

THIỆN PHÚC

**ESSENTIAL SUMMARIES
OF THE DHARMA JEWEL
PLATFORM SUTRA
(YÊU LƯỢC TINH HOA KINH PHÁP BẢO ĐÀN)**

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Preface

The Platform Sutra was preached by Hui-Neng, the Sixth Patriarch. The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch's Dharma Treasure, the basic text of the Southern Zen School in China. The Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch from the High Seat of the Dharma Treasure, basic Zen writing in which Sixth Patriarch's biography, discourses and sayings at Pao-Lin monastery are recorded by his disciples Fa-Hai. It is divided into ten chapters. At one time, the Sixth Patriarch arrived at Pao-Lin to speak the Dharma to the assembly. The Great Master said to the assembly, "Good Knowing Advisors, the self-nature of Bodhi is originally clear and pure. Simply use that mind, and you will directly accomplish Buddhahood. It should be reminded that when the Fifth Patriarch transmitted the robe and bowl to Hui Neng to go south, several hundred people took up pursuit, all hoping to steal the robe and bowl. One Bhikshu, Hui Ming, a coarse-natured man whose lay name had been Ch'en, had formerly been a fourth class military official. He was intent in his search and ahead of the others. When he had almost caught up with Hui Neng, the latter tossed the robe and bowl onto a rock, saying, "This robe and bowl are tokens of faith. How can they be taken by force?" Hui Neng then hid in a thicket. When Hui Ming arrived, he tried to pick them up but found he could not move them. He cried out, "Cultivator, Cultivator, I have come for the Dharma, not for the robe!" Hui Neng then came out and sat cross-legged on a rock. Hui Ming made obeisance and said, "I hope that the Cultivator will teach the Dharma for my sake." Hui Neng said, "Since you have come for the Dharma, you may put aside all conditions. Do not give rise to a single thought and I will teach it to you clearly." After a time, Hui Neng said, "With no thoughts of good and with no thoughts of evil, at just this moment, what is Superior One Hui Ming's original face?"

Meditation must be practiced in the mind, and not just recited in words. When the mouth recites and the mind does not practice, it is like an illusion, a transformation, dew drops, or lightning. According to the Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra, the Sixth Patriarch said: "If the preceding thought does not arise, it is mind. If the following thought does not end, it is Buddha. Thus, he advised one should not be afraid of

rising thoughts, but only of the delay in being aware of them.” The following day, at the invitation of Magistrate Wei, the Master took his seat and said to the great assembly, “All of you purify your minds and think about Maha Prajna Paramita.” He then said, “All-Knowing Advisors, the wisdom of Bodhi and Prajna is originally possessed by worldly people themselves. It is only because their minds are confused that they are unable to enlighten themselves and must rely on a great Good Knowing Advisor who can lead them to see their Buddha-nature. You should know that the Buddha-nature of stupid and wise people is basically not different. It is only because confusion and enlightenment are different that some are stupid and some are wise. Also in the Jewel Platform Sutra, the sixth patriarch Hui-Neng taught: Good knowing Advisors, unenlightened, the Buddha is a living being. At the time of a single enlightened thought, the living being is a Buddha. Therefore, you should know that the ten thousand dharmas exist totally within your own mind. Why don’t you, from within your own mind, suddenly see the truth (true suchness) of your original nature. The Bodhisattva-Sila-Sutra says, ‘Our fundamental self-nature is clear and pure.’ If we recognize our own mind and see the nature, we shall perfect the Buddha Way. The Vimalakirti Nirdeśa Sutra says, ‘Just then, you suddenly regain your original mind.’ Good Knowing Advisors, each contemplates his own mind and sees his own original nature. If you are unable to enlighten yourself, you must seek out a great Good Knowing Advisor, one who understands the Dharma of the Most Superior Vehicle and who will direct you to the right road. Such a Good Knowing Advisor possesses great karmic conditions, which is to say that he will transform you, guide you and lead you to see your own nature. It is because of the Good Knowing Advisor that all wholesome Dharmas can arise. All the Buddhas of the three eras (periods of time), and the twelve divisions of Sutra texts as well, exist within the nature of people, that is originally complete within them. If you are unable to enlighten yourself, you should seek out the instruction of a Good Knowing Advisor who will lead you to see your nature. If you are one who is able to achieve self-enlightenment, you need not seek a teacher outside. If you insist that it is necessary to seek a Good Knowing Advisor in the hope of obtaining liberation, you are mistaken. Why? Within your own mind, there is self-enlightenment, which is a Good

Knowing Advisor itself. But if you give rise to deviant confusion, false thoughts and perversions, though a Good Knowing Advisor outside of you instructs you, he cannot save you. If you give rise to genuine Prajna contemplation and illumination, in the space of an instant, all false thoughts are eliminated. If you recognize your self-nature, in a single moment of enlightenment, you will arrive at the level of Buddha.

The Truth must be seen immediately at one glance, no gradations, no continuous unfolding. The Platform Sutra contains all the essentials of the abrupt doctrines. The Sixth Patriarch taught: "Oh my friends, have no fixed abode inside or outside, and your conduct will be perfectly free and unfettered. Take away your attachment and your walk will know no obstructions whatever. The ignorant will grow wise if they abruptly get an understanding and open their hearts to the truth. When the abrupt doctrine is understood there is no need of disciplining oneself in things external. Only let a man always have a right view within his own mind, no desires, no external objects will ever defile him. This is the seeing into his Nature. The seeing is an instant act as far as the mental eye takes the whole truth at one glance, the truth which transcends all kinds of dualism in all form; it is abrupt as far as it knows no gradations, no continuous unfolding." In short, The Jewel Platform Sutra emphasizes that Supreme Bodhi must be obtained at the very moment of speaking. The sutra emphasized on real practice "The true nature of things is beyond the limiting concepts imposed by words." The sutra also emphasized on the primary aim of meditation is to let Zen Flowers blooming with the abilities to stop the flow of thoughts and to clear the mind as well as to eliminate sufferings and afflictions, and eventually producing fruits of Enlightenment and Emancipation with a life full of peace, mindfulness and happiness in this very life. In other words, in Essential Summaries of the Quintessence of the Jewel Platform Sutra, Zen Flowers always produce fruits of Enlightenment and Emancipation in four seasons of Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter.

This little book titled "Essential Summaries of the Quintessence of the Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra" is only showing essential summaries of the cores of the quintessence which the author of this book considers as Zen Flowers that will surely produce fruits of Enlightenment and

Emancipation in the Jewel Platform Sutra; it is not a profound study of wonderful meanings of this sutra. Devout Buddhists should always remember that Buddhist religion is the path of returning to self (looking inward), the goal of its education must be inward and not outward for appearances and matters. The most important thing here is to enter into practicing these cores of the quintessence in Buddhist teachings in order to be able to establish these patterns of virtues in daily life and cultivative activities, to make our lives more peaceful, mindful and happy. In Buddhist scriptures, in this case, the Jewel Platform Sutra, the Sixth Patriarch Hui Neng already explained clearly about the path of seeing the Buddha-Nature which He found out and advanced on that path. Now, it's our own responsibility to practice or not to practice. The path of cultivation still demands continuous efforts with right understanding and practice. Presently even with so many books available on Buddhism, I venture to compose this booklet titled "Essential Summaries of the Quintessence of the Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra" in Vietnamese and English to introduce basic things in Buddhism to all Vietnamese Buddhist followers, especially Buddhist beginners, hoping this little contribution will help Buddhists in different levels to understand on how to achieve and lead a life of peace, mindfulness and happiness.

Respectfully,
Thiền Phúc

Part One
From the Buddha to
Early Times of Chinese Zen Schools

Chapter One

Sakyamuni Buddha & the Birth of Zen

I. The Historical Buddha Sakyamuni:

The historical person with the name of Siddhattha, a Fully Enlightenment One. One who has reached the Utmost, Right and Equal Enlightenment. The lack of hard facts and information, even the date of the Buddha's life is still in doubt. Indian people believe that the Buddha's Nirvana took place around 100 years before the time of king Asoka. However, most modern scholars agreed that the Buddha's Birthday was in some time in the second half of the seventh century B.C. and His Nirvana was about 80 years after His Birthday. The Buddha is the All-Knowing One. He was born in 623 BC in Northern India, in what is now Nepal, a country situated on the slope of Himalaya, in the Lumbini Park at Kapilavathu on the Vesak Fullmoon day of April. Almost 26 centuries ago, the Sakyas were a proud clan of the Khattiyas (the Warrior Caste) living on the foothill of the Himalaya in Northern Nepal. His royal name was Siddhartha, and his family name was Gautama. He belonged to the illustrious family of the Okkaka of the Solar Race. King Raja Suddhodana founded a strong kingdom with the capital at Kapilavathu. His wife was Queen Maha Maya, daughter of the Kolya. Before giving birth to her child, according to the custom at that time, she asked for the King's permission to return to her parents' home in Devadaha for the childbirth. On the way to her parents' home, the Queen took a rest at Lumbini Park, a wonderful garden where flowers filled the air with sweet odor, while swarms of bees and butterflies were flying around and birds of all color were singing as if they were getting ready to welcome the Queen. As she was standing under a flowering sala tree, and catching hold of a branch in full bloom, she gave birth to a prince who would later become Buddha Gotama. All expressed their delight to the Queen and her noble baby prince. Heaven and Earth rejoiced at the marvels. The memorable day was the Full Moon Day of Vesak (in May) in 623 BC. On the naming ceremony, many learned Brahmins were invited to the palace. A wise hermit named Asita told the king

that two ways would open for the prince: he would either become a universal ruler or would leave the world and become a Buddha. Asita named the baby Siddhattha, which means “the One whose wish is fulfilled.” At first the King was pleased to hear this, but later he was worried about the statement that the prince would renounce the world and become a homeless hermit. In the palace, however, delight was followed quickly by sorrow, seven days after the childbirth, Queen Maya suddenly died. Her younger sister, Pajapati Gotami, the second Queen, became the prince’s devoted foster mother, who brought him up with loving care. Although grew up in a luxurious life of a prince with full of glory, he was kind and gentle. He received excellent education in both Vedas and the arts of warfare. A wonderful thing happened at a ploughing festival in his childhood. It was an early spiritual experience which, later in his search for truth, served as a key to his Enlightenment. Once on a spring ploughing ceremony, the King took the prince to the field and placed him under the shade of a rose apple tree where he was watched by his nurses. Because the King himself took part in the ploughing, the prince looked at his father driving a golden plough together with other nobles, but he also saw the oxen dragging their heavy yokes and many farmers sweating at their work. While the nurses ran away to join the crowd, he was left alone in the quiet. Though he was young in age, he was old in wisdom. He thought so deeply over the sight that he forgot everything around and developed a state of meditation to the great surprise of the nurses and his father. The King felt great pride in his son, but all the time he recalled the hermit’s prophecy. Then he surrounded him with all pleasures and amusements and young playmates, carefully keeping away from him all knowledge of pain, sadness and death. When he was sixteen years old, the King Suddhodana arranged for his son’s a marriage with the princess Yasodhara, daughter of King Soupra-Buddha, who bore him a son named Rahula. Although raised in princely luxury and glory, surrounded with splendid palaces, His beautiful wife and well-behaved son, He felt trapped amidst this luxury like a bird in a gold cage, a fish in a silver vase. During a visit to the outskirts of the city, outside the four palace portals, He saw the spectacle of human suffering, an old man with white hair, fallen teeth, blurred eyes, deaf ears, and bent back, resting on his cane and begging

for his food; A sick man lying at the roadside who moaned painfully; a dead man whose body was swollen and surrounded with flies and bluebottles; and a holy ascetic with a calm appearance. The four sights made Him realize that life is subject to all sorts of sufferings. The sight of the holy ascetic who appeared serene gave Him the clue that the first step in His search for Truth was “Renunciation.” Back in his palace, he asked his father to let Him enter monkhood, but was refused. Nevertheless, He decided to renounce the world not for His own sake or convenience, but for the sake of suffering humanity. This unprecedented resolution made Prince Siddartha later become the Founder of Buddhism. At the age of twenty-nine, one night He decided to leave behind His princely life. After his groom Chandala saddled His white horse, He rode off the royal palace, toward the dense forest and became a wandering monk. First, He studied under the guidance of the leading masters of the day such as Alara Kalama and Uddaka Ramaputta. He learned all they could teach Him; however, He could not find what He was looking for, He joined a group of five mendicants and along with them, He embarked on a life of austerity and particularly on starvation as the means which seemed most likely to put an end to birth and death. In His desire for quietude He emaciated His body for six years, and carried out a number of strict methods of fasting, very hard for ordinary men to endure. The bulk of His body was greatly reduced by this self-torture. His fat, flesh, and blood had all gone. Only skin and bone remained. One day, worn out He fell to the ground in a dead faint. A shepherdess who happened to pass there gave Him milk to drink. Slowly, He recovered His body strength. His courage was unbroken, but His boundless intellect led Him to the decision that from now on He needed proper food. He would have certainly died had He not realized the futility of self-mortification, and decided to practice moderation instead. Then He went into the Nairanjana River to bathe. The five mendicants left Him, because they thought that He had now turned away from the holy life. He then sat down at the foot of the Bodhi tree at Gaya and vowed that He would not move until He had attained the Supreme Enlightenment. After 49 days, at the beginning of the night, He achieved the “Knowledge of Former Existence,” recollecting the successive series of His former births in the three realms. At midnight, He acquired the “Supreme

Heavenly Eye,” perceiving the spirit and the origin of the Creation. Then early next morning, He reached the state of “All Knowledge,” realizing the origin of sufferings and discovering the ways to eliminate them so as to be liberated from birth-death and reincarnation. He became Anuttara Samyak-Sambodhi, His title was Sakyamuni Buddha. He attained Enlightenment at the age of 35, on the eighth day of the twelfth month of the lunar calendar, at the time of the Morning Star’s rising. After attaining Enlightenment at the age of 35 until his Mahaparinirvana at the age of 80, he spent his life preaching and teaching. He was certainly one of the most energetic man who ever lived: forty-nine years he taught and preached day and night, sleeping only about two hours a day. The Buddha said: “I am not the first Buddha to come upon this earth, nor shall I be the last. In due time, another Buddha will arise, a Holy one, a supreme Enlightened One, an incomparable leader. He will reveal to you the same Eternal Truth which I have taught you.” Two months after his Enlightenment, the Buddha gave his first discourse entitled “The Turning of The Dharma Wheel” to the five ascetics, the Kodannas, his old companions, at the Deer Park in Benares. In this discourse, the Buddha taught: “Avoiding the two extremes of indulgence in sense pleasures and self-mortification, the Tathagata has comprehended the Middle Path, which leads to calm, wisdom, enlightenment and Nirvana. This is the Very Noble Eight-fold Path, namely, right view, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration.” Next he taught them the Four Noble Truths: Suffering, the Cause of Suffering, the Ceasing of Suffering and the Path leading to the ceasing of suffering. The Venerable Kodanna understood the Dharma and immediately became a Sotapanna, the other four asked the Buddha to receive them into his Order. It was through the second sermon on the “No-self Quality” that all of them attained Arahantship. Later the Buddha taught the Dharma to Yasa, a rich young man in Benares and his 54 companions, who all became Arahants. With the first 60 disciples in the world, the Buddha founded his Sangha and he said to them: “I am free from all fetters, both human and divine, you are also free from all fetters. Go forth, Bhiksus, for the welfare of many, for the happiness of many, out of compassion for the world, for the good and welfare, and happiness of gods and men. Preach the Dharma, perfect in

the beginning, perfect in the middle, perfect in the end, both in spirit and in letter. Proclaim the holy life in all its fullness and purity.” With these words, he sent them into the world. He himself set out for Uruvela, where he received 30 young nobles into the Order and converted the Three Brothers Kassapa, who were soon established in Arahantship by means of “the Discourse on Fire.” Then the Buddha went to Rajagaha, to visit King Bimbisara. The King, on listening to the Dharma, together with his attendants, obtained the Fruit of the First Path and formally offered the Buddha his Bamboo Grove where the Buddha and the Sangha took up their residence for a long time. There, the two chief disciples, Sariputra and Mogallana, were received into the Order. Next, the Buddha went to Kapilavatthu and received into the Order his own son, Rahula, and his half-brother Nanda. From his native land, he returned to Rajagaha and converted the rich banker Anathapindika, who presented him the Jeta Grove. For 45 years, the Buddha traversed all over India, preaching and making converts to His religion. He founded an order of monks and later another order of nuns. He challenged the caste system, taught religious freedom and free inquiry, raised the status of women up to that of men, and showed the way to liberation to all walks of life. His teaching were very simple but spiritually meaningful, requiring people “to put an end to evil, fulfil all good, and purify body and mind.” He taught the method of eradicating ignorance and suppressing sufferings. He encouraged people to maintain freedom in the mind to think freely. All people were one in the eyes of the Buddha. He advised His disciples to practice the ten supreme qualities: compassion, wisdom, renunciation, discipline, will power, forbearance, truthfulness, determination, goodwill, and equanimity. The Buddha never claimed to be a deity or a saint. He always declared that everyone could become a Buddha if he develops his qualities to perfection and is able to eliminate his ignorance completely through his own efforts. At the age of 80, after completing His teaching mission, He entered Nirvana at Kusinara, leaving behind millions of followers, among them were His wife Yasodara and His son Rahula, and a lot of priceless doctrinal treasures considered even today as precious moral and ethical models. In short, there are eight periods of Buddha’s life. First, descending from the Tushita Heaven Palace, or descend into and abode in the Tusita heaven. Second, abode at the

Tushita and visibly preached to the devas. Third, entry into his mother's womb (Queen Maha Maya). Fourth, birth from his mother's side in Limbini. Fifth, leaving the home life (leaving home at the age of 29 as a hermit). Sixth, subduing mara and accomplishing the Way. After six years suffering, subduing mara and attaining enlightenment. Seventh, turning the Dharma wheel (rolling the Law-wheel or preaching). Eighth, entering nirvana (Parinirvana) at the age of 80.

II. Six Years of Ascetic Practicing in Order to Find the Truth of the Buddha:

After Prince Siddhartha left the royal palace, he wandered in the forest of ascetics. There were many practicing ascetics. The Prince consulted one of the elders: "How can I attain true enlightenment and emancipation?" The elder replied: "We practice asceticism diligently, hoping that upon our death we could be reborn in the heavens to enjoy happiness. We don't know anything about enlightenment and emancipation." The elder added: "The way we take to the asceticism is that when we are hungry, we eat grassroots, bark, flowers, and fruits. Sometimes we pour cold water on our heads all day long. Sometimes we sleep by a fire, allowing the body to be baked and tanned. Sometimes we hang ourselves upside down on tree branches. We practice in different ways, the purpose of which is to worship the sun, moon, stars, the running water and the blazing fire." After listening to the explanations of this elder, the wise Prince knew that they had practically no knowledge of the problems of life and death and they could not even redeem themselves, not to mention saving other sentient beings. The ascetics were merely inflicting sufferings upon themselves. Then Prince Siddhartha came to study with Masters Arada and Udraka. In a short time he mastered everything they had to teach him. But still he was not satisfied. "My teachers are holy people, but what they taught me does not bring an end to all suffering. I must continue to search for the Truth on my own." So the Prince decided to relinquish this kind of ascetic life, left the forest and headed towards other places where the hermits were. He came to Gaya Hill to practice asceticism and meditation. The life which the Prince led was very simple. He just ate a little wheat and barley everyday while devoting all his energy to his practice. So his body became thinner by the day.

His body lost its radiance and became covered with dust and dirt. Eventually he looked like a living skeleton. But he still refused to give up his practices. After six years of ascetic practice, the Prince could not reach his goal. He realized that it was a mistake to punish his body like that. Finally he realized that the major issue of enlightenment and emancipation could never be achieved through ascetic practicing alone. To find the Truth, he must follow a middle path between too much pleasure and too much pain.

III. The Image of the Buddha in the Dharmapada Sutra:

No one surpasses the one whose conquest is not turned into defeat again. By what track can you lead him? The Awakened, the all-perceiving, the trackless? (Dharmapada 179). It is difficult to seduce the one that has eradicated all cravings and desires. By which way can you seduce him? The trackless Buddha of infinite range (Dharmapada 180). Even the gods envy the wise ones who are intent on meditation, who delight in the peace of renunciation (Dharmapada 181). It is difficult to obtain birth as a human being; it is difficult to have a life of mortals; it is difficult to hear the Correct Law; it is even rare to meet the Buddha (Dharmapada 182). Not to do evil, to do good, to purify one's mind, this is the teaching of the Buddhas (Dharmapada 183). The Buddhas say: "Nirvana is supreme, forbearance is the highest austerity. He is not a recluse who harms another, nor is he an ascetic who oppresses others." (Dharmapada 184). Not to slander, not to harm, but to restrain oneself in accordance with the fundamental moral codes, to be moderate in eating, to dwell in secluded abode, to meditate on higher thoughts, this is the teaching of the Buddhas (Dharmapada 185). Even a shower of gold pieces cannot satisfy lust. A wise man knows that lusts have a short taste, but long suffering (Dharmapada 186). Even in heavenly pleasures the wise man finds no delight. The disciple of the Supremely Enlightened One delights only in the destruction of craving (Dharmapada 187). Men were driven by fear to go to take refuge in the mountains, in the forests, and in sacred trees (Dharmapada 188). But that is not a safe refuge or no such refuge is supreme. A man who has gone to such refuge, is not delivered from all pain and afflictions (Dharmapada 189). On the contrary, he who takes refuge in the Buddhas, the Dharma and the Sangha, sees with right

knowledge (Dharmapada 190). With clear understanding of the four noble truths: suffering, the cause of suffering, the destruction of suffering, and the eightfold noble path which leads to the cessation of suffering (Dharmapada 191). That is the secure refuge, the supreme refuge. He who has gone to that refuge, is released from all suffering (Dharmapada 192). It is difficult to find a man with great wisdom, such a man is not born everywhere. Where such a wise man is born, that family prospers (Dharmapada 193). Happy is the birth of Buddhas! Happy is the teaching of the True Law! Happy is the harmony in the sangha! Happy is the discipline of the united ones! (Dharmapada 194). Whoever pays homage and offering, whether to the Buddhas or their disciples, those who have overcome illusions and got rid of grief and lamentation (Dharmapada 195). The merit of him who reverences such peaceful and fearless Ones cannot be measured by anyone (Dharmapada 196).

IV. The Image of the Buddha in the Point of View of Zen Tradition:

According to the Zen sects, Buddhists accept the historic Sakyamuni Buddha neither as a Supreme Deity nor as a savior who rescues men by taking upon himself the burden of their sins. Rather, it venerates him as a fully awakened, fully perfected human being who attained liberation of body and mind through his own human efforts and not by the grace of any supernatural being. According to Buddhism, we are all Buddhas from the very beginning, that means everyone of us is potentially a Buddha; however, to become a Buddha, one must follow the arduous road to enlightenment. Various classifications of the stages of Buddhahood are to be found in the sutras. A Buddha in the highest stage is not only fully enlightened but a Perfect One, one who has become whole, complete in himself, that is, one in whom all spiritual and psychic faculties have come to perfection, to maturity, to a stage of perfect harmony, and whose consciousness encompasses the infinity of the universe. Such a one can no longer be identified with the limitations of his individual personality, his individual character and existence; there is nothing by which he could be measured, there are no words to describe him.

V. The Buddha & the Birth of Meditation:

A Summary of the Birth of Meditation In Buddhism: After Prince Siddhartha Gautama decided to leave behind His princely life. After his groom Chandala saddled His white horse, He rode off the royal palace, toward the dense forest and became a wandering monk. First, He studied under the guidance of the leading masters of the day such as Alara Kalama and Uddaka Ramaputta. He learned all they could teach Him; however, He could not find what He was looking for, He joined a group of five mendicants and along with them, He embarked on a life of austerity and particularly on starvation as the means which seemed most likely to put an end to birth and death. In His desire for quietude He emaciated His body for six years, and carried out a number of strict methods of fasting, very hard for ordinary men to endure. The bulk of His body was greatly reduced by this self-torture. His fat, flesh, and blood had all gone. Only skin and bone remained. One day, worn out He fell to the ground in a dead faint. A shepherdess who happened to pass there gave Him milk to drink. Slowly, He recovered His body strength. His courage was unbroken, but His boundless intellect led Him to the decision that from now on He needed proper food. He would have certainly died had He not realized the futility of self-mortification, and decided to practice moderation instead. Then He went into the Nairanjana river to bathe. The five mendicants left Him, because they thought that He had now turned away from the holy life. He then sat down at the foot of the Bodhi tree at Gaya and vowed that He would not move until He had attained the Supreme Enlightenment. After 49 days, at the beginning of the night, He achieved the “Knowledge of Former Existence,” recollecting the successive series of His former births in the three realms. At midnight, He acquired the “Supreme Heavenly Eye,” perceiving the spirit and the origin of the Creation. Then early next morning, He reached the state of “All Knowledge,” realizing the origin of sufferings and discovering the ways to eliminate them so as to be liberated from birth-death and reincarnation. He became Anuttara Samyak-Sambodhi, His title was Sakyamuni Buddha.

As a Matter of Fact, the Title “Buddha” Speaks Out All the Meanings of Meditation: The word Buddha is not a proper name, but a title meaning “Enlightened One” or “Awakened One.” Prince

Siddhartha was not born to be called Buddha. He was not born enlightened; however, efforts after efforts, he became enlightened. Any beings who sincerely try can also be freed from all clings and become enlightened as the Buddha. All Buddhists should be aware that the Buddha was not a god or any kind of supernatural being. Like us, he was born a man. The difference between the Buddha and an ordinary man is simply that the former has awakened to his Buddha nature while the latter is still deluded about it. However, whether we are awakened or deluded, the Buddha nature is equally present in all beings. Therefore, the term “Buddha” is an epithet of those who successfully break the hold of ignorance, liberate themselves from cyclic existence, and teach others the path to liberation. The word “Buddha” derived from the Sanskrit root *budh*, “to awaken,” it refers to someone who attains Nirvana through meditative practice and the cultivation of such qualities as wisdom, patience, and generosity. Such a person will never again be reborn within cyclic existence, as all the cognitive ties that bind ordinary beings to continued rebirth have been severed. Through their meditative practice, buddhas have eliminated all craving, and defilements. The Buddha of the present era is referred to as “Sakyamuni” (Sage of the Sakya). He was born Siddhartha Gautama, a member of the Sakya clan. The Buddha is One awakened or enlightened to the true nature of existence. The word Buddha is the name for one who has been enlightened, who brings enlightenment to others, whose enlightened practice is complete and ultimate. The term Buddha derived from the Sanskrit verb root “*Budh*” meaning to understand, to be aware of, or to awake. It describes a person who has achieved the enlightenment that leads to release from the cycle of birth and death and has thereby attained complete liberation. In the Ratana Sutta, Khuddakapatha, volume 6, the Buddha taught: “What the excellent Awakened One extolled as pure and called the concentration of unmediated knowing. No equal to that concentration can be found. This, too, is an exquisite treasure in the Dhamma. By this truth may there be well-being.”

Buddhism Is a Religion of Wisdom of Emancipation, and Meditation in Buddhism Is Aiming At That Wisdom: Many people believe that they meditate to become a Buddha. Yes, they’re right. The exposition of meditation as it is handed down in the early Buddhist

writings is more or less based on the methods used by the Buddha for his own attainment of enlightenment and Nirvana, and on his personal experience of mental development. Therefore, the final goal of any Buddhist is becoming a Buddha; however, meditation itself will not turn any beings to a Buddha. The contemplative traditions of Buddhism are not simple like that. What distinguishes Buddhism from the contemplative traditions of other religions is the fact that, for Buddhism, meditation by itself is not enough. We might say that, for Buddhism, meditation is like sharpening a knife. We sharpen a knife for a purpose, let's say, in order to cut something easily. Similarly, by means of meditation, we sharpen the mind for a definite purpose, in the case of cultivation in Buddhism, the purpose is wisdom. The wisdom that's able us to eliminate ignorance and to cut off sufferings and afflictions. The word meditation really is no equivalent for the Buddhist term "bhavana" which literally means 'development' or 'culture,' that is development of the mind, culture of the mind, or 'making-the-mind become.' It is the effort to build up a calm, concentrated mind that sees clearly the true nature of all phenomenal things and realizes Nirvana, the ideal state of mental health. In Buddhism, meditation functions the job of a torch which gives light to a dark mind. Suppose we are in a dark room with a torch in hand. If the light of the torch is too dim, or if the flame of the torch is disturbed by drafts of air, or if the hand holding the torch is unsteady, it's impossible to see anything clearly. Similarly, if we don't meditate correctly, we can't never obtain the wisdom that can penetrate the darkness of ignorance and see into the real nature of existence, and eventually cut off all sufferings and afflictions. Therefore, sincere Buddhists should always remember that meditation is only a means, one of the best means to obtain wisdom in Buddhism. Furthermore, owing to obtaining the wisdom, one can see right from wrong and be able to avoid the extremes of indulgence in pleasures of senses and tormenting the body.

Priceless Message from the Buddha Which Is Related to the Cultivation of Meditation: Priceless Message from the Buddha or the Four Noble Truths is one of the most important parts in the Buddha's Teachings. The Buddha gave this message to suffering humanity for their guidance, to help them to be rid of the bondage of "Dukkha" and to attain happiness, both relative and absolute (relative happiness or

worldly happiness, absolute happiness or Nirvana). These Truths are not the Buddha's creation. He only re-discovered their existence. The Buddha said: "I am neither a vaguely so-called God nor an incarnation of any vaguely so-called God. I am only a man who re-discovers what had been covered for so long. I am only a man who attains enlightenment by completely comprehending all Noble Truths." In fact, the Buddha is a man who deserves our respect and reverence not only as a teacher but also as a Saint. He was a man, but an extraordinary man, a unique being in the universe. All his achievements are attributed to his human effort and his human understanding. He achieved the highest mental and intellectual attainments, reached the supreme purity and was perfect in the best qualities of human nature. He was an embodiment of compassion and wisdom, two noble principles in Buddhism. The Buddha never claimed to be a savior who tried to save 'souls' by means of a revelation of other religions. According to the Buddha, only through continuous meditation we can perceive our mind clearly and purely. Only through continuous meditation we can gradually overcome mental wandering and abandon conceptual distractions. At the same time we can focus our mind within and observe whatever arises (thoughts, sensations of body, hearing, smelling, tasting and images). Through continuous meditation we are able to contemplate that they all are impermanent, we then develop the ability to let go of everything. Nirvana appears right at the moment we let go of everything. The Buddha's message is simple but priceless to all of us: "Infinite potentialities are latent in man and that it must be man's effort and endeavor to develop and unfold these possibilities. That is to say, in each man, there exists the Buddha-nature; however, deliverance and enlightenment lie fully within man's effort and endeavor."

Chapter Two

A Summary of the School of Buddhist Meditation

I. A Summary of the School of Buddhist Meditation:

Dhyana is Meditation (Zen), probably a transliteration. Meditation is an element of Concentration; however, the two words (dhyana and samadhi) are loosely used. Concentration is an interpretation of Samadhi. Samadhi covers the whole ground of meditation, concentration or abstraction, reaching to the ultimate beyond emotion or thinking. There are several different definitions for Dhyana and Samadhi: Meditation or Mental development, or to meditate upon the implications or disciplines of pain, unreality, impermanence, and the non-ego. Although different in forms and methods in different Buddhist schools, but has the same goal is to concentrate the mind of the cultivators, to calm and to clarify it as one would calm and clarify the surface of a turbulent body of water, so that the bottom of which can be seen. Once the surface of that turbulent water is pacified, one can see its bottom as when the mind is pacified, one can come to an experience or a state of awakening, liberation or enlightenment. In addition, diligent repetition of practice of meditation, if the cultivator has not yet become one with the “absolute truth,” dualistic state of mind and distinction between subject and object disappeared in that person. Meditation is also a process of concentration and absorption by which the mind is first tranquilized and brought to one-pointedness, and then awakened.

“Dhyana” is one of the six paramitas. The term “Dhyana” connotes Buddhism and Buddhist things in general, but has special application to the Zen (Ch’an) sects. As a Mahayana Buddhist sect, Zen is a religious free of dogmas or creeds whose teachings and disciplines are directed toward self-consummation. For example, the full awakening that Sakyamuni Buddha himself experienced under the Bodhi-tree after strenuous self-discipline. In Vietnam, Zen sects comprise of Lin-Chi, T’ao-Tung, and Ch’u-Lin. Meditation is not a state of self-suggestion. Enlightenment does not consist in producing a certain premeditated condition by intensely thinking of it. Meditation is the growing

conscious of a new power in the mind, which enabled it to judge things from a new point of view. The cultivation of Zen consists in upsetting the existing artificially constructed framework once for all and in remodelling it on an entirely new basis. The older frame is called 'ignorance' and the new one 'enlightenment.' It is evident that no products of our relative consciousness or intelligent faculty can play any part in Zen. Buddhists practise meditation for mind-training and self-discipline by looking within ourselves. To meditate is to try to understand the nature of the mind and to use it effectively in daily life. The mind is the key to happiness, and also the key to sufferings. To practice meditation daily will help free the mind from bondage to any thought-fetters, defilements, as well as distractions in daily life. Practicing meditation is the most direct way to reach enlightenment.

According to the Zen sect, the key theory of Zen, to look inwards and not to look outwards, is the only way to achieve enlightenment, which to the human mind is ultimately the same as Buddhahood. In this system, the emphasis is upon 'intuition,' its peculiarity being that it has no words in which to express itself, no method to reason itself out, no extended demonstration of its own truth in a logically convincing manner. If it expresses itself at all, it does so in symbols and images. In the course of time this system developed its philosophy of intuition to such a degree that it remains unique to this day. According to Prof. Junjiro Takakusu in *The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy*, Zen has much philosophy, but is not a philosophy in the strict sense of the term. It is the most religious school of all and yet not a religion in the ordinary sense of the word. It has no scripture of the Buddha, nor does it hold any discipline of the Buddha. Without a sutra (discourse) or a vinaya (Discipline) text, no school or sect would seem to be Buddhistic. However, according to the ideas of Zen, those who cling to words, letters or rules can never fully comprehend the speaker's true idea. The ideal or truth conceived by the Buddha should be different from those taught by him because the teaching was necessarily conditioned by the language he used, by the hearers whom he was addressing, and by the environment in which the speaker and hearers were placed. What Zen aims at is the Buddha's ideal, pure and unconditioned. The school is otherwise called 'the School of the Buddha's Mind.' The Buddha's mind is after all a human mind. An introspection of the

human mind alone can bring aspirant to a perfect enlightenment. But how? The general purport of Buddhism is to let one see rightly and walk rightly. *Darsana-marga*: The way of viewing is different from the way of walking. To judge whether the path we are going to take is right or not, first of all, science is important. *Bhavana-marga*: The way of walking or the way of cultivation. People often walk without seeing the way. Religions generally lay importance on practice, that is, how to walk, but neglect teaching the intellectual activity with which to determine the right way, that is, how to see.

With Zen, as we go on, we discover that philosophy is much more important than anything else. In case science and philosophy do not give a satisfactory result, we must resort to the meditative method of Zen in order to get insight into any given problem. First, find out your way and begin to walk on it. The foot acquired by meditation can carry you across the wave-flux of human life, and over and above the air region of the heavenly world and finally make you perfect and enlightened like the Buddha. Contemplation is the eye which gives insight, and, at the same time, the foot which procures a proper walk. Zen (meditation and concentration) is the lens on which diverse objects outside will be concentrated and again dispersed and impressed on the surface of the negative plates inside. The concentration on the lens itself is concentration (samadhi) and the deeper the concentration is, the quicker the awakening of intuitive intellect. The further impression on the negative film is wisdom (prajna) and this is the basis of intellectual activity. Through the light of reflection (prajna) outwardly, i.e., insight, we see and review the outer world of diversity once again so as to function or act appropriately toward actual life.

According to the Lankavatara Sutra, the Zen sects believe in direct enlightenment, disregarded ritual and sutras and depended upon the inner light and personal influence for the propagation of its tenets, founding itself on the esoteric tradition supposed to have been imparted to Kasyapa by the Buddha, who indicated his meaning by plucking a flower without further explanation. Kasyapa smiled in apprehension and is supposed to have passed on this mystic method to the patriarchs. According to Prof. Junjiro Takakusu in *The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy*, as an inheritance from the ancient Aryan race, India has had the habit of meditation practiced in all schools of

philosophy as well as in religion. There are six systems of Indian philosophy, one of which called Yoga, is especially devoted to meditation or concentration. The Yoga system is the practical side of the Sankhya philosophy, which is dualistic. In Sankhya, Self (Atman) and Nature (Prakriti), one blind as it were, and the other lame, cannot function without being united. Self has the intellectual function, but cannot move without the physical function of Nature. When the two combine together, they see the way and move at will. Self, like the promoter of a theatrical play, simply looks on his mate's acting and moving but curiously thinks that he himself is acting in the moving, though in reality only Nature is moving and achieving. Only self-culture brings about freedom, that is, dependence of Self. The method of self-culture is practically the Yoga system of Patanjali in the second century B.C. The Sankhya system, originally heterodox since it was atheistic, asserted only the existence of the individual Self (Atman) and not of Universal Self (Mahatman). But in the practice of abstract meditation an object of self-concentration was necessary and so the doctrine assumes the form of deism, but not theism. At the end of meditation, when the absolute separation of Self from Nature has been effected, the object of meditation, Brahman, Paramatman or God, whatever it is, is no longer used. The importance of the abstract meditation of the Yoga system is laid upon the evolution and reversion of the dual principles and upon the final liberation of Self from Nature, while that of the idealistic Yogacara School of Buddhism is centered on the unification of the world within and without, on the synthesizing of our causal and illusory existences, and thus negatively discovering the state of Thusness (Tathata). Buddhism, has, of course, a special doctrine of meditation. Although the depth and width of contemplation depend upon one's personal character, the methods or contents of meditation taught by the Buddha are similar in Hinayana and Mahayana. This special meditation is generally called 'Tathagata meditation,' as it forms one part of the sacred teaching. The highest development of it is seen in the perfect 'calmness and insight' (samathavipasyana) of the T'ien-T'ai School and in the mystical Yogacara of the Shingon School.

According to Zen Master D.T. Suzuki in *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, Book III, *the Zen Sect also believes in the trikaya: First, Dharmakaya:*

The Dharmakaya is the essence-being of all the Buddhas and also of all beings. What makes at all possible the existence of anything is the Dharmakaya, without which the world itself is inconceivable. But, especially, the Dharmakaya is the essence-body of all beings which forever is. In this sense it is Dharmata or Buddhata, that is, the Buddha-nature within all beings. *Second, Sambhogakaya:* The Sambhogakaya is the spiritual body of the Bodhisattvas which is enjoyed by them as the fruit of their self-discipline in all the virtues of perfection. This they acquire for themselves according the law of moral causation, and in this they are delivered at last from all the defects and defilements inherent in the realm of the five Skandhas. *Third, Nirmanakaya:* The Nirmanakaya is born of great loving heart (mahakaruna) of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. By reason of this love they have for all beings, they never remain in the self-enjoyment of the fruits of their moral deeds. Their intense desire is to share those fruits with their fellow-beings. If the ignorant could be saved by the Bodhisattva by his vicariously suffering for them, he would do so. If the ignorant could be enlightened by the Bodhisattva by turning his stock of merit over to them, he would do so. This turning over of merit and this vicarious suffering are accomplished by the Bodhisattva by means of his Nirmanakaya, transformation-body. Nirmanakaya is a body assumed by the Buddha in order to establish contact with the world in a human form. In this form, therefore, the Bodhisattva, spatially speaking, divides himself into hundreds of thousands of kotis of bodies. He can then be recognized in the form of a creeping caterpillar, in a sky-scraping mountain, in the saintly figure of Saints, and even in the shape of a world-devouring Evil One (Mara), if he thinks it necessary to take this form in order to save a world that has passed into the hands of ignorance, evil passions, and all kinds of defilements and corruptions.

According to Edward Conze in *Buddhism: Its Essence and Development*, there are ***four stages of development of the Zen School:*** *The first period is a formative period:* The formative period began about 440 A.D. with a group of students of Gunabhadra's Chinese translation of the Lankavatara Sutra. About 520 A.D. we have the legendary figure of Bodhidharma. After that, a few groups of monks round Zen masters like Seng-T'san (?-606), whose poem, called Hsin Hsin Ming (On Believing in Mind) is one of the finest expositions of

Buddhism we know of, and Hui-Neng (637-713), of South China, who is held up to posterity as an illiterate, practically-minded person, who approached truth abruptly and without circumlocution. Much of the traditions about the early history of Zen are the inventions of later age. Many of the Sayings and Songs of the patriarchs which are transmitted to us are, however, very valuable historical and spiritual documents.

The second period, Zen became a separate Sect: After 700 A.D. Zen established itself as a separate school. In 734, Shen-Hui, a disciple of Hui-Neng, founded a school in the South of China. While the Northern branch of Zen died out in the middle of the T'ang dynasty (750A.D.), all the later developments of Zen issue from Shen-Hui's school. Whereas so far the Zen monks had lived in the monasteries of the Lu-Tsung (Vinaya) sect, about 750 A.D. Pai-Chang provided them with a special rule of their own, and an independent organization. The most revolutionary feature of Pai-Chang's Vinaya was the introduction of manual work. "A Day Without Work, A Day Without Food." Under the T'ang Dynasty (618-907), the Zen sect slowly gained its ascendancy over the other schools. One of the reasons was the fact that it survived the bitter persecution of 845 better than any other sects. The five Great Masters among Hui-Neng's disciples initiated a long series of great T'ang masters of Zen, and this was the heroic and creative period of Zen.

The third period, Zen was systemized: By about 1,000 A.D., Zen had overshadowed all Chinese Buddhist sects, except Amidism. Within the Zen school, the Lin-Chi sect had gained the leadership. Its approach was now systematized, and to some extent mechanized. In the form of collections of riddles and cryptic sayings, usually connected with the T'ang masters, special text books were composed in the Twelfth and Thirteenth centuries. The riddles are technically known as Kungan (Japanese Koan), literally "official document." An example of this one: Once a monk asked Tung-Shan: "What is the Buddha?" Tung-Shan replied: "Three pounds of flax." *The final period is one of permeation into the general culture of the Far East:* Generally speaking, in this period, Zen penetrated its art and the general habits into daily life activities. The art of the Sung Period is an expression of Zen philosophy. It was particularly in Japan that the cultural influence of Zen made itself felt. Zen had been brought to Japan about 1,200 by Eisai and Dogen. Its simplicity and straightforward heroism appealed to

the men of the military class. Zen discipline helped them to overcome the fear of death. Many poems were composed testifying to the soldier's victory over death.

II. Five Kinds of Meditation in Buddhist Teachings:

The five varieties of meditation: First, Ordinary Zen for anybody and everybody, which help people learn to concentrate and control their mind, being free from any philosophic or religious content. Ordinary is a pure Zen practice, in the belief that it can improve both physical and mental health. However, the fact remains that ordinary Zen, although far more beneficial for the cultivation of the mind than the reading of countless books on ethics and philosophy, is unable to resolve the fundamental problem of man and his relation to the universe, because it cannot pierce the ordinary man's basic delusion of himself as distinctly other than the universe. Second, an outside way of meditation or Outsider Zen, i.e. Indian (Hindu) Yoga, the quiet sitting of Confucianism, contemplation practices in Christianity, etc. One aspect of the outsider Zen is that it is often practiced in order to cultivate various supranormal powers or skills, or to master certain arts beyond the reach of ordinary man, i.e walking barefooted on sharp sword blades or staring at sparrows so that they become paralyzed. Another aspect of the outsider Zen is that it is practiced to obtain rebirth in various heavens. These aspects of the outsider Zen are not the objects of Zen Buddhism; the ultimate goal of Buddhist meditators is to become a Buddha. Third, Hinayana Zen or Zen of Small Vehicle. This is the vehicle or teaching that is to take you from one state of mind to another state of mind, i.e. from delusion to enlightenment. However, Zen of the Small Vehicle looks only into one's own peace of mind. The purpose of Zen of Small Vehicle is to attain one of the four degrees of saintliness of Hinayana. Fourth, Mahayana Zen or Great Vehicle Zen, this is a truly Buddhist Zen, for it has its central purpose, seeing into your essential nature and realizing the way in your daily life. In the practice of Mahayana Zen your aim in the beginning is to awaken to your true-nature, but upon enlightenment you realize that meditation is more than a means to enlightenment. It is the actualization of your true-nature. The object of the Mahayana Zen is Awakening, it is easy to mistakenly regard meditation as but a means.

However, any enlightened masters point out from the beginning that meditation is in fact the actualization of the innate Buddha-nature and not merely a technique for achieving enlightenment. If meditation were no more than such a technique, it would follow that after awakening meditation would be unnecessary. But T'ao-Yuan himself pointed out, precisely the reverse is true; THE MORE DEEPLY YOU EXPERIENCE AWAKENING, THE MORE YOU PERCEIVE THE NEED FOR PRACTICE. Fifth, Zen of the highest vehicle. This is the culmination and crown of Buddhist Zen. This Zen was practiced by all Buddhas of the past, namely Sakyamuni and Amitabha. It is the expression of the Absolute Life, life in its purest form. It is the meditation that T'ao-Yuan chiefly advocated and it involves no struggle for awakening or any other objects. In this highest practice, means and end are just one, Mahayana Zen and Zen of the highest vehicle are in fact complementary for one another. When rightly practiced, you sit in the firm conviction that meditation is the actualization of your undefiled True-nature, and at the same time you sit in complete faith that the day will come when, exclaiming "Oh, this is it!" You will unmistakably realize this True-nature. Therefore you need not self-consciously strive for enlightenment.

III. Summaries of the Cores of Buddhist Zen Teachings:

Zen is the Japanese pronunciation of the Chinese word "Ch'an" which in turn is the Chinese pronunciation of the Sanskrit technical term Dhyana, meaning meditation. The distinctive characteristic of the Buddha's practice at the time of his enlightenment was his inner search. For this reason, many people believe that they meditate to become a Buddha. Yes, they're right. The final goal of any Buddhist is becoming a Buddha; however, meditation itself will not turn any beings to a Buddha. Zen is the method of meditation and contemplation, the method of keeping the mind calm and quiet, the method of self-realization to discover that the Buddha-nature is nothing other than the true nature. However, the contemplative traditions of Buddhism are not simple like that. What distinguishes Buddhism from the contemplative traditions of other religions is the fact that, for Buddhism, meditation by itself is not enough. We might say that, for Buddhism, meditation is like sharpening a knife. We sharpen a knife for a purpose, let's say, in order

to cut something easily. Similarly, by means of meditation, we sharpen the mind for a definite purpose, in the case of cultivation in Buddhism, the purpose is wisdom. The wisdom that's able us to eliminate ignorance and to cut off sufferings and afflictions. Before the moment of 'Enlightenment', the Buddha practiced the inward way for forty-nine days until suddenly He experienced enlightenment and became the Buddha. By turning inward upon Himself, he discovered His true nature, or Buddha-nature. This is the ultimate aim of Zen. Zen in Buddhism differs from meditation in other religions. Most other religions place a supreme God above man and then ask that man should pray to God and worship Him, implying that reality is to be sought externally. While Zen in Buddhism holds that reality is to be gotten hold of, not externally, but inwardly. Zen practice means trying to have a mind unmoved while living in this continuously moving world. Zen practice means trying to be like the water, not like waves or bubbles. The water is unmoved, uncreated and unconditioned while the waves rise and fall, and the bubbles form and pop endlessly. Zen practitioners should always remember that our mind is like an endless stream of thoughts, Zen practice means to try to watch the mind continuously, and be like water, which equally flows all things thrown into that stream. According to Buddhism, every living being has within himself the Buddha-nature, and to become a Buddha is simply to turn inward to discover this Buddha-nature. This Buddha-nature is always present within, and eternally shining. It is like the sun and the moon. The sun and the moon continually shine and give forth light, but when the clouds cover them, we cannot see the sunlight or the moonlight. The goal of any Zen practitioner is to eliminate the clouds, for when the clouds fly away, we can see the light again. In the same way, human beings always have within ourselves the Buddha-nature, but when our desires, attachments and afflictions cover it up, it does not appear. In Buddhism, meditation functions the job of a torch which gives light to a dark mind. Suppose we are in a dark room with a torch in hand. If the light of the torch is too dim, or if the flame of the torch is disturbed by drafts of air, or if the hand holding the torch is unsteady, it's impossible to see anything clearly. Similarly, if we don't meditate correctly, we can't never obtain the wisdom that can penetrate the darkness of ignorance and see into the real nature of existence, and

eventually cut off all sufferings and afflictions. It is obvious that the essentials of Buddhism or Zen focus on the practice with wisdom, not on ignorance. If our purpose to practice Zen is to gain supernatural powers, i.e., to release our soul from our body, and so forth, we are not practicing Zen Buddhism. To cultivate Zen in Buddhism, we have to realize our true nature and live in it. Therefore, sincere Buddhists should always remember that meditation is only a means, one of the best means to obtain wisdom in Buddhism. Furthermore, owing to obtaining the wisdom, one can see right from wrong and be able to avoid the extremes of indulgence in pleasures of senses and tormenting the body.

What Is Meditation?: Dhyana is considered meditating. Meditation in the visible or known is called Dhyana. Dhyana is Meditation (Zen), probably a transliteration. Meditation is an element of Concentration; however, the two words (dhyana and samadhi) are loosely used. Ch'an is a Chinese version from the Sanskrit word "Dhyana," which refers to collectedness of mind or meditative absorption in which all dualistic distinctions disappear. The fifth paramita (to practice dhyana to obtain real wisdom or prajna). In dhyana all dualistic distinctions like subject, object, true, false are eliminated. Ch'an is a Chinese most equivalent word to the Sanskrit word "Dhyana," which means meditation. To enter into meditation. A school that developed in East Asia, which emphasized meditation aimed at a non-conceptual, direct understanding of reality. Its name is believed to derive from the Sanskrit term "Dhyana." Dhyana is a general term for meditation or a state of quietude or equanimity gained through relaxation. To meditate, to calm down, and to eliminate attachments, the aversions, anger, jealousy and the ignorance that are in our heart so that we can achieve a transcendental wisdom which leads to enlightenment. It traces itself back to the Indian monk named Bodhidharma, who according to tradition travelled to China in the early sixth century. He is considered to be the twenty-eighth Indian and the first Chinese patriarch of the Zen tradition. The school's primary emphasis on meditation, and some schools make use of enigmatic riddles called "kung-an," which are designed to defeat conceptual thinking and aid in direct realization of truth. When looking into the origins of Zen, we find that the real founder of Zen is none other than the Buddha himself. Through the

practice of inward meditation the Buddha attained Supreme Enlightenment and thereby became the Awakened One, the Lord of Wisdom and Compassion. In Buddhism, there are many methods of cultivation, and meditation is one of the major and most important methods in Buddhism. According to the Buddhist History, our Honorable Gautama Buddha reached the Ultimate Spiritual Perfection after many days of meditation under the Bodhi Tree. The Buddha taught more than 25 centuries ago that by practicing Zen we seek to turn within and discover our true nature. We do not look above, we do not look below, we do not look to the east or west or north or south; we look into ourselves, for within ourselves and there alone is the center upon which the whole universe turns. To this day, we, Buddhist followers still worship Him in a position of deep meditation. Zen is traced to a teaching the Buddha gave by silently holding a golden lotus. The general audience was perplexed, but the disciple Mahakasyapa understood the significance and smiled subtly. The implication of this is that the essence of the Dharma is beyond words. In Zen, that essence is transmitted from teacher to disciple in sudden moments, breakthroughs of understanding.

The meaning Mahakasyapa understood was passed down in a lineage of 28 Indian Patriarchs to Bodhidharma. Bodhidharma, an Indian meditation master, strongly adhered to the Lankavatara Sutra, a Yogacara text. He went to China around 470 A.D., and began the Zen tradition there. It spread to Korea and Vietnam, and in the 12th century became popular in Japan. Zen is a Japanese word, in Chinese is Ch'an, in Vietnamese is Thiền, in Sanskrit is "Dhyana" which means meditative concentration. There are a number of different Zen lineages in China, Japan and Vietnam, each of it has its own practices and histories, but all see themselves as belonging to a tradition that began with Sakyamuni Buddha. Zen histories claim that the lineage began when the Buddha passed on the essence of his awakened mind to his disciple Kasyapa, who in turn transmitted to his successor. The process continued through a series of twenty-eight Indian patriarchs to Bodhidharma, who transmitted it to China. All the early Indian missionaries and Chinese monks were meditation masters. Meditation was one of many practices the Buddha gave instruction in, ethics, generosity, patience, and wisdom were others, and the Ch'an tradition

arose from some practitioners' wish to make meditation their focal point. An underlying principle in Zen is that all beings have Buddha nature, the seed of intrinsic Buddhahood. Some Zen masters express this by saying all beings are already Buddhas, but their minds are clouded over by disturbing attitudes and obscurations. Their job, then, is to perceive this Buddha nature and let it shine forth without hindrance. Because the fundamental requirement for Buddhahood, Buddha nature, is already within everyone, Zen stresses attaining enlightenment in this very lifetime. Zen masters do not teach about rebirth and karma in depth, although they accept them. According to Zen, there is no need to avoid the world by seeking nirvana elsewhere. This is because first, all beings have Buddha-nature already, and second, when they realize emptiness, they will see that cyclic existence and nirvana are not different.

Zen is accurately aware of the limitations of language, and gears its practice to transcend it. When we practice meditation we seek to turn to within and to discover our true nature. We do not look above, we do not look below, we do not look to the east or to the west, or to the north, or to the south; we look into ourselves, for within ourselves and there alone is the center upon which the whole universe turns. Experience is stressed, not mere intellectual learning. Thus, associating with an experienced teacher is important. The Zen teacher's duty is to bring the students back to the reality existing in the present moment whenever their fanciful minds get involved in conceptual wanderings. In this sense, Ch'an is a religion, the teachings, and practices of which are directed toward self-realization and lead finally to complete awakening or enlightenment as experienced by Sakyamuni Buddha after intensive meditative self-discipline under the Bodhi-tree. More than any other school, Ch'an stresses the prime importance of the enlightenment experience and the uselessness of ritual religious practices and intellectual analysis of doctrine for the attainment of liberation. Ch'an teaches the practice of sitting in meditative absorption as the shortest, but also steepest, way to awakening. The essential nature of Ch'an can be summarized in four short statements: Special transmission outside the orthodox teaching; nondependence on sacred writings; direct pointing to the human heart; leading to realization of one's own nature and becoming a Buddha. Esoterically regarded,

Ch'an is not a religion, but rather an indefinable, incommunicable root, free from all names, descriptions, and concepts, that can only be experienced by each individual for him or herself. From expressed forms of this, all religions have sprung. In this sense, Ch'an is not bound to any religion, including Buddhism. It is the primordial perfection of everything existing, designated by the most various names, experienced by all great sages, and founders of religions of all cultures and times. Buddhism has referred to it as the "identity of Samsara and Nirvana." From this point of view, Ch'an is not a method that brings people living in ignorance to the goal of liberation; rather it is the immediate expression and actualization of the perfection present in every person at every moment.

Exoterically regarded, Zen, or Ch'an as it is called when referring to its history in China, is a school of Mahayana Buddhism, which developed in China in the 6th and 7th centuries from the meeting of Dhyana Buddhism, which was brought to China by Bodhidharma, and Taoism. However, according to Buddhist traditions, there are five different kinds of Zen: Outer Path Zen, Common People's Zen, Hinayana Zen, Mahayana Zen, and Utmost Vehicle Zen. Outer Path Zen: Outer Path Zen includes many different types of meditation. For example, Christian meditation, Divine Light, Transcendental Meditation, and so on. Common People's Zen: Common People's Zen is concentration meditation, Dharma Play meditation, sports, the tea ceremony, ritual ceremonies, etc. Hinayana Zen: Hinayana Zen is insight into impermanence, impurity, and non-self. Mahayana Zen: Mahayana Zen a) insight into the existence and nonexistence of the nature of the dharmas; b) insight into the fact that there are no external, tangible characteristics, and that all is empty; c) insight into existence, emptiness, and the Middle Way; d) insight into the true aspect of all phenomena; e) insight into the mutual interpenetration of all phenomena; f) insight that sees that phenomena themselves are the Absolute. These six are equal to the following statement from the Avatamsaka Sutra: "If you wish thoroughly understand all the Buddhas of the past, present, and future, then you should view the nature of the whole universe as being created by the mind alone." Utmost Vehicle Zen: Utmost Vehicle Zen, which is divided into three types: Theoretical Zen, Tathagata Zen, and Patriarchal Zen.

In the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha taught: “From meditation arises wisdom. Lack of meditation wisdom is gone. One who knows this twofold road of gain and loss, will conduct himself to increase his wisdom (Dharmapada 282). He who controls his hands and legs; he who controls his speech; and in the highest, he who delights in meditation; he who is alone, serene and contented with himself. He is truly called a Bhikshu (Dharmapada 362). Meditate monk! Meditate! Be not heedless. Do not let your mind whirl on sensual pleasures. Don’t wait until you swallow a red-hot iron ball, then cry, “This is sorrow!” (Dharmapada 371). He who is meditative, stainless and secluded; he who has done his duty and is free from afflictions; he who has attained the highest goal, I call him a Brahmana (Dharmapada 386).”

Practice Meditation & Contemplation In Buddhism: Zen is the Japanese pronunciation of the Chinese word “Ch’an” which in turn is the Chinese pronunciation of the Sanskrit technical term Dhyana, meaning meditation. The distinctive characteristic of the Buddha’s practice at the time of his enlightenment was his inner search. For this reason, many people believe that they meditate to become a Buddha. Yes, they’re right. The final goal of any Buddhist is becoming a Buddha; however, meditation itself will not turn any beings to a Buddha. Zen is the method of meditation and contemplation, the method of keeping the mind calm and quiet, the method of self-realization to discover that the Buddha-nature is nothing other than the true nature. However, the contemplative traditions of Buddhism are not simple like that. What distinguishes Buddhism from the contemplative traditions of other religions is the fact that, for Buddhism, meditation by itself is not enough. We might say that, for Buddhism, meditation is like sharpening a knife. We sharpen a knife for a purpose, let’s say, in order to cut something easily. Similarly, by means of meditation, we sharpen the mind for a definite purpose, in the case of cultivation in Buddhism, the purpose is wisdom. The wisdom that’s able us to eliminate ignorance and to cut off sufferings and afflictions. Before the moment of ‘Enlightenment’, the Buddha practiced the inward way for forty-nine days until suddenly He experienced enlightenment and became the Buddha. By turning inward upon Himself, he discovered His true nature, or Buddha-nature. This is the ultimate aim of Zen. Zen in

Buddhism differs from meditation in other religions. Most other religions place a supreme God above man and then ask that man should pray to God and worship Him, implying that reality is to be sought externally. While Zen in Buddhism holds that reality is to be gotten hold of, not externally, but inwardly. Zen practice means trying to have a mind unmoved while living in this continuously moving world. Zen practice means trying to be like the water, not like waves or bubbles. The water is unmoved, uncreated and unconditioned while the waves rise and fall, and the bubbles form and pop endlessly. Zen practitioners should always remember that our mind is like an endless stream of thoughts, Zen practice means to try to watch the mind continuously, and be like water, which equally flows all things thrown into that stream. According to Buddhism, every living being has within himself the Buddha-nature, and to become a Buddha is simply to turn inward to discover this Buddha-nature. This Buddha-nature is always present within, and eternally shining. It is like the sun and the moon. The sun and the moon continually shine and give forth light, but when the clouds cover them, we cannot see the sunlight or the moonlight. The goal of any Zen practitioner is to eliminate the clouds, for when the clouds fly away, we can see the light again. In the same way, human beings always have within ourselves the Buddha-nature, but when our desires, attachments and afflictions cover it up, it does not appear. In Buddhism, meditation functions the job of a torch which gives light to a dark mind. Suppose we are in a dark room with a torch in hand. If the light of the torch is too dim, or if the flame of the torch is disturbed by drafts of air, or if the hand holding the torch is unsteady, it's impossible to see anything clearly. Similarly, if we don't meditate correctly, we can't never obtain the wisdom that can penetrate the darkness of ignorance and see into the real nature of existence, and eventually cut off all sufferings and afflictions. It is obvious that the essentials of Buddhism or Zen focus on the practice with wisdom, not on ignorance. If our purpose to practice Zen is to gain supernatural powers, i.e., to release our soul from our body, and so forth, we are not practicing Zen Buddhism. To cultivate Zen in Buddhism, we have to realize our true nature and live in it. Therefore, sincere Buddhists should always remember that meditation is only a means, one of the best means to obtain wisdom in Buddhism. Furthermore, owing to

obtaining the wisdom, one can see right from wrong and be able to avoid the extremes of indulgence in pleasures of senses and tormenting the body.

Meditation Is For Practicing, Not So Much An Unpractical Theoretical Philosophy: Zen is not so much a theoretical philosophy to be discussed and debated at leisure as it is a way of action, a philosophy to be practiced and realized every moment of our daily life. To attain the experience of enlightenment, the ultimate goal of Zen, sitting meditation is necessary, but only sitting meditation is not enough. Meditation serves to develop wisdom, but we must be able to give concrete expression to this wisdom, and to do so, we have to cultivate right action. Many people think that a Zen practitioner turns his back upon the world to submerge himself in abstract meditation. This is a misconception. To practice meditation is to make the practice of sitting meditation an integral part of our daily life, but it is at the same time to work, to act with loving-kindness and respect for others, to contribute our part to the world in which we live in order to change this world into a better world. The Zen way is not to withdraw from life into an isolate environment, but to get into life and change it from the inside action. To perform our daily activities in the spirit of meditation, we should perform everything as a form of meditation. We should not meditate only when we sit in quiet, but should apply the method of meditation to our daily life. When we wash dishes, we must meditate. When we work in the garden, meditate. When we drive, meditate. When we work in an office, meditate. In other words, we must meditate at every moment, in every activity of our daily life. To those who have a life of cultivation, life is Zen, but some people say that life is suffering. As a matter of fact, if we make a life of Zen, then our life becomes Zen. In the contrary, if we make a life of suffering, then our life must become suffering. We should keep our mind in Zen just now, at this very moment, for this 'just-now mind in Zen' continues and becomes our life, as one point continues and becomes a straight line.

Indeed, meditation is not done by polishing the logical thinking, but by cultivating the mind. In accordance with Zen's attitude towards intellectual insight, its aim of teaching is not as in the West an ever-increasing subtlety of logical thinking, but its method "consists in putting one in a dilemma, out of which one must contrive to escape not

through logic indeed but through a mind of higher order. Accordingly the teacher is not a teacher in Western sense. He is a master, inasmuch as he has mastered his own mind, and hence is capable of conveying to the student the only thing that can be conveyed: his existence. With all that the master can do, he is helpless to make the disciple take hold of the thing, unless the latter is fully prepared for it. The taking hold of the ultimate reality is to be done by oneself. It is no use if we only reason that names and their forms are different, but their substance is the same, or names and forms are made by our thinking. We have to realize through meditation and contemplation, not by thinking, so that we will not have attachment to name and form, then we will automatically see that all substance is one with our real experience. Then we will see all things in the universe, the sun, the moon, the stars, mountains, rivers, people, and so forth, have the same substance.

Meditation Is A Mental Development Not an Exercise in Analysis or Reasoning: Zen does not encourage practitioners to involve worshipping or praying to some supernatural being, but seeing into our true nature and realizing that our true nature is Buddha-nature. To arrive at this insight we must cultivate ourselves, we must practice. How can we discover our true nature if we blindly cling to the scriptures and do not practice for ourselves? If we go to a meditation center and speak with a Zen master, sometimes he may answer our questions with silence. This is the silence of knowledge. It does not mean that the Zen master does not know how to answer; rather it means that he is trying to communicate that there are some things which cannot be explained in words, things which will ever remain in the dark until we discover them through our own experience. This is one of the three flavors taught by the Buddha. To sit in dhyana (abstract meditation, fixed abstraction, contemplation). Its introduction to China is attributed to Bodhidharma, though it came earlier, and its extension to T'ien-T'ai. According to the Vimalakirti Sutra, Vimalakirti reminded Sariputra about meditation, saying: "Sariputra, meditation is not necessarily sitting. For meditation means the non-appearance of body and mind in the three worlds (of desire, form and no form); giving no thought to inactivity when in nirvana while appearing (in the world) with respect-inspiring deportment; not straying from the Truth while attending to worldly affairs; the mind abiding neither within nor

without; being imperturbable to wrong views during the practice of the thirty-seven contributory stages leading to enlightenment: and not wiping out troubles (klesa) while entering the state of nirvana. If you can thus sit in meditation, you will win the Buddha's seal." We, Buddhist followers, should always see this, so that we can practice meditation on a regular basis to purify our body and mind. The exposition of meditation as it is handed down in the early Buddhist writings is more or less based on the methods used by the Buddha for his own attainment of enlightenment and Nirvana, and on his personal experience of mental development. The word meditation really is no equivalent for the Buddhist term "bhavana" which literally means 'development' or 'culture,' that is development of the mind, culture of the mind, or 'making-the-mind become.' It is the effort to build up a calm, concentrated mind that sees clearly the true nature of all phenomenal things and realizes Nirvana, the ideal state of mental health. Meditation as practiced and experienced by the Buddha is twofold: Concentration of the mind (samatha or samadhi) that is one-pointedness or unification of the mind, and insight (vipassana, skt—vipasyana or vidarsana). Of these two forms, samatha or concentration has the function of calming the mind, and for this reason the word samatha or samadhi, in some contexts, is rendered as calmness, tranquility or quiescence. Calming the mind implies unification or "one-pointedness" of the mind. Unification is brought about by focussing the mind on one salutary object to the exclusion of all others. Meditation begins with concentration. Concentration is a state of undistractedness. What is concentration? What is its marks, requisites and development? Whatever is unification of mind, this is concentration; the four setting-up of mindfulness are the marks of concentration; the four right efforts are the requisites for concentration; whatever is the exercise, the development, the increase of these very things, this is herein the development of concentration. This statement clearly indicates that three factors of the samadhi group, namely, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration function together in support of each other. They comprise real concentration. It must be mentioned that the development of concentration or calm (samath or bhavana) as taught in Buddhism, is not exclusively Buddhist. Practitioners, before the advent of the Buddha, practiced different

systems of meditation as they do now. India has always been a land of mysticism, but the Yoga then prevalent in India never went beyond a certain point. Meditation or Mental development, or to meditate upon the implications or disciplines of pain, unreality, impermanence, and the non-ego. Although different in forms and methods in different Buddhist schools, but has the same goal is to concentrate the mind of the cultivators, to calm and to clarify it as one would calm and clarify the surface of a turbulent body of water, so that the bottom of which can be seen. Once the surface of that turbulent water is pacified, one can see it's bottom as when the mind is pacified, one can come to an experience or a state of awakening, liberation or enlightenment. In addition, diligent repetition of practice of meditation, if the cultivator has not yet become one with the "absolute truth," dualistic state of mind and distinction between subject and object disappeared in that person. Zen is also a process of concentration and absorption by which the mind is first tranquilized and brought to one-pointedness, and then awakened. The term "Dhyana" connotes Buddhism and Buddhist things in general, but has special application to the Zen (Ch'an) sects. As a Mahayana buddhist sect, Zen is a religious free of dogmas or creeds whose teachings and disciplines are directed toward self-consummation. For example, the full awakening that Sakyamuni Buddha himself experienced under the Bodhi-tree after strenuous self-discipline. In Vietnam, Zen sects comprise of Lin-Chi, T'ao-Tung, and Ch'u-Lin.

The practice of meditation is not an exercise in analysis or reasoning. The sword of logic has no place in the practice of awareness, concentration, and understanding, and those of stopping and looking. When we cook we must monitor the fire under the pot. When the sun's rays beat down on the snow, the snow slowly melts. When a hen sits on her eggs, the chicks inside gradually take form until they are ready to peck their way out. These are images which illustrate the effect of practicing meditation. The Zen sect insists that salvation could not be found by study of books. However, this does not mean that Zen followers do not study Buddhist books at all. On the contrary, their own teachings are saturated with references to such works as the Vajra-Sutra and the Lankavatara Sutra, the two favorites of the Zen sect. Meditation is one of the best methods to tame our bodies and to

regulate our minds. Taming the body keeps it from acting in random, impulsive ways. Regulating the mind means not allowing it to indulge in idle thoughts, so it is always pure and clear. Then wherever we go, to the ends of space or the limits of the Dharma Realm, we are still right within our self-nature. Our inherent nature contains absolutely everything. Nothing falls outside of it. It is just our fundamental Buddha-nature. Thus, Zen followers strongly believe that the study of sutras should play only a subordinate role compared with the demands of dhyana and spiritual realization.

Indeed, the authority of Zen is the genuine experience, not an irrational authority. The attitude of the Zen master to his student is bewildering to the modern Western reader who is caught in the alternative between an irrational authority which limits freedom and exploits its object, and a laissez-faire absence of any authority. Zen represents another form of authority, that of “rational authority.” The master does not call the student; he wants nothing from him, not even that he becomes enlightened; the student comes of his own free will, and he goes of his own free will. But inasmuch as he wants to learn from the master, the fact has to be recognized that the master is a master, that is, that the master knows what the student wants to know, and does not yet know. For the master ‘there is nothing to explain by means of words, there is nothing to be given out as a holy doctrine.’ Thirty blows whether you affirm or negate. Do not remain silent, nor be discursive. The Zen master is characterized at the same time by the complete lack of irrational authority, the source of which is genuine experience.

Meditation Helps Eliminate Attachments to the Self & To Maintain a Cool and Un-agitated Mind Under All Circumstances: Although the main purpose of meditation and contemplation is ‘Enlightenment’, the immediate and important purpose of meditation and contemplation is the elimination of the self. Once the attachment of the self is eliminated, the ignorance will also automatically ends. At that moment, the practitioner will gain the enlightenment which the Honorable Buddha declared 26 centuries ago. All Buddhists have had one and the same aim, which is the “extinction of self, the giving up the concept of a separate individuality, and all their practices have generally tended to foster such easily recognizable spiritual virtues as

serenity, detachment, consideration and tenderness for others. In the scriptures, the Dharma has been compared to a taste for direct feeling, not for learning and keeping. The golden word of the Buddha is there defined as that which has the taste of Peace, the taste of Emancipation, the taste of Nirvana. It is, of course, a peculiarity of tastes that they are not easily described, and must elude those who refuse actually to taste them for themselves." Once we are able to eliminate the attachment of the self, our minds will completely purify and we are able to know everything in the universe with wisdom. Once we are able to eliminate the attachment of the self, we are able to see all sentient beings' sufferings, thus we are able to develop loving kindness toward all beings with great compassion. Thus, meditation and contemplation does not only help us purify our bodies and minds, but they also set us free from the long-term clinging of self.

Ordinarily speaking, meditation means to maintain a cool and unagitated mind under all circumstances. But it also means the practice necessary in order to attain this result. In other words, it indicates the idea of contemplation, or concentration of the mind on a single object while sitting quietly alone. On what should we concentrate? That is the important question. And this indeed is the point at which religion differs from philosophy and morality. However hard we may concentrate on something, we cannot become absolutely free from our sufferings as long as we are absorbed only in immediate phenomena with a self-centered attitude. For example, we devote ourselves to thinking of such a selfish matter as wishing to be rid of uneasiness and irritation concerning the management of our business, or wishing to recover from illness, it is obvious that we cannot be freed from such trouble for a moment, because our mind is swayed by our business or our illness. This kind of mental absorption is not meditation but a mere struggling with illusion. To reflect our past conduct, criticizing ourselves for what we think to be wrong and determining to correct it, is a kind of meditation from a moral point of view. This is a very fine practice that is useful for improving our character. To think still more deeply than this about a subject is meditation without a self-centered idea. To probe deeply into such matters as the formation of the world, the way of human life, and the ideal society, this is meditation from the philosophical point of view. This kind of meditation is also a fine

practice that enhances our character, adding depth to our ideas and in turn benefiting society. However, regrettably, we cannot obtain a true state of mental peace or Nirvana through the forms of meditation mentioned above. This is because we can go only as far as the range of human knowledge permits, however sternly we may reflect on ourselves and however deeply we may probe philosophically into the ideal way of the world and human life. If we say that man cannot lead himself to Nirvana even though he reflects on his conduct, repents of wrong conduct, and determines to practice good conduct, the following questions will naturally arise: “That must be so when reflecting on morality and society and making resolutions on basis of that reflection. But is it not the way to Nirvana on oneself in the light of the Buddha’s teachings and to determine one’s actions according to them?” Indeed, this is one process by which we progress toward Nirvana, but the way to attain Nirvana is not as easy as that. If it were only a matter of understanding and controlling one’s superficial, conscious mind, the problem would be relatively simple. Most people can control their conscious mind by means of the Buddha’s teachings through practice of religious disciplines. But man also has a mind of which he is not aware. He cannot grasp it because he is unconscious of it. He cannot control it because of being unable to grasp it. This kind of mind is called “alaya” or “Manas” in Sanskrit and corresponds to the subconscious mind in scientific terminology. All that one has experienced, thought, and felt in past remains in the depth of one’s subconscious mind. Psychologists recognize that the subconscious mind not only exerts a great influence on the man’s character and his mental functions but even causes various disorders. Because it is normally beyond our reach, we cannot control the subconscious mind by mere reflection and meditation. In fact, karma contributes a considerable problem to current practice of meditation.

Through Self-Discipline to Stop the Flow of Thoughts and to Clear the Mind: Meditation is not a state of self-suggestion. Enlightenment does not consist in producing a certain premeditated condition by intensely thinking of it. Meditation is the growing conscious of a new power in the mind, which enabled it to judge things from a new point of view. The cultivation of Zen consists in upsetting the existing artificially constructed framework once for all and in remodelling it on

an entirely new basis. The older frame is call 'ignorance' and the new one 'enlightenment.' It is evident that no products of our relative consciousness or intelligent faculty can play any part in Zen. However, Zen practitioners should not think about becoming Buddhas, getting enlightened, or gaining wisdom. We should simply work hard and cultivate vigorously. When the time comes, they naturally become enlightened. Continue to sit and walk, walk and sit, then after a long time, we will have a chance to realize the power of the mind.

Buddhists practise meditation for mind-training and self-discipline by looking within ourselves. To meditate is also to try to understand the nature of the mind and to use it effectively in daily life. The mind is the key to happiness, and also the key to sufferings. To practice meditation and meditation daily will help free the mind from bondage to any thought-fetters, defilements, as well as distractions in daily life. Practicing meditation and contemplation is the most direct way to reach enlightenment. The main purpose of practicing meditation and contemplation is to gain a mind without thoughts, but with awaking on everything. However, it is not easy to achieve a thoughtless mind because of long lasting thoughts that always occupy our minds. Thus, if we are not patient enough, we might give up any time.

The introduction of Zen to China is attributed to Bodhidharma, though it came earlier, and its extension to T'ien-T'ai. To sit in dhyana (abstract meditation, fixed abstraction, contemplation). With thoughts or without thoughts, or noisy or quiet are made by our thinking. If we think something is noisy, it is noisy; if we think something is quiet, it is quiet. If we do not think, noisy is not noisy, quiet is not quiet. True quiet is neither quiet nor noisy. If we sit in our car listening to the traffic with a clear mind, without any concepts and thoughts, it is not noisy, it is only what it is. Therefore, to stop the flow of thoughts and to clear the mind are extremely important for any Zen practitioners. The best way to stop the flow of thoughts and to clear the mind is to notice the thoughts as they come up and to acknowledge them without judging, just return to the clear experience of the present moment. We must be patient for we might have to do this millions of times, but the value of our cultivation is the constant return of the mind into the present, over and over and over again. According to the Vimalakirti Sutra, Vimalakirti reminded Sariputra about meditation, saying:

“Sariputra, meditation is not necessarily sitting. For meditation means the non-appearance of body and mind in the three worlds (of desire, form and no form); giving no thought to inactivity when in nirvana while appearing (in the world) with respect-inspiring deportment; not straying from the Truth while attending to worldly affairs; the mind abiding neither within nor without; being imperturbable to wrong views during the practice of the thirty-seven contributory stages leading to enlightenment: and not wiping out troubles (klesa) while entering the state of nirvana. If you can thus sit in meditation, you will win the Buddha’s seal.”

Meditation & Contemplation Help Control and Purify Body and Mind: Rapture, the surest way to mind-control and purification. However, you should control your body and mind at all times, not only when you sit in meditation. Your body and mind must be pure and mindful at all times. Meditation means the ending of thought; however, if you are unable to end your thought, you should try to concentrate your mind just in one thought or one object of contemplation. That means you should know what you’re thinking or what you’re doing at the present time. In Zen, there is no desire, even it’s a desire of “mindfulness”, for if there is a desire, there must be a struggle or an urge for achievement, and this is the concept of a conditioned mind. When you are able to watch and know yourself, you are practicing meditation. When you know the way you walk, what and how you eat, what and how you say, that means you’re practicing meditation. When you have gossip, hate, jealousy, etc., in your mind, you know that you’re harboring gossip, hate and jealousy, you’re practicing meditation. Thus, meditation is not something different from your daily life activities. If you set aside an hour or so to sit in a room to meditate then come out of it and go right back to be a cheater, you are nothing different from (or better than) a full-time cheater. So a real meditation is a kind of meditation in which you can meditate at any time in your daily life activities. And thus, meditation has no beginning nor end. According to Zen master Doc The in the Essential Discipline for Daily Use: “Just awakened, I hope that everybody will attain great awareness and see in complete clarity. Washing my hands, I hope that everybody will have pure hands to receive reality. When putting my robe, washing the dishes, going to the bathroom, folding the mat,

carrying buckets of water, or brushing teeth... I also hope that everyone will have mindfulness and purity in both the body and mind.” However, in order to achieve mindfulness for the mind and purity for the body, we should practice sitting meditation everyday. When sitting in meditation, you should sit upright and always think that you are sitting on the Bodhi spot. During sitting meditation, various feelings and thoughts may arise. If we don't practice mindfulness of the breath or Buddha recitation, these feelings and thoughts will soon lure us away from mindfulness. But following or counting the breath or Buddha recitation aren't simply means by which to chase away odd thoughts and feelings. They are also means to unite body and mind and to open the gate to wisdom. When a feeling or an odd thought arise, we should continue to follow or to count our breath, or to recite the Buddha's name. We should not chase them away, neither hate them, nor worry about them. We should simply acknowledge their presence. When an odd thought arises, we should recognize it; if it still exists, we should recognize that it still exists, continues to exist. When a feeling of pain arises, we should recognize it; if it continues to exist, we should recognize that it continues to exist. The essential thing is not to let any feeling or thought arise without recognizing them in mindfulness. Meditation means mindfulness of whatever happening. Meditation is nourishment for our body and mind, especially sitting meditation. Through sitting meditation, our bodies obtain harmony, feel lighter, and are more at peace. The path from observation of our mind to seeing into our own nature won't be too rough. Meditation requires the highest form of discipline, not a constraint, nor an imitation, but a constant awareness of you and your surroundings. If you use methods of constraints or imitation in practicing meditation, you're only the person who tries to cook sand for food, for at that very moment effort of constraints and imitation becomes another wearisome burden for yourself. We should always remember that a mind of constant awareness is a mind that is awake, intelligent and free. Thus, those who wish to seek for wider, deeper, and transcendental experience are those who know nothing about meditation, for why should a mind of constant awareness need any kind or any form of experience? Devout Buddhists should always remember that once you set out to meditate, you never have a real meditation, for a mind desiring meditation will

be able to destroy your real meditation. Meditation is not a separate thing from your daily life activities, it is the essence of your daily life activities.

Perhaps when some people see us sitting in meditation, they ask us why we are wasting our time. To them meditation is meaningless; but to us who practice meditation, it is an essential and very meaningful part of our lives. All day long, every day of the week, every week of the month, and every month of the year, we are so busy with our business or occupation. According to Buddhism, our mind behaves like a monkey, restless and always jumping; it is therefore called a 'monkey-mind'. These are reasons why we have to meditate. To give balance to our lives it is necessary to sit quietly, to learn to accept and experience rather than to look outward for forms, we look within in order to understand ourselves better. Through meditation we try to keep that monkey-mind still, to keep it calm, quiet and pure. When our mind is still, we will realize that the Buddha is inside us, that the whole universe is inside us and that our true nature is one with the Buddha nature. So the most important task is to keep our minds quiet, a task which may be simple to understand but is not simple to practice at all. Yet practice is all important; knowing by itself has no value at all if we do not put our knowledge into practice. The method of Zen is the scientific method, that is to say we learn by doing, by our own experience. Another reason to cause us to practice meditation and contemplation is that meditation is a 'peak' of practice in Buddhism. Through meditation, we can not only purify our body and mind, but also attain wisdom of emancipation. Furthermore, through meditation we can see things as they really are, and we can generate inside ourselves compassion, modest, patient, tolerance, courage, and gratitude, and so on.

Meditation & Contemplation Help Developing Man As A Whole:

The word "meditation" really is no equivalent for the Buddhist term "bhavana" which literally means "development" or "culture," that is development of the mind, culture of the mind. It is the effort to build up a calm, concentrated mind that sees clearly the true nature of all phenomenal things and finally realizes Nirvana, the ideal state of mental health. Meditation is not only for Indian or Chinese people, or for the Buddha's time, but for all mankind at all times, regardless of

their origin, religion, or ethnic races. Meditation is not a practice of today or yesterday. From beginningless time, people have been practicing meditation in different ways. After experiencing enlightenment, the Buddha once confirmed: "There never was, and never will be, any mental development or mental purity without meditation. Meditation was the means by which I gained supreme enlightenment." All religions teach some kind of meditation or mental training for man's inner development. It may take the form of silent prayer, reading individually or collectively from some "holy scriptures" or concentrating on some sacred object, person or idea. And it is believed that these mental exercises, at times, result in seeing visions of saints or holy men, engaging in conversation with them, or hearing voices, or some mysterious occurrences. Whether they are illusions, imaginations, hallucinations, mere projections of the subconscious mind or real phenomena, one cannot say with certainty. But devout Buddhists should always remember that according to Buddhist doctrines, mind is an invisible force capable of producing all these phenomena. Buddhist books tell us that through meditative absorption (jhana or dhyana), through the development of mental faculties, man is capable of gaining psychic powers. But it is extremely important to bear in mind that the Buddhist meditation is not a state of auto-hypnosis, or coma. It is a state of mental purity where disturbing passions and impulses are subdued and calmed down so that the mind becomes unified and collected and enters into a state of clear consciousness and mindfulness. Meditation, certainly, is not a voluntary exile from life; or something practiced for the hereafter. Meditation should be applied to the daily affairs of life, and its results obtained here and now. It is not separated from the work-a-day life. It is a part and parcel of our life. We still participate in all daily activities, but remain free from the rush of city life, from nagging preoccupation with the world, this is easy to say but not easy to do; however, if we consistently practice meditation, we can do it. Any meditation we do is of immense help in enabling us to face all this with calm. And the calmness itself will in turn help us overcome all sufferings and afflictions. According to Buddhism, meditation is a way of living. It is a total way of living and not a partial activity. It aims at developing man as a whole. Let's strive for perfection here and in this very life, not in some golden age

yet to come. What will we become when we are still participating in daily activities, but free from all worldly attachments, bonds, hindrances, and other problems. Are we a real son of the Buddha? Yes, we are. Devout Buddhists should always remember that meditation taught in Buddhism is neither for gaining union with any supreme being, nor for bringing about any mystical experiences, nor is it for any self-hypnosis. It is for gaining tranquility of mind (samatha) and insight (vipassana), for the sole purpose of attaining unshakable deliverance of the mind. This can only be obtained through the total extinction of all mental defilements. Many believe that meditation is only for monks and nuns in the past, things have changed and now there is a growing interest in meditation in almost everyone. If by meditation is meant mental discipline or mind culture, all should cultivate meditation irrespective of gender, age, clergy or lay. Meditation is distinctively a human phenomenon, and therefore, should be dealt with from a human point of view, with human feelings and human understanding. Human problems and their solutions are basically psychological in nature. True meditation and mysticism do not co-exist. They are two different things. While mysticism takes us away from reality, meditation brings us to reality; for through real meditation we can see our own illusions and hallucinations face to face without pretence. This brings about a total transformation in our personality. It is more of an unlearning than a worldly learning. We have to give up many things that we have learned and hugged in great glee once we realize that they are hindrances and obsessions.

