

# *Flower Adornment Sutra*

*prologue by T'ang dynasty Master Ch'ing Liang*

*commentary by Tripitaka Master Hua*

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PROLOGUE:

SINCE WORLD-TRANSCENDING WISDOM DEPENDS UPON THE SEEDS OF CONSCIOUSNESSES THAT ARE PRODUCED AND DESTROYED, THEREFORE THE LEVELS OF MIND OF THE FOUR WISDOMS ARE SHIFTS OF MARKS, AND THE REWARD BODY OF THE FRUIT OF BUDDHAHOOD IS CONDITIONED YET WITHOUT OUTFLOWS.

COMMENTARY:

SINCE cultivation of WORLD-TRANSCENDING WISDOM, according to the doctrines of the Initial Teaching, DEPENDS UPON THE SEEDS OF CONSCIOUSNESS THAT ARE PRODUCED AND DESTROYED, THEREFORE THE LEVELS OF MIND OF THE FOUR WISDOMS of a Buddha ARE SHIFTS and changes OF conditioned dharmas with MARKS.

## The Four Wisdoms

1. Wisdom That Accomplishes What is Done.
2. Wisdom of Wonderful Contemplation.
3. Wisdom of Equality.
4. Great Perfect Mirror Wisdom.

AND THE REWARD BODY OF THE position of the FRUIT OF BUDDHAHOOD IS CONDITIONED YET WITHOUT OUTFLOWS. Cultivation to completion of conditioned dharmas subject to the Four Marks discussed before leads to attaining the non-outflowing Reward Body, that is, True Suchness of Nirvana. That cultivation, based on seeds of consciousness subject to production and extinction, brings about the non-outflowing True Suchness of Nirvana of the Fruit of Buddhahood--a very forced and far from perfect doctrine.

PROLOGUE:

OF DOCTRINES SUCH AS THOSE THREE ARE A GREAT MANY EXPANSIONS, AS SET FORTH IN THE *YOGACHARYA-VINISHCAYASAMGRAHA*, AND SO FORTH.

COMMENTARY:

OF the Initial Teaching's DOCTRINES SUCH AS THOSE which are not perfectly fused and interpenetrating or mutually unobstructive, THERE ARE A GREAT MANY EXPANSIONS. But

you won't find them saying, as does the Dharma Nature School, that when one is cut off, all are cut off, or that severance on the phenomenal level is also severance on the noumenal level. The Dharma Nature School makes phenomena and noumenon identical with each other and interfused, and has truth and falseness interlink and mingle in unobstructed interpenetration where whatever way it is discussed is right. By contrast, the discussions of doctrine in the Dharma Marks School have a very forced and unnatural feeling to them. If you wish to know more about them you can consult such treatments AS are found IN THE *YOGACHARYA-bhumi-VINISHCA-YASAMGRAHA* (by Bodhisattva Asanga; no Chinese translation available) AND SO FORTH.

PROLOGUE:

IN THE THIRD, THE FINAL TEACHING, THERE IS LITTLE TALK OF DHARMA MARKS, AND MUCH DISCUSSION OF THE DHARMA NATURE, AND WHAT IS SAID OF DHARMA MARKS IS ALSO BROUGHT BACK TO THE NATURE.

COMMENTARY:

To review, the Hsien Shou--the Flower Adornment (*hua yen*)--School's Five Teachings, we have already discussed the first, the Small Teaching. That was the Three Stores ("Tripitaka") Teaching for the Small Vehicle. Then we discussed the second, the Initial Teaching, which starts to present the Great Vehicle. It primarily talks of Dharma marks, with little discussion of the Dharma nature, and what there is is not in great detail. Now IN THE THIRD, which is called THE FINAL TEACHING, we finally get the rest of the Great Vehicle. THERE IS LITTLE TALK OF DHARMA MARKS within the Final Teaching, AND MUCH DISCUSSION OF THE DHARMA NATURE, proportionately more emphasis being given in its teaching doctrines to separation from the mark of terms and words, and separation from the mark of what is thought by mind. Its principles are that:

The path of language is cut off,  
And the place of the mind's workings is extinguished.

This belongs to emptiness, whereas the preceding Initial Teaching belonged to existence. AND WHAT IS SAID OF DHARMA MARKS, when here and there they are discussed, IS ALSO BROUGHT BACK TO the principles of THE Dharma NATURE. For example, when the Final Teaching considers the dharmas of the Five Skandhas, it says the Five Skandhas are basically empty--and that emptiness is the Dharma Nature which has no shape or form. Any talk of the characteristics of dharmas eventually leads to the principle of emptiness which is the doctrine of this Teaching.

