

# *Prologue to the Flower Adornment Sutra*

*by T'ang Dynasty National Master Ch'ing Liang with commentary*

*by Tripitaka Master Hua*

*continued from Issue #191*

PROLOGUE:

SECOND, IN TERMS OF THE SEPARATE TEACHING, THERE COME TO BE FOUR PROPOSITIONS. BECAUSE THERE IS NO DESTRUCTION OF MARKS, BEINGS AND THE BUDDHA BOTH REMAIN.

COMMENTARY:

SECOND\*, IN TERMS OF THE SEPARATE TEACHING, THERE COME TO BE FOUR PROPOSITIONS. This is the second of four. BECAUSE THERE IS NO DESTRUCTION OF the MARKS of either living beings or the Buddha, BEINGS AND THE BUDDHA BOTH REMAIN. They both stay present.

PROLOGUE:

ONE, SINCE LIVING BEINGS ARE ENTIRELY WITHIN THE BUDDHA, IN THAT CASE, THE APPROACH CONCERNED WITH THE FRUITION INCLUDES ALL DHARMAS WITHOUT EXCEPTION. INASMUCH AS EVEN BEINGS ARE WITHIN THE BUDDHA'S MIND, IS IT NOT EVEN MORE THE CASE THAT THE TEACHINGS SPOKEN ARE SIMPLY MANIFESTATIONS OF THE BUDDHA? THEREFORE, THE *APPEARANCES CHAPTER* SAYS: "WHEN THE THUS COME ONE REALIZES PROPER ENLIGHTENMENT, WITHIN HIS OWN BODY HE SEES ALL LIVING BEINGS EVERYWHERE REALIZING PROPER ENLIGHTENMENT, UP THROUGH SEEING ALL LIVING BEINGS ENTERING NIRVANA.

COMMENTARY:

ONE, the first proposition, maintains that SINCE LIVING BEINGS ARE ENTIRELY WITHIN THE BUDDHA--all living beings are within the Buddha's Dharma Body and none of them fall outside of it--IN THAT CASE, THE APPROACH CONCERNED WITH THE FRUITION, that is, becoming a Buddha, INCLUDES ALL DHARMAS WITHOUT EXCEPTION. All are included in the accomplishment of Buddhahood. None fall outside. All beings are within the Buddha's mind, within the Buddha's body, and within the Buddha's nature. INASMUCH AS EVEN LIVING BEINGS ARE WITHIN THE BUDDHA'S MIND, IS IT NOT EVEN MORE THE CASE THAT THE TEACHINGS SPOKEN ARE SIMPLY MANIFESTATIONS OF THE BUDDHA? Since all living beings are in the Buddha's mind, so much the more must the Teachings spoken by the Buddha be manifestations of the Buddha. THEREFORE IN THE

APPEARANCES CHAPTER there is a passage of Sutra text which SAYS: "WHEN THE THUS COME ONE REALIZES PROPER ENLIGHTENMENT, WITHIN HIS OWN BODY HE SEES ALL LIVING BEINGS EVERYWHERE REALIZING PROPER ENLIGHTENMENT." When the Buddha becomes a Buddha, he doesn't just see himself becoming a Buddha. All the living beings within his body also become Buddhas. It's similar to:

Becoming a Buddha in a hundred worlds.

One goes to be a Buddha in a hundred different world-systems, and yet none of those world-systems falls outside the Buddha's Dharma Body. Here the Buddha, within his own body, sees them all becoming Buddhas, "UP THROUGH SEEING ALL LIVING BEINGS ENTERING NIRVANA." Not only do they become Buddhas, they also turn the Dharma wheel, and teach and transform living beings and afterwards enter Parinirvana. The Buddha sees it all. That means we living beings are not at all far from the Buddha. We are very close. That is why the Great Master the Sixth Patriarch said, "If you are eighteen thousand miles away from me but believe, then you are by my side. If you are beside me but do not believe, that is the same as being eighteen thousand miles away from me." We are all within the Buddha's Dharma Body, but although we are, we don't realize it. It's the same way as we have living beings in our bodies. They are the living beings within the living being that is us, and there are infinitely many of them. When we become Buddhas, all of those living beings in our bodies will become Buddhas along with us. And so there is becoming a Buddha and turning into a ghost. Although they are not the same, it's only a matter of time, because eventually everyone will become a Buddha. That's why it says in the text now that living beings are the living beings within the Buddha's mind, and the Buddha is the Buddha within the mind of living beings. They are not separate from one another.

Every day everyone is very busy. Being busy is cultivation. Cultivation is being busy. If you are not busy, you become lazy. If you are idle, you have false thinking. If you are busy every day, you are cultivating the Way. When we cultivate, we should find a little work to do, because our minds are like monkeys. If they don't have any work to do, they go leaping off to the east, and leaping off to the west, leaping off to the north and south, leaping up and down. They run throughout the six directions. And so if we're a little busy, the monkey has some work to do.