Who Can Practice Meditation & Contemplation?: Who is a Zen practitioner? He is the one who tries to practice to attain partial or complete enlightenment. When learning Zen, the practitioner can realize that this body is not real, that wishful thinking is also not real. Once realizing this falsity is understanding the Buddha's teaching of no self. The Buddha became enlightened from practicing Zen; other masters also followed his step and attained their enlightenment as well. Then, do we have any other paths to follow if we want to become enlightenment? Devout Buddhists should always remember that the true spirit of Zen Buddhism is to use wisdom to see the truth; the body and mind are not real. When we are able to see the truth, we can then forsake greed and anger; our mind then will be calm and mindful, and

we shall see the truth within ourselves; that is emancipation through wisdom. The Buddha can only provide us with guidelines of Zen. It is up to us to apply these techniques in our daily life. Therefore, a Zen practitioner is the one who is practicing Buddhist meditation in each moment of his life. Perhaps he has attained partial or complete enlightenment. When cultivating Zen, the practitioner can realize that this body is not real, that the so-called mind is impermanent, that wishful thinking is also not real, that all things are without a so-called 'self'. Buddhist Zen Patriarchs always say, "The Sutra is the Buddha's mouth, and Zen is the Buddha's heart. The Buddha's mouth and heart are not two, not different." The Buddha's words come from his mind; thus how can Zen and sutra be two different things? Many people still misinterpret the special concepts of Zen, saying that Zen is an outside sect, not Buddhism because its instruction or teaching from outsiders, its special transmission outside of the teaching, its transmission is from mind to mind. This intuitive school which does not rely on texts or writings. However, after thorough understanding, we will see that Zen and sutra are not different at all. The Buddha became enlightened from practicing Zen; other masters also followed his step and attained their enlightenment as well. Then, we practice meditation means we only follow the Buddha's path to enlightenment, not any other paths. The true spirit of Zen Buddhism is to use wisdom to see the truth; the body and mind are not real. When we are able to see the truth, we can then forsake greed and anger; our mind then will be calm, and we shall see the truth within ourselves; that is emancipation through wisdom. Besides, when practicing Zen, we also see the truth within ourselves; that is emancipation through wisdom. The Buddha can only provide us with guidelines of Zen. It is completely up to us to apply these techniques in our daily life.

The Necessity of Meditation: According to Buddhism, besides the goal of emancipation, this religion also helps practitioners achieve the goal of peace and happiness. To obtain these goals, the only way that can be achieved is through wisdom. Even though the practice for good conduct and observance of moral rules are also necessary, but in order to achieve wisdom, practitioners have no other choices but developing the mind through meditation. In fact, on the one hand, meditation serves as a safeguard of our practice of morality, and on the other

hand, it helps prepare the mind to see things as they really are and to obtain wisdom which will open the door to freedom. During the time of the Buddha, He always reminded His disciples that the mind is the source of all virtues and qualities. Thus, in order to attain these virtues, the only thing we need to do is to discipline our minds, for mind is the key to changing the nature of our experience. That's why Buddhism always focuses upon the mind as the key to achieving a change in the way human beings experience life, and in the way human beings relate to other people. The Buddha pointed out: "For a long time has man's mind been defiled by greed, hatred and delusion. Mental defilements make beings impure; mental cleansing purifies them." The Buddhist way of life is an intense process of cleansing one's action, speech, and thought. It is self-development and self-purification resulting in self-realization. The emphasis is on practical results and not on philosophical speculation or logical abstraction. Hence the need to practice daily a little meditation. To behave like the hen on her eggs, and not behaving like the squirrel in the revolving cage.

As mentioned above, meditation is a lifetime process. Fish swim in the water, but they don't know they are in water. Every minute, every moment we breathe in air, but we do it unconsciously. We would only be conscious of air only if we were without it. In the same way, we are always hearing the sounds of water falls, wind, rain, bird-singing, and so forth. All these sounds are wonderful and lively sermons. They are the voice of the Buddha himself preaching to us. We hear many sermons, all the time, but we are deaf to them. If we were really alive in mindfulness, whenever we heard, saw, smelled, tasted, touched, we would say to ourselves "Ah, this is a fine sermon!" At that time, we would see that there is no scripture that teaches so well as this experience with nature. Just as we breathe and eat every day. Both breathing and eating are important for life, and so is meditation, for meditation keeps our life in balance and helps us understand ourselves and the nature of life. It provides a secure foundation for harmony between ourselves and others, and between ourselves and the universe. So meditation is not a matter of days, weeks, months, or years, but of a whole lifetime. When we have a strong determination in practice, there is no doubt that we will reach our final goal, the state

of Buddhahood, the realization of perfect wisdom and infinite compassion.

There are three minimum requirements. *The first requirement is the Necessities of Buddhist Sutras:* Some one says words are not necessary, but in reality, they are very necessary because without words no one can transfer methods of cultivation to anyone else. If we are attached to words, we cannot return to our true self. If we are not attached to words, sooner or later we will attain enlightenment. In Zen, there is no rule to prohibit Zen practitioners to read books and sutras; however, you should read with a mind that has cut off all thinking. If you read with a mind that has cut off all thinking, then Zen books, sutras, and even Bibles are all the truth. However, Zen practitioners should always remember that sutras are only the Buddha's words. They are not Buddha's mind. No matter how many sutras we have mastered, we still have not attained true understanding. The purpose of Zen meditation is to dissolve this thought-mass. What is finally left is the real self. We enter into the world of the selfless, And if we do not stop there, if we do not think about this realm or cling to it, we will continue in our practice until we become one with the Absolute. *The second requirement is the Necessity of a Good Zen Master:* Whenever you learn a new skill, we need to have a good teacher. It is important that we need a good master when we want to practice meditation. With the advice of a teacher, we learn quicker and we cannot go wrong. We need a teacher who is competent to give instructions, correct our mistakes, and give guidance when we have trouble in the course of meditation. Only the teacher can tell, and so at such a time he or she is indispensable. If we cannot find a teacher, we may rely on books, although no book can entirely take the place of a teacher. We may be able to do fairly well by reading the instructions and following them carefully. But even then, we may have need for discussion with a teacher occasionally. *The third requirement is the Necessity of Meditation Retreats:* A meditation retreat provides an opportunity to deepen meditation practice in a supportive environment with the guidance of a experienced teacher. Everything we do at a retreat becomes the object of meditation. A retreat day consists of alternate periods of sitting and walking meditation, a nightly lecture and personal interviews with the teacher. Continuity of practice is

developed by bringing mindfulness to all other activities throughout the day as well. Noble silence is observed during the retreat. Retreats can last for one day, a weekend, a week or longer. The intensive practice of a retreat is very beneficial for developing good concentration and quieting the mind. Since concentration is essential for penetrative wisdom to arise, a meditation retreat gives us the best possible opportunity to be able to experience for ourselves the true nature of reality.

Purposes & Benefits of Meditation Practices: Yes, the ultimate aim of Buddhist meditation is to gain full enlightenment, self-mastery and complete mental health or Nirvana through the conquest of mental defilements. However, apart from this ultimate aim there are other advantages and benefits that can be derived through meditation. It can inspire us to discover our own intelligence, richness and natural dignity. Meditation can also stimulate the latent powers of the mind, aid clear thinking, deep understanding, mental balance and tranquility. It is a creative process which aims at converting the chaotic feelings and unwholesome thoughts into mental harmony and purity. If by meditation is meant mental discipline or mind culture, it goes without saying that all should cultivate meditation irrespective of sex, color, creed or any other division. Modern society is in danger of being swamped by distractions and temptation which can only be controlled if we undertake the difficult task of steady training our minds. All of us should wake up to the fact that we need to work with our life, we need to practice Zen. We have to see through the mirage that there is an “I” that is separating from our “Original Nature”. Our cultivation is to close the gap. Only in that instant when we and the object become one can we see what our life is. Perhaps everyone of us finds life difficult, perplexing, and oppressive. Even when everything goes well for some time, we still worry that it probably will not keep on that way. This is the very reason for all of us to practice Zen. Speaking of Zen, why do we have to practice Zen? We often hear about ‘Samadhi’, that is a ‘Ch’an’ method of meditation to pacify the mind. When the mind is pacified, it is unperturbed, and we attain the one-pointedness of mind. The purpose of Zen is to dissolve our accumulated ‘thought-mass’. What is finally left in us is just the real self and eventually we enter into the world of the selfless. And if we do not stop there, if we do not

think about this realm or cling to it, we will continue in our practice until we become one with the Absolute. Then, is Zen method different from any other methods in Buddhism? While reciting the sutra, reading the mantras, and practicing Buddha Recitation, we are sitting still and fixing our mind in reciting the sutra, reading the mantras, and practicing Buddha Recitation. Thus, when practicing reciting the sutra, reading the mantras, and practicing Buddha Recitation, we may have accomplished controlling the body, speech and mind if we want to stop our mind from wandering about. In the same manner, when practicing meditation, may also have accomplished controlling the body, speech and mind if we want to stop our mind from wandering about. It is really difficult to control the mind; however, if we can halt our body and speech still, we earn some merits. If we want to get the highest level of all merits, we have to control our mind. The main purpose of a Zen practitioner is the search for truth, the search for awakening. On our journey, if we move one step, we are one step closer to the truth, one step closer to awakening. The Buddha is the Awakened, so learning the Buddha's teachings is learning about his methods of awakening. Thus, on the way to enlightenment, the more we move forward, the closer we come to awakening. Meditation and contemplation means practice to obtain the seeing which goes beyond what is ordinary, clear vision. It is not surface seeing or skimming, not seeing mere appearance, but seeing things as they really are. This means seeing everything in terms of the three characteristics, the signs of all phenomenal existence: impermanence, suffering, and egolessness. It is this insight meditation, with calm concentration of mind as its basis, that enables the practitioner to purge his mind of all defilements, to remove ego-illusion, to see reality, and to experience Nirvana. The ultimate purpose of meditation is to eradicate mental impurities from our mind altogether. Before that stage, there are benefits of tranquillity, peace of mind and the ability to accept things as they come. Meditation helps us to see things as they truly are, not as they appear to be. Things appear to be permanent, desirable and substantial, but actually they are not. When we practice meditation, we will see for ourselves the arising and disappearing of mental and physical phenomena. And we will have a clearer comprehension of what is going on in our mind and body. We will be able to accept things as they come to us with less agitation and

deal with situations in a more positive way. Yes, the ultimate aim of Buddhist meditation is to gain full enlightenment, self-mastery and complete mental health or Nirvana through the conquest of mental defilements. However, apart from this ultimate aim there are other advantages and benefits that can be derived through meditation. It can inspire us to discover our own intelligence, richness and natural dignity. Meditation can also stimulate the latent powers of the mind, aid clear thinking, deep understanding, mental balance and tranquility. It is a creative process which aims at converting the chaotic feelings and unwholesome thoughts into mental harmony and purity. Therefore, if we wait until we sit down and compose ourselves to practice meditation for a couple of hours, then what happens to the other hours of our day? Saying that sitting meditation is Zen, we really destroy the true concept of Zen. If we know how to practice meditation, we will certainly make good use of our whole day. In order for us to do this, we should devote our day to Zen while accomplishing our daily tasks.

We see the values that emerge from the Buddha's life such as loving-kindness and compassion and prajna wisdom... From where did the Buddha attain these qualifications? If these qualifications are not the result of His practice of meditation, then we have nothing else to say. Beside the ultimate benefit of emancipation, nowadays people recognize that meditation has wide-range benefits. Meditation can help us to think more clearly and improve our energy so that we can work more effectively. Meditation can also help us to relax and create a distance from stressful situations so that we remain more in control and less overwhelmed by negative emotions. Besides, meditation can help us to understand ourselves and to accept situations. Above all, we will see right away upfront benefits when we practice meditation, such as the improvement of our physical health, or the improvement of our quality of life and making us happier and more relaxed.

Since mental impurities are almost always with us, we need meditation and contemplation almost all of the time. There is no fixed time for the practice of meditation. Morning, during the day, before bed ... anytime is the time for meditation. And meditation may be practiced at any age. Meditation is for the cure of diseases of the mind in the form of mental defilements like greed, hatred, delusion, etc. We all have these mental diseases almost all the time. In order to at least

control them we need meditation and contemplation. So meditation is for all people. Furthermore, there is nothing which can be called particularly Buddhist in meditation and contemplation. There is no element of religion. It is a scientific investigation and examination of ourselves. We just observe closely every thing that comes to us and is happening to us in our body and mind at the present moment.

According to Bhikkhu Piyananda in *The Gems of Buddhism* Wisdom, meditation practices have many benefits. Meditation helps achieving a complete and deep realization of what it means to be a Buddha and how to reach Buddhahood. It is to see one's Nature, comprehend the True Nature of things, the Truth. However, only after becoming a Buddha can one be said to have truly attained Supreme Enlightenment. Practicing meditation can help practitioners eradicate dullness and bring about wisdom. Besides, meditation also brings about health, happiness, and optimism. If you are a busy person, meditation practices can help you to get rid of tension and to find some relaxation. If you are a worried person, meditation practices can help to calm and help you to find either permanent or temporary peace. If you are a person who has endless problems, meditation practices can help you to develop courage and strength to face and overcome problems. If you lack self-confidence, meditation practices can help you gain the self-confidence you need. This self-confidence is the secret of success. If you have fear in your heart, meditation practices can help you understand the real nature of the objects that are making you afraid, then you can overcome the fear in your mind. If you are always dissatisfied with everything; nothing in life seems to be satisfactory; meditation practices will give you the chance to develop and maintain some inner satisfaction. If you are sceptical and disinterested in religion, meditation practices can help you go beyond your own scepticism and to see some practical value in religious guidance. If you are frustrated and heart-broken due to lack of understanding of the nature of life and the world, meditation practices will truly guide and help you understand that you are disturbed by unnecessary things. If you are a rich man, meditation practices can help you realize the true nature of your wealth and how to make use of your wealth for your own happiness as well as for others. If you are a poor man, meditation practices can help you have some contentment and not to harbour

jealousy towards those who have more than you. If you are a young man at the cross-roads of your life, and do not know which way to turn, meditation practices will help you understand which is the road for you to travel to reach your proper goal. If you are an elderly man who is fed-up with life, meditation practices will bring you to a deeper understanding of life; this understanding in turn will relieve you from the pains of life and will increase the joy of living. If you are hot-tempered, meditation practices can help you develop the strength to overcome these weaknesses of anger, hatred and resentment. If you are jealous, meditation practices can help you understand the danger of your jealousy. If you are a slave to your five senses, meditation practices can help you learn how to become the master of your sense-desires. If you are addicted to wine, tobacco, or drugs, meditation practices can help you realize how to overcome the dangerous habits which have enslaved you. If you are an ignorant person, meditation practices will give you a chance to cultivate some knowledge that will be useful and beneficial both to you and to your friends and family. If you are a weak-minded person, meditation practices can help strengthen your mind to develop your will-power in order to overcome your weaknesses. If you are a wise person, meditation practices will take you to supreme enlightenment. Then you will see things as they are, and not as they appear to be.

Chapter Three

Zen in Buddhist Teachings

I. Meditation and Contemplation in Buddhism:

Zen is the Japanese pronunciation of the Chinese word “Ch’an” which in turn is the Chinese pronunciation of the Sanskrit technical term Dhyana, meaning meditation. The distinctive characteristic of the Buddha’s practice at the time of his enlightenment was his inner search. For this reason, many people believe that they meditate to become a Buddha. Yes, they’re right. The final goal of any Buddhist is becoming a Buddha; however, meditation itself will not turn any beings to a Buddha. Zen is the method of meditation and contemplation, the method of keeping the mind calm and quiet, the method of self-realization to discover that the Buddha-nature is nothing other than the true nature. However, the contemplative traditions of Buddhism are not simple like that. What distinguishes Buddhism from the contemplative traditions of other religions is the fact that, for Buddhism, meditation by itself is not enough. We might say that, for Buddhism, meditation is like sharpening a knife. We sharpen a knife for a purpose, let’s say, in order to cut something easily. Similarly, by means of meditation, we sharpen the mind for a definite purpose, in the case of cultivation in Buddhism, the purpose is wisdom. The wisdom that’s able us to eliminate ignorance and to cut off sufferings and afflictions. Before the moment of ‘Enlightenment’, the Buddha practiced the inward way for forty-nine days until suddenly He experienced enlightenment and became the Buddha. By turning inward upon Himself, he discovered His true nature, or Buddha-nature. This is the ultimate aim of Zen. Zen in Buddhism differs from meditation in other religions. Most other religions place a supreme God above man and then ask that man should pray to God and worship Him, implying that reality is to be sought externally. While Zen in Buddhism holds that reality is to be gotten hold of, not externally, but inwardly. According to Buddhism, every living being has within himself the Buddha-nature, and to become a Buddha is simply to turn inward to discover this Buddha-nature. This Buddha-nature is always present within, and eternally

shining. It is like the sun and the moon. The sun and the moon continually shine and give forth light, but when the clouds cover them, we cannot see the sunlight or the moonlight. The goal of any Zen practitioner is to eliminate the clouds, for when the clouds fly away, we can see the light again. In the same way, human beings always have within ourselves the Buddha-nature, but when our desires, attachments and afflictions cover it up, it does not appear. In Buddhism, meditation functions the job of a torch which gives light to a dark mind. Suppose we are in a dark room with a torch in hand. If the light of the torch is too dim, or if the flame of the torch is disturbed by drafts of air, or if the hand holding the torch is unsteady, it's impossible to see anything clearly. Similarly, if we don't meditate correctly, we can't never obtain the wisdom that can penetrate the darkness of ignorance and see into the real nature of existence, and eventually cut off all sufferings and afflictions. Therefore, sincere Buddhists should always remember that meditation is only a means, one of the best means to obtain wisdom in Buddhism. Furthermore, owing to obtaining the wisdom, one can see right from wrong and be able to avoid the extremes of indulgence in pleasures of senses and tormenting the body.

II. The Real Meaning of Flower Which the Buddha Held Up in the Assembly:

The Buddha was born near the end of the sixth century before the Common Era. As a prince living in the lap of luxury, the Buddha started to ponder very deeply on why living beings suffer in this world. He asked himself: "What is the cause of this suffering?" One day while sitting under a tree as a young boy, he saw a snake suddenly appear and catch an eel. As the snake and the eel were struggling, an eagle swooped down from the sky and took away the snake with the eel still in its mouth. That incident was the turning point for the young prince to start thinking about renouncing the worldly life. He realized that living beings on the earth survive by preying on each other. While one being tries to grab and the other tries to escape and this eternal battle will continue forever. This never-ending process of hunting, and self-preservation is the basis of our unhappiness. It is the source of all suffering. The Prince decided that he would discover the means to end this suffering. He left His father's palace at the age of 29 and six years

later he gained enlightenment. According to the Buddha, the Law of Cause and Effect controls all beings. Karma simply means action. If a person commits a bad action (karma) it will be impossible for that person to escape from its bad effect. The Buddha is only a Master, who can tell beings what to do and what to avoid but he cannot do the work for anyone. In the Dhammapada Sutra, the Buddha clearly stated: “You have to do the work of salvation yourself. No one can do anything for another for salvation except to show the way.” In one occasion when a large gathering that came to hear a talk by the Buddha. Instead of speaking about enlightenment, He simply held up a flower, twirling it slowly in his fingers. Of the whole assembly only one person understood, the Venerable Mahakashyapa. He smiled. From that time on, the Buddha’s True Dharma or the Supreme Nirvana was handed down to Mahakashyapa.

III. Buddhism Is a Religion of Wisdom of Emancipation, and Meditation in Buddhism Is Aiming at That Wisdom:

Many people believe that they meditate to become a Buddha. Yes, they’re right. The exposition of meditation as it is handed down in the early Buddhist writings is more or less based on the methods used by the Buddha for his own attainment of enlightenment and Nirvana, and on his personal experience of mental development. Therefore, the final goal of any Buddhist is becoming a Buddha; however, meditation itself will not turn any beings to a Buddha. The contemplative traditions of Buddhism are not simple like that. What distinguishes Buddhism from the contemplative traditions of other religions is the fact that, for Buddhism, meditation by itself is not enough. We might say that, for Buddhism, meditation is like sharpening a knife. We sharpen a knife for a purpose, let’s say, in order to cut something easily. Similarly, by means of meditation, we sharpen the mind for a definite purpose, in the case of cultivation in Buddhism, the purpose is wisdom. The wisdom that’s able us to eliminate ignorance and to cut off sufferings and afflictions. The word meditation really is no equivalent for the Buddhist term “bhavana” which literally means ‘development’ or ‘culture,’ that is development of the mind, culture of the mind, or ‘making-the-mind become.’ It is the effort to build up a calm, concentrated mind that sees clearly the true nature of all phenomenal things and realizes Nirvana,

the ideal state of mental health. In Buddhism, meditation functions the job of a torch which gives light to a dark mind. Suppose we are in a dark room with a torch in hand. If the light of the torch is too dim, or if the flame of the torch is disturbed by drafts of air, or if the hand holding the torch is unsteady, it's impossible to see anything clearly. Similarly, if we don't meditate correctly, we can't never obtain the wisdom that can penetrate the darkness of ignorance and see into the real nature of existence, and eventually cut off all sufferings and afflictions. Therefore, sincere Buddhists should always remember that meditation is only a means, one of the best means to obtain wisdom in Buddhism. Furthermore, owing to obtaining the wisdom, one can see right from wrong and be able to avoid the extremes of indulgence in pleasures of senses and tormenting the body.

IV. In Buddhism, the Title “Buddha” Speaks Out All the Meanings of Zen:

In Buddhism, the word Buddha is not a proper name, but a title meaning “Enlightened One” or “Awakened One.” Prince Siddhartha was not born to be called Buddha. He was not born enlightened; however, efforts after efforts, he became enlightened. Any beings who sincerely try can also be freed from all clingings and become enlightened as the Buddha. All Buddhists should be aware that the Buddha was not a god or any kind of supernatural being. Like us, he was born a man. The difference between the Buddha and an ordinary man is simply that the former has awakened to his Buddha nature while the latter is still deluded about it. However, whether we are awakened or deluded, the Buddha nature is equally present in all beings. Therefore, the term “Buddha” is an epithet of those who successfully break the hold of ignorance, liberate themselves from cyclic existence, and teach others the path to liberation. The word “Buddha” derived from the Sanskrit root budh, “to awaken,” it refers to someone who attains Nirvana through meditative practice and the cultivation of such qualities as wisdom, patience, and generosity. Such a person will never again be reborn within cyclic existence, as all the cognitive ties that bind ordinary beings to continued rebirth have been severed. Through their meditative practice, buddhas have eliminated all craving, and defilements. The Buddha of the present era is referred to as

“Sakyamuni” (Sage of the Sakya). He was born Siddhartha Gautama, a member of the Sakya clan. The Buddha is One awakened or enlightened to the true nature of existence. The word Buddha is the name for one who has been enlightened, who brings enlightenment to others, whose enlightened practice is complete and ultimate. The term Buddha derived from the Sanskrit verb root “Budh” meaning to understand, to be aware of, or to awake. It describes a person who has achieved the enlightenment that leads to release from the cycle of birth and death and has thereby attained complete liberation. In the Ratana Sutta, Khuddakapatha, volume 6, the Buddha taught: “What the excellent Awakened One extolled as pure and called the concentration of unmediated knowing. No equal to that concentration can be found. This, too, is an exquisite treasure in the Dhamma. By this truth may there be well-being.”

Chapter Four

Meditation At the Time of the Buddha: Four Kinds of Mindfulness

At the time of the Buddha, there were some forty such meditations of mindfulness are given in the Visuddha-Magga: four ‘measureless meditations, ten impurities, four formless states, ten universals, ten remembrances, one sign, and one mental reflex. Four kinds of mindfulness is also called four meditations, or four objects on which memory or thought should dwell. Four types of Buddhist meditation for eradicating illusions and attaining enlightenment. In other words, for Buddhist practitioners, four foundations of Mindfulness are four wonderful paths that can help practitioners advance to the Buddhahood. Theravada calls these practices ‘basis of action’ (kammathana) which is one of the modes of analytical meditation.

First, Meditation and Full Realization on the Body: Also called the contemplation of the impurity of the body. Due to illusions, most of us think that our body is more valuable than any thing else. So it needs be provided with better foods and expensive clothes. Therefore, the ‘struggle for life’ has come into play. Life is no longer a peaceful place, but a battle field with greed, hatred, envy, arrogance, doubt, wrong views, killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying. Evil karma is gradually formed as a result. Earnest Buddhists should view the body (eye, ear, skin, hair, nose, tongue, mouth, anus, etc) is unclean (Quán thân bất tịnh) which covered with a bag of skin, inside are flesh, fat, bone, blood, mucus and waste matters of which no one wishes to touch. The body itself, if not being washed frequently with fragrant water and soap, no one wants to stay close to it. In addition, it is prone to decay minute after minute, second after second. If we stop breathing, what is the body called if not a corpse? During the first day, its color is changing. A few days later, it becomes bluish and produces offensive odor. At this time, even if that disintegrated body once was the most beautiful woman or a handsome man, no one wants to be close to it. Earnest Buddhist should always contemplate that the body is unclean. This contemplation is designed to cure greed, attachment, selfishness,

and arrogance. Also, when people realize that they are physically and biologically the same, they would easily understand, tolerate and compassionate among themselves and others. The discrimination against the aging, people with disabilities, and the other race would be diminished. As we see above, through contemplation we see that our body is not clean. It is viewed as a skinned bag containing dirty trash that will soon be disintegrated. Therefore, we must not become attached to it. The nature of our bodies and minds are impure which is neither holy nor beautiful. From psychological and physiological standpoint, human beings are impure. This is not negative or pessimistic. Objectively speaking, if we examine the constituents of our bodies from the hair, blood, pus, excrement, urine, intestines, liver, and stomach, etc., they are dwelling places for many bacteria. Many diseases are awaiting for the opportunity to develop. In fact, our bodies are impure and subject to decay. The body as an abode of mindfulness. Contemplation of the impurity of the body, or to contemplate the body as impure. Mindfulness of the body as impure and utterly filthy (consider the body is impure). This negates the idea of "Purity.". Here a monk abides contemplating body as body, ardent, clearly aware and mindful, having put aside hankering and fretting for the world.

Second, Meditation and Full Realization on the Evils of Sensations: Also called the contemplation of sensations is suffering. No matter they are painful, joyous, or indifferent sensations. To view all the feelings are painful. There are three kinds of feelings: pleasures, pain and neutral ones; however, according to Buddha's teaching, all feelings are painful because they are impermanent, transient, ungraspable, and therefore, they are unreal, illusive and deceptive. (Quán thọ thị khổ). Furthermore, when you accept something from others, naturally, you have to do something else for them in return. It might cost you more than what you have accepted. However, we can easily refuse material things, but the hardest thing to escape is our own feelings. Feeling is a form of acceptance that most of us could easily be trapped. It is very subtle, but its effect is so destructible. We usually feel whatever conveyed to us by the six senses. For example, hearing someone bad-mouth on us, we feel angry at once. Seeing something profitable, we readily feel greedy. After all, if we don't cultivate, greed and angry are two uncontrollable agents

which dominate and overwhelm our daily activities. To contemplate all the feelings are painful will gradually assist us to keep the feelings under control as well as to purify our mind; and as a result, provide us the joy and peace. We experience good and bad feelings from our five senses. But good feelings never last long; and sooner or later they will disappear. Only bad feelings remain from which we will suffer. Nothing in the universe can exist independently or permanently. All things including bodies of human beings are composed of four elements: earth, water, fire, and air. When there is a harmonious relationship among these four elements, there is peace. When the four elements are not in harmony, there is suffering. Feelings as an abode of mindfulness, or to contemplate all feelings or sensations lead to suffering, or mindfulness of feeling as the cause of suffering. Sensation or consciousness as always resulting in suffering (receiving is self-binding, consider feelings or the senses as a source of suffering). This negates the idea of "Joy." Here a monk abides contemplating feelings as feelings, ardent, clearly aware and mindful, having put aside hankering. According to the Satipatthanasutta, contemplation of feelings or sensations means to be mindful of our feeling, including pleasant, unpleasant and indifferent or neutral. When experiencing a pleasant feeling we should know that it is a pleasant feeling because we are mindful of the feeling. The same with regard to all other feelings. We try to experience each feeling as it really is. Generally, we are depressed when we are experiencing unpleasant feelings and are elated by pleasant feelings. Contemplation of feelings or sensations will help us to experience all feelings with a detached outlook, with equanimity and avoid becoming a slave to sensations. Through the contemplation of feelings, we also learn to realize that there is only a feeling, a sensation. That feeling or sensation itself is not lasting and there is no permanent entity or "self" that feels. According to the Satipatthana Sutta in the Majjhima Nikaya, the Buddha taught "How, Bhikkhus, does a Bhikkhu abide contemplating feelings as feelings? Here, when feeling a pleasant feeling, a Bhikkhu understands: 'I feel a pleasant feeling;' when feeling a painful feeling, he understands: 'I feel a painful feeling;' when feeling a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling, he understands: 'I feel a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling.' When feeling a worldly pleasant feeling, he understands: 'I feel a

worldly pleasant feeling;’ when feeling an unworldly pleasant feeling, he understands: ‘I feel an unworldly pleasant feeling;’ when feeling a worldly painful feeling, he understands: ‘I feel a worldly painful feeling;’ when feeling an unworldly painful feeling, he understands: ‘I feel an unworldly painful feeling;’ when feeling a worldly neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling, he understands: ‘I feel a worldly neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling;’ when feeling an unworldly neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling, he understands: ‘I feel an unworldly neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling.’ In this way he abides contemplating feelings as feelings internally, or he abides contemplating feelings as feelings externally, or he abides contemplating feelings as feelings both internally and externally. Or else he abides contemplating in feelings their arising factors, or he abides contemplating in feelings their vanishing factors, or he abides contemplating in feelings both their arising and vanishing factors. Or else, mindfulness that ‘there is feeling’ is simply established in him to the extent necessary for bare knowledge and mindfulness. And, he abides independent, not clinging to anything in the world. That is how a Bhikkhu abides contemplating feelings as feelings.” Cultivation on the Sensations means meditation and full realization on the evils of sensations, no matter they are painful, joyous, or indifferent sensations. We experience good and bad feelings from our five senses. But good feelings never last long; and sooner or later they will disappear. Only bad feelings remain from which we will suffer. Nothing in the universe can exist independently or permanently. All things including bodies of human beings are composed of four elements: earth, water, fire, and air. When there is a harmonious relationship among these four elements, there is peace. When the four elements are not in harmony, there is suffering. Feelings as an abode of mindfulness, or to contemplate all feelings or sensations lead to suffering, or mindfulness of feeling as the cause of suffering. Sensation or consciousness as always resulting in suffering (receiving is self-binding. Consider feelings or the senses as a source of suffering). This negates the idea of “Joy.” Here a monk abides contemplating feelings as feelings, ardent, clearly aware and mindful, having put aside hankering and fretting for the world.

Third, Meditation and Full Realization on the Mind: Also called the contemplation of evanescence or impermanence of mind and thoughts (contemplating the impermanence of the thought). To view the mind is transient or impermanent. Most people think that their mind is not changed; therefore, they attach to whatever they think. They believe that what they think reflects the truth. Probably some of them would discover that their mind is changing, but they refuse to accept it. Buddhist practitioners should always contemplate their wholesome and unwholesome minds, they are all subject to rising and destroying. They have no real entity. In sitting meditation, one will have the chance to recognize the facts that the mind keeps jumping in a fast speed as pictures on a movie screen. The body, therefore, always feels restless and eager to react on the thinking pulses. That is why people are rarely calm down or experiencing true happiness. Earnest Buddhists should always remember that the mind does not have any “real entity” to itself. It changes from second to second. That’s why the Buddha viewed the mind of an ordinary person is like a swinging monkey, the wind, lightning or a drop of morning dew. This contemplation helps the practitioners see that everything is changed so that the practitioners will have the ability to eliminate attachment to what they think. Impermanence is the key nature of all things. From moment to moment, all things in this universe, including human’s bodies and minds are in constant transformation. Everything passes through a period of birth, maturity, transformation and destruction. Mind as an abode of mindfulness, or mindfulness of the mind as impermanent, or to contemplate the mind as impermanent. Ordinary mind is impermanent, merely one sensation after another (mind is everchanging, consider the mind to be a constant state of flux). This negates the idea of “Permanence.” Here a monk abides contemplating mind as mind, ardent, clearly aware and mindful, having put aside hankering and fretting for the world. However, on what mind do we have to contemplate? According to the Sikkhāsamuccaya Sutta, the Buddha taught: “Cultivator searches all around for this thought. But what thought? Is it the passionate, hateful or confused one? Or is it the past, future, or present one? The past one no longer exists, the future one has not yet arrived, and the present one has no stability. In the Satipatthana Sutta in the Majjhima Nikaya, the Buddha taught: “For

thought, Kasyapa, cannot be apprehended, inside, or outside, or in between. For thought is immaterial, invisible, nonresisting, inconceivable, unsupported, and non-residing. Thought has never been seen by any of the Buddhas, nor do they see it, nor will they see it. And what the Buddhas never see, how can that be observable process, except in the sense that dharmas proceed by the way of mistaken perception? Thought is like a magical illusion; by an imagination of what is actually unreal it takes hold of a manifold variety of rebirths. A thought is like the stream of a river, without any staying power; as soon as it is produced it breaks up and disappears. A thought is like a flame of a lamp, and it proceeds through causes and conditions. A thought is like lightning, it breaks up in a moment and does not stay on. Searching thought all around, cultivator does not see it in the skandhas, or in the elements, or in the sense-fields. Unable to see thought, he seeks to find the trend of thought, and asks himself: "Whence is the genesis of thought?" And it occurs to him that "where is an object, there thought arises." Is then the thought one thing and the object another? No, what is the object that is just the thought. If the object were one thing and the thought another, then there would be a double state of thought. So the object itself is just thought. Can then thought review thought? No, thought cannot review thought. As the blade of a sword cannot cut itself, so can a thought not see itself. Moreover, vexed and pressed hard on all sides, thought proceeds, without any staying power, like a monkey or like the wind. It ranges far, bodiless, easily changing, agitated by the objects of sense, with the six sense-fields for its sphere, connected with one thing after another. The stability of thought, its one-pointedness, its immobility, its undistraughtness, its one-pointed calm, its nondistractedness, that is on the other hand called mindfulness as to thought. In short, the contemplation of mind speaks to us of the importance of following and studying our own mind, of being aware of arising thoughts in our mind, including lust, hatred, and delusion which are the root causes of all wrong doing. In the contemplation of mind, we know through mindfulness both the wholesome and unwholesome states of mind. We see them without attachment or aversion. This will help us understand the real function of our mind. Therefore, those who practice contemplation of mind constantly will be able to learn how to control the mind. Contemplation of mind also helps us realize that the

so-called “mind” is only an ever-changing process consisting of changing mental factors and that there is no abiding entity called “ego” or “self.” According to the Satipatthana Sutta in the Majjhima Nikaya, the Buddha taught: “Bhikkhus, does a Bhikhu abide contemplating mind as mind? Here a Bhikhu understands mind affected by lust as mind affected by lust, and mind unaffected by lust as mind unaffected by lust. He understands mind affected by hate as mind affected by hate, and mind unaffected by hate as mind unaffected by hate. He understands mind affected by delusion as mind affected by delusion, and mind unaffected by delusion as mind unaffected by delusion. He understands contracted mind as contracted mind, and distracted mind as distracted mind. He understands exalted mind as exalted mind, and unexalted mind as unexalted mind. He understands surpassed mind as surpassed mind, and unsurpassed mind as unsurpassed mind. He understands concentrated mind as concentrated mind, and unconcentrated mind as unconcentrated mind. He understands liberated mind as liberated mind, and unliberated mind as unliberated mind. In this way he abides contemplating mind as mind internally, or he abides contemplating mind as mind externally, or he abides contemplating mind as mind both internally and externally. Or else, he abides contemplating in mind its arising factors, or he abides contemplating in mind its vanishing factors, or he abides contemplating in mind both its arising and vanishing factors. Or else mindfulness that ‘there is mind’ is simply established in him to the extent necessary for bare knowledge and mindfulness. And he abides independent, not clinging to anything in the world. That is how a Bhikkhu abides contemplating mind as mind.”

Fourth, Contemplation of Mental Objects: “Contemplation of mind-objects” means meditation and full realization on the transiency selflessness of all elements (contemplating that all the dharmas are without their own nature). The contemplation of mental objects or mind contents means to be mindful on all essential dharmas. The contemplation of mental objects is not mere thinking or deliberation, it goes with mindfulness in discerning mind objects as when they arise and cease. For example, when there is a sense desire arising, we immediately know that a sense desire is arising in us; when a sense desire is present, we immediately know that a sense desire is present in

us; when a sense desire is ceasing, we immediately know that a sense desire is ceasing. In other words, when there is sense desire in us, or when sense desire is absent, we immediately know or be mindful that there is sense desire or no sense desire in us. We should always be mindful with the same regard to the other hindrances, as well as the five aggregates of clinging (body or material form, feelings, perception, mental formation, and consciousness). We should also be mindful with the six internal and six external sense-bases. Through the contemplation of mental factors on the six internal and external sense-bases, we know well the eye, the visible form and the fetter that arises dependent on both the eye and the form. We also know well the ear, sounds, and related fetters; the nose, smells and related fetters; the tongue and tastes; the body and tactile objects; the mind and mind objects, and know well the fetter arising dependent on both. We also know the ceasing of the fetter. Similarly, we discern the seven factors of enlightenment, and the Four Noble Truths, and so on. Thus we live mindfully investigating and understanding the mental objects. We live independent, clinging to nothing in the world. Our live is totally free from any attachments. Zen practitioners must contemplate to see that everything is without-self and has no real nature. Everything in the world, either physical or mental, is depend upon each other to function or survive. They are not free from one another or free to act on their own, on their own will. They do not have a "self." They are not capable of being self-existed. A human body is composed of billions of cells that depend on one another; one cell dies will effect so many other cells. Similarly, a house, a car, a road, a mountain, or a river all are compounded, not being self-existed. Everything, therefore, is a combination of other things. For instance, without nutritious foods, water, and fresh air, this body will certainly be reduced to a skeleton and eventually disintegrated. Thus the Buddha taught: "All existents are selfless, empty, and impermanent." Practitioners who always contemplate 'the dharma is without-self,' they should become more humble and likable. In fact, everything has no real nature, they are only a combination of the four elements, and each element is empty and without a self of itself, thus everything is without a self. Dharmas (real things and phenomena) as an abode of mindfulness, or mindfulness of dharmas as dependent, without self-entity, or to

contemplate all things as being dependent, without self-nature or self-identity. All phenomena lack self-nature. There is no such thing as an ego. Things in general as being dependent and without a nature of their own (things are composed and egoless: consider everything in the world as being a consequence of causes and conditions and that nothing remains unchanged forever). This negates the idea of “Personality.” Here a monk abides contemplating monf-objects as mind-objects, ardent, clearly aware and mindful, having put aside hankering and fretting for the world.

According to Majjhima Nikaya and Digha Nikaya, the Buddha taught: “Bhiksus! Whoever should be able to develop these Four Foundations of mindfulness for seven years, one of these two fruits may be expected by him: ‘either Arahantship in this life or the state of Non-returning in the future. Bhiksus! Let alone 7 years. Should anyone be able to develop these Four Foundations of mindfulness for six years, five years, four years, three years, two years, one year... then one of the two above mentioned fruits may also be expected by him. Bhiksus! Let alone one year. Should anyone be able to develop these Four Foundations of mindfulness for seven months, six months... half a month, then one of the two above mentioned fruits may also be expected by him. Bhiksus! Let alone half a month. Should anyone be able to develop these Four Foundations of mindfulness for a week, then one of the two above mentioned fruits may also be expected by him. This is the only way, Bhiksus, for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, for the destruction of suffering and grief, for winning the right path, for realizing Nirvana, namely, the Four Foundations of mindfulness.”

Chapter Five

A Summary of the Indian Zen School & Its First Twenty-Eight Patriarchs

I. An Overview of Lines of Transmission In Indian Zen School:

The history of Zen is mythical. It is said that one day Brahma came to the Buddha who was residing at the Vulture Peak, offered a Kumbhala flower, and requested him to preach the Law. The Buddha ascended the Lion seat and taking that flower touched it with his fingers without saying a word. No one in the assembly could understand the meaning. The venerable Mahakasyapa alone smiled with joy. The world-Honoured One said: "The doctrine of the Eye of the True Law is hereby entrusted to you, Oh Mahakasyapa! Accept and hand it down to posterity." Once when Ananda asked Mahakasyapa what the Buddha's transmission was, Mahakasyapa said: "Go and take the banner-stick down!" Ananda understood him at once. Thus the mind-sign was handed down successively. The teaching was called the 'school of the Buddha-mind.' We are told that Sakyamuni Buddha had given the secret doctrine to Mahakasyapa through the incident of "Smiling and twirling a flower between the fingers" (Buddha held up a flower and Kasyapa smiled). However, this incident does not appear till about 800 A.D., but is regarded as the beginning of the tradition on which the Ch'an or Intuitional sect based its existence. In Japanese, the term 'Nenge-misho' means 'smiling and swirling a flower between the fingers'; a Zen expression that refer to the wordless transmission of the Buddha-dharma from Sakyamuni Buddha to his student Kashyapa, later called Mahakashyapa. The transmission from heart-mind to heart-mind is the beginning of the "Special transmission outside the orthodox teaching," as Zen calls itself. The story begins with a sutra, the "Ta-fan T'ien-wang Wen Fo Ching." In it it is told that once Brahma, the highest deity in the Hinduist assembly of gods, visited a gathering of disciples of the Buddha on Mount Gridhrakuta (Vulture Peak Mountain). He presented the Buddha with a garland of flowers and requested him respectfully to expound the dharma. However, instead of giving a discourse, the Buddha only took a flower and twirled it, while smiling

silently, between the fingers of his raised hand. None of the gathering understood except for Kashyapa, who responded with a smile. When the World-Honored One holds up a flower to the assembly. Mahakasyapa's face is transformed, and he smiles. Zen practitioners should open your eyes and look carefully. A thousand mountain ranges separate the one who reflects from the one who is truly present. According to Zen Keys, Vietnamese King Tran Thai Tong said: "While looking at the flower that the World-Honored One raised in his hand, Mahakasyapa found himself suddenly at home. To call that 'transmission of the essential Dharma' is to say that, for him alone, the chariot shaft is adequate transport." According to the somewhat shortened version of this episode given in example 6 of the Wu-Men-Kuan, the Buddha then said, "I have the treasure of the eye of true dharma, the wonderful mind of nirvana, the true form of no form, the mysterious gate of dharma. It cannot be expressed through words and letters and is a special transmission, outside of all doctrine. This I entrust to Mahakasyapa." After this event, Kashyapa was called Mahakasyapa, thus became the first patriarch of the Indian transmission lineage of Ch'an. The story of the Buddha twirling a flower before his assembly, like the story of the baby Buddha taking seven steps in each of the cardinal directions, need not be taken literally. The first account of his transmitting the Dharma to Mahakasyapa is set forth in a sutra of Chinese origin that is dated A.D. 1036, fourteen hundred years after the Buddha's time. This was the Sung period, a peak in the development of Chinese culture when great anthologies, encyclopedias, and directories were being produced. Myth, oral tradition, and sectarian justification all played a role in this codification. The fable of the Buddha twirling a flower filled a great need for connection with the founder, and it was picked up immediately and repeated like gospel. The 'Four Principles' attributed to Bodhidharma were also formulated during the Sung period, some six hundred years after Bodhidharma's time, using some of the same language attributed to the Buddha: 'A special transmission outside tradition, not established on words or letters.' The Sung teachers were making important points with their myths." No matter what we say, Indian Zen Sect began with the First Patriarch Maha Kasyapa and handed down to the twenty-eighth Patriarch Bodhidharma before

moving to China (handing down the Patriarchs in China). According to the Zen sect, men who inherited and passed on teaching of Sakyamuni. Zen sect was transmitted from one patriarch after the other, which was not expounded in words but transmitted from mind to mind and without the use of written texts.

II. Mahakashyapa: The First Patriarch of the Indian Zen School:

An Overview of Mahakashyapa: He was a wealthy man and a wise and widely read scholar. He lived on the outskirts of Rajagrha, one of the Buddha's great disciples. He was said to be foremost among the ten great disciples in non-attachment, and foremost at the practice of austerity. He never missed any of the Buddha's discourse at Venuvana Vihara. On one occasion when he had just finished listening to the Buddha's exposition of a sutra and was on his way home, he saw the Buddha already seated underneath a tree in the road ahead. He was very surprised. It transpired that the Buddha showed a little of his supernatural powers to win over Mahakasyapa. Since then he became a close disciple of the Buddha. He was renowned for his ascetic self-discipline and moral strictness. Thanks to the qualities right after the death of the Buddha, he was asked to reside at the First Council and to take over leadership of the Sangha. He was considered (reckoned) as the first of 28 Great Ancient Patriarchs Indian Zen. He was regarded as the First Patriarch from the story of the "transmission" of the Mind-seal when the Buddha held up a golden flower and Maha-Kasyapa smiled. Maha-Kasyapa is said to have become an Arhat after being with the Buddha for eight days. After the Buddha's death, Mahakasyapa succeeded the Buddha as a leader of Buddhist Order. He also presided the First Council at Rajagrha. After his death he is reputed to have entrusted Ananda with leadership of the Order.

A Smile With One Twirls a Flower: The story begins with a sutra, the "Ta-fan T'ien-wang Wen Fo Ching." In it it is told that once Brahma, the highest deity in the Hinduist assembly of gods, visited a gathering of disciples of the Buddha on Mount Gridhrakuta (Vulture Peak Mountain). He presented the Buddha with a garland of flowers and requested him respectfully to expound the dharma. However, instead of giving a discourse, the Buddha only took a flower and

twirled it, while smiling silently, between the fingers of his raised hand. None of the gathering understood except for Kashyapa, who responded with a smile. According to the somewhat shortened version of this episode given in example 6 of the Wu-Men-Kuan, the Buddha then said, "I have the treasure of the eye of true dharma, the wonderful mind of nirvana, the true form of no form, the mysterious gate of dharma. It cannot be expressed through words and letters and is a special transmission, outside of all doctrine. This I entrust to Mahakashyapa." According to Wu Men Hui-Kai in the Wu-Men-Kuan, as a matter of fact, suppose that all the monks had smiled, how would the eye treasury have been transmitted? Or suppose that Mahakasyapa had not smiled, how could he have been entrusted with it? If you say the eye treasury can be transmitted, that would be as if the World Honored One were swindling people in a loud voice at the town gate. If you say the eye treasury cannot be transmitted, then why did the Buddha say that he entrusted it to Mahakasyapa? Zen practitioners should open your eyes and look carefully. A thousand mountain ranges separate the one who reflects from the one who is truly present. According to Zen Keys, Vietnamese King Tran Thai Tong said: "While looking at the flower that the World-Honored One raised in his hand, Mahakasyapa found himself suddenly at home. To call that 'transmission of the essential Dharma' is to say that, for him alone, the chariot shaft is adequate transport." According to the somewhat shortened version of this episode given in example 6 of the Wu-Men-Kuan, the Buddha then said, "I have the treasure of the eye of true dharma, the wonderful mind of nirvana, the true form of no form, the mysterious gate of dharma. It cannot be expressed through words and letters and is a special transmission, outside of all doctrine. This I entrust to Mahakashyapa." After this event, Kashyapa was called Mahakashyapa, thus became the first patriarch of the Indian transmission lineage of Ch'an. The story of the Buddha twirling a flower before his assembly, like the story of the baby Buddha taking seven steps in each of the cardinal directions, need not be taken literally. The first account of his transmitting the Dharma to Mahakasyapa is set forth in a sutra of Chinese origin that is dated A.D. 1036, fourteen hundred years after the Buddha's time. This was the Sung period, a peak in the development of Chinese culture when great

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III. First Twenty-Eight Indian Patriarchs:

1) ***Mahakashyapa:*** He was a wealthy man and a wise and widely read scholar. He lived on the outskirts of Rajagrha, one of the Buddha's great disciples. He was said to be foremost among the ten great disciples in non-attachment, and foremost at the practice of austerity. He never missed any of the Buddha's discourse at Venuvana Vihara. On one occasion when he had just finished listening to the Buddha's exposition of a sutra and was on his way home, he saw the Buddha already seated underneath a tree in the road ahead. He was very surprised. It transpired that the Buddha showed a little of his supernatural powers to win over Mahakasyapa. Since then he became a close disciple of the Buddha. He was renowned for his ascetic self-discipline and moral strictness. Thanks to the qualities right after the death of the Buddha, he was asked to reside at the First Council and to take over leadership of the Sangha. He was considered (reckoned) as the first of 28 Great Ancient Patriarchs Indian Zen. He was regarded as the First Patriarch from the story of the "transmission" of the Mind-seal when the Buddha held up a golden flower and Maha-Kasyapa smiled. Maha-Kasyapa is said to have become an Arhat after being with the Buddha for eight days. After the Buddha's death, Mahakasyapa succeeded the Buddha as a leader of Buddhist Order. He also presided the First Council at Rajagrha. After his death he is reputed to have entrusted Ananda with leadership of the Order—See Chapter 3.

2) ***Ananda: An Overview on Ananda:*** Ananda, a cousin of Shakyamuni, a younger brother of Devadatta; he was noted as the most learned disciple of the Buddha. He had a perfect memory and thus was

capable of recalling all of the Buddha's sermons, one of the Buddha's ten great disciples. Ananda served as the Buddha's personal attendant during the last twenty-five years of his life. He was famous for his excellent memory and is supposed to have memorized all the Buddha's sermons, which were later recorded as sutras. Ananda is often extolled (praised) in the canonical writings for his humility and devotion toward the Buddha. He first took his position of a personal attendant after the Buddha had assured him he would acquire no advantages as a result of his position. His name means 'rejoicing,' because he was born on the day the Buddha realized Buddhahood. With his flawless memory, he was chosen to recite the Dharma at the First Council (4 months after the cremation of Buddha's sacred body). Ananda was more than any other an advocate for the cause of women. After the Buddha initially refused a request by his stepmother Mahaprajapati that he allow her and other women to be ordained, Ananda interceded with the Buddha on her behalf, and the Buddha eventually agreed to institute ordination for women.

Life of Ananda: Ananda was the son of Dronodana-rajā (a younger brother of King Suddhodana). Ananda was a younger brother of Devadatta. He was known as Sundarananda or Beautiful Nanda, as he was born bringing happiness to all his kinsfolk, he was named Ananda. He was a cousin of Sakyamuni and one of the Buddha's ten great disciples. In the second year of the Buddha's ministry, Ananda entered the Sangha together with the other Sakya Nobles (Anuruddha, Devadatta, Bhaddiya, Bhagu, and Kimbala). When the Buddha was fifty-five years old, Venerable Ananda became his chief attendant (he was personal attendant to the Lord Buddha for more than twenty years). Ananda volunteered to become a personal attendant for Lord Buddha on condition the Buddha would grant the following eight things.

He was famous (famed) for his extraordinary (excellent) memory, capable of remembering every word ever spoken by the Buddha in his sermons, which were later recorded as sutras. Who was chosen to recite the Dharma at the First Council (4 months after the cremation of Buddha's sacred body). He is said to have recited all the Buddha's sermons which were later recorded as "Basket of Buddhist Scriptures." He was the second patriarch in India, after Mahakasyapa. Ananda is

said to have attained enlightenment after the passing of the Buddha and to have lived to the age of 120. The Buddha predicted that Ananada will become a Buddha named Saga-ravara-dhara-buddhi-vikridi-tabhidjina.

Ananda Begged to Serve the Buddha With the Following Conditions: First, the Buddha should not give him robes which people offered to the Buddha. Second, the Buddha should not give him food which people offered to the Buddha. Third, the Buddha should not allow him to dwell in the same fragrant chamber. Fourth, the Buddha should not take him with him wherever the Buddha is invited. Fifth, the Buddha should kindly go with him wherever he is invited. Sixth, the Buddha should give him permission to introduce visitors that come from afar to see the Buddha. Seventh, the Buddha should kindly grant him permission to approach him whenever any doubt should arise. Eight, the Buddha should kindly repeat to him the discourses that were declared in his absence.

The Roles of Ananda in Buddhism: After King Suddhodana's funeral, the Buddha still stayed at Namatighani in Kapilavastu. Ananda insisted the Buddha to accept his mother, Mahaprajapati, she was also the Buddha's aunt and step-mother, to be the first nun to be ordained. In the fourteenth years after his enlightenment, the Buddha yielded to persuasion and admitted his aunt and women to his order of religious mendicants, but said that the admission of women would shorten the period of Buddhism by 500 years. One day, Prajapati requested the Buddha to accept the 500 odd women for ordination, but the Buddha did not consent. However, since they were already determined to do so, they shaved away their long hair themselves, put on the kasaya, and rushed to where the Buddha was staying. Ananda was very surprised when he saw the 500 women all with their hair shaven, he inquired as to the cause, and he was sympathetic. Prajapati begged Ananda to plead for them. Ananda led them to see the Buddha and they prostrated before him. The Buddha compassionately agreed to the sincere request of Ananda and Prajapati. It was the request of Elder Ananda and Queen Mahaprajapati, that the Buddha founded the Order of Nuns. The Buddha also appointed Nun Gotami, used to be Queen Mahaprajapati, Chief of the Order of Nuns, and Venerable Nuns Khema and Uppalavanna, two chief to be deputy for Venerable Nun Gotami. He

then spoke to them of Precepts for a Bhiksuni as well as the Eight Rules of Respect. Henceforth, there were Bhiksunis and Sramanerika, femal members of the Order among the Buddhist Sangha. They are first Bhiksunis and Sramanerikas in Buddhist Sangha.

Roles of Ananda in the First Buddhist Council: Ananda also played a crucial role in the “First Buddhist Council” held at Rajagrha, at which 500 Arhats assembled to recite the discourses of the Buddha from memory. Ananda had been presented at most of these, but he had not yet attained arhathood, and so was initially excluded from the council. He became an arhat on the night before the council, however, and so was able to attend. In the First Council: Venerable Ananda, the closest disciple and the attendant of the Buddha for 25 years. He was endowed with a remarkable memory. First Ananda was not admitted to the First Council. According to the Cullavagga, later other Bhikhus objected the decision. They strongly interceded for Ananda, though he had not attained Arhathood, because of the high moral standard he had reached and also because he had learnt the Dharma and vinaya from the Buddha himself. Ananda was eventually accepted by Mahakasyapa into the Council, and was able to recite what was spoken by the Buddha (sutras and doctrines). However, Ananda was charged by other Bhikshus several charges which he explained as follows: a) He could not formulate the lesser and minor precepts, as he was overwhelmed with grief at the imminent death of the Master. b) He had to tread upon the garment of the Master while sewing it as there was no one to help him. c) He permitted women to salute first the body of the Master, because he did not want to detain them. He also did for their edification. d) He was under the influence of the evil one when he forgot to request the Master to enable him to continue his study for a kalpa. e) He had to plead for the admission of women into the Order out of consideration for Mahaprapati Gautami who nursed the Master in his infancy. f) However, according to the Dulva, two other charges also seem to have brought against Ananda. g) He failed to supply drinking water to the Buddha though he had thrice asked for it. He said that the water of the river at that time was muddy, not potable for the Buddha. h) He showed the privy parts of the Buddha to men and women of low character. He said that the exhibition of the privy parts of the Buddha would rid those concerned of their sensuality.

The Chandala Maid and Venerable Ananda: At the time of the Buddha, one day Venerable Ananda donned his robe with neatness and care and taking bowl in hand entered the city of Savatthi with measured steps and downcast eyes. After he had finished his meal, he searched for water and saw a well by the roadside. At that time, a Chandala maid was drawing the water at the well. Venerable Ananda approached the well and stood with downcast eyes, holding the bowl with both arms. The girl asked: "What do you need?" Ven. Ananda replied: "Please give me some water." The Chandala maid replied: "How can I, a Chandala girl, offer you water? The people of high class dare not trample even our shadows. They avoid us, they spurn us, and if by chance they see us, they will rush to the bathroom to wash their face with perfumed water, lamenting 'O bad luck, we have seen an outcast' in such a contemptuous manner do they look down upon us." Venerable Ananda replied: "I know not of high and low caste, you are just as much a human being as I am. All human beings are alike. We all belong to the common race of mankind. Our blood is red. What difference is there? What distinction can there be? I have learned from my Teacher that not by birth is one an outcast, not by birth is one a Brahmin; by deed one becomes an outcast, by deed one becomes a Brahmin." The Chandala was so impressed and could not say a word, but bending forward and graciously offered water to Venerable Ananda. This is one of the long stories about Ananda; however, I just want to conclude the story right here to emphasize that to Buddhist disciples, there does not exist a so-called "caste system", only good and bad deeds will make a person a Brahmin or a Chandala. In the Dhammapada Sutta, sentence 43, the Buddha taught: "What neither mother, nor father, nor any other relative can do, a well-directed mind can do one far greater good."

Ananda Bodhi Tree: Ananda Bodhi Tree, so called because it was Venerable Ananda who was responsible for the planting of the tree. In the absence of the Buddha, devout followers, who used to bring flowers and garlands, laid them at the entrance to the fragrant chamber and departed with much rejoicing. Anathapindika heard of it and requested Venerable Ananda to inquire from the Buddha whether there was a possibility of finding a place where his devotees might pay obeisance to the Buddha when he is away on his preaching tours.

Venerable Ananda mentioned this matter to the Buddha and asked if he might bring a seed from the great Bodhi Tree and plant at the entrance to Jetavana, as a symbol of the Buddha for people to pay homage when the Buddha was on his preaching tours. The Buddha agreed. The tree that sprang up in that place was known as the Ananda-Bodhi.

3) *S(h)anavasa*: A younger brother and disciple of Ananda. According to the history of the Buddha's successors, he was a wealthy man of Rajagriha, the capital of Magadha in India. In daily life, he was wise and valiant. As a layperson, he made offerings of buildings and other things for to the Buddhist Order. Finally he renounced the secular world to devote himself as a monk to practicing the Buddha's teachings. Shanavasa became Ananda's Dharma heir and later became the third Patriarch in Indian tradition. He, then, traveled to Mathura and Kashmir to spread the Buddha-dharma. An arhat, whom Eitel, in *The Dictionary of Chinese-English Buddhist Terms*, gives as the third patriarch, and says: "A Tibetan tradition identifies him with yasas, the leader of the II Synod. Because of his name he is associated with a hemp or linen garment, or a covering with which he was born. However, according to the Buddhist legends, Madhyantika was also another successor of the Second Patriarch Ananda. Although Madhyantika also propagated in Kashmir, no distinct lineage or successorship emerged from his efforts and the recorded transmission of teachings he had received from Ananda ended. Madhyantika, however, is sometimes included among the Buddha's successors, bringing the total number of successors to twenty-nine successors, Shanavasa is traditionally regarded as the fourth, and Madhyantika, as the third.

4) *Upagupta*: The fourth patriarch in the Indian lineage of Zen. A Sudra by birth, who entered upon monastic life when 17 years of age. He was renowned as almost a Buddha, lived under king Asoka, and teacher of Asoka, and is reputed as the fourth patriarch, 100 years after the nirvana. According to the *Mahavamsa Commentary* and the *Manjusrimulakalpa*, Ananda asked his dharma heir Sanavasa to protect the religion after his demise and to ordain Upagupta, a citizen of Mathura, to become the fourth patriarch of Indian Ch'an Sect. He foretold that, according to the prophecy of the Buddha, Upagupta would become a Buddha but not a Sambuddha. Due to the absence of

his name in Theravada literature, it is assumed that Upagupta was a Sarvastivadin monk (Realistic school, Prajnaptivadinah, a branch of the Mahasanghikah (Đại Chúng Bộ), one of the twenty Hinayana sects, the School which preaches the Existence of All Things which held that dharmas have a real existence in the past, present and future. This school took the view of phenomenality and reality, founded on the Prajnapti-sastra. This school flourished in India for many centuries and was widely studied in China and Japan).

5) Dhitaka (Dhritaka): According to Eitel in The Dictionary of Chinese-English Buddhist Terms, Dhrtaka, the fifth patriarch “Unknown to Southern Buddhists, born in Magadha, about a little more than one hundred years after the Buddha’s parinirvana. He was a disciple and dharma heir of Patriarch Upagupta, went to Madhyadesa, the central kingdom (in Central India), where he converted the heretic Micchaka and his 8,000 followers.

6) Mikkaka (Micchaka): According to Eitel in The Dictionary of Chinese-English Buddhist Terms, Mikkaka, a native of Central India, who laboured in Northern India transported himself to Ferghana where he chose Vasumitra as his successor. He died by the fire of samadhi of his own. Mikkaka was originally a teacher of Brahmanism with a following of eight thousand disciples. When he heard the preaching of Dhritaka, his predecessor, he converted to Buddhism with all his followers. Known for his scholarship and eloquence, Mikkaka spread the Buddha’s teachings in northern India.

7) Vasumitra: Vasumitra, name of a Bodhisattva, born 400 years after the Buddha’s death, a native of Northern Indian state of Gandhara, born at the end of the first century AD. A Sanskrit term for “Excellent Friend.” An Indian monk named Vasumitra, who according to tradition presided over the “Fourth Buddhist Council” sponsored by Kaniska I and held in Gandhara around 100 A.C. in Kashmir. He was also the seventh patriarch of Indian Zen Sect. According to Eitel in the Dictionary of Chinese-English Buddhist Terms, Vasumitra is described as a native of northern India, converted from riotous living by Micchaka, was a follower of the Sarvastivadah school, became president of the last synod for the revision of the Canon under Kaniska, and wrote the Abhidharma-prakarana-pada sastra. Vasumitra’s argument from the difference of function or position in accounting

where the same numeral may be used to express three different values. He helped compile the "Great Commenatary on the Abhidharma" and he was also known as the author of the "Doctrines of the Different Schools."

8) *Buddhanandi*: A descendant of the Gautama family and eighth patriarch in India. He was from Kamarupa in northern India. According to Eitel in The Dictionary of Chinese-English Buddhist Terms, Kamarupa, now Kamrup, an ancient kingdom formed by the western portion of Assam. Until the T'ang dynasty, no temples were ever built there. When King Kamala heard that Hsuan-Tsang crossed by the country, he invited Hsuan-tsang to stop by to preach Buddha's teaching. He is said to have immediately attained the state of Arhat right after he was converted to Buddhism. He excelled in preaching and propagated the Hinayana teachings. It is said that Buddhananda often converted people by skillful means, and defeated a number of Brahmanists in debates.

9) *Buddhamitra*: We do not have detailed records of this Patriarch, we only know that the reason he became the ninth patriarch because he was one of the best disciples of Patriarch Buddhanandi. He was born and raised in Jalandhara, an ancient kingdom and city in the Punjab, the present Jalandar. According to Hsuan-Tsang in the Records of the Western Lands, there were about 20 monasteries with 1,000 monks, who were either Hinayanists or Mahayanists, but the number of Hinayanists was few. It is said that as his predecessor, Buddhamitra often converted people by skillful means, and defeated a number of Brahmanists in debates. According to the Buddhist legends, the king of his country was strongly supported Brahmanism and tried by all means to rid the kingdom of all Buddhist influences. Determined to overcome the king's prejudice, Buddhamitra, bearing a red flag, is said to have walked back and forth in front of the palace for twelve years. Finally the king, moved by his resolve, allowed him to debate with a Brahmanist teacher in the king's presence. Buddhamitra refuted his opponent and thus converted the king to Buddhism. On another occasion, he refuted an ascetic who was slandering the Buddha, and converted the man and his five hundred followers to Buddhism, an accomplishment for which he became widely known.

10) Bhikshu Pars(h)va: A native of Central India. He is also said to have presided over the Fourth Council. According to Professor Soothill in *The Dictionary of Chinese-English Buddhist Terms*, Parsva was the tenth patriarch, the master of Avaghosa, previously a Brahman of Gandhara, who took a vow to not lie down until he had mastered the meaning of the Tripitaka, cut off all desire in the realms of sense, form, and non-form, and obtained the six supernatural powers and the eight paramitas. This he accomplished after three years. He died around 36 B.C.

11) Punyayas(h)as: A native of the ancient Indian state of Kosala, north of India. He was a descendant of Gautama family, born in Pataliputra (Pataliputra is name of an ancient Indian city corresponding to modern-day Patna, originally Kusumapura. It was the capital of Magadha kingdom of the Mauryan dynasty, it located in the southern part of Magadha. The residence of King Asoka, known as Pataliputra, the modern Patna. It was the residence of King Asoka, he there convoked the third synod), about over five hundred years after the Buddha's parinirvana. He laboured in Varanasi and converted Asvaghosa. Punyanaysa was the eleventh of the twenty-eight patriarch in the Indian Zen tradition.

12) Asvaghosha: Asvaghosha was a native of Sravasti. He was the author of the *Buddha Carita*, a biography of the Buddha. He was a Buddhist writer and poet of the first or the second century A.D. (600 years after the Buddha's nirvana). Author of the *Buddha-Carita Kavya*, famous life of Buddha in verse. He was a famous writer whose patron was the Indo-Scythian king Kanishka. According to Buddhist tradition he was born a brahman but was converted to Buddhism by a monk named Parsva, who belonged to the Vaibarsva. He finally settled at Benares, and became the twelfth patriarch. His name is attached to the ten works. The two of which have exerted great influence on Buddhism are *Buddha-carita-kavya-sutra*, translated into Chinese by Dharmaraksa around 414-421 A.D., later translated into English by Beal, S.B.E.; and *Mahayana-sraddhotpada-sastra*, translated by Paramartha, around 554 A.D., and by Siksanda, 695-700 A.D.; later translated into English by Taitaro Suzuki in 1900. He gave to Buddhism the philosophical basis for its Mahayana development. Asvaghosa occupies a unique position not only in the history of

Buddhist thought but also in the whole tradition of Sanskrit poetry. The chief contribution which Asvaghosa made to the history of Buddhist thought was his emphasis on Buddha-bhakti. Though the Mahayanist teachings had been spreading for at least two to three centuries before his time, they find the first notable expression in his writings, in spite of the fact that he belonged to the Sarvastivada school. The *Buddhacarita* described the life of Lord Buddha in a chaste and stately style, though written with considerable restraint. The original poem, as known to I-Ch'ing in the Chinese translation in the seventh century A.D., contains 28 cantos. The Tibetan translation also has the same number of cantos. Hence the original Sanskrit version must also have consisted of 28 cantos. However, only 17 are preserved in Sanskrit today, and generally only the first thirteen are regarded as authentic. I-Ch'ing says that in his time this beautiful poem was 'widely read or sung throughout the five divisions of India, and the countries of the Southern Sea.' In *Buddhacariya*, Buddhaghosa not only gives us the best account of the life of Lord Buddha, but also gives evidence of his encyclopaedic knowledge of India's mythological traditions and pre-Buddhistic philosophical systems, notably the Sankhya. The *Saundarananda-kavya* narrates the ordination by the Buddha of Nanda, his half-brother. Besides these two significant poetical works, Asvaghosa wrote three Buddhist dramas which were discovered by H. Luders in Turfan in Central Asia at the beginning of the twentieth century. Of these, the *Sariputraprakarana* with nine acts is the most important. It is the oldest dramatic work in Sanskrit literature. Asvaghosa also wrote a lyrical poem called *Gandistotra-gatha* which consists of 29 stanzas in the *sragdhara* metre. E.H. Johnston questions Asvaghosa's authorship of this work, but as Winternitz observes: "It is a beautiful poem, worthy of Asvaghosa both in form and content." Besides, according to Buddhist tradition, when *Rashtrapala*, a Buddhist drama he wrote about a noted monk whom the Buddha mentioned in the *Agama Sutra*, he left home to follow the Buddha, then went back to preach to save his parents. When this drama was staged, five hundred princes immediately renounced secular life to become Buddhist monks. He propagated Buddhism in Northern India under the patronage of King Kanishka. He wrote epics such as *Buddhacarita* and *Saundarananda*. *Buddhacarita* recounts the Buddha's life and is

considered a masterpiece of Indian literature. Saundarananda is the story of Nanda, a cousin of the Buddha, who severed his relationship with his beloved and beautiful wife and became a monk.

13) *Bhikshu Kapimala:* Kapimala was a native of Pataliputra in the Indian state of Magadha in central Indian in the second century. Pataliputra was an ancient Indian city corresponding to modern-day Patna, originally Kusumapura. It was the capital of Magadha kingdom of the Mauryan dynasty, it located in the southern part of Magadha. This was the residence of Asoka, to whom the title of Kusuma is applied. At the time Pataliputra was ruled by king Asoka. It is said that at first he led a group of three thousand non-Buddhists, but later he met Asvaghosha, realized the truth, and spread the Dharma through the North and West of India.

14) *Nagarjuna:* Also called Long Thǎng. Nagarjuna lived in the second or third century AD. He was born into a Brahmin family in Southern India. When he became a monk he first studied Hinayana canon, but later he travelled to the Himalaya and learned the teachings of Mahayana. An Indian Buddhist philosopher, founder of the Madhyamika School. He was the 14th Patriarch of Indian Zen School. He composed Madhyamika sastra and sastra on Maha prajna paramita. According to Kumarajiva, Nagarjuna was born in South India in a Brahmin family. Hsuan-Tsang, however, stated that Nagarjuna was born in South Kosala, now Berar. When he was young, he studied the whole of the Tripitaka in three months, but was not satisfied. He received the Mahayana-Sutra from a very old monk in the Himalayas, but he spent most of his life at Sripurvata of Sri Sailam in South India which he made into a center for propagation of Buddhism. He was one of the most important philosophers of Buddhism and the founder of the Madhyamika school or Sunyavada. Nagarjuna was a close friend and contemporary of the Satavahana king, Yajnasri Gautamiputra (166-196 A.D.). The world has never seen any greater dialectician than Nagarjuna. One of his major accomplishments was his systematization of the teaching presented in the Prajnaparamita Sutra. Nagarjuna's methodological approach of rejecting all opposites is the basis of the Middle Way. He is considered the author of the Madhyamika-Karika (Memorial Verses on the Middle teaching), Mahayana-vimshaka (Twenty Songs on the Mahayana), and Dvada-Shadvara-Shastra

(Treatise of the Twelve Gates). He was the 14th patriarch of the Indian lineage. He was the one who laid the foundation for (established) the doctrine of the Madhyamika in the “Eight Negations” (no elimination, no production, no destruction, no eternity, no unity, no manifoldness, no arriving, no departing). To him, the law of conditioned arising is extremely important for without this law, there would be no arising, no passing away, no eternity, or mutability. The existence of one presupposed the existence of the other. Nagarjuna is revered in all of Mahayana as a great religious figure, in many places as a Bodhisattva. Not only Zen, but also Tantric branch of Buddhism and the devotional communities of Amitabha Buddha, count Nagarjuna among their patriarchs. Nagarjuna created an age in the history of Buddhist philosophy and gave it a definite turn. Hsuan-Tsang speaks of the ‘four suns which illumined the world.’ One of these was Nagarjuna, the other three being Asvaghosa, Kumarajiva, and Aryadeva. Indeed as a philosophical thinker, Nagarjuna has no match in the history of Indian philosophy. According to one legend, in the 3rd century, Nagarjuna traveled to the sea dragon’s palace beneath the ocean to retrieve the Avatamsaka Sutra. According to another legend, he discovered the sutra in an abandoned monastery. Nagarjuna was the fourteenth patriarch of Indian Zen. He was the founder and first patriarch of the Madhyamika (Middle Way) school, also the founder of the Pure Land Sect (Salvation School). Although a great number of works are attributed to him by Buddhist tradition, only a handful are thought by contemporary scholars to have actually been composed by him. The most important of these is the Fundamental Verses on the Middle Way (Mulamadhyamaka-Karika), in which he extends the logic of the doctrine of emptiness (sunyata). In the Lankavatara Sutra, the Buddha is asked who will teach the Mahayana after he has passed away. He foretold the coming of Nagarjuna and Nagarjuna’s rebirth in the Pure Land: “After 500 years of my passing away, a Bhikshu most illustrious and distinguished will be born; his name will be Nagarjuna, he will be the destroyer of the one-sided views based on being and non-being. He will declare my Vehicle, the unsurpassed Mahayana, to the world; attaining the stage of Joy he will go to the Land of Bliss.”

15) Aryadeva (Kanadeva): He was called Kanadeva because he had only one eye. The Sanskrit “Kana” means one-eyed. He was also

called Aryadeva. He lived in Southern India in the third century, the fifteenth patriarch of the Indian Zen School. He was one of the most foremost disciples of Nagarjuna and devoted his life to continuing his master's work, consolidating the Madhyamika tradition. The main features of Madhyamaka Philosophy. It is both philosophy and mysticism. By its dialectic, its critical probe into all the categories of thought, it relentlessly exposes the pretensions of Reason to know Truth. The hour of Reason's despair, however, becomes the hour of truth. The seeker now turns to meditation on the various forms of 'Sunyata,' and the practice of 'Prajnaparamitas.' By moral and yogic practices, he is prepared to receive the Truth. In the final stage of Prajna, the wheels of imagination are stopped, the discursive mind is stilled, and in that silence Reality stoops to kiss the eye of the aspirant; he receives the accolade of prajna and becomes the knighterrant of Truth. It is an experience of a different dimension, spaceless, timeless, which is beyond the province of thought and speech. Hence it cannot be expressed in any human language. According to the Buddhist tradition, he was one of the six great commentators on the Buddha's teachings and was the author of Four Hundred Verses on the Yogic Deeds of Bodhisattvas (Catuhisataka). It is said to have been killed by a non-Buddhist.

16) Arya Rahulata: Arya Rahulata was originally a native of Kapilavastu, in present day Nepal. Rahulata of Kapila, the sixteenth patriarch, who miraculously transported himself to the kingdom of Sravasti, where he saw on the Hiranyavati the shadow of five Buddhas. He was an early Madhyamika master, sometimes said to have been a Brahmin. He is most famous for his verses in praise of the Prajnaparamita (Skt. Prajnaparamitastotra).

17) Samghanandi: We do not have detailed records of this Patriarch, we only know that he was a native of the city of Sravasti, the capital of the ancient state of Kosala. According to The Record of the Lineage of the Buddha and the Patriarchs, he was one of the princes of King Ratna-Alamkaraka in northern India in the middle of the seventh century. He learned to speak when he was not one year of age yet, and he always spoke about Buddhadharma. At the age of seven, he entered the monk's life and later became the dharma hier of Patriarch Arya Rahulata.

18) Samgayashas (Gayasata): We do not have detailed records of this Patriarch, we only know that the reason he became the eighteenth patriarch because he was one of the best disciples of Patriarch Samghanandi. A History of the Buddha's Successors, in the late seventh century, Patriarch Samghanandi always told his disciples that his master had told him this: "There would be a saint named Samgayashas, who would continue to preach the correct dharma to benefit sentient beings." So Patriarch Samghanandi and his assembly moved to the area, now north of India, to seek the saint. On the way to Mati he met a little boy. The Patriarch asked, "How old are you?" The boy replied, "I am one hundred years old." The Patriarch said, "You're still a boy, how can you say you're one hundred years old?" The boy said, "I don't know the reason why I myself am a hundred years old." The Patriarch asked, "You have a good original endowment and nature." The boy said, "Is it the Buddha who teach "To live one hundred years without understanding Buddhism is not equal to live just one day with a thorough understanding of Buddhism." After this conversation, Samgayashas' parents allowed him to follow Patriarch Samghanandi to study more on Buddhism, and as a result, Samgayashas became Samghanandi's dharma hier, and the eighteenth Indian Patriarch.

19) Kumarata: We do not have detailed records of this Patriarch, we only know that Kumarata was born in about 400 years after the Buddha's death. Some sources said that he lived near the late third century, but there is no clear evidence confirming that date. According to A History of the Buddha's Successors, he was born in Takshashilain (it should be noted that Taksasila was the name of a city in Gandhara, modern Taxila in Pakistan, where there was a well-known Buddhist university. According to Nalinnaksha Dutt in Buddhist Sects in India, here have been found, among other objects, traces of at least 55 stupas, 28 monasteries and 9 temples. Hsuan-Tsang visited this place twice, once in 630, when he came to this country and, again in 645, on his return journey. There he saw numerous monasteries but all in ruins. The few monks he saw were all Mahayanists), the north-western part of ancient India and was very wise even as a child. He became a monk and is said to have later inherited Sakyamuni Buddha's teachings from Samghayashas to become the nineteenth patriarch. His wisdom and scholarship were famed throughout India and attracted numerous

people to Buddhism. Hsuan-tsang's Record of the Western Regions lists Kumarata as one of the "Four Suns," the others being Ashvaghosha, Nagarjuna, and Aryadeva. They were called "Suns" because they were considered to illuminate the world with the light of wisdom. Kumarata is regarded as the founder of the Sautrantika school. He transferred the Buddha's teaching to Jayata. The name "Sautrantika" itself means "Ending with the Sutra," so when Patriarch Kumarata founded Sautrantika, he claimed "Canonical Texts" to be extremely important in Buddhist cultivation. The Sautrantika School Rejected the claim that the Abhidharma was ultimately authoritative. Its name means "Ending with the Sutras," implying that its concept of what was canonical ended with the Sutra Pitaka, which preached by the Buddha, and nothing else but the Satras can be considered as sutras. This is an Indian Buddhist school that developed from the Sarvastivada, probably sometime around 150 B.C. As the name suggests, this tradition bases itself on the Sutras, rather than on Abhidharma texts. The teaching of the sutras, an important Hinayana school, which based its doctrine on the sutras alone, the founder of this division is Kumara-labha. This school believed in the transmigration of a substance (sankranti) from one life to another. According to its followers, of the five skandhas of an individual, there is only one subtle skandha which transmigrates, as against the whole of the pudgala of the Sammitiyas. It also believed that every man had in him the potentiality of becoming a Buddha, a doctrine of the Mahayanists. On account of such views, this school is considered to be a bridge between the Sravakayana (often called the Hinayana) and the Mahayana. The Sautrantika School arose as a reaction to the commentarial and Abhidharmic trend of the Vaibhasikas, denying the authority of the complex manuals and treatises that it produced. Although developed from the Sarvastivada, but is believed that this is an important Hinayana school, which based its doctrine on the sutras alone. There were a number of views on which the Sautrantika School differed from the Sarvastivadin. In particular it opposed the Sarvastivadin concept of dharmas existing in the three modes of time, asserting that all dharmas had only a momentary, or 'ksanika,' existence. In order to deal with the problems of karman that the Sarvastivada had sought to resolve through the idea of dharmas persisting through all three times. According to the

Sarvastivadin, karma and effect relate in three mode of time: past, present and future. However, Sautrantika School proposed actions perfumed one's mental continuum in such a way as to determine particular results. Difficulties with this model led them to develop the idea of "seed" which were planted by an action with a particular ethical character, only to "sprout" at a later point, when conditions allowed, and give rise to a "fruit" appropriate to the original action. The Sautrantika School did not regard other commentaries or treatises as the word of the Buddha. They rejected the claim that the Abhidharma was ultimately authoritative. In fact, the origin of the Sautrantika School lay in the rejection of the ever growing Vibhasas, or scholastic summaries, of the Vaibhasika-Sarvastivada. In the fourth century A.D., Vasubandhu wrote his famous Abhidharmakosa from a Sautrantika viewpoint and he was so successful that the Vaibhasika School died out. Thereafter Abhidharmakosa was regarded as a definitive Abhidharma text, expounding both the Sarvastivada and Sautrantika philosophies.

20) Jayata: We do not have detailed records of this Patriarch, we only know that he was a native of Northern India, teacher of Vasubandhu. We only know that he was one of the greatest commentators and the the greatest authorities of ancient India. He was the younger brother of Asanga, and composed The Treasury of Abhidharma (Abhidharmakosha), a complete and systematic account of the Abhidharma, the peak of scholarship in the Fundamental Vehicle. Later he followed the Mahayana Yogachara view, and wrote many works, such as Thirty Stanzas on the Mind (Trimsikavijnapti-karika). His writings include: Abhidharmakosha, Analysis of the Five Skandhas, Thirty Stanzas, Treatise on Karma, Treatise on the Three Natures, Twenty Stanzas, and Well Explained Reasoning, and so on.

21) Vasubandhu (420-500 AD): He was born in the fifth century in Purusapura (close to present-day Peshawar), the capital of Gandhara (now is part of Afghanistan). He was one of the great philosophers in India in the fifth century, a native of Peshawar (now is Peshawar) in Gandhara, born 900 years after the Buddha's nirvana. He was the second of the three sons of a Brahmin family. All three sons were called Vasubandhu and all three became Buddhist monks. In his youth he adhered to the Hinayana teachings of the Sautrantika School. He

went to Kashmir to learn the Abhidharma philosophy. On his return home he wrote the Abhidharma-kosa, perhaps the most well-known of all treatises on the Abhidharma. Later he became dissatisfied with key elements of its philosophical system and was converted from Hinayana to Mahayana by his brother, Asanga. On his conversion he would have cut out his tongue for its past heresy, but he was dissuaded by his brother, who bade him use the same tongue to correct his errors, whereupon he wrote “The Teaching of the Nature of the Eight Consciousnesses” (Duy Thức Học) and other Mahayanist works. He is called the twenty-first patriarch. He was one of the famous Indian Buddhist philosophers and writers, with his brother Asanga founded the Sarvastivada and Yogacara Schools of Mahayana Buddhism. Vasubandhu along with his brother Asanga is considered to be one of the two main figures in the early development of the Yogacara tradition. He was also the twenty-first patriarch of the Indian lineage of Zen. He was also the author of the Trimshika, a poem made of thirty songs, expounded Yogachara (the works of Asanga on important Mahayana sutras). He also composed some of the most influential Yogacara treatises, including the “Twenty Verses,” and the “Thirty Verses,” and so on. The Abhidharmakosa Sastra is preserved in sixty volumes of Chinese translation. The Sanskrit text is lost, but fortunately we have a commentary written by Yasomitra called the Abhidharma-kosa-vyakhya which has facilitated the restoration of the lost text undertaken by the late Professor Louis de la Vallée-Pousin of Belgium and completed by Rahula Sankrityayana of India.

22) Manorhita (Manura): Manorhita was name of an Indian prince of the Nadai Kingdom who lived in around eight hundred years after the Buddha's parinirvana. According to A History of the Buddha's Successors, when he was born, auspicious signs appeared in the royal palace, so later his father dared not to bind him with secular life. At the age of thirty, his father allowed him to enter the Buddhist Order, and he became disciple and successor to Vasubandhu as 22nd patriarch. Author of the Vibhasa-Sastra. He laboured in Western India and Ferghana where he died in 165 AD. The following is the gatha from Patriarch Manorhita:

"The mind moves with the ten thousand things;
Even when moving, it is serene.

Perceive its essence as it moves on,
And neither joy nor sorrow there is."

23) Haklena (*Haklenayasas or Padmaratna*): We do not have detailed records of this Patriarch, we only know that he was born into a Brahmin family in a the Tokhara country and who lived in around nine hundred years after the Buddha's parinirvana (according to Eitel in Chinese-English Buddhist Terms, Tukhara is the name of the Yueh-Chih country, a topographical term designating a country of ice and frost (tukhara), and corresponding to the present Badakchan which Arab geographers still call Tokharestan. An ethnographical term used by the Greeks to designate the Tocharoi or Indo-Scythians, and likewise by Chinese writers applied to the Tochari Tartars who driven on by the Huns (180 B.C.) conquered Trans-Oxania, destroyed the Bactrian kingdom in 126 B.C., and finally conquered the Punjab, Cashmere, and the greater part of India. Their greatest king was Kanichka). According to The Record of the Lineage of the Buddha and the Patriarchs, the people where he grew up feared demons and performed debased sacrifices of oxen and wine. He would go alone into the deep woods and destroy the ceremonial altars, seize the oxen, and drive them away, and scolded the mountain and forest gods: "Do not try to cheat poor people, every year, this nonsense thing wasted people's money and killed a lot of animals!" He spreaded the Buddha's Teachings in Central India. It is said that when Aryasimha came to see him, Aryasimha asked, "Master! I want to function my mind to see the Way, can you help me?" He replied, "There is no place for you to function your mind." Aryasimha said, "If there is no place for me to function the mind, how can I do the Buddhs-work?" He said, "If you try to function the so-called mind, it's not the real merit. If you don't do, that is Buddha-work. Remember, we, Buddhists, try to do the Buddha-work, but never think about the things we do." Listening to these words, Aryasimha suddenly became awakening. Later, Aryasimha became Haklena's dharma heir.

24) Aryasimha (*Bhikshu Simha*): We do not have detailed records of this Patriarch, the twenty-fourth Patriarch of Indian Zen School. We only know that he was born into a Brahmin family in Central India in the sixth century. He spreaded the Buddha's Teachings in the Northern India. It is said that he was executed by the king of Kashmira. A

History of the Buddha's Successors states that Aryasimha was executed (beheaded) by the king of Kashmir when he was propagating Buddhism there. And when he was beheaded, the text states, milk instead of blood flowed from his neck. According to The Record of the Lineage of the Buddha and the Patriarchs, at the moment of the execution, the king's arm, still holding the sword, fell to the ground, and he died seven days later. Aryasimha is often cited as the symbol of willingness to give up one's life for the sake of the Law.