PROLOGUE:

THE EIGHTH CONSCIOUSNESS ESTABLISHED COINCIDES WITH THE THUS COME ONE'S TREASURY SET AS ACCORDING WITH CONDITIONS, AND THE NOT PRODUCED OR DESTROYED AND THE PRODUCED AND DESTROYED FORM A COMBINATION, BEING NEITHER ONE NOR DIFFERENT.

COMMENTARY:

THE EIGHTH CONSCIOUSNESS ESTABLISHED by the Final Teaching is not subject to production or extinction. It is a turning of consciousness into wisdom--the Great Perfect Mirror Wisdom--and so it COINCIDES WITH THE THUS COME ONE'S TREASURY. They are the same. The *Shurangama Sutra* has a detailed discussion of how the Seven Elements are all the nature of the Treasury of the Thus Come One. In investigating that Sutra, you should put effort into understanding the Seven Elements, so what the Treasury of the Thus Come One is will become clear. In the Final Teaching, the nature of the Thus Come One's Treasury is SET up AS ACCORDING WITH CONDITIONS, AND it, THE NOT PRODUCED OR DESTROYED, is conjoined with what has production and extinction. It's not that non-production and non-extinction exist apart from what is produced and destroyed. AND THE PRODUCED AND DESTROYED is not separate from that not subject to production and extinction, so they are said to FORM A COMBINATION. The produced and destroyed and the not produced and not destroyed are combined with one another so that production and extinction itself is just the not produced and not destroyed. And the not produced and not destroyed itself is production and extinction. It's right within production and extinction that the power of that not produced and not destroyed is found. Non-production and non-extinction are not something different and elsewhere from what is produced and destroyed, or they would be two different things. Therefore, they happen as a combination, BEING NEITHER ONE NOR DIFFERENT. If you try to say they are one, they aren't. But you won't be right if you try to say they are two. They are neither one nor two different things. The only solution is that they are a totality formed by combination--not exactly one, but not really different. That is, there's no split between the eighth consciousness and the Thus Come One's Treasury. The one is just the other. In the Initial Teaching, the eighth consciousness was produced and destroyed, but in this Teaching it isn't.

The eighth consciousness is also known as the *alaya* or "store" consciousness, and "store" is just the same as "treasury," as in the Thus Come One's Treasury. Therefore, there's no Thus Come One's Treasury other and apart from the eighth consciousness, nor is there an eighth consciousness separate from the Treasury of the Thus Come One. It's right in the eighth consciousness that there is the Treasury of the Thus Come One, the *tathagatagarbha*. But in our Thus Come One's Storehouse too many waves have been stirred up, just like the waves in the sea, and there are lots of waves in our eighth consciousness too. The waves are simply our false thoughts, our subtle delusions, coarse delusions and delusions like dust and sand--delusions of ignorance. All of those delusions are waves, and so in the description of the eighth consciousness in the *Rule-Verses on the Eighth Consciousness* it says:

How plentiful the three storings, that cannot be exhausted!

"Many Meanings" Dharma Master talks about the eighth consciousness, whereas "Few Meanings" Dharma Master discusses the Treasury of the Thus Come One. There are overflowing stores\* from the past, the present, and the future--more than could ever be depleted, just like endless waves.

How deep the seventh's waves, as states act as the wind!

The seventh consciousness has deeply profound waves and does the transmitting between the sixth, the mind consciousness, and the eighth consciousness. You could call the seventh consciousness a "postman" because it's always delivering and bringing back news.

Being infused, holding seeds, the vessel of organs and body,  
The last to leave, first to arrive, it is the ruling dignitary.

It is always being perfumed and infused, and in the eighth consciousness those seeds are stored which become the body with its six sense organs and objects and six associated consciousnesses. They all come from it. When you die, the eighth consciousness can't give you up, and you don't want to part from it either. It keeps on holding hands with your stinking skin bag and neither wants to let go although that is the original intention. It is the last to leave, after the eye consciousness, the ear consciousness, the nose consciousness, the tongue consciousness, the body consciousness, the mind consciousness and the manas consciousness have gone. And whenever someone is born the first thing to take birth is the eighth consciousness. It is the big shot, the old "boss" of our body. Any who want to be boss are the eighth consciousness--and it's the "many meanings" Dharma Master.