Besides, that is a way of protecting the Bodhimanda. If there's work to be done, you should look upon it as your own work. Don't separate yourself from the Way Place. The Way Place is itself the Buddha, and we are the living beings within it. We living beings help the Buddha's Way Place, and the Buddha helps us living beings to become Buddhas. Therefore, in whatever you do, you should do it with a true mind. If you have a true mind, then you will have a response. Working, for example, is just the same as meditation. All you have to do is work with one mind unconfused and that's just the same as being mindful of the Buddha. When you work and you obtain the "working" samadhi, that is investigating Chan. It all depends on how you do it. In every move you make and in every word you say--it doesn't matter what you're doing--you can be cultivating the Way. If you're able to apply effort, then you're applying effort whether you're walking, standing, sitting, or lying down, and at all times you're working. If you're not able to apply effort, then you're having false thinking whether you're walking, standing, sitting, or lying down. Now everyone is protecting the Buddha's Way Place, and bringing "living beings' Buddha" to accomplishment.

## PROLOGUE:

FURTHERMORE, THE *BUDDHA NATURE SHASTRA*, IN THE SECOND CHAPTER, THE THUS COME ONE'S TREASURY, SAYS: "IT IS CALLED A TREASURY BECAUSE ALL LIVING BEINGS ARE WITHIN THE THUS COME ONE'S WISDOM. SINCE THE WISDOM OF THUSNESS MATCHES THE STATE OF THUSNESS, AND ALL LIVING BEINGS DEFINITELY DO NOT FALL OUTSIDE THE STATE OF THUSNESS, THEY TOO ARE ENCOMPASSED BY THE THUS COME ONE." HENCE IT NAMES THE LIVING BEINGS WHO ARE GATHERED IN AS THE TREASURY OF THE THUS COME ONE. MOREOVER, LATER, THE *APPEARANCES CHAPTER* MAKES CLEAR THAT SINCE THE MINDS, THOUGHTS, DISPOSITIONS, AND INCLINATIONS OF ALL LIVING BEINGS THROUGHOUT ALL KALPAS AND KSHETRAS OF THE THREE PERIODS OF TIME ALL APPEAR INSTANTANEOUSLY EVEN WITHIN THE SINGLE BODY, HOW MUCH THE MORE MUST THEY APPEAR WITHIN THE BUDDHA'S WISDOM WHICH IS SO VAST AND GREAT IT IS THE SAME AS EMPTY SPACE.

## COMMENTARY:

FURTHERMORE, THE *BUDDHA NATURE SHASTRA*, IN THE SECOND CHAPTER which particularly discusses THE THUS COME ONE'S TREASURY SAYS: "IT IS CALLED A TREASURY BECAUSE ALL LIVING BEINGS ARE WITHIN THE THUS COME ONE'S WISDOM." It states that there aren't any living beings who fall outside of the Buddha's wisdom. All of them are reflected in the Great Perfect Mirror Wisdom of the Thus Come One. They appear with the Great Perfect Mirror Wisdom, the Wisdom of Equality, the Wisdom of Wonderful Contemplation, and the Wisdom of Accomplishing What Should be Done. Those four wisdoms include all living beings within them. There isn't a single being who is outside the Buddha's wisdom. Because it has so many things in it, including all living beings to the exhaustion of empty space and of the Dharma Realms, it is called the Treasury of the Thus Come One.

SINCE THE WISDOM OF THUSNESS MATCHES THE STATE OF THUSNESS, AND ALL LIVING BEINGS DEFINITELY DO NOT FALL OUTSIDE THE STATE OF THUSNESS, THEY TOO ARE ENCOMPASSED BY THE THUS COME ONE. However great the state of Thusness is, the Thus Come One's wisdom is just that great; and however vast the state of Thusness is, the Thus Come One's wisdom is just that vast--not more and not less. Therefore they are said to match. All living beings are within the wisdom of Thusness, the state of Thusness. No living beings are outside that state of Thusness, and so they too are encompassed by the Buddha. All living beings are within the Thus Come One's gathering in and transforming, his teaching and transforming. AND SO IT NAMES THE LIVING BEINGS WHO ARE GATHERED IN AS THE TREASURY OF THE THUS COME ONE. The name Thus Come One's Treasury comes from the living beings contained within it.