25) Vasiasita: We do not have detailed records of this Patriarch, we only know that he was a native of Western India, belonged to a Brahmin family. At early age his parents allowed him to enter the Buddhist Order and studied Buddhism under Patriarch Aryasimha. Later, he became the twenty-fifth patriarch of the Indian Ch'an Sect, who laboured in Central and Southern India. According to The Record of the Lineage of the Buddha and the Patriarchs, at the time, king of the Southern India listened to non-Buddhists who tried to hurt Patriarch Vasiasita, but a son of the king named Punyamitra, tried to convince the king that Patriarch Vasiasita followed Buddhism with correct dharma. The king was so angry that he imprisoned his son immediately, but later he was imprisoned by his father. But after a dialogue with Vasiasita, the king thoroughly understood, so he not only treated Vasiasita well, but he also allowed his son to become a monk and studied Buddhism under Patriarch Vasiasita. Later, Punyamitra became Vasiasita's dharma heir and the twenty-sixth Indian Patriarch. The date of Patriarch Vasiasita's death is given as 325 A.D.

26) Punyamitra: We do not have detailed records of this Patriarch, we only know that he was the son of a king belonged to the Sastriya class in Southern India. According to The Record of the Lineage of the Buddha and the Patriarchs, he tried to intervene in the case of Patriarch Vasiasita, as a result, he was imprisoned by his father. After he was released from the jail, he asked permission from the king to become a monk and studied Buddhism under Patriarch Vasiasita. Later, he became Vasiasita's dharma heir and the twenty-sixth Indian Patriarch.

27) Prajnatara: We do not have detailed records of this Patriarch, we only know that he was born into a Brahmin family in Eastern India. According to The Record of the Lineage of the Buddha and the Patriarchs, his parents passed away when he was very young, so he had

to join his neighbors to wander in the countryside to beg for food. However, his language and behavior were totally different from them. Whenever, he was asked to do anything, he tried his best to accomplish without asking for any money. A good opportunity came to his life after he met Patriarch Punyamitra, became the Patriarch's disciple and later a dharma hier. Prajnatarā, the 27th patriarch in India, who laboured in southern India and consumed himself by the fire of transformation, 457 A.D., teacher of Bodhidharma.

28) Bodhidharma: An Overview of Patriarch Bodhidharma: Bodhidharma was a deeply learned Indian Buddhist monk who arrived at the Chinese Court in 520 AD. After his famous interview with Emperor Han Wu Ti. However, later on, he meditated for nine years in silence and departed. Bodhidharma was the 28th Indian and first Zen Patriarch in China. He is an archetype for steadfast practice. According to the Indian tradition, Bodhidharma, an Indian meditation master who is considered by the Ch'an tradition to be its first Chinese patriarch and the twenty-eighth Indian patriarch. According to East Asian legends, he traveled from India to spread the true Dharma and is thought to have arrived in the town of Lo-Yang in Southern China between 516 and 526. The legends report that he traveled to Shao-Lin Ssu monastery on Mount Sung, where he meditated facing a wall for nine years. During this time his legs reportedly fell off, and he is also said to have cut off his own eyelids to prevent himself from falling asleep. Another legend holds that when he cast his eyelids to the ground a tea plant sprang up, and its ability to ward off sleep due to its caffeine content is thought to be a gift from Bodhidharma to successive generations of meditators. Later, his main disciple was Hui-K'o, who is said to have cut off his own arm as an indication of his sincerity in wishing to be instructed by Bodhidharma. Hui-K'o is considered by the tradition to be its second Chinese patriarch.

Patriarch Bodhidharma and King Liang Wu-Ti: The Emperor Wu-Ti invited him to Nanking for an audience. The Emperor said: "Since my enthronement, I have built many monasteries, copied many holy writings and invested many priests and nuns. How great is the merit due to me?" "No merit at all," was the answer. Bodhidharma added: "All these things are merely insignificant effects of an imperfect cause. It is the shadow following the substance and is without real entity." The

emperor asked: "Then, what is merit in the true sense of the word?" Bodhidharma replied: "It consists in purity and enlightenment, completeness and depth. Merit as such cannot be accumulated by worldly means." The emperor asked again: "What is the Noble Truth in its highest sense?" Bodhidharma replied: "It is empty, no nobility whatever." The emperor asked: "Who is it then that facing me?" Bodhidharma replied: "I do not know, Sir." The Emperor could not understand him. Bodhidharma was famous for his interview with Emperor Han Wu Ti. But after that, Bodhidharma went away. He crossed the Yangtze River and reached the capital, Lo-Yang, of Northern Wei. People said Bodhidharma used the rush-leaf boat to cross the Yangtse River. After a sojourn there he went to Mount Wu-T'ai-Shan and resided in the Shao-Lin Temple where he meditated (facing the wall) for nine years in silence and departed. As is clear from the dialogue between the emperor and Bodhidharma, the essential core of Bodhidharma's doctrine is the philosophy of emptiness (sunyata), and sunyata is beyond demonstration of any kind. Therefore, Bodhidharma also replied in the negative form. Later, Wu-ti asked Chih-kung about this interview with Bodhidharma. Said Chih-kung: "Do you know this man?" The Emperor confessed his ignorance, saying: "I really do not know him." Chih-kung said: "He is a Kuan-Yin Bodhisattva attempting to transmit the seal of the Buddha-mind." The Emperor was grieved and tried to hasten an envoy after Bodhidharma. But Chih-kung said: "It is of no use for your Majesty to try to send for him. Even when all the people in this land run after him, he will never turn back." When we speak of the Buddhist influence on the life and literature of the Chinese people, we should keep this mystic trend of Bodhidharma's philosophy in mind, for there is no doubt that it has had a great deal to do with the moulding of the spirit of Chinese Zen Buddhism. Zen practitioners in the world can leap clear of this. Bodhidharma gives them a single swordblow that cuts off everything. These days how people misunderstand! They go on giving play to their spirits, put a glare in their eyes and say, "Empty, without holiness!" Fortunately, this has nothing to do with it. Zen master Wu Tsu once said, "If only you can penetrate 'empty, without holiness,' then you can return home and sit in peace." All this amounts to creating complications; still, it does not stop Bodhidharma from smashing the

lacquer bucket for others. Among all, Bodhidharma is most extraordinary. The sacred truth is Vast Emptiness itself, and where can one point out its marks? In fact, when the emperor asked: "Who is it then that facing me?" Bodhidharma replied: "I do not know, Sir." The Emperor could not understand him. After that, Bodhidharma went away. He crossed the Yangtze River and reached the capital, Lo-Yang, of Northern Wei. But what thorny brambles that have grown after him! Even the entire populace of the land pursued, there is no turning back for him. So it is said, "If you can penetrate a single phrase, at the same moment you will penetrate a thousand phrases, ten thousand phrases." Then naturally you can cut off, you can hold still. An Ancient said, "Crushing your bones and dismembering your body would not be sufficient requital; when a single phrase is clearly understood, you leap over hundreds of millions." Bodhidharma confronted Emperor Wu directly; how he indulged! The Emperor did not awaken; instead, because of his notions of self and others, he asked another question, "Who is facing me?" Bodhidharma's compassion was excessive; again he addressed him, saying, "I don't know." At this, Emperor Wu was taken aback; he did not know what Bodhidharma meant. When Zen practitioners get to this point, as to whether there is something or there isn't anything, pick and you fail. Through this koan, we see that in the sixth century, Bodhidharma saw that he need to go to China to transmit the Mind seal to people who had the capability of the Great Vehicle. The intent of his mission was to arouse and instruct those mired in delusion. Without establishing written words, he pointed directly to the human mind for them to see nature and fulfill Buddhahood.

Bodhidharma's Zen Methods: In 527, the first Patriarch Bodhidharma settled in Shao-lin Monastery to teach Zen. His teaching can be divided into two approaches: first, entry through understanding and, second, entry through practice. Understanding refers to wisdom achieved through meditation, with the practitioner attaining insight into cosmic reality. The form of meditative practice the Bodhidharma taught still owed a great deal to Indian Buddhism. His instructions were to a great extent based on the traditional sutra of Mahayana Buddhism; he especially emphasized the importance of the Lankavatara Sutra. Typical Chinese Zen, which is a fusion of the Dhyana Buddhism represented by Bodhidharma and indigenous Chinese Taoism and

which is described as a "special transmission outside the orthodox teaching," first developed with Hui-Neng, the sixth patriarch of Zen in China, and the great Zen masters of the T'ang period who followed him.

Patriarch Bodhidharma and the Spreading of Zen Without Sutras: According to historians, Bodhidharma denied canon reading, and his system therefore made the Buddhist monasteries much less intellectual and much more meditative than they were ever before. According to Bodhidharma, Buddhists should stress on meditation, because by which alone enlightenment can be attained. Bodhidharma was the 28th Indian (in line from the Buddha) and first Zen Patriarch in China. Scholars still disagree as to when Bodhidharma came to China from India, how long he stayed there, and when he died, but it is generally accepted by Zen Buddhists that he came by boat from India to southern China about the year 520 A.D., and after a short, fruitless attempt to establish his teaching there he went to Lo-Yang in northern China and finally settled in Shao-Lin Temple. Bodhidharma came to China with a special message which is summed in sixteen Chinese words, even though Zen masters only mentioned about this message after Ma-Tsu:

“A special transmission outside the scriptures;
No dependence upon words and letters
Direct pointing at the soul of man;
Seeing into one’s nature and the attainment of Buddhahood.”

Patriarch Bodhidharma and the Second Patriarch Hui-K’e: Bodhidharma and Hui-K’e, his disciple to whom he had transmitted the Dharma, are always the subject of koan in the “No Gate Zen” as well as of a famous painting by Sesshu, Japan’s greatest painter. Hui-K’e, a scholar of some repute, complains to Bodhidharma, who is silently doing meditation, that he has no peace of mind and asks how he can acquire it. Bodhidharma turns him away, saying that the attainment of inward peace involves long and hard discipline and is not for the conceited and fainthearted. Hui-K’e, who has been standing outside in the snow for hours, implores Bodhidharma to help him. Again he is rebuffed. In desperation he cuts off his left hand and offers it to Bodhidharma. Now convinced of his sincerity and determination, Bodhidharma accepts him as a disciple. This story emphasizes the importance which Zen masters attach to the hunger for self-realization,

to meditation, and to sincerity and humility, perserverance and fortitude as prerequisites to the attainment of the highest truth. He was moved by the spirit of sincerity of Hui-K'o, so he instructed him: "Meditating facing the wall is the way to obtain peace of mind, the four acts are the ways to behave in the world, the protection from slander and ill-disposition is the way to live harmoniously with the surroundings, and detachment is the upaya to cultivate and to save sentient beings." When he lived at Shao-Lin temple, he always taught the second patriarch with this verse:

Externally keep you away from all relationships, and,
Internally, have no hankerings in your heart;
When your mind is like unto a straight-standing wall
You may enter into the Path.

Patriarch Bodhidharma Talked About His Disciples' Attainments: Bodhidharma's Skin, Flesh, Bone and Marrow: After nine years at Shao-Lin temple, the Patriarch wished to return to India. He called in all his disciples before him, and said: "The time is come for me to depart, and I want to see what your attainments are." Tao-Fu said: "According to my view, the truth is above affirmation and negation, for this is the way it moved." The Patriarch said: "You have got my skin." Then Nun Tsung-Ch'ih said: "As I understand it, it is like Ananda's viewing the Buddhaland of Akshobhya Buddha: it is seen once and never again." The Patriarch said: "You have got my flesh." Tao-Yu said: "Empty are the four elements and non-existent the five skandhas. According to my view, there is not a thing to be grasped as real." The Patriarch said: "You have got my bone." Finally, Hui-K'o reverently bowed to the master, then kept standing in his place and said nothing. The Patriarch said: "You have my marrow." Nobody knows his whereabouts and when he passed away. Some people say that he crossed the desert and went to India, and others say that he crossed the sea to go to Japan.

Bodhidharma's Straw Sandal: The story of Bodhidharma returning to India after his death with one straw sandal. According to the legend preserved in the Ching te Ch'uan-teng Lu (Dentôroku), some three years after Bodhidharma had died and been buried in China, a Chinese official named Sung Yun was returning to China from a mission to India and encountered the master somewhere in Central Asia. The

master carried a single straw sandal in his shoulder. When the emissary asked where he was going, the master replied that he was returning to India. The official reported this encounter to the emperor on his return to the capitol. The emperor ordered Bodhidharma's grave opened for inspection. They found the coffin completely empty, save for a single straw sandal. Because of this story, Bodhidharma often appears in Zen art carrying a single sandal (seriki daruma).

Bodhidharma's Six Zen Essays: A collection of six Zen essays, all of which are traditionally attributed to Bodhidharma. The word "Shôshitsu" refers to the hermitage on Mount Sung where Bodhidharma practiced meditation, and is often used as another name for Bodhidharma. The title therefore can be translated as "The Six Gates of Bodhidharma." Scholars believe that the six texts are later compositions, probably written during the T'ang dynasty (618-907). They were originally written as independent texts and later collected under a single title. Exactly when the collection was put together is unknown, but the oldest extant copy is a Japanese edition published in 1647. The first essay is written in verse and called "Hsin-ching Sung" (Shingyô Ju), or "Verse on the Heart Sutra." The other five are prose texts, entitled "P'o-hsiang Lun" (Hasô Ron) or "On Breaking Through Form"; Erh-chung-ju (Nishu'nyû), Two Ways of Entrance; An-hsin famên (Anjin Hômon), The Gate of Peaceful Mind; Wu-hsing Lun (Goshô Ron), On Awakened Nature; and Hsueh-mo Lun (Ketsumyaku Ron), On the Blood Lineage. Three of the six essays are translated into English in Red Pine's *Zen Teaching of Bodhidharma*.

Bodhidharma's Coming From the West: Before entering the Parinirvana, the Buddha made a prediction that from the Twenty-eighth Patriarch on, the Great Vehicle teaching should go to China. Thus the Patriarch Bodhidharma came to China. According to Most Venerable Hsuan-hua in "The Intention of Patriarch Bodhidharma's Coming From the West," at that time, the Buddhadharmas seemed to exist in China, but it really did not. It was as if it were and yet weren't there. That is because the work being done was superficial. There were few who recited Sutras, investigated Sutra texts, or explained the Sutras, and virtually no one bowed repentance ceremonies. Ordinary scholars regarded Buddhism as a field of study and engaged in debates and discussions about it. But the principles in the Sutras should be

cultivated! However, nobody was cultivating. Why not? People were afraid of suffering. No one truly meditated. Except Venerable Patriarch Chi-kung, who practiced meditation and attained the Five Eyes. But most people feared suffering and didn't cultivate. No one seriously investigated Zen and sat in meditation, just like you people now who sit in meditation for a while until your legs begin to hurt. When their legs began to ache, they would wince and fidget then gently unbend and rub them. People are just people and everyone avoids suffering as much as possible. That's the way it was then; that the way it is now. That's called Buddhadharma seeming to be there but not really being there.

Bodhidharma's Sitting Facing the Wall: To sit in meditation with the face to a wall, as did Bodhidharma for nine years, without uttering a word. This practice is still common in Japanese Soto monasteries, in which younger monks generally practice Zazen facing a wall, while Rinzai monasteries meditators generally face the center of the meditation hall (zendo). When Dharma Master Shen-Kuang caught up with Patriarch Bodhidharma, only to find him sitting in meditation facing a wall. He was turned toward the wall and not speaking to anyone. The Dharma Master immediately knelt down and did not get up, saying, "Venerable Sir! When I first saw you, I did not know that you were a patriarch, a sage. I hit you with my recitation beads, and I'm really sorry. I'm really remorseful. I know you are a person with true virtue. You are a noble one who cherishes the Way. I am now seeking the Way, the Dharma, from you." Patriarch Bodhidharma took one look at him and said nothing; he remained sitting in meditation. Dharma Master Shen-Kuang (Hui-k'o) knelt there seeking the Dharma for nine years. Patriarch Bodhidharma meditated facing the wall for nine years, and Dharma Master Shen-Kuang knelt there for nine years. This practice is still common in Japanese Soto monasteries, in which younger monks generally practice Zazen facing a wall, while Rinzai monasteries meditators generally face the center of the meditation hall (zendo).

The First Patriarch Bodhidharma and Shao-Lin Monastery: One of the great monasteries in China, located on Mount Sung, in Teng-Feng district, Hunan province, built in 477 by Emperor Hsiao-Wen of the Northern Wei dynasty. The Indian monk named Bodhiruci lived at this

monastery at the beginning of the sixth century and he translated numerous sutras into Chinese. According to Ch'an Tradition, after Bodhidharma arrived in China and encountered King Liang Wu Ti. As the emperor was not ready, he missed this opportunity to experience an awakening. Bodhidharma then went north, as he came to Yangtze River, Bodhidharma stepped on a floating reed and used his supernatural powers to cross this river that separates south and north China. He decided that the country was not yet ready for his teachings, so he went to Shao-Lin, where he meditated facing a wall for nine years until his eventual disciple Hui-K'o convinced him to accept him as a student. However, today many people, especially people from East Asia, usually associate the Shao-Lin Monastery with the practice of kung-fu, a form of chi-kung, that is often misunderstood as a combat sport though it was originally a form of both spiritual and physical training.

The First Patriarch Bodhidharma and Four Disciplinary Processes: According to the first patriarch Bodhidharma. First, to requite hatred. Those who discipline themselves in the Path should think thus when they have to struggle with adverse conditions: "During the innumerable past eons I have wandered through multiplicity of existences, never thought of cultivation, and thus creating infinite occasions for hate, ill-will, and wrong-doing. Even though in this life I have committed no violations, the fruits of evil deeds in the past are to be gathered now. Neither gods nor men can foretell what is coming upon me. I will submit myself willingly and patiently to all the ills that befall me, and I will never bemoan or complain. In the sutra it is said not to worry over ills that may happen to you, because I thoroughly understand the law of cause and effect. This is called the conduct of making the best use of hatred and turned it into the service in one's advance towards the Path. Second, to obedient to karma. Being obedient to karma, there is not 'self' (atman) in whatever beings that are produced by the interplay of karmic conditions; pain and pleasure we suffer are also the results of our previous action. If I am rewarded with fortune, honor, etc., this is the outcome of my past deeds which, by reason of causation, affect my present life. When the force of karma is exhausted, the result I am enjoying now will disappear; what is then the use of being joyful over it? Gain or loss, let us accept karma as it brings us the one or the other;

the spirit itself knows neither increase nor decrease. The wind of gladness does not move it, as it is silently in harmony with the Path. Therefore, his is called 'being obedient to karma.' Third, not to seek after anything. By 'not seeking after anything' is meant this: "Men of the world, in eternal confusion, are attached everywhere to one thing or another, which is called seeking. The wise, however, understand the truth and are not like the vulgar. Their minds abide serenely in the uncreated while the body turns about in accordance with the laws of causation. All things are empty and there is nothing desirable and to be sought after. Wherever there is nothing merit of brightness there follows the demerit of darkness. The triple world there one stays too long is like a house on fire; all that has a body suffers, and who would ever know what is rest? Because the wise are thoroughly acquainted with this truth, they get neer attached to anything that becomes, their thoughts are quieted, they never seek. Says the sutra: 'Wherever there is seeking, there you have sufferings; when seeking ceases you are blessed. Thus we know that not to seek is verily the way to the truth. Therefore, one should not seek after anything.'" Fourth, to be in accord with the Dharma. By 'being in accord with the Dharma; is meant that the reason in its essence is pure which we call the Dharma, and that this reason is the principle of emptiness in all that is manifested, as it is above defilements and attachments, and as there is no 'self' or 'other' in it. Says the sutra: 'In the Dharma there are no sentient beings, because it is free from the stains of being; in the Dharma there is no Self because it is free from the stain of selfhood. When the wise understand this truth and believe in it, their conduct will be in accordance with the Dharma. As the Dharma in essence has no desire to possess, the wise are ever ready to practise charity with their body, life, property, and they never begrudge, they never know what in ill grace means. As they have a perfect understanding of the threefold nature of emptiness they are above partiality and attachment. Only because of their will to cleanse all beings of their stains, they come among them as of them, but they are not attached to the form. This is known as the inner aspect of their life. They, however, know also how to benefit others, and again how to clarify the path of enlightenment. As with the virtue of charity, so with the other five virtues in the Prajnaparamita. That the wise practise the six virtues of perfection is to

get rid of confused thoughts, and yet they are not conscious of their doings. This is called 'being in accord with the Dharma.'

Chapter Six

Chinese Zen School & The First Six Patriarchs

(A) Chinese Zen School

I. An Overview of the Zen School in China:

The Ch'an (Zen), meditative or intuitional, sect usually said to have been established in China by Bodhidharma, the twenty-eighth patriarch, who brought the tradition of the Buddha-mind from India. Ch'an is considered as an important school of Buddhism. This was the recreation of the Buddhist sutras in the Fourth Council. The first three councils being the Abhidharma, the Mahayana, and the Tantra. Zen is nearly contemporary with the Tantra and the two have much in common. Bodhidharma came to China about 470 A.D. and became the founder of esoteric and Zen schools there. It is said that he had practised meditation against the wall of the Shao-Lin-Tzu monastery for nine years. The followers of Bodhidharma were active everywhere, and were completely victorious over the native religions with the result that the teachings of Zen have come to be highly respected everywhere in China. According to the Zen sect, the key theory of Zen, to look inwards and not to look outwards, is the only way to achieve enlightenment, which to the human mind is ultimately the same as Buddhahood. In this system, the emphasis is upon 'intuition,' its peculiarity being that it has no words in which to express itself, no method to reason itself out, no extended demonstration of its own truth in a logically convincing manner. If it expresses itself at all, it does so in symbols and images. In the course of time this system developed its philosophy of intuition to such a degree that it remains unique to this day. According to Prof. Junjiro Takakusu in *The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy*, Zen has much philosophy, but is not a philosophy in the strict sense of the term. It is the most religious school of all and yet not a religion in the ordinary sense of the word. It has no scripture of the Buddha, nor does it hold any discipline of the Buddha. Without a sutra

(discourse) or a vinaya (Discipline) text, no school or sect would seem to be Buddhistic. However, according to the ideas of Zen, those who cling to words, letters or rules can never fully comprehend the speaker's true idea. The ideal or truth conceived by the Buddha should be different from those taught by him because the teaching was necessarily conditioned by the language he used, by the hearers whom he was addressing, and by the environment in which the speaker and hearers were placed. What Zen aims at is the Buddha's ideal, pure and unconditioned. The school is otherwise called 'the School of the Buddha's Mind.' The Buddha's mind is after all a human mind. An introspection of the human mind alone can bring aspirant to a perfect enlightenment. But how? The general purport of Buddhism is to let one see rightly and walk rightly. The followers of Bodhidharma were active everywhere, and were completely victorious over the native religions with the result that the teachings of Zen have come to be highly respected everywhere in China. There were six first Chinese Patriarchs: Bodhidharma, the First Patriarch in China, the founder of the Chinese Zen, the Second Patriarch Hue-Ke, from 468 to 543 AD, the Third Patriarch Seng Tsan, who passed away in around 606 AD, the fourth Patriarch Tao Hsin, from 580 to 651, the fifth Patriarch Hung-Jen, from 601 to 675, and the Sixth Patriarch Hui-Neng, who received the transmission from Hung-Jen (fifth patriarch). Hui Neng propagated Zen in the Southern part of China; therefore, his lineage is called the southern school of Zen.

II. The Development & Division Into Sects in Chinese Zen School:

The Chinese Zen Sect is a Mahayana buddhist sect, Zen is a religious free of dogmas or creeds whose teachings and disciplines are directed toward self-consummation. For example, the full awakening that Sakyamuni Buddha himself experienced under the Bodhi-tree after strenuous self-discipline. According to Edward Conze in *Buddhism: Its Essence and Development*, there are four stages of development of the Zen School. 1) A Formative Period: The formative period began about 440 A.D. with a group of students of Gunabhadra's Chinese translation of the Lankavatara Sutra. About 520 A.D. we have the legendary figure of Bodhidharma. After that, a few groups of

monks round Zen masters like Seng-T'san (?-606), whose poem, called Hsin Hsin Ming (On Believing in Mind) is one of the finest expositions of Buddhism we know of, and Hui-Neng (637-713), of South China, who is held up to posterity as an illiterate, practically-minded person, who approached truth abruptly and without circumlocution. Much of the traditions about the early history of Zen are the inventions of later age. Many of the Sayings and Songs of the patriarchs which are transmitted to us are, however, very valuable historical and spiritual documents. 2) After 700 A.D. Zen established itself as a separate school. In 734, Shen-Hui, a disciple of Hui-Neng, founded a school in the South of China. While the Northern branch of Zen died out in the middle of the T'ang dynasty (750A.D.), all the later developments of Zen issue from Shen-Hui's school. Whereas so far the Zen monks had lived in the monasteries of the Lu-Tsung (Vinaya) sect, about 750 A..D. Pai-Chang provided them with a special rule of their own, and an independent organization. The most revolutionary feature of Pai-Chang's Vinaya was the introduction of manual work. "A Day Without Work, A Day Without Food." Under the T'ang Dynasty (618-907), the Zen sect slowly gained its ascendancy over the other schools. One of the reasons was the fact that it survived the bitter persecution of 845 better than any other sects. The five Great Masters among Hui-Neng's disciples initiated a long series of great T'ang masters of Zen, and this was the heroic and creative period of Zen. 3) By about 1,000 A.D., Zen had overshadowed all Chinese Buddhist sects, except Amidism. Within the Zen school, the Lin-Chi sect had gained the leadership. Its approach was now systematized, and to some extent mechanized. In the form of collections of riddles and cryptic sayings, usually connected with the T'ang masters, special text books were composed in the Twelfth and Thirteenth centuries. The riddles are technically known as Kungan (Japanese Koan), literally "official document." An example of this one: Once a monk asked Tung-Shan: "What is the Buddha?" Tung-Shan replied: "Three pounds of flax." 4) The final period is one of permeation into the general culture of the Far East, its art and the general habits of life. The art of the Sung Period is an expression of Zen philosophy. It was particularly in Japan that the cultural influence of Zen made itself felt. Zen had been brought to Japan about 1,200 by Eisai and Dogen. Its simplicity and straightforward heroism appealed to

the men of the military class. Zen discipline helped them to overcome the fear of death. Many poems were composed testifying to the soldier's victory over death.

The Northern Zen School: Hung-Jen was a great Zen Master, and had many capable followers, but Hui-Neng and Shen-Hsiu stood far above the rest. During that time Zen came to be divided into two schools, the Northern and Southern. When we understand Shen-Hsiu and what was taught by him, it will be easier to understand Hui-Neng. Unfortunately, however, we are not in possession of much of the teaching of Shen-Hsiu, for the fact that this School failed to prosper against its competitor led to the disappearance of its literature. The Teaching of the Five Means by the Northern School, one of the preserved writings of the Northern School, which is incomplete and imperfect in meaning, and not written by Shen-Hsiu. They were notes taken by his disciples of the Master's lectures. Here the word "Means" or method, upaya in Sanskrit, is not apparently used in any special sense, and the five means are five heads of reference to the Mahayana Sutras as to the teaching in the Northern School. The Northern School teaches that all beings are originally endowed with Enlightenment, just as it is the nature of a mirror to illuminate. When the passions veil the mirror it is invisible, as thought obscured with dust. If, according to the instructions of Shen-Hsiu, erroneous thoughts are subdued and annihilated, they cease to rise. The the mind is enlightened as to its own nature, leaving nothing unknown. It is like brushing the mirror. When there is no more dust the mirror shines out, leaving nothing unilluminated. Therefore, Shen-Hsiu, the great Master of the Northern School, writes, in his gatha presented to the Fifth Patriarch:

"This body is the Bodhi tree
The mind is like a mirror bright;
Take heed to keep it always clean
And let not dust collect upon it."

This dust-wiping attitude of Shen-Hsiu and his followers inevitably leads to the quietistic method of meditation, and it was indeed the method which they recommended. They taught the entering into a samadhi by means of concentration, and the purifying of the mind by making it dwell on one thought. They further taught that by awakening

of thoughts an objective world was illumined, and that when they were folded up an inner world was perceived.

There are five teachings in the Northern Zen School: The first teaching, Buddhahood is enlightenment, and enlightenment is not awakening the mind. The second teaching, when the mind is kept immovable, the senses are quietened, and in this state the gate of supreme knowledge opens. The third teaching is the opening of supreme knowledge leads to a mystical emancipation of mind and body. This, however, does not mean the absolute quietism of the Nirvana of the Hinayanists, for the supreme knowledge attained by Bodhisattvas involved unattached activity of the senses. The fourth teaching, the unattached activity means being free from the dualism of mind and body, wherein the true character of things is grasped. The fifth teaching is the path of Oneness, leading to a world of Suchness which knows no obstructions, no differences. This is Enlightenment. The Northern followers of “gradual enlightenment”, who assumed that our defilements must be gradually removed by strenuous practice. However, this branch soon died out.

The Southern Zen School: After the period of six patriarchs in China, the Bodhidharma school, divided into northern and southern, the northern under Shen-Hsiu, the southern under Hui-Neng, around 700 A.D. The southern of the Sixth Patriarch Hui-Neng came to be considered the orthodox Intuition school or the immediate method, the northern of the great monk Shen-Hsiu came to be considered as the gradual method. The school of Zen derives from Hui-Neng, the sixth patriarch of Chinese Zen. The name “Nam Tông” was used to distinguish with the Northern school founded by Shen-Hsiu. While the Northern school was still strongly influenced by traditional Indian Meditation of gradual enlightenment (enlightenment is reached gradually through slow progress) and placed great value on study and intellectual penetration of the scriptures of Buddhism, the Southern uprooted the Northern school’s beliefs, down played the value of study, and stressed the “Sudden enlightenment.” The Southern school flourished, survived until today, while the Northern school declined just right after Shen-Hsiu and died out together within a few generations. The Southern School is often referred to as “Patriarch Ch’an” because it claims descent from Hui Neng. Later, the Southern

Zen Sect developed into five Ch'an sects. The first sect is the Lin-Ji Sect: The Lin-Chi School was propagated by Lin-Chi, a Dharma heir of the Sixth Zen Patriarch Hui-Neng. This sect remains and is very successful until this day. During the Sung dynasty, it divided into two sects of Yang-Qi and Hung-Lung. The second sect is the Kui-Yang Sect: Kui-Yang Zen sect was established by Pai-Ch'ang-Huai-Hai (disappeared). The third sect is the Yun-Men Sect, remains until this day. The fourth sect is the Fa-Yan Sect, which was removed to Korea. The fifth sect is the Tsao-Tung Sect, remains until this day. Among these sects, the second already disappeared; the fourth was removed to Korea; the other three remained, the first being the most successful.

(B) First Six Patriarchs in The Chinese Zen School

I. First Patriarchs in the Pre-History of the Chinese Zen School:

The First Patriarch Was Bodhidharma: Before Hui-Neng (638-713), we have a kind of pre-history of Zen in China, which is said to begin with Bodhidharma, a more or less legendary Southern Indian who came to China at the beginning of the sixth century and spent nine years in Lo-Yang, the capital, in "wall-gazing". According to Buddhist history, Bodhidharma was the third son of the King of Kancipura, South India. He was a deeply learned Indian Buddhist monk at that time. He was a man of wonderful intelligence, bright and far reaching; he thoroughly understood everything that he ever learned. According to the Indian tradition, Bodhidharma was the twenty-eighth Indian patriarch. He obeyed the instruction of his teacher, Prajnatarā, Bodhidharma started for the East in China in 520 A.D., with the special purpose of propagating his system of philosophy. According to Buddhist history, Bodhidharma arrived at the Chinese Court in 520 AD. According to East Asian legends, he traveled from India to spread the true Dharma and is thought to have arrived in the town of Lo-Yang in Southern China between 516 and 526. After a brief unsuccessful attempt to spread his teaching there, especially after his famous interview with Emperor Han Wu Ti, he wandered further to Lo-Yang in

north China and finally settled at the Shao-Lin Monastery on Sung-shan Mountain. Here he practiced unmovable zazen for nine years, known as nine years in from of the wall. Here, Hui-K'o, later the second patriarch of Zen in China, found his way to the master, after an impressive proof of his 'will for truth', was accepted as his disciple. It is not certain whether he died there or again left the monastery after he had transmitted the patriarchy to Hui-K'o. The importance of Bodhidharma lies in providing the Zen Sect with a concrete link with the Indian tradition, a link which the school in spite of its profound originality greatly cherished.

The Second Patriarch Was Hui-K'e: The period from the Third Patriarch Seng-Tsan to the Fifth Patriarch Heng-Ren was a period in which patriarchs taught a Buddhism strongly tinged with Taoism. According to the Transmission of the Lamp, Hui-K'o (487-593), a strong-minded Confucian scholar, a liberated minded, open-hearted kind of person. He thoroughly acquainted with Confucian and Taosit literature, but always dissatisfied with their teachings because they appeared to him not quite thorough-going. When he heard of Bodhidharma coming from India, he came to Bodhidharma and asked for instruction at Sha-Lin Temple, when arrived to seek the dharma with Bodhidharma, but the master was always found sitting silently facing the wall. Hui-K'o wondered to himself: "History gives examples of ancient truth-seekers, who were willing for the sake of enlightenment to have the marrow extracted from their bones, their blood spilled to feed the hungry, to cover the muddy road with their hair, or to throw themselves into the mouth of a hungry tiger. What am I? Am I not also able to give myself up on the altar of truth?" On the ninth of December of the same year, to impress Bodhidharma, he stood still under the snow, then knelt down in the snow-covered courtyard for many days. Bodhidharma then took pity on him and said: "You have been standing in the snow for some time, and what is your wish?" Hui-K'o replied: "I come to receive your invaluable instruction; please open the gate of mercy and extend your hand of salvation to this poor suffering mortal." Bodhidharma then said: "The incomparable teaching of the Buddha can be comprehended only after a long and hard discipline and by enduring what is most difficult to endure and practising what is most difficult to practise. Men of inferior virtue and

wisdom who are light-hearted and full of self-conceit are not able even to set their eyes on the truth of Buddhism. All the labor of such men is sure to come to naught.” Hui-K’o was deeply moved and in order to show his sincerity in the desire to be instructed in the teaching of all the Buddhas, he finally cut off his left arm in appeal to be received as disciple. Until he seemed to be well prepared, Bodhidharma call him in and asked: “What do you wish to learn?” Hui-K’o replied: “My mind is always disturbed. I request your honor that I could be taught a way to pacify it.” Bodhidharma then ordered: “Bring me your troubled mind and I will calm it down for you.” Hui-K’o replied: “But Honorable Master, I could not locate it.” Bodhidharma then said: “Don’t worry, disciple. I have appeased your mind for you already.” With that short encounter, Hui-K’o immediately became enlightened. Hui-K’o tried so many times to explain the reason of mind, but failed to realize the truth itself. The Patriarch simply said: “No! No! And never proposed to explain to his disciple what was the mind-essence in its thought-less state. One day, Hui-K’o said: “I know now how to keep myself away from all relationships.” The Patriarch queried: “You make it total annihilation, do you not?” Hui-K’o replied: “No, master, I do not make it a total annihilation.” The Patriarch asked: “How do you testify your statement?” Hui-K’o said: “For I know it always in a most intelligible manner, but to express it in words, that is impossible.” The Patriarch said: “That is the mind-essence itself transmitted by all the Buddhas. Harbour no doubts about it.” Eventually Hui-K’o received the teaching directly “mind-to-mind.” Subsequently, he inherited his robe and alms-bowl to become the Second Patriarch of the Chinese Zen Sect (the successor of Bodhidharma). After he left the master, he did not at once begin his preaching, hiding himself among people of lower classes of society. He evidently shunned being looked up as a high priest of great wisdom and understanding. However, he did not neglect quietly preaching the Law whenever he had an occasion. He was simply quiet and unassuming, refusing to show himself off. But one day when he was discoursing about the Law before a three-entrance gate of a temple, there was another sermon going on inside the temple by a resident Monk, learned and honoured. The audience, however, left the reverend lecturer inside and gathered around the street-monk, probably clad in rags and with no outward signs of ecclesiastical dignity. The

high Monk got angry over the situation. He accused the beggar-monk to the authorities as promulgating a false doctrine, whereupon Hui-K'o was arrested and put to death. He did not specially plead innocent but composedly submitted, saying that he had according to the law of karma an old debt to pay up. This took place in 593 A.D. and he was one hundred and seven years old when he was killed.

The Third Patriarch Was Seng-T'san: The third patriarch was Sêng-Ts'an, who was famous for his superb poem on "Believing in Mind", which is one of the great classics of Buddhist literature. According to The Transmission of the Lamp Records, when Seng-Ts'an came to see Hui-K'o he as a lay man of forty years old. He came and bowed before Hui-K'o and asked: "I am suffering from feng-yang, please cleanse me of my sins." The Patriarch said: "Bring your sins here and I will cleanse you of them." He was silent for a while but finally said: "As I seek my sins, I find them unattainable." The Patriarch said: "I have then finished cleansing you altogether. From now on, you should take refuge and abide in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha." Seng-Ts'an said: "As I stand before you, O master, I know that you belong to the Sangha, but please tell me what are the Buddha and the Dharma?" The Patriarch replied: "Mind is the Buddha, Mind is the Dharma; and the Buddha and the Dharma are not two. The same is to be said of the Sangha (Brotherhood). This satisfied the disciple, who now said: "Today for the first time I realize that sins are neither within nor without nor in the middle; just as Mind is, so is the Buddha, so is the Dharma; they are not two." He was then ordained by Hui-K'o as a Buddhist monk, and after this he fled from the world altogether, and nothing much of his life is known. This was partly due to the persecution of Buddhism carried on by the Emperor of the Chou dynasty. It was in the twelfth year of K'ai-Huang, of the Sui dynasty (592 A.D.), that he found a disciple worthy to be his successor. His name was Tao-Hsin. His whereabouts was unknown; however, people said that he passed away around 606 A.D.

The Fourth Patriarch was T'ao-Hsin: Tao-Hsin (580-651), the fourth patriarch of Zen in China, the student and dharma successor of Seng-Ts'an and the master of Hung-Jen. Tao Hsin was different from other patriarchs preceding him who were still strongly influenced by the orthodox Mahayana tradition and sutras. We can find in his works

paragraphs encouraged disciples to meditate: “Let’s sit in meditation, Sitting is the basis, the fundamental development of enlightenment. Shut the door and sit! Don’t continue to read sutras without practicing.” One day Tao Hsin stopped the Third Patriarch Seng-Ts’an on the road and asked: “Honorable Master! Please be compassionate to show me the door to liberate.” The Patriarch stared at him and earnestly said: “Who has restrained you, tell me.” Tao-Hsin replied: “No Sir, no one has.” The Patriarch then retorted: “So, what do you wish to be liberated from now?” This sharp reply thundered in the young monk’s head. As a result, Tao-Hsin awaked instantaneously, and prostrated the Patriarch in appreciation. Thereafter, he was bestowed with robe and bowl to become the Fourth Patriarch of the Zen Sect in China. According to Zen master D.T. Suzuki in the *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, Book I, under Tao-Hsin, the fourth patriarch, Zen in China was divided into two branches. The one known as ‘Niu-T’ou-Ch’an’ at Mount Niu-T’ou, and was considered not belonging to the orthodox line of Zen. However, this branch did not survive long after the passing of its founder, Fa-Jung. The other branch was headed by Hung-Jen, and it is his school that has survived till today.

The Fifth Patriarch Was Hung-Jên: The fifth patriarch of Ch’an in China; the dharma successor of Tao-hsin and the master of Shen-hsui and Hui-Neng. Hung-Jên, a noted monk. He was the fifth patriarch, a disciple of the fourth patriarch Tao-Hsin, and the master of the sixth patriarch Hui-Neng. Hung-Jen came from the same province as his predecessor, Tao-Hsin in Ch’i-Chou. Hung-Jen came to the fourth patriarch when he was still a little boy; however, what he pleased his master at their first interview was the way he answered. When Tao-Hsin asked what was his family name, which pronounced ‘hsing’ in Chinese, he said: “I have a nature (hsing), and it is not an ordinary one.” The patriarch asked: “What is that?” Hung-Jen said: “It is the Buddha-nature (fo-hsing).” The patriarch asked: “Then you have no name?” Hung-Jun replied: “No, master, for it is empty in its nature.” Tao-Hsin knew this boy would be an excellent candidate for the next patriarch. Here is a play of words; the characters denoting ‘family name’ and that for ‘nature’ are both pronounced ‘hsing.’ When Tao-Hsin was referring to the ‘family name’ the young boy Hung-Jen took it for ‘nature’ purposely, whereby to express his view by a figure of

speech. Finally, Hung-Jen became the fifth patriarch of the Chinese Zen line. His temple was situated in Wang-Mei Shan (Yellow Plum Mountain), where he preached and gave lessons in Zen to his five hundred pupils. Some people said that he was the first Zen master who attempted to interpret the message of Zen according to the doctrine of the Diamond Sutra. Before the time of Hung-Jen, Zen followers had kept quiet, though working steadily, without arresting public attention; the masters had retired either into the mountains or in the deep forests where nobody could tell anything about their doings. But Hung-Jen was the first who appeared in the field preparing the way for his successor, Hui-Neng.

The Sixth Patriarch Was Hui-Neng: The last Patriarchs of the first six patriarchs in the Zen Sect in China. Chinese Zen history gives us clues that the interpretation of the teachings of the previous patriarchs led to a split between a Northern branch, headed by Shen-Hsiu, and a Southern branch, headed by Hui-Neng. The main point of dispute being the question of “gradual” and “sudden” enlightenment. The Southern followers of “sudden enlightenment”, who assumed that our enlightenment must be sudden or instantaneous, not from removing defilements gradually, nor by strenuous practice. However, this branch soon died out. He was born in 638 A.D., one of the most distinguished of the Chinese masters during the T’ang dynasty, the sixth patriarch of Intuitional or meditation sect (Zen Buddhism) in China. Hui-Neng came from Hsin-Chou in the southern parts of China. His father died when he was very young. It is said that he was very poor that he had to sell firewood to support his widowed mother; that he was illiterate; that he became enlightened in his youth upon hearing a passage from the Diamond sutra. One day, he came out of a house where he sold some fuel, he heard a man reciting a Buddhist Sutra. The words deeply touched his heart. Finding what sutra it was and where it was possible to get it, a longing came over him to study it with the master. Later, he was selected to become the Sixth Patriarch through a verse someone wrote for him to respond to Shen-Hsiu demonstrating his profound insight. As leader of the Southern branch of Ch’an school, he taught the doctrine of Spontaneous Realization or Sudden Enlightenment, through meditation in which thought, objectively and all attachment are eliminated. The Sixth Patriarch Hui-Neng never passed on the

patriarchy to his successor, so it lapsed. However, the outstanding masters of succeeding generations, both in China, Vietnam (especially Lin-Chi) and Japan, were highly respected for their high attainments.

II. The Influences of Patriarchs During the Golden Age of the Zen School in China:

The influence of the Zen Sect in China from the first patriarch Bodhidharma to the sixth patriarch Hui-Neng was very little on society because these patriarchs lived in poverty without a fixed residence and generally made it a rule not to spend more than one night in any one place. It was Po-Chang Hoai-Hai who made a new set of rules for Zen monks, which tried to revive the austerity and simplicity of living conditions in the early Order. Nowadays, most of the regulations of all Zen monasteries are derived from Po-Chang. He introduced an innovation which did much to ensure the survival and social success of the Zen sect. Monks in Zen monasteries went on their begging round each morning, but in addition, they were expected to work in the monastery in the afternoon too. Po-Chang was famous with this watchword: "A day without work, a day without eating". This was something unheard of so far in any monasteries.

Chapter Seven

Life and Acts of the Sixth Patriarch Hui-Neng

Hui Neng was born in 638 A.D., one of the most distinguished of the Chinese masters during the T'ang dynasty, the sixth patriarch of Intuitionist or meditation sect (Zen Buddhism) in China. It should be noted that the Five Traditional Schools of Chinese Zen Buddhism all trace their origin to this famous master. Hui-Neng came from Hsin-Chou in the southern parts of China. His father died when he was very young. It is said that he was very poor that he had to sell firewood to support his widowed mother; that he was illiterate; that he became enlightened in his youth upon hearing a passage from the Diamond sutra. One day, he came out of a house where he sold some fuel, he heard a man reciting a Buddhist Sutra. The words deeply touched his heart. Finding what sutra it was and where it was possible to get it, a longing came over him to study it with the master. Later, he was selected to become the Sixth Patriarch through a verse someone wrote for him to respond to Shen-Hsiu demonstrating his profound insight. As leader of the Southern branch of Ch'an school, he taught the doctrine of Spontaneous Realization or Sudden Enlightenment, through meditation in which thought, objectively and all attachment are eliminated. The Sixth Patriarch Hui-Neng never passed on the patriarchy to his successor, so it lapsed. However, the outstanding masters of succeeding generations, both in China, Vietnam (especially Lin-Chi) and Japan, were highly respected for their high attainments. His words are preserved in a work called the Platform Sutra, the only sacred Chinese Buddhist writing which has been honoured with the title Ching or Sutra.

After Hui Neng arrived at Huang Mei and made obeisance to the Fifth Patriarch, who asked him, "Where are you from and what do you seek?" Hui Neng replied, "Your disciple is a commoner from Hsin Chou in Ling Nan and comes from afar to bow to the Master, seeking only to be a Buddha, and nothing else." The Patriarch said, "You are from Ling Nan and therefore are a barbarian, so how can you become a Buddha?" Hui Neng said, "Although there are people from the north

and people from the south, there is ultimately no north or south in the Buddha nature. The body of the barbarian and that of the High Master are not the same, but what distinction is there in the Buddha nature?" The Fifth Patriarch wished to continue the conversation, but seeing his disciples gathering on all sides, he ordered his visitor to follow the group off to work. Hui Neng said, "Hui Neng informs the High Master that this disciple's mind constantly produces wisdom and is not separate from the self nature. That, itself, is the field of blessing. It has not yet been decided what work the High Master will instruct me to do." The Fifth Patriarch said, "Barbarian, your faculties are too sharp. Do not speak further but go to the back courtyard." Hui Neng withdrew to the back courtyard where a cultivator ordered him to split firewood and thresh rice. More than eight months had passed when the Patriarch one day suddenly saw Hui Neng and said, "I think these views of yours can be of use, but I feared that evil people could harm you. For that reason, I have not spoken with you. Did you understand the situation?" Hui Neng replied, "Your disciple knew the Master's intention and stayed out of the front hall, so that others might not notice him."

One day the Patriarch summoned his disciples together and said, "I have something to say to you: for people in the world, the matter of birth and death is a great one. All day long you seek fields of blessings only; you do not try to get out of the bitter sea of birth and death. If you are confused about your self-nature, how can blessings save you?" The Patriarch continued, "Each of you go back and look into your own wisdom and use the Prajna-nature of your own original mind to compose a verse. Submit it to me so that I may look at it. If you understand the great meaning, the robe and Dharma will be passed on to you and you will become the Sixth Patriarch. Hurry off! Do not delay! Time spent thinking and considering is of no use in this matter. When seeing your own nature it is necessary to see it at the very moment of speaking. One who does that perceives as does one who wields a sword in the height of battle." The assembly received this order and withdrew, saying to one another, "We of the assembly do not need to clear our minds and use our intellect to compose a verse to submit to the High Master. What use would there be in this? Shen Hsiu is our senior instructor and Dharma teacher, certainly he should be the one to obtain it. It would be not only improper for us to compose a

verse but a waste of effort as well.” Hearing this, everyone put his mind to rest and said, “Henceforth, we will rely on Master Shen Hsiu. Why vex ourselves writing verses?” Shen Hsiu then thought, “The others are not submitting verses because I am their teacher. I must compose a verse and submit it to the Higher Master. If I do not submit a verse, how will the High Master know whether the views and understanding in my mind are deep or shallow? My intention in submitting the verse is to seek the Dharma and that is good. But if it is to grasp the patriarchate, then that is bad, for how would that be different from the mind of a common person coveting the holy position? But, if I do not submit a verse, in the end I will not obtain Dharma. This is a terrible dilemma!” In front of the Fifth Patriarch’s hall were three corridors. Their walls were to be frescoed by Court Artist Lu Chen with stories from the Lankavatara Sutra and with pictures portraying in detail the lives of the five patriarchs in order to the patriarchs might be venerated by future generations. After composing his verse, Shen Hsiu made several attempts to submit it. But whenever he reached the front hall, his mind became agitated and distraught and his entire body became covered with perspiration. Though he made thirteen attempts in four days, he did not dare submit it. Then he thought, “This is not as good as writing it on the wall for the Higher Master to see it suddenly. If he says it is good, I will step forward, bow, and say, ‘Hsiu did it.’ If it is not good enough, then I have spent my years on this mountain in vain, receiving veneration from others. And as to further development, what can I say?” That night in the third watch, while holding a candle, he secretly wrote the verse on the wall of South corridor to show what his mind had seen. Verse said:

“The body is a Bodhi tree,
The mind like a bright mirror stand.
Time and again brush it clean,
And let no dust alight.”

After writing this verse, Shen Hsiu returned to his room, and the others did not know what he had done. Then he thought, “If the Fifth Patriarch sees the verse tomorrow and is pleased, it will mean that I have an affinity with the Dharma. If he says that it does not pass, it will mean that I am confused by heavy karmic obstacles from past lives and

thereafter that I am not fit to obtain the Dharma. It is difficult to fathom the sage's intentions." In his room he continued to think and could not sit or sleep peacefully through to the fifth watch. The Patriarch already knew that Shen Hsiu had not yet entered the gate and seen his own nature. At daybreak, the Patriarch called Court Artist Lu Chen to paint the wall of the south corridor. Suddenly, he saw the verse and said to the court artist, "There is no need to paint. I am sorry that you have been troubled by coming so far, but the Diamond Sutra says, 'Whatever has marks is empty and false.' Instead leave this verse for people to recite and uphold. Those who cultivate in accordance with this verse will not fall into the evil destinies and will attain great merit." He then ordered the disciples to light incense and bow before it and to recite it, thus enabling them to see their own nature. The disciples all recited it and exclaimed, "Excellent!" At the third watch, the Patriarch called Shen Hsiu into the hall and asked him, "Did you write this verse?" Shen Hsiu said, "Yes, in fact, Hsiu did it. He does not dare to claim to the position of Patriarch but hopes the High Master will compassionately see whether or not this disciple has a little bit of wisdom." The Patriarch said, "The verse which you wrote shows that you have not yet seen your original nature but are still outside the gate. With such views and understanding, you may seek supreme Bodhi but in the end will not obtain it. Supreme Bodhi must be obtained at the very moment of speaking. In recognizing the original mind at all times in every thought, you yourself will see that the ten thousand Dharmas are unblocked; in one truth is all truth and the ten thousand states are of themselves "thus"; as they are. The 'thusness' of the mind; that is true reality. If seen in this way, it is indeed the self nature of Supreme Bodhi." The Patriarch continued, "Go and think it over for a day or two. Compose another verse and bring it to me to see. If you have been able to enter the gate, I will transmit the robe and Dharma to you." Shen Hsiu made obeisance and left. Several days passed but he was unable to compose a verse. His mind was agitated and confused; his thoughts and moods were uneasy. He was as if in a dream; whether walking or sitting down, he could not be happy.

Two days later, a young boy chanting that verse passed by the threshing room. Hearing it for the first time, Hui Neng knew that the writer had not yet seen his original nature. Although he had not yet

received a transmission of the teaching, he already understood its profound meaning. He asked the boy, "What verse are you reciting?" "Barbarian, you know nothing," replied the boy. The Great Master said that birth and death are profound concerns for people in the world. Wishing to transmit the robe and Dharma, he ordered his disciples to compose verses and bring them to him to see. The person who has awakened to the profound meaning will inherit the robe and Dharma and become the Sixth Patriarch. Our senior, Shen Hsiu, wrote this 'verse without marks' on the wall of the south corridor. The Great Master ordered everyone to recite it, for to cultivate in accordance with this verse is to avoid falling into the evil destinies and is of great merit. Hui Neng said, "I, too, would like to recite it to create an affinity. Superior One, I have been pounding rice here for over eight months and have not yet been to the front hall. I hope that the Superior One will lead me before the verse to pay homage." The boy then led him to the verse to bow. Hui Neng said, "Hui Neng cannot read. Please, Superior One, read it to me." Then an official from Chiang Chou, named Chang Jih Yung, read it loudly. After hearing it, Hui Neng said, "I, too, have a verse. Will the official please write it for me?" The official replied, "You, too, can write a verse? That is strange!" Hui Neng said to the official, "If you wish to study the Supreme Bodhi, do not slight the beginner. The lowest people may have the highest wisdom; the highest people may have the least wisdom. If you slight others, you create limitless, unbounded offenses." The official said, "Recite your verse and I will write it out for you. If you obtain the Dharma you must take me across first. Do not forget these words." Hui Neng's verse read:

"Originally Bodhi has no tree,
The bright mirror has no stand.
Originally there is not a single thing,
Where can dust alight?"

After this verse was written, the followers all were startled and without exception cried out to one another, "Strange indeed! One cannot judge a person by his appearance. How can it be that, after so little time, he has become a Bodhisattva in the flesh?" The Fifth Patriarch saw the astonished assembly and feared that they might become dangerous. Accordingly, he erased the verse with his shoe

saying, “This one, too, has not yet seen his nature.” The assembly agreed. The next day the Patriarch secretly came to the threshing floor where he saw Hui Neng pounding rice with a stone tied around his waist and he said, “A seeker of the Way would forget his very life for the Dharma. Is this not the case?” Then the Fifth Patriarch asked, “Is the rice ready?” Hui Neng replied, “The rice has long been ready. It is now waiting only for the sieve.” The Patriarch rapped the pestle three times with his staff and left. Hui Neng then knew the Patriarch’s intention and, at the third watch, he went into the Patriarch’s room. The Patriarch covered them with his precept sash in order to hide and he explained the Diamond Sutra for him, “One should produce a thought that is nowhere supported.” At the moment he heard those words, Hui Neng experienced the great enlightenment and he knew that all the ten thousand dharmas are not separate from the self-nature. He said to the Patriarch:

“How unexpected! The self-nature is originally pure in itself.
 How unexpected!
 The self-nature is originally neither produced nor destroyed.
 How unexpected! The self-nature is originally complete in itself.
 How unexpected!
 The self-nature is originally without movement.
 How unexpected!
 The self-nature can produce the ten thousand dharmas.”

The Fifth Patriarch knew of Hui Neng’s enlightenment to his original nature and said to him, “Studying the Dharma without recognizing the original mind is of no benefit. If one recognizes one’s own original mind and sees one’s original nature, then one is called a great hero, a teacher of gods and humans, a Buddha.” He received the Dharma in the third watch and no one knew about it. The Fifth Patriarch also transmitted the Sudden Teaching, the robe and bowl saying, “You are the Sixth Patriarch. Protect yourself carefully. Take living beings across by every method and spread the teaching for the sake of those who will live in the future. Do not let it be cut off.” Listen to my verse:

“With feeling comes,
 The planting of the seed.
 Because of the ground,

The fruit is born again
 Without feeling,
 There is no seed at all.
 Without that nature,
 There is no birth either.”

The Patriarch further said, “In the past, when the First Patriarch Great Master Bodhidharma first came to this land and people did not believe in him yet, he transmitted this robe as a symbol of faith to be handed down from generation to generation. The Dharma is transmitted from mind to mind, leading everyone to self-awakening and self-enlightenment. From ancient time, Buddha only transmits the original substance to Buddha; master secretly transmits the original mind to master. Since the robe is a source of contention, it should stop with you. Do not transmit it, for if you do, your life will hang by a thread. You must go quickly for I fear that people might harm you.” Hui Neng asked, “Where shall I go?” The Patriarch replied, “Stop at Huai and hide at Hui.” Hui Neng received the robe and bowl in the third watch. He said, “Hui Neng is a Southerner and does not know these mountain roads. How does one reach the mouth of the river?” The Fifth Patriarch said, “You need not worry. I will accompany you.” The Fifth Patriarch escorted him to the Chiu Chiang courier station and ordered him to board a boat. The Fifth Patriarch took up the oars and rowed. Hui Neng said, “Please, High Master, sit down. It is fitting that your disciple take the oars.” The Patriarch replied, “It is fitting that I take you across.” Hui Neng said, “When someone is deluded, his master takes him across, but when he is enlightened, he takes himself across. Although the term ‘taking across’ is the same in each case, the function is not the same. Hui Neng was born in the frontier regions and his pronunciation is incorrect, yet he has received the Dharma transmission from the Master. Now that enlightenment has been attained, it is only fitting that he takes his own nature across.” The Patriarch replied, “So it is, so it is. Hereafter, because of you, the Buddhadharma will be widely practiced. Three years after your departure, I will leave this world. Start on your journey now and go south as fast as possible. Do not speak too soon, for the Buddhadharma arises from difficulty.” After Hui Neng took leave of

the Patriarch, he set out on foot for the South. After two months, he reached the Ta Yu Mountain.

Four years after acknowledging Huineng as his successor, Zen master Hung-jen died in 674. At the time, Huineng was still residing in seclusion in the mountains. In the Platform Sutra, the Chinese Patriarch Hui Neng relates that after inheriting the Dharma, robes, and bowl from the Fifth Patriarch, he spent years in seclusion with a group of hunters. At mealtimes, they cooked meat in the same pot with the vegetables. If he was asked to share, he would pick just only the vegetables out of the meat. He would not eat meat, not because he was attached to vegetarianism, or non-vegetarianism, but because of his limitless compassion.

When he was thirty-nine years old, he decided it was time to assume his responsibilities. One day Hui Neng thought, "The time has come to spread the Dharma. I cannot stay in hiding forever." Then he made his way to Fa-shin Temple in Kuang-chou where Dharma Master Yin Tsung was giving lectures on The Nirvana Sutra. As he approached it, he saw a group of monks observing and discussing a flapping pennant. The first monk said, "It's the pennant that moves." Another objected, "The pennant is an inanimate object and has no power to move; it is the wind that moves." Then a third said, "The flapping of the pennant is due to the combination of flag and wind." Huineng interrupted the discussion, telling the monks, "It's neither wind nor pennant that moves; rather it's your own minds that move." Everyone was startled. Dharma Master Yin Tsung invited him to take a seat of honor and sought to ask him about the hidden meaning. Seeing that Hui Neng's demonstration of the true principles was concise and not based on written words, Yin Tsung said, "The cultivator is certainly no ordinary man. I heard long ago that Huang Mei's robe and bowl had come south. Cultivator, is it not you?" Hui Neng said, "I dare not presume such a thing." Yin Tsung then made obeisance and requested that the transmitted robe and bowl be brought forth and shown to the assembly. He further asked, "How was Huang Mei's doctrine transmitted?" "There was no transmission," replied Hui Neng. "We merely discussed seeing the nature. There was no discussion of Dhyana samadhi or liberation." Yin Tsung asked, "Why was there no discussion of Dhyana samadhi or liberation?" Hui Neng said, "There

are dualistic dharmas. They are not the Buddhadharma. The Buddhadharma is a dharma of non-dualism.” Yin Tsung asked further, “What is this Buddhadharma, which is the dharma of non-dualism?” Hui Neng said, “The Dharma Master has been lecturing The Nirvana Sutra says that to understand the Buddha-nature is the Buddhadharma, which is the Dharma of non-dualism. As Kao Kuei Te Wang Bodhisattva said to the Buddha, ‘Does violating the four serious prohibitions, committing the five rebellious acts or being an icchantika and the like cut off the good roots and the Buddha-nature?’” The Buddha replied, “There are two kinds of good roots: the first, permanent; the second impermanent. The Buddha-nature is neither permanent nor impermanent. Therefore it is not cut off.” “That is what is meant by non-dualistic. The first is good and the second is not good. The Buddha-nature is neither good nor bad. That is what is meant by non-dualistic. Common people think of the heaps and realms as dualistic. The wise man comprehends that they are non-dualistic in nature. The non-dualistic nature is the Buddha-nature.” Hearing this explanation, Yin Tsung was delighted. He joined his palms and said, “My explanation of Sutra is like broken tile; whereas your discussion of the meaning, Kind Sir, is like pure gold.” He then shaved Hui Neng’s head and asked Hui Neng to be his master. Accordingly, under that Bodhi tree, Hui Neng explained the Tung Shan Dharma-door. Hui Neng obtained the Dharma at Tung Shan and has undergone much suffering, as if his life was hanging by a thread. “Today, in this gathering of magistrate and officials, of Bhikshus, Bhikshunis, Taoists, and laymen, there is not one of you who is not here because of accumulated ages of karmic conditions. Because in past lives you have made offerings to the Buddhas and planted good roots in common ground, you now have the opportunity to hear Sudden Teaching, which is an opportunity to obtain the Dharma. This teaching has been handed down by former sages; it is not Hui Neng’s own wisdom. You, who wish to hear the teaching of the former sages, should first purify your minds. After hearing it, cast aside your doubts, and that way you will be no different from the sages of the past.” Hearing this Dharma, the entire assembly was delighted, made obeisance and withdrew.

The Master obtained the Dharma at Huang-Mei and returned to Ts’ao-Hou Village in Shao-Chou, where no one knew him. But Liu-

Chih-Liao, a scholar, received him with great courtesy. Chih-Liao's aunt, Bhikshuni Wu-Chin-Tsang, constantly recited the Mahaparinirvana Sutra. When the Master heard it, he instantly grasped its wonderful principle and explained it to her. The bhikshuni then held out a scroll and asked about some characters. The Master said, "I cannot read; please ask about the meaning." "If you cannot even read, how can you understand the meaning?" asked the Bhikshuni. The Master replied, "The subtle meaning of all Buddhas is not based on language." The Bhikshuni was startled, and she announced to all the elders and virtuous ones in the village: "Here is a gentleman who possesses the way. We should ask him to stay and receive our offerings." Ts'ao-Shu-Liang, great-grandson of the Marquis Wu of the Wei dynasty, came rushing to pay homage, along with the people of the village. At that time, the pure dwellings of the ancient Pao-Lin Temple, which had been destroyed by war and fire at the end of the Sui dynasty, were rebuilt on their old foundation. The Master was invited to stay and soon the temple became a revered place.

In the Transmission of the Lamp, after returning from his study-pilgrimage, a disciple drew a circle in front of the Master, Hui-neng, stood within it, and bowed. Hui-neng asked, 'Do you wish to make of it a Buddha or not?' The monk answered, 'I do not know how to fabricate the eyes.' Hui-neng remarked, 'I cannot do any better than you.' The disciple made no response."

The Sixth Patriarch Hui-neng taught for thirty-seven years and, according to his "Final Instructions" at the end of the Platform Sutra, the number of his disciples who achieved some degree of enlightenment was too large to count. Besides, there were so many known dharma heirs of the Sixth Patriarch, but eighteen recorded outstanding disciples. They are following Zen Masters: Hsing-ssu, Huai-jang, Hsuan-Chueh, Hui-chung, Shên-hui, Fa-Hai, Chih-Ch'eng, Upagupta Tripitaka, Shiao-Liao, Chih-Huang, Fa-Ta, Chih-T'ung, Chih-Ch'e, Chih-Ch'ang, Chih-Tao, Yin-Tsung, Hsuan-T'se, and Ling-T'ao. In the middle of 712, one day the Master summoned his disciples Fa-Hai, Chih-Ch'eng, Fa-Ta, Shen-Hui, Chih-Ch'ang, Chih-T'ung, Chih-Ch'e, Chih-Tao, Fa-Chen and Fa-Ju, and said to them, "You are not like other people. After my passage into extinction, you should each be a master in a different direction. I will now teach you how to

explain the Dharma without deviating from the tradition of our school. First, bring up the three classes of Dharma-doors and then, use the thirty-six pairs of opposites, so that, whether coming or going, you remain in the Bodhimandala. While explaining all the dharmas, do not become separate from your self-nature. Should someone suddenly ask you about a dharma, answer him with its opposite. If you always answer with the opposite, both will be eliminated and nothing will be left since each depends on the other for existence. The three classes of Dharma-doors are the heaps, the realms and the entrances. The five heaps are: form, feeling, perception, impulses and consciousness. The twelve entrances are the six sense objects outside: forms, sounds, smells, tastes, tangible objects and objects of the mind; and the six sense organs within: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind. The eighteen realms are the six sense objects, the six sense organs and the six consciousnesses. The self-nature is able to contain all dharmas; it is the 'store-enveloping consciousness.' If one gives rise to a thought, it turns into consciousness, and the six consciousnesses are produced, which go out the six organs and perceive the six sense objects. Thus, the eighteen realms arise as a function of the self-nature. If the self-nature is wrong, it gives rise to the eighteen wrongs; if the self-nature is right, it gives rise to eighteen rights. Evil functioning is that of a living being, while good functioning is that of a Buddha. What is the functioning based on? It is based on opposing dharmas within the self-nature. External insentient things have five pairs of opposites: heaven and earth, sun and moon, light and darkness, positive and negative (yin and yang) and water and fire. In speaking of the marks of dharmas one should delineate twelve opposites: speech and dharmas, existence and non-existence, form and formless, the marked and the unmarked, the presence of outflows and the lack of outflows, form and emptiness, motion and stillness, clarity and turbidity, the common and the holy, membership in the Sangha and membership in the laity, old age and youth, and largeness and smallness. From the self-nature nineteen pairs of opposites arise: length and shortness, deviance and orthodoxy, foolishness and wisdom, stupidity and intelligence, confusion and concentration, kindness and cruelty, morality and immorality, Straightness and crookedness, reality and unreality, danger and safety, affliction and Bodhi, permanence and impermanence, compassion and

harm, joy and anger, generosity and stinginess, advance and retreat, production and extinction, the Dharma-body and the form-body, the Transformation-body and the reward-body. The Master said, “If you can understand and use these thirty-six pairs of opposites you can connect yourself with the dharmas of all the Sutras and avoid extremes, whether coming or going. When you act from your self-nature in speaking with others, you are separate from external marks while in the midst of them and separate from inward emptiness while in the midst of emptiness. If you are attached to marks, you will add to your wrong views and if you grasp at emptiness, you will increase your ignorance. Those who grasp at emptiness slander the Sutras by maintaining that written words have no use. Since they maintain they have no need of written words, they should not speak either because written words are merely the marks of spoken language. They also maintain that the direct way cannot be established by written words, and yet these two words ‘not established’, are themselves written. When they hear others speaking, they slander them by saying that they are attached to written words. You should know that to be confused as they are may be permissible but to slander the Buddha’s Sutras is not. Do not slander the Sutras for if you do, your offense will create countless obstacles for you. One who attaches himself to external marks and practice dharmas in search of truth, or who builds many Bodhimandalas and speaks of the error and evil of existence and non-existence will not see his nature for many aeons. Listen to the Dharma and cultivate accordingly. Do not think of hundreds of things, for that will obstruct the nature of the Way. Listening without cultivating will cause others to form deviant views. Simply cultivate according to the Dharma, and do not dwell in marks when bestowing it. If you understand, then speak accordingly, function accordingly, practice accordingly, and act accordingly, and you will not stray from the basis of our school. If someone ask you about a meaning, and the question is about existence, answer with non-existence; if you are asked about non-existence, answer with existence; asked about common life, answer with the holy life; asked about the holy life, answer with the common life. Since in each case the two principles are interdependent, the meaning of the Middle Way will arise between them. If you answer every question with an opposite, you will not stray from the basic

principle. Suppose someone asks, 'What is darkness?' You should answer 'Brightness is the cause and darkness the condition. When there is no brightness, there is darkness. Brightness reveals darkness and darkness reveals brightness.' Since opposites are interdependent, the principle of the Middle Way is established. Answer every question that way, and in the future, when you transmit the Dharma, transmit it in the way I am instructing you. Then you will not stray from the tradition of our school."

In the seventh month of the year Jen-Tsu, the first year of T'ai-Chi and Yen-Ho reigns (around 712 A.D.), the Master sent his disciples to Hsin-Chou to build a pagoda at Kuo-Ên Temple. He ordered them to hurry the work and it was completed by the end of the summer of the following year. On the first day of the seventh month, he gathered his disciples together and said, "In the eighth month I wish to leave this world. Those of you with doubts should ask about them soon so that I may resolve them for you and put an end to your confusion, because when I am gone there will be no one to teach you." Hearing this, Fa-Hai and others wept. Only Shen-Hui was unmoved and did not cry. The Master said, "Little Master Shen-Hui has attained the equality of good and evil. He is not moved by blame or praise and does not feel sadness or joy. None of the rest of you have attained that. All these years on the mountain, how have you been cultivating? Now you cry. Who are you worrying about? Are you worrying that I don't know where I'm going? I know where I'm going. If I did not know, I wouldn't have been able to tell you about it in advance. No doubt you are crying because you don't know where I am going but if you knew you wouldn't need to cry. Originally, the Dharma nature is not produced or extinguished; it does not come or go. All of you sit down, and I will recite a verse called 'The True-False Motion-Stillness Verse.'" If you take it up and recite it, you will be of the same mind as I am. If you rely on it to cultivate, you will not stray from the true principle of our school." The assembly bowed and begged the Master to recite the verse.

There is nothing true in anything,
 So don't view anything as true.
 If you view anything as true,
 Your view will be completely false.
 You can know what is true by yourself.

Being apart from the false is the truth of the mind.
 When your own mind is not apart from the false
 And lacks the truth, then where is the truth?
 Sentient beings understand motion.
 Insentient beings do not move.
 If you cultivate the work of non-movement,
 Like insentient beings, you will not move.
 If you seek the true non-movement,
 In movement, there is non-movement.
 Non-movement is non-movement, but
 Things without sentience lack the Buddha-seed.
 Fully able to discriminate among marks,
 But unmoving in the primary meaning:
 The very act of viewing in this way,
 Itself is the function of true suchness.
 I tell you, students of the Way,
 Apply your minds with effort and take care,
 At the gate of the Great Vehicle,
 Do not grasp the wisdom of birth and death.
 If there is response of these words,
 Then let us discuss the Buddha's meaning together.
 If there is no response,
 Join your hands together and make others glad.
 The basis of this school is non-contention,
 Contention is not the meaning of the Way.
 For in grasping at the
 Dharma doors of contradiction and contention,
 The self-nature enters birth and death.

When the followers heard this verse, they understood its meaning and bowed down before the Master. They made up their minds to practice in accord with the Dharma and not to argue, knowing that the Great Master would not remain long in the world. The Senior Seated Fa-Hai bowed again and asked, "After the High Master enters extinction, who will inherit the robe and Dharma?" The Master said, "Since the time I lectured on the Dharma in Ta-Fan Temple, transcriptions of my lectures have been circulated. They are to be called 'The Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra.' Protect and transmit them

in order to take humankind across. If you speak according to them, you will be speaking the Orthodox Dharma. I will explain the Dharma to you, but I will not transmit the robe because your roots of faith are pure and ripe. You certainly have no doubts and are worthy of the great Work. According to the meaning of the transmission verse of the First Patriarch Bodhidharma, the robe should not be transmitted. His verse said,

“Originally I came to this land,
Transmitting Dharma, saving living beings.
One flower opens; five petals and
The fruit comes to bear of itself.”

The Master added, “All of you Good Knowing Advisors should purify your minds and listen to my explanation of the Dharma. If you wish to realize all knowledge, you must understand the Samadhi of one Mark and the Samadhi of One Conduct. If you do not dwell in marks anywhere and do not give rise to hate and love, do not grasp or reject and do not calculate advantage or disadvantage, production and destruction while in the midst of marks, but instead, remain tranquil, calm and yielding, then you will have achieved the Samadhi of One Mark. In all places, whether walking, standing, sitting or lying down, to maintain a straight and uniform mind, to attain the unmoving Bodhimandala and the true realization of the Pure Land. That is called the Samadhi of One Conduct. One who perfects the two samadhis is like earth in which seeds are planted; buried in the ground, they are nourished and grow, ripening and bearing fruit. The One Mark and One Conduct are just like that. Now, I speak the Dharma, which is like the falling of the timely rain, moistening the great earth. Your Buddha-nature is like the seeds, which receiving moisture, will sprout and grow. Those who receive my teaching will surely obtain Bodhi and those who practice my conduct certainly certify to the wonderful fruit. Listen to my verse”

The mind-ground contains every seeds;
Under the universal rain they all sprout
Flower and feeling-Sudden Enlightenment
The Bodhi-fruit accomplishes itself.”

After speaking the verse the Master said, “Dharma is not dual nor is the mind, and the Way is pure and without marks. All of you take

care not to contemplate stillness or empty the mind. The mind is basically pure and does not grasp or reject anything. Each of you work hard and go well in harmony with circumstances.” On the eighth day of the seventh month, the Master suddenly said to his disciples, “I wish to return to Hsin-Chou. Quickly ready a boat and oars.” The great assembly entreated him earnestly to stay, but the Master said, “All Buddhas appear in the world and then are seen to enter Nirvana. This body of mine must return somewhere.” The assembly said, “Master, you are leaving, but sooner or later, you will return.” The Master said, “Falling leaves return to the root. There was no day on which I came.” They further asked, “Who has received the transmission of the Right Dharma-eye Treasury?” The Master said, “The one who has the Way obtains it; the one without a mind penetrates it.” They further asked, “In the future, there won’t be any difficulties, will there?” The Master said, “Five or six years after my extinction (death), a man will come to take my head. Listen to me verse:

"Offerings to the parents with bowed head.
There must be food in the mouth.
When the difficulty of ‘Man’ is met,
The officials will be Yang and Liu.”

The Master also said, “Seventy years after my departure, two Bodhisattvas, one who has left home and one who is a layman, will simultaneously come from the east to propagate and transform. They will establish my school, build and restore monasteries and glorify the Dharma for its heirs. The assembly made obeisance again and asked, “Will you please let us know for how many generations the teaching has been transmitted since the first Buddha and Patriarchs appeared in the world?” The Master said, “The Buddhas of antiquity who have appeared in the world are numberless and uncountable. But now I will begin with the last seven Buddhas. In the Past ‘Adorned Aeon’ there were Vipashyin Buddha, Shikhin Buddha and Vishvabhu Buddha. In the present ‘Worthy Aeon’, there have been Krakucchanda Buddha, Kanakamuni Buddha, Kashyapa Buddha, and Shakyamuni Buddha. From Shakyamuni Buddha, the transmission went to Arya Mahakashyapa, Arya Ananda, Arya Sanakavasa, Arya Upagupta, Arya Dhrtaka, Arya Miccaka, Arya Vasumitra, Arya Buddhanandi, Arya Buddhmitra, Arya Parshva, Arya Punyayashas, Mahasattva

Ashvaghosa, Arya Kapimala, Mahasattva Nagarjuna, Arya Kanadeva, Arya Rahulata, Arya Sanghanandi, Arya Gayashata, Arya Kumarata, Arya Jayata, Arya Vasubandhu, Arya Manorhita, Arya Arya Haklena, Arya Aryasima, Arya Basiasita, Arya Punyamitra, Arya Prajnatarā, Arya Bodhidharma. Great Master Hui-K'o, Great Master Seng-Ts'an, Great Master Tao-Hsin, Great Master Hung-Jen, and I, Hui-Neng, am the Thirty-Third Patriarch. Thus, the transmission has been handed down from patriarch to patriarch. In the future, transmit it accordingly from generation to generation. Do not allow it to become extinct.”

Chapter Eight

The Scriptural Text of the Jewel Platform Sutra

At one time, the Sixth Patriarch arrived at Pao-Lin to speak the Dharma to the assembly. The Great Master said to the assembly, “Good Knowing Advisors, the self-nature of Bodhi is originally clear and pure. Simply use that mind, and you will directly accomplish Buddhahood. One of the special points in the Jewel Platform Sutra is that the sutra emphasizes that Supreme Bodhi must be obtained at the very moment of speaking. The sutra emphasized on real practice “The true nature of things is beyond the limiting concepts imposed by words.” The sutra also emphasized on the primary aim of meditation is to let Zen Flowers blooming with the abilities to stop the flow of thoughts and to clear the mind as well as to eliminate sufferings and afflictions, and eventually producing fruits of Enlightenment and Emancipation with a life full of peace, mindfulness and happiness in this very life. In other words, in the Vimalakirti Zen Garden, Zen Flowers always produce fruits of Enlightenment and Emancipation in four seasons of Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter. The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch’s Dharma Treasure is also called the Sutra of Hui-Neng, the basic text of the Southern Zen School in China. The Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch from the High Seat of the Dharma Treasure, basic Zen writing in which Sixth Patriarch’s biography, discourses and sayings at Pao-Lin monastery are recorded by his disciples Fa-Hai. It is divided into ten chapters.

The First Chapter—Action & Intention: At one time the Great Master arrived at Pao-Lin. Magistrate Wei Ch’u of Shao Chou and other local officials climbed the mountain and invited the Master to come into the city to the lecture hall of the Ta Fan Temple to speak the Dharma to the assembly. When the Master had taken his seat, the Magistrate and over thirty other officials including more than thirty Confucian scholars, and more than one thousand Bhikshus, Bhikshunis, Taoists, and laypeople, all made obeisance, at the same time, wishing to hear the essentials (essence) of Dharma. The Great Master said to the assembly, “Good Knowing Advisors, the self-nature of Bodhi is

originally clear and pure. Simply use that mind, and you will directly accomplish Buddhahood. Good Knowing Advisors, listen while I tell you about the actions and intentions by which Hui-Neng obtained the Dharma. Hui-Neng's stern father was originally from Fan Yang. He was banished to Hsin Chou in Ling Nan, where he became a commoner. Unfortunately, his father soon died, and his aging mother was left alone. They moved to Nan Hai and, poor and in bitter straits, Hui Neng sold wood in the market place. Once a customer bought firewood and ordered it delivered to his shop. When the delivery was made, and Hui Neng received the money, he went outside the gate and he noticed a customer reciting a Sutra. Upon once hearing the words of this Sutra: "One should produce that thought which is nowhere supported," Hui Neng's mind immediately opened to enlightenment. Thereupon he asked the customer what Sutra he was reciting. The customer replied, "The Diamond Sutra." Then again he asked, "Where do you come from and why do you recite this Sutra?" The customer said, "I come from Tung Ch'an Monastery in Ch'i Chou, Huang Mei Province. There, the fifth Patriarch, the Great Master Hung Jen, dwells and teaches over one thousand disciples. I went there to make obeisance and I heard and received this Sutra." The Great Master constantly exhorts the Sangha and laypeople only to uphold the Diamond Sutra. Then, they may see their own nature and directly achieve Buddhahood. Hui Neng heard this and desired to go to seek the Dharma but he recalled that his mother had no support. Karmic conditions originating from past lives led another man to give Hui Neng a pound of silver, so that he could provide clothing and food for his aging mother. The man further instructed him to go to Huang Mei to call upon and bow to the Fifth Patriarch.

After Hui Neng had made arrangements for his mother's welfare, he took his leave. In less than thirty days, he arrived at Huang Mei and made obeisance to the Fifth Patriarch, who asked him, "Where are you from and what do you seek?" Hui Neng replied, "Your disciple is a commoner from Hsin Chou in Ling Nan and comes from afar to bow to the Master, seeking only to be a Buddha, and nothing else." The Patriarch said, "You are from Ling Nan and therefore are a barbarian, so how can you become a Buddha?" Hui Neng said, "Although there are people from the north and people from the south, there is

ultimately no north or south in the Buddha nature. The body of the barbarian and that of the High Master are not the same, but what distinction is there in the Buddha nature?" The Fifth Patriarch wished to continue the conversation, but seeing his disciples gathering on all sides, he ordered his visitor to follow the group off to work. Hui Neng said, "Hui Neng informs the High Master that this disciple's mind constantly produces wisdom and is not separate from the self nature. That, itself, is the field of blessing. It has not yet been decided what work the High Master will instruct me to do." The Fifth Patriarch said, "Barbarian, your faculties are too sharp. Do not speak further but go to the back courtyard." Hui Neng withdrew to the back courtyard where a cultivator ordered him to split firewood and thresh rice. More than eight months had passed when the Patriarch one day suddenly saw Hui Neng and said, "I think these views of yours can be of use, but I feared that evil people could harm you. For that reason, I have not spoken with you. Did you understand the situation?" Hui Neng replied, "Your disciple knew the Master's intention and stayed out of the front hall, so that others might not notice him."

One day the Patriarch summoned his disciples together and said, "I have something to say to you: for people in the world, the matter of birth and death is a great one. All day long you seek fields of blessings only; you do not try to get out of the bitter sea of birth and death. If you are confused about your self-nature, how can blessings save you?" The Patriarch continued, "Each of you go back and look into your own wisdom and use the Prajna-nature of your own original mind to compose a verse. Submit it to me so that I may look at it. If you understand the great meaning, the robe and Dharma will be passed on to you and you will become the Sixth Patriarch. Hurry off! Do not delay! Time spent thinking and considering is of no use in this matter. When seeing your own nature it is necessary to see it at the very moment of speaking. One who does that perceives as does one who wields a sword in the height of battle."

The assembly received this order and withdrew, saying to one another, "We of the assembly do not need to clear our minds and use our intellect to compose a verse to submit to the High Master. What use would there be in this? Shen Hsiu is our senior instructor and Dharma teacher, certainly he should be the one to obtain it. It would be

not only improper for us to compose a verse but a waste of effort as well." Hearing this, everyone put his mind to rest and said, "Henceforth, we will rely on Master Shen Hsiu. Why vex ourselves writing verses?"

Shen Hsiu then thought, "The others are not submitting verses because I am their teacher. I must compose a verse and submit it to the Higher Master. If I do not submit a verse, how will the High Master know whether the views and understanding in my mind are deep or shallow? My intention in submitting the verse is to seek the Dharma and that is good. But if it is to grasp the patriarchate, then that is bad, for how would that be different from the mind of a common person coveting the holy position? But, if I do not submit a verse, in the end I will not obtain Dharma. This is a terrible dilemma!"

In front of the Fifth Patriarch's hall were three corridors. Their walls were to be frescoed by Court Artist Lu Chen with stories from the Lankavatara Sutra and with pictures portraying in detail the lives of the five patriarchs in order to the patriarchs might be venerated by future generations. After composing his verse, Shen Hsiu made several attempts to submit it. But whenever he reached the front hall, his mind became agitated and distraught and his entire body became covered with perspiration. Though he made thirteen attempts in four days, he did not dare submit it. Then he thought, "This is not as good as writing it on the wall for the Higher Master to see it suddenly. If he says it is good, I will step forward, bow, and say, 'Hsiu did it.' If it is not good enough, then I have spent my years on this mountain in vain, receiving veneration from others. And as to further development, what can I say?" That night in the third watch, while holding a candle, he secretly wrote the verse on the wall of South corridor to show what his mind had seen. Verse said:

"The body is a Bodhi tree,
The mind like a bright mirror stand.
Time and again brush it clean,
And let no dust alight."

After writing this verse, Shen Hsiu returned to his room, and the others did not know what he had done. Then he thought, "If the Fifth Patriarch sees the verse tomorrow and is pleased, it will mean that I have an affinity with the Dharma. If he says that it does not pass, it will

mean that I am confused by heavy karmic obstacles from past lives and thereafter that I am not fit to obtain the Dharma. It is difficult to fathom the sage's intentions." In his room he continued to think and could not sit or sleep peacefully through to the fifth watch.

The Patriarch already knew that Shen Hsiu had not yet entered the gate and seen his own nature. At daybreak, the Patriarch called Court Artist Lu Chen to paint the wall of the south corridor. Suddenly, he saw the verse and said to the court artist, "There is no need to paint. I am sorry that you have been troubled by coming so far, but the Diamond Sutra says, 'Whatever has marks is empty and false.' Instead leave this verse for people to recite and uphold. Those who cultivate in accordance with this verse will not fall into the evil destinies and will attain great merit." He then ordered the disciples to light incense and bow before it and to recite it, thus enabling them to see their own nature. The disciples all recited it and exclaimed, "Excellent!"

At the third watch, the Patriarch called Shen Hsiu into the hall and asked him, "Did you write this verse?" Shen Hsiu said, "Yes, in fact, Hsiu did it. He does not dare to claim to the position of Patriarch but hopes the High Master will compassionately see whether or not this disciple has a little bit of wisdom." The Patriarch said, "The verse which you wrote shows that you have not yet seen your original nature but are still outside the gate. With such views and understanding, you may seek supreme Bodhi but in the end will not obtain it. Supreme Bodhi must be obtained at the very moment of speaking. In recognizing the original mind at all times in every thought, you yourself will see that the ten thousand Dharmas are unblocked; in one truth is all truth and the ten thousand states are of themselves "thus"; as they are. The 'thusness' of the mind; that is true reality. If seen in this way, it is indeed the self nature of Supreme Bodhi." The Patriarch continued, "Go and think it over for a day or two. Compose another verse and bring it to me to see. If you have been able to enter the gate, I will transmit the robe and Dharma to you."