So don't go looking for the Treasury of the Thus Come One somewhere else outside of the eighth consciousness, and don't search for an eighth consciousness elsewhere than within the Treasury of the Thus Come One. This is just the same principle as ice being identical with water and water being ice. The combination formed by production and extinction being the not produced and not destroyed is the same.

Afflictions are just Bodhi.  
Birth and death is just Nirvana.

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\*Technically the "three storings" are "that which stores," "that which is stored," and "the holding and storing."

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This is the Dharma of mutual identity. If you're looking for Bodhi, all you have to do is turn afflictions around, and just that is Bodhi. If you wish to obtain the virtues of the Fruit of Great Nirvana--permanence, bliss, true self, and purity--just turn birth and death around, and that itself is Nirvana. Whatever is birth and death--samsara--is Nirvana, and whatever is Nirvana is birth and death. They are:

Two and yet not two,  
Not two yet two.

Try to say they aren't two and they still are two. But are they two? Not quite. This prevents you from knowing how many they are. You can't count this number clearly even though it's a very small figure.

Someone wants to know what the seven great elements are that are the Treasury of the Thus Come One, as discussed in the *Shurangama Sutra*. They are "great" because they fill every place and pervade the Dharma Realm. They aren't just in one place, nor is there any one place where they are not present. There is no place they are, and no place where they are not. All seven are that way, but people only see a small amount of them, and are unaware of their filling the Dharma Realm. Instead people feel they themselves are the great element, far greater than the other seven.

The Seven Great Elements

1. The element of Earth.
2. The element of Water.
3. The element of Fire.
4. The element of Air (wind).
5. The element of Space.
6. The element of Vision.
7. The element of Consciousness.

People fail to recognize the seven as great, and either don't know about them, or add themselves as the eighth great. Their reasoning then goes that since the other seven greats need the eighth great to know them so they won't remain unknown, the eighth must therefore be the greatest.

PROLOGUE:

ALL LIVING BEINGS SHARE THE SAMENESS OF A SINGLE NATURE. THEY ONLY COME ABOUT THROUGH TRUE SUCHNESS ACCORDING WITH CONDITIONS.

COMMENTARY:

ALL LIVING BEINGS SHARE THE SAMENESS OF A SINGLE NATURE which doesn't decrease the least in ordinary common ones, or increase at all in Buddhas. So, extending up to all Buddhas and reaching down to living beings, it's one and the same, and in the same proportion. The single nature is the Buddha nature, the One Vehicle besides which there is no other Vehicle. All living beings are endowed with the meritorious qualities of the nature of the One Vehicle, and THEY ONLY COME ABOUT THROUGH TRUE SUCHNESS ACCORDING WITH CONDITIONS. True Suchness accords with conditions, which is why there are living beings. Another way of saying this is that from limitless kalpas up to now the habit of evil has saturated the Treasury of the Thus Come One so it has turned into consciousness. When that happens it's called according with conditions. Yet although it accords with conditions, it still does not change. Living beings come about through its according with conditions, but in its basic substance there has been no change.

PROLOGUE:

THAT WITHOUT A NATURE BECAUSE DEPENDENT ON SOMETHING ELSE IS IDENTICAL WITH THE PERFECTLY ACCOMPLISHED.

COMMENTARY:

We talked before about the Three Natures. The Nature Everywhere Calculated and Attached to is produced upon encounter with the shadow of a sense impression. When that nature passes, there is the Nature That Arises Dependent on Something Else, produced due to causes and conditions. Whatever is produced due to causes and conditions is empty, and that emptiness is the Perfectly Accomplished

Real Nature. So now the text says THAT WITHOUT A NATURE of its own BECAUSE arising due to causes and conditions and therefore DEPENDENT ON SOMETHING ELSE, IS empty. And its emptiness makes it IDENTICAL WITH THE PERFECTLY ACCOMPLISHED Real Nature.

PROLOGUE:

THERE IS ONE PRINCIPLE OF EVEN BALANCE, AND SO IT SAYS THE REALM OF BEINGS AND THE REALM OF BUDDHAS HAVE NO INCREASE OR DECREASE.

