

## *The Bodhi Seal of the Patriarchs*



### *The Nineteenth Patriarch Venerable Kumarata*

THE VENERABLE ONE WAS A NATIVE OF KUSHANA. WHEN THE EIGHTEENTH PATRIARCH ARRIVED THE VENERABLE ONE ASKED HIM, WHAT GROUP DO YOU BELONG TO?" Kushana was a country in India. When this Patriarch was first approached by his predecessor, he asked him what religion he belonged to and where he'd come from.

THE PATRIARCH REPLIED, "I AM A DISCIPLE OF THE BUDDHA." WHEN THE VENERABLE ONE HEARD THE NAME "BUDDHA," HE IMMEDIATELY BECAME ALARMED AND SHUT THE DOOR. He was scared of the word "Buddha." So he retreated inside his room and closed the door. THE PATRIARCH WAITED OUTSIDE FOR A LONG TIME AND THEN KNOCKED.

THE VENERABLE ONE SAID, "THERE IS NO ONE HOME AT ALL." All he would say was, "Nobody's here."

THE PATRIARCH SAID SIMPLY, "WHO'S 'NOBODY'?" His question was right to the point. "Who's in there saying 'there's nobody home'?" is what he meant. But he put his question quite tersely. "Is it a ghost? Is it some weird thing in there?" was implied in his tone.

WHEN THE VENERABLE ONE HEARD HIS QUESTION HE KNEW THAT THIS WAS AN EXTRAORDINARY PERSON SO HE OPENED THE DOOR AND LET HIM IN. The Venerable One who was to become the 19th Patriarch opened the door to the 18th. THE PATRIARCH THEN TOLD HIM, "LONG AGO THE WORLD HONORED ONE PREDICTED THAT ONE THOUSAND YEARS AFTER HIS EXTINCTION A GREAT MASTER WOULD APPEAR IN THE COUNTRY OF KUSHANA WHO WOULD CARRY ON AND SPREAD THE ESOTERIC TEACHING. NOW THAT YOU HAVE MET ME, TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS AUSPICIOUS TURN OF FATE." Hearing now about that ancient prediction, and having had the fortune to meet me, you should realize that most likely that prediction refers to you." The Patriarch told him straight out. HE LEFT HOME AND RECEIVED THE COMPLETE PRECEPTS. LATER THE MASTER TRANSMITTED THE GREAT DHARMA TO HIM. He received the mind-to-mind seal transmission passed from generation to generation--the transmission outside the teaching, the Proper Dharma Eye Treasury.

THE VENERABLE ONE IN TURN TRANSMITTED THE DHARMA TO JAYATA AT A LATER TIME. THEN, WHILE ON HIS Dharma SEAT, HE USED HIS FINGER--NAIL TO SCRATCH THE IMPRESSION OF A BLOOMING RED LOTUS UPON HIS FACE. Once he'd drawn the lotus blossom IT BEGAN TO EMIT GREAT LIGHT WHICH SHONE ON THE FOUR ASSEMBLIES. THEN HE ENTERED EXTINCTION.

A VERSE IN HIS PRAISE SAYS:

HEARING THE WORD "BUDDHA" HE SHUT THE DOOR,  
NOT REALLY NOT BELIEVING.  
"NOBODY'S HOME" CAME THE REPLY,  
"THERE'S ONLY A THIEF IN HERE."  
HE SPOKE DHARMA FOR THE BRAHMA GODS  
WASHED THE CHARCOAL IN THE DEAD EMBERS.  
IT WAS PREDICTED HE WOULD COME  
WHEN THE DHARMA HUNG BY A THREAD.

ANOTHER VERSE IN HIS PRAISE SAYS:

"THERE'S NO PERSON IN THIS ROOM,"  
SO IT MUST BE A THIEF.  
THE PLACE OF THE MIND'S WORKINGS CEASED,  
HE COULD NOT FORMULATE WORDS.  
THE QUESTION WAS "WHO'S ANSWERING?"  
I REALLY DON'T UNDERSTAND."

THE REPLY CAME, "IT'S NOT I.  
YOU MUST KNOW WHO IT IS."  
AFTER A THOUSAND YEARS A GREAT KNIGHT  
WILL APPEAR IN KUSHANA.  
MYRIAD AEONS HENCE THE DHARMA KING'S  
PREDICTION WILL STILL SHINE LIKE THE SUN.  
A CRIMSON LOTUS OPENED FORTH  
SHINING ON THE FOUR ASSEMBLIES.  
THE 19TH GENERATIONAL PATRIARCH  
TAUGHT THE MULTITUDE OF MEN AND WOMEN.

Since he claimed there was no one in the room, the Patriarch deduced that a thief had come. Why? He's clearly in there and yet lying about it, so if that's not a thief's behavior what is it? He had no place to hide and his mind had no place to go. He didn't know what to say. Shakyamuni Buddha foretold of his coming long ago. When he was about to depart he scratched a red lotus on his face and from it came forth a bright light that illumined the entire assembly. The 19th Patriarch taught and transformed many, many beings.