Shen Hsiu made obeisance and left. Several days passed but he was unable to compose a verse. His mind was agitated and confused; his thoughts and moods were uneasy. He was as if in a dream; whether walking or sitting down, he could not be happy. Two days later, a young boy chanting that verse passed by the threshing room. Hearing it

for the first time, Hui Neng knew that the writer had not yet seen his original nature. Although he had not yet received a transmission of the teaching, he already understood its profound meaning. He asked the boy, "What verse are you reciting?" "Barbarian, you know nothing," replied the boy. The Great Master said that birth and death are profound concerns for people in the world. Wishing to transmit the robe and Dharma, he ordered his disciples to compose verses and bring them to him to see. The person who has awakened to the profound meaning will inherit the robe and Dharma and become the Sixth Patriarch. Our senior, Shen Hsiu, wrote this 'verse without marks' on the wall of the south corridor. The Great Master ordered everyone to recite it, for to cultivate in accordance with this verse is to avoid falling into the evil destinies and is of great merit.

Hui Neng said, "I, too, would like to recite it to create an affinity. Superior One, I have been pounding rice here for over eight months and have not yet been to the front hall. I hope that the Superior One will lead me before the verse to pay homage." The boy then led him to the verse to bow. Hui Neng said, "Hui Neng cannot read. Please, Superior One, read it to me." Then an official from Chiang Chou, named Chang Jih Yung, read it loudly. After hearing it, Hui Neng said, "I, too, have a verse. Will the official please write it for me?" The official replied, "You, too, can write a verse? That is strange!" Hui Neng said to the official, "If you wish to study the Supreme Bodhi, do not slight the beginner. The lowest people may have the highest wisdom; the highest people may have the least wisdom. If you slight others, you create limitless, unbounded offenses." The official said, "Recite your verse and I will write it out for you. If you obtain the Dharma you must take me across first. Do not forget these words." Hui Neng's verse read:

"Originally Bodhi has no tree,
The bright mirror has no stand.
Originally there is not a single thing,
Where can dust alight?"

After this verse was written, the followers all were startled and without exception cried out to one another, "Strange indeed! One cannot judge a person by his appearance. How can it be that, after so little time, he has become a Bodhisattva in the flesh?" The Fifth

Patriarch saw the astonished assembly and feared that they might become dangerous. Accordingly, he erased the verse with his shoe saying, "This one, too, has not yet seen his nature." The assembly agreed. The next day the Patriarch secretly came to the threshing floor where he saw Hui Neng pounding rice with a stone tied around his waist and he said, "A seeker of the Way would forget his very life for the Dharma. Is this not the case?" Then the Fifth Patriarch asked, "Is the rice ready?" Hui Neng replied, "The rice has long been ready. It is now waiting only for the sieve." The Patriarch rapped the pestle three times with his staff and left. Hui Neng then knew the Patriarch's intention and, at the third watch, he went into the Patriarch's room. The Patriarch covered them with his precept sash in order to hide and he explained the Diamond Sutra for him, "One should produce a thought that is nowhere supported."

At the moment he heard those words, Hui Neng experienced the great enlightenment and he knew that all the ten thousand dharmas are not separate from the self-nature. He said to the Patriarch:

"How unexpected! The self-nature is
originally pure in itself.
How unexpected! The self-nature is
originally neither produced nor destroyed.
How unexpected! The self-nature is
originally complete in itself.
How unexpected! The self-nature is
originally without movement.
How unexpected! The self-nature can
produce the ten thousand dharmas."

The Fifth Patriarch knew of Hui Neng's enlightenment to his original nature and said to him, "Studying the Dharma without recognizing the original mind is of no benefit. If one recognizes one's own original mind and sees one's original nature, then one is called a great hero, a teacher of gods and humans, a Buddha." He received the Dharma in the third watch and no one knew about it. The Fifth Patriarch also transmitted the Sudden Teaching, the robe and bowl saying, "You are the Sixth Patriarch. Protect yourself carefully. Take living beings across by every method and spread the teaching for the

sake of those who will live in the future. Do not let it be cut off.” Listen to my verse:

“With feeling comes,
 The planting of the seed.
 Because of the ground,
 The fruit is born again
 Without feeling,
 There is no seed at all.
 Without that nature,
 There is no birth either.”

The Patriarch further said, “In the past, when the First Patriarch Great Master Bodhidharma first came to this land and people did not believe in him yet, he transmitted this robe as a symbol of faith to be handed down from generation to generation. The Dharma is transmitted from mind to mind, leading everyone to self-awakening and self-enlightenment. From ancient time, Buddha only transmits the original substance to Buddha; master secretly transmits the original mind to master. Since the robe is a source of contention, it should stop with you. Do not transmit it, for if you do, your life will hang by a thread. You must go quickly for I fear that people might harm you.” Hui Neng asked, “Where shall I go?” The Patriarch replied, “Stop at Huai and hide at Hui.” Hui Neng received the robe and bowl in the third watch. He said, “Hui Neng is a Southerner and does not know these mountain roads. How does one reach the mouth of the river?” The Fifth Patriarch said, “You need not worry. I will accompany you.” The Fifth Patriarch escorted him to the Chiu Chiang courier station and ordered him to board a boat. The Fifth Patriarch took up the oars and rowed. Hui Neng said, “Please, High Master, sit down. It is fitting that your disciple take the oars.” The Patriarch replied, “It is fitting that I take you across.” Hui Neng said, “When someone is deluded, his master takes him across, but when he is enlightened, he takes himself across. Although the term ‘taking across’ is the same in each case, the function is not the same. Hui Neng was born in the frontier regions and his pronunciation is incorrect, yet he has received the Dharma transmission from the Master. Now that enlightenment has been attained, it is only fitting that he takes his own nature across.” The Patriarch replied, “So it is, so it is. Hereafter,

because of you, the Buddhadharma will be widely practiced. Three years after your departure, I will leave this world. Start on your journey now and go south as fast as possible. Do not speak too soon, for the Buddhadharma arises from difficulty.” After Hui Neng took leave of the Patriarch, he set out on foot for the South. After two months, he reached the Ta Yu Mountain.

The Fifth Patriarch returned to the monastery but for several days he did not enter the hall. The assembly was concerned and went on to ask: “Has the Master some slight illness or problem?” “There is no illness,” came the reply, “but the robe and Dharma have already gone south.” “Who received the transmission?” they asked. “The Able One obtained it,” said the Patriarch. The assembly then understood and soon, several hundred people took up pursuit, all hoping to steal the robe and bowl. One Bhikshu, Hui Ming, a coarse-natured man whose lay name had been Ch’en, had formerly been a fourth class military official. He was intent in his search and ahead of the others. When he had almost caught up with Hui Neng, the latter tossed the robed and bowl onto a rock, saying, “This robe and bowl are tokens of faith. How can they be taken by force?” Hui Neng then hid in a thicket. When Hui Ming arrived, he tried to pick them up but found he could not move them. He cried out, “Cultivator, Cultivator, I have come for the Dharma, not for the robe!” Hui Neng then came out and sat cross-legged on a rock. Hui Ming made obeisance and said, “I hope that the Cultivator will teach the Dharma for my sake.” Hui Neng said, “Since you have come for the Dharma, you may put aside all conditions. Do not give rise to a single thought and I will teach it to you clearly.” After a time, Hui Neng said, “With no thoughts of good and with no thoughts of evil, at just this moment, what is Superior One Hui Ming’s original face?”

At these words, Hui Ming was greatly enlightened. Hui Ming asked further, “Apart from the secret speech and secret meanings just spoken, is there yet another secret meaning?”

Hui Neng said, “What has been spoken to you is not secret. If you turn the illumination inward, the secret is with you.” Hui Ming said, “Although Hui Ming was at Huang Mei, he has not yet awakened to his original face. Now that he has been favored with this instruction he is

like one who drinks water and knows for himself whether it is cold or warm.”

The cultivator is now Hui Ming’s master.”

“If you feel that way,” said Hui Neng, “then you and I have the same master, Huang Mei. Protect yourself well.”

Hui Ming asked further, “Where should I go now?”

Hui Neng said, “Stop at Yuan and dwell at Meng.”

Hui Ming bowed and left. Reaching the foot of the mountain, he said to the pursuers. “Up above there is only a rocky, trackless height. He must find another path.” The pursuers all agreed. Afterward, Hui Ming changed his name to Tao Ming to avoid using Hui Neng’s first name.

Hui Neng arrived at Ts’ao His where he was again pursued by men with evil intentions. To avoid difficulty, he went to Szu Hui and lived among hunters for fifteen years, at times teaching the Dharma to them in an appropriate manner. The hunters often told him to watch their nets but whenever he saw beings who were still living he released them. At mealtimes, he cooked vegetables in the pot alongside the meat. When he was questioned about it, he would answer “I only eat vegetables alongside the meat.” One day Hui Neng thought, “The time has come to spread the Dharma. I cannot stay in hiding forever.” Accordingly, he went to Fa Hsing Monastery in Kuang Cou where Dharma Master Yin Tsung was giving lectures on The Nirvana Sutra. At that time there were two bhikshus who were discussing the topic of the wind and a flag. One said, “The wind is moving.” The other said, “The flag is moving.” They argued incessantly. Hui Neng stepped forward and said, “The wind is not moving, nor is the flag. Your minds, Kind Sirs, are moving.” Everyone was startled. Dharma Master Yin Tsung invited him to take a seat of honor and sought to ask him about the hidden meaning. Seeing that Hui Neng’s demonstration of the true principles was concise and not based on written words, Yin Tsung said, “The cultivator is certainly no ordinary man. I heard long ago that Huang Mei’s robe and bowl had come south. Cultivator, is it not you?” Hui Neng said, “I dare not presume such a thing.” Yin Tsung then made obeisance and requested that the transmitted robe and bowl be brought forth and shown to the assembly. He further asked, “How was Huang Mei’s doctrine transmitted?” “There was no transmission,”

replied Hui Neng. “We merely discussed seeing the nature. There was no discussion of Dhyana samadhi or liberation.” Yin Tsung asked, “Why was there no discussion of Dhyana samadhi or liberation?” Hui Neng said, “There are dualistic dharmas. They are not the Buddhadharma. The Buddhadharma is a dharma of non-dualism.” Yin Tsung asked further, “What is this Buddhadharma, which is the dharma of non-dualism?” Hui Neng said, “The Dharma Master has been lecturing The Nirvana Sutra says that to understand the Buddha-nature is the Buddhadharma, which is the Dharma of non-dualism. As Kao Kuei Te Wang Bodhisattva said to the Buddha, ‘Does violating the four serious prohibitions, committing the five rebellious acts or being an icchantika and the like cut off the good roots and the Buddha-nature?’ The Buddha replied, ‘There are two kinds of good roots: the first, permanent; the second impermanent. The Buddha-nature is neither permanent nor impermanent. Therefore it is not cut off.’ ‘That is what is meant by non-dualistic. The first is good and the second is not good. The Buddha-nature is neither good nor bad. That is what is meant by non-dualistic. Common people think of the heaps and realms as dualistic. The wise man comprehends that they are non-dualistic in nature. The non-dualistic nature is the Buddha-nature.’ Hearing this explanation, Yin Tsung was delighted. He joined his palms and said, “My explanation of Sutra is like broken tile; whereas your discussion of the meaning, Kind Sir, is like pure gold.” He then shaved Hui Neng’s head and asked Hui Neng to be his master. Accordingly, under that Bodhi tree, Hui Neng explained the Tung Shan Dharma-door. Hui Neng obtained the Dharma at Tung Shan and has undergone much suffering, as if his life was hanging by a thread. “Today, in this gathering of magistrate and officials, of Bhikshus, Bhikshunis, Taoists, and laymen, there is not one of you who is not here because of accumulated ages of karmic conditions. Because in past lives you have made offerings to the Buddhas and planted good roots in common ground, you now have the opportunity to hear Sudden Teaching, which is an opportunity to obtain the Dharma. This teaching has been handed down by former sages; it is not Hui Neng’s own wisdom. You, who wish to hear the teaching of the former sages, should first purify your minds. After hearing it, cast aside your doubts, and that way you will be

no different from the sages of the past.” Hearing this Dharma, the entire assembly was delighted, made obeisance and withdrew.

The Second Chapter—Prajna: The following day, at the invitation of Magistrate Wei, the Master took his seat and said to the great assembly, “All of you purify your minds and think about Maha Prajna Paramita.” He then said, “All-Knowing Advisors, the wisdom of Bodhi and Prajna is originally possessed by worldly people themselves. It is only because their minds are confused that they are unable to enlighten themselves and must rely on a great Good Knowing Advisor who can lead them to see their Buddha-nature. You should know that the Buddha-nature of stupid and wise people is basically not different. It is only because confusion and enlightenment are different that some are stupid and some are wise. I will now explain for you the Maha Prajna Paramita Dharma in order that each of you may become wise. Pay careful attention and I will explain it to you.” Good Knowing Advisors, worldly people recite ‘Prajna’ with their mouths all day long and yet do not recognize the Prajna of their self-nature. Just as talking about food will not make you full, so, too, if you speak of emptiness you will not see your own nature in ten thousand ages. In the end, you will not have obtained any benefit. Good Knowing Advisors, Maha Prajna Paramita is a Sanskrit word which means ‘great wisdom which has arrived at the other shore.’ It must be practiced in the mind, and not just recited in words. When the mouth recites and the mind does not practice, it is like an illusion, a transformation, dew drops, or lightning. However, when the mouth recites and the mind practices, then mind and mouth are in mutual accord. One’s own original nature is Buddha; apart from the nature there is no other Buddha.

What is meant by Maha? Maha means ‘great.’ The capacity of the mind is vast and great like empty space, and has no boundaries. It is not square or round, great or small. Neither is it blue, yellow, red, white. It is not above or below, or long or short. It is without anger, without joy, without right, without wrong, without good, without evil, and it has no head or tail. All Buddha-lands are ultimately the same as empty space. The wonderful nature of worldly people is originally empty, and there is not a single dharma which can be obtained. The true emptiness of the self-nature is also like this. Good Knowing Advisors, do not listen to my explanation of emptiness and then become attached to emptiness.

The most important thing is to avoid becoming attached to emptiness. If you sit still with an empty mind you will become attached to undifferentiated emptiness. Good Knowing Advisors, The emptiness of the universe is able to contain the forms and shapes of the ten thousand things: the sun, moon, and stars; the mountains, rivers, and the great earth; the fountains, springs, streams, torrents, grasses, trees, thickets, and forests; good and bad people, good and bad dharmas, the heavens and the hells, all the great seas, Sumeru and all mountains; all are contained within emptiness. The emptiness of the nature of worldly men is also like this. Good Knowing Advisors, the ability of one's own nature to contain the ten thousand dharmas is what is meant by 'great.' The myriad dharmas are within the nature of all people. If you regard all people, the bad as well as the good, without grasping or rejecting, without producing a defiling attachment, your mind will be like empty space. Therefore, it is said to be 'great,' or 'Maha.'

Good Knowing Advisors, the mouth of the confused person speaks, but the mind of the wise person practices. There are deluded men who sit still with empty minds, vainly thinking of nothing and declaring that to be something great. One should not speak with these people because of their deviant views. Good Knowing Advisors, the capacity of the mind is vast and great, encompassing the Dharma realm. Its function is to understand clearly and distinctly. Its correct function is to know all. All is one; one is all. Coming and going freely, the mind's substance is unobstructed. That is Prajna. Good Knowing Advisors, all Prajna wisdom is produced from one's own nature; it does not enter from outside. Using the intellect correctly is called the natural function of one's true nature. One truth is all truth. The mind has the capacity for great things, and is not meant for practicing petty ways. Do not talk about emptiness with your mouth all day and in your mind fail to cultivate the conduct that you talk of. That would be like a common person calling himself the king of a country, which cannot be. People like that are not my disciples.

Good Knowing Advisors, what is meant by 'Prajna?' Prajna in our language means wisdom. Everywhere and at all times, in thought after thought, remain undeluded and practice wisdom constantly; that is Prajna conduct. Prajna is cut off by a single deluded thought. By one wise thought, Prajna is produced. Worldly men, deluded and confused,

do not see Prajna. They speak of it with their mouths, but their minds are always deluded. They constantly say of themselves, 'I cultivate Prajna!' And though they continually speak of emptiness, they are unaware of true emptiness. Prajna, without form or mark, is just the wisdom of the mind. If thus explained, this is Prajna wisdom.

What is meant by Paramita? It is a Sanskrit word which in our language means 'arrived at the other shore,' and is explained as 'apart from production and extinction.' When one is attached to states of being, production and extinction arise like waves. States of being, with no production or extinction, is like free flowing water. That is what is meant by 'the other shore.' Therefore, it is called 'Paramita.'

Good Knowing Advisors, deluded people recite with their mouths, but while they recite they live in falsehood and in error. When there is practice in every thought, that is the true nature. You should understand this dharma, which is the Prajna dharma; and cultivate this conduct, which is the Prajna conduct. Not to cultivate is to be a common person, but in a single thought of cultivation, you are equal to the Buddhas.

Good Knowing Advisors, common people are Buddhas and affliction is Bodhi. The deluded thoughts of the past are thoughts of a common person. Enlightened future thoughts are the thoughts of a Buddha. Past thoughts attached to states of being are afflictions. And, future thoughts separate from states of being are Bodhi.

Good Knowing Advisors, Maha Prajna Paramita is the most honored, the most supreme, the foremost. It does not stay; it does not come or go. All Buddhas of the three periods of time emerge from it. You should use great wisdom to destroy affliction, defilement and the five skandhic heaps. With such cultivation as that, you will certainly realize the Buddha Way, transforming the three poisons into morality, concentration, and wisdom.

Good Knowing Advisors, my Dharma-door produces 84,000 wisdom from the one Prajna. Why? Because worldly people have 84,000 kinds of defilement. In the absence of defilement, wisdom is always present since it is not separate from the self-nature. Understand this dharma is simply no-thought, no-remembrance, non-attachment and the non-production of falsehood and error. Use your own true-suchness nature and, by means of wisdom, contemplate and illuminate

all dharmas without grasping or rejecting them. That is to see one's own nature and realize the Buddha Way.

Good Knowing Advisors, if you wish to enter the extremely deep Dharma realm and the Prajna samadhi, you must cultivate the practice of Prajna. Hold and recite the 'Diamond Prajna Paramita Sutra' and that way you will see your own nature. You should know that the merit and virtue of this sutra is immeasurable, unbounded, and indescribable, as the Sutra text itself clearly states. This Dharma-door is the Superior Vehicle, that is taught to the people of great wisdom and superior faculties. When people of limited faculties and wisdom hear it, their minds give rise to doubt. Why is that? Take this example, the rains which the heavenly dragons shower on Jambudvipa. Cities and villages drift about in the flood like thorns and leaves. But if the rain falls on the great sea, its water neither increases nor decreases. If people of the Great Vehicle, the Most Superior Vehicle, hear the Diamond Sutra, their minds open up, awaken and understand. Then they know that their original nature itself possesses the wisdom of Prajna. Because they themselves use this wisdom constantly to contemplate and illuminate. And they do not rely on written words. Take for example, the rain does not come from the sky. The truth is that the dragons cause it to fall in order that all living beings, all plants and trees, all those with feeling and those without feeling may receive its moisture. In a hundred streams, it flows into the great sea and there unites in one substance. The wisdom of the Prajna of the original nature of living beings acts the same way.

Good Knowing Advisors, when people of limited faculties hear this Sudden Teaching, they are like the plants and trees with shallow roots which, washed away by the great rain, are unable to grow. But at the same time, the Prajna wisdom which people of limited faculties possess is fundamentally no different from the Prajna that men of great wisdom possess. Hearing this Dharma, why do they not become enlightened? It is because the obstacle of their deviant views is a formidable one and the root of their afflictions is deep. It is like when thick clouds cover the sun. If the wind does not blow, the sunlight will not be visible. 'Prajna' wisdom is itself neither great nor small. Living beings differ because their own minds are either confused or enlightened. Those of confused minds look outwardly to cultivate in search of the Buddha.

Not having awakened to their self-nature yet, they have small roots. When you become enlightened to the Sudden Teaching, you do not grasp onto the cultivation of external things. When your own mind constantly gives rise to right views, afflictions and defilement can never stain you. That is what is meant by seeing your own nature.

Good Knowing Advisors, the ability to cultivate the conduct of not dwelling inwardly or outwardly, of coming and going freely, of casting away the grasping mind, and of unobstructed penetration, is basically no different from the Prajna Sutra.

Good Knowing Advisors, all sutras and writings of the Great and Small Vehicles, the twelve divisions of sutras, have been devised for people and established based on the nature of wisdom. If there were no people, the ten thousand dharmas would not exist. Therefore you should know that all dharmas are originally postulated for people and all sutras are spoken for their sake. Some people are deluded and some are wise; the deluded are small people and the wise are great people. The deluded people question the wise and the wise people teach Dharma to the deluded people. When the deluded people suddenly awaken and understand, their minds open to enlightenment and, therefore they are no longer different from the wise.

Good knowing Advisors, unenlightened, the Buddha is a living being. At the time of a single enlightened thought, the living being is a Buddha. Therefore, you should know that the ten thousand dharmas exist totally within your own mind. Why don't you, from within your own mind, suddenly see the truth (true suchness) of your original nature. The Bodhisattva-Sila-Sutra says, 'Our fundamental self-nature is clear and pure.' If we recognize our own mind and see the nature, we shall perfect the Buddha Way. The Vimalakirti Nirdeśha Sutra says, 'Just then, you suddenly regain your original mind.'

Good Knowing Advisors, when I was with the High Master Jen, I was enlightened as soon as I heard his words and suddenly saw the true suchness (truth) of my own original nature. That is why I am spreading this method of teaching which leads students of the Way to become enlightened suddenly to Bodhi, as each contemplates his own mind and sees his own original nature. If you are unable to enlighten yourself, you must seek out a great Good Knowing Advisor, one who understands the Dharma of the Most Superior Vehicle and who will

direct you to the right road. Such a Good Knowing Advisor possesses great karmic conditions, which is to say that he will transform you, guide you and lead you to see your own nature. It is because of the Good Knowing Advisor that all wholesome Dharmas can arise. All the Buddhas of the three eras (periods of time), and the twelve divisions of Sutra texts as well, exist within the nature of people, that is originally complete within them. If you are unable to enlighten yourself, you should seek out the instruction of a Good Knowing Advisor who will lead you to see your nature. If you are one who is able to achieve self-enlightenment, you need not seek a teacher outside. If you insist that it is necessary to seek a Good Knowing Advisor in the hope of obtaining liberation, you are mistaken. Why? Within your own mind, there is self-enlightenment, which is a Good Knowing Advisor itself. But if you give rise to deviant confusion, false thoughts and perversions, though a Good Knowing Advisor outside of you instructs you, he cannot save you. If you give rise to genuine Prajna contemplation and illumination, in the space of an instant, all false thoughts are eliminated. If you recognize your self-nature, in a single moment of enlightenment, you will arrive at the level of Buddha.

Good Knowing Advisor, when you contemplate and illuminate with the wisdom, which brightly penetrates within and without, you recognize your original mind. The recognition of your original mind is the original liberation. The attainment of liberation is the Prajna Samadhi, thus no-thought. What is meant by 'no-thought?' No-thought means to view all dharmas with a mind undefiled by attachment. The function of the mind pervades all places but is nowhere attached. Merely purify your original mind to cause the six consciousnesses to go out the six gates, to be undefiled and unmixed among the six objects, to come and go freely and to penetrate without obstruction. That is the Prajna Samadhi, freedom and liberation, and it is called the practice of no-thought. Not thinking of the hundred things and constantly causing your thought to be cut off is called Dharma-bondage and is an extremist view.

Good Knowing Advisors, one who awakens to the no-thought dharma completely penetrates the ten thousand dharmas; one who awakens to the no-thought dharma sees all Buddha realms; one who awakens to the no-thought dharma arrives at the Buddha position.

Good Knowing Advisors, those of future generations who obtain my Dharma, should take up this Sudden Teaching. The Dharma door including those of like views and like practice should vow to receive and uphold it as if serving the Buddhas. To the end of their lives they should not retreat, and they will certainly enter the holy position. In this way, it should be transmitted from generation to generation. It is silently transmitted. Do not hide away the orthodox Dharma and do not transmit it to those of different views and different practice, who believe in other teachings, since it may harm them and ultimately be of no benefit. I fear that deluded people may misunderstand and slander this Dharma-door and, therefore will cut off their own nature, which possesses the seed of Buddhahood for hundreds of ages and thousands of lifetimes.

Good Knowing Advisors, I have a verse of no-mark, which you should all recite. Those at home and those who have left home should cultivate accordingly. If you do not cultivate it, memorizing it will be of no use. Listen to my verse:

“With speech and mind both understood,
Like the sun whose place is in space,
Just spread the ‘seeing-the-nature way’
Appear in the world to destroy false doctrines.

Dharma is neither sudden nor gradual,
Delusion and awakening are slow and quick
But deluded people cannot comprehend
This Dharma-door of seeing-the-nature.
Although it is said in ten thousand ways,
United, the principles return to one;
In the dark dwelling of defilements,
Always produce the sunlight of wisdom.

The deviant comes and affliction arrives,
The right comes and affliction goes.
The false and true both cast aside,
In clear purity the state of no residue is attained.

Bodhi is the original self-nature;

Giving rise to a thought is wrong;
 The pure mind is within the false:
 Only the right is without the three obstructions.

If people in the world practice the Way,
 They are not hindered by anything.
 By constantly seeing their own transgressions,
 They are in accord with the Way.

Each kind of form has its own way
 Without hindering one another;
 Leaving the Way to seek another way
 To the end of life is not to see the Way.

A frantic passage through a life,
 Will bring regret when it comes to its end.
 Should you wish for a vision of the true Way,
 Right practice is the Way.

If you don't have a mind for the Way,
 You walk in darkness blind to the Way;
 If you truly walk the Way,
 You are blind to the faults of the world.

If you attend to others' faults,
 Your fault-finding itself is wrong;
 Others' faults I do not treat as wrong;
 My faults are my own transgressions.

Simply cast out the mind that finds fault,
 Once cast away, troubles are gone;
 When hate and love don't block the mind,
 Stretch out both legs and then lie down.

If you hope and intend to transform others,
 You must perfect expedient means.
 Don't cause them to have doubts, and then

Their self-nature will appear.

The Buddhadharma is here in the world;
 Enlightenment is not apart from the world.
 To search for Bodhi apart from the world
 Is like looking for a hare with horns.

Right views are transcendental;
 Deviant views are all mundane.
 Deviant and right completely destroyed:
 The Bodhi nature appears spontaneously.

This verse is the Sudden Teaching,
 Also called the great Dharma boat.
 Hear in confusion, pass through ages,
 In an instant's space, enlightenment.

The Master said further, "In the Ta Fan Temple I have just now spoken the Sudden Teaching, making the universal vow that all living beings of the Dharma realm will see their nature and realize Buddhahood as they hear these words." Then among Magistrate Wei and the officials, Taoists and lay people who heard what the Master said, there were none who did not awaken. Together they made obeisance and exclaimed with delight, "Good indeed! Who would have thought that in Ling Nan a Buddha would appear in the world."

Chapter Three—Doubts & Questions: One day, Magistrate Wei arranged a great vegetarian feast on behalf of the Master. After the meal, the Magistrate asked the Master to take his seat. Together with officials, scholars, and the assembly, he bowed reverently and asked, "Your disciple has heard the High Master explain the Dharma. It is truly inconceivable. I now have a few doubts and hope you will be compassionate and resolve them for me."

The Master said, "If you have any doubts, please ask me and I will explain."

The Honorable Wei said, "Is not what the Master speaks the same as the doctrine of Bodhidharma?"

The Master replied, "It is."

The Magistrate asked, “Your disciple has heard that when Bodhidharma first instructed the Emperor Wu of Liang, the Emperor asked him, “All my life I have built temples, given sanction to the Sangha, practiced giving, and arranged vegetarian feasts. What merit and virtue have I gained?” Bodhidharma said, “There was actually no merit and virtue.” I, your disciple, have not yet understood this principle and hope that the High Master will explain it.

The Master said, “There actually was no merit and virtue, though not doubt the words of the sage. Emperor Wu of Liang’s mind was wrong; he did not know the right Dharma. Building temples and giving sanction to the Sangha, practicing giving and arranging vegetarian feasts is called ‘seeking blessings.’ Do not mistake blessings for merit and virtue. Merit and virtue are in the Dharma body, not in the cultivation of blessings.” The Master further said, “Seeing your own nature is merit, and equanimity is virtue. To be unobstructed in every thought, constantly seeing the true, real, wonderful function of your original nature is called merit and virtue. Inner humility is merit and the outer practice of reverence is virtue. Your self-nature establishing the ten thousand dharmas is merit and the mind-substance separate from thought is virtue. Not being separate from the self-nature is merit, and the correct use of the undefiled self-nature is virtue. If you seek the merit and virtue of the Dharma body, simply act according to these principles, for this is true merit and virtue. Those who cultivate merit in their thoughts, do not slight others but always respect them. Those who slight others and do not cut off the ‘me and mine’ are without merit. The vain and unreal self-nature is without virtue, because of the ‘me and mine,’ because of the greatness of the ‘self,’ and because of the constant slighting of others. Good Knowing Advisors, continuity of thought is merit; the mind practicing equality and directness is virtue. Self-cultivation of one’s nature is merit and self-cultivation of the body is virtue. Good Knowing Advisors, merit and virtue should be seen within one’s own nature, not sought through giving and making offerings. That is the difference between blessings and merit and virtue. Emperor Wu did not know the true principle. Our Patriarch was not in error.”

The Magistrate asked further, “Your disciple has often seen the Sangha and laity reciting ‘Amitabha Buddha,’ vowing to be reborn in

the West. Will the High Master please tell me if they will obtain rebirth there and, so, dispel my doubts?"

The Master said, "Magistrate, listen well. Hui Neng will explain it for you. When the World Honored One was in Shravasti City, he spoke of being led to rebirth in the West. The Sutra text clearly states, 'it is not far from here.' If we discuss its appearance, it is 108,000 miles away but in immediate terms, it is explained as far distant for those of inferior roots and as nearby for those of superior wisdom. There are two kinds of people, not two kinds of Dharma. Enlightenment and confusion differ, and seeing can be quick or slow. The deluded person recites the Buddha's name, seeking rebirth there, while the enlightened person purifies his own mind. Therefore, the Buddha said, 'As the mind is purified, the Buddhaland is purified.' Magistrate, if the person of the East merely purifies his mind, he is without offense. Even though one may be of the West, if his mind is impure, he is at fault. The person of the East commits offenses and recites the Buddha's name, seeking rebirth in the West. When the person of the West commits offenses and recites the Buddha's name, in what country does he seek rebirth? Common, deluded people do not understand their self-nature and do not know that the Pure Land is within themselves. Therefore, they make vows for the East and vows for the West. To enlightened people, all places are the same. As the Buddha said, 'In whatever place one dwells, there is constant peace and happiness.' Magistrate, if the mind-ground is only without unwholesomeness, the West is not far from here. If one harbors unwholesome thoughts, one may recite the Buddha's name but it will be difficult to attain that rebirth. Good Knowing Advisors, I now exhort you all to get rid of the ten evils first and you will have walked one hundred thousand miles. Next get rid of the eight deviations and you will have gone eight thousand miles. If in every thought you see your own nature, always practice impartiality and straightforwardness, you will arrive in a finger-snap and see Amitabha. Magistrate, merely practice the ten wholesome acts; then what need will there be for you to vow to be reborn there? But if you do not rid the mind of the ten evils, what Buddha will come to welcome you? If you become enlightened to the sudden dharma of the unproduced, you will see the West in an instant. Unenlightened, you may recite the Buddha's name seeking rebirth but since the road is so

long, how can you traverse it? Hui-Neng will move to the West here in the space of an instant so that you may see it right before your eyes. Do you wish to see it?"

The entire assembly bowed and said, "If we could see it here, what need would there be to vow to be reborn there? Please, High Master, be compassionate and make the West appear so that we might see it."

The Master said, "Great assembly, the worldly person's own physical body is the city, and the eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body are the gates. Outside there are five gates and inside there is a gate of the mind. The mind is the 'ground' and one's nature is the 'king.' The 'king' dwells on the mind 'ground.' When the nature is present, the king is present but when the nature is absent, there is no king. When the nature is present, the body and mind remain, but when the nature is absent, the body and mind are destroyed. The Buddha is made within the self-nature. Do not seek outside the body. Confused, the self-nature is a living being: enlightened, it is a Buddha. 'Kindness and compassion' are Avalokitesvara and 'sympathetic joy and giving' are Mahasthamaprapta. 'Purification' is Sakyamuni, and 'equanimity and directness' are Amitabha. 'Others and self' are Mount Sumeru and 'deviant thoughts' are the ocean water. 'Afflictions' are the waves. 'Cruelty' is an evil dragon. 'Empty falseness' is ghosts and spirits. 'Defilement' is fish and turtles, 'greed and hatred' are hell, and 'delusion' is animals. Good Knowing Advisors, always practice the ten good practices and the heavens can easily be reached. Get rid of others and self, and Mount Sumeru topples. Do away with deviant thought, and the ocean waters dry up. Without defilements, the waves cease. End cruelty and there are no fish or dragons. The Tathagata of the enlightened nature is on your own mind-ground, emitting a great bright light which outwardly illuminates and purifies the six gates and breaks through the six desire-heavens. Inwardly, it illuminates the self-nature and casts out the three poisons. The hells and all such offenses are destroyed at once. Inwardly and outwardly, there is a bright penetration. This is no different from the West. But if you do not cultivate, how can you go there?"

On hearing this speech, the members of the great assembly clearly saw their own natures. They bowed together and exclaimed, "This is

indeed good! May all living beings of the Dharma Realm who have heard this awaken at once and understand.”

The Master said, “Good Knowing Advisors, if you wish to cultivate, you may do so at home. You need not be in a monastery. If you live at home and practice, you are like the person of the East, whose mind is good. If you dwell in a monastery but do not cultivate, you are like the person of the West, whose mind is evil. Merely purify your mind; that is the ‘West’ of your self-nature.”

The Honorable Wei asked further, “How should those at home cultivate? Please instruct us.”

The Master said, “I have composed a markless verse for the great assembly. Merely rely on it to cultivate and you will be as if always by my side. If you cut your hair and leave home but do not cultivate, it will be of no benefit in pursuing the Way. The verse runs:

“The mind made straight, why toil following rules?

The practice sure, of what use is Dhyana meditation?

Filial deeds support the father and mother.

Right conduct is in harmony with those above and below.

Deference: the honored and lowly in accord with each other.

Patience: no rumors of the evils of the crowd.

If drilling wood can spin smoke into fire,

A red-petalled lotus can surely spring from mud.

Good medicine is bitter to the taste.

Words hard against the ear must be good advice.

Correcting failings gives birth to wisdom.

Guarded errors expose a petty mind.

Persist daily in just, benevolent deeds.

Charity is not the means to attain the way.

Search out Bodhi only in the mind.

Why toil outside in search of the profound?

Just as you hear these words, so practice:

Heavens then appears, right before your eyes.

The Master continued, “Good Knowing Advisors, you in this assembly should cultivate according to this verse to see and make contact with your self-nature and to realize the Buddha Way directly. The Dharma does not wait. The assembly may now disperse. I shall now return to Ts’ao-His. If you have questions, come quickly and ask.”

At that time, Magistrate Wei, the officials, the good men and faithful women of the assembly all attained understanding, faithfully accepted and honored the teaching and, therefore, practiced it.

The Fourth Chapter—Concentration & Wisdom: The Master instructed the assembly: “Good Knowing Advisors, this Dharma-door of mine has concentration and wisdom as its foundation. Great assembly, do not be confused and say that concentration and wisdom are different. Concentration and wisdom are one substance, not two. Concentration is the substance of wisdom, and wisdom is the function of concentration. Where there is wisdom, concentration is in the wisdom. Where there is concentration, wisdom is in the concentration. If you understand this principle, you understand the balanced study of concentration and wisdom. Students of the Way, do not say that first there is concentration, which produces wisdom, or that first there is wisdom, which produces concentration: do not say that the two are different. To hold this view implies a duality of dharma. If your speech is good, but your mind is not, then concentration and wisdom are useless because they are not equal. If mind and speech are both good, the inner and outer are alike, and concentration and wisdom are equal. Self-enlightenment, cultivation, and practice are not a matter for debate. If you debate which comes first, then you are similar to a confused man who does not cut off ideas of victory and defeat, but magnifies the notion of self and dharmas, and does not disassociate himself from the four makrs.

Good Knowing Advisors, what are concentration and wisdom like? They are like a lamp and its light. With the lamp, there is light. Without the lamp, there is darkness. The lamp is the substance of the light and the light is the function of the lamp. Although there are two names, there is one fundamental substance. The dharma of concentration and wisdom is also thus.”

The Master instructed the assembly: “Good Knowing Advisors, the Single Conduct Samadhi is the constant practice of maintaining a direct, straightforward mind in all places, whether one is walking, standing, sitting or lying down. As the Vimalakirti Sutra says, ‘The straight mind is the Bodhimandala; the straight mind is the Pure Land.’ Do not speak of straightness with the mouth only, while the mind and practice are crooked nor speak of the Single Conduct Samadhi without

maintaining a straight mind. Simply practice keeping a straight mind and have no attachment to any dharma. The confused person is attached to the marks of dharmas, while holding to the Single Conduct Samadhi and saying, 'I sit unmoving and falseness does not arise in my mind. That is the Single Conduct Samadhi.' Such an interpretation serves to make him insensate and obstructs the causes and conditions for attaining the Way.

Good Knowing Advisors, the Way must penetrate and flow. How can it be impeded? If the mind does not dwell in dharmas, the way will penetrate and flow. The mind that dwells in dharmas is in self-bondage. To say that sitting unmoving is correct is to be like Sariputra who sat quietly in the forest but was scolded by Vimalakirti. Good Knowing Advisors, there are those who teach people to sit looking at the mind and contemplating stillness, without moving or arising. They claimed that it has merit. Confused men, not understanding, easily become attached and go insane. There are many such people. Therefore, you should know that teaching of this kind is a greater error."

The Master instructed the assembly: "Good Knowing Advisors, the right teaching is basically without a division into 'sudden' and 'gradual.' People's natures themselves are sharp or dull. When the confused person who gradually cultivates and the enlightened person who suddenly connects each recognize the original mind and see the original nature, they are no different. Therefore, the terms sudden and gradual are shown to be false names. Good Knowing Advisors, this Dharma-door of mine, from the past onwards, has been established the first with no-thought as its doctrine, no-mark as its substance, and no-dwelling as its basis. No-mark means to be apart from marks while in the midst of marks. No-thought means to be without thought while in the midst of thought. No-dwelling is the basic nature of human beings. In the world of good and evil, attractiveness and ugliness, friendliness and hostility, when faced with language which is offensive, critical, or argumentative, you should treat it all as empty and have no thought of revenge. In every thought, do not think of former states. If past, present, and future thoughts succeed one another without interruption, it is bondage. Not to dwell in dharmas from thought to thought is to be free from bondage. That is to take no-dwelling as the basis. Good Knowing Advisors, to be separate from all outward marks is called 'no-

mark.’ The ability to be separate from marks is the purity of the Dharma’s substance. It is to take no-mark as the substance. Good Knowing Advisors, the non-defilement of the mind in all states is called ‘no-thought.’ In your thoughts you should always be separate from states; do not give rise to thought about them. If you merely do not think of hundred things, and so completely rid yourself of thought, then as the last thought ceases, you die and undergo rebirth in another place. That is a great mistake, of which students of the Way should take heed. To misinterpret the Dharma and make a mistake yourself might be acceptable but to exhort others to do the same is unacceptable. In your own confusion you do not see, and, moreover, you slander the Buddha's Sutras. Therefore, no-thought is to be established as the doctrine. Good Knowing Advisors, why is no-thought established as the doctrine? Because there are confused people who speak of seeing their own nature, and yet they produce thought with regard to states. Their thoughts cause deviant views to arise, and from that, all defilement and false thinking are created. Originally, not one single dharma can be obtained in the self-nature. If there is something to attain, or false talk of misfortune and blessing, that is just defilement and deviant views. Therefore, this Dharma-door establishes no-thought as its doctrine. Good Knowing Advisors, ‘No’ means no what? ‘Thought’ means thought of what? ‘No’ means two marks, no thought of defilement. ‘Thought’ means thought of the original nature of True Suchness. True Suchness is the substance of thought and thought is the function of True Suchness. The True Suchness self-nature gives rise to thought. It is not the eye, ear, nose, or tongue which can think. The True Suchness possesses a nature and therefore gives rise to thought. Without True Suchness, the eye, ear, forms, and sounds immediately go bad. Good Knowing Advisors, the True Suchness self-nature gives rise to thought, and the six faculties, although they see, hear, feel, and know, are not defiled by the ten thousand states. Your true nature is eternally independent. Therefore, the Vimalakirti Sutra says, ‘If one is well able to discriminate all dharma marks, then, in the primary meaning, one does not move.’”

The Fifth Chapter—Sitting in Meditation: The Master instructed the assembly: “The door of sitting in Ch’an consists fundamentally of attaching oneself neither to the mind nor to purity; it is not non-

movement. One might speak of becoming attached to the mind, and yet the mind is fundamentally false. You should know that the mind is like an illusion and, therefore, there is nothing to which you can become attached. One might say that to practice Ch'an is to attach oneself to purity, yet the nature of people is basically pure. It is because of false thinking that the True Suchness is obscured. Simply have no false thinking, and the nature will be pure of itself. If attachment to purity arises in your mind, a deluded idea of purity will result. What is delusory does not exist, and the attachment is false. Purity has no form or mark and yet there are those who set up the mark of purity as an achievement. Those with this view obstruct their own original nature and become bound by purity."

Good Knowing Advisors, one who cultivates non-movement does not notice whether other people are right or wrong, good or bad, or whether they have other faults. That is the non-movement of the self-nature. Good Knowing Advisors, although the body of the confused person may not move, as soon as he opens his mouth he speaks of what is right and wrong about others, of their good points and shortcomings and so, he turns his back on the way. Attachment to the mind and attachment to purity are obstructions to the Way."

The Master instructed the assembly, "Good Knowing Advisors, what is meant by 'sitting in Ch'an?' In this obstructed and unimpeded Dharma-door, the mind's thoughts do not arise with respect to any good or evil external state. That is what 'sitting' is. To see the unmoving self-nature inwardly is Ch'an. Good Knowing Advisors, what is meant by Ch'an concentration? Being separate from external mark is 'Ch'an.' Not being confused inwardly is 'concentration.' If you become attached to external marks, your mind will be confused inwardly. If you are separate from external marks, inwardly your mind will be unconfused. The original nature is naturally pure, in a natural state of concentration. Confusion arises merely because states are seen and attended to. If the mind remains unconfused when any state is encountered, that is true concentration. Good Knowing Advisors, being separate from all external marks is Ch'an and being inwardly unconfused is concentration. External Ch'an and inward concentration are Ch'an concentration. The Vimalakirti Sutra says, 'Just then, suddenly return and regain the original mind.' The Bodhisattva-Sila Sutra says, 'Our

basic nature is pure of itself.’ Good Knowing Advisors, in every thought, see your own clear and pure original nature. Cultivate, practice, realize the Buddha Way.”

The Sixth Chapter—Repentance and Reform: Seeing the scholars and common people of Kuang-Chou and Shao-Kuan and the four directions assembled on the mountain to hear the Dharma, the Great Master took his seat and spoke to the assembly saying: “Come, each of you, Good Knowing Advisors! This work must begin within your self-nature. At all times, in every thought, purify your mind, cultivate your own conduct, see your own Dharm-body and the Buddha of your own mind. Take yourself across; discipline yourself. Only then will your coming here have not been in vain. You have come from afar to attend this gathering because we have karmic affinities in common. Now all of you kneel and I will first transmit to you the fivefold Dharma-body refuge of the self-nature, and then the markless repentance and reform.”

The assembly knelt and the Master said, “The first is the morality-refuge, which is simply your own mind when free from error, evil, jealousy, greed, hatred and hostility. The second is the concentration-refuge, which is just your own mind and does not become confused when seeing the marks of all good and evil conditions. The third is the wisdom-refuge, which is simply your own mind when it is unobstructed and when it constantly uses wisdom to contemplate and illuminate the self-nature, when it does no evil, does good without becoming attached and, is respectful of superior, considerate of inferiors, and sympathetic towards orphans and widows. The fourth is the liberation-refuge, which is simply your own mind independent of conditions, not thinking of good or evil, free and unobstructed. The fifth is the refuge of knowledge and views, which is simply your own mind when it is independent of good and evil conditions and when it does not dwell in emptiness or cling to stillness. You should then study this in detail, listen a great deal, recognize your original mind and penetrate the true principle of all the Buddhas. You should welcome and be in harmony with living creatures; the unchanging true nature. Good Knowing Advisors, the incense of these refuges perfumes each of you within. Do not seek outside. I will now transmit to you the markless repentance and reform to destroy the offensive actions done within the three

periods of time and to purify the three karmas. Good Knowing Advisors, repeat after me: “May this disciple be, in past, present, and future thought, in every thought, unstained by stupidity and confusion. May it be wiped away at once and never arise again. May this disciple be, in past, present, and future thought, in every thought, unstained by ignorance and deceit. Now I Completely repent of and reform all bad actions done in the past out of arrogance and deceit and other such offenses. May their effects be wiped away at once and may never be perpetrated again. May this disciple be in past, present, and future thought, in every thought unstained by jealousy. Now I completely repent and reform all bad actions done in the past out of jealousy and other such offenses. May they be wiped away at once and never arise again. Good Knowing Advisors, the above has been the markless repentance and reform. What is repentance and what is reform? Repentance is to repent of past errors, to repent so completely of all bad actions done in the past out of stupidity, confusion, arrogance, deceit, jealousy, and other such offenses, that they never arise again. Reform is to refrain from such transgressions in the future. Awakening and cutting off such offenses completely and never committing them again is called repentance and reform. Common people, stupid and confused, know only how to repent of former errors and do not know how to reform and refrain from transgressions in the future. Because they do not reform, their former errors are not wiped away, and they will occur in the future. If former errors are not wiped away and transgressions are again committed, how can that be called repentance and reform?”

Good Knowing Advisors, as you have repented and reformed, I will now teach you to make the four all-encompassing vows:

I vow to take across the limitless living beings of my own mind.

I vow to cut off the inexhaustible afflictions of my own mind.

I vow to study the immeasurable Dharma-doors of my own nature.

I vow to realize the supreme Buddha Way of my own nature.

Good Knowing Advisors, did all of you not just say, “I vow to take across the limitless beings? What does it mean? You should remember that it is not Hui-Neng who takes them across. Good Knowing Advisors, the ‘living beings’ within your mind are deviant and confused thoughts, deceitful and false thoughts, unwholesome thoughts, jealous

thoughts, vicious thoughts: and these thoughts are 'living beings' The self-nature of each one of them must take itself across. That is true crossing over. What is meant by 'the self-nature taking across?' It is to take across by means of right views the living beings of deviant views, affliction, and delusion within your own mind. Once you have right views, use Prajna Wisdom to destroy the living beings of delusion, confusion, and falsehood. Each one takes itself across. Enlightenment takes confusion across, wisdom takes delusion across, goodness takes evil across. Such crossing over is a true crossing. Further, 'I vow to cut off the inexhaustible afflictions.' That is to use the Prajna Wisdom of your own self-nature to cast out the vain and false thoughts in your mind. Further, 'I vow to study the immeasurable Dharma-door.' You must see your own nature and always practice the right Dharma. That is true study. Further, 'I vow to realize the supreme Buddha Way,' and with humble mind to always practice the true and proper way. Separate yourself from both confusion and enlightenment, and always give rise to Prajna. When you cast out the true and the false, you see your nature and realize the Buddha-way at the very moment it is spoken of. Always be mindful; cultivate the Dharma that possesses the power of this vow."

Good Knowing Advisors, now that you have made the four all-encompassing vows, I will transmit the precepts of the triple refuge that has no mark. Good Knowing Advisors, take refuge with the enlightened, the honored, the doubly complete. Take refuge with the right, the honored, that is apart from desire. Take refuge with the pure, the honored among the multitudes. 'From this day forward, we call enlightenment our master and will never again take refuge with deviant demons or outside religions. We constantly enlighten ourselves by means of the Triple Jewel of our own self-nature.' Good Knowing Advisors, I exhort you all to take refuge with the Triple Jewel of your own nature: the Buddha, which is enlightenment; the Dharma, which is right; and the Sangha, which is pure. When your mind takes refuge with enlightenment, deviant confusion does not arise. Desire decreases, so that you know contentment and are able to keep away from wealth and from the opposite sex. That is called the honored, the doubly complete. When your mind takes refuge with what is right, there are no deviant views in any of your thoughts because there are no deviant views;

there is no self, other, arrogance, greed, love or attachment. That is called the honored that is apart from desire. When your own mind takes refuge with the pure, your self-nature is not stained by attachment to any state of defilement, desire or love. That is called the honored among the multitudes. If you cultivate this practice, you take refuge with yourself. Common people do not understand that, and so, from morning to night, they take the triple-refuge precepts. They say they take refuge with the Buddha, but where is the Buddha? If they cannot see the Buddha, how can they return to him? Their talk is absurd. Good Knowing Advisors, each of you examine yourselves. Do not make wrong use of the mind. The Avatamsaka Sutra clearly states that you should take refuge with your own Buddha, not with some other Buddha. If you do not take refuge with the Buddha in yourself, there is no one you can rely on. Now that you are self-awakened, you should each take refuge with the Triple Jewel of your own mind. Within yourself, regulate your mind and nature; outside yourself, respect others. That is to take refuge with yourself.”

Good Knowing Advisors, now that you have taken refuge with the Triple Jewel, you should listen carefully while I explain to you the three bodies of a single substance, the self-nature of the Buddha, so that you may see the three bodies and become completely enlightened to your own self-nature. Repeat after me:

I take refuge with the clear, pure Dharma-body of the Buddha within my own body.

I take refuge with the hundred thousand myriad Transformation-bodies of the Buddha within my own body.

I take refuge with the complete and full Reward-body of the Buddha within my own body.

Good Knowing Advisors, the form-body is an inn; it cannot be returned to. The three bodies of the Buddha exist within the self-nature of worldly people but, because they are confused, they do not see the nature within them and so, seek the three bodies of the Tathagata outside themselves. They do not see that the three bodies of the Buddha are within their own bodies. Listen to what I say, for it can cause you to see the three bodies of your own self-nature within your own body. The three bodies of the Buddha arise from your own self-nature and are not obtained from outside. What is the clear pure

Dharma-body Buddha? The worldly person's nature is basically clear and pure and, the ten thousand dharmas are produced from it. The thought of evil produces evil actions and the thought of good produces good actions. Thus, all dharmas exist within self-nature. This is like the sky which is always clear, and the sun and moon which are always bright, so that if they are obscured by floating clouds, it is bright above the clouds and dark below them. But if the wind suddenly blows and scatters the clouds, there is brightness above and below, and the myriad forms appear. The worldly person's nature constantly drifts like those clouds in the sky. Good Knowing Advisors, intelligence is like the sun and wisdom is like the moon. Intelligence and wisdom are constantly bright but, if you are attached to external states, the floating clouds of false thought cover the self-nature so that it cannot shine. If you meet a Good Knowing Advisor, if you listen to the true and right Dharma and cast out your own confusion and falseness, then inside and out there will be penetrating brightness, and within the self-nature all the ten thousand dharmas will appear. That is how it is with those who see their own nature. It is called the clear, pure Dharma-body of the Buddha.”

Good Knowing Advisors, when your own mind takes refuge with your self-nature, it takes refuge with the true Buddha. To take refuge is to rid your self-nature of ego-centered and unwholesome thoughts as well as jealousy, obsequiousness, deceitfulness, contempt, pride, conceit, and deviant views, and all other unwholesome tendencies whenever they arise. To take refuge is to be always aware of your own transgressions and never to speak of other people's good or bad traits. Always to be humble and polite is to have penetrated to the self-nature without any obstacle. That is taking refuge.”

What is the perfect, full Reward-body of the Buddha? Just as one lamp can dispense the darkness of a thousand years, one thought of wisdom can destroy ten thousand years of delusion. Do not think of the past; it is gone and can never be recovered. Instead think always of the future and in every thought, perfect and clear, see your own original nature. Although good and evil differ, the original nature is non-dual. That non-dual nature is the real nature. Undefined by either good or evil, it is the perfect, full Reward-body of the Buddha. One evil thought arising from the self-nature destroys ten thousand aeons' worth of good

karma. One good thought arising from the self-nature ends evils as numerous as the sand-grains in the Ganges River. To reach the unsurpassed Bodhi directly, see it for yourself in every thought and do not lose the original thought. That is the Reward-body of the Buddha.”

Good Knowing Advisors, the Dharma body of the Buddha is basically complete. To see your own nature in every thought is the Reward body of the Buddha. When the Reward body thinks and calculates, it is the Transformation body of the Buddha. Awaken and cultivate by your own efforts the merit and virtue of your self-nature. That is truly taking refuge. The skin and flesh of the physical body are like an inn to which you cannot return. Simply awaken to the three bodies of your self-nature and you will understand the self-nature Buddha. I have a verse without marks. If you can recite and memorize it, it will wipe away accumulated aeons of confusion and offenses as soon as the words are spoken. The verse runs:

A confused person will foster blessings, but not cultivate the Way
And say, “To practice for the blessings is practice of the way.”

While giving and making offerings
bring blessings without limit,
It is in the mind that the three evils
have their origins.

By seeking blessings you may wish
To obliterate offenses
But in the future, though you are
blessed, offenses still remain.

You ought to simply strike the evil
Conditions from your mind
By true repentance and reform
Within your own self-nature.

A sudden awakening: the true repentance and
reform of the Great Vehicle;
You must cast out the deviant, and
practice the right, to be without offense.

To study the Way, always look
 within your own self-nature;
 You are then the same in kind
 And lineage as all Buddhas.

Our Patriarch passed along only
 This Sudden Teaching,
 Wishing that all might see the nature
 And be of one substance.

In the future if you wish
 To find the Dharma-body,
 Detach yourself from Dharma marks
 And inwardly wash the mind.

Strive to see it for yourself
 And do not waste your time,
 For when the final thought has stopped
 Your life comes to an end.

Enlightenment to the Great Vehicle
 You can see your nature;
 So reverently join your palms
 And seek it with all your heart.

The Master said, “Good Knowing Advisors, all of you should take up this verse and cultivate according to it. If you see your nature at the moment these words are spoken, even if we are a thousand miles apart you will always be by my side. If you do not awaken at the moment of speaking, then, though face to face, we are a thousand miles apart, so why did you bother to come from so far? Take care of yourselves and go well.”

The united assembly heard this Dharma and there were none who did not awaken. They received it with delight and practiced in accord with it.

The Seventh Chapter—Opportunities & Conditions: The Master obtained the Dharma at Huang-Mei and returned to Ts’ao-Hou Village

in Shao-Chou, where no one knew him. But Liu-Chih-Liao, a scholar, received him with great courtesy. Chih-Liao's aunt, Bhikshuni Wu-Chin-Tsang, constantly recited the Mahaparinirvana Sutra. When the Master heard it, he instantly grasped its wonderful principle and explained it to her. The bhikshuni then held out a scroll and asked about some characters. The Master said, "I cannot read; please ask about the meaning."

"If you cannot even read, how can you understand the meaning?" asked the Bhikshuni.

The Master replied, "The subtle meaning of all Buddhas is not based on language."

The Bhikshuni was startled, and she announced to all the elders and virtuous ones in the village: "Here is a gentleman who possesses the way. We should ask him to stay and receive our offerings." Ts'ao-Shu-Liang, great-grandson of the Marquis Wu of the Wei dynasty, came rushing to pay homage, along with the people of the village. At that time, the pure dwellings of the ancient Pao-Lin Temple, which had been destroyed by war and fire at the end of the Sui dynasty, were rebuilt on their old foundation. The Master was invited to stay and soon the temple became a revered place. He dwelt there a little over nine months when he was once again pursued by evil men. The Master hid in the mountain in the front of the temple, and when they set fire to the brush and trees, he escaped by crawling into a cave to hide. The rock still bears the imprints of the Master's knees and of his robe where he sat in lotus posture. Because of this it is called 'The Rock of Refuge.' Remembering the Fifth Patriarch's instructions to stop at Huai and hide at Hui, he went to conceal himself in those two cities.

When Bhikshu Fa-Hai of Ch'u-Ch'iang city in Shao-Chou first called on the Patriarch, he asked, "Will you please instruct me on the sentence, 'Mind is Buddha'?"

The Master said, "When one preceding thoughts are not produced, this is mind; when one's subsequent thoughts are not extinguished, this is Buddha. The setting up of marks is mind, and separation from them is Buddha. Were I to explain it fully, I would not finish before the end of the present age." Listen to my verse:

"When the mind is called wisdom,
Then the Buddha is called concentration.

When concentration and wisdom are equal.
The intellect is pure.

Understand this Dharma teaching
By practicing with your own nature.
The function is basically unproduced;
It is right to cultivate both.”

At these words, Fa-Hai was enlightened and spoke a verse in praise:

“This mind is basically Buddha;
By not understanding I disgrace myself.
I know the cause of concentration and wisdom
Is to cultivate both and separate
myself From all things.”

Bhikshu Fa-Ta of Hung-Chou left home at age seven and constantly recited the Dharma Flower Sutra, but when he came to bow before the Patriarch, his head did not touch the ground. The Master scolded him, saying, “If you do not touch the ground, isn’t it better not to bow? There must be something on your mind. What do you practice?”

“I have recited the Dharma Flower Sutra over three thousand times,” he replied.

The Master said, “I don’t care if you have recited it ten thousand times. If you understood the Sutra’s meaning, you would not be so overbearing, and you could walk along with me. You have failed in your work and do not recognize your error. Listen to my verse:

“As bowing is basically to cut off arrogance,
Why don’t you touch your head to the ground?
When you possess an ego, offenses arise,
but forgetting merit brings supreme blessings.”

The Master asked further, “What is your name?”

“Fa-Ta,” he replied.

The Master said, “Your name means ‘Dharma Penetration,’ but what dharma have you penetrated?” The Master then spoke a verse:

“Your name means Dharma Penetration,

And you earnestly recite without pause to rest. Recitation is merely sound, but one who understands his mind is called a Bodhisattva.

Now, because of your karmic conditions, I will explain it to you:
 Believe only that the Buddha is without words,
 And the lotus blossom will bloom from your mouth.”

Hearing the verse, Fa-Ta was remorseful and he said, “From now on I will respect everyone. Your disciple recites the Dharma Flower Sutra but, has not yet understood its meaning. His mind often has doubts. High Master, your wisdom is vast and great. Will you please explain the general meaning of the Sutra for me?”

The Master said, “Dharma Penetration, the Dharma is extremely penetrating but, your mind does not penetrate it. There is basically nothing doubtful in the Sutra. The doubts are in your own mind. You recite this Sutra but what do you think its teaching is?”

Fa-Ta said, “This student’s faculties are dull and dim. Since I have only recited it by heart, how could I understand its doctrine?”

The Master said, “I cannot read, but if you take the Sutra and read it once, I will explain it to you.”

Fa-Ta recited loudly until he came to the ‘Analogies Chapter.’ The Master said, “Stop! This Sutra fundamentally is based on the principle underlying the causes and conditions of the Buddha’s appearance in the world. None of the analogies spoken go beyond that. What are the causes and conditions? The Sutra says, ‘All Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, appear in the world for the causes and conditions of the One Important Matter.’ The One Important Matter is the knowledge and vision of the Buddha. Worldly people, deluded by external world, attach themselves to marks, and deluded by their inner world, they attach themselves to emptiness.

If you can live among marks and yet be separate from it, then you will be confused by neither the internal nor the external. If you awaken to this Dharma, in one moment your mind will open to enlightenment. The knowledge and vision of the Buddha is simply that. The Buddha is enlightenment. There are four divisions:

- Opening to the enlightened knowledge and vision;
- Demonstrating the enlightened knowledge and vision;
- Awakening to the enlightened knowledge and vision; and
- Entering the enlightened knowledge and vision.

If you listen to the opening and demonstrating of the Dharma, you can easily awaken and enter. That is the enlightened knowledge and

vision, the original true nature becoming manifested. Be careful not to misinterpret the Sutra by thinking that the opening, demonstrating, awakening, and entering of which it speaks is the Buddha's knowledge and vision and that we have no share in it. To explain it that way would be to slander the Sutra and defame the Buddha. Since he is already a Buddha, perfect in knowledge and vision, what is the use of his opening to it again? You should now believe that the Buddha's knowledge and vision is simply your own mind, for there is no other Buddha. But, because living beings cover their brilliance with greed, and their love with states of defilement; external conditions and inner disturbance make slaves of them. That troubles the World-Honored One to rise from Samadhi, and with various reproaches and expedients, he exhorts living beings to stop and rest, not to seek outside themselves, and to make themselves the same as he is. That is called 'Opening the knowledge and vision of the Buddha.' I, too, am always exhorting all people to open to the knowledge and vision of the Buddha within their own minds. The mind of worldly people are deviant. Confused and deluded, they commit offenses. Their speech may be good, but their minds are evil. They are greedy, hateful, envious, given to flattery, deceit and arrogance. They oppress one another and harm living creatures, thus, they open not the knowledge and vision of Buddha but that of living beings. If you can with an upright mind constantly bring forth wisdom, contemplating and illuminating your own mind, and if you can practice the good and refrain from evil, you, yourself will open to the knowledge and vision of the Buddha. In every thought you should open up to the knowledge and vision of the Buddha; do not open up to the knowledge and vision of living beings. To be open to the knowledge and vision of the Buddha is transcendental; to be open to the knowledge and vision of living beings is mundane. If you exert yourself in recitation, clinging to it as a meritorious exercise, how does that make you different from a yak who loves his own tail?"

Fa-Ta said, "If this is so, then I need only to understand the meaning and need not to exert myself in reciting the Sutra. Isn't that correct?"

The Master replied, "What fault does the Sutra have that would stop you from reciting it? Confusion and enlightenment are in you. Loss

or gain comes from yourself. If your mouth recites and your mind practices, you 'turn' the Sutra, but if your mouth recites and your mind does not practice, the Sutra 'turns' you. Listen to my verse:

“When the mind is confused, the Dharma Flower turns it.
The enlightened mind will turn the Dharma Flower.

Reciting the Sutra so long without understanding
Has made you an enemy of its meaning.

Without a thought your recitation is right.
With thought, your recitation is wrong.

With no 'with' and no 'without'
You may ride forever in the White Ox Cart.”

Fa-Ta heard this verse and wept without knowing it. At the moment the words were spoken, he achieved a great enlightenment and said to the Master, “Until today I have never actually turned the Dharma Flower; instead it has turned me.” Fa-Ta asked further, “The Lotus Sutra says, ‘If everyone from Sravakas up to the Bodhisattvas were to exhaust all their thought in order to measure the Buddha’s wisdom, they still could not fathom it.’ Now, you cause common people merely to understand their own minds, and you call that the knowledge and vision of the Buddha. Because of this, I am afraid that those without superior faculties will not be able to avoid doubting and slandering the Sutra. The Sutra also speaks of three carts. How do the sheep, deer, and ox carts differ from the White Ox Cart? I pray the High Master will once again instruct me.”

The Master said, “The Sutra’s meaning is clear. You yourself are confused. Disciples of all three vehicles are unable to fathom the Buddha’s wisdom; the fault is in their thinking and measuring. The more they think, the further they go. From the start, the Buddha speaks for the sake of common people, not for the sake of other Buddhas. Those who chose not to believe were free to leave the assembly. Not knowing that they were sitting in the White Ox Cart, they sought three vehicles outside the gate. What is more, the Sutra text clearly tells you ‘There is only the one Buddha Vehicle, no other vehicle, whether two or three, and the same is true for countless expedients, for various

causes and conditions, and for analogies and rhetoric. All these Dharma are for the sake of the One Buddha Vehicle. Why don't you wake up? The three carts are false because they are preliminary. The one vehicle is real because it is the immediate present. You are merely taught to go from the false and return to the real. Once you have returned to reality, the real is also nameless. You should know that all the treasure and wealth is ultimately your own, for your own use. That is called maintaining the Dharma Flower Sutra. Then from aeon to aeon, your hands will never let go of the scrolls; from morning to night you will recite it unceasingly."

Fa-Ta received this instruction and, overwhelmed with joy, he spoke a verse:

"Three thousand Sutra recitations:
At Ts'ao-Hsi not one single world.
Before I knew why he appeared in the world,
How could I stop the madness of accumulated births?
Sheep, deer, and ox provisionally set up;
Beginning, middle, end, well set forth.
Who would have thought that within the Burning house
Originally the king of Dharma dwelt?"

The Master said, "From now on you may be called the monk mindful of the Sutra." From then on, although Fa-Ta understood the profound meaning, he continued to recite the Sutra unceasingly.

Bhikshu Chih-T'ung, a native of An-feng in Shao-Chou, had read the Lankavatara Sutra over a thousand times but still did not understand the three bodies and the four wisdoms. He made obeisance to the Master, seeking an explanation of the meaning. The Master said, "The three bodies are: the clear, pure Dharma-body, which is your nature; the perfect, full Reward-body, which is your wisdom; and the hundred thousand myriad Transformation-bodies, which are your conduct. To speak of the three bodies as separate from your nature is to have the bodies but not the wisdom. To remember that the three bodies have no self-nature is to understand the four wisdom of Bodhi. Listen to my verse:

Three bodies complete in your own self-nature
When understood become four wisdoms.
While not apart from seeing and hearing

Transcend them and ascend to the Buddha realm.

I will now explain it for you.

If you are attentive and faithful, you will never be deluded.

Don't run outside in search of them,

By saying 'Bodhi' to the end of your days.

Chih-T'ung asked further, "May I hear about the meaning of the four wisdoms?"

The Master said, "Since you understand the three bodies, you should also understand the four wisdom. Why do you ask again? To speak of the four wisdoms as separate from the three bodies is to have the wisdoms but not the bodies, in which case the wisdom becomes non-wisdom." He then spoke the verse:

The wisdom of the great, perfect mirror
Is your clear, pure nature.
The wisdom of equal nature
Is the mind without disease.
Wonderfully observing wisdom
Is seeing without effort.
Perfecting wisdom is
The same as the perfect mirror.

Five, eight, six, seven,
Effect and cause both turn;
Merely useful names:
They are without real nature.
If, in the place of turning,
Emotion is not kept,
You always and forever dwell
In Naga concentration.

Note: The transformation of consciousness into wisdom has been described. The teaching says, "The first five consciousnesses turned become the perfecting wisdom; the sixth consciousness turned becomes the wonderfully observing wisdom; the seventh consciousness turned becomes the wisdom of equal nature; the eighth consciousness turned

becomes the wisdom of great perfect mirror. Although the sixth and seventh are turned in the cause and the first five and the eighth in the effect, it is merely the names which turn. Their substance does not turn.”

Instantly enlightened to the nature of wisdom,
 Chih-T’ng submitted the following verse:
 Three bodies are my basic substance,
 Four wisdoms my original bright mind.
 Body and wisdom in unobstructed fusion
 In response to beings I accordingly take form.
 Arising to cultivate them is false movement.
 Holding to or pondering over them a waste of effort.
 Through the Master I know the wonderful principle,
 And, in the end, I lose the stain of names.

Bhikshu Chih-Ch’ang, a native of Kuei-Hsi in Hsin-Chou, left home when he was a child and resolutely sought to see his own nature. One day he called on the Master, who asked him, “Where are you from and what do you want?”

Chih-Ch’ang replied, “Your student has recently been to Pai-Feng Mountain in Hung-Chou to call on the High Master Ta-T’ung and received his instruction on the principle of seeing one’s nature and realizing Buddhahood. As I have not yet resolved my doubts, I have come from a great distance to bow reverently and request the Master’s compassionate instruction.”

The Master said, “What instruction did he give you? Try to repeat it to me.”

Chih-Ch’ang said, “After arriving there, three months passed and still I had received no instruction. Being eager for the Dharma, one evening I went alone into the Abbot’s room and asked him, ‘What is my original mind and original substance?’

But Ta-T’ung then said to me, ‘Do you see empty space?’

‘Yes,’ I said, ‘I see it.’

Ta-T’ung said, ‘Do you know what appearance it has?’

Chih-Ch’ang replied, ‘Empty space has no form. How could it have an appearance?’

Ta-T'ung said, "Your original mind is just like empty space. To understand that nothing can be seen is called right seeing; to know that nothing can be known is called true knowing. There is nothing blue or yellow, long or short. Simply seeing the clear, pure original source, the perfect bright enlightened substance, this is what is called 'seeing one's nature and realizing Buddhahood.' It is also called 'the knowledge and vision of the Tathagata.' Although I heard this instruction, I still do not understand and beg you, O Master to instruct me."

The Master said, "Your former master's explanation still retains the concepts of knowing and seeing; and that is why you have not understood. Now, I will teach you with a verse:

Not to see a single dharma still retains no-seeing,
Greatly resembling floating clouds covering the sun.
Not to know a single dharma holds to empty knowing,
Even as a lightning flash comes out of empty space.
This knowing and seeing arise in an instant.
When seen wrongly, can expedients being understood?
If, in the space of a thought, you can know your own error,
Your own spiritual light will always be manifested.

Hearing the verse, Chih-Ch'ang understood it with his heart and mind, and he composed this verse:

Without beginning, knowing and seeing arise.
When one is attached to marks
Bodhi is sought out.
Clinging to a thought of enlightenment,
Do I rise above my former confusion?
The inherently enlightened substance of my nature
Illuminates the turning twisting flow.
But had I not entered the Patriarch's room,
I'd still be running, lost between the two extremes.

One day Chih-Ch'ang asked the Master, "The Buddha taught the dharma of the three vehicles and also the Supreme Vehicle. Your disciple has not yet understood that and would like to be instructed."

The Master said, "Contemplate only your own original mind and do not be attached to the marks of external dharmas. The Dharma doesn't have four vehicles; it is people's minds that differ. Cultivating by seeing, hearing, and reciting is the small vehicle. Cultivating by

awakening to the Dharma and understanding the meaning is the middle vehicle. Cultivating in accord with Dharma is the great vehicle. To penetrate the ten thousand dharmas entirely and completely while remaining without defilement, and to sever attachment to the marks of all the dharmas with nothing whatsoever gained in return: that is the Supreme Vehicle. Vehicles are methods of practice, not subjects for debate. Cultivate on your own and do not ask me, for at all times your own self-nature is itself ‘thus.’”

Chih-Ch’ang bowed and thanked the Master and served him to the end of the Master’s life.

Bhikshu Chih-Tao, a native of Nan-Hai in Kuang-Chou, asked a favor: “Since leaving home, your student has studied the NirvanaSutra for over ten years and has still not understood its great purpose. I hope that the High Master will bestow his instruction.”

The Master said, “What point haven’t you understood?”

Chih-Tao replied:

“All activities are impermanent,
 Characterized by production and extinction;
 When production and extinction are extinguished,
 That still extinction is bliss.
 My doubts are with respect to this passage.”

The Master said, “What are your doubts?”

Chih-Tao replied, “All living beings have two bodies, the physical body and Dharma-body. The physical body is impermanent and is produced and destroyed. The Dharma-body is permanent and is without knowing or awareness. The Sutra says that the extinction of production and extinction is bliss, but I do not know which body is in tranquil extinction and which receives the bliss. How could it be the physical body which receives the bliss? When this physical body is extinguished, the four elements scatter. That is total suffering cannot be called bliss. If the Dharma-body were extinguished it would become like grass, trees, tiles, or stones; then what would receive the bliss? Moreover, the Dharma-nature is the substance of production and extinction and the five heaps are the function of production and extinction. With one body having five functions, production and extinction are permanent; at the time of production, the functions arise

from the substance, and at the time of extinction, the functions return to the substance. If there were rebirth then sentient beings would not cease to exist or be extinguished. If there were not rebirth, they would return to tranquil extinction and be just like insentient objects. Thus, all dharmas would be suppressed by nirvana and there would not even be production. How could there be bliss?"

The Master said, "You are a son of Sakya! How can you hold the deviant views of annihilationism and permanence which belongs to other religions and criticise the Supreme Vehicle Dharma! According to what you say, there is a Dharma-body that exists apart from physical form a tranquil extinction to be sought apart from production and extinction. Moreover, you propose that there is a body which enjoys the permanence and bliss of Nirvana. But, that is to grasp tightly onto birth and death and to indulge in worldly bliss. You should now know that deluded people mistook the union of five heaps for their own bodies and determined the dharmas as external to themselves. They loved life, dreaded death and drifted from thought to thought, not knowing that this illusory dream is empty and false. They turned vainly around on the wheel of birth and death and mistook the permanence and bliss of Nirvana for a form of suffering. All day long they sought after something else. Taking pity on them, the Buddha made manifest in the space of an instant the true bliss of Nirvana, which has no mark of production or extinction; it has no production or extinction to be extinguished. That, then, is the manifestation of tranquil extinction. Its manifestation cannot be reckoned; it is permanent and blissful. The bliss has neither an enjoyer nor a non-enjoyer. How can you call it 'one substance with five functions?' Worse, how can you say that Nirvana suppresses all dharmas, causing them to be forever unproduced? That is to slander the Buddha and defame the Dharma. Listen to my verse:

Supreme. Great Nirvana is bright
 Perfect, permanent, still, and shining.
 Deluded commonpeople call it death,
 Other teachings hold it to be annihilation.
 All those who seek two vehicles
 Regard it as non-action.
 Ultimately these notions arise from feeling,
 And form the basis for sixty-two views,

Wrongly establishing unreal names.
 What is the true, real principle?
 Only one who has gone beyond measuring
 Penetrates without grasping or rejecting,
 And knows that the dharma of the five heaps
 And the self within the heaps,
 The outward appearances—a mass of
 images—the mark of every sound,
 Are equally like the illusion of dreams,
 For him, views of common and holy do not arise
 Nor are explanations of Nirvana made.
 The two boundaries, the three limits are cut off.
 All organs have their function,
 But there never arises the thought of the function.
 All dharmas are discriminated
 Without a thought of discrimination arising.
 When the fire at the aeon's end burns
 the bottom of the sea
 And the winds blow the mountain against each other,
 The true, permanent, still extinct bliss,
 The mark of Nirvana is 'thus.'
 I have struggled to explain it,
 To cause you to reject your false views.
 Don't understand it by words alone
 And maybe you'll understand a bit of this."

After hearing this verse, Chih-Tao was greatly enlightened.
 Overwhelmed with joy, he made obeisance and withdrew.

Dhyana Master Hsing Szu was born into the Liu Family, which
 lived in An-Cha'ng district in Chih-Chou. Hearing of the flourishing
 influence of the Ts'ao-His Dharma Assembly, Hsing-Szu went directly
 there to pay homage and asked, "What is required to avoid falling into
 successive stages?"

The Master said, "What did you do before coming here?"

He replied, "I did not even practice the Holy truths."

The Master said, "Then into what successive states could you fall?"

He replied, "If one isn't practicing the Four Holy Truths, what successive stages are there?"

The Master greatly admired his capacity and made him the leader of the assembly. One day the Master said, "You should go elsewhere to teach. Do not allow the teaching to be cut off."

Having obtained the Dharma, Hsing-Szu returned to Ch'ing Yuan Mountain in Chi-Chou, to propagate the Dharma and transform living beings. After his death he was given the posthumous title "Dhyana Master Hung-Chi."

Dhyana Master Huai-Jang was the son of the Tu family in Chin-Chou. He first visited National Master An of Sung Mountain, who told him to go to Ts'ao-His to pay homage. When he arrived, he bowed, and the Master asked him, "What has come?"

He replied, "Sung-Shan."

The Master said, "What is it and how does it come?"

He replied, "To say that it is like a thing is to miss the point."

The Master said, "Then can there still be that which is cultivated and certified?"

He replied, "Cultivation and certification are not absent, but there can be no defilement."

The Master said, "It is just the lack of defilement of which all Buddhas are mindful and protective. You are like that, and I am like that too. In the West, Prajnatara predicted that a colt would run from under your feet, trampling and killing people under heaven. You should keep that in mind, but do not speak of it too soon."

Huai-Jang suddenly understood. Accordingly he waited upon the Master for fifteen years, daily penetrating more deeply into the profound and mysterious. He later went to Nan-Yao where he spread the Dhyana School. The title "Dhyana Master Ta Hui" was bestowed upon him posthumously.

Dhyana Master Hsuan-Chiao of Yung-Chia was the son of a family called Tai in Wen-Chou. When he was young he studied the Sutras and commentaries and was skilled in the T'ien-T'ai Dharma-door of "Stop and Look." Upon reading the Vimalakirti Sutra, he understood the mind-ground. One day he happened to meet the Master's disciple Hsuan-Ch'e and they had a pleasant talk. As Hsuan-Chiao's words

were consonant with the words of all the Patriarchs, Hsuan-Ch'e asked him, "Kind Sir, from whom did you obtain the Dharma?"

He replied, "I have heard the Vaipulya Sutras and Sastras, receiving each from a master. Later, upon reading the Vimalakirti Sutra, I awakened to the doctrine of the Buddha-mind, but as yet no one has certified me."

Hsuan-Ch'e said, "That was acceptable before the time of the Buddha called The Awesome-Voiced King. But since the coming of that Buddha, all those who 'self-enlightened' without a master belong to other religions which hold to the tenet of spontaneity."

"Then will you please certify me, Kind Sir?" said Hsuan-Chiao.

Hsuan-Ch'e said, "My words are of little worth, but the Great Master, the Sixth Patriarch, is at Ts'ao-His, where people gather like clouds from the four directions. He is one who has received the Dharma. If you wish to go, I will accompany you."

Thereupon Hsuan-Chiao went with Hsuan-Ch'e to call upon the Master. On arriving, he circumambulated the Master three times, shook his staff, and stood in front of him. The Master said, "Inasuch as a Sramana has perfected the three thousand awesome deportments and the eighty thousand fine practices, where does the virtuous One come from and what makes him so arrogant?"

Hsuan-Chiao said, "The affair of birth and death is great and impermanence comes quickly."

The Master said, "Why not embody non-production and understand that which is not quick?"

He replied, "The body itself is not produced and fundamentally there is no quickness."

The Master said, "So it is; so it is."

Hsuan-Chiao then made obeisance with perfect awesome deportment. A short while, later he announced that he was leaving and the Master said, "Aren't you leaving too quickly?"

He replied, "Fundamentally, I don't move; how can I be quick?"

The Master said, "Who knows you don't move?"

He replied, "Kind Sir, you yourself make this discrimination."

The Master said, "You have truly got the idea of non-production."

"But does non-production possess an 'idea'?" asked Hsuan-Chiao.

"If it is without ideas, then who discriminates it?" said the Master.

“What discriminates is not an idea either,” he replied.

The Master exclaimed, “Good indeed! Please stay for a night.”

During his time, he was called “The One Enlightened Overnight” and later he wrote the “Song of Certifying to the Way,” which circulated widely in the world. His posthumous title is “Great Master Wu-Hsiang,” and during his lifetime he was called “Chen-Chiao.”

Dhyana cultivator Chih-Huang had formerly studied under the Fifth Patriarch and said of himself that he had attained to the ‘right reception.’ He lived in a hut, constantly sitting for twenty years. In his travels, the Master’s disciple Hsuan-Ch’e reached Ho-Shuo, where he heard of Chih-Huang’s reputation. He paid a visit to his hut and asked him, “What are you doing here?”

“Entering concentration,” replied Chih-Huang.

Hsuan-Ch’e said, “You say you are entering concentration. Do you enter with thought or without thought. If you enter without thought, then all insentient things, such as grass, trees, tiles, and stones, should likewise attain concentration. If you enter with thought, then all sentient things which have consciousness should also attain concentration.”

Chih-Huang said, “When I properly enter concentration I do not notice whether I have thought or not.

Hsuan-Ch’e said, “Not to notice whether or not you have thought is eternal concentration. How can you enter it or come out of it? If you come out of it or enter it, it is not the great concentration.”

Chih-Huang was speechless. After a long while, he finally asked, “Who is your teacher?”

Hsuan-Ch’e said, “My Master is the Sixth Patriarch at Ts’ao-His.”

Chih-Huang said, “What does your master take to be Dhyana Concentration?”

Hsuan-Ch’e said, “My teacher speaks of the wonderful, clear, perfect stillness, the suchness of the substance and function, the fundamental emptiness of the five skandhas, and the non-existence of the six organs. There is neither emerging nor entering, neither concentration nor confusion. The nature of Dhyana is non-dwelling and is beyond the act of dwelling in Dhyana stillness. The nature of Dhyana is unproduced and beyond the production of the thought of Dhyana.

The mind is like empty space and is without the measure of empty space.”

Hearing this explanation, Chih-Huang went directly to visit the Master.

The Master asked him, “Kind Sir, where are you from?”

Chih-Huang related the above incident in details.

The Master said, “It is truly just as he said. Simply let your mind be like empty space without being attached to the idea of emptiness and the correct function of the self-nature will no longer be obstructed. Have no thought, whether in motion or stillness; forget any feeling of being common or holy, put an end to both subject and object. The nature and mark will be ‘thus, thus,’ and at no time will you be out of the state of concentration.”

Just then Chih-Huang attained the great enlightenment. What he had gained in twenty years vanished from his mind without a trace. That night, the people of Hopei heard a voice in space announcing, ‘Today, Dhyana Master Chih-Huang has attained the Way.’ Later, he made obeisance and left, returning to Hopei to teach and convert the four assemblies there.”

One of the Sangha asked the Master, “Who got the principle of Huang-Mei?”

The Master replied, “The one who understands the Buddhadharma.”

The sangha member said, “High Master, have you obtained it?”

“I do not understand the Buddhadharma,” the Master replied.

One day the Master wanted to wash the robe which he had inherited, but there was no clear stream nearby. He walked about two miles behind the temple where he saw good energies revolving in a dense grove of trees. He shook his staff, stuck it in the ground, and a spring bubbled up and formed a pool. As he knelt to wash his robe on a rock, suddenly a monk came up and bowed before him saying, “I am Fang-Pien, a native of His-Shu. A while ago I was in India, where I visited the Great Master Bodhidharma. He told me to return to China immediately, saying, ‘The orthodox Dharma Eye Treasury and the Samghati robe which I inherited from Mahakasyapa has been transmitted to the six generation at Ts’ao-His, Shao-Chou. Go there

and pray reverence.’ Fang Pien has come from afar, hoping to see the robe and bowl that his Master transmitted.” The Master showed them to him and asked, “Superior One, what work do you do?”

“I am good at sculpting,” he replied.

Keeping straight face, the Master said, “Then sculpt something for me to see.”

Fang-Pien was bewildered but, after several days, he completed a lifelike image of the Patriarch, seven inches high and wonderful in every detail.

The Master laughed and said, “You only understand the nature of sculpture; you do not understand the nature of the Buddha.” Then the Master stretched out his hand and rubbed the crown of Fang-Pien’s head, saying, “You will forever be a field of blessing for gods and humans.” The Master rewarded him with a robe, which Fang-Pien divided into three parts: one he used to wrap the sculpture, one he kept for himself and, the third, he wrapped in palm leaves and buried in the ground, vowing, “In the future, when this robe is found again, I will appear in the world to be abbot here and restore these buildings.” During the Sung dynasty in the eighth year of the Chia-Yu reign period (1063 A.D.), while Bhikshu Wei Hsien was repairing the hall, he excavated the earth and found the robe which was like new. The image is at Kao-Ch’uan Temple and those who pray before it obtain a quick response.

One Bhikshu was reciting Dhyana Master Wo-Lun’s verse:

Wo-Lun has the talent
To stop the hundred thoughts:
Facing situations his mind won’t move;
Bodhi grows day by day.

When the Master heard it he said, “This verse shows no understanding of the mind-ground, and to cultivate according to it will increase one’s bondage. Then he spoke this verse:

Hui-Neng has no talent
To stop the hundred thoughts.
Facing situations his mind often moves;
How can Bodhi grow?”