COMMENTARY:

THERE IS ONE PRINCIPLE OF EVEN BALANCE, which is still referring to the sameness of a single nature. The Dharma Nature stays the same in even balance, with no increase or decrease. AND SO IT SAYS THE REALM OF living BEINGS AND THE REALM OF BUDDHAS HAVE NO INCREASE OR DECREASE. When there's one more Buddha, the realm of Buddhas doesn't enlarge, and when there's one more living being, the realm of beings has no increment either. There's an even balance in the single nature. The Dharma Nature is one.

You may say, "Well, the Dharma Nature may be one, and there may be one principle of even balance, but what if living beings became Buddhas all at the same time, so there were no living beings. Wouldn't that entail a decrease of living beings? Or what if all Buddhas made the same decision to 'turn the boat of compassion around' and become living beings: wouldn't there be an increase in the realm of living beings in that case?"

No. The Dharma Nature is such that all Buddhas are endowed with the Dharma Nature, and all living beings are endowed with it too. But you can't say that as you go from Dharma Nature to Dharma Nature, you have more Dharma Nature here and less Dharma Nature there. In the *Sub-commentary* to the *Prologue*, also by National Master Ch'ing Liang, it sets up the analogy whereby you might call empty space in the east living beings, and empty space in the west you might call Buddhas. You can't take the empty space in the east and move it to where the empty space in the west is. Empty space is one, and it doesn't increase or decrease. You can't make emptiness be more or less. The one principle of even balance is just the same way.

PROLOGUE:

EMPTINESS IN THE PRIMARY SENSE CONNECTS TRUTH AND FALSENESS. THE TRUE IS NOT OUTSIDE THE COMMON, AND SO THE VERY COMMON IS THE TRUE.

COMMENTARY:

EMPTINESS IN THE PRIMARY SENSE is just True Emptiness. And it is the Absolute Truth of the Two Truths--Absolute and Relative--discussed before. Emptiness in the primary sense is just another name for it, and it CONNECTS TRUTH AND FALSENESS. It is all-inclusive so that truth is just falseness, and the false is just the true. Truth and falseness have a combined functioning, and are in perfectly interfused non-obstruction. The reason for that is THE TRUTH IS NOT OUTSIDE THE COMMON. True emptiness, the Truth of Emptiness, is not at all outside of Common, Relative Truth, AND SO THE VERY COMMON IS THE TRUE. Right within Common, Relative Truth is Absolute Truth. Absolute Truth is not something other than or apart from Common, Relative Truth. The reason

all living beings are said to be capable of becoming Buddhas is that Buddhas are made from living beings. Buddhas basically are living beings, and living beings basically are Buddhas. Which Buddhas? All are endowed with the Buddha Nature is what this means. It's referring to Identity with the Buddha in Principle. Speaking in terms of principle, all living beings are Buddhas. Truth is therefore not outside of Falseness, and the relative, the false, is just the true. It all depends upon whether you understand or not. If you do, then the false becomes the true. But before you understand, the true becomes the false.

For example, salt is a flavoring, and it won't work to try to use it as a vegetable. But if you know how to use salt to flavor vegetables, not putting on too much or adding too little, it makes them more pleasant to eat. The Absolute and the relative--the true and the common--work the same way. If you know how to employ it, the common can become the true. Truth is not outside of falseness. Don't look outside the untrue to find truth as if it were something else. The very relative is the absolute. Take for example emptiness and existence. Ordinary common people are sure to say that emptiness is there not being anything. That's the only principle they know, and say, "Emptiness is nothing at all." However, there is also emptiness when there is something. That's called existence itself being emptiness, and the very emptiness being existence. If you understand this principle of non-obstruction of emptiness and existence, then you won't have attachments. And isn't having no attachments just attaining liberation?

PROLOGUE:

THERE IS EMPTINESS YET NO CUTTING OFF, EXISTENCE YET NOT PERMANENCE. THE FOUR MARKS ARE SIMULTANEOUS, IN SUBSTANCE AND NATURE BEING JUST EXTINCTION.

