't have that kind of Buddha Nature. OR THERE MAY BE POSSESSION OF THE BUDDHA NATURE WHICH THE TWO KINDS OF PEOPLE, icchantikas and people with good roots, BOTH POSSESS--WHICH IS JUST talking about THE Buddha NATURE IN PRINCIPLE, how from the van-tage point of principle all living beings have the Buddha Nature."

PROLOGUE:

INASMUCH AS THE *NIRVANA* BASES ITSELF ON THE NATURE IN PRINCIPLE IN MAKING CLEAR THAT ALL EQUALLY POSSESS IT, IT THEREFORE SAYS THAT ALL WHO HAVE THE MIND ARE CERTAIN TO BE BUDDHAS. IT DOES NOT SAY THAT ALL WHO HAVE PRACTICE ARE CERTAIN TO BE BUDDHAS. IF ONE MAINTAINS THAT THE NATURE IN PRINCIPLE BEING CERTAINLY POSSESSED ALLOWS THOSE TENDING TOWARDS

STILLNESS NOT TO HAVE ACCOMPLISHMENT, THEN THAT CONTRADICTS THE PRINCIPLE OF THE TEACHING. FROM THIS ONE KNOWS THAT THE STATEMENT THAT ICCHANTIKAS DO NOT BECOME BUDDHAS IS BECAUSE UPON BECOMING BUDDHAS THEY ARE NOT ICCHANTIKAS, AND WAS SIMPLY REPROACH AND ACCLAIM FOR THE CURRENT TIME.

COMMENTARY:

INASMUCH AS THE *NIRVANA Sutra*. BASES ITSELF ON THE Buddha NATURE IN PRINCIPLE IN MAKING CLEAR THAT ALL living beings EQUALLY POSSESS IT, the Buddha Nature, IT THEREFORE SAYS THAT ALL WHO HAVE THE MIND ARE CERTAIN TO BE BUDDHAS. "Mind" here means the Buddha Nature in principle, and any who have it are said to accomplish Buddhahood. Nonetheless IT DOES NOT SAY THAT ALL WHO HAVE PRACTICE ARE CERTAIN TO BE BUDDHAS. IF ONE MAINTAINS the preceding DOCTRINE, THAT of THE NATURE IN PRINCIPLE BEING CERTAINLY POSSESSED so that all definitely have the hope of becoming Buddhas, and yet ALLOWS THOSE Fixed-Nature Sound Hearers TENDING TOWARDS STILLNESS NOT TO HAVE ACCOMPLISHMENT, to enter Nirvana, without becoming Buddhas, THEN THAT CONTRADICTS THE PRINCIPLE OF THE TEACHING. To accept that they enter the still extinction of Nirvana and don't accomplish Buddhahood contradicts that doctrine because the Nature in principle means that all will be Buddhas.

FROM THIS ONE KNOWS THAT THE STATEMENT THAT ICCHANTIKAS DO NOT BECOME BUDDHAS IS BECAUSE UPON BECOMING BUDDHAS THEY ARE NOT ICCHANTIKAS. To be sure, as long as they are icchantikas they can't become Buddhas; but when they become Buddhas, they are no longer icchantikas. And so the statement that icchantikas can't become Buddhas doesn't mean they never do become Buddhas. It's just that as long as they remain icchantikas they are unable to turn back from the small and turn towards the great; and that inability to change their way of thinking prevents them from being Buddhas. But when they are able to turn their minds around--turn back from the small and turn towards the great, turn back from self and turn towards others and transfer the merit and virtue they have created to all living beings--then they will accomplish Buddhahood. Therefore, the statement that icchantikas don't become Buddhas WAS SIMPLY REPROACH AND ACCLAIM FOR THE CURRENT TIME. It put icchantikas down with the intention of rousing them to repent and reform since they would think, "Oh, I'm an icchantika with insufficient faith so I can't become a Buddha. Well then, I won't be an icchantika anymore! I'll start believing." They change and no longer are icchantikas. Or there may be Bodhisattvas on the point of retreating from their Great Vehicle resolve. But as soon as they hear the Buddha say that living beings with insufficient faith, icchantikas, Fixed-Nature Sound Hearers, can't become Buddhas, they don't retreat from their resolve after all. "Reproach" is causing the icchantikas themselves to repent and reform, and "acclaim" is getting the Bodhisattvas to keep bringing forth the Great Vehicle resolve for Bodhi. It's the method of either commending them for being good, or censuring them for being wrong.