The Eighth Chapter—Sudden And Gradual: While the Patriarch was staying at Pao-Lin Temple in Ts'ao-Hsi, the Great Master Shen Hsiu was at Yu Ch'uan Temple in Ching-Nan. At that time the two schools flourished and everyone called them, 'Southern Neng and Northern Hsiu.' So it was that the two schools, northern and southern, were divided into 'Sudden' and 'Gradual.' As the students did not understand the doctrine, the Master said to them, "The Dharma is originally of one school. It is people who think of North and South. The Dharma is of one kind, but people understand it slowly or quickly. Dharma is not sudden or gradual, rather it is people who are sharp or dull. Hence the terms sudden and gradual." Nonetheless, Shen-Hsiu's followers continually ridiculed the southern Patriarch, saying that he couldn't read a single word and had nothing in his favor. But Shen Hsiu said, "He has obtained wisdom without the aid of a teacher and understands the Supreme Vehicle deeply. I am inferior to him. Furthermore, my Master, the Fifth Patriarch, personally transmitted the robe and Dharma to him and not without good reason. I regret that I am unable to make the long journey to visit him, as I unworthily receive state patronage here. But do not let me stop you. Go to Ts'ao-Hsi and call on him." One day Shen Hsiu told his disciple Chih-Ch'eng, "You are intelligent and very wise. You may go to Ts'ao-Hsi on my behalf and listen to the Dharma. Remember it all and take careful notes to read to me when you return."

As ordered, Chih-Ch'eng proceeded to Ts'ao-Hsi and joined the assembly without saying where he had come from. The Patriarch told the assembly, "Today there is a Dharma thief hidden in this assembly." Chih-Ch'eng immediately stepped forward, bowed and explained his mission. The Master said, "You are from Yu-Ch'uan; you must be a spy."

"No," he replied, "I am not."

The Master said, "What do you mean?"

He replied, "Before I confessed, I was; but now that I have confessed, I am not."

The Master said, "How does your Master instruct his followers?"

Chih-Ch'eng replied, "He always instructs us to dwell with the mind contemplating stillness and to sit up all the time without lying down."

The Master said, “To dwell with the mind contemplating stillness is sickness, not Dhyana. Constant sitting restrains the body. How can it be beneficial? Listen to my verse:

When living, sit, don't lie.
When dead, lie down, don't sit.
How can a set of stinking bones
Be used for training?”

Chih-Ch'eng bowed again and said, “Your disciple studied the way for nine years at the place of great Master Hsiu but obtained no enlightenment. Now, hearing one speech from the High Master, I am united with my original mind. Your disciple's birth and death is a serious matter. Will the High Master be compassionate enough to instruct me further?” The Master said, “I have heard that your Master instructs his students in the dharmas of morality, concentration, and wisdom. Please tell me how he defines the terms.”

Chih-Ch'eng said, “The great Master Shen-Hsiu says that morality is abstaining from doing evil, wisdom is offering up all good conduct, and concentration is purifying one's own mind. This is how he explains them, but I do not know, High Master, what dharma of instruction you use.”

The Master said, “If I said that I had a dharma to give to others, I would be lying to you. I merely use expedients to untie bonds and falsely call that samadhi. Your master's explanation of morality, concentration, and wisdom is truly inconceivably good but my conception of morality, concentration and wisdom is different from his.”

Chih-Ch'eng said, “There can only be one kind of morality, concentration, and wisdom. How can there be a difference?”

The Master said, “Your master's morality, concentration, and wisdom guide those of the Great Vehicle, whereas my morality, concentration, and wisdom guide those of the Supreme Vehicle. Enlightenment is not the same as understanding; seeing may take place slowly or quickly. Listen to my explanation. Is it the same as Shen-Hsiu's? The Dharma which I speak does not depart from the self-nature, for to depart from the self-nature in explaining the Dharma is to speak of marks and continually confuse the self-nature. You should know that the functions of the ten thousand dharmas all arise from the

self-nature and that this is the true morality, concentration, and wisdom. Listen to my verse:

Mind-ground without wrong:
 Self-nature morality.
 Mind-ground without delusion:
 Self-nature wisdom.
 Mind-ground without confusion:
 Self-nature concentration.
 Neither increasing nor decreasing:
 You are vajra.
 Body comes, body goes:
 The original samadhi.”

Hearing this verse, Chih-Ch’eng regretted his former mistakes and he expressed his gratitude by saying this verse:

These five heaps are
 A body of illusion.
 And what is illusion?
 Ultimately?
 If you tend toward
 True suchness
 The Dharma is
 Not yet pure.

The Master approved, and he said further to Chih-Ch’eng, “Your Master’s morality, concentration and wisdom exhort those of lesser faculties and lesser wisdom, while my morality, concentration, and wisdom exhort those of great faculties and great wisdom. If you are enlightened to your self-nature, you do not set up in your mind the notion of Bodhi or of Nirvana or of the liberation of knowledge and vision. When not a single dharma is established in the mind, then the ten thousand dharmas can be established there. To understand this principle is to achieve the Buddha’s body which is also called Bodhi, Nirvana, and the liberation of knowledge and vision as well. Those who see their own nature can establish dharmas in their minds or not establish them as they choose. They come and go freely, without impediments or obstacles. They function correctly and speak appropriately, seeing all transformation bodies as integral with the self-nature. That is precisely the way they obtain independence,

spiritual powers and the samadhi of playfulness. This is what is called seeing the nature."

Chih Ch'eng asked the Master further, "What is meant by 'not establishing?'"

The Master replied, "When your self-nature is free from error, obstruction and confusion when Prajna is present in every thought, contemplating and shedding illumination and when you are constantly apart from the dharma marks and are free and independent, both horizontally and vertically, then what is there to be established? In the self-nature, in self-enlightenment, in sudden enlightenment, and in sudden cultivation there are no degrees. Therefore, not a single dharma is established. All dharmas are still and extinct. How can there be stages?"

Chih-Ch'eng made obeisance and attended on the Master day and night without laziness. He was a native of T'ai Ho in Chi Chou.

Bhikshu Chih-Ch'e, a native of Chiang Hsi, had the family name Chang and the personal name Hsing-Ch'ang. As a youth, he was an itinerant warrior. When the schools split into the Northern and Southern, although the two leaders had lost the notion of self and other, the disciples stirred up love and hate. The disciples of the Northern School secretly set up Shen-Hsiu as the Sixth Patriarch. Fearing that the country would hear of the transmission of the robe, they hired Hsing-Ch'ang to assassinate the Master. But the Master had the power of knowing the thoughts of others. He knew of this matter in advance and set ten ounces of gold in his chair. That night, Hsing-Ch'ang entered his room intending to kill him. The Master stretched out his neck. Hsing-Ch'ang swung the blade three times but could not harm him. The Master said, "A straight sword is not bent, a bent sword is not straight, I merely owe you gold, I do not owe you life." Hsing-Ch'ang fell to the ground in fright. After a while he came to and begged for mercy, repenting of his error and vowing to leave home. The Master gave him the gold and said, "Go. I fear that my followers will come and take revenge. Change your appearance and return another day and I will accept you." Hsing Ch'ang received his orders and disappeared into the night. Later, he left home under another Bhikshu, received complete precepts and was vigorous in practice. One day,

remembering the Master's words, he made the long journey to have an audience. The Master said, "I have thought of you for a long time. What took you so long?"

He replied, "The High Master once favored me by pardoning my crime. Although I have left home and although I practice austerities, I shall never be able to repay his kindness. May I try to repay you by transmitting the Dharma and taking living beings across? Your disciple often studies the Mahaparinirvana Sutra, but he has not yet understood the principles of permanence and impermanence. I beg the High Master to be compassionate and explain them for me."

The Master said, "Impermanence is just the Buddha nature and permanence is just the mind discriminating good and evil dharmas."

Hsing-Ch'ang replied, "High Master, your explanation contradicts the Sutra text!"

The Master said, "I transmit the Buddha's mind-seal. How could I dare to contradict the Buddhas' Sutras?"

Hsing-Ch'ang replied, "The Sutra says that the Buddha nature is permanent and the High Master has just said that it is impermanent; it says that good and evil dharmas, reaching even to the Bodhi Mind, are impermanent and the High Master has just said that they are permanent. This contradiction has merely intensified your student's doubt and delusion."

The Master said, "Formerly, I heard Bhikshuni Wu Chin Tsang recite the Nirvana Sutra. When I commented on it, there was not one word or principle which did not accord with the sutra text. My explanation to you now is not different."

Hsing-Ch'ang replied, "Your student's capacity for understanding is superficial. Will the High Master please explain further?"

The Master said, "Don't you understand? If the Buddha nature were permanent, what use would there be in speaking of good and evil dharmas? To the end of an aeon not one person would produce the Bodhi Mind. Therefore, I explain it as impermanent. That is exactly what the Buddha explained as the meaning of true permanence. Furthermore, if all dharmas were permanent, all things would have a self-nature subject to birth and death and the true permanent nature would not pervade all places. Therefore, I explain it as impermanent. That is exactly what the Buddha explained as the meaning of the true

permanence. It was for the sake of common people and those who belong to other religions who cling to deviant views of permanence, and for all those who follow the two-vehicle way, mistaking permanence for impermanence formulating the eight perverted views, that the Buddha in the ultimate Nirvana teaching destroyed their prejudiced views. He explained true permanence, true bliss, true selfhood and true purity. You now contradict this meaning by relying on the words, taking annihilation to be impermanence and fixing on a lifeless permanence. In this way you misinterpret the last, subtle, complete and wonderful words of the Buddha. Even if you read it a thousand times, what benefit could you derive from it?"

Hsing-Ch'ang suddenly achieved the great enlightenment and spoke this verse:

To those who hold impermanence in mind
The Buddha speaks of the permanent nature;
Not knowing expedients is like
Picking up pebbles from a spring pond.

But now without an effort
The Buddha nature manifests;
The Master did not transmit it,
And I did not obtain a thing."

The Master said, "Now you understand! You should be called Chih-Ch'e (breadth of understanding)." Chih-Ch'e thanked the Master, bowed and withdrew.

A young boy thirteen years old named Shen-Hui, who was from a Kao family in Hsiang-Yang, came from Yu-Ch'uan to pay homage.

The master said, "The Knowing One's journey must have been difficult. Did you bring the original with you? If you have the original, you should know the owner. Try to explain it to me."

Shen-Hui said, "I take non-dwelling as the original and seeing as the owner."

The Master said, "This Sramanera imitates the talk of others."

Shen-Hui then asked, "When you sit in Ch'an, High Master, do you see or not?"

The Master hit him three times with his staff and said, “When I hit you, does it hurt or not?”

Shen-Hui replied, “It both hurts and does not hurt.”

The Master said, “I both see and do not see.”

Shen-Hui asked, “How can you both see and not see?”

The Master said, “What I see is the transgression and error of my own mind. I do not see the right, wrong, good or bad of other people. This is my seeing and not seeing. How can you say it both hurts and does not hurt? If it does not hurt you are like a piece of stone but if it does hurt you are just like a common person and will give rise to hatred. Your ‘seeing and not seeing’ are two extreme and your ‘hurting and not hurting’ are production and extinction. You have not even seen your own nature and yet you dare to ridicule others.”

Shen-Hui bowed, apologized and thanked the Master. The Master continued, “If your mind is confused and you do not see, then ask a Good Knowing Advisor to help you find the way. If your mind is enlightened, then see your own nature and cultivate according to the Dharma. You yourself are confused and do not see your own mind and, yet, you come to ask me whether or not I see. If I see, I know it for myself but is that of any help to you in your confusion? In the same way your seeing is of no use to me. Why don’t you know and see it for yourself, instead of asking me whether or not I see?” Shen-Hui bowed again over one hundred times, seeking forgiveness for his error. He served the Master with diligence, never leaving his side.

One day the Master addressed the assembly as follows: “I have a thing. It has no head or tail, no name or label, no back or front. Do you all know what it is?”

Shen-Hui stepped forward and said, “It is the root source of all Buddhas, Shen-Hui’s Buddha nature!”

The Master said, “I just told you that it has no name or label, and you immediately call it the root-source of all Buddhas. Go and build a thatched hut over your head! You’re nothing but a follower who pursues knowledge and interpretation.”

After the Master’s extinction, Shen-Hui went to Ching Lo where he propagated the Ts’ao-His Sudden Teaching. He wrote the Hsien-Tsung

Chi which circulated widely throughout the land. He is known as Dhyana Master Ho-Che.

The Master saw many disciples of other schools, all with evil intentions, gathered beneath his seat to ask him difficult questions. Pitying them, he said, “Students of the way, all thoughts of good or evil should be completely cast away. What cannot be named by any name is called the self-nature. This non-dual nature is the real nature and it is within the real nature that all teaching doors are established. At these words you should see it for yourselves.”

Hearing this, they all made obeisance and asked him to be their master.

The Ninth Chapter—Proclamation: On the fifteenth day of the first month, during the first year of the Shen-Lung reign (705 A.D.), Empress Tse-T'ien and Emperor Chung-Tsung issued the following proclamation: “We have invited Master Hui-Neng and Shen-Hsiu to the palace to receive offerings so that we may investigate the One Vehicle in the leisure time remaining after our myriad duties. The two Masters have declined, saying that in the South there is Dhyana Master Hui-Neng, who was secretly transmitted the robe and Dharma of the Great Master Hung-Jen who now transmits the Buddhas’ mind-seal. We now send Chamberlain Hsieh Chien with this invitation, hoping that the Master will remember us with compassion and come to the capital.” The Master sent back a petition pleading illness saying that he wished to spend his remaining years at the foot of the mountain. Hsieh Chien said, “The Virtuous Dhyana Masters at the capital all say that to master the Way one must sit in Dhyana meditation and practice concentration, for without Dhyana concentration, liberation is impossible. I do not know how the Master explains this dharma.”

The Master said, “The Way is awakened to from the mind. How could it be found in sitting? The Diamond Sutra states that to say the Tathagata either sits or lies down is to walk a deviant path. Why? The clear pure Dhyana of the Tathagata comes from nowhere and goes nowhere and is neither produced nor extinguished. The Tathagata’s clear pure ‘sitting’ is the state of all dharmas being empty and still. Ultimately there is no certification; even less is there any ‘sitting.’

Hsieh Chien said, “When your disciple returns to the capital, their majesties will surely question him. Will the High Master please be compassionate and instruct me on the essentials of the mind so that I can transmit them to the two palaces and to students of the Way at the capital? It will be like one lamp setting a hundred thousand lamps burning, making all the darkness endlessly light.”

The Master said, “The Way is without light or darkness. Light and darkness belong to the principle of alternation. ‘Endless light’ has an end, too, because such terms are relative. Therefore the Vimalakirti Sutra says, ‘The Dharma is incomparable because it is not relative.’”

Hsien Chien said, “Light represents wisdom and darkness represents affliction. If cultivators of the Way do not use wisdom to expose and destroy affliction, how can they escape from the birth and death that have no beginning?”

The Master said, “Affliction is Bodhi; they are not two and not different. One who uses wisdom to expose and destroy affliction has the views and understanding of the two vehicles and the potential of the sheep and deer carts. Those of superior wisdom and great roots are completely different.”

Hsieh Chien said, “What are the views and understanding of the Great vehicle?”

The Master said, “The common person sees light and darkness as two, but the wise person comprehends that their nature is non-dual. The non-dual nature is the real nature. The real nature does not decrease in common people nor increase in worthy sages. In afflictions, it is not confused and in Dhyana concentration, it is not still. It is neither cut off nor permanent. It does not come or go. It is not inside, outside, or in the middle. It is not produced or destroyed. The nature and mark is ‘thus, thus.’ It permanently dwells and does not change. It is called the ‘Way.’”

Hsieh Chien said, “How does your explanation of the self-nature as neither produced nor destroyed differ from that of other religions?”

The Master answered, “As non-production and non-extinction are explained by other religions, extinction ends production and production reveals extinction. Their extinction is not extinction and what they call production is not production. My explanation of non-production and non-extinction is this: originally there was no production and now there

is no extinction. For this reason my explanation differs from that of other religions. If you wish to know the essentials of the mind, simply do not think of good or evil. You will then enter naturally the clear, pure substance of the mind, which is deep and permanently still, and whose wonderful abilities are as numerous as the sand grains in the Ganges River.”

Hsieh Chien received this instruction and was suddenly greatly enlightened. He bowed, took leave and returned to the palace to report the Master’s speech. That year on the third of the ninth month a proclamation was issued in praise of the Master. It read: “The Master has declined our invitation because of old age and illness. He cultivates the Way for us and is a field of blessings for the country. The Master is like Vimalakirti, who pleaded illness in Vashali. He spreads the great fruit widely, transmitting the Buddha-mind and discoursing on the non-dual Dharma. Hsieh Chien has conveyed the Master’s instruction, the knowledge and vision of the Tathagata. It must be due to accumulated good acts, abundant blessings and good roots planted in former lives that we now have met with the Master when he appears in the world and have suddenly been enlightened to the Supreme Vehicle. We are extremely grateful for his kindness, which we receive with bowed heads and now offer in return a Mo Na robe and crystal bowl as gifts. We order the Magistrate of Shao Chou to rebuild the temple buildings and convert the Master’s former dwelling place into a temple to be called ‘Kuo-Ên’ or the Country’s Kindness.”

The Tenth Chapter—Final Instructions: One day the Master summoned his disciples Fa-Hai, Chih-Ch’eng, Fa-Ta, Shen-Hui, Chih-Ch’ang, Chih-T’ung, Chih-Ch’e, Chih-Tao, Fa-Chen and Fa-Ju, and said to them, “You are not like other people. After my passage into extinction, you should each be a master in a different direction. I will now teach you how to explain the Dharma without deviating from the tradition of our school. First, bring up the three classes of Dharmadoors and then, use the thirty-six pairs of opposites, so that, whether coming or going, you remain in the Bodhimandala. While explaining all the dharmas, do not become separate from your self-nature. Should someone suddenly ask you about a dharma, answer him with its opposite. If you always answer with the opposite, both will be

eliminated and nothing will be left since each depends on the other for existence. The three classes of Dharma-doors are the heaps, the realms and the entrances. The five heaps are: form, feeling, perception, impulses and consciousness. The twelve entrances are the six sense objects outside: forms, sounds, smells, tastes, tangible objects and objects of the mind; and the six sense organs within: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind. The eighteen realms are the six sense objects, the six sense organs and the six consciousnesses. The self-nature is able to contain all dharmas; it is the 'store-enveloping consciousness.' If one gives rise to a thought, it turns into consciousness, and the six consciousnesses are produced, which go out the six organs and perceive the six sense objects. Thus, the eighteen realms arise as a function of the self-nature. If the self-nature is wrong, it gives rise to the eighteen wrongs; if the self-nature is right, it gives rise to eighteen rights. Evil functioning is that of a living being, while good functioning is that of a Buddha. What is the functioning based on? It is based on opposing dharmas within the self-nature. External insentient things have five pairs of opposites: heaven and earth, sun and moon, light and darkness, positive and negative (yin and yang) and water and fire. In speaking of the marks of dharmas one should delineate twelve opposites: speech and dharmas, existence and non-existence, form and formless, the marked and the unmarked, the presence of outflows and the lack of outflows, form and emptiness, motion and stillness, clarity and turbidity, the common and the holy, membership in the Sangha and membership in the laity, old age and youth, and largeness and smallness. From the self-nature nineteen pairs of opposites arise: length and shortness, deviance and orthodoxy, foolishness and wisdom, stupidity and intelligence, confusion and concentration, kindness and cruelty, morality and immorality, Straightness and crookedness, reality and unreality, danger and safety, affliction and Bodhi, permanence and impermanence, compassion and harm, joy and anger, generosity and stinginess, advance and retreat, production and extinction, the Dharma-body and the form-body, the Transformation-body and the reward-body. The Master said, "If you can understand and use these thirty-six pairs of opposites you can connect yourself with the dharmas of all the Sutras and avoid extremes, whether coming or going. When you act from your self-nature in speaking with others, you are separate from

external marks while in the midst of them and separate from inward emptiness while in the midst of emptiness. If you are attached to marks, you will add to your wrong views and if you grasp at emptiness, you will increase your ignorance. Those who grasp at emptiness slander the Sutras by maintaining that written words have no use. Since they maintain they have no need of written words, they should not speak either because written words are merely the marks of spoken language. They also maintain that the direct way cannot be established by written words, and yet these two words 'not established', are themselves written. When they hear others speaking, they slander them by saying that they are attached to written words. You should know that to be confused as they are may be permissible but to slander the Buddha's Sutras is not. Do not slander the Sutras for if you do, your offense will create countless obstacles for you. One who attaches himself to external marks and practice dharmas in search of truth, or who builds many Bodhimandalas and speaks of the error and evil of existence and non-existence will not see his nature for many aeons. Listen to the Dharma and cultivate accordingly. Do not think of hundreds of things, for that will obstruct the nature of the Way. Listening without cultivating will cause others to form deviant views. Simply cultivate according to the Dharma, and do not dwell in marks when bestowing it. If you understand, then speak accordingly, function accordingly, practice accordingly, and act accordingly, and you will not stray from the basis of our school. If someone ask you about a meaning, and the question is about existence, answer with non-existence; if you are asked about non-existence, answer with existence; asked about common life, answer with the holy life; asked about the holy life, answer with the common life. Since in each case the two principles are interdependent, the meaning of the Middle Way will arise between them. If you answer every question with an opposite, you will not stray from the basic principle. Suppose someone asks, 'What is darkness?' You should answer 'Brightness is the cause and darkness the condition. When there is no brightness, there is darkness. Brightness reveals darkness and darkness reveals brightness.' Since opposites are interdependent, the principle of the Middle Way is established. Answer every question that way, and in the future, when

you transmit the Dharma, transmit it in the way I am instructing you. Then you will not stray from the tradition of our school.”

In the seventh month of the year Jen-Tsu, the first year of T’ ai-Chi and Yen-Ho reigns (around 712 A.D.), the Master sent his disciples to Hsin-Chou to build a pagoda at Kuo-Ên Temple. He ordered them to hurry the work and it was completed by the end of the summer of the following year. On the first day of the seventh month, he gathered his disciples together and said, “In the eighth month I wish to leave this world. Those of you with doubts should ask about them soon so that I may resolve them for you and put an end to your confusion, because when I am gone there will be no one to teach you.” Hearing this, Fa-Hai and others wept. Only Shen-Hui was unmoved and did not cry.

The Master said, "Little Master Shen-Hui has attained the equality of good and evil. He is not moved by blame or praise and does not feel sadness or joy. None of the rest of you have attained that. All these years on the mountain, how have you been cultivating? Now you cry. Who are you worrying about? Are you worrying that I don't know where I'm going? I know where I'm going. If I did not know, I wouldn't have been able to tell you about it in advance. No doubt you are crying because you don't know where I am going but if you knew you wouldn't need to cry. Originally, the Dharma nature is not produced or extinguished; it does not come or go. All of you sit down, and I will recite a verse called "The True-False Motion-Stillness Verse." If you take it up and recite it, you will be of the same mind as I am. If you rely on it to cultivate, you will not stray from the true principle of our school." The assembly bowed and begged the Master to recite the verse.

There is nothing true in anything,
 So don't view anything as true.
 If you view anything as true,
 Your view will be completely false.
 You can know what is true by yourself.
 Being apart from the false is the truth of the mind.
 When your own mind is not apart from the false
 And lacks the truth, then where is the truth?

Sentient beings understand motion.

Insentient beings do not move.
 If you cultivate the work of non-movement,
 Like insentient beings, you will not move.
 If you seek the true non-movement,
 In movement, there is non-movement.
 Non-movement is non-movement, but
 Things without sentience lack the Buddha-seed.
 Fully able to discriminate among marks,
 But unmoving in the primary meaning:
 The very act of viewing in this way,
 Itself is the function of true suchness.

I tell you, students of the Way,
 Apply your minds with effort and take care,
 At the gate of the Great Vehicle
 Do not grasp the wisdom of birth and death.
 If there is response of these words,
 Then let us discuss the Buddha's meaning together.
 If there is no response,
 Join your hands together and make others glad.
 The basis of this school is non-contention.
 Contention is not the meaning of the Way.
 For in grasping at the Dharma doors of
 contradiction and contention,
 The self-nature enters birth and death.

When the followers heard this verse, they understood its meaning and bowed down before the Master. They made up their minds to practice in accord with the Dharma and not to argue, knowing that the Great Master would not remain long in the world. The Senior Seated Fa-Hai bowed again and asked, "After the High Master enters extinction, who will inherit the robe and Dharma?"

The Master said, "Since the time I lectured on the Dharma in Ta-Fan Temple, transcriptions of my lectures have been circulated. They are to be called 'The Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra.' Protect and transmit them in order to take humankind across. If you speak according to them, you will be speaking the Orthodox Dharma. I will explain the Dharma to you, but I will not transmit the robe because

your roots of faith are pure and ripe. You certainly have no doubts and are worthy of the great Work. According to the meaning of the transmission verse of the First Patriarch Bodhidharma, the robe should not be transmitted. His verse said,

“Originally I came to this land,
Transmitting Dharma, saving living beings.
One flower opens; five petals and
The fruit comes to bear of itself.”

The Master added, “All of you Good Knowing Advisors should purify your minds and listen to my explanation of the Dharma. If you wish to realize all knowledge, you must understand the Samadhi of One Mark and the Samadhi of One Conduct. If you do not dwell in marks anywhere and do not give rise to hate and love, do not grasp or reject and do not calculate advantage or disadvantage, production and destruction while in the midst of marks, but instead, remain tranquil, calm and yielding, then you will have achieved the Samadhi of One Mark. In all places, whether walking, standing, sitting or lying down, to maintain a straight and uniform mind, to attain the unmoving Bodhimandala and the true realization of the Pure Land. That is called the Samadhi of One Conduct. One who perfects the two samadhis is like earth in which seeds are planted; buried in the ground, they are nourished and grow, ripening and bearing fruit. The One Mark and One Conduct are just like that. Now, I speak the Dharma, which is like the falling of the timely rain, moistening the great earth. Your Buddha-nature is like the seeds, which receiving moisture, will sprout and grow. Those who receive my teaching will surely obtain Bodhi and those who practice my conduct certainly certify to the wonderful fruit. Listen to my verse”

The mind-ground contains every seeds;
Under the universal rain they all sprout
Flower and feeling-Sudden Enlightenment
The Bodhi-fruit accomplishes itself.”

After speaking the verse the Master said, “Dharma is not dual nor is the mind, and the Way is pure and without marks. All of you take care not to contemplate stillness or empty the mind. The mind is basically pure and does not grasp or reject anything. Each of you work

hard and go well in harmony with circumstances.” At that time, his followers made obeisance and withdrew.

On the eighth day of the seventh month, the Master suddenly said to his disciples, “I wish to return to Hsin-Chou. Quickly ready a boat and oars.” The great assembly entreated him earnestly to stay, but the Master said, “All Buddhas appear in the world and then are seen to enter Nirvana. This body of mine must return somewhere.”

The assembly said, “Master, you are leaving, but sooner or later, you will return.”

The Master said, “Falling leaves return to the root. There was no day on which I came.”

They further asked, “Who has received the transmission of the Right Dharma-eye Treasury?”

The Master said, “The one who has the Way obtains it; the one without a mind penetrates it.”

They further asked, “In the future, there won’t be any difficulties, will there?”

The Master said, “Five or six years after my extinction (death), a man will come to take my head. Listen to me verse:

Offerings to the parents with bowed head.
There must be food in the mouth.
When the difficulty of ‘Man’ is met,
The officials will be Yang and Liu.”

The Master also said, “Seventy years after my departure, two Bodhisattvas, one who has left home and one who is a layman, will simultaneously come from the east to propagate and transform. They will establish my school, build and restore monasteries and glorify the Dharma for its heirs.

The assembly made obeisance again and asked, “Will you please let us know for how many generations the teaching has been transmitted since the first Buddha and Patriarchs appeared in the world?”

The Master said, “The Buddhas of antiquity who have appeared in the world are numberless and uncountable. But now I will begin with the last seven Buddhas. In the Past ‘Adorned Aeon’ there were Vipashyin Buddha, Shikhin Buddha and Vishvabhu Buddha. In the

present 'Worthy Aeon', there have been Krakucchanda Buddha, Kanakamuni Buddha, Kashyapa Buddha, and Shakyamuni Buddha. From Shakyamuni Buddha, the transmission went to Arya Mahakashyapa, Arya Ananda, Arya Sanakavasa, Arya Upagupta, Arya Dhrtaka, Arya Miccaka, Arya Vasumitra, Arya Buddhanandi, Arya Buddhamitra, Arya Parshva, Arya Punyayashas, Mahasattva Ashvaghosa, Arya Kapimala, Mahasattva Nagarjuna, Arya Kanadeva, Arya Rahulata, Arya Sanghanandi, Arya Gayashata, Arya Kumarata, Arya Jayata, Arya Vasubandhu, Arya Manorhita, Arya Arya Haklena, Arya Aryasima, Arya Basiasita, Arya Punyamitra, Arya Prajnatarā, Arya Bodhidharma. Great Master Hui-K'o, Great Master Seng-Ts'an, Great Master Tao-Hsin, Great Master Hung-Jen, and I, Hui-Neng, am the Thirty-Third Patriarch. Thus, the transmission has been handed down from patriarch to patriarch. In the future, transmit it accordingly from generation to generation. Do not allow it to become extinct."

The assembly heard and faithfully accepted what the Master had said, bowed and withdrew.

On the third day of the eighth month of the year Kuei-Chou, the second year of the Hsien-T'ien reign (around 713 A.D.), after a meal in Kuo-Ên Temple, the Master said, "Each of you take your seat, for I am going to say goodbye."

Fa-Hai said, "What teaching dharma will the High Master leave behind so that confused people can be led to see the Buddha-nature?"

The Master said, "All of you please, listen carefully. If those of future generations recognize living beings, they will have perceived the Buddha-nature. If they do not recognize living beings, they may seek the Buddha throughout many aeons but he will be difficult to meet. I will now teach you how to recognize the living beings within your mind and how to see the Buddha-nature there. If you wish to see the Buddha, simply recognize living beings for it is living beings who are confused about the Buddha and not the Buddha who is confused about living beings. When enlightened to the self-nature, the living being is a Buddha. If confused about the self-nature, the Buddha is a living being. When the self-nature is impartial, the living being is the Buddha. When the self-nature is biased, the Buddha is a living being. If your thoughts are devious and malicious, the Buddha dwells within the living being but by means of one impartial thought, the living being

becomes a Buddha. Our minds have their own Buddha and that Buddha is the true Buddha. If the mind does not have its own Buddha, where can the true Buddha be sought? Your own minds are the Buddha; have no further doubts. Nothing can be established outside the mind, for the original mind produces the ten thousand dharmas. Therefore, the Sutras say, 'The mind produced, all dharmas are produced; the mind extinguished, all dharmas are extinguished. Now, to say goodbye, I will leave you a verse called the 'Self-Nature's True Buddha Verse.' People of the future who understand its meaning will see their original mind and realize the Buddha Way. The verse runs:

The true-suchness self-nature is the true Buddha.
 Deviant views, the three poisons, are the demon king.
 At times of deviant confusion the demon king is in the house;
 But when you have proper views the Buddha is in the hall.
 Deviant views, the three poisons produced within the nature,
 Are just the demon king come to dwell in the house.
 Proper views casting out three poisons of the mind
 Transform the demon into Buddha True, not False.
 Dharma-body, Reward-body, and Transformation-body:
 Fundamentally the three bodies are one body.
 Seeing that for yourself within your own nature
 Is the Bodhi-cause for realizing Buddhahood.
 The pure nature is originally
 Produced from the Transformation-body.
 The pure nature is ever-present
 Within the Transformation-body.
 One's nature leads the
 Transformation-body down the right road.
 And in the future the full perfection is truly without end.
 The root cause of purity is the lust nature,
 For once rid of lust, the substance of the nature is pure.
 Each of you, within your natures; abandon the five desires.
 In an instant, see your nature, it is true.
 If in this life you encounter
 The door of Sudden Teaching
 You will be suddenly enlightened to
 your self-nature and see the Honored of the world.

If you wish to cultivate and aspire to Buddhahood,
 You won't know where the truth is to be sought
 Unless you can see the truth within your own mind,
 This truth which is the cause of realizing Buddhahood.
 Not to see your self-nature but to seek the Buddha outside:
 If you think that way, you are deluded indeed.
 I now leave behind the Dharma-door of the Sudden Teaching
 To liberate worldly people who must cultivate themselves.
 I announce to you and to future students of the Way:
 If you do not hold these views you will only waste your time.

Having spoken the verse the Master continued, "All of you should take care. After my extinction, do not act with worldly emotion. If you weep in sorrow, receive condolences or wear mourning clothes, you are not my disciples, for that is contrary to the proper Dharma. Simply recognize your own original mind and see your own original nature, which is neither moving nor still, neither produced nor extinguished, neither coming nor going, neither right nor wrong, neither dwelling nor departing. Because I am afraid that your confused minds will misunderstand my intention, I will instruct you again so that you may see your nature. After my extinction, continue to cultivate accordingly, as if I were still present. Should you disregard my teaching, then even if I were to remain in the world, you would obtain no benefit."

He further spoke this verse:

Firm, firm: Do not cultivate the good.

High, high: Do not do evil.

Still, still: Cut off sight and sound.

Vast, vast: The mind unattached.

After speaking this verse, the Master sat upright until the third watch, when suddenly he said to his disciples, "I am going!" In an instant he changed and a rare fragrance filled the room. A white rainbow linked with the earth and the trees in the wood turned white. The birds and beasts cried out in sorrow.

In the eleventh month, a dispute arose among the officials, disciples, Sangha and laity of the three countries of Kuang Chou, Shao-Chou and Hsin-Chou as to who should receive the true body. As they could not agree, they lit incense and prayed saying, "The Master will be returned to the place indicated by the incense smoke." The smoke

went directly to Ts'ao-His and so, on the thirteenth day of the eleventh month, the reliquary and the transmitted robe and bowl were returned there. In the following year, on the twenty-fifth day of the seventh month, the body was removed from the reliquary and Disciple Fang Pien anointed it with incense paste. Remembering the prophecy that his head would be taken, the disciples wrapped sheets of iron and laquered cloth around his neck for protection and then placed his body in the pagoda. Just then a white light appeared within the pagoda, shot up into the sky and did not fade for three days. The Magistrate of Shao-Chou reported this to the Emperor and received an imperial order to erect a stone tablet commemorating the Master's conduct in the Way. The Master's springs and autumns were seventy-six. The robe was transmitted to him when he was twenty-four and when he was thirty-nine his hair was cut. For thirty-seven years, he spoke the Dharma to benefit living beings. Forty-three men inherited his Dharma and an unaccountable number awoke to the Way and overstepped the common lot. The robe of belief transmitted from Bodhidharma, the Mo-Na robe and precious bowl conferred by Emperor Chung-Tsung, as well as the lifelike image sculpted by Fang Pien and other articles of the Way, were entrusted to the attendant in charge of the stupa and were permanently retained at the Pao-Lin Bodhimandala for the Bodhimanda's protection. The Platform Sutra has been transmitted to set forth the principles of our school, to glorify the Triple Jewel and to benefit all living beings.

Part Two
Essential Summaries of
the Quintessence of
the Jewel Platform Sutra

Chapter Nine

The Secrets of Huang-Mei

According to a story from the Southern School, shortly after Huineng left Hung-Jen, the governor of the local region happened to hear that an illiterate commoner had been chosen to succeed the Fifth Patriarch. Curious about this choice, he went to see Hung-Jen. "You have a thousand disciples," he said. "In what way does this Huineng distinguish from the others that you should bestow upon him the honor of possessing the bowl and robe of Bodhidharma?" "Nine hundred and ninety-nine of my disciples have a good understanding of Buddhism," the master replied. "The only exception is Huineng. He isn't to be compared with the others, and for that reason I've transmitted the bowl and robe to him." According to the Records of the Transmission of the Lamp (Ch'uan-Teng-Lu), Volume V, one day, a monk asked the Sixth Patriarch, "Who has attained the secrets of Huang-mei?" Hui-neng said, "One who understands Buddhism has attained to the secrets of Huang-mei." The monk asked, "Have you then attained them?" Hui-neng said, "No, I have not." The monk asked, "How is it that you have not?" Hui-neng said, "I do not understand Buddhism." Hui-neng was the Sixth Patriarch of the Zen sect in China, who flourished late in the seventh and early in the eighth centuries, and it was a well-known fact that Hui-neng studied Zen under Hung-jen and succeeded him in the orthodox line of transmission to be the sixth patriarch. Did he not really understand Buddhism? Or is it that not to understand is to understand? In this case, the question was therefore really not a plain regular one, seeking an information about facts. It had quite an ulterior object. As a matter of fact, the truth of Zen requires such contradictions and denials; for Zen has a standard of its own, which, to our common-sense minds, consists just in negating everything we properly hold true and real. In spite of these apparent confusions, the philosophy of Zen is guided by a thorough-going principle which, when once grasped, its topsy-turviness (perversion of the universe) becomes the plainest truth.

When Hui-Neng was thirty-nine years old, he decided it was time to assume his responsibilities. One day Hui Neng thought, "The time

has come to spread the Dharma. I cannot stay in hiding forever.” Then he made his way to Fa-shin Temple in Kuang-chou where Dharma Master Yin Tsung was giving lectures on The Nirvana Sutra. As he approached it, he saw a group of monks observing and discussing a flapping pennant. The first monk said, "It's the pennant that moves." Another objected, "The pennant is an inanimate object and has no power to move; it is the wind that moves." Then a third said, "The flapping of the pennant is due to the combination of flag and wind." Huineng interrupted the discussion, telling the monks, "It's neither wind nor pennant that moves; rather it's your own minds that move." Everyone was startled. Dharma Master Yin Tsung invited him to take a seat of honor and sought to ask him about the hidden meaning. Seeing that Hui Neng's demonstration of the true principles was concise and not based on written words, Yin Tsung said, "The cultivator is certainly no ordinary man. I heard long ago that Huang Mei's robe and bowl had come south. Cultivator, is it not you?" Hui Neng said, "I dare not presume such a thing." Yin Tsung then made obeisance and requested that the transmitted robe and bowl be brought forth and shown to the assembly. He further asked, "How was Huang Mei's doctrine transmitted?" "There was no transmission," replied Hui Neng. "We merely discussed seeing the nature. There was no discussion of Dhyana samadhi or liberation." Yin Tsung asked, "Why was there no discussion of Dhyana samadhi or liberation?" Hui Neng said, "There are dualistic dharmas. They are not the Buddhadharma. The Buddhadharma is a dharma of non-dualism." Yin Tsung asked further, "What is this Buddhadharma, which is the dharma of non-dualism?" Hui Neng said, "The Dharma Master has been lecturing The Nirvana Sutra says that to understand the Buddha-nature is the Buddhadharma, which is the Dharma of non-dualism. As Kao Kuei Te Wang Bodhisattva said to the Buddha, 'Does violating the four serious prohibitions, committing the five rebellious acts or being an icchantika and the like cut off the good roots and the Buddha-nature?' The Buddha replied, 'There are two kinds of good roots: the first, permanent; the second impermanent. The Buddha-nature is neither permanent nor impermanent. Therefore it is not cut off.' 'That is what is meant by non-dualistic. The first is good and the second is not good. The Buddha-nature is neither good nor bad. That is what is meant by

non-dualistic. Common people think of the heaps and realms as dualistic. The wise man comprehends that they are non-dualistic in nature. The non-dualistic nature is the Buddha-nature.” Hearing this explanation, Yin Tsung was delighted. He joined his palms and said, “My explanation of Sutra is like broken tile; whereas your discussion of the meaning, Kind Sir, is like pure gold.” He then shaved Hui Neng’s head and asked Hui Neng to be his master. Accordingly, under that Bodhi tree, Hui Neng explained the Tung Shan Dharma-door. Hui Neng obtained the Dharma at Tung Shan and has undergone much suffering, as if his life was hanging by a thread. “Today, in this gathering of magistrate and officials, of Bhikshus, Bhikshunis, Taoists, and laymen, there is not one of you who is not here because of accumulated ages of karmic conditions. Because in past lives you have made offerings to the Buddhas and planted good roots in common ground, you now have the opportunity to hear Sudden Teaching, which is an opportunity to obtain the Dharma. This teaching has been handed down by former sages; it is not Hui Neng’s own wisdom. You, who wish to hear the teaching of the former sages, should first purify your minds. After hearing it, cast aside your doubts, and that way you will be no different from the sages of the past.” Hearing this Dharma, the entire assembly was delighted, made obeisance and withdrew.

It should be reminded that after master Ying-Tsung had Hui-Neng’s head shaved, ordained him as a monk, he requested Hui neng to be his teacher and asked Hui Neng to enlighten him on the teaching of the master of Yellow Plum Mountain. Hui Neng said: “My master had no special instruction to give; he simply insisted upon the need of our seeing into our own Nature through our own effort. He had nothing to do with meditation, or with deliverance. For meditation and deliverance are names; and whatever can be named leads to dualism, and Buddhism is not dualistic. To take hold of this non-duality of truth is the aim of Zen. The Buddha-Nature of which we are all in possession, and the seeing into which constitute Zen, is invisible into such oppositions as good and evil, eternal and temporal, material and spiritual, and so on. The ignorant see dualism in life is due to confusion of thought; the wise, the enlightened, see into the reality of things unhampered by erroneous ideas. It is a mistake to think that sitting quietly in contemplation is essential to deliverance. The truth of Zen

opens by itself from within and it has nothing to do with the practice of dhyana. For we read in the Diamond Sutra that those who try to see the Tathagata in one of his special attitudes, as sitting or lying, do not understand his spirit. Tathagata is designated as Tathagata because he comes from nowhere and departs nowhere. His appearance has no whence, and his disappearance no whither, and this is Zen. In Zen, therefore, there is nothing to gain, nothing to understand; what shall we then do with sitting cross-legged and practicing dhyana? Some may think that understanding is needed to enlighten the darkness of ignorance, but the truth of Zen is absolute in which there is no dualism, no conditionality. To speak of ignorance and enlightenment, or of Bodhi and Klésa, as if they were two separate objects which cannot be merged in one, is not Zen. In Zen, every possible form of dualism is condemned as not expressing the ultimate truth. Everything is a manifestation of the Buddha-Nature, which is not defiled in passions, nor purified in enlightenment. It is above all categories. If you want to see what is the nature of your being, free your mind from thought of relativity and you will see by yourself how serene it is and yet how full of life it is! ”

Chapter Ten

Layperson Hui Neng's Extraordinary Verse

I. Hui-Neng Became An Official Dharma Successor of the fifth patriarch Hung-Jen:

After Hui-Neng became an official Dharma successor of the fifth patriarch Hung-Jen, but 15 years of hiding, he went to Fa-hsin monastery (at the time he was still not even ordained as a monk) in Kuang Chou, where his famous dialogue with the monks who were arguing whether it was the banner or the wind in motion, took place. When Ying-Tsung, the dharma master of the monastery, heard about this, he said to Hui-Neng, “You are surely no ordinary man. Long ago I heard that the dharma successor of Heng-Jen robe of Huang Mei had come to the south. Isn’t that you ?” The Hui-Neng let it be known that he was the dharma successor of Heng-Jen and the holder of the patriarchate. Master Ying-Tsung had Hui-Neng’s head shaved, ordained him as a monk, and requested Hui neng to be his teacher. Hui-Neng began his work as a Ch’an master, first in Fa-Hsin monastery, then in Pao-Lin near Ts’ao-Ch’i. Hue Neng and his Ch’an followers began the golden age of Ch’an and they strongly rejected method of mere book learning. After the passing away of the fifth patriarch Hung-Jen, the succession was challenged by Shen-Hsiu, who considered himself as the dharma-successor of Hung-Jen, and founder of the “Northern School,” which stressed on a “gradual awakening.” While in the South, Hui-Neng was considered to be the real dharma successor of Hung-Jen, and the founder of the “Southern School,” which emphasized on “sudden awakening.” Soon later the Northern School died out within a few generations, but the Southern School continued to be the dominant tradition, and contemporary Zen lineages from China, Japan, Korea and Vietnam, etc..., trace themselves back to Hui-Neng. He died in 713 A.D. After his death, the institution of the patriarchate came to an end, since he did not name any dharma-successor.

II. Although There Are People From the North and South There Is Ultimately No North or South in the Buddha Nature:

When the Six Patriarch Hui Neng arrived at Huang Mei and made obeisance to the Fifth Patriarch, who asked him: “Where are you from and what do you seek?” Hui Neng replied: “Your disciple is a commoner from Hsin Chou, Ling Nan and comes from afar to bow to the Master, seeking only to be a Buddha, and nothing else.” The Fifth Patriarch said: “You are from Ling Nan and are therefore a barbarian, so how can you become a Buddha?” Hui Neng said: “Although there are people from the north and people from the South, there is ultimately no North or South in the Buddha Nature. The body of this barbarian and that of the High Master are not the same, but what distinction is there in the Buddha Nature?”

III. An Extraordinary Verse of a Layperson Named Hui Neng:

When the lay person named Hui Neng arrived at Huang Mei and made obeisance to the Fifth Patriarch, who asked him: “Where are you from and what do you seek?” Hui Neng replied: “Your disciple is a commoner from Hsin Chou, Ling Nan and comes from afar to bow to the Master, seeking only to be a Buddha, and nothing else.” The Fifth Patriarch said: “You are from Ling Nan and are therefore a barbarian, so how can you become a Buddha?” Hui Neng said: “Although there are people from the north and people from the South, there is ultimately no North or South in the Buddha Nature. The body of this barbarian and that of the High Master are not the same, but what distinction is there in the Buddha Nature?” Although there are people from the North and people from the South, there is ultimately no North or South in the Buddha Nature. This pleased the master very much. Hui-Neng was given an office as rice-pounder for the Sangha in the temple. More than eight months, it is said, he was employed in this menial labour, when the fifth patriarch wished to select his spiritual successor from among his many disciples. One day the patriarch made an announcement that any one who could prove his thorough comprehension of the religion would be given the patriarchal robe and proclaimed as his legitimate heir. At that time, Shen-Hsiu, who was the most learned of all the disciples and thoroughly versed in the lore of his religion, and who was therefore considered by his fellow monks to be

the heir of the school, composed a stanza expressing his view, and posted it on the outside wall of the meditation hall, which read:

The body is like the bodhi tree,
 The mind is like a mirror bright,
 Take heed to keep it always clean,
 And let no dust accumulate on it.

All those who read these lines were greatly impressed and secretly cherished the idea that the author of this gatha would surely be awarded the prize. But when they awoke the next morning they were surprised to see another gatha written alongside of it. The gatha read:

The Bodhi is not like the tree,
 (Bodhi tree has been no tree)
 The mirror bright is nowhere shining,
 (The shining mirror was actually none)
 As there is nothing from the first,
 (From the beginning, nothing has existed)
 Where can the dust itself accumulate?
 (How would anything be dusty?)

In the paragraph "Bodhi tree has been no tree. The shining mirror was actually none. From the beginning, nothing has existed. How would anything be dusty?" (The Bodhi is not like the tree. The mirror bright is nowhere shining. As there is nothing from the first. Where can the dust itself accumulate?), the sentences of "the shining mirror was actually none" and "how would anything be dusty?" have a clear meaning. However, we should emphasize on other two sentences of "Bodhi tree has been no tree" and "From the beginning, nothing has existed."

Bodhi Tree Has Been No Tree: As mentioned above, the writer of this line was an insignificant layman in the service of the monastery, who spent most of his time in pounding rice and splitting wood for the temple. He has such an unassuming air that nobody ever thought much of him, and therefore the entire community was now set astir to see this challenge made upon its recognized authority. But the fifth patriarch saw in this unpretentious monk a future leader of mankind, and decided to transfer to him the robe of his office. That man was the Sixth Patriarch Hui-nêng. If we, Zen practitioners, consider this is a koan; it must be one of the koans that illustrates Zen-truth through a negating

approach with nullifying or abrogating expressions. With this type of koan, we usually accuse the Zen masters of being negatory. But in fact, they did not negate anything. What they have done is to point out our delusions in thinking of the non-existent as existent, and the existent as non-existent, and so on.

Not One Thing Originated: The term "not one thing" points to the fact no phenomenon has a permanent substance as its basis. As a matter of fact, all things are nothing other than manifestations of emptiness. Zen master Yuan-wu boldly said, "No Buddhas have ever appeared on earth; nor is there anything that is to be given out as a holy doctrine. Bodhidharma, the First Patriarch of Zen, has never come east, nor has he ever transmitted any secret doctrine through the mind. Only people of the world, not understanding what all this means, seek the truth outside of themselves. What a pity that the thing they are so earnestly looking for being trodden under their own feet! This is not to be grasped by the wisdom of all the sages. However, we want to see the thing and yet it is not seen; we hear it and yet it is not heard; we talk about it and yet it is not talked about; we know it and yet it is not known. How does it so happen?" There is another dialogue between Zen master Yen-yang at Hsin-Hsing and his master, Zen master Chao-chou Ts'ung-shên in *The Wudeng Huiyuan*, Volume IV: One day, Yen-yang asked Chao-chou, "What would you say when I come to you with nothing?" Chao-chou said, "Fling it down to the ground." Protested Yen-yang, "I said that I had nothing; what shall I let go?" "If so, carry it away," was the retort of Chao-chou. Chao-chou has thus plainly exposed the fruitlessness of a nihilistic philosophy. To reach the goal of Zen, even the idea of "having nothing" ought to be done away with. Buddha reveals himself when he is no more asserted ; that is, for Buddha's sake Buddha is to be given up. This is the only way to come to the realization of the truth of Zen. So long as one is talking of nothingness or of the absolute one is far away from Zen, and ever receding from Zen. Zen practitioners should always remember that even the foothold of Sunyata must be kicked off. The only way to get saved is to throw oneself right down into a bottomless abyss. And this is, indeed, no easy task. Zen practitioners should always remember that when Zen denies, it is not necessary a denial in the logical sense. The same can be said of an affirmation. The idea is that the ultimate fact of

experience must not be enslaved by any artificial or schematic laws of thought, nor by any antithesis of "yes" and "no", nor by any cut and dried formulae of epistemology. Evidently Zen commits absurdities and irrationalities all the time; but this only apparently. No wonder it fails to escape the natural consequences, misunderstandings, wrong interpretations, and ridicules which are often malicious. The charge of nihilism is only one of these.

As mentioned above, the writer of these lines was an insignificant layman in the service of the monastery, who spent most of his time inpounding rice and splitting wood for the temple. He has such an unassuming air that nobody ever thought much of him, and therefore the entire community was now set astir to see this challenge made upon its recognized authority. But the fifth patriarch saw in this unpretentious monk a future leader of mankind, and decided to transfer to him the robe of his office. He had, however, some misgivings concerning the matter; for the majority of his disciples were not enlightened enough to see anything of deep religious intuition in the lines by the rice-pounder, Hui-Neng. If he were publicly awarded the honour they might do him harm. So the fifth patriarch gave a secret sign to Hui-Neng to come to his room at midnight, when the rest of the monks were still asleep. Then he gave him the robe as insignia of his authority and in acknowledgement of his unsurpassed spiritual attainment, and with the assurance that the future of their faith would be brighter than ever. The patriarch then advised him that it would be wise for him to hide his own light under a bushel until the proper time arrived for the public appearance and active propaganda, and also that the robe which was handed down from Bodhi-Dharma as a sign of faith should no more be given up to Hui-Neng's successors, because Zen was now fully recognized by the outside world in general and there was no more necessity to symbolize the faith by the transference of the robe. That night Hui-Neng left the monastery.

Chapter Eleven

A Profoundly Intuitive Insight of the Rice-Pounder, Hui-Neng

The writer of the gatha of “Bodhi tree has been no tree” was an insignificant layman in the service of the monastery, who spent most of his time in pounding rice and splitting wood for the temple. He has such an unassuming air that nobody ever thought much of him, and therefore the entire community was now set astir to see this challenge made upon its recognized authority. But the fifth patriarch saw in this unpretentious monk a future leader of mankind, and decided to transfer to him the robe of his office. He had, however, some misgivings concerning the matter; for the majority of his disciples were not enlightened enough to see anything of deep religious intuition in the lines by the rice-pounder, Hui-Neng. If he were publicly awarded the honour they might do him harm. So the fifth patriarch gave a secret sign to Hui-Neng to come to his room at midnight, when the rest of the monks were still asleep. Then he gave him the robe as insignia of his authority and in acknowledgement of his unsurpassed spiritual attainment, and with the assurance that the future of their faith would be brighter than ever. The patriarch then advised him that it would be wise for him to hide his own light under a bushel until the proper time arrived for the public appearance and active propaganda, and also that the robe which was handed down from Bodhi-Dharma as a sign of faith should no more be given up to Hui-Neng’s successors, because Zen was now fully recognized by the outside world in general and there was no more necessity to symbolize the faith by the transference of the robe. That night Hui-Neng left the monastery. Three days after Hui-Neng left Wang-Mei, the news of what had happened in secret became noised abroad throughout the monastery, and a group of indignant monks, headed by Hui-Ming, pursued Hui-Neng, who, in accordance with his master’s instructions, was silently leaving the monastery. When he was overtaken by the pursuers while crossing a mountain-pass far from the monastery, he laid down his robe on a rock near by and said to Hui-Ming: “This robe symbolizes our patriarchal faith and is

not to be carried away by force. Take this along with you if you desired to." Hui-Ming tried to lift it, but it was as heavy as a mountain. He halted, hesitated, and trembled with fear. At last he said: "I come here to obtain the faith and not the robe. Oh my brother monk, please dispel my ignorance." The sixth patriarch said: "If you came for the faith, stop all your hankerings. Do not think of good, do not think of evil, but see what at this moment your own original face even before you were born does look like." After this, Hui-Ming at once perceived the fundamental truth of things, which for a long time he had sought in things without. He now understood everything, as if had taken a cupful of cold water and tasted it to his own satisfaction. Out of the immensity of his feeling he was literally bathed in tears and perspirations, and most reverently approaching the patriarch he bowed and asked: "Besides this hidden sense as is embodied in these significant words, is there anything which is secret?" The patriarch replied: "In what I have shown to you there is nothing hidden. If you reflect within yourself and recognize your own face, which was before the world, secrecy is in yourself."

Chapter Twelve

Seeking Only to Be a Buddha, and Nothing Else

When the lay person named Hui Neng arrived at Huang Mei and made obeisance to the Fifth Patriarch, who asked him: “Where are you from and what do you seek?” Hui Neng replied: “Your disciple is a commoner from Hsin Chou, Ling Nan and comes from afar to bow to the Master, **seeking only to be a Buddha, and nothing else.**” The Fifth Patriarch said: “You are from Ling Nan and are therefore a barbarian, so how can you become a Buddha?” Hui Neng said: “Although there are people from the north and people from the South, there is ultimately no North or South in the Buddha Nature. The body of this barbarian and that of the High Master are not the same, but what distinction is there in the Buddha Nature?” Although there are people from the North and people from the South, there is ultimately no North or South in the Buddha Nature. This pleased the master very much. Hui-Neng was given an office as rice-pounder for the Sangha in the temple. More than eight months, it is said, he was employed in this menial labour, when the fifth patriarch wished to select his spiritual successor from among his many disciples. One day the patriarch made an announcement that any one who could prove his thorough comprehension of the religion would be given the patriarchal robe and proclaimed as his legitimate heir. At that time, Shen-Hsiu, who was the most learned of all the disciples and thoroughly versed in the lore of his religion, and who was therefore considered by his fellow monks to be the heir of the school, composed a stanza expressing his view, and posted it on the outside wall of the meditation hall, which read:

The body is like the bodhi tree,
The mind is like a mirror bright,
Take heed to keep it always clean,
And let no dust accumulate on it.

All those who read these lines were greatly impressed and secretly cherished the idea that the author of this gatha would surely be awarded the prize. But when they awoke the next morning they were surprised to see another gatha written alongside of it. The gatha read:

The Bodhi is not like the tree,
 (Bodhi tree has been no tree)
 The mirror bright is nowhere shining,
 (The shining mirror was actually none)
 As there is nothing from the first,
 (From the beginning, nothing has existed)
 Where can the dust itself accumulate?
 (How would anything be dusty?)

The writer of these lines was an insignificant layman in the service of the monastery, who spent most of his time inpounding rice and splitting wood for the temple. He has such an unassuming air that nobody ever thought much of him, and therefore the entire community was now set astir to see this challenge made upon its recognized authority. But the fifth patriarch saw in this unpretentious monk a future leader of mankind, and decided to transfer to him the robe of his office. He had, however, some misgivings concerning the matter; for the majority of his disciples were not enlightened enough to see anything of deep religious intuition in the lines by the rice-pounder, Hui-Neng. If he were publicly awarded the honour they might do him harm. So the fifth patriarch gave a secret sign to Hui-Neng to come to his room at midnight, when the rest of the monks were still asleep. The he gave him the robe as insignia of his authority and in acknowledgement of his unsurpassed spiritual attainment, and with the assurance that the future of their faith would be brighter than ever. The patriarch then advised him that it would be wise for him to hide his own light under a bushel until the proper time arrived for the public appearance and active propaganda, and also that the robe which was handed down from Bodhi-Dharma as a sign of faith should no more be given up to Hui-Neng's successors, because Zen was now fully recognized by the outside world in general and there was no more necessity to symbolize the faith by the transference of the robe. That night Hui-Neng left the monastery.

Chapter Thirteen

The Views and Understanding of the Great Vehicle

In Buddhism, Great Vehicle of salvation or Northern schools of Buddhism that emphasize the compassionate action of Bodhisattvas. The greater vehicle, one of the two great schools of Buddhism (Hinayana and Mahayana). The Mahayana arose in the first century BC. It is called Great Vehicle because its objective is the salvation of all beings. It opens the way of liberation to a great number of people and indeed, expresses the intention to liberate all beings. One of the most critical in Mahayana is that it stresses the value on laypersons. It emphasizes that laypersons can also attain nirvana if they strive to free themselves from worldly bondages. Major Mahayana sects include Hua-Yen, T'ien T'ai, Zen and the Pure Land. It should be noted that Mahayana spread from India to Tibet, China, Korea and Viet Nam. Mahayana doctrine is not only a highly developed and profound philosophy and psychology, it is also an accessible, dynamic vehicle for achievement of Buddhahood. The basic practice doctrine of Mahayana Buddhism is the cultivation of the six paramitas; among them, the perfection of wisdom is the crown of the six perfections, for it is the penetrative, direct understanding of emptiness will transform the practices of generosity, morality, patience, energy, and meditation into perfections. The role of the perfection of wisdom is unique among the six perfections, for it is in the light of the perfection of wisdom that we see the emptiness of the subject, object, as well as action of the other five perfections. For example, in the perfection of generosity, it is the perfection of wisdom that causes us to understand the emptiness of the subject of the action of giving or the giver, the emptiness of the object of giving or the recipient, and the emptiness of the gift. Similarly, in the perfections of morality, patience, energy, and meditation, it is through understanding the perfection of wisdom that one understands the purity or emptiness of the subject, object, and action present in every sphere of action. The practice of the six paramitas results in the accomplishment of the two accumulations of merit and knowledge. The

perfection of generosity, morality, and patience result in the accumulation of merit; while those of meditation and wisdom result in the accumulation of knowledge; the perfection of energy is necessary in both accumulations of merit and knowledge. These two accumulations is very necessary for the cultivation and achievement of the Buddhahood. Besides, four infinite minds or four perfections of virtues may also be termed stereological or altruistic perfections. They are great vows of the enlightened ones with intention to free all sentient beings. These Enlightened Beings use all kinds of skillful means to save themselves as well as to save others. Meanwhile, Mahayana meditation is the method of practicing meditation which is based on the Mahayana Sutras. Mahayana Meditation is considered as “Instant Awakening Meditation,” or “Supreme Meditation.” Mahayana Meditation emphasizes: “Everyone is able to meditate, is able to be awakened instantly and attain the Buddhahood.”

According to the Platform Sutra, Chapter Nine, on the fifteenth day of the first month, during the first year of the Shen-Lung reign (705 A.D.), Empress Tse-T'ien and Emperor Chung-Tsung issued the following proclamation: “We have invited Master Hui-Neng and Shen-Hsiu to the palace to receive offerings so that we may investigate the One Vehicle in the leisure time remaining after our myriad duties. The two Masters have declined, saying that in the South there is Dhyana Master Hui-Neng, who was secretly transmitted the robe and Dharma of the Great Master Hung-Jen who now transmits the Buddhas' mind-seal. We now send Chamberlain Hsieh Chien with this invitation, hoping that the Master will remember us with compassion and come to the capital.” The Master sent back a petition pleading illness saying that he wished to spend his remaining years at the foot of the mountain.

Hsieh Chien said, “What are the views and understanding of the Great vehicle?” The Master said, “The common person sees light and darkness as two, but the wise person comprehends that their nature is non-dual. The non-dual nature is the real nature. The real nature does not decrease in common people nor increase in worthy sages. In afflictions, it is not confused and in Dhyana concentration, it is not still. It is neither cut off nor permanent. It does not come or go. It is not inside, outside, or in the middle. It is not produced or destroyed. The nature and mark is ‘thus, thus.’ It permanently dwells and does not

change. It is called the ‘Way.’” Hsieh Chien said, “How does your explanation of the self-nature as neither produced nor destroyed differ from that of other religions?” The Master answered, “As non-production and non-extinction are explained by other religions, extinction ends production and production reveals extinction. Their extinction is not extinction and what they call production is not production. My explanation of non-production and non-extinction is this: originally there was no production and now there is no extinction. For this reason my explanation differs from that of other religions. If you wish to know the essentials of the mind, simply do not think of good or evil. You will then enter naturally the clear, pure substance of the mind, which is deep and permanently still, and whose wonderful abilities are as numerous as the sand grains in the Ganges River.” Hsieh Chien received this instruction and was suddenly greatly enlightened. He bowed, took leave and returned to the palace to report the Master’s speech. That year on the third of the ninth month a proclamation was issued (by the King) in praise of the Master. It read: “The Master has declined our invitation because of old age and illness. He cultivates the Way for us and is a field of blessings for the country. The Master is like Vimalakirti, who pleaded illness in Vashali. He spreads the great fruit widely, transmitting the Buddha-mind and discoursing on the non-dual Dharma. Hsieh Chien has conveyed the Master’s instruction, the knowledge and vision of the Tathagata. It must be due to accumulated good acts, abundant blessings and good roots planted in former lives that we now have met with the Master when he appears in the world and have suddenly been enlightened to the Supreme Vehicle. We are extremely grateful for his kindness, which we receive with bowed heads and now offer in return a Mo Na robe and crystal bowl as gifts. We order the Magistrate of Shao Chou to rebuild the temple buildings and convert the Master’s former dwelling place into a temple to be called ‘Kuo-Ên’ or the Country’s Kindness.”

Chapter Fourteen

Hui-Neng: The Lightning of The Mind of Non-Existence

According to Buddhism, our mind is all things that we see, hear and feel. Meanwhile, the mind of none-existence is the state of consciousness before the division into duality created by thought takes place. Thus, unconsciousness does not mean that we don't have a mind or have no mind, it does mean that we have a mind which is free from attachment to thoughts (free from self-consciousness). In Zen Buddhism, "No-Mind" describes a state consciousness before the division into duality created by thought takes place. Only when the mind is empty (does not have anything); thus it is called "mind of non-existence." Devout Buddhists should never say existence nor emptiness. Let's realize the emptiness nature of the mind, seeing all things as images reflected in the mind, we have no words to say whatsoever. Thought comes from nowhere, and then disappears. Watch our mind with no thought at all, then existence and emptiness will not bother us anymore. The Buddha taught that in cultivation, practitioners should take this mind to tame the deluded mind. In Zen, Mind of Non-Existence as a transcendental mind. Therefore, the mind of none-existence means the mind of non-duality, or normally speaking, the 'don't-know' mind. In the 'don't-know' mind, there is Buddha, no Dharma, no good, no bad, no light, no dark, no sky, no ground, no same, no difference, no emptiness, no form, no anything in it. If we keep the 'do not know' mind, seeing is the same as not seeing, hearing is the same as not hearing, working is the same as not working. This is the mind of no-attachment. We use our eyes, but there are no eyes. We use your mouth, but there is no mouth. If we keep a clear mind, red is red, white is white, we are not attached to red or to white. There is only red, only white. No attainment with nothing to attain. This means that before thinking there are no words and no speech. If we keep 'don't-know' mind, there is no-attainment, with nothing to attain. This is a truly empty mind. Empty mind is the mind which does not

appear or disappear. Buddhist practitioners, especially, Zen practitioners should always keep this mind at all times.

Patriarch Bodhidharma brought with him to China the Indian view that all this world comes from mind. What we may call Divine Mind, since it is beyond all limitations, just as the sun is beyond all clouds. His successors, up to the Fifth Patriarch, agreed that meditation should be such as to favor the reception of this pure light without stain or dust. The monk's mind was to be "a mirror bright" and must not "gather dust while it reflects," which means that he must be on guard. It was only upon the Hui-Neng's lightning that the doctrine of "Mind of Non-Existence" came forward. Mind of Non-Existence means beings' innate Buddhahood. The idea is that when every effort is put forward to achieve some task, and you are finally exhausted and have come to an end of your energy, you give yourself up so far as your consciousness is concerned. In fact, however, your conscious mind is still intensely bent on the work accomplished. "Man's extremity is God's opportunity." This is really what is meant by 'to accomplish the task by no-mind.' But there is also a philosophical construction of the idea of Buddha's no-mind. For, according to Zen philosophy, we are all endowed with the Buddha-nature from which Prajna issues, illumining all our activities, mental and physical. The Buddha-nature does this in the same way as the sun radiates heat and light, or as the mirror reflects everything coming before it, that is to say, unconsciously, with 'no-mind', in its adverbial sense. Hence it is declared that 'Buddha is unconscious' or 'By Buddhahood is meant the unconscious.' Philosophically speaking, therefore, no special conscious strivings are necessary; in fact they are a hindrance to the attainment of Buddhahood. We are already Buddhas. To talk about any sort of attainment is a desecration, and logically a tautology (môn Lập Thừa). 'Having no-mind,' or 'cherishing the unconscious,' therefore means to be free from all these artificial, self-created, double-roofing efforts. Even this 'having', this 'cherishing', goes against "Mind of Non-Existence."

The Buddha taught that in cultivation, practitioners should take this mind to tame the deluded mind. The ultimate reason itself is without words, but to give expression to it words are borrowed. The great Way has no form, but in order to come in contact the uncultivated

it reveals itself in form. So is the ultimate reason conscious or unconscious? According to Zen, it is unconscious. If it is unconscious, who is it that does all the seeing, hearing, remembering, and recognizing? And who is it that recognizes the Unconscious? Zen practitioner should always remember that just because of the Unconscious, seeing, hearing, remembering, and recognizing are possible; just because of the Unconscious, the Unconscious is recognized. So, how is it possible for the Unconscious to see, to hear, to remember, or to recognize? In fact, the Unconscious would be incapable of all this. Though a Zen practitioner is of the Unconscious, he can see, hear, remember, and recognize. If a Zen practitioner can see, hear, remember, and recognize, he cannot be of the Unconscious; he must be a conscious being. Zen practitioners should always remember that to see, to hear, to remember, and to recognize... these are the very acts of the Unconscious. Apart from the seeing, hearing, remembering, and recognizing, there is no Unconscious. Zen practitioners should always remember that if the mind has any perceivable form, it is not a real mind. The mind is not considered existing within, or without, or midway. Nor is it to be perceived as existing in any other possible places.

According to Zen master Hui-hai Ta-chou, in the Doctrine of the Vital Gate of Sudden Entry into the Way (Tun-wu Ju-tao Yao-men Lun), in the Unconscious there is right thought but no wrong thought. And right thought is to be conscious of Bodhi, enlightenment. However, Bodhi is unattainable; as to Bodhi, it is no more than a provisionally made-up word, and there is no corresponding individual reality to be the object of sense attainment. Nor is there any one who has ever attained it in the past or ever will attain it in the future; for it is something beyond attainability. Thus there is nothing for one to think of, except the Unconscious itself. This is called true thought. Bodhi means not to have any thought on anything, that is to say to be unconscious of all thing. To be unconscious of all things is to have no-mind on all occasions. When this is understood, we have the Unconscious, and when the Unconscious (wu-nien) is realized, emancipation follows by itself." Thus, Hui-hai evidently identified 'No Mind' (Wu-hsin) with 'No-thought' (Wu-nien), and as they mean the same thing, they can be translated as 'the Unconscious' or 'to be

unconscious' according to the case. Zen master Ta-hui told his disciple, Huang Po Cheng, "The so-called 'No-mind' is not like clay, wood, or stone, that is, utterly devoid of consciousness; nor does the term imply that the mind stands still without any reaction when it contacts objects or circumstances in the world. It does not adhere to anything, but is natural and spontaneous at all times and under all circumstances. There is nothing impure within it; neither does it remain in a state of impurity. He who observes his body and mind, sees them as magic shadows or as a dream. Nor does he abide in this magic and dreamlike state. When he reaches this point, then he can be considered as having arrived at the true state of No-mind." 'No Mind' (Wu-hsin) was used by Bodhidharma and 'No-thought' (Wu-nien) by Hui-neng and Shen-hui. While Hui-hai, here using them as synonyms, explains Bodhi (enlightenment) and emancipation by them.

In short, only after the Hui-Neng's lightning that the doctrine of "Mind of Non-Existence" burst out, Zen practitioners clearly see that the ultimate end of Zen discipline is a complete emancipation in not having attachment to anything, because everything belonging to this world of particulars is predictable in one way or another and not at all final. Final reality is above all categories, and therefore beyond thinkability or attainability. "No thought" (no-consciousness or thoughtlessness) is a Ch'an concept which is closely related to "no mind." It is a state of awareness in which one is no longer attached to some thoughts and averse (không muốn) to others. Attachments to one thought is said to lead to attachment of a series of thoughts, and this situation is the state of bondage, according to Ch'an. When one cuts off attachment to thoughts, the mind flows freely, not privileging some thoughts and rejecting others. According to Hui-Neng's Platform Sutra, "No thought is not thinking even when involved in thought." As he explains this idea, thought per se is not the issue, but rather whether or not one is attached to it. Attachment is based on the mistaken notion that the concept of a thing is the thing itself, but when one realizes that the things one desires are only fleeing mental events, attachment vanishes. According to the Sixth Patriarch Hui Neng, free from thought or the Unconscious is the name not only for ultimate reality but for the state of consciousness in which the ultimate presents itself. As long as our individual consciousness remains severed from Reality which is at

its back, its strivings are ego-centered consciously or unconsciously, and the outcome is a feeling of loneliness and pain. Consciousness must be made somehow to relate to the Unconscious, if it is not; and if it is, the relation must be realized, and this realization is known as the state of thoughtlessness. Good friends, to have an insight for once is to know what Buddhahood means. When the light of Prajna penetrates the ground nature of consciousness, it illuminates inside and outside; everything grows transparent, and one recognizes one's own inmost mind. To recognize the inmost mind is emancipation. When emancipation is attained, Prajna Samadhi obtains. To realize Prajna-Samadhi means to have the Unconscious. What is the Unconscious? It is to see all things as they are and not to become attached to anything; it is to be present in all places and yet not to become attached to anywhere; it is to remain for ever in the purity of self-nature; it is to let the six sense-robbers run out of the six sense-gates into the world of the six sense-objects, and yet not to become defiled therein, nor to get away therefrom; it is but to retain perfect freedom in going and coming. This is to realize Prajna-Samadhi, to be master of oneself, to become emancipated, and is known as living the Unconscious. He who understands the teaching of the Unconscious has a most thoroughgoing knowledge of all things. He who understands the teaching of the Unconscious sees into the spiritual realm of all Buddhahood. He who understands the 'abrupt' teaching of the Unconscious reaches the stage of Buddhahood.

Chapter Fifteen

Fragrance of Zen Flowers In the Jewel Platform Sutra

The Platform Sutra was preached by Hui-Neng, the Sixth Patriarch. The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch's Dharma Treasure, the basic text of the Southern Zen School in China. The Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch from the High Seat of the Dharma Treasure, basic Zen writing in which Sixth Patriarch's biography, discourses and sayings at Pao-Lin monastery are recorded by his disciples Fa-Hai. It is divided into ten chapters. At one time, the Sixth Patriarch arrived at Pao-Lin to speak the Dharma to the assembly. The Great Master said to the assembly, "Good Knowing Advisors, the self-nature of Bodhi is originally clear and pure. Simply use that mind, and you will directly accomplish Buddhahood. Good Knowing Advisors, when I moved to Nan Hai and, our family was poor and in bitter straits, I sold wood in the market place. Once a customer bought firewood and ordered it delivered to his shop. When the delivery was made, after I received the money and went outside the gate, I noticed a customer reciting a Sutra. Upon once hearing the words of this Sutra: 'One should produce that thought which is nowhere supported,' my mind immediately opened to enlightenment. Thereupon I asked the customer what Sutra he was reciting. The customer replied, 'The Diamond Sutra.' Then again I asked, 'Where do you come from and why do you recite this Sutra?' The customer said, 'I come from Tung Ch'an Monastery in Ch'i Chou, Huang Mei Province. There, the fifth Patriarch, the Great Master Hung Jen, dwells and teaches over one thousand disciples. I went there to make obeisance and I heard and received this Sutra.' The Great Master constantly exhorts the Sangha and laypeople only to uphold the Diamond Sutra. Then, they may see their own nature and directly achieve Buddhahood. Hui Neng heard this and desired to go to seek the Dharma but he recalled that his mother had no support. Karmic conditions originating from past lives led another man to give Hui Neng a pound of silver, so that he could provide clothing and food for his aging mother. The man further instructed him to go to Huang Mei to

call upon and bow to the Fifth Patriarch. When Hui Neng arrived at Huang Mei and made obeisance to the Fifth Patriarch, who asked him, "Where are you from and what do you seek?" Hui Neng replied, "Your disciple is a commoner from Hsin Chou in Ling Nan and comes from afar to bow to the Master, seeking only to be a Buddha, and nothing else." The Patriarch said, "You are from Ling Nan and therefore are a barbarian, so how can you become a Buddha?" Hui Neng said, "Although there are people from the north and people from the south, there is ultimately no north or south in the Buddha nature. The body of the barbarian and that of the High Master are not the same, but what distinction is there in the Buddha nature?" The Fifth Patriarch wished to continue the conversation, but seeing his disciples gathering on all sides, he ordered his visitor to follow the group off to work. Hui Neng said, "Hui Neng informs the High Master that this disciple's mind constantly produces wisdom and is not separate from the self nature. That, itself, is the field of blessing. It has not yet been decided what work the High Master will instruct me to do." The Fifth Patriarch said, "Barbarian, your faculties are too sharp. Do not speak further but go to the back courtyard." Hui Neng withdrew to the back courtyard where a cultivator ordered him to split firewood and thresh rice. More than eight months had passed when the Patriarch one day suddenly saw Hui Neng and said, "I think these views of yours can be of use, but I feared that evil people could harm you. For that reason, I have not spoken with you. Did you understand the situation?" Hui Neng replied, "Your disciple knew the Master's intention and stayed out of the front hall, so that others might not notice him."

The Jewel Platform Sutra emphasizes that Supreme Bodhi must be obtained at the very moment of speaking. After reading the Shen Hsiu's verse, "The body is a Bodhi tree, the mind like a bright mirror stand, time and again brush it clean, and let no dust alight." The Patriarch already knew that Shen Hsiu had not yet entered the gate and seen his own nature. At daybreak, the Patriarch called Court Artist Lu Chen to paint the wall of the south corridor. Suddenly, he saw the verse and said to the court artist, "There is no need to paint. I am sorry that you have been troubled by coming so far, but the Diamond Sutra says, 'whatever has marks is empty and false.' Instead leave this verse for people to recite and uphold. Those who cultivate in accordance with

this verse will not fall into the evil destinies and will attain great merit.” He then ordered the disciples to light incense and bow before it and to recite it, thus enabling them to see their own nature. The disciples all recited it and exclaimed, “Excellent!” At the third watch, the Patriarch called Shen Hsiu into the hall and asked him, “Did you write this verse?” Shen Hsiu said, “Yes, in fact, Hsiu did it. He does not dare to claim to the position of Patriarch but hopes the High Master will compassionately see whether or not this disciple has a little bit of wisdom.” The Patriarch said, “The verse which you wrote shows that you have not yet seen your original nature but are still outside the gate. With such views and understanding, you may seek supreme Bodhi but in the end will not obtain it. Supreme Bodhi must be obtained at the very moment of speaking. In recognizing the original mind at all times in every thought, you yourself will see that the ten thousand Dharmas are unblocked; in one truth is all truth and the ten thousand states are of themselves “thus”; as they are. The ‘thusness’ of the mind; that is true reality. If seen in this way, it is indeed the self nature of Supreme Bodhi.” The Patriarch continued, “Go and think it over for a day or two. Compose another verse and bring it to me to see. If you have been able to enter the gate, I will transmit the robe and Dharma to you.” Shen Hsiu made obeisance and left. Several days passed but he was unable to compose a verse. His mind was agitated and confused; his thoughts and moods were uneasy. He was as if in a dream; whether walking or sitting down, he could not be happy. Two days later, a young boy chanting that verse passed by the threshing room. Hearing it for the first time, Hui Neng knew that the writer had not yet seen his original nature. Although he had not yet received a transmission of the teaching, he already understood its profound meaning. He asked the boy, “What verse are you reciting?” “Barbarian, you know nothing,” replied the boy. The Great Master said that birth and death are profound concerns for people in the world. Wishing to transmit the robe and Dharma, he ordered his disciples to compose verses and bring them to him to see. The person who has awakened to the profound meaning will inherit the robe and Dharma and become the Sixth Patriarch. Our senior, Shen Hsiu, wrote this ‘verse without marks’ on the wall of the south corridor. The Great Master ordered everyone to recite it, for to cultivate in accordance with this verse is to avoid falling

into the evil destinies and is of great merit. According to the Sixth Patriarch Hui-Neng, studying the Dharma without recognizing the original mind is of no benefit. If one recognizes one's own original mind and sees one's original nature, then one is called a great hero, a teacher of gods and humans, a Buddha. Hui Neng cannot read, so he asked an official from Chiang Chou, Chang Jih Yung, to read Shen Hsiu's verse on the wall. After hearing the verse, Hui Neng said, "I, too, have a verse. Will the official please write it for me?" The official replied, "You, too, can write a verse? That is strange!" Hui Neng said to the official, "If you wish to study the Supreme Bodhi, do not slight the beginner. The lowest people may have the highest wisdom; the highest people may have the least wisdom. If you slight others, you create limitless, unbounded offenses." The official said, "Recite your verse and I will write it out for you. If you obtain the Dharma you must take me across first. Do not forget these words." Hui Neng's verse read: "Originally Bodhi has no tree, the bright mirror has no stand, originally there is not a single thing, where can dust alight?" After this verse was written, the followers all were startled and without exception cried out to one another, "Strange indeed! One cannot judge a person by his appearance. How can it be that, after so little time, he has become a Bodhisattva in the flesh?" The Fifth Patriarch saw the astonished assembly and feared that they might become dangerous. Accordingly, he erased the verse with his shoe saying, "This one, too, has not yet seen his nature." The assembly agreed. The next day the Patriarch secretly came to the threshing floor where he saw Hui Neng pounding rice with a stone tied around his waist and he said, "A seeker of the Way would forget his very life for the Dharma. Is this not the case?" Then the Fifth Patriarch asked, "Is the rice ready?" Hui Neng replied, "The rice has long been ready. It is now waiting only for the sieve." The Patriarch rapped the pestle three times with his staff and left. Hui Neng then knew the Patriarch's intention and, at the third watch, he went into the Patriarch's room. The Patriarch covered them with his precept sash in order to hide and he explained the Diamond Sutra for him, "One should produce a thought that is nowhere supported." At the moment he heard those words, Hui Neng experienced the great enlightenment and he knew that all the ten thousand dharmas are not separate from the self-nature. He said to the

Patriarch: “How unexpected! The self-nature is originally pure in itself. How unexpected! The self-nature is originally neither produced nor destroyed. How unexpected! The self-nature is originally complete in itself. How unexpected! The self-nature is originally without movement. How unexpected! The self-nature can produce the ten thousand dharmas.” The Fifth Patriarch knew of Hui Neng’s enlightenment to his original nature and said to him, “Studying the Dharma without recognizing the original mind is of no benefit. If one recognizes one’s own original mind and sees one’s original nature, then one is called a great hero, a teacher of gods and humans, a Buddha.” He received the Dharma in the third watch and no one knew about it. The Fifth Patriarch also transmitted the Sudden Teaching, the robe and bowl saying, “You are the Sixth Patriarch. Protect yourself carefully. Take living beings across by every method and spread the teaching for the sake of those who will live in the future. Do not let it be cut off.” Listen to my verse: “With feeling comes, the planting of the seed. Because of the ground, the fruit is born again. Without feeling, there is no seed at all. Without that nature, there is no birth either.”

Hui Neng arrived at Ts’ao His where he was again pursued by men with evil intentions. To avoid difficulty, he went to Szu Hui and lived among hunters for fifteen years, at times teaching the Dharma to them in an appropriate manner. The hunters often told him to watch their nets but whenever he saw beings who were still living he released them. At mealtimes, he cooked vegetables in the pot alongside the meat. When he was questioned about it, he would answer “I only eat vegetables alongside the meat.” One day Hui Neng thought, “The time has come to spread the Dharma. I cannot stay in hiding forever.” Accordingly, he went to Fa Hsing Monastery in Kuang Cou where Dharma Master Yin Tsung was giving lectures on The Nirvana Sutra. At that time there were two bhikshus who were discussing the topic of the wind and a flag. One said, “The wind is moving.” The other said, “The flag is moving.” They argued incessantly. Hui Neng stepped forward and said, “The wind is not moving, nor is the flag. Your minds, Kind Sirs, are moving.” Everyone was startled. Dharma Master Yin Tsung invited him to take a seat of honor and sought to ask him about the hidden meaning. Seeing that Hui Neng’s demonstration of the true

principles was concise and not based on written words, Yin Tsung said, “The cultivator is certainly no ordinary man. I heard long ago that Huang Mei’s robe and bowl had come south. Cultivator, is it not you?” Hui Neng said, “I dare not presume such a thing.” Yin Tsung then made obeisance and requested that the transmitted robe and bowl be brought forth and shown to the assembly. He further asked, “How was Huang Mei’s doctrine transmitted?” “There was no transmission,” replied Hui Neng. “We merely discussed seeing the nature. There was no discussion of Dhyana samadhi or liberation.” Yin Tsung asked, “Why was there no discussion of Dhyana samadhi or liberation?” Hui Neng said, “There are dualistic dharmas. They are not the Buddhadharma. The Buddhadharma is a dharma of non-dualism.” Yin Tsung asked further, “What is this Buddhadharma, which is the dharma of non-dualism?” Hui Neng said, “The Dharma Master has been lecturing The Nirvana Sutra says that to understand the Buddha-nature is the Buddhadharma, which is the Dharma of non-dualism. As Kao Kuei Te Wang Bodhisattva said to the Buddha, ‘Does violating the four serious prohibitions, committing the five rebellious acts or being an icchantika and the like cut off the good roots and the Buddha-nature?’ The Buddha replied, ‘There are two kinds of good roots: the first, permanent; the second impermanent. The Buddha-nature is neither permanent nor impermanent. Therefore it is not cut off.’” “That is what is meant by non-dualistic. The first is good and the second is not good. The Buddha-nature is neither good nor bad. That is what is meant by non-dualistic. Common people think of the heaps and realms as dualistic. The wise man comprehends that they are non-dualistic in nature. The non-dualistic nature is the Buddha-nature.” Hearing this explanation, Yin Tsung was delighted. He joined his palms and said, “My explanation of Sutra is like broken tile; whereas your discussion of the meaning, Kind Sir, is like pure gold.” He then shaved Hui Neng’s head and asked Hui Neng to be his master. Accordingly, under that Bodhi tree, Hui Neng explained the Tung Shan Dharma-door. Hui Neng obtained the Dharma at Tung Shan and has undergone much suffering, as if his life was hanging by a thread. “Today, in this gathering of magistrate and officials, of Bhikshus, Bhikshunis, Taoists, and laymen, there is not one of you who is not here because of accumulated ages of karmic conditions. Because in past lives you have

made offerings to the Buddhas and planted good roots in common ground, you now have the opportunity to hear Sudden Teaching, which is an opportunity to obtain the Dharma. This teaching has been handed down by former sages; it is not Hui Neng's own wisdom. You, who wish to hear the teaching of the former sages, should first purify your minds. After hearing it, cast aside your doubts, and that way you will be no different from the sages of the past." Hearing this Dharma, the entire assembly was delighted, made obeisance and withdrew.

