

THE WONDERFUL DHARMA LOTUS FLOWER SUTRA

with the commentary of TRIPITAKA MASTER HUA

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SUTRA:

"O BHIKSHUS, PURNAMAITREYANIPUTRA HAS BEEN THE FOREMOST SPEAKER OF THE DHARMA FOR THE PAST SEVEN BUDDHAS, AND HE IS ALSO FOREMOST SPEAKER OF DHARMA UNDER ME. HE WILL ALSO BE THE FOREMOST SPEAKER OF DHARMA UNDER ALL THE BUDDHAS TO COME IN THE WORTHY KALPA, FOR WHOM HE WILL PROTECT, UPHOLD AND HELP IN PROPAGATING THE BUDDHADHARMA. HE SHALL ALSO PROTECT, UPHOLD AND HELP THE DHARMA OF LIMITLESS, BOUNDLESS NUMBERS OF FUTURE BUDDHAS, TEACHING, TRANSFORMING AND BENEFITTING LIMITLESS LIVING BEINGS, CAUSING THEM TO STAND IN ANUTTARASAMYAKSAMBOODHI. IN ORDER TO PURIFY THE BUDDHALANDS, HE WILL BE EVER VIGOROUS AND DILIGENT IN TEACHING AND TRANSFORMING LIVING BEINGS."

COMMENTARY:

Shakyamuni Buddha tells the Bhikshus, "O BHIKSHUS, PURNAMAITREYANAPUTRA HAS BEEN THE FOREMOST SPEAKER OF THE DHARMA FOR THE PAST SEVEN BUDDHAS." This Sound Hearer who "hides the great and manifests the small" has been the foremost speaker of the Dharma for the past seven Buddhas.

The Past Seven Buddhas

1. Vipashin Buddha
2. Shikin Buddha
3. Vishvabhu Buddha
4. Krakuccanda Buddha
5. Kanakamuni Buddha
6. Kashyapa Buddha
7. Shakyamuni Buddha

Why was Purnamaitreyaniputra foremost speaker of Dharma under the last seven Buddhas? The phrase "seven Buddhas" actually includes Shakyamuni Buddha, but the Buddha mentions himself specifically. "Now, at present," he says, "he is the foremost speaker of Dharma."

How did he get to be number one? I'll tell you about the causes and conditions behind this. Long ago, limitless, limitless aeons ago, he was a person who couldn't express himself verbally and he couldn't speak the Dharma. This is not to say that he was a mute, he just couldn't talk very well. Everytime someone was lecturing on the Sutras or Dharma, however, he made a point of going to listen. Not only that, when he listened to Sutras, he would not have to eat to get full or drink to satisfy his thirst. He didn't even need to sleep! But there's more to it than that. At first he insisted on standing during the lecture to show his respect. Everyone else would be sitting down, but he would stand up. Later, he got to feeling that standing wasn't respectful enough, so he knelt whenever anyone lectured on the Sutras. If someone spoke the Dharma, he would kneel there with his palms together, very respectfully, listening. At that time he couldn't talk very well. But he got a lot of experience listening to Dharma speakers both good ones and not-so-good ones. Then he made a vow: "In the future, I will certainly leave the home-life to become a Dharma Master and I am going to be the best speaker of Dharma. I will sit beneath the Dharma throne of every single Buddha and be foremost speaker of the Dharma. I won't be number two!" In every life he made that vow. It was like planting a Bodhi seed. Eventually the seed of unobstructed eloquence sprouted, and he fulfilled his vow. He was born in the presence of a Buddha, and he had limitless wisdom and unobstructed eloquence. He opened great wisdom, attained great eloquence, and was number one in speaking the Dharma. Now you know. If you want to be number one, you have to have some real skill. If you don't you can't get that position. This is a general explanation of why Purnamaitreyaniputra is number one at speaking the Dharma. It would not be possible to explain all the causes and conditions in detail. He received various benefits listening to the Dharma from various Dharma Masters and gained various small awakenings leading to his final awakening. But we can't go into all that here.

"AND HE IS ALSO FOREMOST SPEAKER OF DHARMA UNDER ME." It's not easy to become number one. It's no simple thing. "HE WILL ALSO BE THE FOREMOST SPEAKER OF DHARMA UNDER ALL THE BUDDHAS TO COME IN THE WORTHY AEON." What is the Worthy Aeon? It is the aeon we are presently in, an aeon which will see the emergence of many worthy sages. Shakyamuni Buddha is the fourth Buddha to appear in the Worthy Aeon. Krakucchanda was the first. Kanakamuni Buddha was the second. Kashyapa Buddha was the third.

