

flower adornment sutra

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The Third Door: Doctrinal Analysis of the Perfect Teaching

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PROLOGUE:

THEREFORE, THE PERFECT TEACHING, WHEN SPOKEN OF IN TERMS OF ITS BREADTH, CAN BE LIMITLESS VEHICLES. WHEN SPOKEN OF IN TERMS OF ITS DEPTH, IT MANIFESTS AS THE ONE VEHICLE. THE ONE VEHICLE IS OF TWO TYPES: FIRST,

THE ONE VEHICLE OF THE CONNECTIVE TEACHING, FOR IT CONNECTS WITH THE SUDDEN AND THE ACTUAL. SECOND, THE ONE VEHICLE OF THE SEPARATE TEACHING, FOR IT ALONE IS COMPLETELY INTERPENETRATING AND REplete WITH VIRTUES.

THE SEPARATE TEACHING INCLUDES THE CONNECTIVE TEACHING, AND BOTH ARE INCORPORATED IN THE PERFECT TEACHING.

COMMENTARY:

Above it said that the Perfect Teaching includes all teachings, and the four teachings preceding it. The previous four teachings do not include the Perfect Teaching in the same way that the rivers and streams do not include the ocean. THEREFORE, THE PERFECT TEACHING, WHEN SPOKEN OF IN TERMS OF ITS BREADTH, CAN BE SAID TO HAVE LIMITLESS VEHICLES. All the limitless vehicles are included in the Perfect Teaching without exception. WHEN SPOKEN OF IN TERMS OF ITS DEPTH, IT MANIFESTS AS ONLY THE ONE VEHICLE, the wonderful doctrine of the One Vehicle. THE ONE VEHICLE IS OF TWO TYPES: FIRST, THE ONE VEHICLE OF THE CONNECTIVE TEACHING, FOR IT CONNECTS WITH THE SUDDEN AND THE ACTUAL. It is common with the Sudden and the Actual Teachings, but not common with the Small, Initial, and Final Teachings. Thus, this is the Sudden Teaching, the wonderful doctrine of the Real Mark.

SECOND, THE ONE VEHICLE OF THE SEPARATE TEACHING, FOR IT ALONE IS COMPLETELY INTER-PENETRATING AND REplete WITH VIRTUES. It is special because it is the most perfectly fused and is complete with the myriad virtues.

THE SEPARATE TEACHING INCLUDES THE CONNECTIVE TEACHING, AND BOTH ARE INCORPORATED IN THE PERFECT TEACHING.

PROLOGUE:

WE WILL NOW ELABORATE ON THE ONE VEHICLE OF THE SEPARATE TEACHING. IN GENERAL THERE ARE FOUR DIVISIONS.

1. EXPLAINING THE STRUCTURE OF THE SPECIFICS RELIED UPON.
2. SHOWING THE RETURN TO TRUE REALITY.
3. DISPLAYING THE NON-OBSTRUCTION.
4. REVEALING THE PERVASIVENESS AND INCLUSIVENESS.

EACH OF THESE HAS TEN DIVISIONS AND INFINITE MANIFESTATIONS.

COMMENTARY:

WE WILL NOW ELABORATE ON THE ONE VEHICLE OF THE SEPARATE TEACHING. We will make it clear by speaking about it in general. If we were to explain it in detail, there would be many meanings, but IN GENERAL THERE ARE FOUR DIVISIONS.

1. EXPLAINING THE STRUCTURE OF THE SPECIFICS RELIED UPON.
2. SHOWING THE RETURN TO TRUE REALITY.
3. DISPLAYING THE NON-OBSTRUCTION.
4. REVEALING THE PERVASIVENESS AND INCLUSIVENESS.

These correspond to the Four Unobstructed Dharma Realms.

THE FOUR UNOBSTRUCTED DHARMA REALMS

- 1) The Dharma Realm of Unobstructed Specifics.
- 2) The Dharma Realm of Unobstructed Principles.
- 3) The Dharma Realm of Unobstructed Specifics and Principles.
- 4) The Dharma Realm of Unobstructed Specifics and Specifics.

1."Explaining the structure of the specifics relied upon" corresponds to the Dharma Realm of Unobstructed Specifics.

2."Showing the return to true reality" corresponds to the Dharma Realm of Unobstructed Principles.

3."Displaying the non-obstruction" corresponds to the Dharma Realm of Unobstructed Specifics and Principles.

4."Revealing the pervasiveness and inclusiveness" corresponds to the Dharma Realm of Unobstructed Specifics and Specifics.

EACH OF THESE HAS TEN DIVISIONS AND INFINITE MANIFESTATIONS. Each Dharma Realm, each division, can be further divided into ten sub-divisions. The ten sub-divisions show that they are endless, multi-layered and infinite, infinite and multi-layered. Dharma doors are endless. The limitless return to

the one; the one spreads out into the limitless. This is right where the wonderful lies. The one can be many and the many are one.