The sixth patriarch Hui-Neng emphasizes that when there exist no thoughts of good or evil, original face manifests. Put aside all conditions, do not give rise to a single thought; with no thoughts of good and with no thoughts of evil, at just this moment, the manifestation of the so called 'original face'. When the Fifth Patriarch transmitted the robe and bowl to Hui Neng to go south, several hundred people took up pursuit, all hoping to steal the robe and bowl. One Bhikshu, Hui Ming, a coarse-natured man whose lay name had been Ch'en, had formerly been a fourth class military official. He was intent in his search and ahead of the others. When he had almost caught up with Hui Neng, the latter tossed the robe and bowl onto a rock, saying, "This robe and bowl are tokens of faith. How can they be taken by force?" Hui Neng then hid in a thicket. When Hui Ming arrived, he tried to pick them up but found he could not move them. He cried out, "Cultivator, Cultivator, I have come for the Dharma, not for the robe!" Hui Neng then came out and sat cross-legged on a rock. Hui Ming made obeisance and said, "I hope that the Cultivator will teach the Dharma for my sake." Hui Neng said, "Since you have come for the Dharma, you may put aside all conditions. Do not give rise to a single thought and I will teach it to you clearly." After a time, Hui Neng said, "With no thoughts of good and with no thoughts of evil, at just this moment, what is Superior One Hui Ming's original face?"

Meditation must be practiced in the mind, and not just recited in words. When the mouth recites and the mind does not practice, it is like an illusion, a transformation, dew drops, or lightning. According to the Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra, the Sixth Patriarch said: "If the preceding thought does not arise, it is mind. If the following thought does not end, it is Buddha. Thus, he advised one should not be afraid of rising thoughts, but only of the delay in being aware of them." The

following day, at the invitation of Magistrate Wei, the Master took his seat and said to the great assembly, “All of you purify your minds and think about Maha Prajna Paramita.” He then said, “All-Knowing Advisors, the wisdom of Bodhi and Prajna is originally possessed by worldly people themselves. It is only because their minds are confused that they are unable to enlighten themselves and must rely on a great Good Knowing Advisor who can lead them to see their Buddha-nature. You should know that the Buddha-nature of stupid and wise people is basically not different. It is only because confusion and enlightenment are different that some are stupid and some are wise. I will now explain for you the Maha Prajna Paramita Dharma in order that each of you may become wise. Pay careful attention and I will explain it to you.” Good Knowing Advisors, worldly people recite ‘Prajna’ with their mouths all day long and yet do not recognize the Prajna of their self-nature. Just as talking about food will not make you full, so, too, if you speak of emptiness you will not see your own nature in ten thousand ages. In the end, you will not have obtained any benefit. Good Knowing Advisors, Maha Prajna Paramita is a Sanskrit word which means ‘great wisdom which has arrived at the other shore.’ It must be practiced in the mind, and not just recited in words. When the mouth recites and the mind does not practice, it is like an illusion, a transformation, dew drops, or lightning. However, when the mouth recites and the mind practices, then mind and mouth are in mutual accord. One’s own original nature is Buddha; apart from the nature there is no other Buddha. What is meant by Maha? Maha means ‘great.’ The capacity of the mind is vast and great like empty space, and has no boundaries. It is not square or round, great or small. Neither is it blue, yellow, red, white. It is not above or below, or long or short. It is without anger, without joy, without right, without wrong, without good, without evil, and it has no head or tail. All Buddha-lands are ultimately the same as empty space. The wonderful nature of worldly people is originally empty, and there is not a single dharma which can be obtained. The true emptiness of the self-nature is also like this. Good Knowing Advisors, do not listen to my explanation of emptiness and then become attached to emptiness. The most important thing is to avoid becoming attached to emptiness. If you sit still with an empty mind you will become attached to undifferentiated emptiness. Good

Knowing Advisors, The emptiness of the universe is able to contain the forms and shapes of the ten thousand things: the sun, moon, and stars; the mountains, rivers, and the great earth; the fountains, springs, streams, torrents, grasses, trees, thickets, and forests; good and bad people, good and bad dharmas, the heavens and the hells, all the great seas, Sumeru and all mountains; all are contained within emptiness. The emptiness of the nature of worldly men is also like this. Good Knowing Advisors, the ability of one's own nature to contain the ten thousand dharmas is what is meant by 'great.' The myriad dharmas are within the nature of all people. If you regard all people, the bad as well as the good, without grasping or rejecting, without producing a defiling attachment, your mind will be like empty space. Therefore, it is said to be 'great,' or 'Maha.' Good Knowing Advisors, the mouth of the confused person speaks, but the mind of the wise person practices. There are deluded men who sit still with empty minds, vainly thinking of nothing and declaring that to be something great. One should not speak with these people because of their deviant views. Good Knowing Advisors, the capacity of the mind is vast and great, encompassing the Dharma realm. Its function is to understand clearly and distinctly. Its correct function is to know all. All is one; one is all. Coming and going freely, the mind's substance is unobstructed. That is Prajna. Good Knowing Advisors, all Prajna wisdom is produced from one's own nature; it does not enter from outside. Using the intellect correctly is called the natural function of one's true nature. One truth is all truth. The mind has the capacity for great things, and is not meant for practicing petty ways. Do not talk about emptiness with your mouth all day and in your mind fail to cultivate the conduct that you talk of. That would be like a common person calling himself the king of a country, which cannot be. People like that are not my disciples. Good Knowing Advisors, what is meant by 'Prajna?' Prajna in our language means wisdom. Everywhere and at all times, in thought after thought, remain undeluded and practice wisdom constantly; that is Prajna conduct. Prajna is cut off by a single deluded thought. By one wise thought, Prajna is produced. Worldly men, deluded and confused, do not see Prajna. They speak of it with their mouths, but their minds are always deluded. They constantly say of themselves, 'I cultivate Prajna!' And though they continually speak of emptiness, they are unaware of true

emptiness. Prajna, without form or mark, is just the wisdom of the mind. If thus explained, this is Prajna wisdom. What is meant by Paramita? It is a Sanskrit word which in our language means 'arrived at the other shore,' and is explained as 'apart from production and extinction.' When one is attached to states of being, production and extinction arise like waves. States of being, with no production or extinction, is like free flowing water. That is what is meant by 'the other shore.' Therefore, it is called 'Paramita.' Good Knowing Advisors, deluded people recite with their mouths, but while they recite they live in falsehood and in error. When there is practice in every thought that is the true nature. You should understand this dharma, which is the Prajna dharma; and cultivate this conduct, which is the Prajna conduct. Not to cultivate is to be a common person, but in a single thought of cultivation, you are equal to the Buddhas. Good Knowing Advisors, common people are Buddhas and affliction is Bodhi. The deluded thoughts of the past are thoughts of a common person. Enlightened future thoughts are the thoughts of a Buddha. Past thoughts attached to states of being are afflictions. And, future thoughts separate from states of being are Bodhi. Good Knowing Advisors, Maha Prajna Paramita is the most honored, the most supreme, the foremost. It does not stay; it does not come or go. All Buddhas of the three periods of time emerge from it. You should use great wisdom to destroy affliction, defilement and the five skandhic heaps. With such cultivation as that, you will certainly realize the Buddha Way, transforming the three poisons into morality, concentration, and wisdom. Good Knowing Advisors, my Dharma-door produces 84,000 wisdom from the one Prajna. Why? Because worldly people have 84,000 kinds of defilement. In the absence of defilement, wisdom is always present since it is not separate from the self-nature. Understand this dharma is simply no-thought, no-remembrance, non-attachment and the non-production of falsehood and error. Use your own true-suchness nature and, by means of wisdom, contemplate and illuminate all dharmas without grasping or rejecting them. That is to see one's own nature and realize the Buddha Way. Good Knowing Advisors, if you wish to enter the extremely deep Dharma realm and the Prajna samadhi, you must cultivate the practice of Prajna. Hold and recite the 'Diamond Prajna Paramita Sutra' and that way you will see your own

nature. You should know that the merit and virtue of this sutra is immeasurable, unbounded, and indescribable, as the Sutra text itself clearly states. This Dharma-door is the Superior Vehicle that is taught to the people of great wisdom and superior faculties. When people of limited faculties and wisdom hear it, their minds give rise to doubt. Why is that? Take this example, the rains which the heavenly dragons shower on Jambudvīpa. Cities and villages drift about in the flood like thorns and leaves. But if the rain falls on the great sea, its water neither increases nor decreases. If people of the Great Vehicle, the Most Superior Vehicle, hear the Diamond Sutra, their minds open up, awaken and understand. Then they know that their original nature itself possesses the wisdom of Prajna. Because they themselves use this wisdom constantly to contemplate and illuminate. And they do not rely on written words. Take for example, the rain does not come from the sky. The truth is that the dragons cause it to fall in order that all living beings, all plants and trees, all those with feeling and those without feeling may receive its moisture. In a hundred streams, it flows into the great sea and there unites in one substance. The wisdom of the Prajna of the original nature of living beings acts the same way. Good Knowing Advisors, when people of limited faculties hear this Sudden Teaching, they are like the plants and trees with shallow roots which, washed away by the great rain, are unable to grow. But at the same time, the Prajna wisdom which people of limited faculties possess is fundamentally no different from the Prajna that men of great wisdom possess. Hearing this Dharma, why do they not become enlightened? It is because the obstacle of their deviant views is a formidable one and the root of their afflictions is deep. It is like when thick clouds cover the sun. If the wind does not blow, the sunlight will not be visible. 'Prajna' wisdom is itself neither great nor small. Living beings differ because their own minds are either confused or enlightened. Those of confused minds look outwardly to cultivate in search of the Buddha. Not having awakened to their self-nature yet, they have small roots. When you become enlightened to the Sudden Teaching, you do not grasp onto the cultivation of external things. When your own mind constantly gives rise to right views, afflictions and defilement can never stain you. That is what is meant by seeing your own nature. Good Knowing Advisors, the ability to cultivate the conduct of not

dwelling inwardly or outwardly, of coming and going freely, of casting away the grasping mind, and of unobstructed penetration, is basically no different from the Prajna Sutra. Good Knowing Advisors, all sutras and writings of the Great and Small Vehicles, the twelve divisions of sutras, have been devised for people and established based on the nature of wisdom. If there were no people, the ten thousand dharmas would not exist. Therefore you should know that all dharmas are originally postulated for people and all sutras are spoken for their sake. Some people are deluded and some are wise; the deluded are small people and the wise are great people. The deluded people question the wise and the wise people teach Dharma to the deluded people. When the deluded people suddenly awaken and understand, their minds open to enlightenment and, therefore they are no longer different from the wise.

Also in the Jewel Platform Sutra, the sixth patriarch Hui-Neng taught: Good knowing Advisors, unenlightened, the Buddha is a living being. At the time of a single enlightened thought, the living being is a Buddha. Therefore, you should know that the ten thousand dharmas exist totally within your own mind. Why don't you, from within your own mind, suddenly see the truth (true suchness) of your original nature. The Bodhisattva-Sila-Sutra says, 'Our fundamental self-nature is clear and pure.' If we recognize our own mind and see the nature, we shall perfect the Buddha Way. The Vimalakirti Nirdesha Sutra says, 'Just then, you suddenly regain your original mind.' Good Knowing Advisors, each contemplates his own mind and sees his own original nature. If you are unable to enlighten yourself, you must seek out a great Good Knowing Advisor, one who understands the Dharma of the Most Superior Vehicle and who will direct you to the right road. Such a Good Knowing Advisor possesses great karmic conditions, which is to say that he will transform you, guide you and lead you to see your own nature. It is because of the Good Knowing Advisor that all wholesome Dharmas can arise. All the Buddhas of the three eras (periods of time), and the twelve divisions of Sutra texts as well, exist within the nature of people, that is originally complete within them. If you are unable to enlighten yourself, you should seek out the instruction of a Good Knowing Advisor who will lead you to see your nature. If you are one who is able to achieve self-enlightenment, you need not seek a teacher

outside. If you insist that it is necessary to seek a Good Knowing Advisor in the hope of obtaining liberation, you are mistaken. Why? Within your own mind, there is self-enlightenment, which is a Good Knowing Advisor itself. But if you give rise to deviant confusion, false thoughts and perversions, though a Good Knowing Advisor outside of you instructs you, he cannot save you. If you give rise to genuine Prajna contemplation and illumination, in the space of an instant, all false thoughts are eliminated. If you recognize your self-nature, in a single moment of enlightenment, you will arrive at the level of Buddha.

The Truth must be seen immediately at one glance, no gradations, no continuous unfolding. The Platform Sutra contains all the essentials of the abrupt doctrines. The Sixth Patriarch taught: "Oh my friends, have no fixed abode inside or outside, and your conduct will be perfectly free and unfettered. Take away your attachment and your walk will know no obstructions whatever. The ignorant will grow wise if they abruptly get an understanding and open their hearts to the truth. When the abrupt doctrine is understood there is no need of disciplining oneself in things external. Only let a man always have a right view within his own mind, no desires, no external objects will ever defile him. This is the seeing into his Nature. The seeing is an instant act as far as the mental eye takes the whole truth at one glance, the truth which transcends all kinds of dualism in all form; it is abrupt as far as it knows no gradations, no continuous unfolding."

Talking about the Samadhi of One Mark, the Sixth Patriarch told the assembly: "All of you Good Knowing Advisors should purify your minds and listen to my explanation of the Dharma. If you wish to realize all knowledge, you must understand the Samadhi of One Mark and the Samadhi of One Conduct. If you do not dwell in marks anywhere and do not give rise to hate and love, do not grasp or reject and do not calculate advantage or disadvantage, production and destruction while in the midst of marks, but instead, remain tranquil, calm and yielding, then you will have achieved the Samadhi of One Mark. In all places, whether walking, standing, sitting or lying down, to maintain a straight and uniform mind, to attain the unmoving Bodhimandala and the true realization of the Pure Land. That is called the Samadhi of One Conduct. One who perfects the two samadhis is

like earth in which seeds are planted; buried in the ground, they are nourished and grow, ripening and bearing fruit. The One Mark and One Conduct are just like that. Now, I speak the Dharma, which is like the falling of the timely rain, moistening the great earth. Your Buddha-nature is like the seeds, which receiving moisture, will sprout and grow. Those who receive my teaching will surely obtain Bodhi and those who practice my conduct certainly certify to the wonderful fruit. Listen to my verse"

The mind-ground contains every seeds;
 Under the universal rain they all sprout
 Flower and feeling-Sudden Enlightenment
 The Bodhi-fruit accomplishes itself."

Chapter Sixteen

Think Neither Good Nor Evil, Zen Flowers Bloom, Original Face Appears

In Zen Buddhism, former state of things or initial form or original form refers to one's buddha-nature (buddhata), the fundamental reality that is obscured by attachment to conceptual thoughts and language. The term is used in one of the best-known Koans, "What is your original face before your parents were born? Meanwhile, the term 'not thinking good, not thinking bad' is an expression for transcending the dualistic worldview in which phenomena are distinguished in terms of 'good' and 'bad', 'desirable' or 'repulsive', and judged on that basis. This is a state of mind that can only be actualized through the enlightenment experience of the sameness of nature of all phenomena. The expression 'not thinking good, not thinking bad' comes from a famous story of the Zen tradition, which is given as example 23 of the Wu-Men-Kuan. In it, Hui-neng, the sixth patriarch of Zen appears. He had received from the fifth patriarch, Hung-jen, the 'bowl and robe' and had thus been confirmed as his dharma successor and installed as the sixth patriarch. He was pursued by the followers of Shen-hsiu, who wanted to get these insignia of the patriarchate away from him by force. In the first part of example 23 of the Wu-Men-Kuan we hear further : "The sixth patriarch was once pursued by the monk Ming to Mount Ta-yu. When the patriarch saw Ming coming, he put the robe and bowl on a rock and said, 'This robe represents faith. It should not be fought over with violence. I leave it to you to take it.' Ming immediately tried to pick it up, but it was heavy like a mountain and could not be moved. Trembling and shaking, Ming sai, 'I came to seek the dharma, not to get this robe. Please review it to me.' The patriarch said, 'Think neither good nor bad. In this moment, what is the primordial face of Ming the monk? Right at this moment what is your own original face even before you were born does look like.' In that moment Ming suddenly experienced profound enlightenment. Sweat ran from his entire body. In tears he made his bows saying, 'Beside these secret words and secret meanings, is there anything of further significance?' The Sixth Patriarch

said, 'What I have just conveyed to you is not secret. If you reflect on your own face, whatever is secret will be right there with you.' Hui-ming said, 'Though I practiced at Huang-mei with the assembly, I could not truly realize my original face. Now, thanks to your pointed instruction, I am like someone who drinks water and knows personally whether it is cold or warm. Lay brother, you are now my teacher.' The Sixth Patriarch said, 'If you can say that, then, let us both call Huang-mei our teacher. Maintain your realization carefully.'" If the phrase, "Not thinking of good, not thinking of evil," is considered by itself, this koan is easily misinterpreted as being negative or nullifying. But the real point of the Sixth Patriarch's remark is in the words that follow: "right at this moment that is your own original face even before you were born does look like (right at this very moment, that is your real face)." We will see that nothing could be more direct and affirmative than this. According to Wu Men Hui-Kai in the Wu-Men-Kuan, it must be said that the Sixth Patriarch forgets himself completely in taking action here. He is like a kindly grandmother who peels a fresh lychee, removes the seed, and puts it into your mouth. Then you only need to swallow it down. According to the Platform Sutra, the First Chapter, the Sixth Patriarch Hui Neng said, "Since you have come for the Dharma, you may put aside all conditions. Do not give rise to a single thought and I will teach it to you clearly." After a time, Hui Neng said, "With no thoughts of good and with no thoughts of evil, at just this moment, what is Superior One Hui Ming's original face?" At these words, Hui Ming was greatly enlightened. Hui Ming asked further, "Apart from the secret speech and secret meanings just spoken, is there yet another secret meaning?" Hui Neng said, "What has been spoken to you is not secret. If you turn the illumination inward, the secret is with you." Hui Ming said, "Although Hui Ming was at Huang Mei, he has not yet awakened to his original face. Now that he has been favored with this instruction he is like one who drinks water and knows for himself whether it is cold or warm." The cultivator is now Hui Ming's master."

Later, according to Zen Master Daito (1282-1334) in *A First Zen Reader*: "All Zen students should devote themselves at the beginning to zazen (sitting in meditation). Sitting in either the fully locked position or the half-locked position, with the eyes half-shut, see the original face that was before father or mother was born. This means to

see the state before the parents were born, before heaven and earth were parted, before you received human form. What is called the original face will appear. The original face is something without color or form, like the empty sky in whose clarity there is not form. The original face is really nameless, but it is indicated by such terms as original face, the Lord, the Buddha-nature, and the true Buddha. It is as with man, who has no name at birth, but afterwards various names are attached to him. The seventeen hundred koan or themes to which Zen students devote themselves are all only for making them see their original face. The World-honored One sat in meditation in the snowy mountains for six years, then saw the morning star and was enlightened, and this was seeing his original face... Every time a thought arises, throw it away... The thoughts are like clouds, when the clouds have cleared, the moon appears. The moon of eternal truth is the original face."

One day Zen Master Bassui Tokusho (1327-1386) entered the hall to teach the assembly: "If you would free yourself of the sufferings of samsara, you must learn the direct way to become a Buddha. This way is no other than the realization of your own Mind. Now what is this Mind? It is the true nature of all sentient beings, that which existed before our parents were born and hence before our own birth, and which presently exists, unchangeable and eternal. So it is called one's Face before one's parents were born. This Mind is intrinsically pure. When we are born it is not newly created, and when we died it does not perish. It has no distinction of male or female, nor has it any coloration of good or bad. it cannot be compared with anything, so it is called Buddha-nature. Yet countless thoughts issue from this Self-nature as waves arise in the ocean or as images are reflected in a mirror... Imagine a child sleeping next to its parents and dreaming it is being beaten or is painfully sick. The parents cannot help the child no matter how much it suffers, for no one can enter the dreaming mind of another. If the child could awaken itself, it could be freed of this suffering automatically. In the same way, one who realizes that his own Mind is Buddha frees himself instantly from the sufferings arising from ignorance of the law of ceaseless change of birth-and-death." Zen Master Tokugaku (fifteenth century) wrote about the original face in Zen Poems of China and Japan as follows:

"Original Face is the reality of realities:
Stretch your hand to the winging bird.
Vertical nose, horizontal eye, and then?
What if your mind is empty?"

In the Opening the Hand of Thought, Zen Master Kosho Uchiyama mentioned a koan that asks, "What is your original face before your parents were born?" One might naturally assume that there is some special thing called "original face," but that is not the right approach. When we open the hand of thought, letting go, the original Self is there. It's not some special mystical state. Don't seek it somewhere else. When we open the hand of thought, that is original face. When we refrain from grasping our thoughts, we realize that the force that animates our lives and the force that moves the wind are the very same force. Our lives and the force that moves the wind are the very same. Our breath and the wind blowing are one.

Chapter Seventeen

Not to Cultivate Good, Not to do Evil, Cut off Sight and Sound, Mind Unattached

In Buddhism, good or wholesome is in contrast with evil or unwholesome. Good karma created by wholesome path such as practicing of the five precepts and the ten wholesome deeds, which will result in happiness. Good karmas are deeds that lead to birth in the Pure Land. According to the Dharmapada Sutra, verse 183, the Buddha taught: Not to do evil, to do good, to purify one's mind, this is the teaching of the Buddhas." Kusala karmas or good deeds will help a person control a lot of troubles arising from his mind. Inversely, if a person does evil deeds he will receive bad results in this life and the next existence which are suffering. Skillful actions are those that arise from an awareness of Unity, or nonseparation. Such actions, not overly bound by attachment to thoughts of self and other, are spontaneous, wise, and compassionate. Unskillful actions, on the other hand, grow out of the unwholesome roots of greed, hatred or anger, and delusion. As the primary delusion is that of self and other, thoughts and actions that arise from such condition of separation, of separateness we might say, tend to be reactive and self-protective. They can hardly form the basis of skillful life, that is, creative and fullfilling. For example, think of the first item of good character: not to kill but to cherish all life. It is not possible to commit murder unless the thought to take a life has arisen. One must have already seen a person as separate from oneself and one's own self-interest to conceive of him or her as someone to be killed. Out of this seed of separation, this thought in the mind, the deed can happen. Killing is the outward expression of a mind dominated by separation, specifically by anger or hatred. Deeds are thoughts made manifest. From unskillful thoughts, unskillful or pain-producing acts arise. Almost all action proceeds from thought."

However, before passing away, the Sixth Patriarch Hui-Neng convened his assembly and said, "All of you should take care. After my extinction, do not act with worldly emotion. If you weep in sorrow, receive condolences or wear mourning clothes, you are not my

disciples, for that is contrary to the proper Dharma. Simply recognize your own original mind and see your own original nature, which is neither moving nor still, neither produced nor extinguished, neither coming nor going, neither right nor wrong, neither dwelling nor departing. Because I am afraid that your confused minds will misunderstand my intention, I will instruct you again so that you may see your nature. After my extinction, continue to cultivate accordingly, as if I were still present. Should you disregard my teaching, then even if I were to remain in the world, you would obtain no benefit." He further spoke this verse:

Firm, firm: Do not cultivate the good.

High, high: Do not do evil.

Still, still: Cut off sight and sound.

Vast, vast: The mind unattached.

Chapter Eighteen

The Theory of Causation in the Spirit of the Jewel Platform Sutra

I. An Overview of the Theory of Causation in Buddhist Teachings:

Conditions mean the circumstantial, conditioning, or secondary cause, in contrast with the Hetu, the direct or fundamental cause. Hetu is the seed, Pratyaya is the soil, rain, sunshine, etc. So, conditions are external circumstances. If our cultivation power is weak, we can be attracted by external conditions; however, if our cultivation power is strong, no external environments can attract us. The sixth patriarch told the monks in Kuang Chou that: "It is not the wind moving, and it is not the flag moving, it is our mind moving." So if we follow the teachings of the sixth patriarch, no external environments can be fertilizers to our cycle of births and deaths. Change due to conditions means change because of outside conditions. In the Mind-Only Theories, condition itself is also called change. Practitioners should always remember that the condition of perception arising from the five senses. Immediate, conditional or environmental causes, in contrast with the more remote. A contributory or developing cause, i.e. development of the fundamental Buddha-nature; as compared with direct or true cause.

According to Prof. Junjiro Takakusu, the following definitions are based on the interpretation in his book titled *The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy*: First, conditioned arising means arising from the secondary causes, in contrast with arising from the primal nature or *bhutatatha* (Tánh giác). Second, everything arises from conditions and not being spontaneous and self-contained has no separate and independent nature. Third, Buddhism does not give importance to the idea of the Root-Principle or the First Cause as other systems of philosophy often do; nor does it discuss the idea of cosmology. Naturally such a branch of philosophy as theology did not have grounds to develop in Buddhism. One should not expect any discussion of theology from a Buddhist philosopher. As for the problem of creation, Buddhism is ready to accept any theory that science may advance, for Buddhism does not

recognize any conflict between religion and science. Fourth, according to Buddhism, human beings and all living things are self-created or self-creating. The universe is not homocentric; it is a co-creation of all beings. Buddhism does not believe that all things came from one cause, but holds that everything is inevitably created out of more than two causes. The creations or becomings of the antecedent causes continue in time-series, past, present and future, like a chain. This chain is divided into twelve divisions and is called the Twelve Divisioned Cycle of Causation and Becomings. Since these divisions are interdependent, the process is called Dependent Production or Chain of Causation. The formula of this theory is as follows: From the existence of this, that becomes; from the happening of this, that happens. From the non-existence of this that does not become; from the non-happening of this, that does not happen.

In Buddhist teachings, causation means conditioned arising, or arising from the secondary causes, in contrast with arising from the primal nature or *bhutatatha* (Tánh giác); or everything arises from conditions and not being spontaneous and self-contained has no separate and independent nature. Buddhism does not agree with the existence of a so-called “self,” nor a so-called Creator. But this doesn’t mean that all beings and things do not exist. They do not exist with a substratum or a permanent essence in them, as people often think, but according to Buddhism beings and things do exist as causal relatives or combinations. All becomings, either personal or universal, originate from the principle of causation, and exist in causal combinations. The center of causation is one’s own action, and the action will leave it latent energy which decides the ensuing existence. Accordingly, our past forms our present, and the present forms the future. In this world, we are continuously creating and changing ourselves as a whole. According to Buddhism, there’s nothing created by accident, nor there exists a so-called “the first cause”. All things in the phenomenal world are brought into being by the combination of various causes and conditions (twelve links of Dependent Origination), they are relative and without substantiality or self-entity. According to the *Majjhima Nikaya Sutra*, the Buddha taught: “Depending on the oil and wick does the light of the lamp burn; it is neither in the one, nor in the other, nor anything in itself; phenomena are, likewise, nothing in themselves. So

do we, we do not exist accidentally, but exist and live by means of this Law. As soon as we realize this fact, we become aware of our firm foundation and set our minds at ease. Far from being capricious, this foundation rests on the Law, with which nothing can compare firmness. This assurance is the source of the great peace of mind that is not agitated by anything. It is the Law that imparts life of all of us. The Law is not something cold but is full of vigor and vivid with life. All things are unreal; they are deceptions; Nirvana is the only truth.”

Dependent origination means that all phenomena are produced and annihilated by causation. This term indicates the following: a thing arises from or is produced through the agency of a condition or a secondary cause. A thing does not take form unless there is an appropriate condition. This truth applies to all existence and all phenomena in the universe. The Buddha intuitively perceived this so profoundly that even modern science cannot probe further. When we look carefully at things around us, we find that water, stone, and even human beings are produced each according to a certain pattern with its own individual character. Through what power or direction are the conditions generated that produce various things in perfect order from such an amorphous energy as “sunyata?” When we consider this regularity and order, we cannot help admitting that some rule exists. It is the rule that causes all things exist. This indeed is the Law taught by the Buddha.

From microscopic one-celled living creatures evolved into more sophisticated forms, culminating in man. Just consider that billions of years ago, the earth had no life; volcanoes poured forth torrents of lava, and vapor and gas filled the sky. However, when the earth cooled about two billions years ago, microscopic one-celled living creatures were produced. It goes without saying that they were produced through the working of the Law. They were born when the energy of “sunyata” forming the foundation of lava, gas, and vapor came into contact with appropriate conditions or a secondary cause. It is the Law that provided the conditions for the generation of life. Therefore, we realize that the Law is not cold, a mere abstract rule, but is full of vivid power causing everything to exist and live. Conversely, everything has the power of desiring to exist and to live. During the first two billions years of the development of the earth, even lava, gas, and vapor possessed the urge

to live. That is why one-celled living creatures were generated from them when the conditions were right. These infinitesimal creatures endured all kinds of trials, including extreme heat and cold, tremendous floods, and torrential rains, for about two billions years, and continued to live. Moreover, they gradually evolved into more sophisticated forms, culminating in man. This evolution was caused by the urge to live of these first microscopic creatures. Life had mind, through which it desired to live, from the time even before it existed on earth. Such a will exists in everything in the universe. This will exists in man today. From the scientific point of view, man is formed by a combination of elementary particles; and if we analyze this still more deeply, we see that man is an accumulation of energy. Therefore, the mind desiring to live must surely exist in man.

According to the Madhyamaka philosophy, the doctrine of causal law (Pratityasamutpada) is exceedingly important in Buddhism. It is the causal law both of the universe and the lives of individuals. It is important from two points of view. Firstly, it gives a very clear idea of the impermanent and conditioned nature of all phenomena. Secondly, it shows how birth, old age, death and all the miseries of phenomenal existence arise in dependence upon conditions, and how all the miseries cease in the absence of these conditions. The rise and subsidence of the elements of existence is not the correct interpretation of the causal law. According to the Madhyamaka philosophy, the causal law (pratityasamutpada) does not mean the principle of temporal sequence, but the principle of essential dependence of things on each other. In one word, it is the principle of relativity. Relativity is the most important discovery of modern science. What science has discovered today, the Buddha had discovered more than two thousand five hundred years before. In interpreting the causal law as essential dependence of things on each other or relativity of things, the Madhyamaka means to controvert another doctrine of the Hinayanists. The Hinayanists had analyzed all phenomena into elements (dharmas) and believed that these elements had a separate reality of their own. The Madhyamika says that the very doctrine of the causal law declares that all the dharmas are relative, they have no separate reality of their own. Without a separate reality is synonymous with devoid of real (sunyata), or independent existence. Phenomena are devoid of

independent reality. The most importance of the causal law lies in its teaching that all phenomenal existence, all entities in the world are conditioned, are devoid of real (sunya), independent existence (svabhava). There is no real, dependent existence of entities. All the concrete content belongs to the interplay of countless conditions. Nagarjuna sums up his teaching about the causal law in the following words: "Since there is no elements of existence (dharma) which comes into manifestation without conditions, therefore there is no dharma which is not 'sunya,' or devoid of real independent existence."

II. Causation in the Spirit of the Jewel Platform Sutra:

From Where Does Causation Arise?: Conditions mean the circumstantial, conditioning, or secondary cause, in contrast with the Hetu, the direct or fundamental cause. Hetu is the seed, Pratyaya is the soil, rain, sunshine, etc. So, conditions are external circumstances. According to Buddhist teachings, everything arises from conditions and not being spontaneous and self-contained has no separate and independent nature. According to Buddhism, human beings and all living things are self-created or self-creating. The universe is not homocentric; it is a co-creation of all beings. Buddhism does not believe that all things came from one cause, but holds that everything is inevitably created out of more than two causes. The creations or becomings of the antecedent causes continue in time-series, past, present and future, like a chain. This chain is divided into twelve divisions and is called the Twelve Divisioned Cycle of Causation and Becomings. Since these divisions are interdependent, the process is called Dependent Production or Chain of causation. The formula of this theory is as follows: From the existence of this, that becomes; from the happening of this, that happens. From the non-existence of this, that does not become; from the non-happening of this, that does not happen.

Two monks were arguing about the temple flag waving in the wind. One said, "The flag moves." The other said, "The wind moves." They argued back and forth but could not agree. The Sixth Patriarch said, "Gentlemen! It is not the wind that moves; it is not the flag that moves; it is you mind that moves." The two monks were struck with awe. According to Zen Master in Dropping Ashes on the Buddha, long ago in China, in the same way, with the leaves, wind, anger, etc., when your

mind is moving, the actions appear. But when your mind is not moving, the truth is just like this. The falling of the leaves is the truth. The sweeping is the truth. The wind's blowing them away is the truth. If your mind is moving, you can't understand the truth. You must first understand that form is emptiness, emptiness is form. Next, not form, no emptiness. Then you will understand that form is form, emptiness is emptiness. Then all these actions are the truth. And then you will find your true home. According to Wu Men Hui-Kai in the Wu-Men-Kuan, it is not the wind that moves. It is not the flag that moves. It is not the mind that moves. How do you see the Ancestral Teacher here? If you can view this matter intimately, you will find that the two monks received gold when they were buying iron. The Ancestral Teacher could not repress his compassion and overspent himself.

In fact, if our cultivation power is weak, we can be attracted by external conditions; however, if our cultivation power is strong, no external environments can attract us. The sixth patriarch told the monks in Kuang Chou that: "It is not the wind moving, and it is not the flag moving, it is our mind moving." So if we follow the teachings of the sixth patriarch, no external environments can be fertilizers to our cycle of births and deaths. Change due to conditions means change because of outside conditions. In the Mind-Only Theories, condition itself is also called change. Practitioners should always remember that the condition of perception arising from the five senses. Immediate, conditional or environmental causes, in contrast with the more remote. A contributory or developing cause, i.e. development of the fundamental Buddha-nature; as compared with direct or true cause.

Conditions: Fertilizers to the Cycle of Births and Deaths: Conditions are external circumstances. According to the Records of the Transmission of the Lamp (Ch'uan-Teng-Lu), Volume III and the Platform Sutra, the First Chapter, one day Hui Neng thought, "The time has come to spread the Dharma. I cannot stay in hiding forever." Accordingly, he went to Fa Hsing Monastery in Kuang Cou where Dharma Master Yin Tsung was giving lectures on The Nirvana Sutra. At that time there were two bhikshus who were discussing the topic of the wind and a flag. One said, "The wind is moving." The other said, "The flag is moving." They argued incessantly. Hui Neng stepped forward and said, "The wind is not moving, nor is the flag. Your minds,

Kind Sirs, are moving.” Everyone was startled. Dharma Master Yin Tsung invited him to take a seat of honor and sought to ask him about the hidden meaning. Seeing that Hui Neng’s demonstration of the true principles was concise and not based on written words. Many generations later, according to Zen Master in Dropping Ashes on the Buddha, long ago in China, in the same way, with the leaves, wind, anger, etc., when your mind is moving, the actions appear. But when your mind is not moving, the truth is just like this. The falling of the leaves is the truth. The sweeping is the truth. The wind's blowing them away is the truth. If your mind is moving, you can't understand the truth. You must first understand that form is emptiness, emptiness is form. Next, not form, no emptiness. Then you will understand that form is form, emptiness is emptiness. Then all these actions are the truth. And then you will find your true home. According to Wu Men Hui-Kai in the Wu-Men-Kuan, it is not the wind that moves. It is not the flag that moves. It is not the mind that moves. How do you see the Ancestral Teacher here? If you can view this matter intimately, you will find that the two monks received gold when they were buying iron. The Ancestral Teacher could not repress his compassion and overspent himself. If our cultivation power is weak, we can be attracted by external conditions; however, if our cultivation power is strong, no external environments can attract us. The sixth patriarch told the monks in Kuang Chou that: “It is not the wind moving, and it is not the flag moving, it is our mind moving.” So if we follow the teachings of the sixth patriarch, no external environments can be fertilizers to our cycle of births and deaths. Zen practitioners should always remember that we can see a flag waving in the wind, our mind is moving in that, for our mind is not a thing, and it has neither shape nor shadow. Existence is the mind manifesting; its true nature is the Emptiness. Be careful!

Chapter Nineteen

The Original Mind Is the Original Liberation

I. An Overview of Mind in Buddhist Point of View:

“Mind” is another name for Alaya-vijnana. Unlike the material body, immaterial mind is invisible. We are aware of our thoughts and feelings and so forth by direct sensation, and we infer their existence in others by analogy. The mind is the root of all dharmas. In Contemplation of the Mind Sutra, the Buddha taught: “All my tenets are based on the mind that is the source of all dharmas.” The mind has brought about the Buddhas, the Heaven, or the Hell. It is the main driving force that makes us happy or sorrowful, cheerful or sad, liberated or doomed. A Japanese term "Kokoro" for heart, mind, soul and spirit. Ancient people believed that 'kokoro' is in the chest area. In Zen, it means either the mind of a person in the sense of all his powers of consciousness, mind, heart and spirit, or else absolutely reality, the mind beyond the distinction between mind and matter. It is for the sake of giving practitioners an easier understanding of Mind, Buddhist teachers usually divide the mind into aspects or layers, but to Zen, Mind is one great Whole, without parts or divisions. The manifesting, illuminating, and nonsubstantial characteristics of Mind exist simultaneously and constantly, inseparable and indivisible in their totality. In Buddhist teachings, outside the mind, there is no other thing. Mind, Buddha, and all the living, these three are not different (the Mind, the Buddha and sentient beings are not three different things). Zen practitioners should always remember that nothing exists outside the mind (consciousness), since all phenomena are projections of consciousness.

In Buddhist point of view, man’s mind influences his body profoundly. If allowed to function viciously and indulge in unwholesome thoughts, mind can cause disaster, can even cause one’s death. But on the other hand, a mind imbued with wholesome thoughts can cure a sick body. When the mind is concentrated on right thoughts with right effort and right understanding, the effects it can produce are immense. Thus a mind with pure and wholesome thoughts leads to a

healthy and relaxed life. Mind is such a subtle and intricate phenomenon that it is impossible to find two men of the same mind. Man's thoughts are translated into speech and action. Repetition of such speech and action gives rise to habits and finally habits form character. Character is the result of man's mind-directed activities and so the characters of human beings vary. Thus to understand the real nature of life, one has to explore the innermost recesses of one's mind which can only be accomplished by deep self-introspection based on purity of conduct and meditation. The Buddhist point of view is that the mind or consciousness is the core of our existence. Of all forces the force of mind is the most potent. It is the power by itself. All our psychological experiences, such as pain and pleasure, sorrow and happiness, good and evil, life and death, are not attributed to any external agency. They are the result of our own thoughts and their resultant actions. To train our "force of mind" means to try to guide our minds to follow the wholesome path and to stay away from the unwholesome path. According to Buddhism teachings, training the mind doesn't mean to gain union with any supreme beings, nor to bring about any mystical experiences, nor is it for any self-hypnosis. It is for gaining tranquility of mind and insight for the sole purpose of attaining unshakable deliverance of the mind. For a long long period of time, we all talk about air, land and environment pollution, what about our mind pollution? Should we do something to prevent our minds from wandering far deep into the polluted courses? Yes, we should. We should equally protect and cleanse our mind. The Buddha once taught: "For a long time has man's mind been defiled by greed, hatred and delusion. Mental defilements make beings impure; and only mental cleansing can purify them." Devout Buddhists should always keep in mind that our daily life is an intense process of cleansing our own action, speech and thoughts. And we can only achieve this kind of cleansing through practice, not philosophical speculation or logical abstraction. Remember the Buddha once said: "Though one conquers in battle thousand times thousand men, yet he is the greatest conqueror who conquers himself." This is nothing other than "training of your own monkey mind," or "self-mastery," or "control your own mind." It means mastering our own mental contents, our emotions, likes and dislikes, and so forth. Thus, "self-mastery" is the greatest empire a man

can aspire unto, and to be subject to our own passions is the most grievous slavery.

II. Studying the Dharma Without Recognizing the Original Mind Is of No Benefit!:

The Sixth Patriarch Hui Neng cannot read, so he asked an official from Chiang Chou, Chang Jih Yung, to read Shen Hsiu's verse on the wall. After hearing the verse, Hui Neng said, "I, too, have a verse. Will the official please write it for me?" The official replied, "You, too, can write a verse? That is strange!" Hui Neng said to the official, "If you wish to study the Supreme Bodhi, do not slight the beginner. The lowest people may have the highest wisdom; the highest people may have the least wisdom. If you slight others, you create limitless, unbounded offenses." The official said, "Recite your verse and I will write it out for you. If you obtain the Dharma you must take me across first. Do not forget these words." Hui Neng's verse read: "Originally Bodhi has no tree, the bright mirror has no stand, originally there is not a single thing, where can dust alight?" After this verse was written, the followers all were startled and without exception cried out to one another, "Strange indeed! One cannot judge a person by his appearance. How can it be that, after so little time, he has become a Bodhisattva in the flesh?" The Fifth Patriarch saw the astonished assembly and feared that they might become dangerous. Accordingly, he erased the verse with his shoe saying, "This one, too, has not yet seen his nature." The assembly agreed. The next day the Patriarch secretly came to the threshing floor where he saw Hui Neng pounding rice with a stone tied around his waist and he said, "A seeker of the Way would forget his very life for the Dharma. Is this not the case?" Then the Fifth Patriarch asked, "Is the rice ready?" Hui Neng replied, "The rice has long been ready. It is now waiting only for the sieve." The Patriarch rapped the pestle three times with his staff and left. Hui Neng then knew the Patriarch's intention and, at the third watch, he went into the Patriarch's room. The Patriarch covered them with his precept sash in order to hide and he explained the Diamond Sutra for him, "One should produce a thought that is nowhere supported." At the moment he heard those words, Hui Neng experienced the great enlightenment and he knew that all the ten thousand dharmas are not

separate from the self-nature. He said to the Patriarch: “How unexpected! The self-nature is originally pure in itself. How unexpected! The self-nature is originally neither produced nor destroyed. How unexpected! The self-nature is originally complete in itself. How unexpected! The self-nature is originally without movement. How unexpected! The self-nature can produce the ten thousand dharmas.” According to the Platform Sutra, the First Chapter, when the Fifth Patriarch knew of Hui Neng’s enlightenment to his original nature and said to him, “Studying the Dharma without recognizing the original mind is of no benefit. If one recognizes one’s own original mind and sees one’s original nature, then one is called a great hero, a teacher of gods and humans, a Buddha.” He received the Dharma in the third watch and no one knew about it. The Fifth Patriarch also transmitted the Sudden Teaching, the robe and bowl saying, “You are the Sixth Patriarch. Protect yourself carefully. Take living beings across by every method and spread the teaching for the sake of those who will live in the future. Do not let it be cut off.” Listen to my verse:

“With feeling comes,
 The planting of the seed.
 Because of the ground,
 The fruit is born again
 Without feeling,
 There is no seed at all.
 Without that nature,
 There is no birth either.”

The Patriarch further said, “In the past, when the First Patriarch Great Master Bodhidharma first came to this land and people did not believe in him yet, he transmitted this robe as a symbol of faith to be handed down from generation to generation. The Dharma is transmitted from mind to mind, leading everyone to self-awakening and self-enlightenment. From ancient time, Buddha only transmits the original substance to Buddha; master secretly transmits the original mind to master. Since the robe is a source of contention, it should stop with you. Do not transmit it, for if you do, your life will hang by a thread. You must go quickly for I fear that people might harm you.” Hui Neng asked, “Where shall I go?” The Patriarch replied, “Stop at

Huai and hide at Hui.” Hui Neng received the robe and bowl in the third watch. He said, “Hui Neng is a Southerner and does not know these mountain roads. How does one reach the mouth of the river?” The Fifth Patriarch said, “You need not worry. I will accompany you.” The Fifth Patriarch escorted him to the Chiu Chiang courier station and ordered him to board a boat. The Fifth Patriarch took up the oars and rowed. Hui Neng said, “Please, High Master, sit down. It is fitting that your disciple take the oars.” The Patriarch replied, “It is fitting that I take you across.” Hui Neng said, “When someone is deluded, his master takes him across, but when he is enlightened, he takes himself across. Although the term ‘taking across’ is the same in each case, the function is not the same. Hui Neng was born in the frontier regions and his pronunciation is incorrect, yet he has received the Dharma transmission from the Master. Now that enlightenment has been attained, it is only fitting that he takes his own nature across.” The Patriarch replied, “So it is, so it is. Hereafter, because of you, the Buddhadharma will be widely practiced. Three years after your departure, I will leave this world. Start on your journey now and go south as fast as possible. Do not speak too soon, for the Buddhadharma arises from difficulty.” After Hui Neng took leave of the Patriarch, he set out on foot for the South. After two months, he reached the Ta Yu Mountain.

III. Recognition of Your Original Mind Is the Original Liberation:

The original mind means the mind nature from the beginningless time. According to the Buddhist teachings, no matter how confused or deluded we may be at the moment, the original mind or the fundamental nature of being is clear and pure. In the same way, clouds can temporarily obscure but cannot damage the light-giving power of the sun, so does the temporary afflictions of body and mind. The ultimate goal of all Buddhists, regardless of sects, is to uncover and make contact with this fundamental pure nature. According to Buddhist terminology, the ultimate goal of our individual human evolution is enlightenment or Buddhahood. This state can be achieved by everyone. This state can be achieved when all the delusions, greed, hatred, ignorance, etc presently obscure our mind have been

completely removed. According to the Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch's Dharma Treasure, the Sixth Patriarch, Hui-Neng, taught: "Good Knowing Advisor, when you contemplate and illuminate with the wisdom, which brightly penetrates within and without, you recognize your original mind. The recognition of your original mind is the original liberation. The attainment of liberation is the Prajna Samadhi, thus no-thought. What is meant by 'no-thought?' No-thought means to view all dharmas with a mind undefiled by attachment. The function of the mind pervades all places but is nowhere attached. Merely purify your original mind to cause the six consciousnesses to go out the six gates, to be undefiled and unmixed among the six objects, to come and go freely and to penetrate without obstruction. That is the Prajna Samadhi, freedom and liberation, and it is called the practice of no-thought. Not thinking of the hundred things and constantly causing your thought to be cut off is called Dharma-bondage and is an extremist view.

When one gives up their attachment, imagination, false discrimination, and so on, one restores the purity of their original mind, then both body and mind would be free from defilement and suffering. Also according to the Platform Sutra, the First Chapter, when the Fifth Patriarch knew of Hui Neng's enlightenment to his original nature and said to him, "Studying the Dharma without recognizing the original mind is of no benefit. If one recognizes one's own original mind and sees one's original nature, then one is called a great hero, a teacher of gods and humans, a Buddha." He received the Dharma in the third watch and no one knew about it. The Fifth Patriarch also transmitted the Sudden Teaching, the robe and bowl saying, "You are the Sixth Patriarch. Protect yourself carefully. Take living beings across by every method and spread the teaching for the sake of those who will live in the future. Do not let it be cut off." Listen to my verse:

'With feeling comes,
 The planting of the seed.
 Because of the ground,
 The fruit is born again
 Without feeling,
 There is no seed at all.
 Without that nature,

There is no birth either.”

Chapter Twenty

Buddha-Nature in the Point of View of the Jewel Platform Sutra

I. An Overview of Buddha-Nature in Buddhist Teachings:

Buddhata or Buddha-Nature means true nature, or wisdom faculty, the substratum of perfection, of completeness, intrinsic to both sentient and insentient life. The Buddha-nature within (oneself) all beings which is the same as in all Buddhas. Potential bodhi remains in every gati, all have the capacity for enlightenment; however, it requires to be cultivated in order to produce its ripe fruit. The seed of mindfulness and enlightenment in every person, representing our potential to become fully awakened and eventually a Buddha. The substratum of perfection, of completeness, intrinsic to both sentient and insentient life. In Zen, the attainment of enlightenment or becoming a Buddha is the highest aim of all beings. Since all beings possess this Buddha-nature, the question here is not to attain anything, but to be able to see and live with our originally perfect nature in our daily activities means the same thing with becoming a Buddha. Zen Master Huang-Po taught in *The Zen Teaching of Huang-Po*: "Our original Buddha-Nature is, in highest truth, devoid of any atom of objectivity. It is void, omnipresent, silent, pure; it is glorious and mysterious peaceful joy; and that is all. Enter deeply into it by awaking to it yourself. That which is before you is it, in all its fullness, utterly complete. There is naught beside. Even if you go through all the stages of a Bodhisattva's progress towards Buddhahood, one by one; when at last, in a single flash, you attain to full realization, you will only be realizing the Buddha-Nature which has been with you all the time; and by all the foregoing stages you will have added to it nothing at all." According to Hakuin, a famous Japanese Zen master, Buddha-nature is identical with that which is called emptiness. Although the Buddha-nature is beyond all conception and imagination, it is possible for us to awaken to it because we ourselves are intrinsically Buddha-nature. Charlotte Joko Beck wrote an interesting story in *Everyday Zen*: "There's a story of three people who are watching a monk standing on top of a hill. After they watch

him for a while, one of the three says, 'He must be a shepherd looking for a sheep he's lost.' The second person says, 'No, he's not looking around. I think he must be waiting for a friend.' And the third person says, 'He's probably a monk. I'll bet he's meditating.' They begin arguing over what this monk is doing, and eventually, to settle the squabble, they climb up the hill and approach him. 'Are you looking for a sheep?' 'No, I don't have any sheep to look for.' 'Oh, then you must be waiting for a friend.' 'No, I'm not waiting for anyone.' 'Well, then you must be meditating.' 'Well, no. I'm just standing here. I'm not doing anything at all... Seeing Buddha-nature requires that we... completely be each moment, so that whatever activity we are engaged in, whether we're looking for a lost sheep, or waiting for a friend, or meditating, we are standing right here, right now, doing nothing at all.'"

II. The Buddha-Nature Is the Non-Dualistic Nature in the Point of View of the Jewel Platform Sutra:

When Hui-Neng was thirty-nine years old, he decided it was time to assume his responsibilities. One day Hui Neng thought, "The time has come to spread the Dharma. I cannot stay in hiding forever." Then he made his way to Fa-shin Temple in Kuang-chou where Dharma Master Yin Tsung was giving lectures on The Nirvana Sutra. As he approached it, he saw a group of monks observing and discussing a flapping pennant. The first monk said, "It's the pennant that moves." Another objected, "The pennant is an inanimate object and has no power to move; it is the wind that moves." Then a third said, "The flapping of the pennant is due to the combination of flag and wind." Huineng interrupted the discussion, telling the monks, "It's neither wind nor pennant that moves; rather it's your own minds that move." Everyone was startled. Dharma Master Yin Tsung invited him to take a seat of honor and sought to ask him about the hidden meaning. Seeing that Hui Neng's demonstration of the true principles was concise and not based on written words, Yin Tsung said, "The cultivator is certainly no ordinary man. I heard long ago that Huang Mei's robe and bowl had come south. Cultivator, is it not you?" Hui Neng said, "I dare not presume such a thing." Yin Tsung then made obeisance and requested that the transmitted robe and bowl be brought forth and shown to the assembly. He further asked, "How was Huang Mei's doctrine

transmitted?” “There was no transmission,” replied Hui Neng. “We merely discussed seeing the nature. There was no discussion of Dhyana samadhi or liberation.” Yin Tsung asked, “Why was there no discussion of Dhyana samadhi or liberation?” Hui Neng said, “There are dualistic dharmas. They are not the Buddhadharma. The Buddhadharma is a dharma of non-dualism.” Yin Tsung asked further, “What is this Buddhadharma, which is the dharma of non-dualism?” Hui Neng said, “The Dharma Master has been lecturing The Nirvana Sutra says that to understand the Buddha-nature is the Buddhadharma, which is the Dharma of non-dualism. As Kao Kuei Te Wang Bodhisattva said to the Buddha, ‘Does violating the four serious prohibitions, committing the five rebellious acts or being an icchantika and the like cut off the good roots and the Buddha-nature?’ The Buddha replied, ‘There are two kinds of good roots: the first, permanent; the second impermanent. The Buddha-nature is neither permanent nor impermanent. Therefore it is not cut off.’” “That is what is meant by non-dualistic. The first is good and the second is not good. The Buddha-nature is neither good nor bad. That is what is meant by non-dualistic. Common people think of the heaps and realms as dualistic. The wise man comprehends that they are non-dualistic in nature. The non-dualistic nature is the Buddha-nature.” Hearing this explanation, Yin Tsung was delighted. He joined his palms and said, “My explanation of Sutra is like broken tile; whereas your discussion of the meaning, Kind Sir, is like pure gold.” He then shaved Hui Neng’s head and asked Hui Neng to be his master. Accordingly, under that Bodhi tree, Hui Neng explained the Tung Shan Dharma-door. Hui Neng obtained the Dharma at Tung Shan and has undergone much suffering, as if his life was hanging by a thread. “Today, in this gathering of magistrate and officials, of Bhikshus, Bhikshunis, Taoists, and laymen, there is not one of you who is not here because of accumulated ages of karmic conditions. Because in past lives you have made offerings to the Buddhas and planted good roots in common ground, you now have the opportunity to hear Sudden Teaching, which is an opportunity to obtain the Dharma. This teaching has been handed down by former sages; it is not Hui Neng’s own wisdom. You, who wish to hear the teaching of the former sages, should first purify your minds. After hearing it, cast aside your doubts, and that way you will be

no different from the sages of the past.” Hearing this Dharma, the entire assembly was delighted, made obeisance and withdrew.

III. Impermanence Is Just the Buddha Nature and Permanence Is Just the Mind Discriminating Good and Evil Dharmas:

One day, remembering the Master’s words, he made the long journey to have an audience. The Master said, “I have thought of you for a long time. What took you so long?” He replied, “The High Master once favored me by pardoning my crime. Although I have left home and although I practice austerities, I shall never be able to repay his kindness. May I try to repay you by transmitting the Dharma and taking living beings across? Your disciple often studies the Mahaparinirvana Sutra, but he has not yet understood the principles of permanence and impermanence. I beg the High Master to be compassionate and explain them for me.” The Master said, “Impermanence is just the Buddha nature and permanence is just the mind discriminating good and evil dharmas.” Hsing-Ch’ang replied, “High Master, your explanation contradicts the Sutra text!” The Master said, “I transmit the Buddha’s mind-seal. How could I dare to contradict the Buddhas’ Sutras?” Hsing-Ch’ang replied, “The Sutra says that the Buddha nature is permanent and the High Master has just said that it is impermanent; it says that good and evil dharmas, reaching even to the Bodhi Mind, are impermanent and the High Master has just said that they are permanent. This contradiction has merely intensified your student’s doubt and delusion.” The Master said, “Formerly, I heard Bhikshuni Wu Chin Tsang recite the Nirvana Sutra. When I commented on it, there was not one word or principle which did not accord with the sutra text. My explanation to you now is not different.” Hsing-Ch’ang replied, “Your student’s capacity for understanding is superficial. Will the High Master please explain further?” Then the Master said, “Don’t you understand? If the Buddha nature were permanent, what use would there be in speaking of good and evil dharmas? To the end of an aeon not one person would produce the Bodhi Mind. Therefore, I explain it as impermanent. That is exactly what the Buddha explained as the meaning of true permanence. Furthermore, if all dharmas were permanent, all things would have a self-nature subject to birth and death and the true permanent nature would not pervade all places.

Therefore, I explain it as impermanent. That is exactly what the Buddha explained as the meaning of the true permanence. It was for the sake of common people and those who belong to other religions who cling to deviant views of permanence, and for all those who follow the two-vehicle way, mistaking permanence for impermanence formulating the eight perverted views, that the Buddha in the ultimate Nirvana teaching destroyed their prejudiced views. He explained true permanence, true bliss, true selfhood and true purity. You now contradict this meaning by relying on the words, taking annihilation to be impermanence and fixing on a lifeless permanence. In this way you misinterpret the last, subtle, complete and wonderful words of the Buddha. Even if you read it a thousand times, what benefit could you derive from it?" Hsing-Ch'ang suddenly achieved the great enlightenment and spoke this verse:

"To those who hold impermanence in mind
The Buddha speaks of the permanent nature;
Not knowing expedients is like
Picking up pebbles from a spring pond.
But now without an effort
The Buddha nature manifests;
The Master did not transmit it,
And I did not obtain a thing."

The Master said, "Now you understand! You should be called Chih-Ch'e (breadth of understanding)." Chih-Ch'e thanked the Master, bowed and withdrew.

IV. When Zen Flowers Bloom, the Buddha-Nature Appears Regardless North or South:

After Hui Neng arrived at Huang Mei and made obeisance to the Fifth Patriarch, who asked him, "Where are you from and what do you seek?" Hui Neng replied, "Your disciple is a commoner from Hsin Chou in Ling Nan and comes from afar to bow to the Master, seeking only to be a Buddha, and nothing else." The Patriarch said, "You are from Ling Nan and therefore are a barbarian, so how can you become a Buddha?" Hui Neng said, "Although there are people from the north and people from the south, there is ultimately no north or south in the Buddha nature. The body of the barbarian and that of the High Master

are not the same, but what distinction is there in the Buddha nature?" The Fifth Patriarch wished to continue the conversation, but seeing his disciples gathering on all sides, he ordered his visitor to follow the group off to work. Hui Neng said, "Hui Neng informs the High Master that this disciple's mind constantly produces wisdom and is not separate from the self nature. That, itself, is the field of blessing. It has not yet been decided what work the High Master will instruct me to do." The Fifth Patriarch said, "Barbarian, your faculties are too sharp. Do not speak further but go to the back courtyard." Hui Neng withdrew to the back courtyard where a cultivator ordered him to split firewood and thresh rice. More than eight months had passed when the Patriarch one day suddenly saw Hui Neng and said, "I think these views of yours can be of use, but I feared that evil people could harm you. For that reason, I have not spoken with you. Did you understand the situation?" Hui Neng replied, "Your disciple knew the Master's intention and stayed out of the front hall, so that others might not notice him."

Chapter Twenty-One

Flowers of Prajna Wisdom In the Jewel Platform Sutra

One day, at the invitation of Magistrate Wei, the Master took his seat and said to the great assembly, “All of you purify your minds and think about Maha Prajna Paramita.” He then said, “All-Knowing Advisors, the wisdom of Bodhi and Prajna is originally possessed by worldly people themselves. It is only because their minds are confused that they are unable to enlighten themselves and must rely on a great Good Knowing Advisor who can lead them to see their Buddha-nature. You should know that the Buddha-nature of stupid and wise people is basically not different. It is only because confusion and enlightenment are different that some are stupid and some are wise. I will now explain for you the Maha Prajna Paramita Dharma in order that each of you may become wise. Pay careful attention and I will explain it to you.” Good Knowing Advisors, worldly people recite ‘Prajna’ with their mouths all day long and yet do not recognize the Prajna of their self-nature. Just as talking about food will not make you full, so, too, if you speak of emptiness you will not see your own nature in ten thousand ages. In the end, you will not have obtained any benefit. Good Knowing Advisors, Maha Prajna Paramita is a Sanskrit word which means ‘great wisdom which has arrived at the other shore.’ It must be practiced in the mind, and not just recited in words. When the mouth recites and the mind does not practice, it is like an illusion, a transformation, dew drops, or lightning. However, when the mouth recites and the mind practices, then mind and mouth are in mutual accord. One’s own original nature is Buddha; apart from the nature there is no other Buddha.

What is meant by Maha? Maha means ‘great.’ The capacity of the mind is vast and great like empty space, and has no boundaries. It is not square or round, great or small. Neither is it blue, yellow, red, white. It is not above or below, or long or short. It is without anger, without joy, without right, without wrong, without good, without evil, and it has no head or tail. All Buddha-lands are ultimately the same as empty space.

The wonderful nature of worldly people is originally empty, and there is not a single dharma which can be obtained. The true emptiness of the self-nature is also like this. Good Knowing Advisors, do not listen to my explanation of emptiness and then become attached to emptiness. The most important thing is to avoid becoming attached to emptiness. If you sit still with an empty mind you will become attached to undifferentiated emptiness. Good Knowing Advisors, The emptiness of the universe is able to contain the forms and shapes of the ten thousand things: the sun, moon, and stars; the mountains, rivers, and the great earth; the fountains, springs, streams, torrents, grasses, trees, thickets, and forests; good and bad people, good and bad dharmas, the heavens and the hells, all the great seas, Sumeru and all mountains; all are contained within emptiness. The emptiness of the nature of worldly men is also like this. Good Knowing Advisors, the ability of one's own nature to contain the ten thousand dharmas is what is meant by 'great.' The myriad dharmas are within the nature of all people. If you regard all people, the bad as well as the good, without grasping or rejecting, without producing a defiling attachment, your mind will be like empty space. Therefore, it is said to be 'great,' or 'Maha.'

Good Knowing Advisors, the mouth of the confused person speaks, but the mind of the wise person practices. There are deluded men who sit still with empty minds, vainly thinking of nothing and declaring that to be something great. One should not speak with these people because of their deviant views. Good Knowing Advisors, the capacity of the mind is vast and great, encompassing the Dharma realm. Its function is to understand clearly and distinctly. Its correct function is to know all. All is one; one is all. Coming and going freely, the mind's substance is unobstructed. That is Prajna. Good Knowing Advisors, all Prajna wisdom is produced from one's own nature; it does not enter from outside. Using the intellect correctly is called the natural function of one's true nature. One truth is all truth. The mind has the capacity for great things, and is not meant for practicing petty ways. Do not talk about emptiness with your mouth all day and in your mind fail to cultivate the conduct that you talk of. That would be like a common person calling himself the king of a country, which cannot be. People like that are not my disciples.

Good Knowing Advisors, what is meant by 'Prajna?' Prajna in our language means wisdom. Everywhere and at all times, in thought after thought, remain undeluded and practice wisdom constantly; that is Prajna conduct. Prajna is cut off by a single deluded thought. By one wise thought, Prajna is produced. Worldly men, deluded and confused, do not see Prajna. They speak of it with their mouths, but their minds are always deluded. They constantly say of themselves, 'I cultivate Prajna!' And though they continually speak of emptiness, they are unaware of true emptiness. Prajna, without form or mark, is just the wisdom of the mind. If thus explained, this is Prajna wisdom. What is meant by Paramita? It is a Sanskrit word which in our language means 'arrived at the other shore,' and is explained as 'apart from production and extinction.' When one is attached to states of being, production and extinction arise like waves. States of being, with no production or extinction, is like free flowing water. That is what is meant by 'the other shore.' Therefore, it is called 'Paramita.'

Good Knowing Advisors, deluded people recite with their mouths, but while they recite they live in falsehood and in error. When there is practice in every thought, that is the true nature. You should understand this dharma, which is the Prajna dharma; and cultivate this conduct, which is the Prajna conduct. Not to cultivate is to be a common person, but in a single thought of cultivation, you are equal to the Buddhas. Good Knowing Advisors, common people are Buddhas and affliction is Bodhi. The deluded thoughts of the past are thoughts of a common person. Enlightened future thoughts are the thoughts of a Buddha. Past thoughts attached to states of being are afflictions. And, future thoughts separate from states of being are Bodhi. Good Knowing Advisors, Maha Prajna Paramita is the most honored, the most supreme, the foremost. It does not stay; it does not come or go. All Buddhas of the three periods of time emerge from it. You should use great wisdom to destroy affliction, defilement and the five skandhic heaps. With such cultivation as that, you will certainly realize the Buddha Way, transforming the three poisons into morality, concentration, and wisdom. Good Knowing Advisors, my Dharma-door produces 84,000 wisdom from the one Prajna. Why? Because worldly people have 84,000 kinds of defilement. In the absence of defilement, wisdom is always present since it is not separate from the self-nature. Understand

this dharma is simply no-thought, no-remembrance, non-attachment and the non-production of falsehood and error. Use your own true-suchness nature and, by means of wisdom, contemplate and illuminate all dharmas without grasping or rejecting them. That is to see one's own nature and realize the Buddha Way.

Good Knowing Advisors, if you wish to enter the extremely deep Dharma realm and the Prajna samadhi, you must cultivate the practice of Prajna. Hold and recite the 'Diamond Prajna Paramita Sutra' and that way you will see your own nature. You should know that the merit and virtue of this sutra is immeasurable, unbounded, and indescribable, as the Sutra text itself clearly states. This Dharma-door is the Superior Vehicle, that is taught to the people of great wisdom and superior faculties. When people of limited faculties and wisdom hear it, their minds give rise to doubt. Why is that? Take this example, the rains which the heavenly dragons shower on Jambudvipa. Cities and villages drift about in the flood like thorns and leaves. But if the rain falls on the great sea, its water neither increases nor decreases. If people of the Great Vehicle, the Most Superior Vehicle, hear the Diamond Sutra, their minds open up, awaken and understand. Then they know that their original nature itself possesses the wisdom of Prajna. Because they themselves use this wisdom constantly to contemplate and illuminate. And they do not rely on written words. Take for example, the rain does not come from the sky. The truth is that the dragons cause it to fall in order that all living beings, all plants and trees, all those with feeling and those without feeling may receive its moisture. In a hundred streams, it flows into the great sea and there unites in one substance. The wisdom of the Prajna of the original nature of living beings acts the same way.

Good Knowing Advisors, when people of limited faculties hear this Sudden Teaching, they are like the plants and trees with shallow roots which, washed away by the great rain, are unable to grow. But at the same time, the Prajna wisdom which people of limited faculties possess is fundamentally no different from the Prajna that men of great wisdom possess. Hearing this Dharma, why do they not become enlightened? It is because the obstacle of their deviant views is a formidable one and the root of their afflictions is deep. It is like when thick clouds cover the sun. If the wind does not blow, the sunlight will not be visible.

'Prajna' wisdom is itself neither great nor small. Living beings differ because their own minds are either confused or enlightened. Those of confused minds look outwardly to cultivate in search of the Buddha. Not having awakened to their self-nature yet, they have small roots. When you become enlightened to the Sudden Teaching, you do not grasp onto the cultivation of external things. When your own mind constantly gives rise to right views, afflictions and defilement can never stain you. That is what is meant by seeing your own nature.

Good Knowing Advisors, the ability to cultivate the conduct of not dwelling inwardly or outwardly, of coming and going freely, of casting away the grasping mind, and of unobstructed penetration, is basically no different from the Prajna Sutra. Good Knowing Advisors, all sutras and writings of the Great and Small Vehicles, the twelve divisions of sutras, have been devised for people and established based on the nature of wisdom. If there were no people, the ten thousand dharmas would not exist. Therefore you should know that all dharmas are originally postulated for people and all sutras are spoken for their sake. Some people are deluded and some are wise; the deluded are small people and the wise are great people. The deluded people question the wise and the wise people teach Dharma to the deluded people. When the deluded people suddenly awaken and understand, their minds open to enlightenment and, therefore they are no longer different from the wise.

Good knowing Advisors, unenlightened, the Buddha is a living being. At the time of a single enlightened thought, the living being is a Buddha. Therefore, you should know that the ten thousand dharmas exist totally within your own mind. Why don't you, from within your own mind, suddenly see the truth (true suchness) of your original nature. The Bodhisattva-Sila-Sutra says, 'Our fundamental self-nature is clear and pure.' If we recognize our own mind and see the nature, we shall perfect the Buddha Way. The Vimalakirti Nirdeśha Sutra says, 'Just then, you suddenly regain your original mind.' Good Knowing Advisors, when I was with the High Master Jen, I was enlightened as soon as I heard his words and suddenly saw the true suchness (truth) of my own original nature. That is why I am spreading this method of teaching which leads students of the Way to become enlightened suddenly to Bodhi, as each contemplates his own mind and sees his

own original nature. If you are unable to enlighten yourself, you must seek out a great Good Knowing Advisor, one who understands the Dharma of the Most Superior Vehicle and who will direct you to the right road. Such a Good Knowing Advisor possesses great karmic conditions, which is to say that he will transform you, guide you and lead you to see your own nature. It is because of the Good Knowing Advisor that all wholesome Dharmas can arise. All the Buddhas of the three eras (periods of time), and the twelve divisions of Sutra texts as well, exist within the nature of people, that is originally complete within them. If you are unable to enlighten yourself, you should seek out the instruction of a Good Knowing Advisor who will lead you to see your nature. If you are one who is able to achieve self-enlightenment, you need not seek a teacher outside. If you insist that it is necessary to seek a Good Knowing Advisor in the hope of obtaining liberation, you are mistaken. Why? Within your own mind, there is self-enlightenment, which is a Good Knowing Advisor itself. But if you give rise to deviant confusion, false thoughts and perversions, though a Good Knowing Advisor outside of you instructs you, he cannot save you. If you give rise to genuine Prajna contemplation and illumination, in the space of an instant, all false thoughts are eliminated. If you recognize your self-nature, in a single moment of enlightenment, you will arrive at the level of Buddha.

Good Knowing Advisor, when you contemplate and illuminate with the wisdom, which brightly penetrates within and without, you recognize your original mind. The recognition of your original mind is the original liberation. The attainment of liberation is the Prajna Samadhi, thus no-thought. What is meant by 'no-thought?' No-thought means to view all dharmas with a mind undefiled by attachment. The function of the mind pervades all places but is nowhere attached. Merely purify your original mind to cause the six consciousnesses to go out the six gates, to be undefiled and unmixed among the six objects, to come and go freely and to penetrate without obstruction. That is the Prajna Samadhi, freedom and liberation, and it is called the practice of no-thought. Not thinking of the hundred things and constantly causing your thought to be cut off is called Dharma-bondage and is an extremist view. Good Knowing Advisors, one who awakens to the no-thought dharma completely penetrates the ten thousand dharmas; one

who awakens to the no-thought dharma sees all Buddha realms; one who awakens to the no-thought dharma arrives at the Buddha position. Good Knowing Advisors, those of future generations who obtain my Dharma, should take up this Sudden Teaching. The Dharma door including those of like views and like practice should vow to receive and uphold it as if serving the Buddhas. To the end of their lives they should not retreat, and they will certainly enter the holy position. In this way, it should be transmitted from generation to generation. It is silently transmitted. Do not hide away the orthodox Dharma and do not transmit it to those of different views and different practice, who believe in other teachings, since it may harm them and ultimately be of no benefit. I fear that deluded people may misunderstand and slander this Dharma-door and, therefore will cut off their own nature, which possesses the seed of Buddhahood for hundreds of ages and thousands of lifetimes.

Good Knowing Advisors, I have a verse of no-mark, which you should all recite. Those at home and those who have left home should cultivate accordingly. If you do not cultivate it, memorizing it will be of no use. Listen to my verse:

“With speech and mind both understood,
Like the sun whose place is in space,
Just spread the ‘seeing-the-nature way’
Appear in the world to destroy false doctrines.

Dharma is neither sudden nor gradual,
Delusion and awakening are slow and quick
But deluded people cannot comprehend
This Dharma-door of seeing-the-nature.
Although it is said in ten thousand ways,
United, the principles return to one;
In the dark dwelling of defilements,
Always produce the sunlight of wisdom.

The deviant comes and affliction arrives,
The right comes and affliction goes.
The false and true both cast aside,
In clear purity the state of no residue is attained.

Bodhi is the original self-nature;
 Giving rise to a thought is wrong;
 The pure mind is within the false:
 Only the right is without the three
 obstructions.

If people in the world practice the Way,
 They are not hindered by anything.
 By constantly seeing their own transgressions,
 They are in accord with the Way.

Each kind of form has its own way
 Without hindering one another;
 Leaving the Way to seek another way
 To the end of life is not to see the Way.

A frantic passage through a life,
 Will bring regret when it comes to its end.
 Should you wish for a vision of the true
 Way,
 Right practice is the Way.

If you don't have a mind for the Way,
 You walk in darkness blind to the Way;
 If you truly walk the Way,
 You are blind to the faults of the world.

If you attend to others' faults,
 Your fault-finding itself is wrong;
 Others' faults I do not treat as wrong;
 My faults are my own transgressions.

Simply cast out the mind that finds fault,
 Once cast away, troubles are gone;
 When hate and love don't block the mind,
 Stretch out both legs and then lie down.

If you hope and intend to transform others,
 You must perfect expedient means.
 Don't cause them to have doubts, and then
 Their self-nature will appear.

The Buddhadharma is here in the world;
 Enlightenment is not apart from the world.
 To search for Bodhi apart from the world
 Is like looking for a hare with horns.

Right views are transcendental;
 Deviant views are all mundane.
 Deviant and right completely destroyed:
 The Bodhi nature appears spontaneously.

This verse is the Sudden Teaching,
 Also called the great Dharma boat.
 Hear in confusion, pass through ages,
 In an instant's space, enlightenment.

The Master said further, "In the Ta Fan Temple I have just now spoken the Sudden Teaching, making the universal vow that all living beings of the Dharma realm will see their nature and realize Buddhahood as they hear these words." Then among Magistrate Wei and the officials, Taoists and lay people who heard what the Master said, there were none who did not awaken. Together they made obeisance and exclaimed with delight, "Good indeed! Who would have thought that in Ling Nan a Buddha would appear in the world."

Chapter Twenty-Two

Prajna-Paramita Emancipation in the Point of View of the Platform Sutra

I. An Overview & Meanings of Emancipation:

In Buddhism, "Emancipation" means to release from the round of birth and death. The liberation the experiencing of which is the goal of all Buddhists and all meditative training in Buddhism. Liberation is also used as a synonym for enlightenment. To emancipate from the round of birth and death means to deliverance from all the trammels of life, the bondage of the passion and reincarnation. Final emancipation or liberation, eternal liberation, release from worldly existence or the cycle of birth and death. Emancipation means the escaping from bonds and the obtaining of freedom, freedom from transmigration, from karma, from illusion, from suffering of the burning house in the three realms (lokiya). In Buddhism, it is not the Buddha who delivers men, but he teaches them to deliver themselves, even as he delivered himself. Above all, for Buddhist practitioners, emancipation denotes nirvana. Liberation or release from suffering through knowledge of the cause of suffering and the cessation of suffering, through realization of the four noble truths to eliminate defilements. Vimukti is the extinction of all illusions and passions. It is liberation from the karmic cycle of life and death and the realization of nirvana.

Generally speaking, all teachings of the Buddha are aimed at releasing human beings' sufferings and afflictions in this very life. They have a function of helping individual see the way to make arise the skilful thought, and to release the evil thought. For example, using compassion to release ill-will; using detachment or greedlessness to release greediness; using wisdom or non-illusion to release illusion; using perception to release selfishness; using impermanence and suffering to release "conceit." For lay people who still have duties to do in daily life for themselves and their families, work, religion, and country, the Buddha specifically introduced different means and methods, especially the Buddha's teachings in the Advices to Lay People (Sigalaka) Sutra. The Buddha also introduced other methods of

cultivation: “To abandon four wrong deeds of not taking life, not taking what is not given, not committing sexual misconduct, not lying, not doing what is caused by attachment, ill-will, or fear, not to waste one’s substance by the six ways of not drinking alcohol, not haunting the streets at unfitting time, not attending nonsense affairs, not gambling, not keeping bad company, and not staying idle. In addition, lay people should always live in the six good relationships of their families and society: between parents and children, between husband and wife, between teacher and student, among relatives and neighbors, between monks and lay people, between employer and employee, etc. These relationships should be based on human love, loyalty, sincerity, gratitude, mutual acceptance, mutual understanding and mutual respect because they relate closely to individuals’ happiness in the present. Thus, the Buddha’s Dharma is called the Dharma of liberation.

II. Prajna-Paramita Emancipation:

Paramita means to cross over from this shore of births and deaths to the other shore, or nirvana. In The Lankavatara Sutra, the Buddha gave three kinds of Paramitas. The Sanskrit term “Paramita” is transliterated into Chinese as “Po-luo-mi.” “Po-luo” is Chinese for “pineapple”, and “mi” means “honey.” In Buddhism, “Paramita” means to arrive at the other shore, to ferry across, or save, without limit. Paramita also means perfection, or crossed over, or gone to the opposite shore (reaching the other shore). Crossing from Samsara to Nirvana or crossing over from this shore of births and deaths to the other shore. Practice which leads to Nirvana. Paramita also means to achieve, finish, or accomplish completely whatever we do. For instance, if we decide to cultivate to become a Buddha, then the realization of Buddhahood is “Paramita.” The (six) practices of the Bodhisattva who has attained the enlightened mind. The term “Paramita” is popular for both Mahayana and Theravada Buddhism. The Buddha expounded the Prajna-paramita emancipation in the Avatamsaka Sutra. Sudhana asked Sucandra: “How does one come to the Prajna-paramita emancipation face to face? How does one get this realization?” Sucandra answered: “A man comes to this emancipation face to face when his mind is awakened to Prajnaparamita and stands in a most intimate relationship to it; for then he attains self-realization in all that he perceives and understands.”

Sudhana asked: "Does one attain self-realization by listening to the talks and discourses on Prajnaparamita?" Sucandra replied: "That is not so. Because Prajnaparamita sees intimately into the truth and reality of all things." Sudhana asked: "Is it not that thinking comes from hearing and that by thinking and reasoning one comes to perceive what Suchness is? And is this not self-realization?" Sucandra said: "That is not so. Self-realization never comes from mere listening and thinking. O son of a good family, I will illustrate the matter by analogy. Listen! In a great desert there are no springs or wells; in the spring time or summer time when it is warm, a traveller comes from the west going eastward; he meets a man coming from the east and asks him: 'I am terribly thirsty, please tell me where I can find a spring and a cool refreshing shade where I may drink, bathe, rest, and get revived.' The man from the east gives the traveller, as desired, all the information in detail, saying: 'When you go further east the road divides itself into two, right and left. You take the right one, and going steadily further on you will surely come to a fine spring and a refreshing shade. Now, son of a good family, do you think that the thirsty traveller from the west, listening to the talk about the spring and the shady trees, and thinking of going to that place as quickly as possible, can be relieved of thirst and heat and get refreshed? Sudhana replied: "No, he cannot; because he is relieved of thirst and heat and gets refreshed only when, as directed by the other, he actually reaches the fountain and drinks of it and bathes in it." Sucandra added: "Son of a good family, even so with the Bodhisattva. By merely listening to it, thinking of it, and intellectually understanding it, you will never come to the realization of any truth. Son of a good family, the desert means birth and death; the man from the west means all sentient beings; the heat means all forms of confusion; thirst is greed and lust; the man from the east who knows the way is the Buddha or the Bodhisattva who, abiding in all-knowledge has penetrated into the true nature of all things and the reality of sameness; to quench the thirst and to be relieved of the heat by drinking of the refreshing fountain means the realization of the truth by oneself. Sucandra added: "O son of a good family, the realm of self-realization where all the wise ones are living is free from materiality, free from purities as well as from defilements, free from grasped and grasping, free from murky confusion; it is most excellently pure and in

its nature indestructible; whether the Buddha appears on earth or not, it retains its eternal oneness in the Dharmadhatu. O son of a good family, the Bodhisattva because of this truth has disciplined himself in innumerable forms of austerities, and realizing this Reality within himself has been able to benefit all beings so that they find herein the ultimate abode of safety. O son of a good family, truth of self-realization is validity itself, something unique, reality-limit, the substance of all-knowledge, the inconceivable, non-dualistic Dharmadhatu, and the perfection of emancipation.” Thus, to Prajnaparamita emancipation must be personally experienced by us, and that mere hearing about it, mere learning of it, does not help us to penetrate into the inner nature of Reality itself.

As mentioned above, Maha-Prajna is the wisdom which enables one to reach the other shore, i.e. wisdom for salvation; the highest of the six paramitas, the virtue of wisdom as the principal means of attaining nirvana. It connotes a knowledge of the illusory character of everything earthly, and destroys error, ignorance, prejudice, and heresy. The prajna-paramita is a gate of Dharma-illumination; for with it, we eradicate the darkness of ignorance. Among the basic desires and passions, ignorance has the deepest roots. When these roots are loosened, all other desires and passions, greed, anger, attachment, arrogance, doubt, and wrong views are also uprooted. The prajna wisdom which enables one to reach the other shore, i.e. wisdom for salvation; the highest of the six paramitas, the virtue of wisdom as the principal means of attaining nirvana. It connotes a knowledge of the illusory character of everything earthly, and destroys error, ignorance, prejudice, and heresy. In order to obtain wisdom-paramita, practitioner must make a great effort to meditate on the truths of impermanence, no-self, and the dependent origination of all things. Once the roots of ignorance are severed, we can not only liberate ourselves, but also teach and guide foolish beings to break through the imprisonment of birth and death.

According to the Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch’s Dharma Treasure, the Sixth Patriarch, Hui-Neng, taught: “Good Knowing Advisors, Maha Prajna Paramita is a Sanskrit word which means ‘great wisdom which has arrived at the other shore.’ It must be practiced in the mind, and not just recited in words. When the mouth recites and the

mind does not practice, it is like an illusion, a transformation, dew drops, or lightning. However, when the mouth recites and the mind practices, then mind and mouth are in mutual accord. One's own original nature is Buddha; apart from the nature there is no other Buddha. What is meant by Maha? Maha means 'great.' The capacity of the mind is vast and great like empty space, and has no boundaries. It is not square or round, great or small. Neither is it blue, yellow, red, white. It is not above or below, or long or short. It is without anger, without joy, without right, without wrong, without good, without evil, and it has no head or tail. All Buddha-lands are ultimately the same as empty space. The wonderful nature of worldly people is originally empty, and there is not a single dharma which can be obtained. The true emptiness of the self-nature is also like this. Good Knowing Advisors, do not listen to my explanation of emptiness and then become attached to emptiness. The most important thing is to avoid becoming attached to emptiness. If you sit still with an empty mind you will become attached to undifferentiated emptiness. Good Knowing Advisors, The emptiness of the universe is able to contain the forms and shapes of the ten thousand things: the sun, moon, and stars; the mountains, rivers, and the great earth; the fountains, springs, streams, torrents, grasses, trees, thickets, and forests; good and bad people, good and bad dharmas, the heavens and the hells, all the great seas, Sumeru and all mountains; all are contained within emptiness. The emptiness of the nature of worldly men is also like this. Good Knowing Advisors, the ability of one's own nature to contain the ten thousand dharmas is what is meant by 'great.' The myriad dharmas are within the nature of all people. If you regard all people, the bad as well as the good, without grasping or rejecting, without producing a defiling attachment, your mind will be like empty space. Therefore, it is said to be 'great,' or 'Maha.' Good Knowing Advisors, what is meant by 'Prajna?' Prajna in our language means wisdom. Everywhere and at all times, in thought after thought, remain undeluded and practice wisdom constantly; that is Prajna conduct. Prajna is cut off by a single deluded thought. By one wise thought, Prajna is produced. Worldly men, deluded and confused, do not see Prajna. They speak of it with their mouths, but their minds are always deluded. They constantly say of themselves, 'I cultivate Prajna!' And though they continually speak of emptiness, they are

unaware of true emptiness. Prajna, without form or mark, is just the wisdom of the mind. If thus explained, this is Prajna wisdom. What is meant by Paramita? It is a Sanskrit word which in our language means 'arrived at the other shore,' and is explained as 'apart from production and extinction.' When one is attached to states of being, production and extinction arise like waves. States of being, with no production or extinction, is like free flowing water. That is what is meant by 'the other shore.' Therefore, it is called 'Paramita.' Good Knowing Advisors, Maha Prajna Paramita is the most honored, the most supreme, the foremost. It does not stay; it does not come or go. All Buddhas of the three periods of time emerge from it. You should use great wisdom to destroy affliction, defilement and the five skandhic heaps. With such cultivation as that, you will certainly realize the Buddha Way, transforming the three poisons into morality, concentration, and wisdom.

Chapter Twenty-Three

Flowers of No Thoughts In the Jewel Platform Sutra

I. Thoughtlessness and Mindlessness in the Jewel Platform Sutra:

“No thought” is a Ch’an concept which is closely related to “no mind.” It is a state of awareness in which one is no longer attached to some thoughts and averse (không muốn) to others. Attachments to one thought is said to lead to attachment of a series of thoughts, and this situation is the state of bondage, according to Ch’an. When one cuts off attachment to thoughts, the mind flows freely, not privileging some thoughts and rejecting others. According to Hui-Neng’s Platform Sutra, “No thought is not thinking even when involved in thought.” As he explains this idea, thought per se is not the issue, but rather whether or not one is attached to it. Attachment is based on the mistaken notion that the concept of a thing is the thing itself, but when one realizes that the things one desires are only fleeing mental events, attachment vanishes. According to Zen master Hui-hai Ta-chou, in the Doctrine of the Vital Gate of Sudden Entry into the Way (Tun-wu Ju-tao Yao-men Lun), in the Unconscious there is right thought but no wrong thought. And right thought is to be conscious of Bodhi, or enlightenment. However, Bodhi is unattainable; as to Bodhi, it is no more than a provisionally made-up word, and there is no corresponding individual reality to be the object of sense attainment. Nor is there any one who has ever attained it in the past or ever will attain it in the future; for it is something beyond attainability. Thus there is nothing for one to think of, except the Unconscious itself. This is called true thought. Bodhi means not to have any thought on anything, that is to say to be unconscious of all things. To be unconscious of all things is to have no-mind on all occasions. When this is understood, we have the Unconscious, and when the Unconscious (wu-nien) is realized, emancipation follows by itself.”