COMMENTARY:

THERE IS EMPTINESS in the doctrines of this Teaching, YET WITH NO CUTTING OFF or ending to create that emptiness. It also speaks of EXISTENCE, YET that existence is NOT PERMANENCE, not eternal existing. Its emptiness is True Emptiness, and its existence is Wonderful Existence. True Emptiness does not obstruct Wonderful Existence, nor does Wonderful Existence interfere with True Emptiness. Therefore, it's not at all like the principles of annihilationism or eternalism propounded by those of outside ways. Furthermore, THE FOUR MARKS ARE SIMULTANEOUS. The time of the mark of production is just the time of the mark of extinction. The mark of dwelling, too, is at the same time as the mark of change. Although there are distinctions of the Four Marks of Coming into Being, Dwelling, Change, and Extinction, they form a simultaneous totality, IN SUBSTANCE AND NATURE BEING JUST EXTINCTION. Their substance and nature is just emptiness, and because empty, the Four Marks exist at the same time. On the other hand, there simultaneously are not Four Marks. In substance and nature they are still and extinct, still and unmoving. Their basic substance does not move. Why not? That's because although it accords with conditions, it does not change. If it moved, it couldn't be said not to change. It would change. But although it accords with conditions, it does not change, and does not change according to conditions. Even though the basic substance does not move, that does not obstruct the movement represented by the Four Marks. The Four Marks are simultaneous, but in substance and nature they are just extinction.

A few days ago I said that those who study the Buddhadharma shouldn't become dependent, and fail to take notes because there is a tape-recorder. If you rely on the tape-recorder, it will rely on you and depend on you to remember. What about relying on oneself and saying, "I have a good memory, and I'm sure to remember for at least ten years, during which time I can write it down. It won't matter after ten years have passed." Don't rely on yourself, don't rely on others, and don't rely on the tape-recorder. Be especially careful not to rely on your Teacher and think, "Whenever Shr Fu says something I don't understand, I can ask about it, so it won't matter if I don't remember." The reason I'm bringing this up is that almost no one remembered the Seven Elements when they were just mentioned and no one remembered them perfectly clearly. That comes from being dependent. You may have studied and mastered them once, but then become fuzzy over time. Your recall of the Peaceful Conduct Chapter, for example, may no longer be clear, which is not being peaceful the way clear memory of it would be. Don't let yourself forget what you once could recite from memory clearly. If after going to the mountain of jewels and bringing treasures home you lose them in your house because of failing to protect them, it won't have been of any use. So no one should be reliant, but instead should urge oneself on with determination: "I'm absolutely going to remember this Sutra clearly." "I'm definitely going to cultivate." "I'm going to be sure to investigate the Buddhadharma to the point that I understand it!" You have to rouse yourself and not let yourself become dependent. Then it will be very easy to understand the Buddha-dharma.

I'll tell you, when I used to recite the *Earthstore Bodhisattva Sutra* I used to kneel until my knees bled. The more I knelt the more they hurt and bled, but I just said, "Go ahead and hurt. I'm not going to pay any attention to you." Then when I kept on kneeling even though they bled, after a while they didn't hurt anymore. They couldn't do anything because I wasn't dependent. But if you become reliant and start swabbing them with medicine and decide you won't kneel the next day, they will just get worse and worse to persuade you to rest. I knelt right on the bricks when I recited, and didn't use any cushion. Even now I don't like to sit on cushions when I lecture Sutras, because I know I don't deserve such blessings, and can't get away with sitting on thick cushions. But all of you have blessings coming to you, so you like to sit on thick cushions. You may have them now, but once you've used them up you'll again be without them. It's as when you have money: if you keep spending it and spending it, eventually you'll use it up and be poor even if you started out as rich. Blessings work the same way, and so:

To enjoy blessings is to destroy your blessings.  
To undergo suffering is to lessen suffering.

I've got too much suffering due me, so I like to undergo a little suffering. Do you all understand the principle I go by?

#### PROLOGUE:

THROUGH CLIMBING ONTO STATES THERE IS SEVERANCE OF DELUSIONS, SO THEY ARE NOT TWO YET TWO. THERE IS SUBJECT AND OBJECT TO THE SEVERANCE, SO THEY ARE TWO AND YET NOT TWO, WHICH IS DESCRIBED AS INNER CERTIFICATION. ILLUMINATION OF DELUSIONS IS WITHOUT A BASIS, WHICH IS JUST THE SUBSTANCE OF WISDOM. THE SUBSTANCE OF ILLUMINATION IS WITHOUT A SELF, WHICH IS THE VERY CERTIFICATION TO SUCHNESS. THERE IS NO THUSNESS OUTSIDE WISDOM TO

WHICH WISDOM CERTIFIES, NOR IS THERE A WISDOM OUTSIDE THUSNESS WHICH CERTIFIES TO WISDOM.

