

# *News From The Dharma Realm*

*The Great Perfect Mirror Wisdom*

*Editorial Committee of THE PROPER DHARMA SEAL Newspaper*

*-by Bhikshuni Heng Tao*

*-edited by The Proper Dharma Seal Editorial Staff*

It is just as if a large Sutra scroll  
Whose measure equals the three thousand worlds.  
Were stored within a single mote of dust,  
And in every mote of dust it were the same.  
Then should a man of great wisdom appear  
Whose pure eyes could see all this clearly,  
He would smash dust-motes open to obtain the Sutra scroll  
To benefit living beings everywhere.  
The Buddhas' Wisdom is the same way.  
It pervades all beings' hearts.  
They are not aware of it only because  
They are fettered by their false thinking.  
But because of their great compassion  
All Buddhas cause beings to cast out their false thinking.  
In this way, the Buddhas appear  
And benefit all Bodhisattvas.

In Chapter Thirty-seven, "The Thus Come Ones' Appearances, of the *Avatamsaka Sutra*, Universal Worthy Bodhisattva explains the analogy of an immense Sutra scroll whose scope encompasses a billion worlds. Within such a Sutra would be recorded all the phenomena that are present in the universe. It would be the sum total of all living beings' knowledge. And yet, although the Sutra would be infinitely huge, its entire content could be neatly stored away within the tiniest particle of dust. Not only would this be the case with a single dust particle, Universal Worthy Bodhisattva says, but the countless dust particles that pervade the cosmos would all be this way. Then a truly wise man comes along, who, with his pure Heavenly Eye, sees the Sutras stored inside the dust motes. Wishing to benefit living beings with the knowledge stored in the Sutras, he energetically breaks open the dust motes and brings out the Sutra, so that all beings can obtain benefit.

In the Bodhisattva's analogy, the Sutra Scroll stands for the Buddhas' boundless, unimpeded wisdom, perfected and replete with the nature of virtue. The dust motes represent each single living being, you and me, who, although but minute elements in the grade scheme of things, are nonetheless completely endowed with universal wisdom in encapsulated and potential form. The wise man in the analogy is, of course, a Buddha, or any good and wise teacher. By their wisdom they see that all living beings have the inherent potential for perfect enlightenment. With their energetic efforts, these wise guides "break" open the dust motes; they help us smash the iron bars of our ego-prisons and show us that obscured by each of our tiny ego-cells is a treasury of wisdom and vision that can fill the entire cosmos. There is nothing larger than the Sutra scroll, and nothing smaller than a dust mote. Yet the two are interpenetrating and perfectly fused, without obstruction. So, too, the Buddha nature of all

living beings, even the lowest and most primitive forms of life, are all interconnected by the same life-force. We all possess the fundamentally bright Buddha nature; we can all become Buddhas.

Therefore in the same Chapter of the *Avatamsaka Sutra*, the Bodhisattva also observes:

There is nowhere that the Thus Come Ones' wisdom doesn't reach.  
Why? It is because there is not a single being who is without the Thus Come Ones' wisdom. Only because of false thinking and upside-down attachments are beings unable to be certified to it. If they leave false thinking, then All-Wisdom, spontaneous wisdom, and unobstructed wisdom, will instantaneously manifest.

Why is it that the Buddhas are now Buddhas and living beings are still living beings, so pathetically deluded and confused? It is because, the Buddha tells us, we are covered by our desires and false thinking, which trap us in a prison of our own making, rendering us blind to our true natures and the real needs of our fellow beings. By giving rise to desire, people learn to conquer and oppress other people and creatures and to infringe upon their right to live. We have built skyscrapers, satellites, missile silos and nuclear reactors to enforce what we consider our triumph over nature. And yet our supposed victory has been won through the act of domination, not through virtue. We have spurned the innate tendencies within our Buddha nature which include a profoundly respectful and moral regard for true principle, and a non-discriminating compassion for all that lives. By deliberately going against the grain of our natural goodness, we occlude our original wisdom. As a result we become stupid and "live as if drunk, and die in a dream."