There will be a thousand Buddhas appearing in the Worthy Aeon, and Purnamaitreyaniputra will be foremost speaker of Dharma in every Buddha's assembly. So, you see that the number one position isn't something you can take by force. He cultivated to perfect his skill. If someone is a little better than you, be careful not to get jealous of him. Don't think, "I can't let him be number one!" That is a terrible attitude. If you want to be number one, you have to work for it. You can't steal it. You can't try to take it by force. If everyone agrees that you are number one, then that's different. You can't force the issue. That would be like stealing someone else's money and putting it into your pocket. There's no glory in such riches. In Buddhism you can't fight to be number one, and you be jealous or obstructive just because someone has a little talent. How should you be? You should praise them? The more cultivation someone has, the happier I am. Whoever is intelligent and wise, I will study with him." Don't be jealous. If you get jealous you can't have any great accomplishment, because your mind is too petty. Purnamaitreyaniputra got the number one position through hard work. When he listened to the Sutras, he didn't need to eat, drink, or sleep. What is more, when he

heard the Dharma he forgot absolutely everything else. He had no other hopes or false thoughts as he knelt to listen to the Dharma.

In the past there was cultivator called the Living Buddha of Gold Mountain. Where did he get his name? It was very easy. He just wrote the two words, "living Buddha" on his head like a billboard. He told everyone to call him by that name, and they did. He jumped off a many-storied pagoda, and didn't even get hurt! If anyone was sick, all he had to do was touch them or blow a breath of air on them, and they would get well. Or he might have the sick person drink some of his saliva or the water he had washed his feet in, and they would get well. He called this water "Prajna soup!" Living Buddha he may have been, but whenever anyone lectured on the sutras, no matter who they were, or whether they lectured well or not, he would kneel right on the ground to listen, without a pad or a pillow. If you lectured for two hours, he would kneel there for two hours. If a living Buddha knelt to listen to the Sutras, how much the more so should we "dead" Buddhas! As a result of such bitter practices, he gained efficacious responses. When the monastery ran out of rice, the Abbot of Gold Mountain would send for the living Buddha. "Go get us some rice!" the Abbot would say, and the living Buddha would come back with a lot of rice. How did he get it. He recited a mantra, saying, "Come on rice, come on rice..." and the rice showed up! That's how strange it was.

Purnamaitreyaniputra "WILL PROTECT, UPHOLD, AND HELP IN PROPAGATING THE BUDDHADHARMA." For all the Buddhas of the Worthy Aeon he is first in speaking Dharma, but it isn't because he declared himself number one. The Buddha pronounced him number one. You should all be very clear about this. I hope that none of you will fight over the number-one position. If you do, you'll just become thieves.

"IN ORDER TO PURIFY THE BUDDHALANDS, to adorn and purify all the Buddhalands, HE WILL BE EVER VIGOROUS AND DILIGENT." Whoever can be vigorous can purify and adorn the Buddhalands. So, we are now translating the Sutras, and that is purifying the Buddhalands. We are not afraid of toiling for the future of Buddhism, and this is purifying the Buddhalands. For example, whoever works might think, "He's just saying that so it sounds good. He's just going to give us more work!" That's not it at all. I would say the same things whether you work or not. That's because I haven't become a Buddha, and I don't want my land purified anyway. Whether you are lazy or vigorous is entirely up to you. If you are diligent, you are purifying the Buddhalands. If you are not, you are not purifying them. There's something else you should be clear about; if you purify the lands of other Buddhas, then in the future, when you become a Buddha, your land will be adorned and pure. This is to take the Buddha's adornments as your own adornments. To purify other Buddhalands is to purify the Buddhaland of your own nature. Since you are studying the Buddhadharmas, in the future you are certainly going to become Buddhas. Therefore, if you are lazy now, in the future your land might be a land of ten evil turbidities! You'll have twice as many turbidities as the land we are in now! I'm not joking! It's true. If you don't cultivate now, and don't purify the Buddhalands, your own land will be very unclean. All of you good knowing advisors should deeply understand the Buddhadharmas, teach and transform living beings. The Venerable Purnamaitreyaniputra taught and transformed living beings. The reason I can lecture Sutras now is because in the past I was taught by the Venerable Purnamaitreyaniputra. I basically can't talk very well. I'm pretty plain and ordinary. Although you don't dare to lecture the Sutras, you can say a few sentences. When I was small I didn't even talk. Now, I am speaking Dharma to you because I have been taught and transformed by Purnamaitreyaniputra. All of you should resolve to purify your Buddhalands. One of my disciples said, "Oh, now that we are putting out this magazine, we'll have even more work to do!"

I said, "All the Buddhas of the past had more work to do than you, and they weren't afraid."

"Right," he said, and I believe now he's not afraid of having too much to do.

cont. next issue

Publications from the Buddhist Text Translation Society

DHARANI SUTRA - This Sutra tells of the past events in the life of the Bodhisattva of great compassion Avalokiteshvara (Kuan Yin), and the various ways of practicing the Great Compassion Mantra, and its many benefits. It is a fundamental Secret School method. The second half of the publication is divided up into three sections. The first explains the meaning of the mantra line by line. The second has Chinese poems and drawings of division bodies of Kuan Yin for each of the 84 lines of the mantra. The last section contains drawings and verses in English on each of the 42 Hands and Eyes of Kuan Yin. This is the first English translation of this scripture.

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