MOREOVER, LATER THE *APPEARANCES CHAPTER* MAKES CLEAR THAT SINCE THE MINDS, THOUGHTS, DISPOSITIONS, AND INCLINATIONS OF ALL LIVING BEINGS THROUGHOUT THE KALPAS AND KSHETRAS OF THE THREE PERIODS OF TIME

ALL APPEAR INSTANTANEOUSLY EVEN WITHIN THE SINGLE BODY, HOW MUCH THE MORE MUST THEY APPEAR WITHIN THE BUDDHA'S WISDOM WHICH IS SO VAST AND GREAT IT IS THE SAME AS EMPTY SPACE. The *Appearance Chapter* of the *Flower Adornment Sutra* explains that this pertains to all living beings of all past, present, and future aeons and lands who are as many as motes of dust and grains of sand. The minds of all living beings, their thoughts, faculties, and what they like all suddenly appear even within the one body of the Thus Come One. Those of the past, present, and future simultaneously manifest. Even the more so do they appear within the Buddha's wisdom of Thusness. That wisdom is so infinitely vast and great it extends throughout empty space and the entire Dharma Realm, being identical with empty space. Is there any living being who isn't included within empty space? All are inside it. The Buddha's wisdom--the Buddha's Dharma Body--is as extensive and all-inclusive as empty space.

#### PROLOGUE:

TWO, SINCE THE BUDDHA IS WITHIN THE MINDS OF LIVING BEINGS, IN THAT CASE, THE APPROACH CONCERNED WITH THE CAUSES INCLUDES ALL DHARMAS WITHOUT EXCEPTION. INASMUCH AS EVEN THE BUDDHA IS WITHIN LIVING BEINGS' MINDS, IS IT NOT EVEN MORE THE CASE THAT THE TEACHINGS SPOKEN ARE SIMPLY MANIFESTATIONS OF LIVING BEINGS' MINDS?

#### COMMENTARY:

TWO, SINCE THE BUDDHA IS WITHIN THE MINDS OF LIVING BEINGS, IN THAT CASE, THE APPROACH CONCERNED WITH THE CAUSES INCLUDES ALL DHARMAS WITHOUT EXCEPTION. The first proposition stated that living beings are within the Buddha's mind. It is because the Buddha's mind is great that all living beings are contained within it. It is known as the Treasury of the Thus Come One. However, the Buddha is also within the minds of living beings. If the Buddha were not in living beings' minds, how could they become Buddhas? Since the Buddha is within the minds of living beings, then living beings' minds are basically the Buddha. That means living beings' minds and the Buddha are not different from each other. They are not two different things. The Buddha teaches and transforms living beings; living beings teach and transform the Buddha--in a reciprocal relationship of teaching, transforming, and guiding. Therefore, sometimes we say that the Buddha does not take living beings across, that living beings take them-selves across; but sometimes we speak of the Buddha taking living beings across, enabling all living beings to accomplish Buddhahood. The principle now being discussed is that the Buddha and living beings' minds are one and the same, and so we say that living beings are within the Buddha's mind, and that the Buddha is within living beings' minds. That way they are equal. If it were only the case that living beings were within the Buddha's mind, and that the Buddha was not within living beings' minds, then the Dharma would not be interpenetrating. The Buddha would be different from us, and we could not become Buddhas. But now we are being considered as no different from the Buddha.

The first proposition was that the approach concerned with the fruition includes all dharmas without exception, and now this, the second proposition, is that the approach concerned with the causes includes all dharmas without exception. That means the minds of living beings contain all

Buddhadharmas. Although this is the approach concerned with the causes--the causes being living beings, and the fruition being the Buddha--nonetheless this approach includes all Dharmas. The Buddha speaks all Dharmas in order to teach and transform living beings, and if there were no living beings, the Buddha would not have any work to do. Therefore, living beings become Buddhas, and the Buddha teaches and transforms living beings. It's a case of mutual teaching and transforming. Some living beings become Buddhas and say, "I still have friends, relatives, and associates who have not yet become Buddhas. I should go back and get them." Thereupon they return from the Pure Land of Constant Stillness and Light to be living beings again. They act just like living beings, but they have already realized Buddhahood.

If they are supposed to have become Buddhas, how are they any different from living beings then? They are not as confused as living beings. They are a little more awake. From start to finish they understand that they should cultivate, that they should practice the ascetic practices, and cultivate the unsurpassed Way—

Seeking Buddhahood above,  
And teaching and transforming living beings below.

They always make vows to come back and teach and transform living beings. No matter how badly living beings may treat them, they never abandon a single living being. Therefore, the approach of the causes includes all dharmas without exception. INASMUCH AS EVEN THE BUDDHA IS WITHIN LIVING BEINGS' MINDS, IS IT NOT EVEN MORE THE CASE THAT THE Dharmas of the TEACHINGS SPOKEN by the Buddha ARE SIMPLY MANIFESTATIONS OF LIVING BEINGS' MINDS? They certainly are manifested from living beings' minds, since the Buddha is in their minds.

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