A person for example, may be studying the Buddhadharma with a great deal of vigor, but you still say he isn't vigorous. That quells his or her arrogance because it's to be feared that someone who is vigorous will start to think he or she is fantastic along such lines as: "See how vigorous I am." "I work harder than anyone." "I don't talk with women." "I don't talk with men." "I don't hold money." "I eat just one meal a day." The "I's" pile up in a massive heap that blocks the Way. To prevent that, one uses

the Reproach method, and still maintains the person isn't vigorous, for people very easily become arrogant.

PROLOGUE:

IF ONE MAINTAINS THAT THE *DHARMA FLOWER'S* BELIEF IN THE ONE VEHICLE AFTER ENTRY TO NIRVANA IS JUST ON THE PART OF PROVISIONALLY TRANSFORMED SOUND HEARERS, THE PROVISIONAL CERTAINLY IS TRANSFORMATION OF THE ACTUAL, AND WITHOUT THE ACTUAL WHOSE TRANSFORMATION IS IT? FURTHERMORE, WOULD THAT NOT MISLEAD THE ONE KIND OF LIVING BEING WHO IS TIMOROUS AND WEAK AND PREFERS EXTINCTION? FROM THIS ONE SHOULD KNOW THAT ALL TENDING TOWARDS STILLNESS IS MERELY *PRE-DHARMA FLOWER* INTENTION.

COMMENTARY:

IF ONE MAINTAINS THAT THE *DHARMA FLOWER Sutra's* talking about how living beings are only able to have BELIEF IN and cultivate THE ONE VEHICLE Dharma AFTER the Buddha's ENTRY TO NIRVANA, IS JUST talking about it happening ON THE PART OF PROVISIONALLY TRANSFORMED SOUND HEARERS who basically are not Sound Hearers at all but just appear in transformed bodies...If that's what you want to say, well you should realize THE PROVISIONAL CERTAINLY IS TRANSFORMATION OF THE ACTUAL, AND WITHOUT THE ACTUAL WHOSE TRANSFORMATION IS IT? Provisional transformation and skillful expedients later on return to the real and actual Teaching. Or you could say that what basically is real transforms into the provisional, so the provisional is a transformation of the actual. Also, if there is no real or actual, whose transformation is it? If there's no underlying real Teaching as the substance, then who's doing the talking? The person who tries to maintain the starting thesis is acting as his or her own defense attorney, but one would be wrong to defend that case.

FURTHERMORE, if you say that, WOULDN'T THAT disappoint and MISLEAD THE ONE KIND OF LIVING BEING WHO IS TIMOROUS AND WEAK, AND PREFERS EXTINCTION, who gets scared upon hearing how long it takes for Buddhahood and decides not to cultivate? There is also the kind of person who falters and fears upon seeing how hard it is to cultivate the Bodhisattva Path, who would also be misled. For if that kind of Bodhisattva knows that even though living beings have entered extinction, the extinction is not forever nor is the samadhi, then that Bodhisattva continues to maintain his Great Vehicle Bodhi resolve. FROM THIS, these various reasons, ONE SHOULD KNOW THAT ALL doctrines which speak of beings TENDING TOWARDS STILLNESS are doing to in order to teach the kind of living being who prefers extinction. All such doctrine IS MERELY *PRE-DHARMA FLOWER* INTENTION. It was spoken prior to the *Dharma Flower Sutra* which demolishes the three to establish the one. After it, the Three Vehicle doctrine is broken, and there is only one Vehicle.

Above it said. "The provisional certainly is transformation of the actual and without the actual whose transformation is it?" You could just as well say; "The actual certainly is transformation of the provisional and without the provisional, whose transformation is it?" If you think of it from both directions, you'll understand the principle. Also, there's nothing fixed about it. It's simply setting forth

the doctrine. You should not be all rigid and inflexible and insist, "That's precisely how it is." How do you know it's precisely that way? It's being precisely that way is an attachment.

-continued next issue.