

妙法蓮華經淺釋

THE DHARMA FLOWER SUTRA WITH COMMENTARY

【卷五 如來壽量品第十六】

ROLL FIVE, CHAPTER SIXTEEN: THE THUS COME ONE'S LIFE SPAN

宣化上人講 COMMENTARY BY THE VENERABLE MASTER HUA
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修訂版 REVISED VERSION

「剖裂玄微」，這個「玄妙」，本來沒有法子給它破開，現在都把它給破開了。「昭廓心境」，昭，把心裏的境界，都是照得清清楚楚的；廓，就是「空」的意思。「窮理盡性」，窮理，把理都沒有了；盡性，性也沒有了。「徹果該因」，你看！那是「因果同時」，也沒有因，因就是果、果就是因。這可妙到極點！這個法說得——沒有法子講！

諸善男子！於是中間，我說然燈佛等，又復言其入於涅槃，如是皆以方便分別。

「諸善男子」：這個「諸」字，當「多」字講，就是很多的善男子，這是一個講法。這個「諸」字，又可以當一個語助詞來講；什麼叫「語助詞」？就是幫助這句話的一個名詞。這個「諸」字，也可以當「多」字講，也可以當「一」字講。

有人就說：「法師！你講錯了！這個『諸』字，我在任何地方，聽見人家都是當『多』字講！」那麼你在這個地方，就聽當一個「少」字講，也可以嘛！當語助詞來講，就是當「一個」講，就是「你這個善男子」。當「一個善男子」，是對彌勒菩薩說的；當「多的善男子」來講，就是對所有在法會中的這一些個大菩薩說的。這意思，你們各位都明白了？你們以

“Opening and disclosing the mysterious and subtle” – originally, what is mysterious and subtle cannot be expressed. But now it is disclosed and opened. “Understanding and exposing the mind and its states.” – understanding refers to the ability to illumine the state of the mind clearly whereas exposing refers to emptiness. “Fathoming the principle and exhausting the nature,” – fathoming the principle means to exhaust all principles to a point that the nature is also gone. “Penetrating the result, which includes the cause.” – you see this is the simultaneity where causes and effects exist at the same time. The cause is the effect and the effect is just the cause. This is wonderful to an extreme. The way of expounding this principle simply cannot be articulated!

Sutra:

“Good men, in that interval, I spoke of the Buddha Dipankara and others, and I further spoke of them as entering nirvana. But those were just discriminations made expediently.”

Commentary:

Good men: The character *zhu* 諸 here means many—many good men. Very many good men means there were very few bad men. In fact we can say there weren't any, and so the reference is to many good men. That's one way to explain it. The character *zhu* can also be used as an auxiliary participle. As such, it can refer to many or to one.

Someone says, “Dharma Master, you have explained this incorrectly. The character *zhu* is always explained as many.” Now, you are hearing it explained as “few,” and that should be acceptable too. If we regard this word as an auxiliary participle, then the text will read, “Good man.” You, this good man. In that case, the one good man would refer to Maitreya Bodhisattva. Many good men would refer to all the good men, all the Bodhisattvas in the assembly. Now you should understand, and from now on when you encounter the character *zhu*, you should know it can be explained as “many” or as “one.”

後見著這個「諸」字，你就知道了，哦！這個可以當「多」字講，又可以當「一」字講。

「於是中間」：於什麼中間呢？就是把這五百千萬億三千大千世界磨成塵了，過五百千萬億阿僧祇國家，下一個塵點，把這個塵都沒有了；然後再把所經過這麼多的國家，都把它再磨為微塵。每一粒微塵，就算一個大劫；那麼在這個中間，你說這個「中間」是多長時間？沒有人算得出來的。

在這個中間，「我說然燈佛等，又復言其入於涅槃」：我曾說過，在然燈佛的時候，我的名字叫善慧菩薩；後來遇見然燈佛，他給我授記：「汝於來世，當得作佛，號『釋迦牟尼』！」我又說，然燈佛在什麼時候，怎麼樣入涅槃。

「如是皆以方便分別」：我所說的這一些個法，現在實實在在的告訴你，這個說法是方便法門，是爲了對眾生的根性而說這種本跡的因緣——在過去生中因地的事情。你們不要拿它當真實的！

諸善男子！若有眾生來至我所，我以佛眼，觀其信等諸根利鈍，隨所應度，處處自說名字不同、年紀大小，亦復現言當入涅槃。又以種種方便，說微妙法，能令眾生發歡喜心。

「諸善男子！若有眾生來至我所」：你們各位善男子！假使有這個世界上的眾生，他到我的地方來，「我以佛眼，觀其信等諸根利鈍」：我就要先觀察觀察他。以什麼觀察呢？我以佛眼來觀察。觀察什麼呢？觀察他的五根——信根、進根、念根、定根、慧根。觀看他的信心有沒有？有沒有精進根力？有沒有信的根力？有沒有念佛法的根力？有沒有定的根力？他學佛法，是不是今天學佛法，明天又學魔法去了？今天學菩薩法，明天又去學鬼法了？

☞待續

In that interval: In what interval? In the interval when the five hundred myriad *kotis* of *nayutas* of *asamkhyeyas* of countries were passed through and the one mote of dust was dropped. The five hundred myriad *kotis* of *nayutas* of *asamkhyeyas* of worlds were ground into fine dust, and then five hundred *kotis* of *nayutas* of *asamkhyeyas* of lands were passed through and a mote of dust was deposited until all the motes of dust were gone. Then all those lands that were passed through were further ground into fine dust. Each of those fine motes of dust was counted as a great *kalpa*. “In that interval” is that period of time. How long a time could that interval be? No human being could calculate it.

I spoke of the Buddha Dipankara and others. In the midst of that, I said, “At the time of Dipankara Buddha, I was known as Good Wisdom Bodhisattva.” **And I further spoke of them as entering nirvana.** “At the time of Dipankara Buddha, my name was Good Wisdom. When I met Dipankara Buddha, he bestowed a prediction upon me. He said, ‘In the future, you will become a Buddha called Shakyamuni.’” I also said that at such-and-such a time, Dipankara Buddha would enter nirvana.

But those dharmas I spoke of were just discriminations made expediently. I will now tell you the truth. What I said was expedient dharma; these causes and conditions were spoken in accord with living beings’ faculties. I spoke based on living beings’ basic foundation, what they had “planted” in the cause ground. But these were just discriminations made expediently.

Sutra:

“Good men, if a living being comes to where I am, I observe with my Buddha Eye his faith and other qualities, as well as the keenness or dullness of his faculties, and take him across in an appropriate manner. “In place after place, although the names by which I refer to myself are different, and my age may be older or younger, I also appear and announce that I am about to enter nirvana. I also employ various expedient devices, speaking the subtle and wonderful Dharma and enabling living beings to bring forth happiness in their minds.””

Commentary:

Good men, if a living being comes to where I am—he comes to the place where I, the Buddha, am—I **observe with my Buddha Eye**. First I must look into it. What do I look with? I use the Buddha Eye to investigate with. What do I look into? I regard **his faith and other qualities**. “And other qualities” refers to the five roots: Faith, vigor, mindfulness, *samadhi*, and wisdom are called the five roots.

I look into it and see if he has the root of faith. Does he have the root and power of being diligent and vigorous? Does he have the root and power of mindfulness? Is he mindful of the Buddhadharma? Does he have the root and power of *samadhi*? In his study of the Buddhadharma, does he study the Buddhadharma today and then tomorrow go to study demonic dharma? Does he study the Dharma of Bodhisattvas today and the dharma of ghosts tomorrow?

☞To be continued