II. Flowers of No Thoughts In the Jewel Platform Sutra:

According to the Sixth Patriarch Hui Neng, free from thought or the Unconscious is the name not only for ultimate reality but for the state of consciousness in which the ultimate presents itself. As long as our individual consciousness remains severed from Reality which is at its back, its strivings are ego-centered consciously or unconsciously, and the outcome is a feeling of loneliness and pain. Consciousness must be made somehow to relate to the Unconscious, if it is not; and if it is, the relation must be realized, and this realization is known as the state of thoughtlessness. Good friends, to have an insight for once is to know what Buddhahood means. When the light of Prajna penetrates the ground nature of consciousness, it illuminates inside and outside; everything grows transparent, and one recognizes one's own inmost mind. To recognize the inmost mind is emancipation. When emancipation is attained, Prajna Samadhi obtains. To realize Prajna-Samadhi means to have the Unconscious. What is the Unconscious? It is to see all things as they are and not to become attached to anything; it is to be present in all places and yet not to become attached to anywhere; it is to remain for ever in the purity of self-nature; it is to let the six sense-robbers run out of the six sense-gates into the world of the six sense-objects, and yet not to become defiled therein, nor to get away therefrom; it is but to retain perfect freedom in going and coming. This is to realize Prajna-Samadhi, to be master of oneself, to become emancipated, and is known as living the Unconscious. He who understands the teaching of the Unconscious has a most thoroughgoing knowledge of all things. He who understands the teaching of the Unconscious sees into the spiritual realm of all Buddhahood. He who understands the 'abrupt' teaching of the Unconscious reaches the stage of Buddhahood.

According to the Jewel Platform Sutra, the Sixth Patriarch Hui-Neng taught: Good Knowing Advisors, one who awakens to the no-thought dharma completely penetrates the ten thousand dharmas; one who awakens to the no-thought dharma sees all Buddha realms; one who awakens to the no-thought dharma arrives at the Buddha position. According to the Sixth Patriarch Hui-Neng, the attainment of the Tao does not involve a continuous movement from error to truth, or from ignorance to enlightenment. Nowadays, all Zen masters agree with the

patriarch and proclaim that there is no enlightenment whatever which you can claim to have attained. If you say you have attained something, this is the surest proof that you have gone astray. Therefore, not to have is to have; silence is thunder; ignorance is enlightenment; the holy disciples of the purity-path go to hell while the precept-violating Bhikshus attain Nirvana; the wiping-off means dirt-accumulating; all these paradoxical sayings, and Zen literature is filled with them, are no more than so many negations of the continuous movement from discrimination to non-discrimination, from affectability to non-affectability, and so on, and so on... The idea of continuous movement fails to account for the facts, first, that the moving process stops at the originally bright mirror, and makes no further attempt to go on indefinitely, and secondly, that the pure nature of the mirror suffers itself to be defiled, i.e. that from one object comes another object absolutely contradicting it. To put this another way: absolute negation is needed, but can it be possible when the process is continuous? Here is the reason why Hui-Neng persistently opposes the view cherished by his opponents. He does not espouse the doctrine of continuity which is the Gradual School of Shen-Hsiu. All those who hold the view of a continuous movement belong to the latter. Hui-Neng, on the other hand, is the champion of the Abrupt School. According to this school the movement from ignorance to enlightenment is abrupt and not gradual, discrete and not continuous. That the process of enlightenment is abrupt means that there is a leap, logical and psychological, in the Buddhist experience. The logical leap is that the ordinary process of reasoning stops short, and what has been considered irrational is perceived to be perfectly natural, while the psychological leap is that the borders of consciousness are overstepped and one is plunged into the Unconscious which is not, after all, unconscious. This process is discrete, abrupt, and altogether beyond calculation; this is "Seeing into one's Self-nature."

If one's self-nature is understood, one 'satori' is enough to make one attain the Way and rise to a state of Buddhahood. In the Platform Sutra, Hui Neng said: "Oh friends, while under Hung-Jen Master I had a satori by just once listening to his words, and abruptly saw into the original nature of Suchness. This is the reason why I wish to see this teaching propagated, so that seekers of the truth may also be abruptly

have an insight into Bodhi, see each by himself what his mind is, what original nature is. All the Buddhas of the past, present, and future, and all the Sutras belonging to the twelve divisions are in the self-nature of each individual, where they were from the first. There is within oneself that which knows, and thereby one has "satori." If there rises an erroneous thought, falsehood and perversions obtain; and no outsiders, however wise, are able to instruct such people, who are, indeed, beyond help. But if there takes place an illumination by means of genuine Prajna, all falsehood vanish in an instant. If one's self-nature is understood, one 'satori' is enough to make one rise to a state of Buddhahood. Oh friends, when there is a Prajna illumination, the inside as well as the outside becomes thoroughly translucent, and a man knows by himself what his original mind is, which is no more than emancipation. When emancipation is obtained, it is the Prajna-samadhi, and when this Prajna-samadhi is understood, there is realized a state of "thoughtlessness."

Shen Hui was one of the great disciples of the Sixth Patriarch Hui Neng, and it was his school that flourished most immediately after the death of the master, for he bravely erected the standard of the "abrupt school" against the "gradual school" of Shen Hsiu, the rival of Hui Neng. After the death of Hui Neng, Zen master Shen Hui also continued to emphasize the teaching on the Unconscious. One day, Chang Yen Kung (686-760) asked Shen Hui: "Master usually speaks of the Unconscious, advising people to discipline themselves in it. Is this Unconscious to be regarded as existent or non-existent?" Zen master Shen Hui answered: "The Unconscious is not describable as either existent or non-existent." Chang Yen Kung asked: "Why is it not describable as either existent or non-existent?" Shen Hui answered: "When it is said to be existent, this is not the sense which people of the world give to it. When it is said to be non-existent, it is not the sense which people of the world give to it. For this reason, the Unconscious is not to be considered either existent or non-existent." Chang Yen Kung asked: "What kind of thing do you call it, then?" Shen Hui answered: "The term 'thing' is inapplicable here." Chang Yen Kung asked: "If so, what term is applicable?" Shen Hui answered: "No designation is possible. Hence the Unconscious. It is beyond characterization. The reason why it is spoken of here at all is that questions are asked about

it. If no questions were ever raised, there would be no talking about it whatever. For instance, when the mirror has no objects before it, there is no images in it. The images are now perceivable in it is due to the fact that it stands before objects. Images are therefore there.” Chang Yen Kung asked: “If the mirror has no objects before it, is it illuminating or not illuminating?” Shen Hui answered: “I just spoke of its illuminating objects, but whether it stands before an object or not, it is ever illuminating.” Chang Yen Kung asked: “If it has no form, if it is not to be described in any sense, as it is altogether beyond existence and non-existence, and yet it is said to be illuminating, what does it illuminate?” Shen Hui answered: “When the mirror is said to be illuminating, it is because its self-nature has this quality of brightness. When the Mind of all beings is pure, the great light of knowledge which by nature belongs to it will illuminate all the worlds.” Chang Yen Kung asked: “If this be the case, when is it possible to have it?” Shen Hui answered: “Only by seeing into nothingness.” Chang Yen Kung asked: “Nothingness, is this not something to see?” Shen Hui answered: “Though there is the act of seeing, the object is not to be designated as a 'something'.” Chang Yen Kung asked: “If it is not to be designated as a 'something', what is the seeing?” Shen Hui answered: “To see into where there is no 'something', this is a true seeing, this is eternal seeing.” Chang Yen Kung asked: “So what is the Unconscious?” Shen Hui answered: “Not to think of being and non-being, not to think of good and evil, not to think of limit and no-limit, not to think of measurement, not to think of enlightenment (Bodhi), not to fix your thought on Bodhi, not to think of Nirvana, not to fix your thought on Nirvana, this is to attain the Unconscious.”

Chapter Twenty-Four

Zen Flowers Bloom, the Self-Nature Is Enlightened, It Is a Buddha

I. Ordinary People With Confused Self-Nature Is a Living Being:

When talking about beings, we want to talk about sentient beings or ordinary people. Ordinary people is a term for “the common man,” or a man of lower caste of character or profession. In Buddhism, an ordinary person unenlightened by Buddhism, an unbeliever, sinner; childish, ignorant, foolish; the lower orders. Ordinary people who always examine themselves and realize they are just unenlightened mortal filled with greed, hatred and ignorance, as well as an accumulation of infinite other transgressions in the past, present and future. In Mahayana, ordinary people are all of those who have not reached the path of seeing (darsana-marga), and so have not directly perceived emptiness (sunyata). Due to this, they assent (tán thành) to the false appearances of things and do not perceive them in terms of their true nature, i.e., emptiness. In Theravada, this refers to beings who have worldly aspirations (loka-dharma). They are contrasted with noble people, which includes those who have attained one of the supramundane paths, from stream-enterers up to Arhats. There are various kinds of nature of ordinary people; however, according to Buddhism, there are four basic kinds of human-nature: First, those who suffer themselves due to blindly practicing of wrong teachings and austerities. Second, those, by their cruelty, by stealing, by killing, or by other unwholesome acts, cause others to suffer. Third, those who cause other people suffer along with themselves. Fourth, those who do not suffer themselves and cause other to suffer. On the contrary, they save others from suffering. These people abide by the Buddha teachings and practice dharma, they do not give way to greed, anger, ignorance, killing or stealing. On the contrary, they lead peaceful life with wisdom.

In the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha taught: “Long is the night to the wakeful; long is the road to him who is tired; long is samsara to the foolish who do not know true Law (Dharmapada 60). If a traveler does not meet a companion who is better or at least equal, let him firmly pursue his solitary career, rather than being in fellowship with the foolish (Dharmapada 61). These are my sons; this is my wealth; with such thought a fool is tormented. Verily, he is not even the owner of himself. Whence sons? Whence wealth? (Dharmapada 62). A foolish man who knows that he is a fool, for that very reason a wise man; the fool who think himself wise, he is indeed a real fool (Dharmapada 63). If a fool associates with a wise man even all his life, he will understand the Dharma as little as a spoon tastes the flavour of soup (Dharmapada 64). An intelligent person associates with a wise man, even for a moment, he will quickly understand the Dharma, as the tongue tastes the flavour of soup (Dharmapada 65). A fool with little wit, goes through life with the very self as his own greatest enemy. In the same manner, evil doers do evil deeds, the fruit of which is bitter (Dharmapada 66). The deed is not well done of which a man must repent, and the reward of which he receives, weeping, with tearful face; one reaps the fruit thereof (Dharmapada 67). The deed is well done when, after having done it, one repents not, and when, with joy and pleasure, one reaps the fruit thereof (Dharmapada 68). As long as the evil deed done does not bear fruit, the fool thinks it is as sweet as honey; but when it ripens, then he comes to grief (Dharmapada 69). Let a fool, month after month, eats only as much food as can be picked up on the tip of a kusa blade; but he is not worth a sixteenth part of them who have comprehended the truth (Dharmapada 70). An evil deed committed may not immediately bear fruit, just as newl drawn milk does not turn sour at once. In the same manner, smouldering, it follows the fool like fire covered with ashes (Dharmapada 71). The knowledge and fame that the fool gains, so far from benefiting; they destroy his bright lot and cleave his head (Dharmapada 72). The fool always desire for an undue reputation or undeserved honour, precedence among the monks, authority in the monasteries, honour among other families (Dharmapada 73). Let both monks and laymen think, “by myself was this done; in every work, great or small, let them refer to me.” Such is the ambition of the fool; his desires and pride

increase (Dharmapada 74). One is the path that leads to worldly gain, and another is the path leads to nirvana. Once understand this, the monks and the lay disciples of the Buddha, should not rejoice in the praise and worldly favours, but cultivate detachment (Dharmapada 75).”

II. Zen Flowers Bloom, the Self-Nature Is Enlightened, It Is a Buddha:

Self-nature; another expression for the Buddha-nature that is immanent in everything existing and that is experienced in self-realization. Original nature, contrasted to supreme spirit or purusha. Original nature is always pure in its original essence. Self-nature, that which constitutes the essential nature of a thing. In the Lankavatara Sutra, the Buddha told Mahamati: “Oh Mahamati, the nature of existence is not as it is discriminated by the ignorant.” Things in the phenomenal world are transient, momentary, and without duration; hence they have no self-nature. Also according to The Lankavatara Sutra, there are seven types of self-nature. In the third chapter of the Jewel Platform Sutra, the Sixth Patriarch wanted to remind his disciples that ordinary people with confused self-nature is a living being, but when Zen flowers bloom, the self-nature is enlightened, it is a Buddha. As a matter of fact, according to the Platform Sutra, Chapter Three, the Sixth Patriarch said, “Great assembly, the worldly person’s own physical body is the city, and the eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body are the gates. Outside there are five gates and inside there is a gate of the mind. The mind is the ‘ground’ and one’s nature is the ‘king.’ The ‘king’ dwells on the mind ‘ground.’ When the nature is present, the king is present but when the nature is absent, there is no king. When the nature is present, the body and mind remain, but when the nature is absent, the body and mind are destroyed. The Buddha is made within the self-nature. Do not seek outside the body. Confused, the self-nature is a living being: enlightened, it is a Buddha. ‘Kindness and compassion’ are Avalokitesvara and ‘sympathetic joy and giving’ are Mahasthamaprapta. ‘Purification’ is Sakyamuni, and ‘equanimity and directness’ are Amitabha. ‘Others and self’ are Mount Sumeru and ‘deviant thoughts’ are the ocean water. ‘Afflictions’ are the waves. ‘Cruelty’ is an evil dragon. ‘Empty falseness’ is ghosts and spirits.

'Defilement' is fish and turtles, 'greed and hatred' are hell, and 'delusion' is animals. Good Knowing Advisors, always practice the ten good practices and the heavens can easily be reached. Get rid of others and self, and Mount Sumeru topples. Do away with deviant thought, and the ocean waters dry up. Without defilements, the waves cease. End cruelty and there are no fish or dragons. The Tathagata of the enlightened nature is on your own mind-ground, emitting a great bright light which outwardly illuminates and purifies the six gates and breaks through the six desire-heavens. Inwardly, it illuminates the self-nature and casts out the three poisons. The hells and all such offenses are destroyed at once. Inwardly and outwardly, there is a bright penetration. This is no different from the West. But if you do not cultivate, how can you go there?"

Chapter Twenty-Five

Dhyana and Prajna Are Present at the Same Time In the Point of View of the Jewel Platform Sutra

I. An Overview & Meanings of Dhyana and Prajna in Buddhist Point of View:

An Overview of Dhyana: When looking into the origins of Zen, we find that the real founder of Zen is none other than the Buddha himself. Through the practice of inward meditation the Buddha attained Supreme Enlightenment and thereby became the Awakened One, the Lord of Wisdom and Compassion. In Buddhism, there are many methods of cultivation, and meditation is one of the major and most important methods in Buddhism. According to the Buddhist History, our Honorable Gautama Buddha reached the Ultimate Spiritual Perfection after many days of meditation under the Bodhi Tree. The Buddha taught more than 25 centuries ago that by practicing Zen we seek to turn within and discover our true nature. We do not look above, we do not look below, we do not look to the east or west or north or south; we look into ourselves, for within ourselves and there alone is the center upon which the whole universe turns. To this day, we, Buddhist followers still worship Him in a position of deep meditation. Thus, we can not take Zen out of Buddhism. According to Zen Master Thich Thien An in “Zen Philosophy, Zen Practice”, some people believe that Zen Buddhism is a religious phenomenon peculiar to Japan. This is especially the case with many Western world who first learned about Zen through the work of the great Japanese scholar D.T. Suzuki. But while Zen may truly be the flower of Japanese civilization, the Zen school of Buddhism has not been confined to Japan but has flourished in other countries as well. Zen is traced to a teaching the Buddha gave by silently holding a golden lotus. The general audience was perplexed, but the disciple Mahakasyapa understood the significance and smiled subtly. The implication of this is that the essence of the Dharma is beyond words. In Zen, that essence is transmitted from teacher to disciple in sudden moments, breakthroughs of understanding. The

meaning Mahakasyapa understood was passed down in a lineage of 28 Indian Patriarchs to Bodhidharma. Bodhidharma, an Indian meditation master, strongly adhered to the Lankavatara Sutra, a Yogacara text. He went to China around 470 A.D., and began the Zen tradition there. It spread to Korea and Vietnam, and in the 12th century became popular in Japan. Zen is a Japanese word, in Chinese is Ch'an, in Vietnamese is Thiền, in Sanskrit is "Dhyana" which means meditative concentration in English. There are a number of different Zen lineages in China, Japan and Vietnam, each of it has its own practices and histories, but all see themselves as belonging to a tradition that began with Sakyamuni Buddha. Zen histories claim that the lineage began when the Buddha passed on the essence of his awakened mind to his disciple Kasyapa, who in turn transmitted to his successor. The process continued through a series of twenty-eight Indian patriarchs to Bodhidharma, who transmitted it to China. All the early Indian missionaries and Chinese monks were meditation masters. Meditation was one of many practices the Buddha gave instruction in, ethics, generosity, patience, and wisdom were others, and the Ch'an tradition arose from some practitioners' wish to make meditation their focal point. An underlying principle in Zen is that all beings have Buddha nature, the seed of intrinsic Buddhahood. Some Zen masters express this by saying all beings are already Buddhas, but their minds are clouded over by disturbing attitudes and obscurations. Their job, then, is to perceive this Buddha nature and let it shine forth without hindrance. Because the fundamental requirement for Buddhahood, Buddha nature, is already within everyone, Zen stresses attaining enlightenment in this very lifetime. Zen masters do not teach about rebirth and karma in depth, although they accept them.

According to the Zen Sect, there is no need to avoid the world by seeking dhyana elsewhere. This is because first, all beings have Buddha-nature already, and second, when they realize emptiness, they will see that afflictions, bodhi, cyclic existence, and nirvana are not different. Zen is accurately aware of the limitations of language, and gears its practice to transcend it. When we practice meditation we seek to turn to within and to discover our true nature. We do not look above, we do not look below, we do not look to the east or to the west, or to the north, or to the south; we look into ourselves, for within ourselves

and there alone is the center upon which the whole universe turns. Experience is stressed, not mere intellectual learning, but a real cultivation to gain samadhi in our daily activities. In short, samadhi, meditation, or trance, is the training of the mind. In the same manner as in precepts, in Buddhism, there is no so-called cultivation without concentration, or training the mind. In one word, samadhi means “unchanging”. While refraining from committing offenses, Buddhist cultivators should always cultivate samadhi to gain the trance power. Samadhi is extremely important for any Buddhist cultivators. If we have no samadhi, we will surely fail in our cultivation. Moreover, if we do not have samadhi we will not have a firm resolve, and external temptations can easily influence us and cause us to fall. Practicing dhyana or quiet meditation is one of the three important practices for all Buddhists; the other two are precepts and wisdom. Samadhi refers to Dhyana, meditation, trance, or training the mind. In the same manner as above, in Buddhism, there is no so-called cultivation without concentration, or training the mind. Meditation is the exercise to train oneself in tranquilization. Meditation (training the mind) calms mental disturbance. Meditation and wisdom, two of the six paramitas; likened to the two hands, the left meditation, the right wisdom. Sincere Buddhists should always be firm in the method of cultivation, not to change the method day after day. Some undetermined Buddhists practice meditation today, but tomorrow they hear that reciting the Buddha’s name will easily be reborn in the Pure Land with a lot of relics and have a lot of merit and virtue, so they give up meditation and start reciting the Buddha’s name. Not long after that they hear the merit and virtue of reciting mantras is supreme, so they stop reciting the Buddha’s name and start reciting mantras instead. Such people will keep changing from one Dharma-door to another Dharma-door, so they end up achieving nothing. Sincere Buddhists should always remember that “Power of Concentration” is extremely important in our cultivation. If we have no Power of Concentration, we will surely have no success in our cultivation. Furthermore, if we do not have sufficient power of concentration, we will surely lack a firm resolve in the Way, external temptations can easily influence us and cause us to fall.

An Overview and Meanings of Prajna In Buddhist Point of View:
According to Buddhism, precepts are rules which keep us from

committing offenses. When we are able to refrain from committing offenses, our mind is pure to cultivate meditation in the next step to achieve the power of concentration. The resulting wisdom, or training in wisdom. If you want to get rid of greed, anger, and ignorance, you have no choice but cultivating discipline and samadhi so that you can obtain wisdom paramita. With wisdom paramita, you can destroy these thieves and terminate all afflictions. Wisdom (training in wisdom). In other words, Wisdom or Prajna is the power to penetrate into the nature of one's being, as well as the truth itself thus intuited. Study of principles and solving of doubts. Also according to Bhikkhu Piyadassi Mahathera in *The Spectrum of Buddhism*, high concentration is the means to the acquisition of wisdom or insight. Wisdom consists of right understanding and right thought, the first two factors of the path. This is called the training in wisdom or panna-sikkha. Wisdom helps us get rid of the clouded view of things, and to see life as it really is, that is to see life and things pertaining to life as arising and passing. According to Prof. Junjiro Takakusu in *The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy*, Buddhism lays stress on the Threefold Learning (siksa) of Higher Morality, Higher Thought, and Higher Insight. That is to say, without higher morals one cannot get higher thought and without higher thought one cannot attain higher insight. In other words, morality is often said to lead to samadhi, and samadhi to prajna. Higher thought here comprises the results of both analytical investigation and meditative intuition. Buddhism further instructs the aspirants, when they are qualified, in the Threefold Way (marga) of Life-View, Life-Culture and Realization of Life-Ideal or No-More Learning. These are three stages to be passed through in the study of the Fourfold Truth by the application of the Eightfold Noble Path; in the second stage it is investigated more fully and actualized by the practice of the Seven Branches of Enlightenment, life-culture here again means the results of right meditation; and in the last stage the Truth is fully realized in the Path of No-More-Learning. In other words, without a right view of life there will be no culture, and without proper culture there will be no realization of life.

Wisdom is the knowledge of things and realization of truth. Wisdom is arosen from perception or knowing. Wisdom is based on right understanding and right thought. Decision or judgment as to

phenomena or affairs and their principles, of things and their fundamental laws. Prajna is often interchanged with wisdom. Wisdom means knowledge, the science of the phenomenal (1), while prajna more generally to principles or morals, the difference between Buddhi and Jnana is sometimes difficult to point out definitively, for they both signify worldly relative knowledge as well as transcendental knowledge. While Prajna is distinctly pointing out the transcendental wisdom. The Prajna-paramita-sutra describes “prajna” as supreme, highest, incomparable, unequalled, unsurpassed. Wisdom or real wisdom. According to the Mahayana Buddhism, only an immediate experienced intuitive wisdom, not intelligence can help man reach enlightenment. Therefore, to achieve prajna is synonymous with to reach enlightenment. One of the two perfections required for Buddhahood. The wisdom which enables us to transcend desire, attachment and anger so that we will be emancipated (not through the mercy of any body, but rather through our own power of will and wisdom) and so that we will not be reborn again and again in “samsara” or transmigration.

Wisdom is described as the understanding of the Four Noble Truths, the understanding of interdependent origination, and the like. The attainment of wisdom is the ability of transformation of these doctrinal items from mere objects of intellectual knowledge into real, personal experience. In other words, according to Buddhism, wisdom is the ability to change our knowledge of the four Noble Truths and the like from mere sutra learning into actual, living truth. To attain wisdom, we must first cultivate good conduct, then cultivate mental development. It should be noted that reading and understanding the meaning of a sutra doesn't mean attaining wisdom. Wisdom means reading, understanding, and transforming doctrinal items from sutras into real, personal experience. Wisdom gives us the ability of “seeing the truth” or “seeing things as they really are” because the attainment of wisdom is not an intellectual or academic exercise, it is understanding or seeing these truths directly.

Wisdom understanding that emptiness of inherent existence is the ultimate nature of all phenomena. This specific type of wisdom is the sole means to eliminate our ignorance and other disturbing states. It is also the most powerful tool for purifying negative karmic imprints. In

addition, it enables us to benefit others effectively, for we can then teach them how to gain this wisdom themselves. This is also the first key to liberation and enlightenment. In order to be able to obtain this type of wisdom, we must invest all our efforts in cultivating Buddhist laws and practicing Buddhist meditation. Conventional intelligence knowing, logic, science, arts, and so forth. This type of wisdom is from birth; however, the person who possesses this type of wisdom is believed that in previous lives, he or she had already cultivated or practiced so many good deeds.

The resulting wisdom, or training in wisdom. Even though wisdom involves cause and effect. Those who cultivated and planted good roots in their past lives would have a better wisdom. However, in this very life, if you want to get rid of greed, anger, and ignorance, you have no choice but cultivating discipline and samadhi so that you can obtain wisdom paramita. With wisdom paramita, you can destroy these thieves and terminate all afflictions. Wisdom is one of the three studies in Buddhism. The other two are precepts and meditation. According to Bhikkhu Piyadassi Mahathera in *The Spectrum of Buddhism*, high concentration is the means to the acquisition of wisdom or insight. Wisdom consists of right understanding and right thought, the first two factors of the path. This is called the training in wisdom or panna-sikkha. Wisdom helps us get rid of the clouded view of things, and to see life as it really is, that is to see life and things pertaining to life as arising and passing.

In summary, in Buddhism, wisdom is of the highest importance; for purification comes through wisdom, through understanding; and wisdom in Buddhism is the key to enlightenment and final liberation. But the Buddha never praised mere intellect. According to him, knowledge should go hand in hand with purity of heart, with moral excellence (vijja-caranasampanna-p). Wisdom gained by understanding and development of the qualities of mind and heart is wisdom par excellence (bhavanamaya panna-p). It is saving knowledge, and not mere speculation, logic or specious reasoning. Thus, it is clear that Buddhism is neither mere love of, nor inducing the search after wisdom, nor devotion, though they have their significance and bearing on mankind, but an encouragement of a practical application of the teaching that leads the follower to dispassion,

enlightenment and final deliverance. Wisdom in Buddhism is also a sole means to eliminate our ignorance and other disturbing attitudes. It is also a tool for purifying negative karmic imprints. Many people say that wisdom is gained from information or knowledge. The Buddha told us the opposite! He taught us that wisdom is already within our self-nature; it does not come from the outside. In the world, there are some very intelligent and wise people, such as scientists and philosophers, etc. However, the Buddha would not recognize their knowledge as the proper Buddhist enlightenment, because they have not severed their afflictions. They still dwell on the rights and wrongs of others, on greed, anger, ignorance and arrogance. They still harbor wandering discriminatory thoughts and attachments. In other words, their minds are not pure. Without the pure mind, no matter how high the level of realization one reaches, it is still not the proper Buddhist enlightenment. Thus, our first hindrance to enlightenment and liberation is ego, our self-attachment, our own wandering thoughts. Only the wisdom that is based on concentration has the ability to eliminate attachments and ignorance. That is to say the wisdom that arises from a pure mind, not the wisdom that is attained from reading and studying books, for this wisdom is only worldly knowledge, not true wisdom. Thus, the Buddha said: “He who is concentrated knows and sees what really is.” According to the Flower Adornment Sutra, all sentient beings possess the same wisdom and virtuous capabilities as the Buddha, but these qualities are unattainable due to wandering thoughts and attachments. Practicing Buddhism will help us rid of wandering, discriminating thoughts and attachments. Thus, we uncover our pure mind, in turn giving rise to true wisdom. Sincere Buddhists should always remember that our innate wisdom and abilities are temporarily lost due to the cloud of ignorance, attachments and wandering discriminatory thoughts, but are not truly or permanently lost. Our goal in Practicing Buddhism is to break through this cloud and achieve enlightenment.

II. Dhyana and Prajna Are Present at the Same Time In the Point of View of the Jewel Platform Sutra:

“Concentration and Wisdom.” meditation and wisdom, two of the six paramitas; likened to the two hands, the left meditation, the right

wisdom. According to the Sixth Patriarch's point of view in the Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra, Chapter Fourth, the Master instructed the assembly: "Good Knowing Advisors, this Dharma-door of mine has concentration and wisdom as its foundation. Great assembly, do not be confused and say that concentration and wisdom are different. Concentration and wisdom are one substance, not two. Concentration is the substance of wisdom, and wisdom is the function of concentration. Where there is wisdom, concentration is in the wisdom. Where there is concentration, wisdom is in the concentration. If you understand this principle, you understand the balanced study of concentration and wisdom. Students of the Way, do not say that first there is concentration, which produces wisdom, or that first there is wisdom, which produces concentration: do not say that the two are different. To hold this view implies a duality of dharma. If your speech is good, but your mind is not, then concentration and wisdom are useless because they are not equal. If mind and speech are both good, the inner and outer are alike, and concentration and wisdom are equal. Self-enlightenment, cultivation, and practice are not a matter for debate. If you debate which comes first, then you are similar to a confused man who does not cut off ideas of victory and defeat, but magnifies the notion of self and dharmas, and does not disassociate himself from the four marks⁽¹⁾. The disagreement between Shen-Hsiu's teaching of Zen and that of Hui Neng is due to Shen-Hsiu's holding the view that Dhyana is to be practiced first and that it is only after its attainment that Prajna is awakened. But according to Hui-Neng's view, the very moment Dhyana and Prajna are present at the same time. Dhyana and Prajna are the same for according to the Nirvana Sutra, when there is more of Dhyana and less of Prajna, this helps the growth of ignorance; when there is more of Prajna and less of Dhyana, this helps the growth of false views; but when Dhyana and Prajna are the same, this is called seeing into the Buddha-nature. Therefore, in his preachings, Hui-Neng always tried to prove his idea of oneness: "O good friends, in my teaching what is most fundamental is Dhyana and Prajna. And, friends, do not be deceived and let to thinking that Dhyana and Prajna are separable. They are one, and not two. Dhyana is the Body of Prajna, and Prajna is the Use of Dhyana. When Prajna is taken up, Dhyana is in Prajna; when Dhyana is taken up, Prajna is in it. When this is

understood, Dhyana and Prajna go hand in hand in practice of meditation. O followers of truth, do not say that Dhyana is first attained and then Prajna awakened, or that Prajna is first attained and the Dhyana awakened; for they are separate. Those who advocate this view make a duality of the Dharma; they are those who affirm with the mouth and negate in the heart. They regard Dhyana as distinct from Prajna. But with those whose mouth and heart are in agreement, the inner and the outer are one, and Dhyana and Prajna are regarded as equal.” If your speech is good, but your mind is not, then concentration and wisdom are useless because they are not equal. If mind and speech are both good, the inner and outer are alike, and concentration and wisdom are equal. Self-enlightenment, cultivation, and practice are not a matter for debate. If you debate which comes first, then you are similar to a confused man who does not cut off ideas of victory and defeat, but magnifies the notion of self and dharmas, and does not disassociate himself from the four makrs. Hui-Neng further illustrates the idea of this oneness by the relation between the lamp and its light. He says: “It is like the lamp and its light. As there is a lamp, there is light; if no lamp, no light. The lamp is the Body of the light, and the light is the Use of the lamp. They are differently designated, but in substance they are one. The relation between Dhyana and Prajna is to be understood in like manner.” We can see Shen-Hui’s view on the oneness in his Sayings as follows: “Where no thoughts are awakened, and emptiness and nowhere-ness prevails, this is right Dhyana. When this non-awakening of thought, emptiness, and nowhere-ness suffer themselves to be the object of perception, there is right Prajna. Where this mystery takes place, we say that Dhyana, taken up by itself, is the Body of Prajna, and is not distinct from Prajna, and is Prajna itself; and further, that Prajna, taken up by itself, is the Use of Dhyana, and is not distinct from Dhyana, and is Dhyana itself. Indeed, when Dhyana is to be taken up by itself, there is no Dhyana; when Prajna is to be taken up by itself, there is no Prajna. Why? Because Self-nature is suchness, and this is what is meant by the oneness of Dhyana and Prajna.”

Ghi Chú:

- (1) Four appearances are four states of all phenomena or four ejects of the ego mentioned in the Diamond Sutra. The four states of all phenomena in general: birth, being, change (decay), and death. The four forms of activity: coming into existence, abiding, change, and extinction.

Four forms of the consequences (recompenses, retribution, requitals) of one's previous life: birth, old-age, disease, and death. According to the Awakening of Faith, there are four forms of Alaya-vijnana: initiation, continuation, change, and cessation. Besides, there are four objects of the ego in the Diamond sutra (Kinh Kim Cang). First, the Appearance of Ego: The illusion that in the five skandhas there is a real ego; thus creating the idea of looking down on the poor, stupid and deluded. Second, Human Appearance: Attachment to the ego of a man or that this ego is a man and different from beings of the other paths. Man is different from other organisms. Third, Living Beings Appearance: The ego of all beings, that all beings have an ego born of the five skandhas. All the living are produced by the skandhas. Fourth, the Appearance of Longevity: Life is limited to the organism. The ego has age, i.e. a determined or fated period of existence, thus creating the idea of attaching all appearances and desiring for welfare and profit.

Chapter Twenty-Six

One Who Attaches Himself to External Marks and Practices Dharmas in Search of Truth Will Not See Own Nature For Many Aeons

According to the Jewel Platform Sutra, Chapter 10, one day the Master summoned his disciples Fa-Hai, Chih-Ch'eng, Fa-Ta, Shen-Hui, Chih-Ch'ang, Chih-T'ung, Chih-Ch'e, Chih-Tao, Fa-Chen and Fa-Ju, and said to them, "You are not like other people. After my passage into extinction, you should each be a master in a different direction. I will now teach you how to explain the Dharma without deviating from the tradition of our school. First, bring up the three classes of Dharma-doors and then, use the thirty-six pairs of opposites, so that, whether coming or going, you remain in the Bodhimandala. While explaining all the dharmas, do not become separate from your self-nature. Should someone suddenly ask you about a dharma, answer him with its opposite. If you always answer with the opposite, both will be eliminated and nothing will be left since each depends on the other for existence. The three classes of Dharma-doors are the heaps, the realms and the entrances. The five heaps are: form, feeling, perception, impulses and consciousness. The twelve entrances are the six sense objects outside: forms, sounds, smells, tastes, tangible objects and objects of the mind; and the six sense organs within: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind. The eighteen realms are the six sense objects, the six sense organs and the six consciousnesses. The self-nature is able to contain all dharmas; it is the 'store-enveloping consciousness.' If one gives rise to a thought, it turns into consciousness, and the six consciousnesses are produced, which go out the six organs and perceive the six sense objects. Thus, the eighteen realms arise as a function of the self-nature. If the self-nature is wrong, it gives rise to the eighteen wrongs; if the self-nature is right, it gives rise to eighteen rights. Evil functioning is that of a living being, while good functioning is that of a Buddha. What is the functioning based on? It is based on opposing dharmas within the self-nature. External insentient things

have five pairs of opposites: heaven and earth, sun and moon, light and darkness, positive and negative (yin and yang) and water and fire. In speaking of the marks of dharmas one should delineate twelve opposites: speech and dharmas, existence and non-existence, form and formless, the marked and the unmarked, the presence of outflows and the lack of outflows, form and emptiness, motion and stillness, clarity and turbidity, the common and the holy, membership in the Sangha and membership in the laity, old age and youth, and largeness and smallness. From the self-nature nineteen pairs of opposites arise: length and shortness, deviance and orthodoxy, foolishness and wisdom, stupidity and intelligence, confusion and concentration, kindness and cruelty, morality and immorality, Straightness and crookedness, reality and unreality, danger and safety, affliction and Bodhi, permanence and impermanence, compassion and harm, joy and anger, generosity and stinginess, advance and retreat, production and extinction, the Dharma-body and the form-body, the Transformation-body and the reward-body. The Master said, “If you can understand and use these thirty-six pairs of opposites you can connect yourself with the dharmas of all the Sutras and avoid extremes, whether coming or going. When you act from your self-nature in speaking with others, you are separate from external marks while in the midst of them and separate from inward emptiness while in the midst of emptiness. If you are attached to marks, you will add to your wrong views and if you grasp at emptiness, you will increase your ignorance. Those who grasp at emptiness slander the Sutras by maintaining that written words have no use. Since they maintain they have no need of written words, they should not speak either because written words are merely the marks of spoken language. They also maintain that the direct way cannot be established by written words, and yet these two words ‘not established’, are themselves written. When they hear others speaking, they slander them by saying that they are attached to written words. You should know that to be confused as they are may be permissible but to slander the Buddha’s Sutras is not. Do not slander the Sutras for if you do, your offense will create countless obstacles for you. **One who attaches himself to external marks and practice dharmas in search of truth, or who builds many Bodhimandalas and speaks of the error and evil of existence and non-existence will not see his nature for many**

aeons. Listen to the Dharma and cultivate accordingly. Do not think of hundreds of things, for that will obstruct the nature of the Way. Listening without cultivating will cause others to form deviant views. Simply cultivate according to the Dharma, and do not dwell in marks when bestowing it. If you understand, then speak accordingly, function accordingly, practice accordingly, and act accordingly, and you will not stray from the basis of our school. If someone ask you about a meaning, and the question is about existence, answer with non-existence; if you are asked about non-existence, answer with existence; asked about common life, answer with the holy life; asked about the holy life, answer with the common life. Since in each case the two principles are interdependent, the meaning of the Middle Way will arise between them. If you answer every question with an opposite, you will not stray from the basic principle. Suppose someone asks, ‘What is darkness?’ You should answer ‘Brightness is the cause and darkness the condition. When there is no brightness, there is darkness. Brightness reveals darkness and darkness reveals brightness.’ Since opposites are interdependent, the principle of the Middle Way is established. Answer every question that way, and in the future, when you transmit the Dharma, transmit it in the way I am instructing you. Then you will not stray from the tradition of our school.”

Chapter Twenty-Seven

Cultivation of Samadhi of One Mark & the Samadhi of One Conduct In the Spirit of the Jewel Platform Sutra

In Buddhism, the term samadhi means the mind fixed and undisturbed or to assemble together or putting together or composing the mind, intent contemplation, perfect absorption, union of the meditator with the object of meditation. It is a non-dualistic state of mind in which there is no distinction between subject and object, inner and outer, in which, in other words, there is no 'mind' of meditator or subject that is directed toward an object of meditation or concentrated on a 'point' so called one-pointedness of mind. In samadhi, subject and object are just one. In Zen it implies not merely equilibrium, tranquility, and one-pointedness, but a state of intense yet effortless concentration, of complete absorption of the mind in itself, of heightened and expanded awareness. Samadhi and Bodhi are identical from the view of the enlightened Bodhi-mind. Seen from the developing stages leading to enlightenment-awakening; however, samadhi and enlightenment are different. In other words, from the standpoint of complete enlightenment, samadhi and enlightenment are identical, i.e., the same in nature. From the point of view of the stages that lead to enlightenment, however, samadhi and enlightenment are different; that is, a transitory experience of the state of samadhi, which can occur under certain circumstances in the life of any person, is not yet the same thing as enlightenment. Single Conduct Samadhi is one of the four kinds of samadhi. The other three samadhis are Pratyutpanna Samadhi, Following One's Inclination Samadhi, and Lotus-Blossom Samadhi. Single-Practice means specializing in one practice. When cultivating this samadhi, the practitioner customarily sits and concentrates either on visualizing Amitabha Buddha or on reciting His name. Although he actually cultivates only one practice, in effect, he achieves proficiency in all other practices; consequently, single-practice is also called "Perfected Practice." This samadhi as well as the following two samadhis, can be put into practice by people of all capacities. According to the Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch's

Dharma Treasure, the Sixth Patriarch, Hui-Neng, taught: “Good Knowing Advisors, the Single Conduct Samadhi is the constant practice of maintaining a direct, straightforward mind in all places, whether one is walking, standing, sitting or lying down. As the Vimalakirti Sutra says, ‘The straight mind is the Bodhimandala; the straight mind is the Pure Land.’ Do not speak of straightness with the mouth only, while the mind and practice are crooked nor speak of the Single Conduct Samadhi without maintaining a straight mind. Simply practice keeping a straight mind and have no attachment to any dharma. The confused person is attached to the marks of dharmas, while holding to the Single Conduct Samadhi and saying, ‘I sit unmoving and falseness does not arise in my mind. That is the Single Conduct Samadhi.’ Such an interpretation serves to make him insensate and obstructs the causes and conditions for attaining the Way.

According to the Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch’s Dharma Treasure, the Sixth Patriarch, Hui-Neng, taught: “Good Knowing Advisors, the Way must penetrate and flow. How can it be impeded? If the mind does not dwell in dharmas, the way will penetrate and flow. The mind that dwells in dharmas is in self-bondage. To say that sitting unmoving is correct is to be like Sariputra who sat quietly in the forest but was scolded by Vimalakirti. Good Knowing Advisors, there are those who teach people to sit looking at the mind and contemplating stillness, without moving or arising. They claimed that it has merit. Confused men, not understanding, easily become attached and go insane. There are many such people. Therefore, you should know that teaching of this kind is a greater error.”

According to the Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra, Chapter Tenth, the Sixth Patriarch told the assembly: “All of you Good Knowing Advisors should purify your minds and listen to my explanation of the Dharma. If you wish to realize all knowledge, you must understand the Samadhi of One Mark and the Samadhi of One Conduct. If you do not dwell in marks anywhere and do not give rise to hate and love, do not grasp or reject and do not calculate advantage or disadvantage, production and destruction while in the midst of marks, but instead, remain tranquil, calm and yielding, then you will have achieved the Samadhi of One Mark. In all places, whether walking, standing, sitting or lying down, to maintain a straight and uniform mind, to attain the unmoving

Bodhimandala and the true realization of the Pure Land. That is called the Samadhi of One Conduct. One who perfects the two samadhis is like earth in which seeds are planted; buried in the ground, they are nourished and grow, ripening and bearing fruit. The One Mark and One Conduct are just like that. Now, I speak the Dharma, which is like the falling of the timely rain, moistening the great earth. Your Buddha-nature is like the seeds, which receiving moisture, will sprout and grow. Those who receive my teaching will surely obtain Bodhi and those who practice my conduct certainly certify to the wonderful fruit. Listen to my verse: “The mind-ground contains every seeds; under the universal rain they all sprout; flower and feeling-Sudden Enlightenment; the Bodhi-fruit accomplishes itself.” Eleventh, the king of samadhi, the highest degree of samadhi, obtained by invoking Buddha or sitting in meditation or trance.

Also according to the Platform Sutra, Chapter Ten, the Sixth Patriarch told the great assembly, “All of you Good Knowing Advisors should purify your minds and listen to my explanation of the Dharma. If you wish to realize all knowledge, you must understand the Samadhi of one Mark and the Samadhi of One Conduct. If you do not dwell in marks anywhere and do not give rise to hate and love, do not grasp or reject and do not calculate advantage or disadvantage, production and destruction while in the midst of marks, but instead, remain tranquil, calm and yielding, then you will have achieved the Samadhi of One Mark. In all places, whether walking, standing, sitting or lying down, to maintain a straight and uniform mind, to attain the unmoving Bodhimandala and the true realization of the Pure Land. That is called the Samadhi of One Conduct. One who perfects the two samadhis is like earth in which seeds are planted; buried in the ground, they are nourished and grow, ripening and bearing fruit. The One Mark and One Conduct are just like that. Now, I speak the Dharma, which is like the falling of the timely rain, moistening the great earth. Your Buddha-nature is like the seeds, which receiving moisture, will sprout and grow. Those who receive my teaching will surely obtain Bodhi and those who practice my conduct certainly certify to the wonderful fruit. Listen to my verse:

The mind-ground contains every seeds;
Under the universal rain they all sprout

Flower and feeling-Sudden Enlightenment

The Bodhi-fruit accomplishes itself.”

After speaking the verse the Master said, “Dharma is not dual nor is the mind, and the Way is pure and without marks. All of you take care not to contemplate stillness or empty the mind. The mind is basically pure and does not grasp or reject anything. Each of you work hard and go well in harmony with circumstances.” At that time, his followers made obeisance and withdrew.

Chapter Twenty-Eight

Hold Impermanence in Mind, Without an Effort, Buddha-Nature Manifests, Not Transmitted from Master, and Not Obtain a Thing

According to the Jewej Platform Sutra, Chapter 8, there was a Bhikshu named Chih-Ch'e, a native of Chiang Hsi, had the family name Chang and the personal name Hsing-Ch'ang. As a youth, he was an itinerant warrior. When the schools split into the Northern and Southern, although the two leaders had lost the notion of self and other, the disciples stirred up love and hate. The disciples of the Northern School secretly set up Shen-Hsiu as the Sixth Patriarch. Fearing that the country would hear of the transmission of the robe, they hired Hsing-Ch'ang to assassinate the Master. But the Master had the power of knowing the thoughts of others. He knew of this matter in advance and set ten ounces of gold in his chair. That night, Hsing-Ch'ang entered his room intending to kill him. The Master stretched out his neck. Hsing-Ch'ang swung the blade three times but could not harm him. The Master said, "A straight sword is not bent, a bent sword is not straight, I merely owe you gold, I do not owe you life." Hsing-Ch'ang fell to the ground in fright. After a while he came to and begged for mercy, repenting of his error and vowing to leave home. The Master gave him the gold and said, "Go. I fear that my followers will come and take revenge. Change your appearance and return another day and I will accept you." Hsing Ch'ang received his orders and disappeared into the night. Later, he left home under another Bhikshu, received complete precepts and was vigorous in practice. One day, remembering the Master's words, he made the long journey to have an audience. The Master said, "I have thought of you for a long time. What took you so long?"

He replied, "The High Master once favored me by pardoning my crime. Although I have left home and although I practice austerities, I shall never be able to repay his kindness. May I try to repay you by transmitting the Dharma and taking living beings across? Your disciple

often studies the Mahaparinirvana Sutra, but he has not yet understood the principles of permanence and impermanence. I beg the High Master to be compassionate and explain them for me.”

The Master said, “Impermanence is just the Buddha nature and permanence is just the mind discriminating good and evil dharmas.”

Hsing-Ch’ang replied, “High Master, your explanation contradicts the Sutra text!”

The Master said, “I transmit the Buddha’s mind-seal. How could I dare to contradict the Buddhas’ Sutras?”

Hsing-Ch’ang replied, “The Sutra says that the Buddha nature is permanent and the High Master has just said that it is impermanent; it says that good and evil dharmas, reaching even to the Bodhi Mind, are impermanent and the High Master has just said that they are permanent. This contradiction has merely intensified your student’s doubt and delusion.”

The Master said, “Formerly, I heard Bhikshuni Wu Chin Tsang recite the Nirvana Sutra. When I commented on it, there was not one word or principle which did not accord with the sutra text. My explanation to you now is not different.”

Hsing-Ch’ang replied, “Your student’s capacity for understanding is superficial. Will the High Master please explain further?”

The Master said, “Don’t you understand? If the Buddha nature were permanent, what use would there be in speaking of good and evil dharmas? To the end of an aeon not one person would produce the Bodhi Mind. Therefore, I explain it as impermanent. That is exactly what the Buddha explained as the meaning of true permanence. Furthermore, if all dharmas were permanent, all things would have a self-nature subject to birth and death and the true permanent nature would not pervade all places. Therefore, I explain it as impermanent. That is exactly what the Buddha explained as the meaning of the true permanence. It was for the sake of common people and those who belong to other religions who cling to deviant views of permanence, and for all those who follow the two-vehicle way, mistaking permanence for impermanence formulating the eight perverted views, that the Buddha in the ultimate Nirvana teaching destroyed their prejudiced views. He explained true permanence, true bliss, true selfhood and true purity. You now contradict this meaning by relying

on the words, taking annihilation to be impermanence and fixing on a lifeless permanence. In this way you misinterpret the last, subtle, complete and wonderful words of the Buddha. Even if you read it a thousand times, what benefit could you derive from it?"

Hsing-Ch'ang suddenly achieved the great enlightenment and spoke this verse:

**To those who hold impermanence in mind
The Buddha speaks of the permanent nature;
Not knowing expedients is like
Picking up pebbles from a spring pond.**

**But now without an effort
The Buddha nature manifests;
The Master did not transmit it,
And I did not obtain a thing."**

The Master said, "Now you understand! You should be called Chih-Ch'e (breadth of understanding)." Chih-Ch'e thanked the Master, bowed and withdrew.

Chapter Twenty-Nine

Sitting Meditation in the Spirit of the Jewel Platform Sutra

I. An Overview of Zen in Buddhism:

Dhyana is considered meditating. Meditation in the visible or known is called Dhyana. Dhyana is Meditation (Zen), probably a transliteration. Meditation is an element of Concentration; however, the two words (dhyana and samadhi) are loosely used. Ch'an-na is a Chinese version from the Sanskrit word "Dhyana," which refers to collectedness of mind or meditative absorption in which all dualistic distinctions disappear. The fifth paramita (to practice dhyana to obtain real wisdom or prajna). In dhyana all dualistic distinctions like subject, object, true, false are eliminated. Ch'an is a Chinese most equivalent word to the Sanskrit word "Dhyana," which means meditation. To enter into meditation. A school that developed in East Asia, which emphasized meditation aimed at a non-conceptual, direct understanding of reality. Its name is believed to derive from the Sanskrit term "Dhyana." Dhyana is a general term for meditation or a state of quietude or equanimity gained through relaxation. To meditate, to calm down, and to eliminate attachments, the aversions, anger, jealousy and the ignorance that are in our heart so that we can achieve a transcendental wisdom which leads to enlightenment. It traces itself back to the Indian monk named Bodhidharma, who according to tradition travelled to China in the early sixth century. He is considered to be the twenty-eighth Indian and the first Chinese patriarch of the Zen tradition. The school's primary emphasis on meditation, and some schools make use of enigmatic riddles called "kung-an," which are designed to defeat conceptual thinking and aid in direct realization of truth. When looking into the origins of Zen, we find that the real founder of Zen is none other than the Buddha himself. Through the practice of inward meditation the Buddha attained Supreme Enlightenment and thereby became the Awakened One, the Lord of Wisdom and Compassion. In Buddhism, there are many methods of cultivation, and meditation is one of the major and most important

methods in Buddhism. According to the Buddhist History, our Honorable Gautama Buddha reached the Ultimate Spiritual Perfection after many days of meditation under the Bodhi Tree. The Buddha taught more than 25 centuries ago that by practicing Zen we seek to turn within and discover our true nature. We do not look above, we do not look below, we do not look to the east or west or north or south; we look into ourselves, for within ourselves and there alone is the center upon which the whole universe turns. To this day, we, Buddhist followers still worship Him in a position of deep meditation. Zen is traced to a teaching the Buddha gave by silently holding a golden lotus. The general audience was perplexed, but the disciple Mahakasyapa understood the significance and smiled subtly. The implication of this is that the essence of the Dharma is beyond words. In Zen, that essence is transmitted from teacher to disciple in sudden moments, breakthroughs of understanding.

Zen is accurately aware of the limitations of language, and gears its practice to transcend it. When we practice meditation we seek to turn to within and to discover our true nature. We do not look above, we do not look below, we do not look to the east or to the west, or to the north, or to the south; we look into ourselves, for within ourselves and there alone is the center upon which the whole universe turns. Experience is stressed, not mere intellectual learning. Thus, associating with an experienced teacher is important. The Zen teacher's duty is to bring the students back to the reality existing in the present moment whenever their fanciful minds get involved in conceptual wanderings. In this sense, Ch'an is a religion, the teachings, and practices of which are directed toward self-realization and lead finally to complete awakening or enlightenment as experienced by Sakyamuni Buddha after intensive meditative self-discipline under the Bodhi-tree. More than any other school, Ch'an stresses the prime importance of the enlightenment experience and the uselessness of ritual religious practices and intellectual analysis of doctrine for the attainment of liberation. Ch'an teaches the practice of sitting in meditative absorption as the shortest, but also steepest, way to awakening. The essential nature of Ch'an can be summarized in four short statements: Special transmission outside the orthodox teaching; nondependence on sacred writings; direct pointing to the human heart; leading to realization of

one's own nature and becoming a Buddha. Esoterically regarded, Ch'an is not a religion, but rather an indefinable, incommunicable root, free from all names, descriptions, and concepts, that can only be experienced by each individual for him or herself. From expressed forms of this, all religions have sprung. In this sense, Ch'an is not bound to any religion, including Buddhism. It is the primordial perfection of everything existing, designated by the most various names, experienced by all great sages, and founders of religions of all cultures and times. Buddhism has referred to it as the "identity of Samsara and Nirvana." From this point of view, Ch'an is not a method that brings people living in ignorance to the goal of liberation; rather it is the immediate expression and actualization of the perfection present in every person at every moment.

II. Sitting Meditation in the Spirit of the Jewel Platform Sutra:

To sit in dhyana (abstract meditation, fixed abstraction, contemplation). Its introduction to China is attributed to Bodhidharma, though it came earlier, and its extension to T'ien-T'ai. We, Zen practitioners, should sit in meditation until our state is such that 'inside we have no body and mind,' outside we have no word, and afar there are no objects. This state is also described as "Thoughts of the past cannot be obtained, thoughts of the present cannot be obtained, and thoughts of the future cannot be obtained." Practice has been sitting and counting exhalations to ten. This is only one of many methods in Zen. It is possible to practice this way when we are sitting, but when we are driving, when we are talking, when we are watching television, when we are working and when we are playing, and so forth, how is it possible to count our breaths then? Remember! Sitting is only a small part of practicing Zen. The true meaning of sitting Zen is cut off all thinking and to keep not-moving mind. Zen practitioners should always remember the 'before thinking' method in all other activities in our daily life. To sit in dhyana (abstract meditation, fixed abstraction, contemplation). Its introduction to China is attributed to Bodhidharma, though it came earlier, and its extension to T'ien-T'ai. In fact, Zen has nothing to do with any particular posture. At its highest level, meditation is practiced in the midst of all sorts of activities, walking, standing, working, driving, etc. In the history of Zen, many masters

attained enlightenment while washing dishes, cooking, carrying water, and collecting fuel. So whatever we do, we do with concentrated mind, we are meditating. If the mind is kept under control and the adept remains mindful of what he is doing, even washing dishes can become a vehicle of self-realization. However, sitting meditation is the main religious practice in all Zen traditions. It is also considered to be the primary means by which students attain realization and in most Zen monasteries it is practiced for several hours every day. Ideally, sitting meditation is practiced in a state of mind free from grasping or striving, and not focused on any particular object. The practice is based on the notion that all beings are already buddhas, and so during the practice of “sitting meditation,” one attempts to drop off accumulated conceptions and analytical thinking in order to allow this fundamental buddha-nature to manifest spontaneously. We must be patient when practicing sitting meditation. We must learn to bear the pain in our back and legs because when we first practice to sit in meditation, we are unaccustomed to sitting that way and we will surely experience “hard to bear” pain. The only way to overcome the pain is “patience.” Besides, we should not hope for anything, even hoping for enlightenment because the thought of hoping for enlightenment is itself deluded. We cannot expect to sit in just several sessions of meditation or to sit today and get enlightened tomorrow. Thus, while in sitting meditation, try not to expect anything, try not to do it fast. Devout Buddhists should always remember that quiet sitting is very important, but true sitting does not depend on whether or not the body is sitting. Generally speaking, the idea of Sitting Meditation up to the time of Hui-Neng was that the Buddha-nature with which all beings are endowed is thoroughly pure and undefiled as to its self-being. The job of a meditator is to bring out his self-nature, which is the Buddha-nature, in its original purity. It is to say his meditation may end in clearing up the mirror of consciousness in which he expects to see the image of his original pure self-being reflected. This may be called static meditation, or serenely reflecting or contemplating on the purity of the Mind. Watching purity or to keep an eye on Purity is no other than a quietistic contemplation of one’s self-nature or self-being.

According to the Platform Sutra, Chapter Five, the Sixth Patriarch instructed the assembly: “The door of sitting in Ch’an consists

fundamentally of attaching oneself neither to the mind nor to purity; it is not non-movement. One might speak of becoming attached to the mind, and yet the mind is fundamentally false. You should know that the mind is like an illusion and, therefore, there is nothing to which you can become attached. One might say that to practice Ch'an is to attach oneself to purity, yet the nature of people is basically pure. It is because of false thinking that the True Suchness is obscured. Simply have no false thinking, and the nature will be pure of itself. If attachment to purity arises in your mind, a deluded idea of purity will result. What is delusory does not exist, and the attachment is false. Purity has no form or mark and yet there are those who set up the mark of purity as an achievement. Those with this view obstruct their own original nature and become bound by purity. Good Knowing Advisors, one who cultivates non-movement does not notice whether other people are right or wrong, good or bad, or whether they have other faults. That is the non-movement of the self-nature. Good Knowing Advisors, although the body of the confused person may not move, as soon as he opens his mouth he speaks of what is right and wrong about others, of their good points and shortcomings and so, he turns his back on the way. Attachment to the mind and attachment to purity are obstructions to the Way." The Master also instructed the assembly, "Good Knowing Advisors, what is meant by 'sitting in Ch'an?' In this obstructed and unimpeded Dharma-door, the mind's thoughts do not arise with respect to any good or evil external state. That is what 'sitting' is. To see the unmoving self-nature inwardly is Ch'an. Good Knowing Advisors, what is meant by Ch'an concentration? Being separate from external mark is 'Ch'an.' Not being confused inwardly is 'concentration.' If you become attached to external marks, your mind will be confused inwardly. If you are separate from external marks, inwardly your mind will be unconfused. The original nature is naturally pure, in a natural state of concentration. Confusion arises merely because states are seen and attended to. If the mind remains unconfused when any state is encountered, that is true concentration. Good Knowing Advisors, being separate from all external marks is Ch'an and being inwardly unconfused is concentration. External Ch'an and inward concentration are Ch'an concentration. The Vimalakirti Sutra says, 'Just then, suddenly return and regain the original mind.'

The Bodhisattva-Sila Sutra says, ‘Our basic nature is pure of itself.’ Good Knowing Advisors, in every thought, see your own clear and pure original nature. Cultivate, practice, realize the Buddha Way.” So the Sixth Patriarch Hui-Neng proclaimed:

The Bodhi is not like the tree,
 (Bodhi tree has been no tree)
 The mirror bright is nowhere shining,
 (The shining mirror was actually none)
 As there is nothing from the first,
 (From the beginning, nothing has existed)
 Where can the dust itself accumulate?
 (How would anything be dusty?)

The statement was quite original with him, though ultimately it goes back to the Prajnaparamita. It really revolutionized the Zen practice of meditation, establishing what is really Buddhist and at the same time preserving the genuine spirit of Bodhi-Dharma. The disagreement between Shen-Hsiu’s teaching of Zen and that of Hui Neng is due to Shen-Hsiu’s holding the view that Dhyana is to be practiced first and that it is only after its attainment that Prajna is awakened. But according to Hui-Neng’s view, the very moment Dhyana and Prajna are present at the same time. Dhyana and Prajna are the same for according to the Nirvana Sutra, when there is more of Dhyana and less of Prajna, this helps the growth of ignorance; when there is more of Prajna and less of Dhyana, this helps the growth of false views; but when Dhyana and Prajna are the same, this is called seeing into the Buddha-nature. Therefore, in his preachings, Hui-Neng always tried to prove his idea of oneness: “O good friends, in my teaching what is most fundamental is Dhyana and Prajna. And, friends, do not be deceived and let to thinking that Dhyana and Prajna are separable. They are one, and not two. Dhyana is the Body of Prajna, and Prajna is the Use of Dhyana. When Prajna is taken up, Dhyana is in Prajna; when Dhyana is taken up, Prajna is in it. When this is understood, Dhyana and Prajna go hand in hand in practice of meditation. O followers of truth, do not say that Dhyana is first attained and then Prajna awakened, or that Prajna is first attained and the Dhyana awakened; for they are separate. Those who advocate this view make a duality of the Dharma; they are those who affirm with the mouth and negate in the heart. They regard

Dhyana as distinct from Prajna. But with those whose mouth and heart are in agreement, the inner and the outer are one, and Dhyana and Prajna are regarded as equal." Hui-Neng further illustrates the idea of this oneness by the relation between the lamp and its light. He says: "It is like the lamp and its light. As there is a lamp, there is light; if no lamp, no light. The lamp is the Body of the light, and the light is the Use of the lamp. They are differently designated, but in substance they are one. The relation between Dhyana and Prajna is to be understood in like manner." We can see Shen-Hui's view on the oneness in his Sayings as follows: "Where no thoughts are awakened, and emptiness and nowhere-ness prevails, this is right Dhyana. When this non-awakening of thought, emptiness, and nowhere-ness suffer themselves to be the object of perception, there is right Prajna. Where this mystery takes place, we say that Dhyana, taken up by itself, is the Body of Prajna, and is not distinct from Prajna, and is Prajna itself; and further, that Prajna, taken up by itself, is the Use of Dhyana, and is not distinct from Dhyana, and is Dhyana itself. Indeed, when Dhyana is to be taken up by itself, there is no Dhyana; when Prajna is to be taken up by itself, there is no Prajna. Why? Because Self-nature is suchness, and this is what is meant by the oneness of Dhyana and Prajna."

III. Zen Illness:

The illnesses of meditation, i.e. wandering thoughts, illusions, or the illusions and nervous troubles of the mystic. The sickness that has arisen through Zen practice, which refers to the hindrances and mishaps that one may encounter in the practice of Zen. These are expressions for deceptive sensations and appearances that can come up during the practice of sitting meditation. Any attachment to one's own enlightenment experiences, including the attachment to emptiness is also considered Zen sickness. It is an especially pronounced form of Zen sickness when someone develops great pretensions about his experience on the Zen path and thus considers himself someone special. Also when it is all too obvious that someone has experienced enlightenment, this condition also is referred to as Zen sickness (illness). The story is told of one of Shen-hsiu's students who paid a visit to Hui-neng. When Hui-neng asked him to describe what he had learned so far, he said: "My master asserts that the teaching of all the

Buddhas is found in one's own mind, and that to seek the teaching outside of oneself is the same as running away from one's father and abandoning one's home." This much Hui-neng could agree with. But the student went on to say: "We're taught to stop the working of our minds, to control our wandering thoughts, and to sit in meditation for long periods of time without moving." Hui-neng snapped back: "To stop the working of the mind and to sit without moving isn't Zen. It's a disease. There's no profit to be found in such a method." The student asked, then, how one should practice. Hui-neng told him: "While alive, one sits and doesn't lie down; when one is dead, one lies down but doesn't sit. True awakening necessarily occurred suddenly and immediately. Although there may be activity leading up to that experience, the experience itself comes all at once. Our teaching might compare the process to chipping away at a stone barrier. While it could take a long while to pierce the barrier, once one does, the view on the other side becomes visible immediately. So, when practicing, one still have mundane activities as usual for enlightenment experience could be acquired during activities as mundane as chopping and hauling wood."

Chapter Thirty

In the Spirit of the Jewel Platform Sutra The Subtle Meaning of All Buddhas Is Not Based on Language

The Zen or intuitive school does “not set up scriptures.” It lays stress on meditation and intuition rather than on books and other external aids. Word-teaching contrasted with self-realization. In the Lankavatara Sutra, the Buddha taught: “Those who well understand the distinction between realization and teaching, between inner knowledge and instruction, are kept away from the control of mere speculation.” Teaching, recitation, and stories, etc. Thus the Buddha emphasized the inner attainment of the truth, not the teaching realized by all the Tathagatas of the past, present, and future. The realm of the Tathagatagarbha which is the Alayavijnana belongs to those Bodhisattva-Mahasattvas who follow the course of truth and not to those philosophers who cling to the letter, learning, and mere discourse. Thus, the Buddha taught: “It is owing to his not perfectly understanding the nature of words that he regards them as identical with the sense.” In Japanese Zen terms, the term “Ichiji-fusetsu” means “not a word is said.” “Ichiji-fusetsu” refers to the fact that the Buddha in all his teaching or instruction never made use of a single word to describe ultimate reality, for it is not preachable. In consideration of this fact, after his complete enlightenment, the Buddha did not want to teach at all. However, compassion for beings trapped in the cycle of life and death moved him. In doing this, he had to come down from the level of true insight to that of “everyman’s consciousness.” In Zen, all the teachings and instructions of the Buddha mean a “finger-point” for the purpose of giving those who wish to cultivate a way leading to enlightenment and prajna insight into the true nature of reality. According to a Buddhist legend, the special transmission outside the orthodox teaching began with the famous discourse of Buddha Sakyamuni on Vulture Peak Mountain (Gridhrakuta). At that time, surrounded by a crowd of disciples who had assembled to hear him

expound the teaching. The Buddha did not say anything but holding up a lotus flower. Only Kashyapa understood and smiled. As a result of his master, he suddenly experienced a break through to enlightened vision and grasped the essence of the Buddha's teaching on the spot. The Buddha confirmed Mahakashyapa as his enlightened student. Mahakashyapa was also the first patriarch of the Indian Zen. People who practice Zen often advise not using words. In the second century, Nagarjuna wrote "The Madhyamika Sastra," in which he used concepts to destroy concepts. He was not trying to create a new doctrine, but to break all the bottles, all the flasks, all the vases, all the containers, to prove that water needs no form to exist. He outlined a dance for us, a dance for us to drop our categories and barriers so that we can directly encounter reality and not content ourselves with its mere reflection.

As mentioned above, according to the Buddha's teachings in the Lankavatara Sutra, the Zen or intuitive school does "not set up scriptures." It lays stress on meditation and intuition rather than on books and other external aids. The Lankavatara Sutra tries so hard to tell us that language is altogether inadequate as the means of expressing and communicating the inner state of Enlightenment. Despite the fact that without language we may fare worse at least in our practical life, we must guard ourselves most deliberately against our trusting it too much beyond its legitimate office. The Sutra gives the main reason for this, which is that language is the product of casual dependence, subject to change, unsteady, mutually conditioned, and based on false judgment as to the true nature of consciousness. For this reason language cannot reveal to us the ultimate significance of things. The noted analogy of finger and moon is most appropriate to illustrate the relation between language and sense, symbol and reality. In fact, if the Buddha's Enlightenment really contained so much in it that he himself could not sufficiently demonstrate or illustrate it with his 'long thin tongue' through his long peaceful life given to meditation and discoursing, how could those less than he ever hope to grasp it and attain spiritual emancipation? This is not to discredit words, but to avoid the danger of becoming stuck in them. It is to encourage us to use words as skillfully as possible for the sake of those who hear them. This is also one of the fundamental principles, intuitional or relating to direct mental vision of the Zen School.

According to the Platform Sutra, the Seventh Chapter (Opportunities & Conditions), the Sixth Patriarch obtained the Dharma at Huang-Mei and returned to Ts'ao-Hou Village in Shao-Chou, where no one knew him. But Liu-Chih-Liao, a scholar, received him with great courtesy. Chih-Liao's aunt, Bhikshuni Wu-Chin-Tsang, constantly recited the Mahaparinirvana Sutra. When the Master heard it, he instantly grasped its wonderful principle and explained it to her. The bhikshuni then held out a scroll and asked about some characters. The Master said, "I cannot read; please ask about the meaning." "If you cannot even read, how can you understand the meaning?" asked the Bhikshuni. The Master replied, "**The subtle meaning of all Buddhas is not based on language.**" The Bhikshuni was startled, and she announced to all the elders and virtuous ones in the village: "Here is a gentleman who possesses the way. We should ask him to stay and receive our offerings." Ts'ao-Shu-Liang, great-grandson of the Marquis Wu of the Wei dynasty, came rushing to pay homage, along with the people of the village. At that time, the pure dwellings of the ancient Pao-Lin Temple, which had been destroyed by war and fire at the end of the Sui dynasty, were rebuilt on their old foundation. The Master was invited to stay and soon the temple became a revered place. He dwelt there a little over nine months when he was once again pursued by evil men. The Master hid in the mountain in the front of the temple, and when they set fire to the brush and trees, he escaped by crawling into a cave to hide. The rock still bears the imprints of the Master's knees and of his robe where he sat in lotus posture. Because of this it is called 'The Rock of Refuge.' Remembering the Fifth Patriarch's instructions to stop at Huai and hide at Hui, he went to conceal himself in those two cities.

Chapter Thirty-One

In the Point of View of the Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra, The Essence of the Mind: From the Beginning Not a Thing Exists!

In Buddhist teachings, Mind is not separate from the world of thoughts and feelings, how can it leave and retire into itself? When we look at the tree in front of us, our mind does not go outside of us into the forest, nor does it open a door to let the trees in. Our mind fixes on the trees, but they are not a distinct object. Our mind and the trees are one. The trees are only one of the miraculous manifestations of the mind. According to the Sutra In Forty-Two Sections, Chapter 31, the Buddha said: "There was once someone who, plagued by ceaseless sexual desire, wished to castrate himself. To cut off your sexual organs would not be as good as to cut off your mind. You mind is like a supervisor; if the supervisor stops, his employees will also quit. If the deviant mind is not stopped, what good does it do to cut off the organs?" The Kasyapa Buddha taught: "Desire is born from your will; your will is born from thought. When both aspects of the mind are still, there is neither form nor activity." The mind is the root of all dharmas. In Contemplation of the Mind Sutra, the Buddha taught: "All my tenets are based on the mind that is the source of all dharmas." The mind has brought about the Buddhas, the Heaven, or the Hell. It is the main driving force that makes us happy or sorrowful, cheerful or sad, liberated or doomed. In the Dharmapada, the Buddha taught: Of all dharmas, mind is the forerunner, mind is chief. We are what we think, we have become what we thought (what we are today came from our thoughts of yesterday). If we speak or act with a deluded mind or evil thoughts, suffering or pain follows us, as the wheel follows the hoof of the draught-ox (Dharmapada 1). Of all dharmas, mind is the forerunner, mind is chief. We are what we think, we have become what we thought. If we speak or act with a pure mind or thought, happiness and joy follows us, as our own shadow that never leaves (Dharmapada 2). As rain penetrates and leaks into an ill-thatched hut, so does passion

enter an untrained mind or uncultivated mind (Dharmapada 13). As rain does not penetrate a well-thatched hut, so does passion not enter a cultivated mind (Dharmapada 14). The wavering and restless, or unsteady mind, difficult to guard, difficult to hold back; a wise man steadies his trembling mind and thought, as a fletcher makes straight his arrow (Dharmapada 33). As a fish drawn from its watery abode and thrown upon the dry land, our thought quivers all over in its effort to escape the realm of Mara (Dharmapada 34). It is good to control the mind, which is difficult to hold in and flighty, rushing wherever it wishes; a controlled mind brings happiness (Dharmapada 35). The mind is hard to perceive, extremely subtle, flits whenever it wishes. Let the wise person guard it; a guarded mind is conducive to happiness (Dharmapada 36). Traveling far, wandering alone, bodiless, lying in a cave, is the mind. Those who subdue it are freed from the bonds of Mara (Dharmapada 37). He whose mind is not steady, he who does not know the True Law, he whose confidence wavers, the wisdom of such a person will never be perfect (Dharmapada 38). He whose mind is free from lust of desires, he who is not affected by hatred, he who has renounced both good and evil, for such a vigilant one there is no fear (Dharmapada 39). Whatever harm an enemy may do to an enemy, or a hater to a hater, an ill-directed mind can do one far greater harm (Dharmapada 42). What neither mother, nor father, nor any other relative can do, a well-directed mind can do one far greater good (Dharmapada 43). Like the earth, Arhats who are balanced and well-disciplined, resent not. He is like a pool without mud; no new births are in store for him (Dharmapada 95). Those Arhats whose mind is calm, whose speech and deed are calm. They have also obtained right knowing, they have thus become quiet men (Dharmapada 96). In the past times, this mind went wandering wherever it liked, as it wished and as it pleased. But now I shall completely hold it under control as a rider with his hook a rutting elephant (Dharmapada 326). Take delight in heedfulness, check your mind and be on your guard. Pull yourself out of the evil path, just like the elephant draws itself out of the mud (Dharmapada 327).

The "Essence" or the innermost core of the mind. In Zen, the Essence of mind is the Illuminating-Void Suchness. An enlightened Zen Buddhist not only knows the illuminating aspect of the

consciousness but, most important of all, he also knows the void aspect of the mind. Illumination with attachment is decried by Zen as "dead water", but illumination without attachment, or the Illuminating-Voidness, is praised as "the great life." The stanza which Shen-hsiu wrote to demonstrate his understanding of Zen to the Fifth Patriarch showed that he knew only the illuminating, not the void, aspect of the mind. When his mirror-like bright consciousness came up against Hui-neng's "From the beginning not a thing exists!" it became so pitifully insignificant that it made him lose the race for the title of the "Sixth Patriarch of Zen". Hui-neng's "From the beginning not a thing exists!" expresses unmistakably the Essence of Mind as well as the innermost core of Zen. It was because of this deep understanding that Hui-neng became the Sixth Patriarch of Zen. Zen practitioners should always remember that the illuminating consciousness which is a key to all inner realization, basically and qualitatively it is still "clinging-bound". Buddhist enlightenment is not gained through holding on to or inflating one's self-awareness. On the contrary, it is gained through killing or crushing any attachment to this illuminating consciousness; only by transcending it may one come to the innermost core of Mind, the perfect free and thoroughly nonsubstantial illuminating-Voidness. This illuminating-Void character, empty yet dynamic, is the Essence of the mind. Usually, when the word "Essence" is mentioned, people immediately think of something quintessentially envision a dead and static "nothingness". Both of these conceptions miss the meaning of the word "Essence" in the point of view of Zen.

Chapter Thirty-Two

Robe and Bowl or the Faith in Dharma?

Transmission means to take over the Patriarch position by having the former Patriarch formally recognize the person as the successor, especially the Zen tradition. In Zen, a monk turns over his monk's robe and bowl to his disciple, i.e., the transfer of knowledge from one generation to another. Turning over a monk's robe and bowl also indicates that a Zen master (Roshi) has recognized a particular disciple as his dharma-successor (Hassu). The passing on of the master's robe symbolizes that the disciple has grasped the essence of the teaching and is qualified to teach. Hui-ming (E myo) was the name of a Chinese Zen monk who lived during the T'ang dynasty in China. First, he studied Zen under Zen master Hung-ren (601-674), but later he received the dharma seal from the Sixth Patriarch Hui-neng. Later, he went to Yen-chou to spread Hui-neng's Zen teachings. According to the Records of the Transmission of the Lamp (Ch'uan-Teng-Lu), Volume IV, it's said that three days after Hui-Neng left Wang-Mei, the news of what had happened in secret became noised abroad throughout the monastery, and a group of indignant monks, headed by Hui-Ming, pursued Hui-Neng, who, in accordance with his master's instructions, was silently leaving the monastery. When he was overtaken by the pursuers while crossing a mountain-pass far from the monastery, he laid down his robe on a rock near by and said to Hui-Ming: "This robe symbolizes our patriarchal faith and is not to be carried away by force. Take this along with you if you desired to." Hui-Ming tried to lift it, but it was as heavy as a mountain. He halted, hesitated, and trembled with fear. At last he said: "I come here to obtain the faith and not the robe. Oh my brother monk, please dispel my ignorance." The sixth patriarch said: "If you came for the faith, stop all your hankerings. Do not think of good, do not think of evil, but see what at this moment your own original face even before you were born does look like." After this, Hui-Ming at once perceived the fundamental truth of things, which for a long time he had sought in things without. He now understood everything, as if he had taken a cupful of cold water and tasted it to his

own satisfaction. Out of the immensity of his feeling he was literally bathed in tears and perspirations, and most reverently approaching the patriarch he bowed and asked: "Besides this hidden sense as is embodied in these significant words, is there anything which is secret?" The patriarch replied: "In what I have shown to you there is nothing hidden. If you reflect within yourself and recognize your own face, which was before the world, secrecy is in yourself."

Chapter Thirty-Three

Transmitting the Dharma, Not the Robe

According to the Platform Sutra, Chapter Ten, each time the followers heard this verse, they understood its meaning and bowed down before the Master. They made up their minds to practice in accord with the Dharma and not to argue, knowing that the Great Master would not remain long in the world. The Senior Seated Fa-Hai bowed again and asked, “After the High Master enters extinction, who will inherit the robe and Dharma?” The Master said, “Since the time I lectured on the Dharma in Ta-Fan Temple, transcriptions of my lectures have been circulated. They are to be called ‘The Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra.’ Protect and transmit them in order to take humankind across. If you speak according to them, you will be speaking the Orthodox Dharma. I will explain the Dharma to you, but I will not transmit the robe because your roots of faith are pure and ripe. You certainly have no doubts and are worthy of the great Work. According to the meaning of the transmission verse of the First Patriarch Bodhidharma, the robe should not be transmitted. His verse said,

“Originally I came to this land,
Transmitting Dharma, saving living beings.
One flower opens; five petals and
The fruit comes to bear of itself.”

Chapter Thirty-Four

The Living Beings' Own Mind See Their Own Buddha-Nature

On the third day of the eighth month of the year Kuei-Chou, the second year of the Hsien-T'ien reign (around 713 A.D.), after a meal in Kuo-Ên Temple, the Master said, "Each of you take your seat, for I am going to say goodbye." Fa-Hai said, "What teaching dharma will the High Master leave behind so that confused people can be led to see the Buddha-nature?" The Master said, "All of you please, listen carefully. If those of future generations recognize living beings, they will have perceived the Buddha-nature. If they do not recognize living beings, they may seek the Buddha throughout many aeons but he will be difficult to meet. I will now teach you how to recognize the living beings within your mind and how to see the Buddha-nature there. If you wish to see the Buddha, simply recognize living beings for it is living beings who are confused about the Buddha and not the Buddha who is confused about living beings. When enlightened to the self-nature, the living being is a Buddha. If confused about the self-nature, the Buddha is a living being. When the self-nature is impartial, the living being is the Buddha. When the self-nature is biased, the Buddha is a living being. If your thoughts are devious and malicious, the Buddha dwells within the living being but by means of one impartial thought, the living being becomes a Buddha. Our minds have their own Buddha and that Buddha is the true Buddha. If the mind does not have its own Buddha, where can the true Buddha be sought? Your own minds are the Buddha; have no further doubts. Nothing can be established outside the mind, for the original mind produces the ten thousand dharmas. Therefore, the Sutras say, 'The mind produced, all dharmas are produced; the mind extinguished, all dharmas are extinguished. Now, to say goodbye, I will leave you a verse called the 'Self-Nature's True Buddha Verse.' People of the future who understand its meaning will see their original mind and realize the Buddha Way. The verse runs:

The true-suchness self-nature is the true Buddha.

Deviant views, the three poisons, are the demon king.
 At times of deviant confusion the demon king is in the house;
 But when you have proper views the Buddha is in the hall.
 Deviant views, the three poisons produced within the nature,
 Are just the demon king come to dwell in the house.
 Proper views casting out three poisons of the mind
 Transform the demon into Buddha True, not False.
 Dharma-body, Reward-body, and Transformation-body:
 Fundamentally the three bodies are one body.
 Seeing that for yourself within your own nature
 Is the Bodhi-cause for realizing Buddhahood.
 The pure nature is originally produced
 from the Transformation- body.
 The pure nature is ever-present within the Transformation-body.
 One's nature leads the Transformation-body
 down the right road.
 And in the future the full perfection is truly without end.
 The root cause of purity is the lust nature,
 For once rid of lust, the substance of the nature is pure.
 Each of you, within your natures; abandon the five desires.
 In an instant, see your nature, it is true.
 If in this life you encounter the door of Sudden Teaching
 You will be suddenly enlightened to your self-nature
 And see the Honored of the world.
 If you wish to cultivate and aspire to Buddhahood,
 You won't know where the truth is to be sought
 Unless you can see the truth within your own mind,
 This truth which is the cause of realizing Buddhahood.
 Not to see your self-nature but to seek the Buddha outside:
 If you think that way, you are deluded indeed.
 I now leave behind the Dharma-door of the Sudden Teaching
 To liberate worldly people who must cultivate themselves.
 I announce to you and to future students of the Way:
 If you do not hold these views you will only waste your time.

Having spoken the verse the Master continued, "All of you should
 take care. After my extinction, do not act with worldly emotion. If you
 weep in sorrow, receive condolences or wear mourning clothes, you

are not my disciples, for that is contrary to the proper Dharma. Simply recognize your own original mind and see your own original nature, which is neither moving nor still, neither produced nor extinguished, neither coming nor going, neither right nor wrong, neither dwelling nor departing. Because I am afraid that your confused minds will misunderstand my intention, I will instruct you again so that you may see your nature. After my extinction, continue to cultivate accordingly, as if I were still present. Should you disregard my teaching, then even if I were to remain in the world, you would obtain no benefit." He further spoke this verse:

Firm, firm: Do not cultivate the good.

High, high: Do not do evil.

Still, still: Cut off sight and sound.

Vast, vast: The mind unattached.

After speaking this verse, the Master sat upright until the third watch, when suddenly he said to his disciples, "I am going!" In an instant he changed and a rare fragrance filled the room. A white rainbow linked with the earth and the trees in the wood turned white. The birds and beasts cried out in sorrow.

Chapter Thirty-Five

The Self-Nature In the Spirit of the Jewel Platform Sutra

I. An Overview of Self-Nature:

Self-nature (Own nature, Buddha nature, Self-entity, One's own original nature, One's own Buddha-nature); another expression for the Buddha-nature that is immanent in everything existing and that is experienced in self-realization. Original nature (Prakriti or Svabhava), contrasted to supreme spirit or purusha. Original nature is always pure in its original essence. Self-nature, that which constitutes the essential nature of a thing. In the Lankavatara Sutra, the Buddha told Mahamati: "Oh Mahamati, the nature of existence is not as it is discriminated by the ignorant." Things in the phenomenal world are transient, momentary, and without duration; hence they have no self-nature. Also according to The Lankavatara Sutra, there are seven types of self-nature.

II. Self-nature Is Itself "Thus" & Originally Clear and Pure:

Self-nature Is Itself "Thus": One day Chih-Ch'ang asked the Sixth Patriarch, "The Buddha taught the dharma of the three vehicles and also the Supreme Vehicle. Your disciple has not yet understood that and would like to be instructed." The Master said, "Contemplate only your own original mind and do not be attached to the marks of external dharmas. The Dharma doesn't have four vehicles; it is people's minds that differ. Cultivating by seeing, hearing, and reciting is the small vehicle. Cultivating by awakening to the Dharma and understanding the meaning is the middle vehicle. Cultivating in accord with Dharma is the great vehicle. To penetrate the ten thousand dharmas entirely and completely while remaining without defilement, and to sever attachment to the marks of all the dharmas with nothing whatsoever gained in return: that is the Supreme Vehicle. Vehicles are methods of practice, not subjects for debate. Cultivate on your own and do not ask me, for at all times your own self-nature is itself 'thus.'" Chih-Ch'ang

bowed and thanked the Master and served him to the end of the Master's life.

Self-Nature of Bodhi Is Originally Clear and Pure: At one time, the Sixth Patriarch arrived at Pao-Lin to speak the Dharma to the assembly. The Great Master said to the assembly, "Good Knowing Advisors, the self-nature of Bodhi is originally clear and pure. Simply use that mind, and you will directly accomplish Buddhahood. Good Knowing Advisors, when I moved to Nan Hai and, our family was poor and in bitter straits, I sold wood in the market place. Once a customer bought firewood and ordered it delivered to his shop. When the delivery was made, after I received the money and went outside the gate, I noticed a customer reciting a Sutra. Upon once hearing the words of this Sutra: 'One should produce that thought which is nowhere supported,' my mind immediately opened to enlightenment. Thereupon I asked the customer what Sutra he was reciting. The customer replied, 'The Diamond Sutra.' Then again I asked, 'Where do you come from and why do you recite this Sutra?' The customer said, 'I come from Tung Ch'an Monastery in Ch'i Chou, Huang Mei Province. There, the fifth Patriarch, the Great Master Hung Jen, dwells and teaches over one thousand disciples. I went there to make obeisance and I heard and received this Sutra.' The Great Master constantly exhorts the Sangha and laypeople only to uphold the Diamond Sutra. Then, they may see their own nature and directly achieve Buddhahood. Hui Neng heard this and desired to go to seek the Dharma but he recalled that his mother had no support. Karmic conditions originating from past lives led another man to give Hui Neng a pound of silver, so that he could provide clothing and food for his aging mother. The man further instructed him to go to Huang Mei to call upon and bow to the Fifth Patriarch.

III. The Sixth Patriarch Hui Neng's Verse on the Self-Nature:

As mentioned above, self-nature; another expression for the Buddha-nature that is immanent in everything existing and that is experienced in self-realization. Original nature, contrasted to supreme spirit or purusha. Original nature is always pure in its original essence. Self-nature, that which constitutes the essential nature of a thing. In the

Lankavatara Sutra, the Buddha told Mahamati: “Oh Mahamati, the nature of existence is not as it is discriminated by the ignorant.” Things in the phenomenal world are transient, momentary, and without duration; hence they have no self-nature. Also according to The Lankavatara Sutra, there are seven types of self-nature. The Sixth Patriarch Hui-Neng composed a verse on the Self-Nature in the Jewel Platform Sutra as followed:

How unexpected!
 The self-nature is pure in itself.
 The self-nature is originally neither produced nor destroyed.
 The self-nature is originally complete in itself.
 The self-nature is originally without movement,
 The self-nature can produce the ten thousand dharmas.