COMMENTARY:

THROUGH CLIMBING ONTO STATES THERE IS SEVERANCE OF DELUSIONS, SO basically THEY ARE NOT TWO YET TWO. Basically the Treasury of the Thus Come One accords with states; yet as it accords with states there is cutting off of delusions. That is True Suchness according with conditions yet not changing, not changing according to conditions. It accords with the causes and conditions to cut off delusions, yet that involves no duality while remaining dual. THERE IS SUBJECT AND OBJECT TO THE SEVERANCE, SO THEY ARE TWO AND YET NOT TWO. Although there is said to be no duality, there nonetheless is what can sever and what is severed, what cuts off and what is cut off. The subject of the severance is the nature of the Treasury of the Thus Come One, which does not change according to conditions. The object of the severance is the states of delusion. They are spoken of as if they were two, yet they are dual while not being dual--WHICH IS DESCRIBED AS INNER CERTIFICATION. What it's describing is external cutting off of delusions and internal certification to wisdom. It takes that inner certification to wisdom to enable you to cut off delusions, for there's no way to sever delusions without wisdom. However, ILLUMINATION OF DELUSIONS IS WITHOUT A BASIS, WHICH IS JUST THE SUBSTANCE OF WISDOM. The wisdom that does the illumining--the cutting off--of delusions has no basic substance. THE SUBSTANCE OF ILLUMINATION IS WITHOUT A SELF. The basic substance of wisdom has no self to it, WHICH IS THE VERY CERTIFICATION TO SUCHNESS. It's the internal certification to the principle of thusness.

Wisdom of thusness certifies to the principle of thusness.

Nothing at all is done. That is True Suchness.

THERE IS NO THUSNESS OUTSIDE WISDOM TO WHICH WISDOM CERTIFIES. Thusness does not exist outside of wisdom as some principle of Thusness external to wisdom to which wisdom can certify. It's not that way. NOR IS THERE A WISDOM OUTSIDE THUSNESS WHICH CERTIFIES TO WISDOM. It isn't the case that outside of suchness there is something else, a wisdom which can certify to the attainment of certification to suchness. Rather, thusness itself is wisdom, and the very wisdom is thusness. That's why wisdom which is thus certifies to the principle of thusness, and they are said to be two and yet not two, not two yet two.

PROLOGUE:

BECAUSE WORLDLY AND WORLD-TRANSCENDING WISDOM ARE BOTH BASED ON THE TREASURY OF THE THUS COME ONE, THE INITIAL AND THE FUNDAMENTAL ARE NOT TWO, AND SO THE CONDITIONED AND THE UNCONDITIONED ARE NEITHER ONE NOR DIFFERENT.

COMMENTARY:

This is because there is both WORLDLY wisdom AND WORLD-TRANSCENDING WISDOM. Mundane, worldly wisdom depends on words and language, and is Literary Prajna along with science

and philosophy. Starting with Literary Prajna, there arises Contemplative Prajna, which reaches Wisdom of Real Mark--and Real Mark Wisdom is world-transcending wisdom. World-transcending wisdom has no substance, for if it did, it could not certify to thusness. But since it has no substance, it is thus: thus in characteristics and thus in nature. Worldly and world-transcending wisdom ARE BOTH BASED ON THE TREASURY OF THE THUS COME ONE. The attainment of wisdom is based on the nature of the *Tathagatagarbha*. THE INITIAL enlightenment, the nature which has just started to be enlightened, AND THE FUNDAMENTAL wisdom of the fundamentally enlightened nature from which initial enlightenment springs ARE NOT TWO. You can talk about there being initial enlightenment and fundamental enlightenment as if they were two different things, but basically they are one, without any such distinction of initial and fundamental. AND SO THE CONDITIONED dharmas of worldly wisdom AND THE UNCONDITIONED dharmas of world-transcending wisdom ARE NEITHER ONE NOR DIFFERENT. Unconditioned dharmas have to be entered by way of conditioned dharmas, and if you separate from conditioned dharmas, there won't be unconditioned dharmas either. Unconditioned dharmas are established right within conditioned dharmas. The conditioned and the unconditioned are not at all two separate things, and so you can neither say that conditioned and unconditioned dharmas are one and the same, nor can you make them two. They are neither one nor different.

#### PROLOGUE:

THEREFORE, THE BUDDHA'S TRANSFORMATION BODY IS BOTH PERMANENT AND DHARMA, AND DOES NOT FALL INTO NUMBERS. THAT IS EVEN MORE THE CASE WITH THE SUBSTANCE OF THE REWARD. THEY ARE IDENTICAL WITH THE WISDOM OF THE SUBSTANCE, AND ARE NOT SHIFTS OF MARKS.