The present era finds us stranded in a dangerous and paradoxical situation: on the one hand we have amassed a heretofore unsurpassed wealth of technological apparatus, including spaceships, computers, and nuclear weapons, while on the other hand, there is a frightening lack of common sense, let alone wisdom, foresight, or attention to moral obligations and ethical values when it comes to using technology in ways that can benefit humankind. It's to be feared that we are becoming heady with our self-styled triumphs in scientific advancements but are forgetting our responsibilities, losing sight of the big picture, and out of selfishness and greed for power, control, reputation and prestige are deciding to gamble with human life. If we pursue such a course, we are destined to ultimate defeat. That would be suicide. As of now we have accumulated throughout the world such vast arsenals of destructive weapons that a single act of imprudence on the part of just one individual could bring on the utter extinction of civilization and wipe out all forms of life from the face of the planet.

What is the antidote for this unchecked avarice and the insane urge for power and control? True wisdom, of course: the kind of wisdom that is all-seeing, devoid of impulsiveness and rashness, and totally selfless and compassionate. The Buddha is replete with such wisdom. It is called the Great Perfect Mirror Wisdom because it is like a perfect, round, and crystal-clear mirror in which the myriad phenomena of the universe are reflected. That mirror is our true minds. All living beings have it in potential; all Buddhas and sages have fully realized it. Whereas the Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas have time and time again rubbed the mirror clean so that now "no dust alights," we living beings have time and time again covered it over with our false thinking and desires. We create karma that is a mixture of good and evil, so that our originally bright mirror-mind is now thickly coated with dirt and grime. What can be done? The only remedy is to "diligently sweep it clean" by doing the hard,

serious, and infinitely rewarding work of cultivating the true Path, returning the light to illumine within, and returning to the root.

Recent issues of Vajra Bodhi Sea have already introduced three of the Four Editorial Committees of the forthcoming newspaper, Proper Dharma Seal, which will be published and distributed free to the general public from the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas and by the Sino-American Buddhist Association. The Four Editorial Committees take their names from the Four Wisdoms and assume their respective functions. The Wisdom of Accomplishing What Needs to be Done is able to universally benefit and bring about the maturation of the good roots of all beings. In essence, it results from the perfection of the five sense consciousnesses--the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and body consciousnesses. The Wisdom of Wonderful Contemplation turns the sixth consciousness--our ordinary discriminating mind--into a wonderful, unbiased and accurate wisdom that can tell right from wrong without falling into the realm of superficial and mundane discrimination. The Wisdom of Equality transforms the seventh consciousness into all-pervasive kindness and compassion that equally responds to all potentials. And the Great Perfect Mirror Wisdom transforms the eighth consciousness, the "alaya", into a transparent pure wisdom, unmarred by the slightest trace of defilement, so that the ten thousand virtues of the nature spontaneously spring forth.

The Buddhas appear in the world for a single great purpose: to reveal and to lead all living beings to enlighten to and enter the Thus Come Ones' knowledge and vision. The Buddhas are those who have fully realized the Four Wisdoms. The Proper Dharma Seal takes the Buddhas' Four Wisdoms as its guide, because its purpose is to open up the proper knowledge and vision of all sentient beings. With deep conviction, we will work indefatigably, tapping energy from an inherent spirit of giving that does not shrink from toil or criticism, as we strive always to be public-minded, bringing to the reader the simple and wonderful truths of the Orthodox Dharma as it is lived out and practiced in the West.

The Buddhas' wisdom is vast; the scale of our magazine at its inception is small, somewhat like a dust mote compared to the infinite reaches of the Dharma Realm. Yet a dust mote can contain the Sutra scroll of the Dharma Realm and the Sutra scroll of the Dharma Realm can enter into a single mote of dust, both comfortably blending without obstruction. The small can encompass the large without remainder; the large can enter the small with ease. As it is said,

The true and the false interfuse and mingle:  
Within the ordinary mind one sees the Buddha mind.  
Specifics and principles are together cultivated;  
One relies on basic wisdom to seek the Buddhas' wisdom.

*-Flower Adornment (Avatamsaka) Sutra*

*Preface by National Master Ch'ing Liang*

In this chaos-ridden and fear-filled world, The Proper Dharma Seal promises to be wonderful medicine for our neuroses and anxieties: it aspires to true wisdom that is sustained by compassion, vows, and selflessness of practice for the sole purpose of benefiting all.

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