

The Bodhi Seal of the Patriarchs



Twentieth Patriarch, Venerable Jayata

THE VENERABLE ONE WAS FROM NORTHERN INDIA. HE HEARD THE NINETEENTH PATRIARCH, the Venerable Kumarata, SPEAK AND ALL HIS DOUBTS WERE CLEARED UP IMMEDIATELY. The Nineteenth Patriarch was able to teach and transform him quite quickly. THE PATRIARCH SAID, "ALTHOUGH YOU ALREADY BELIEVE, YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND THAT KARMA COMES ABOUT BECAUSE OF DELUSION. You give rise to delusion, create karma, and undergo retribution. ONE IS DELUDED BECAUSE OF THE DISCRIMINATING CONSCIOUSNESS; THE DISCRIMINATING CONSCIOUSNESS IS BASED ON A LACK OF ENLIGHTENMENT AND THE LACK OF ENLIGHTENMENT COMES FROM OUR MINDS. The Three Subtle Appearances:

- 1) the Appearance of Karma,
- 2) the Appearance of Manifestation,
- 3) the Appearance of Turning, arise from ignorance. That's how stupidity comes into being.

"BASICALLY THE MIND IS PURE, WITHOUT ANY PRODUCTION OR DESTRUCTION, WITHOUT ANY CREATION OR RETRIBUTION, AND WITHOUT

ANY VICTORY OR DEFEAT. Yet there is nothing one does not know and understand. IT IS QUIET AND STILL--EFFICACIOUS AND SPONTANEOUS. Your mind is tranquil and yet you are especially aware. IF YOU ENTER THIS DHARMA-DOOR YOU CAN BECOME IDENTICAL WITH ALL BUDDHAS. If you can do it, then you can always be together with all the Buddhas. ALL GOOD AND EVIL AND CONDITIONED AND UNCONDITIONED THINGS ARE LIKE A DREAM OR AN ILLUSION. They are like a dream, an illusion, a bubble, a shadow."

THE VENERABLE ONE ACCEPTED THIS TEACHING AND THEN SOUGHT TO LEAVE THE HOME-LIFE. He asked right away if he could leave home. HE RECEIVED THE COMPLETE PRECEPTS. THE Nineteenth PATRIARCH Kumarata THEN TRANSMITTED THE MIND SEAL DHARMA-DOOR TO HIM. AFTER RECEIVING IT, HE WENT TO RAJAGRHA AND PASSED THE DHARMA ON TO THE VENERABLE VASUBANDU. THEN HE SAT UPON THE DHARMA SEAT AND PEACEFULLY RETURNED TO STILLNESS.

A VERSE IN HIS PRAISE SAYS:

THE RESULT OF GOOD AND EVIL DEEDS IS ALWAYS EXACT.
HEARING THE PATRIARCH'S ECHO SUDDENLY HIS SHACKLES FELL AWAY.
DHARMA IS NOT PRODUCED OR DESTROYED--LIKE A WOODEN COCK'S CROW AT DAWN.
THIS GREAT MAN WHO HAS NO LIMITS OPENED HIS EYES AND STOPPED HIS OUTFLOWS.

Cause and effect are an exacting process. Retribution is clear and precise and no mistakes are made. The Nineteenth Patriarch spoke for him and he understood very quickly. He became a Bright-Eyed Good and Wise Advisor who taught and transformed a multitude of beings. There was no way to fathom him, and yet he completely understood how to look at the opportunities and dispense the teaching in order to break living being's bad habits and help them get rid of their faults.

ANOTHER VERSE IN HIS PRAISE SAYS:

SUDDENLY HIS DOUBTS WERE EXPLAINED AWAY AND HE INSTANTLY GAINED PENETRATING INSIGHT.
IT WAS LIKE GLISTENING SNOW MELTING IN THE SPRINGTIME SUN.
"GIVE RISE TO DELUSION, CREATE KARMA, AND UNDERGO RETRIBUTION;
OR SMASH CONFUSION, MANIFEST THE PROPER, AND ESTABLISH MERIT AND VIRTUE."
THE PURE ORIGIN IS THE BODHI NATURE.
EFFICACIOUS BRIGHT ENLIGHTENMENT OUTSHINES THE SUN IN THE SKY.
MIND TO MIND MUTUALLY SEALED, THE BUDDHA WAY IS TRANSMITTED.
FROM PAST TO PRESENT IT IS LIKE THIS--ALWAYS THE SAME.

When the Twentieth Patriarch received the Nineteenth Patriarch's teaching, he suddenly was released from his bonds of delusion and immediately understood what was being said. The Nineteenth Patriarch told him right out that the process of ignorance giving rise to delusion which in turn creates bad karma for which one must then undergo retribution, is a universal ailment of living beings and that the Patriarch himself at that point was no exception to the rule.

Living beings are born in a stupor and die in a dream. In between, they become im-mersed in and confused by the Five Desires--wealth, sex, fame, food, and sleep. Their wisdom becomes occluded and they don't ever really understand what's happening to them. Nonetheless they seem willing to just muddle through.

The world is like a fish net with dualities like good and evil, deviant and proper, forming the ties in the net. Living beings keep getting caught in one after another of the loops in the net. They never experience any freedom from this but are always right in there together, quarrelling and fighting with one another. No matter how hard any one of them might push to get out, no matter how much vigor they apply to try to extricate themselves, they cannot do it. If they manage to escape one part of the net, they simply get caught up in another part. They get off one dangerous road and immediately set out on another one which winds up putting them back in fetters again. There is no freedom and no liberation. Now would you call this suffering or not?

Patriarchs and Bodhisattvas help living beings break through this confusion and they show us the proper path--how to smash confusion, manifest the proper, and establish merit and virtue. They teach us the Three Irreversibilities of Irreversible Thought, Irreversible Conduct, and Irreversible Position. That is because the Buddha's transmission of the Mind Seal has continued throughout the generations--providing a way to liberation. It is a constant, it is that which never changes, it is always the same.

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