1. THE STRUCTURE OF THE SPECIFICS RELIED UPON BY TEN PAIRS"

PROLOGUE:

THE TEN OF THE FIRST DIVISION ARE AS FOLLOWS.

- (a) TEACHING AND MEANING
- (b) PRINCIPLES AND SPECIFICS
- (c) STATES AND WISDOM
- (d) PRACTICE AND POSITION
- (e) CAUSE AND EFFECT
- (f) THE DEPENDENT AND THE PROPER
- (g) SUBSTANCE AND FUNCTION
- (h) PEOPLE AND DHARMAS
- (i) OPPOSITION AND COMPLIANCE
- (j) PETITION AND RESPONSE

COMMENTARY:

The first of the Four Divisions of the One Vehicle of the Separate Teaching is "Explaining the structure of the Specifics Replied Upon." It is explained in terms of ten pairs. THE TEN OF THE FIRST DIVISION ARE AS FOLLOWS.

(a) TEACHING AND MEANING. The teaching is the actual teaching of the Buddha which is passed on through the generations. The meaning is the doctrine of the Buddha. The teaching is the instruction, the meaning is that which is conveyed by the instruction. The teaching is the specifics and the meaning is the principles.

(b) PRINCIPLES AND SPECIFICS. Principles are the doctrines. Specifics are the marks, the appearances derived from the principles. Principles are the Dharma, specifics are the marks, the characteristics of Dharma.

(c) STATES AND WISDOM. States are what appear in front of you--what's out there. If you have wisdom, you will recognize states when you encounter them and you won't be turned by them. If you have no wisdom, you will be turned by the states you encounter. When a state comes, you must have the wisdom to recognize it, no matter what it is. I often say,

If you see states and awaken to them, you can transcend the world.

If you see states and are confused by them, you fall beneath the wheel.

If you are turned by and confused about the states you meet up with, you will fall into the sea of suffering, into the realm of the hungry ghosts, the animals, or the hell-beings. The evil paths are what's meant by the "wheel"--the cycle of rebirth in mundane states of existence.

Wisdom is very important. Facing states, you need wisdom. Without it, you are in great danger.

(d) PRACTICE AND POSITION. In cultivation, you must progress step by step. Although this is the Perfect Teaching, it still must be cultivated bit by bit in order to become Perfect. If you don't cultivate, it's still imperfect--there is something essential lacking. Thus you must practice and cultivate in order to obtain the resulting position.

(e) CAUSE AND EFFECT. When cultivating, you are planting causes. When perfection arrives, you obtain the effects--the fruition. Shakyamuni Buddha cultivated blessings and wisdom for three great asamkhyeya aeons and perfected the fine marks for a hundred aeons. Those were the causes that lead to his eventual fruition. In his life as Prince Siddhartha, he left home, cultivated, and obtained the fruition of Buddhahood. That was the effect he reaped.

(f) THE DEPENDENT AND THE PROPER. The dependent refers to countries. The proper refers to people and Buddhas.

THE TWO RETRIBUTIONS

1. Dependent Retribution
2. Proper Retribution

Dependent retribution includes the mountains, the rivers, and the great earth, as well as all the houses, vegetation, and other things that people "depend" upon in order to live. Proper retribution includes sentient beings--those who "depend" on the material world.

(g) SUBSTANCE AND FUNCTION. The substance is the basis and the function is the mode of operation. When there is a substance, there can be a function. These are also aspects of the Perfect Teaching.

(h) PEOPLE AND DHARMAS. People can refer to ordinary human beings as well as to Buddha. Dharmas are the things of this world, which are basically our thought-formations. But both people and dharmas are empty. Therefore, you should cultivate the Way.

(i) OPPOSITION AND COMPLIANCE. Opposition means non-compliance. Compliance means no opposition. Opposition is what you don't like and compliance is something you are happy to go along with. These arise depending on what you are doing. If you study the Buddhadharma, you like to understand more doctrine. That is compliance. What you don't like is to be confused, distorted, and unclear. That is opposition.

But for worldly people these definitions are usually just the opposite. Most worldly people like to get rich, to become high officials, to buy beautiful cars, planes, and boats. For them, these are compliant, and yet it is these very things which lead people into deep confusion,

(j) PETITION AND RESPONSE. It is said:

Where there is a petition, a connection follows;
And all petitions are responded to.

An example of petition/response is when you ask for something, but not outright, and you get it. That is how the Way and the response connect. You want something and it comes to be the way you want it. You want something to happen and it does. It's like a

sound and an echo: the bell is rung and the echo of its sound reverberates. The petition belongs to the nature; the response belongs to marks.

In general, when you are hungry, food comes your way. When you are cold, you get some warm clothing. If you have no place to live, you find one. All of these are examples of petition and response. The process of petition and response is a multi-layered and unending one.

These ten will be explained in detail later on. So at this point I have just given a general explanation of their meanings.

-cont. next issue