#### COMMENTARY:

THEREFORE, THE BUDDHA'S TRANSFORMATION BODY IS BOTH PERMANENT AND DHARMA. The Buddha has Three Bodies, the Dharma Body, the Reward Body, and the Transformation Body. As was just discussed, you can't say the conditioned and the unconditioned are either one or two different things, and that can also be applied to the Buddha's Transformation Body. Basically it is a body produced by change and transformation. Nonetheless, it is also a permanent body, and it is the Buddha's Dharma Body which permanently dwells and does not change. That means the Transformation Body, too, is permanently dwelling and unchanging, AND DOES NOT FALL INTO NUMBERS. You can't use your own outlooks and knowledge to estimate it. The Buddha's body is inconceivable, and the ordinary, common person can't say whether the Buddha's body is permanent or impermanent, or that the Buddha's Transformation Body is produced through change and so is neither a permanent body nor the Dharma Body. That can't be done, because the Buddha's Body does not fall within numbers, and you can't use the knowledge and views of an ordinary person to fathom the state of a Sage. Nor can you determine whether the Buddha's body is conditioned or unconditioned. There's no way to use numbers to explain the Buddha's body.

THAT IS EVEN MORE THE CASE WITH THE SUBSTANCE OF REWARD. Since even the Transformation Body is permanent and the Dharma Body, how much more is the Reward Body permanent and the Buddha's Dharma Body. Therefore, the Transformation Body is just the Reward Body and the Dharma Body. Also, the Dharma Body is just the Transformation Body and the Reward Body. They are said to be three bodies, but they basically are one substance, which is just being

neither one nor different. The Buddha's three bodies illustrate by analogy the principle of being two and yet not two, neither one nor different. That's why the text says **THEY ARE IDENTICAL WITH THE WISDOM OF THE SUBSTANCE**. They are precisely the wisdom of the basic substance of the Dharma Body, the basic substance of the Reward Body, and the basic substance of the Transformation Body that has been accomplished. It's just as was said before: wisdom of thusness certifies to the principle of thusness.

Therefore, they **ARE NOT SHIFTS OF MARKS**. The Four Marks of Coming into Being, Dwelling, Change, and Extinction cannot mark the Buddha's three bodies--the Dharma Body, the Reward Body or the Transformation Body--as having changes or shifts. Rather, they are manifestations of wisdom of thusness.

Previously in India there was a woman who loved her son very much, and feared he would not live very long. So she made the vow to die before her son, with the hope that he would have a longer life. She went to the Ganges River, jumped in and died expecting to bring that about. Because she had been sincere enough to try to help her son at the cost of her life, she was reborn in the heavens--the Great Brahma Heaven, where one's lifespan is very long. Basically it had not been her intention to become a long-lived god in the heaven of Lord Brahma, but she obtained that reward because of her one thought of kindness and compassion. Bodhisattvas who guard and protect the Buddhadharmas should not make definite statements about the Buddha's Body being conditioned or unconditioned. They should say instead that the Buddha's state is inconceivable, that the inconceivable is the unconditioned, and that the conditioned is just the unconditioned. The Buddha said that those who speak that way are certain to attain Annutarasamyaksambodhi. That's because they are sincere in protecting the Dharma and don't want to say anything bad about it, nor do they want to raise any doubts or use the knowledge and views of an ordinary person to fathom the state of the Buddha. That one thought of faith can lead them to attain liberation, even if they are not seeking liberation--the same way the woman had no thought of seeking the reward of rebirth in the Brahma Heaven, but just was concerned about her son. The Bodhisattvas also have no thoughts of greed and aren't out to attain Unsurpassed Right and Equal Enlightenment a little faster. They just want to protect the Dharma, and so the Buddha said they would certainly attain liberation even if that wasn't their intent, the same way the woman obtained the reward of the Brahma Heaven, *-cont. next issue*

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**MAY 1982 MARKS THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BEGINNING OF DHARMA MASTER HENG SURE AND DHARMA MASTER HENG CH'AU'S PILGRIMAGE BOWING ONCE EVERY THREE STEPS. HONORING THIS OCCASION, L.A. DEVOTEES HAVE SINCERELY REQUESTED THAT THE MONKS TURN THE DHARMA WHEEL OF THE *AVATAMSAKA* AT GOLD WHEEL TEMPLE.**

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