IV. The Self Nature Is Able to Contain All Dharmas Is Called the Store-Enveloping Consciousness:

The Sixth Patriarch Hui-neng taught for thirty-seven years and, according to his "Final Instructions" at the end of the Platform Sutra, the number of his disciples who achieved some degree of enlightenment was too large to count. Besides, there were so many known dharma heirs of the Sixth Patriarch, but eighteen recorded outstanding disciples. They are following Zen Masters: Hsing-ssu, Huai-jang, Hsuan-Chueh, Hui-chung, Shên-hui, Fa-Hai, Chih-Ch'eng, Upagupta Tripitaka, Shiao-Liao, Chih-Huang, Fa-Ta, Chih-T'ung, Chih-Ch'e, Chih-Ch'ang, Chih-Tao, Yin-Tsung, Hsuan-T'se, and Ling-T'ao. In the middle of 712, one day the Master summoned his disciples Fa-Hai, Chih-Ch'eng, Fa-Ta, Shen-Hui, Chih-Ch'ang, Chih-T'ung, Chih-Ch'e, Chih-Tao, Fa-Chen and Fa-Ju, and said to them, “You are not like other people. After my passage into extinction, you should each be a master in a different direction. I will now teach you how to explain the Dharma without deviating from the tradition of our school. First, bring up the three classes of Dharma-doors and then, use the thirty-six pairs of opposites, so that, whether coming or going, you remain in the Bodhimandala. While explaining all the dharmas, do not become separate from your self-nature. Should someone suddenly ask you about a dharma, answer him with its opposite. If you always answer with the opposite, both will be eliminated and nothing will be

left since each depends on the other for existence. The three classes of Dharma-doors are the heaps, the realms and the entrances. The five heaps are: form, feeling, perception, impulses and consciousness. The twelve entrances are the six sense objects outside: forms, sounds, smells, tastes, tangible objects and objects of the mind; and the six sense organs within: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind. The eighteen realms are the six sense objects, the six sense organs and the six consciousnesses. The self-nature is able to contain all dharmas; it is the 'store-enveloping consciousness.' If one gives rise to a thought, it turns into consciousness, and the six consciousnesses are produced, which go out the six organs and perceive the six sense objects. Thus, the eighteen realms arise as a function of the self-nature. If the self-nature is wrong, it gives rise to the eighteen wrongs; if the self-nature is right, it gives rise to eighteen rights. Evil functioning is that of a living being, while good functioning is that of a Buddha. What is the functioning based on? It is based on opposing dharmas within the self-nature. External insentient things have five pairs of opposites: heaven and earth, sun and moon, light and darkness, positive and negative (yin and yang) and water and fire. In speaking of the marks of dharmas one should delineate twelve opposites: speech and dharmas, existence and non-existence, form and formless, the marked and the unmarked, the presence of outflows and the lack of outflows, form and emptiness, motion and stillness, clarity and turbidity, the common and the holy, membership in the Sangha and membership in the laity, old age and youth, and largeness and smallness. From the self-nature nineteen pairs of opposites arise: length and shortness, deviance and orthodoxy, foolishness and wisdom, stupidity and intelligence, confusion and concentration, kindness and cruelty, morality and immorality, Straightness and crookedness, reality and unreality, danger and safety, affliction and Bodhi, permanence and impermanence, compassion and harm, joy and anger, generosity and stinginess, advance and retreat, production and extinction, the Dharma-body and the form-body, the Transformation-body and the reward-body. The Master said, "If you can understand and use these thirty-six pairs of opposites you can connect yourself with the dharmas of all the Sutras and avoid extremes, whether coming or going. When you act from your self-nature in speaking with others, you are separate from external marks while in

the midst of them and separate from inward emptiness while in the midst of emptiness. If you are attached to marks, you will add to your wrong views and if you grasp at emptiness, you will increase your ignorance. Those who grasp at emptiness slander the Sutras by maintaining that written words have no use. Since they maintain they have no need of written words, they should not speak either because written words are merely the marks of spoken language. They also maintain that the direct way cannot be established by written words, and yet these two words 'not established', are themselves written. When they hear others speaking, they slander them by saying that they are attached to written words. You should know that to be confused as they are may be permissible but to slander the Buddha's Sutras is not. Do not slander the Sutras for if you do, your offense will create countless obstacles for you. One who attaches himself to external marks and practice dharmas in search of truth, or who builds many Bodhimandalas and speaks of the error and evil of existence and non-existence will not see his nature for many aeons. Listen to the Dharma and cultivate accordingly. Do not think of hundreds of things, for that will obstruct the nature of the Way. Listening without cultivating will cause others to form deviant views. Simply cultivate according to the Dharma, and do not dwell in marks when bestowing it. If you understand, then speak accordingly, function accordingly, practice accordingly, and act accordingly, and you will not stray from the basis of our school. If someone ask you about a meaning, and the question is about existence, answer with non-existence; if you are asked about non-existence, answer with existence; asked about common life, answer with the holy life; asked about the holy life, answer with the common life. Since in each case the two principles are interdependent, the meaning of the Middle Way will arise between them. If you answer every question with an opposite, you will not stray from the basic principle. Suppose someone asks, 'What is darkness?' You should answer 'Brightness is the cause and darkness the condition. When there is no brightness, there is darkness. Brightness reveals darkness and darkness reveals brightness.' Since opposites are interdependent, the principle of the Middle Way is established. Answer every question that way, and in the future, when you transmit the Dharma, transmit it in the

way I am instructing you. Then you will not stray from the tradition of our school.”

V. The True-Suchness Self-Nature Is the True Buddha in the Jewel Platform Sutra:

Confused, the Self-Nature is a Living Being; Enlightened, it is a Buddha: Self-nature; another expression for the Buddha-nature that is immanent in everything existing and that is experienced in self-realization. Original nature, contrasted to supreme spirit or purusha. Original nature is always pure in its original essence. Self-nature, that which constitutes the essential nature of a thing. In the Lankavatara Sutra, the Buddha told Mahamati: “Oh Mahamati, the nature of existence is not as it is discriminated by the ignorant.” Things in the phenomenal world are transient, momentary, and without duration; hence they have no self-nature. Also according to The Lankavatara Sutra, there are seven types of self-nature. According to the Platform Sutra, Chapter Three, the Sixth Patriarch said, “Great assembly, the worldly person’s own physical body is the city, and the eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body are the gates. Outside there are five gates and inside there is a gate of the mind. The mind is the ‘ground’ and one’s nature is the ‘king.’ The ‘king’ dwells on the mind ‘ground.’ When the nature is present, the king is present but when the nature is absent, there is no king. When the nature is present, the body and mind remain, but when the nature is absent, the body and mind are destroyed. The Buddha is made within the self-nature. Do not seek outside the body. Confused, the self-nature is a living being: enlightened, it is a Buddha. ‘Kindness and compassion’ are Avalokitesvara and ‘sympathetic joy and giving’ are Mahasthamaprapta. ‘Purification’ is Sakyamuni, and ‘equanimity and directness’ are Amitabha. ‘Others and self’ are Mount Sumeru and ‘deviant thoughts’ are the ocean water. ‘Afflictions’ are the waves. ‘Cruelty’ is an evil dragon. ‘Empty falseness’ is ghosts and spirits. ‘Defilement’ is fish and turtles, ‘greed and hatred’ are hell, and ‘delusion’ is animals. Good Knowing Advisors, always practice the ten good practices and the heavens can easily be reached. Get rid of others and self, and Mount Sumeru topples. Do away with deviant thought, and the ocean waters dry up. Without defilements, the waves cease. End cruelty and there are no fish or dragons. The Tathagata of the

enlightened nature is on your own mind-ground, emitting a great bright light which outwardly illuminates and purifies the six gates and breaks through the six desire-heavens. Inwardly, it illuminates the self-nature and casts out the three poisons. The hells and all such offenses are destroyed at once. Inwardly and outwardly, there is a bright penetration. This is no different from the West. But if you do not cultivate, how can you go there?"

Transformation Bodies of the Buddha Within Your Self-Nature:

According to the Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra, the Sixth Patriarch taught: "Good Knowing Advisors! What are the hundred thousand myriad Transformation bodies of the Buddha? If you are free of any thought of the ten thousand dharmas, then your nature is basically like emptiness, but in one thought of calculation, transformation occurs. Evil thoughts are being transformed into hell-beings and good thoughts into heavenly beings. Viciousness is transformed into dragons and snakes, and compassion into Bodhisattvas. Wisdom is transformed into the upper realms, and delusion into the lower realms. The transformations of the self-nature are extremely many, and yet the confused person, unawakened to that truth, continually gives rise to evil and walks evil paths. Turn a single thought back to goodness, and wisdom is produced. That is the Transformation-body of the Buddha within your self-nature."

The True-Suchness Self-Nature Is the True Buddha in the Jewel Platform Sutra: On the third day of the eighth month of the year Kuei-Chou, the second year of the Hsien-T'ien reign (around 713 A.D.), after a meal in Kuo-Ên Temple, the Master said, "Each of you take your seat, for I am going to say goodbye." Fa-Hai said, "What teaching dharma will the High Master leave behind so that confused people can be led to see the Buddha-nature?" According to the Jewel Platform Sutra, Chapter 10, the Master said, "All of you please, listen carefully. If those of future generations recognize living beings, they will have perceived the Buddha-nature. If they do not recognize living beings, they may seek the Buddha throughout many aeons but he will be difficult to meet. I will now teach you how to recognize the living beings within your mind and how to see the Buddha-nature there. If you wish to see the Buddha, simply recognize living beings for it is living beings who are confused about the Buddha and not the Buddha

who is confused about living beings. When enlightened to the self-nature, the living being is a Buddha. If confused about the self-nature, the Buddha is a living being. When the self-nature is impartial, the living being is the Buddha. When the self-nature is biased, the Buddha is a living being. If your thoughts are devious and malicious, the Buddha dwells within the living being but by means of one impartial thought, the living being becomes a Buddha. Our minds have their own Buddha and that Buddha is the true Buddha. If the mind does not have its own Buddha, where can the true Buddha be sought? Your own minds are the Buddha; have no further doubts. Nothing can be established outside the mind, for the original mind produces the ten thousand dharmas. Therefore, the Sutras say, 'The mind produced, all dharmas are produced; the mind extinguished, all dharmas are extinguished. Now, to say goodbye, I will leave you a verse called the 'Self-Nature's True Buddha Verse.' People of the future who understand its meaning will see their original mind and realize the Buddha Way. The verse runs:

The true-suchness self-nature is the true Buddha.
 Deviant views, the three poisons, are the demon king.
 At times of deviant confusion the demon king is in the house;
 But when you have proper views the Buddha is in the hall.
 Deviant views, the three poisons produced within the nature,
 Are just the demon king come to dwell in the house.
 Proper views casting out three poisons of the mind
 Transform the demon into Buddha True, not False.
 Dharma-body, Reward-body, and Transformation-body:
 Fundamentally the three bodies are one body.
 Seeing that for yourself within your own nature
 Is the Bodhi-cause for realizing Buddhahood.
 The pure nature is originally produced
 from the Transformation-body.
 The pure nature is ever-present within the Transformation-body.
 One's nature leads the Transformation-body down the right road.
 And in the future the full perfection is truly without end.
 The root cause of purity is the lust nature,
 For once rid of lust, the substance of the nature is pure.
 Each of you, within your natures; abandon the five desires.

In an instant, see your nature, it is true.
If in this life you encounter the door of Sudden Teaching
You will be suddenly enlightened to your self-nature
And see the Honored of the world.
If you wish to cultivate and aspire to Buddhahood,
You won't know where the truth is to be sought
Unless you can see the truth within your own mind,
This truth which is the cause of realizing Buddhahood.
Not to see your self-nature but to seek the Buddha outside:
If you think that way, you are deluded indeed.
I now leave behind the Dharma-door of the Sudden Teaching
To liberate worldly people who must cultivate themselves.
I announce to you and to future students of the Way:
If you do not hold these views you will only waste your time.

Chapter Thirty-Six

The Self-Nature, Pure, Neither Produced Nor Destroyed, Completed in Itself, Can Produce All Dharmas

I. An Overview of Self-nature in Buddhist Teachings:

Self-nature; another expression for the Buddha-nature that is immanent in everything existing and that is experienced in self-realization. Original nature, contrasted to supreme spirit or purusha. Original nature is always pure in its original essence. Self-nature, that which constitutes the essential nature of a thing. In the Lankavatara Sutra, the Buddha told Mahamati: "Oh Mahamati, the nature of existence is not as it is discriminated by the ignorant." Things in the phenomenal world are transient, momentary, and without duration; hence they have no self-nature. Also according to The Lankavatara Sutra, there are seven types of self-nature. What is meant by Emptiness of Self-nature (Self-substance)? It is because there is no birth of self-substance by itself. That is to say, individualization is the construction of our own mind; to think that there are in reality individual objects as such, is an illusion; they have no self-substance, therefore, they are said to be empty. According to the T'ien T'ai tradition, this truth refers to reality which is neither nothingness nor substantial Being; it is simultaneously empty and conventionally existent.

II. The Self-Nature, Pure, Neither Produced Nor Destroyed, Completed in Itself, Can Produce All Dharmas:

Naturally pure mind, the mind that is pure in its original essence, gives itself up to the influence of the secondary evil passions, Manas, etc., and the ego. This is the primordial perfection Buddha-nature that is immanent in all beings and does not need to be "attained." This perfection is always present; however, that is obscured by delusion in everyman's consciousness. According to the Awakening of Faith, this is the self-existing fundamental pure mind (Immutable mind corpus, or

mind-nature). After Hui-neng's verse "Originally Bodhi has no tree" was written, the followers all were startled and without exception cried out to one another, "Strange indeed! One cannot judge a person by his appearance. How can it be that, after so little time, he has become a Bodhisattva in the flesh?" The Fifth Patriarch saw the astonished assembly and feared that they might become dangerous. Accordingly, he erased the verse with his shoe saying, "This one, too, has not yet seen his nature." The assembly agreed. The next day the Patriarch secretly came to the threshing floor where he saw Hui Neng pounding rice with a stone tied around his waist and he said, "A seeker of the Way would forget his very life for the Dharma. Is this not the case?" Then the Fifth Patriarch asked, "Is the rice ready?" Hui Neng replied, "The rice has long been ready. It is now waiting only for the sieve." The Patriarch rapped the pestle three times with his staff and left. Hui Neng then knew the Patriarch's intention and, at the third watch, he went into the Patriarch's room. The Patriarch covered them with his precept sash in order to hide and he explained the Diamond Sutra for him, "One should produce a thought that is nowhere supported." At the moment he heard those words, Hui Neng experienced the great enlightenment and he knew that all the ten thousand dharmas are not separate from the self-nature. He said to the Patriarch:

"How unexpected! The self-nature is originally pure in itself.

How unexpected! The self-nature

Is originally neither produced nor destroyed.

How unexpected! The self-nature is originally complete in itself.

How unexpected! The self-nature is originally without movement.

How unexpected! The self-nature

Can produce the ten thousand dharmas."

Chapter Thirty-Seven

Own Mind Takes Refuge with the Self-Nature

In Zen, mind means either the mind of a person in the sense of all his powers of consciousness, mind, heart and spirit, or else absolutely reality, the mind beyond the distinction between mind and matter. It is for the sake of giving practitioners an easier understanding of Mind, Buddhist teachers usually divide the mind into aspects or layers, but to Zen, Mind is one great Whole, without parts or divisions. The manifesting, illuminating, and nonsubstantial characteristics of Mind exist simultaneously and constantly, inseparable and indivisible in their totality. Meanwhile, self-nature, another expression for the Buddha-nature that is immanent in everything existing and that is experienced in self-realization. Original nature, contrasted to supreme spirit or purusha. Original nature is always pure in its original essence. Self-nature, that which constitutes the essential nature of a thing. In the Lankavatara Sutra, the Buddha told Mahamati: "Oh Mahamati, the nature of existence is not as it is discriminated by the ignorant." Things in the phenomenal world are transient, momentary, and without duration; hence they have no self-nature. Also according to The Lankavatara Sutra, there are seven types of self-nature.

One day, someone asked Ishida Baigan, a founder of Shingaku Mind Studies, a lay movement inspired by Zen Buddhism in Japan: "Are mind and essence different?" Baigan replied, "Mind includes both essence and sense; it has movement and stillness, substance and function. Essence is the substance, which is tranquil; mind, which moves, is the function. Speaking of mind in terms of essence, it resembles essence in a way; the substance of mind is unminding until it is disturbed; essence is also unminding. Mind is the realm of energy, essence is the realm of noumenon. Just as the moon is reflected even in a tiny drop of dew, noumenon is inwardly present in all things, even though it is invisible." According to the Platform Sutra, Chapter Six, the Sixth Patriarch taught: "When enlightened to the self-nature, the living being is a Buddha. If confused about the self-nature, the Buddha is a living being. When the self-nature is impartial, the living being is the

Buddha. When the self-nature is biased, the Buddha is a living being. If your thoughts are devious and malicious, the Buddha dwells within the living being but by means of one impartial thought, the living being becomes a Buddha. Good Knowing Advisors, **when your own mind takes refuge with your self-nature, it takes refuge with the true Buddha.** To take refuge is to rid your self-nature of ego-centered and unwholesome thoughts as well as jealousy, obsequiousness, deceitfulness, contempt, pride, conceit, and deviant views, and all other unwholesome tendencies whenever they arise. To take refuge is to be always aware of your own transgressions and never to speak of other people's good or bad traits. Always to be humble and polite is to have penetrated to the self-nature without any obstacle. That is taking refuge."

Chapter Thirty-Eight

Precepts of the Triple Refuge That Has No Mark

I. An Overview of Taking Refuge in the Triratna in Buddhism:

Taking refuge in the Triratna means an admission of a lay disciple, after recantation of his previous wrong belief and sincere repentance to the abbot or monk of the Three Refuges. The phrase “Taking Refuge” is used with the meaning of declaration of faith in the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha. I take refuge in the Buddha, I take refuge in the Dharma, I take refuge in the Sangha. From the without beginning time, we have been taking refuge in pleasures. Now as we understand Buddhism and its practices, we try to break out of these pleasures. Take refuge in the three Precious Ones, or the Three Refuges. In Buddhism, a refuge is something on which one can rely for support and guidance. In most Buddhist traditions, “going for refuge” in the “three refuges” or “three jewels”: Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, is considered to be the central act that establishes a person as a Buddhist. Going for refuge is an acknowledgment that one requires aid and instruction and that one has decided that one is committed to following the Buddhist path. Taking true refuge involves a change of our attitude; it comes from seeing the worthlessness of worldly affairs we are usually attached to, they only cause us to continue to wander in the cycle of birth and death. Sincere Buddhists should always seek ultimate refuge in the Buddha, His Dharmas and the Sangha (the spiritual community that practice according to the Buddha’s teachings). The three refuges are three of the most important entrances to the great enlightenment; for they purify the evil worlds. Zen practitioners should always remember that there are several problems for a Buddhist who does not take refuge in the Three Gems. There is no chance to meet the Sangha for guidance. Buddhist sutras always say, “If one does not take refuge in the Sangha, it’s easier to be reborn into the animal kingdom.” Not taking refuge in the Sangha means that there is no good example for one to follow. If there is no one who can show us the right path to cultivate all good and eliminate all-evil, then ignorance arises, and ignorance is one of the main causes of rebirth in the animal realms.

There is no chance to study Dharma in order to distinguish right from wrong, good from bad. Thus desire appears, and desire is one of the main causes of rebirth in the hungry ghost. Therefore, Buddhist sutras always say, “If one does not take refuge in the Dharma, it’s easier to be reborn in the hungry ghost realms.” There is not any chance to get blessings from Buddhas, nor chance to imitate the compassion of the Buddhas. Thus, anger increased, and anger is one of the main causes of the rebirth in hell. Therefore, Buddhist sutras always say, “if one does not take refuge in Buddha, it’s easier to be reborn in hell. In the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha taught: “Men were driven by fear to go to take refuge in the mountains, in the forests, and in sacred trees (Dharmapada 188). But that is not a safe refuge or no such refuge is supreme. A man who has gone to such refuge, is not delivered from all pain and afflictions (Dharmapada 189). On the contrary, he who take refuge in the Buddhas, the Dharma and the angha, sees with right knowledge (Dharmapada 190). With clear understanding of the four noble truths: suffering, the cause of suffering, the destruction of suffering, and the eightfold noble path which leads to the cessation of suffering (Dharmapada 191). That is the secure refuge, the supreme refuge. He who has gone to that refuge, is released from all suffering (Dharmapada 192).”

II. Precepts of the Triple Refuge That Has No Mark in the Jewel Platform Sutra:

Hui Neng's No-Mark Stanza: The Sanskrit term “Animitta” means “Signlessness.” “Signs” include forms, sounds, scents, tastes, and tangible objects, men, women, birth, aging, sickness, death, and so forth. The absence of these is signlessness. So, animitta means formlessness, no-form, devoid of appearance, or absence of characteristics of all dharmas; the mark of absolute truth, which is devoid of distinctions. Animitta is commonly used as an epithet of Nirvana. According to the Jewel Platform Sutra, Chapter 2, the Sixth Patriarch Hui Neng taught: Good Knowing Advisors, I have a verse of no-mark, which you should all recite. Those at home and those who have left home should cultivate accordingly. If you do not cultivate it, memorizing it will be of no use. Listen to my verse:

“With speech and mind both understood,

Like the sun whose place is in space,
 Just spread the 'seeing-the-nature way'
 Appear in the world to destroy false doctrines.

Dharma is neither sudden nor gradual,
 Delusion and awakening are slow and quick
 But deluded people cannot comprehend
 This Dharma-door of seeing-the-nature.
 Although it is said in ten thousand ways,
 United, the principles return to one;
 In the dark dwelling of defilements,
 Always produce the sunlight of wisdom.

The deviant comes and affliction arrives,
 The right comes and affliction goes.
 The false and true both cast aside,
 In clear purity the state of no residue is attained.

Bodhi is the original self-nature;
 Giving rise to a thought is wrong;
 The pure mind is within the false:
 Only the right is without the three obstructions.

If people in the world practice the Way,
 They are not hindered by anything.
 By constantly seeing their own transgressions,
 They are in accord with the Way.

Each kind of form has its own way
 Without hindering one another;
 Leaving the Way to seek another way
 To the end of life is not to see the Way.

A frantic passage through a life,
 Will bring regret when it comes to its end.
 Should you wish for a vision of the true Way,
 Right practice is the Way.

If you don't have a mind for the Way,
 You walk in darkness blind to the Way;
 If you truly walk the Way,
 You are blind to the faults of the world.

If you attend to others' faults,
 Your fault-finding itself is wrong;
 Others' faults I do not treat as wrong;
 My faults are my own transgressions.

Simply cast out the mind that finds fault,
 Once cast away, troubles are gone;
 When hate and love don't block the mind,
 Stretch out both legs and then lie down.

If you hope and intend to transform others,
 You must perfect expedient means.
 Don't cause them to have doubts, and then
 Their self-nature will appear.

The Buddhadharma is here in the world;
 Enlightenment is not apart from the world.
 To search for Bodhi apart from the world
 Is like looking for a hare with horns.

Right views are transcendental;
 Deviant views are all mundane.
 Deviant and right completely destroyed:
 The Bodhi nature appears spontaneously.

This verse is the Sudden Teaching,
 Also called the great Dharma boat.
 Hear in confusion, pass through ages,
 In an instant's space, enlightenment.

The Master said further, "In the Ta Fan Temple I have just now spoken the Sudden Teaching, making the universal vow that all living

beings of the Dharma realm will see their nature and realize Buddhahood as they hear these words.” Then among Magistrate Wei and the officials, Taoists and lay people who heard what the Master said, there were none who did not awaken. Together they made obeisance and exclaimed with delight, “Good indeed! Who would have thought that in Ling Nan a Buddha would appear in the world.”

Precepts of the Triple Refuge That Has No Mark in the Jewel Platform Sutra: Also according to the Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch’s Dharma Treasure, the Sixth Patriarch, Hui-Neng, taught: Good Knowing Advisors, *Take refuge with the enlightened*, the honored, the doubly complete. *Take refuge with the right*, the honored that is apart from desire. *Take refuge with the pure*, the honored among the multitudes. ‘From this day forward, we call enlightenment our master and will never again take refuge with deviant demons or outside religions. We constantly enlighten ourselves by means of the Triple Jewel of our own self-nature.’ Good Knowing Advisors, I exhort you all to take refuge with the Triple Jewel of your own nature: the Buddha, which is enlightenment; the Dharma, which is right; and the Sangha, which is pure. When your mind takes refuge with enlightenment, deviant confusion does not arise. Desire decreases, so that you know contentment and are able to keep away from wealth and from the opposite sex. That is called the honored, the doubly complete. When your mind takes refuge with what is right, there are no deviant views in any of your thoughts because there are no deviant views; there is no self, other, arrogance, greed, love or attachment. That is called the honored that is apart from desire. When your own mind takes refuge with the pure, your self-nature is not stained by attachment to any state of defilement, desire or love. That is called the honored among the multitudes. If you cultivate this practice, you take refuge with yourself. Common people do not understand that, and so, from morning to night, they take the triple-refuge precepts. They say they take refuge with the Buddha, but where is the Buddha? If they cannot see the Buddha, how can they return to him? Their talk is absurd. Good Knowing Advisors, each of you examine yourselves. Do not make wrong use of the mind. The Avatamsaka Sutra clearly states that you should take refuge with your own Buddha, not with some other Buddha. If you do not take refuge with the Buddha in yourself, there is

no one you can rely on. Now that you are self-awakened, you should each take refuge with the Triple Jewel of your own mind. Within yourself, regulate your mind and nature; outside yourself, respect others. That is to take refuge with yourself.”

In the Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra, Chapter Six, the Sixth Patriarch taught: “Good Knowing Advisors, now that you have taken refuge with the Triple Jewel, you should listen carefully while I explain to you the three bodies of a single substance, the self-nature of the Buddha, so that you may see the three bodies and become completely enlightened to your own self-nature. Repeat after me: I take refuge with the clear, pure Dharma-body of the Buddha within my own body. I take refuge with the hundred thousand myriad Transformation-bodies of the Buddha within my own body. I take refuge with the complete and full Reward-body of the Buddha within my own body. Good Knowing Advisors, the form-body is an inn; it cannot be returned to. The three bodies of the Buddha exist within the self-nature of worldly people but, because they are confused, they do not see the nature within them and so, seek the three bodies of the Tathagata outside themselves. They do not see that the three bodies of the Buddha are within their own bodies. Listen to what I say, for it can cause you to see the three bodies of your own self-nature within your own body. The three bodies of the Buddha arise from your own self-nature and are not obtained from outside. What is the clear pure Dharma-body Buddha? The worldly person’s nature is basically clear and pure and, the ten thousand dharmas are produced from it. The thought of evil produces evil actions and the thought of good produces good actions. Thus, all dharmas exist within self-nature. This is like the sky which is always clear, and the sun and moon which are always bright, so that if they are obscured by floating clouds, it is bright above the clouds and dark below them. But if the wind suddenly blows and scatters the clouds, there is brightness above and below, and the myriad forms appear. The worldly person’s nature constantly drifts like those clouds in the sky. Good Knowing Advisors, intelligence is like the sun and wisdom is like the moon. Intelligence and wisdom are constantly bright but, if you are attached to external states, the floating clouds of false thought cover the self-nature so that it cannot shine. If you meet a Good Knowing Advisor, if you listen to the true and right Dharma and

cast out your own confusion and falseness, then inside and out there will be penetrating brightness, and within the self-nature all the ten thousand dharmas will appear. That is how it is with those who see their own nature. It is called the clear, pure Dharma-body of the Buddha.”

Chapter Thirty-Nine

The Markless Repentance

Seeing the scholars and common people of Kuang-Chou and Shao-Kuan and the four directions assembled on the mountain to hear the Dharma, the Great Master Hui Neng took his seat and spoke to the assembly saying: “Come, each of you, Good Knowing Advisors! This work must begin within your self-nature. At all times, in every thought, purify your mind, cultivate your own conduct, see your own Dharm-body and the Buddha of your own mind. Take yourself across; discipline yourself. Only then will your coming here have not been in vain. You have come from afar to attend this gathering because we have karmic affinities in common. Now all of you kneel and I will first transmit to you the fivefold Dharma-body refuge of the self-nature, and then the markless repentance and reform.” The assembly knelt and the Master said, “The first is the morality-refuge, which is simply your own mind when free from error, evil, jealousy, greed, hatred and hostility. The second is the concentration-refuge, which is just your own mind and does not become confused when seeing the marks of all good and evil conditions. The third is the wisdom-refuge, which is simply your own mind when it is unobstructed and when it constantly uses wisdom to contemplate and illuminate the self-nature, when it does no evil, does good without becoming attached and, is respectful of superior, considerate of inferiors, and sympathetic towards orphans and widows. The fourth is the liberation-refuge, which is simply your own mind independent of conditions, not thinking of good or evil, free and unobstructed. The fifth is the refuge of knowledge and views, which is simply your own mind when it is independent of good and evil conditions and when it does not dwell in emptiness or cling to stillness. You should then study this in detail, listen a great deal, recognize your original mind and penetrate the true principle of all the Buddhas. You should welcome and be in harmony with living creatures; the unchanging true nature. Good Knowing Advisors, repeat after me: “May this disciple be, in past, present, and future thought, in every thought, unstained by stupidity and confusion. May it be wiped away at

once and never arise again. May this disciple be, in past, present, and future thought, in every thought, unstained by ignorance and deceit. Now I completely repent of and reform all bad actions done in the past out of arrogance and deceit and other such offenses. May their effects be wiped away at once and may never be perpetrated again. May this disciple be in past, present, and future thought, in every thought unstained by jealousy. Now I completely repent and reform all bad actions done in the past out of jealousy and other such offenses. May they be wiped away at once and never arise again.

According to the Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch's Dharma Treasure, the Sixth Patriarch, Hui-Neng, taught: "Good Knowing Advisors, I will now transmit to you the markless repentance and reform to destroy the offensive actions done within the three periods of time and to purify the three karmas. Good Knowing Advisors, repeat after me: "May this disciple be, in past, present, and future thought, in every thought, unstained by stupidity and confusion. May it be wiped away at once and never arise again. May this disciple be, in past, present, and future thought, in every thought, unstained by ignorance and deceit. Now I completely repent of and reform all bad actions done in the past out of arrogance and deceit and other such offenses. May their effects be wiped away at once and may never be perpetrated again. May this disciple be in past, present, and future thought, in every thought unstained by jealousy. Now I completely repent and reform all bad actions done in the past out of jealousy and other such offenses. May they be wiped away at once and never arise again. Good Knowing Advisors, the above has been the markless repentance and reform. What is repentance and what is reform? Repentance is to repent of past errors, to repent so completely of all bad actions done in the past out of stupidity, confusion, arrogance, deceit, jealousy, and other such offenses, that they never arise again. Reform is to refrain from such transgressions in the future. Awakening and cutting off such offenses completely and never committing them again is called repentance and reform. Common people, stupid and confused, know only how to repent of former errors and do not know how to reform and refrain from transgressions in the future. Because they do not reform, their former errors are not wiped away, and they will occur in the

future. If former errors are not wiped away and transgressions are again committed, how can that be called repentance and reform?"

Chapter Forty

The Fragrance of the Five-Fold Dharma-Body Refuge of the Self-Nature in the Jewel Platform Sutra

I. An Overview of the Fragrance of the Five Parts of the Dharma Body:

The five attributes of the dharmakaya or spiritual body of Tathagata. These five attributes surpass all conditions of form or the five skandhas, all materiality (rupa), all sensations (vedana), all consciousness (samjna), all moral activity (karman), all knowledge (vijnana): Buddha is above all moral conditions; tranquil and apart from all false ideas; wise and omniscient; free, unlimited, unconditioned, which is the state of nirvana; Buddha has perfect knowledge of this state. Buddhism takes five kinds of incense (the five attributes of dharmakaya or spiritual body of the Tathagata or five kinds of incense or fragrance) to correspond with the five kinds of dharmakaya: the dharmakaya is above all moral conditions, the dharmakaya is tranquil and apart from all false ideas, the dharmakaya is wise and omniscient, the dharmakaya is free, unlimited, unconditioned, which is the state of nirvana, the dharmakaya has perfect knowledge.

II. The Fragrance of the Five-Fold Dharma-Body Refuge of the Self-Nature:

According to The Jewel Platform Sutra, the Sixth Patriarch taught about the five-fold Dharma-body refuge of the self-nature. The first is the morality-refuge, which is simply your own mind when free from error, evil, jealousy, greed, hatred and hostility. The second is the concentration-refuge, which is just your own mind which does not become confused when seeing the marks of all good and evil conditions. The third is the wisdom-refuge, which is simply your own mind when it is unobstructed and when it constantly uses wisdom to contemplate and illuminate the self-nature, when it does no evil, does good without becoming attached, and is respectful of superior, considerate of inferiors, and sympathetic towards orphans and widows.

The fourth is the liberation-refuge, which is simply your own mind independent of conditions, not thinking of good or evil, and free and unobstructed. The fifth is the refuge of knowledge and views, which is simply your own mind when it is independent of good and evil conditions and when it does not dwell in emptiness or cling to stillness. You should then study this in detail, listen a great deal, recognize your original mind, and penetrate the true principle of all the Buddhas. You should welcome and be in harmony with living creatures; the unchanging true nature. Good Knowing Advisors, the incense of these refuges perfumes each of you within. Do not seek outside.

Chapter Forty-One

Cultivation of Discipline-Meditation-Wisdom in the Spirit of the Jewel Platform Sutra

I. Overview and Meanings of Discipline-Meditation-Wisdom:

Discipline, Meditation, and Wisdom are the threefold training, or three studies or endeavors of the non-outflow, or those who have passionless life and escape from transmigration. Buddhist practitioners should always remember that in Buddhism, there is no so-called cultivation without discipline, and also there is no Dharma without discipline. Precepts are considered as cages to capture the thieves of greed, anger, stupidity, pride, doubt, wrong views, killing, stealing, lust, and lying. Samadhi, meditation, trance is a method of training the mind. In the same manner as in the previous sentence, in Buddhism, there is no so-called cultivation without concentration, or training the mind. The resulting wisdom is a training in wisdom. If you want to get rid of greed, anger, and ignorance, you have no choice but cultivating discipline and samadhi so that you can obtain wisdom paramita. With wisdom paramita, you can destroy these thieves and terminate all afflictions. If we do not hold the precepts, we can continue to commit offenses and create more karma; lacking trance power, we will not be able to accomplish cultivation of the Way; and as a result, we will not only have no wisdom, but we also may become more dull. Thus, every Buddhist cultivator (practitioner) must have these three non-outflow studies. Discipline or morality consists in observing all the precepts laid down by the Buddha for the spiritual welfare of his disciples. Discipline (training in moral discipline) wards off bodily evil. Meditation is the exercise to train oneself in tranquilization. Meditation (training the mind) calms mental disturbance. Wisdom (training in wisdom). In other words, Wisdom or Prajna is the power to penetrate into the nature of one's being, as well as the truth itself thus intuited. Discipline wards off bodily evil, meditation calms mental disturbance, and wisdom gets rid of delusion and proves the truth. Without purity of conduct there will be no calm equipoise of thought; without the calm equipoise of thought there will be no completion of insight. The completion of insight

(prajna) means the perfection of intellect and wisdom, i.e., perfect enlightenment. It is the result of self-creation and the ideal of the self-creating life. Obviously, all these three are needed for any Buddhist. But after the Buddha, as time went on, the Triple Discipline was split into three individual items of study. The observers of the rules of morality became teachers of the Vinaya; the yogins of meditation were absorbed in various samadhis and became Zen Masters; those who pursued Prajna became philosophers or dialecticians.

The Threefold study of “Precept-Concentration-Wisdom” completely encloses itself in the Eightfold Noble Path is eight main roads that any Buddhist must tread on in order to achieve enlightenment and liberation. Sincere Buddhists should always remember that even the higher practice of calming concentration or samadhi does not assure and place us in an ultimate position of enlightenment, for defilements or latent tendencies are not totally removed yet. We only calm them down temporarily. At any moment they may re-appear when circumstances permit, and poison our mind if we don’t always apply right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration in our own cultivation. As we still have impurities, we are still impacted by unwholesome impulses. Even though we have gained the state of calm of mind through concentration or samadhi, but that state is not an absolute state of purity. Thus the efforts to develop concentration never an end itself to a Buddhist cultivator. The most important thing for any Buddhist cultivator here is to develop his “Insight” for only “insight” can help us eliminating perversions and destroying ignorance, and to advance on the Path of Enlightenment and Liberation. In Buddhism, the path of liberation includes Virtue, Concentration, and Wisdom, which are referred to in the discourses as the “Threefold Training” (Tividha-sikkha) and none of them is an end in itself; each is a means to an end. One can not function independently of the others. As in the case of a tripod which falls to the ground if a single leg gives away, so here one can not function without the support of the others. These three go together supporting each other. Virtue or regulated behavior strengthens meditation and meditation in turn promotes Wisdom. Wisdom helps one to get rid of the clouded view of things, to see life as it really is, that is to see life and all things pertaining to life as arising and passing away. According to Prof.

Junjiro Takakusu in *The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy*, Buddhism lays stress on the Threefold Learning (siksa) of Higher Morality, Higher Thought, and Higher Insight. That is to say, without higher morals one cannot get higher thought and without higher thought one cannot attain higher insight. In other words, morality is often said to lead to samadhi, and samadhi to prajna. Higher thought here comprises the results of both analytical investigation and meditative intuition. Buddhism further instructs the aspirants, when they are qualified, in the Threefold Way (marga) of Life-View, Life-Culture and Realization of Life-Ideal or No-More Learning. These are three stages to be passed through in the study of the Fourfold Truth by the application of the Eightfold Noble Path; in the second stage it is investigated more fully and actualized by the practice of the Seven Branches of Enlightenment, life-culture here again means the results of right meditation; and in the last stage the Truth is fully realized in the Path of No-More-Learning. In other words, without a right view of life there will be no culture, and without proper culture there will be no realization of life. In the *Dhammapadam*, the Buddha taught: “By observing precepts, one can reach concentration and mindfulness; from concentration and mindfulness, one can achieve knowledge and wisdom. Knowledge brings calmness and peace to life and renders human beings indifferent to the storms of the phenomenal world.”

According to the Mahayana Buddhism, only an immediate experienced intuitive wisdom, not intelligence can help man reach enlightenment. Therefore, to achieve prajna is synonymous with to reach enlightenment. One of the two perfections required for Buddhahood. The wisdom which enables us to transcend desire, attachment and anger so that we will be emancipated (not through the mercy of any body, but rather through our own power of will and wisdom) and so that we will not be reborn again and again in “samsara” or transmigration. In Buddhism, wisdom is the highest virtue of all. It is usual to translate the Sanskrit term “Prajna” (pali-Panna) by “wisdom,” and that is not positively inaccurate. When we are dealing with the Buddhist tradition, however, we must always bear in mind that there Wisdom is taken in a special sense that is truly unique in the history of human thought. “Wisdom” is understood by Buddhists as the methodical contemplation of ‘Dharmas.’ This is clearly shown by

Buddhaghosa's formal and academic definition of the term: "Wisdom has the characteristic of penetrating into dharmas as they are themselves. It has the function of destroying the darkness of delusion which covers the own-being of dharmas. It has the manifestation of not being deluded. Because of the statement: 'He who is concentrated knows, sees what really is,' concentration is its direct and proximate cause."

II. Cultivation of Discipline-Meditation-Wisdom in the Spirit of the Jewel Platform Sutra:

According to the Records of the Transmission of the Lamp (Ch'uan-Teng-Lu), Volume V, and the Platform Sutra, one day, Master Chi-Ch'eng obeyed Shen-Hsiu's order to go to Ts'ao-Ch'i to learn what Great Master Hui Neng taught his disciples, then came back to report to Shen-Hsiu. However, after grasping the purport of Hui Neng's teaching, Chi-Ch'eng stood up and made bows to Hui-Neng, saying: "I come from the Yu-Ch'uan Monastery, but under my Master, Hsiu, I have not been able to come to the realization. Now, listening to your sermon, I have at once come to the knowledge of the original mind. Be merciful, O Master, and teach me further about it." The Great Master said to Chi-Ch'eng: "I hear that your Master only instructs people in the triple discipline of precepts, meditation and transcendental knowledge. Tell me how your Master does this." Chi-Ch'eng said: "The Master, Hsiu, teaches the Precepts, Meditation, and Knowledge in this way 'Not to do evil is the precept; to do all that is good is knowledge; to purify one's mind is meditation'. This is his view of the triple discipline, and his teaching is in accord with this. What is your view, O Master?" After listening to Chi-Ch'eng's report about Shen-Hsiu's Three Studies, the Sixth Patriarch Hui-Neng said: "If I said that I had a dharma to give to others, I would be lying to you. I merely use expedients to untie bonds and falsely call that samadhi. Your master's explanation of morality, concentration, and wisdom is truly inconceivably good but my conception of morality, concentration and wisdom is different from his." Chih-Ch'eng said, "There can only be one kind of morality, concentration, and wisdom. How can there be a difference?" The Master said, "Your master's morality, concentration,

and wisdom guide those of the Great Vehicle, whereas my morality, concentration, and wisdom guide those of the Supreme Vehicle. Enlightenment is not the same as understanding; seeing may take place slowly or quickly. Listen to my explanation. Is it the same as Shen-Hsiu's? The Dharma which I speak does not depart from the self-nature, for to depart from the self-nature in explaining the Dharma is to speak of marks and continually confuse the self-nature. You should know that the functions of the ten thousand dharmas all arise from the self-nature and that this is the true morality, concentration, and wisdom."

Hui Neng told Chi-Ch'eng about his teaching: "The Mind as it is in itself is free from illnesses, this is the Precepts of Self-being. The Mind as it is in itself is free from disturbances, this is the Meditation of Self-being. The Mind as it is in itself is free from follies, this is the knowledge of Self-being. The triple discipline as taught by your Master is meant for people of inferior endowments, whereas my teaching of the triple discipline is for superior people. When Self-being is understood, there is no further use in establishing the triple discipline. The Mind as Self-being is free from illnesses, disturbances and follies, and every thought is thus of transcendental knowledge; and within the reach of this illuminating light there are no forms to be recognized as such. Being so, there is no use in establishing anything. One is awakened to this Self-being abruptly, and there is no gradual realization in it. This is the reason for no establishment." Hui-neng, the Sixth Ancestor, said that for true understanding, we must know that dhyana is not different from prajna, and that prajna is not something attained after practicing meditation. When we are practicing, in this very moment of practicing, prajna is unfolding itself in every single aspect of our lives: sweeping the floor, washing the dishes, cooking the food, everything we do. This was the very original teaching of Hui-neng, and it marked the beginning of true Zen Buddhism. Everything is teaching us, everything is showing us this wonderful Dharma light. All we have to do is open our eyes; open our hearts. Listen to my verse:

"Mind-ground without wrong:
 Self-nature morality.
 Mind-ground without delusion:
 Self-nature wisdom.

Mind-ground without confusion:
 Self-nature concentration.
 Neither increasing nor decreasing:
 You are vajra.
 Body comes, body goes:
 The original samadhi."

Hearing this verse, Chih-Ch'eng regretted his former mistakes and he expressed his gratitude by saying this verse:

"These five heaps are a body of illusion.
 And what is illusion?
 Ultimately? If you tend toward True suchness
 The Dharma is not yet pure."

The Master approved, and he said further to Chih-Ch'eng, "Your Master's morality, concentration and wisdom exhort those of lesser faculties and lesser wisdom, while my morality, concentration, and wisdom exhort those of great faculties and great wisdom. If you are enlightened to your self-nature, you do not set up in your mind the notion of Bodhi or of Nirvana or of the liberation of knowledge and vision. When not a single dharma is established in the mind, then the ten thousand dharmas can be established there. To understand this principle is to achieve the Buddha's body which is also called Bodhi, Nirvana, and the liberation of knowledge and vision as well. Those who see their own nature can establish dharmas in their minds or not establish them as they choose. They come and go freely, without impediments or obstacles. They function correctly and speak appropriately, seeing all transformation bodies as integral with the self-nature. That is precisely the way they obtain independence, spiritual powers and the samadhi of playfulness. This is what is called seeing the nature."

Truly speaking, although Hui-Neng, the Sixth Ancestor, said that for true understanding, we must know that dhyana is not different from prajna, and that prajna is not something attained after practicing meditation. However, Buddhist practitioners should always remember that the resulting wisdom or training in wisdom is the result of observing precepts and practicing concentration even though wisdom also involves cause and effect. Those who cultivated and planted good roots in their past lives would have a better wisdom. However, in this

very life, if you want to get rid of greed, anger, and ignorance, you have no choice but cultivating discipline and samadhi so that you can obtain wisdom paramita. With wisdom paramita, you can destroy these thieves and terminate all afflictions. Wisdom is one of the three studies in Buddhism. The other two are precepts and meditation. According to Buddhism, high concentration is the means to the acquisition of wisdom or insight. Wisdom consists of right understanding and right thought, the first two factors of the path. This is called the training in wisdom or panna-sikkha. Wisdom helps us get rid of the clouded view of things, and to see life as it really is, that is to see life and things pertaining to life as arising and passing. Buddhist practitioners should always remember that the Threefold Study of Precept-Concentration-Wisdom are excellent means in Buddhist Cultivation. The path of liberation includes Virtue, Concentration, and Wisdom, which are referred to in the discourses as the “Threefold Training” (Tividha-sikkha) and none of them is an end in itself; each is a means to an end. One can not function independently of the others. As in the case of a tripod which falls to the ground if a single leg gives away, so here one can not function without the support of the others. These three go together supporting each other. Virtue or regulated behavior strengthens meditation and meditation in turn promotes Wisdom. Wisdom helps one to get rid of the clouded view of things, to see life as it really is, that is to see life and all things pertaining to life as arising and passing away. Practitioners who cultivate merits alongside wisdom will not float in this great ocean of boundless, vicious existence, violence; on the contrary, they always try to cultivate to escape waves of affliction and karma, infested by sea monsters of the three sufferings. Practitioners who cultivate merits alongside wisdom always embrace the three trainings and the treasure of Arya jewels. In summary, practitioners who cultivate merits alongside wisdom always believe that a straight mirror image requires a straight object. If you want to reap the “Buddhahood,” you must sow the Buddha-seed. A mirror reflects beauty and ugliness as they are, the Buddha’s Teachings prevail forever, knowing that requital spans three generations, obviously good deeds cause good results, evil deeds causes evil results. The wise know that it is the object before the mirror that should be changed, while the dull and ignorant waste time and effort hating and

resenting the image in the mirror. Encountering good or adverse circumstances, devoted Buddhists should always be peaceful, not resent the heaven nor hate the earth. In the contrary, sincere Buddhists should strive their best to cultivate until they attain the Buddhahood.

Chapter Forty-Two

Cultivation of Virtues In the Spirit of the Jewel Platform Sutra

According to Buddhist teachings, virtue is practicing what is good like decreasing greed, anger and ignorance. Virtue is to improve oneself, which will help transcend birth and death and lead to Buddhahood. Merit is what one established by benefitting others, while virtue is what one practices to improve oneself such as decreasing greed, anger, and ignorance. Both merit and virtue should be cultivated side by side. These two terms are sometimes used interchangeably. However, there is a crucial difference. Merits are the blessings (wealth, intelligence, etc) of the human and celestial realms; therefore, they are temporary and subject to birth and death. Virtue, on the other hand, transcend birth and death and lead to Buddhahood. The same action of giving charity with the mind to obtain mundane rewards, you will get merit; however, if you give charity with the mind to decrease greed and stingy, you will obtain virtue. Merit is obtained from doing the Buddha work, while virtue gained from one's own practice and cultivation. If a person can sit stillness for the briefest time, he creates merit and virtue which will never disappear. Someone may say, 'I will not create any more external merit and virtue; I am going to have only inner merit and virtue.' It is totally wrong to think that way. A sincere Buddhist should cultivate both kinds of merit and virtue. When your merit and virtue are perfected and your blessings and wisdom are complete, you will be known as the 'Doubly-Perfected Honored One.'

Meanwhile, merit is obtained from doing the Buddha work, while virtue gained from one's own practice and cultivation. If a person can sit stillness for the briefest time, he creates merit and virtue which will never disappear. Someone may say, 'I will not create any more external merit and virtue; I am going to have only inner merit and virtue.' It is totally wrong to think that way. A sincere Buddhist should cultivate both kinds of merit and virtue. When your merit and virtue are perfected and your blessings and wisdom are complete, you will be known as the 'Doubly-Perfected Honored One.' Merit is what one

establishes by benefitting others, while virtue is what one practices to improve oneself such as decreasing greed, anger and ignorance. Both merit and virtue should be cultivated side by side. These two terms are sometimes used interchangeably. However, there is a crucial difference. Merits are the blessings (wealth, intelligence, etc) of the human and celestial realms; therefore, they are temporary and subject to birth and death. Virtue, on the other hand, transcend birth and death and lead to Buddhahood. The same action of giving charity can lead to either Merit or Virtue. If you give charity with the mind to obtain mundane rewards, you will get Merit; however, if you give charity with the mind to decrease greed, you will obtain virtue. According to the Platform Sutra, Chapter Three, the Master told Magistrate Wei, “Emperor Wu of Liang’s mind was wrong; he did not know the right Dharma. Building temples and giving sanction to the Sangha, practicing giving and arranging vegetarian feasts is called ‘seeking blessings.’ Do not mistake blessings for merit and virtue. Merit and virtue are in the Dharma body, not in the cultivation of blessings.” In other words, the Sixth Patriarch wanted to emphasize that all acts from king Liang-Wu-Ti actually had no merit and virtue. Emperor Wu of Liang’s mind was wrong; he did not know the right Dharma. Building temples and giving sanction to the Sangha, practicing giving and arranging vegetarian feasts is called ‘seeking blessings.’ Do not mistake blessings for merit and virtue. Merit and virtue are in the Dharma body, not in the cultivation of blessings. The Master further said, “Seeing your own nature is merit, and equanimity is virtue. To be unobstructed in every thought, constantly seeing the true, real, wonderful function of your original nature is called merit and virtue. Inner humility is merit and the outer practice of reverence is virtue. Your self-nature establishing the ten thousand dharmas is merit and the mind-substance separate from thought is virtue. Not being separate from the self-nature is merit, and the correct use of the undefiled self-nature is virtue. If you seek the merit and virtue of the Dharma body, simply act according to these principles, for this is true merit and virtue. Those who cultivate merit in their thoughts, do not slight others but always respect them. Those who slight others and do not cut off the ‘me and mine’ are without merit. The vain and unreal self-nature is without virtue, because of the ‘me and mine,’ because of the greatness of the ‘self,’ and because of the

constant slighting of others. Good Knowing Advisors, continuity of thought is merit; the mind practicing equality and directness is virtue. Self-cultivation of one's nature is merit and self-cultivation of the body is virtue. Good Knowing Advisors, merit and virtue should be seen within one's own nature, not sought through giving and making offerings. That is the difference between blessings and merit and virtue. Emperor Wu did not know the true principle. Our Patriarch was not in error."

Chapter Forty-Three

Recognize Your Own Original Mind, See Your Own Original Nature

In Buddhism, the inner self is the original heart or mind from the original times. When one gives up their attachment, imagination, false discrimination, and so on, one restores the purity of their original mind, then both body and mind would be free from defilement and suffering. According to the Buddhist teachings, no matter how confused or deluded we may be at the moment, the fundamental nature of being is clear and pure. In the same way, clouds can temporarily obscure but cannot damage the light-giving power of the sun, so does the temporary afflictions of body and mind. The ultimate goal of all Buddhists, regardless of sects, is to uncover and make contact with this fundamental pure nature. According to Buddhist terminology, the ultimate goal of our individual human evolution is enlightenment or Buddhahood. This state can be achieved by everyone. This state can be achieved when all the delusions, greed, hatred, ignorance, etc presently obscure our mind have been completely removed.

According to the Platform Sutra, the First Chapter, when the Fifth Patriarch knew of Hui Neng's enlightenment to his original nature and said to him, "Studying the Dharma without recognizing the original mind is of no benefit. If one recognizes one's own original mind and sees one's original nature, then one is called a great hero, a teacher of gods and humans, a Buddha." He received the Dharma in the third watch and no one knew about it. The Fifth Patriarch also transmitted the Sudden Teaching, the robe and bowl saying, "You are the Sixth Patriarch. Protect yourself carefully. Take living beings across by every method and spread the teaching for the sake of those who will live in the future. Do not let it be cut off." Listen to my verse:

'With feeling comes,
The planting of the seed.
Because of the ground,
The fruit is born again
Without feeling,

There is no seed at all.
 Without that nature,
 There is no birth either.”

Also according to the Platform Sutra, Chapter Ten, the Sixth Patriarch told the great assembly, “All of you should take care. After my extinction, do not act with worldly emotion. If you weep in sorrow, receive condolences or wear mourning clothes, you are not my disciples, for that is contrary to the proper Dharma. Simply recognize your own original mind and see your own original nature, which is neither moving nor still, neither produced nor extinguished, neither coming nor going, neither right nor wrong, neither dwelling nor departing. Because I am afraid that your confused minds will misunderstand my intention, I will instruct you again so that you may see your nature. After my extinction, continue to cultivate accordingly, as if I were still present. Should you disregard my teaching, then even if I were to remain in the world, you would obtain no benefit.” He further spoke this verse:

Firm, firm: Do not cultivate the good.

High, high: Do not do evil.

Still, still: Cut off sight and sound.

Vast, vast: The mind unattached.

After speaking this verse, the Master sat upright until the third watch, when suddenly he said to his disciples, “I am going!” In an instant he changed and a rare fragrance filled the room. A white rainbow linked with the earth and the trees in the wood turned white. The birds and beasts cried out in sorrow. The Master’s springs and autumns were seventy-six. The robe was transmitted to him when he was twenty-four and when he was thirty-nine his hair was cut. For thirty-seven years, he spoke the Dharma to benefit living beings. Forty-three men inherited his Dharma and an unaccountable number awoke to the Way and overstepped the common lot. The robe of belief transmitted from Bodhidharma, the Mo-Na robe and precious bowl conferred by Emperor Chung-Tsung, as well as the lifelike image sculpted by Fang Pien and other articles of the Way, were entrusted to the attendant in charge of the stupa and were permanently retained at the Pao-Lin Bodhimandala for the Bodhimanda’s protection. The

Platform Sutra has been transmitted to set forth the principles of our school, to glorify the Triple Jewel and to benefit all living beings.

Chapter Forty-Four

Not to Contemplate Stillness or Empty the Mind, Not to Grasp or Reject, Let Go Well in Harmony with Circumstances

One day, the Sixth Patriarch Hui-neng entered the hall and addressed the assembly, saying, “**Dharma is not dual nor is the mind, and the Way is pure and without marks. All of you take care not to contemplate stillness or empty the mind. The mind is basically pure and does not grasp or reject anything. Each of you work hard and go well in harmony with circumstances.**” On the eighth day of the seventh month, the Master suddenly said to his disciples, “I wish to return to Hsin-Chou. Quickly ready a boat and oars.” The great assembly entreated him earnestly to stay, but the Master said, “All Buddhas appear in the world and then are seen to enter Nirvana. This body of mine must return somewhere.” The assembly said, “Master, you are leaving, but sooner or later, you will return.” The Master said, “Falling leaves return to the root. There was no day on which I came.” They further asked, “Who has received the transmission of the Right Dharma-eye Treasury?” The Master said, “The one who has the Way obtains it; the one without a mind penetrates it.” They further asked, “In the future, there won’t be any difficulties, will there?” The Master said, “Five or six years after my extinction (death), a man will come to take my head. Listen to me verse:

"Offerings to the parents with bowed head.
There must be food in the mouth.
When the difficulty of ‘Man’ is met,
The officials will be Yang and Liu.”

When the Sixth Patriarch Hui-Neng talked about going well in harmony with circumstances, he meant being in accordance with conditioning cause, or resulting from conditioning cause, or circumstances as waves result from wind. The Sixth Patriarch also wanted to remind his assembly on the First Patriarch's Obedient to Karma. According to the first patriarch Bodhidharma, “Obedient to

karma” is one of the four disciplinary processes. Being obedient to karma, there is not ‘self’ (atman) in whatever beings that are produced by the interplay of karmic conditions; pain and pleasure we suffer are also the results of our previous action. If I am rewarded with fortune, honor, etc., this is the outcome of my past deeds which, by reason of causation, affect my present life. When the force of karma is exhausted, the result I am enjoying now will disappear; what is then the use of being joyful over it? Gain or loss, let us accept karma as it brings us the one or the other; the spirit itself knows neither increase nor decrease. The wind of gladness does not move it, as it is silently in harmony with the Path. Therefore, his is called ‘being obedient to karma.’

Chapter Forty-Five

The True-False Motion-Stillness In the Spirit of the Jewel Platform Sutra

According to the Jewel Platform Sutra, Chapter 10, in the seventh month of the year Jen-Tsu, the first year of T'ai-Chi and Yen-Ho reigns (around 712 A.D.), the Master sent his disciples to Hsin-Chou to build a pagoda at Kuo-Ên Temple. He ordered them to hurry the work and it was completed by the end of the summer of the following year. On the first day of the seventh month, he gathered his disciples together and said, "In the eighth month I wish to leave this world. Those of you with doubts should ask about them soon so that I may resolve them for you and put an end to your confusion, because when I am gone there will be no one to teach you." Hearing this, Fa-Hai and others wept. Only Shen-Hui was unmoved and did not cry. The Master said, "Little Master Shen-Hui has attained the equality of good and evil. He is not moved by blame or praise and does not feel sadness or joy. None of the rest of you have attained that. All these years on the mountain, how have you been cultivating? Now you cry. Who are you worrying about? Are you worrying that I don't know where I'm going? I know where I'm going. If I did not know, I wouldn't have been able to tell you about it in advance. No doubt you are crying because you don't know where I am going but if you knew you wouldn't need to cry. Originally, the Dharma nature is not produced or extinguished; it does not come or go. All of you sit down, and I will recite a verse called 'The True-False Motion-Stillness Verse.'" If you take it up and recite it, you will be of the same mind as I am. If you rely on it to cultivate, you will not stray from the true principle of our school." The assembly bowed and begged the Master to recite the verse.

There is nothing true in anything,
So don't view anything as true.
If you view anything as true,
Your view will be completely false.
You can know what is true by yourself.
Being apart from the false is the truth of the mind.

When your own mind is not apart from the false
 And lacks the truth, then where is the truth?
 Sentient beings understand motion.
 Insentient beings do not move.
 If you cultivate the work of non-movement,
 Like insentient beings, you will not move.
 If you seek the true non-movement,
 In movement, there is non-movement.
 Non-movement is non-movement, but
 Things without sentience lack the Buddha-seed.
 Fully able to discriminate among marks,
 But unmoving in the primary meaning:
 The very act of viewing in this way,
 Itself is the function of true suchness.
 I tell you, students of the Way,
 Apply your minds with effort and take care,
 At the gate of the Great Vehicle,
 Do not grasp the wisdom of birth and death.
 If there is response of these words,
 Then let us discuss the Buddha's meaning together.
 If there is no response,
 Join your hands together and make others glad.
 The basis of this school is non-contention,
 Contention is not the meaning of the Way.
 For in grasping at the Dharma doors
 of contradiction and contention,
 The self-nature enters birth and death.

When the followers heard this verse, they understood its meaning and bowed down before the Master. They made up their minds to practice in accord with the Dharma and not to argue, knowing that the Great Master would not remain long in the world. The Senior Seated Fa-Hai bowed again and asked, "After the High Master enters extinction, who will inherit the robe and Dharma?" The Master said, "Since the time I lectured on the Dharma in Ta-Fan Temple, transcriptions of my lectures have been circulated. They are to be called 'The Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra.' Protect and transmit them in order to take humankind across. If you speak according to them, you will be

speaking the Orthodox Dharma. I will explain the Dharma to you, but I will not transmit the robe because your roots of faith are pure and ripe. You certainly have no doubts and are worthy of the great Work. According to the meaning of the transmission verse of the First Patriarch Bodhidharma, the robe should not be transmitted. His verse said,

“Originally I came to this land,
Transmitting Dharma, saving living beings.
One flower opens; five petals and
The fruit comes to bear of itself.”

The Master added, “All of you Good Knowing Advisors should purify your minds and listen to my explanation of the Dharma. If you wish to realize all knowledge, you must understand the Samadhi of one Mark and the Samadhi of One Conduct. If you do not dwell in marks anywhere and do not give rise to hate and love, do not grasp or reject and do not calculate advantage or disadvantage, production and destruction while in the midst of marks, but instead, remain tranquil, calm and yielding, then you will have achieved the Samadhi of One Mark. In all places, whether walking, standing, sitting or lying down, to maintain a straight and uniform mind, to attain the unmoving Bodhimandala and the true realization of the Pure Land. That is called the Samadhi of One Conduct. One who perfects the two samadhis is like earth in which seeds are planted; buried in the ground, they are nourished and grow, ripening and bearing fruit. The One Mark and One Conduct are just like that. Now, I speak the Dharma, which is like the falling of the timely rain, moistening the great earth. Your Buddha-nature is like the seeds, which receiving moisture, will sprout and grow. Those who receive my teaching will surely obtain Bodhi and those who practice my conduct certainly certify to the wonderful fruit. Listen to my verse”

The mind-ground contains every seeds;
Under the universal rain they all sprout
Flower and feeling-Sudden Enlightenment
The Bodhi-fruit accomplishes itself.”

The Master also said, “Seventy years after my departure, two Bodhisattvas, one who has left home and one who is a layman, will simultaneously come from the east to propagate and transform. They

will establish my school, build and restore monasteries and glorify the Dharma for its heirs. The assembly made obeisance again and asked, “Will you please let us know for how many generations the teaching has been transmitted since the first Buddha and Patriarchs appeared in the world?” The Master said, “The Buddhas of antiquity who have appeared in the world are numberless and uncountable. But now I will begin with the last seven Buddhas. In the Past ‘Adorned Aeon’ there were Vipashyin Buddha, Shikhi Buddha and Vishvabhu Buddha. In the present ‘Worthy Aeon’, there have been Krakucchanda Buddha, Kanakamuni Buddha, Kashyapa Buddha, and Shakyamuni Buddha. From Shakyamuni Buddha, the transmission went to Arya Mahakashyapa, Arya Ananda, Arya Sanakavasa, Arya Upagupta, Arya Dhrtaka, Arya Miccaka, Arya Vasumitra, Arya Buddhanandi, Arya Buddhamitra, Arya Parshva, Arya Punyayashas, Mahasattva Ashvaghosa, Arya Kapimala, Mahasattva Nagarjuna, Arya Kanadeva, Arya Rahulata, Arya Sanghanandi, Arya Gayashata, Arya Kumarata, Arya Jayata, Arya Vasubandhu, Arya Manorhita, Arya Arya Haklena, Arya Aryasima, Arya Basiasita, Arya Punyamitra, Arya Prajnatara, Arya Bodhidharma. Great Master Hui-K’o, Great Master Seng-Ts’an, Great Master Tao-Hsin, Great Master Hung-Jen, and I, Hui-Neng, am the Thirty-Third Patriarch. Thus, the transmission has been handed down from patriarch to patriarch. In the future, transmit it accordingly from generation to generation. Do not allow it to become extinct.”

Chapter Forty-Six

In the Spirit of the Jewel Platform Sutra, The Way Is Awakened From the Mind. How Could It Be Found in Sitting?

I. An Overview of Realization of the Path in Buddhist Teachings:

In Buddhism, to realize (enlighten) the path means religious experience or understanding clearly or realizing the Path. Having attained the way (of mystic experience) or to witness to the truth. According to the Dharmapada Sutra, verse 280, the Buddha taught: "One who does not strive when it is time to strive, who though young and strong but slothful with thoughts depressed; such a person never realizes the path." The term 'Enlightenment' is very important in the Zen sects because the ultimate goal of Zen discipline is to attain what is known as 'enlightenment.' Enlightenment is the state of consciousness in which Noble Wisdom realizes its own inner nature. And this self-realization constitutes the truth of Zen, which is emancipation (moksha) and freedom (vasavartin). The term "Enlightenment" is also used to indicate the transcendental experience of realizing universal Reality. It signifies a spiritual mystical, and intuitive realization, and should not be understood as denoting an intellectual awakening as its common application in association with the "Age of Reason" suggests. According to Zen master D.T. Suzuki in *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, Second Series, Enlightenment is the whole of Zen. Zen starts with it and ends with it. When there is no enlightenment, there is no Zen. Enlightenment is the measure of Zen, as is announced by a master. Enlightenment is not a state of mere quietude, it is not tranquilization, it is an inner experience which has no trace of knowledge of discrimination; there must be a certain awakening from the relative field of consciousness, a certain turning-away from the ordinary form of experience which characterizes our everyday life. The technical Mahayana term for it is 'Paravritti,' turning back, or turning over at the basis of consciousness. By this entirety of one's mental construction

goes through a complete change. Enlightenment is the most intimate individual experience and therefore cannot be expressed in words or described in any manner. All that one can do in the way of communicating the experience to others is to suggest or indicate, and this only tentatively. The one who has had it understands readily enough when such indication are given, but when we try to have a glimpse of it through the indices given we utterly fail. When our consideration is limited to the objective side of enlightenment, the opening an eye to the truth of Zen does not appear to be very extraordinary thing. The master makes some remarks, and if they happen to be opportune enough, the disciple will come at once to a realization and see into a mystery he has never dreamed of before. It seems all to depend upon what kind of mood or what state of mental preparedness one is at the moment. According to Zen master D.T. Suzuki in *Essays in Zen Buddhism, First Series* (p.251), Zen after all a haphazard affair, one may be tempted to think but when we know that it took Nan-yueh eight long years to answer the question from the Sixth Patriarch "What is it that thus come?" We shall realize the fact that in Nan-yueh there was a great deal of mental anguish which he had to go through before he could come to the final solution and declare, "To say it's a thing misses the mark." We must try to look into the psychological aspect of enlightenment, where is revealed the inner mechanism of opening the door to the eternal secret of the human soul.

II. The Way is Awakened From the Mind in the Spirit of the Jewel Platform Sutra:

Hsieh Chien's Question of the Way: According to the Platform Sutra, Chapter Nine, on the fifteenth day of the first month, during the first year of the Shen-Lung reign (705 A.D.), Empress Tse-T'ien and Emperor Chung-Tsung issued the following proclamation: "We have invited Master Hui-Neng and Shen-Hsiu to the palace to receive offerings so that we may investigate the One Vehicle in the leisure time remaining after our myriad duties. The two Masters have declined, saying that in the South there is Dhyana Master Hui-Neng, who was secretly transmitted the robe and Dharma of the Great Master Hung-Jen who now transmits the Buddhas' mind-seal. We now send Chamberlain Hsieh Chien with this invitation, hoping that the Master

will remember us with compassion and come to the capital.” The Master sent back a petition pleading illness saying that he wished to spend his remaining years at the foot of the mountain. Hsieh Chien said, “The Virtuous Dhyana Masters at the capital all say that to master the Way one must sit in Dhyana meditation and practice concentration, for without Dhyana concentration, liberation is impossible. I do not know how the Master explains this dharma.” The Master said, “The Way is awakened to from the mind. How could it be found in sitting? The Diamond Sutra states that to say the Tathagata either sits or lies down is to walk a deviant path. Why? The clear pure Dhyana of the Tathagata comes from nowhere and goes nowhere and is neither produced nor extinguished. The Tathagata’s clear pure ‘sitting’ is the state of all dharmas being empty and still. Ultimately there is no certification; even less is there any ‘sitting.’ Hsieh Chien said, “When your disciple returns to the capital, their majesties will surely question him. Will the High Master please be compassionate and instruct me on the essentials of the mind so that I can transmit them to the two palaces and to students of the Way at the capital? It will be like one lamp setting a hundred thousand lamps burning, making all the darkness endlessly light.” The Master said, “The Way is without light or darkness. Light and darkness belong to the principle of alternation. ‘Endless light’ has an end, too, because such terms are relative. Therefore the Vimalakirti Sutra says, ‘The Dharma is incomparable because it is not relative.’” Hsien Chien said, “Light represents wisdom and darkness represents affliction. If cultivators of the Way do not use wisdom to expose and destroy affliction, how can they escape from the birth and death that have no beginning?” The Master said, “Affliction is Bodhi; they are not two and not different. One who uses wisdom to expose and destroy affliction has the views and understanding of the two vehicles and the potential of the sheep and deer carts. Those of superior wisdom and great roots are completely different.”

Chapter Forty-Seven

Sudden & Gradual Teachings In the Point of View of the Jewel Platform Sutra

I. A Summary of the Teaching of the Yellow Plum Mountain:

After master Ying-Tsung had Hui-Neng's head shaved, ordained him as a monk, he requested Hui neng to be his teacher and asked Hui Neng to enlighten him on the teaching of the master of Yellow Plum Mountain. Hui Neng said: "My master had no special instruction to give; he simply insisted upon the need of our seeing into our own Nature through our own effort. He had nothing to do with meditation, or with deliverance. For meditation and deliverance are names; and whatever can be named leads to dualism, and Buddhism is not dualistic. To take hold of this non-duality of truth is the aim of Zen. The Buddha-Nature of which we are all in possession, and the seeing into which constitute Zen, is invisible into such oppositions as good and evil, eternal and temporal, material and spiritual, and so on. The ignorant see dualism in life is due to confusion of thought; the wise, the enlightened, see into the reality of things unhampered by erroneous ideas. It is a mistake to think that sitting quietly in contemplation is essential to deliverance. The truth of Zen opens by itself from within and it has nothing to do with the practice of dhyana. For we read in the Diamond Sutra that those who try to see the Tathagata in one of his special attitudes, as sitting or lying, do not understand his spirit. Tathagata is designated as Tathagata because he comes from nowhere and departs nowhere. His appearance has no whence, and his disappearance no whither, and this is Zen. In Zen, therefore, there is nothing to gain, nothing to understand; what shall we then do with sitting cross-legged and practicing dhyana? Some may think that understanding is needed to enlighten the darkness of ignorance, but the truth of Zen is absolute in which there is no dualism, no conditionality. To speak of ignorance and enlightenment, or of Bodhi and Klésa, as if they were two separate objects which cannot be merged in one, is not Zen. In Zen, every possible form of dualism is condemned as not expressing the ultimate truth. Everything is a manifestation of the

Buddha-Nature, which is not defiled in passions, nor purified in enlightenment. It is above all categories. If you want to see what is the nature of your being, free your mind from thought of relativity and you will see by yourself how serene it is and yet how full of life it is! ”

II. The Method of Sudden Teachings:

“Sudden Teachings” according to the Sixth Patriarch’s point of view. In the Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra, Chapter Four, the Sixth Patriarch taught: “Good Knowing Advisors, when people of limited faculties hear this Sudden Teaching, they are like the plants and trees with shallow roots which, washed away by the great rain, are unable to grow. But at the same time, the Prajna wisdom which people of limited faculties possess is fundamentally no different from the Prajna that men of great wisdom possess. Hearing this Dharma, why do they not become enlightened? It is because the obstacle of their deviant views is a formidable one and the root of their afflictions is deep. It is like when thick clouds cover the sun. If the wind does not blow, the sunlight will not be visible. ‘Prajna’ wisdom is itself neither great nor small. Living beings differ because their own minds are either confused or enlightened. Those of confused minds look outwardly to cultivate in search of the Buddha. Not having awakened to their self-nature yet, they have small roots. When you become enlightened to the Sudden Teaching, you do not grasp onto the cultivation of external things. When your own mind constantly gives rise to right views, afflictions and defilement can never stain you. That is what is meant by seeing your own nature. Good Knowing Advisors, those of future generations who obtain my Dharma, should take up this Sudden Teaching. The Dharma door including those of like views and like practice should vow to receive and uphold it as if serving the Buddhas. To the end of their lives they should not retreat, and they will certainly enter the holy position. In this way, it should be transmitted from generation to generation. It is silently transmitted. Do not hide away the orthodox Dharma and do not transmit it to those of different views and different practice, who believe in other teachings, since it may harm them and ultimately be of no benefit. I fear that deluded people may misunderstand and slander this Dharma-door and, therefore will cut off

their own nature, which possesses the seed of Buddhahood for hundreds of ages and thousands of lifetimes.”

III. Sudden and Gradual Teachings In the Jewel Platform Sutra:

The Platform Sutra contains all the essentials of the abrupt doctrines. The Sixth Patriarch taught: "Oh my friends, have no fixed abode inside or outside, and your conduct will be perfectly free and unfettered. Take away your attachment and your walk will know no obstructions whatever. The ignorant will grow wise if they abruptly get an understanding and open their hearts to the truth. When the abrupt doctrine is understood there is no need of disciplining oneself in things external. Only let a man always have a right view within his own mind, no desires, no external objects will ever defile him. This is the seeing into his Nature. The seeing is an instant act as far as the mental eye takes the whole truth at one glance, the truth which transcends all kinds of dualism in all form; it is abrupt as far as it knows no gradations, no continuous unfolding." Hui Neng was born in 638 A.D., one of the most distinguished of the Chinese masters during the T'ang dynasty, the sixth patriarch of Intuition or meditation sect (Zen Buddhism) in China. Hui-Neng came from Hsin-Chou in the southern parts of China. His father died when he was very young. It is said that he was very poor that he had to sell firewood to support his widowed mother; that he was illiterate; that he became enlightened in his youth upon hearing a passage from the Diamond sutra. One day, he came out of a house where he sold some fuel, he heard a man reciting a Buddhist Sutra. The words deeply touched his heart. Finding what sutra it was and where it was possible to get it, a longing came over him to study it with the master. Later, he was selected to become the Sixth Patriarch through a verse someone wrote for him to respond to Shen-Hsiu demonstrating his profound insight. As leader of the Southern branch of Ch'an school, he taught the doctrine of Spontaneous Realization or Sudden Enlightenment, through meditation in which thought, objectively and all attachment are eliminated. The Sixth Patriarch Hui-Neng never passed on the patriarchy to his successor, so it lapsed. However, the outstanding masters of succeeding generations, both in China, Vietnam (especially Lin-Chi) and Japan, were highly respected for their high attainments. The main point of dispute being the question of "gradual"

and “sudden” enlightenment. The Southern followers of “sudden enlightenment”, who assumed that our enlightenment must be sudden or instantaneous, not from removing defilements gradually, nor by strenuous practice. However, this branch soon died out.

Immediate, or sudden, attainment, in contrast with gradualness. The two schools of Zen, the Gradual and the Sudden, represent different facets of the same teaching adapted to different types of people in different location. To praise one school while disparaging the other is therefore a form of crazy attachment, not appropriate for any Buddhists. “Sudden and Gradual Teachings” according to the Sixth Patriarch’s point of view in the Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra, Chapter Four, The Master instructed the assembly: “Good Knowing Advisors, the right teaching is basically without a division into ‘sudden’ and ‘gradual.’ People’s natures themselves are sharp or dull. When the confused person who gradually cultivates and the enlightened person who suddenly connects each recognize the original mind and see the original nature, they are no different. Therefore, the terms sudden and gradual are shown to be false names. Good Knowing Advisors, this Dharma-door of mine, from the past onwards, has been established the first with no-thought as its doctrine, no-mark as its substance, and no-dwelling as its basis. No-mark means to be apart from marks while in the midst of marks. No-thought means to be without thought while in the midst of thought. No-dwelling is the basic nature of human beings. In the world of good and evil, attractiveness and ugliness, friendliness and hostility, when faced with language which is offensive, critical, or argumentative, you should treat it all as empty and have no thought of revenge. In every thought, do not think of former states. If past, present, and future thoughts succeed one another without interruption, it is bondage. Not to dwell in dharmas from thought to thought is to be free from bondage. That is to take no-dwelling as the basis. Good Knowing Advisors, to be separate from all outward marks is called ‘no-mark.’ The ability to be separate from marks is the purity of the Dharma’s substance. It is to take no-mark as the substance. Good Knowing Advisors, the non-defilement of the mind in all states is called ‘no-thought.’ In your thoughts you should always be separate from states; do not give rise to thought about them. If you merely do not think of hundred things, and so completely rid yourself of thought,

then as the last thought ceases, you die and undergo rebirth in another place. That is a great mistake, of which students of the Way should take heed. To misinterpret the Dharma and make a mistake yourself might be acceptable but to exhort others to do the same is unacceptable. In your own confusion you do not see, and, moreover, you slander the Buddha's Sutras. Therefore, no-thought is to be established as the doctrine. Good Knowing Advisors, why is no-thought established as the doctrine? Because there are confused people who speak of seeing their own nature, and yet they produce thought with regard to states. Their thoughts cause deviant views to arise, and from that, all defilement and false thinking are created. Originally, not one single dharma can be obtained in the self-nature. If there is something to attain, or false talk of misfortune and blessing, that is just defilement and deviant views. Therefore, this Dharma-door establishes no-thought as its doctrine. Good Knowing Advisors, 'No' means no what? 'Thought' means thought of what? 'No' means two marks, no thought of defilement. 'Thought' means thought of the original nature of True Suchness. True Suchness is the substance of thought and thought is the function of True Suchness. The True Suchness self-nature gives rise to thought. It is not the eye, ear, nose, or tongue which can think. The True Suchness possesses a nature and therefore gives rise to thought. Without True Suchness, the eye, ear, forms, and sounds immediately go bad. Good Knowing Advisors, the True Suchness self-nature gives rise to thought, and the six faculties, although they see, hear, feel, and know, are not defiled by the ten thousand states. Your true nature is eternally independent. Therefore, the Vimalakirti Sutra says, "If one is well able to discriminate all dharma marks, then, in the primary meaning, one does not move."

IV. People Understand Things Slowly or Quickly, Dharma Is Not Sudden or Gradual:

The two schools of Zen, the Gradual and the Sudden, represent different facets of the same teaching adapted to different types of people in different location. To praise one school while disparaging the other is therefore a form of crazy attachment, not appropriate for any Buddhists. According to the Transmission of the Lamp (Ch'uan-Teng-Lu), Volume V, and the Platform Sutra, Zen Master Chih-Ch'eng Chi-

Chou was a native of T'ai Ho in Chi Chou. While the Sixth Patriarch was staying at Pao-Lin Temple in Ts'ao-His, the Great Master Shen Hsiu was at Yu Ch'uan Temple in Ching-Nan. At that time the two schools flourished and everyone called them, 'Southern Neng and Northern Hsiu.' So it was that the two schools, northern and southern, were divided into 'Sudden' and 'Gradual.' As the students did not understand the doctrine, the Master said to them, "The Dharma is originally of one school. It is people who think of North and South. The Dharma is of one kind, but people understand it slowly or quickly. Dharma is not sudden or gradual, rather it is people who are sharp or dull. Hence the terms sudden and gradual."

In the Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra, Chapter Four, the Sixth Patriarch Hui Neng instructed the assembly: "Good Knowing Advisors, the right teaching is basically without a division into 'sudden' and 'gradual.' People's natures themselves are sharp or dull. When the confused person who gradually cultivates and the enlightened person who suddenly connects each recognize the original mind and see the original nature, they are no different. Therefore, the terms sudden and gradual are shown to be false names. Good Knowing Advisors, this Dharma-door of mine, from the past onwards, has been established the first with no-thought as its doctrine, no-mark as its substance, and no-dwelling as its basis. No-mark means to be apart from marks while in the midst of marks. No-thought means to be without thought while in the midst of thought. No-dwelling is the basic nature of human beings. In the world of good and evil, attractiveness and ugliness, friendliness and hostility, when faced with language which is offensive, critical, or argumentative, you should treat it all as empty and have no thought of revenge. In every thought, do not think of former states. If past, present, and future thoughts succeed one another without interruption, it is bondage. Not to dwell in dharmas from thought to thought is to be free from bondage. That is to take no-dwelling as the basis. Good Knowing Advisors, to be separate from all outward marks is called 'no-mark.' The ability to be separate from marks is the purity of the Dharma's substance. It is to take no-mark as the substance. Good Knowing Advisors, the non-defilement of the mind in all states is called 'no-thought.' In your thoughts you should always be separate from states; do not give rise to thought about them. If you merely do

not think of hundred things, and so completely rid yourself of thought, then as the last thought ceases, you die and undergo rebirth in another place. That is a great mistake, of which students of the Way should take heed. To misinterpret the Dharma and make a mistake yourself might be acceptable but to exhort others to do the same is unacceptable. In your own confusion you do not see, and, moreover, you slander the Buddha's Sutras. Therefore, no-thought is to be established as the doctrine. Good Knowing Advisors, why is no-thought established as the doctrine? Because there are confused people who speak of seeing their own nature, and yet they produce thought with regard to states. Their thoughts cause deviant views to arise, and from that, all defilement and false thinking are created. Originally, not one single dharma can be obtained in the self-nature. If there is something to attain, or false talk of misfortune and blessing, that is just defilement and deviant views. Therefore, this Dharma-door establishes no-thought as its doctrine. Good Knowing Advisors, 'No' means no what? 'Thought' means thought of what? 'No' means two marks, no thought of defilement. 'Thought' means thought of the original nature of True Suchness. True Suchness is the substance of thought and thought is the function of True Suchness. The True Suchness self-nature gives rise to thought. It is not the eye, ear, nose, or tongue which can think. The True Suchness possesses a nature and therefore gives rise to thought. Without True Suchness, the eye, ear, forms, and sounds immediately go bad. Good Knowing Advisors, the True Suchness self-nature gives rise to thought, and the six faculties, although they see, hear, feel, and know, are not defiled by the ten thousand states. Your true nature is eternally independent. Therefore, the Vimalakirti Sutra says, "If one is well able to discriminate all dharma marks, then, in the primary meaning, one does not move."

V. Northern Gradual & Southern Immediate:

An Overview of Northern Gradual & Southern Immediate:
Northern Gradual & Southern Immediate are names of two Zen Schools in China after the time of Great Master Hung-Jen. The southern of the Sixth Patriarch Hui-Neng came to be considered the orthodox Intuitional school or the immediate method, the northern of the great monk Shen-Hsiu came to be considered as the gradual

method. The interpretation of the two teachings of sudden and gradual enlightenment was first stated in the writings of Zen master Tsung-mi, a noted Ch'an and Hua-yen theoretician. According to Tsung-mi, Shen-hsiu taught: "Although sentient beings are in fundamental possession of Buddha-nature, it is obscured and rendered invisible because of their beginningless ignorance... One must depend on the oral instructions of one's teacher, reject the realms of perception, and contemplate the mind, putting an end to false thoughts. When these thoughts are exhausted one experiences enlightenment, there being nothing one does not know. It is like a mirror darkened by dust; one must strive to polish it. When the dust is gone the brightness of the mirror appears, there being nothing it does not illuminate." While Hui-neng's understanding is regarded as superior to Shen-hsiu's because it can be achieved by anyone in a sudden and complete transformation. The assertion in Hui-neng's poem that "fundamentally there is not a single thing" is valued as a practical expression of the teaching of "emptiness" (*sunyata*), the essential emptiness or nonsubstantiality of all things. In the usual interpretation, two verses, one from Shen-hsiu and one from Hui-neng, represent a significant conflict. Zen master Tsung-mi believed that such interpretation was based on the assumption that Shen-hsiu and Hui-neng were the leading figures of the Northern and Southern groups, respectively. Also according to Tsung-mi, the biographies of Shen-hsiu and Hui-neng reveal that the two men were not at Hung-jen's side at the same time, and probably neither of them was with him near the end of his life. Hence an exchange of verses between Shen-hsiu and Hui-neng, or any other form of competition between the two men for succession to Hung-jen's position simply never happened. The two verses cannot be simplistically interpreted as representing opposed gradual and sudden positions, or as having some kind of symbolic accuracy with regard to the teachings of Shen-hsiu and Hui-neng. All monks in both the Northern and Southern China know that Shen-hsiu did not advocate a gradualist method of approaching enlightenment, but rather a "perfect" teaching that emphasized constant practice. For Hui-neng, although he did espouse the sudden teaching, it was not exclusively a Southern school doctrine. In fact, it was presented in the context of Northern school ideas until the fourth decade of the eighth century. It is really illegitimate to

consider the verses separately, since they clearly form a single unit. In other words, the verse attributed to Hui-neng is not an independent statement of the idea of suddenness but is heavily dependent on the verse attributed to Shen-hsiu. According to Kenneth Kraft in "Zen: Tradition and Transition," maybe the unnamed author of the Platform Sutra wrote the verses as a matched pair in order to circumscribe a single doctrinal position. In fact, the original author drafted two versions of Hui-neng's verse, both of which were slightly different from the later version. Furthermore, the Platform Sutra was written around the year 780, more than a century after Hung-jen's death, and the story of the verse competition is not known in any earlier source. Hence the image of Hung-jen's community and the contest he supposedly set in motion are not valid for the end of the seventh century, but must rather be understood within the context of late eighth century Ch'an. Finally, there is good evidence that both verses, including the famous line, "Fundamentally there is not a single thing," were strongly influenced by Northern school sources. In fact, nowadays scholars can no longer accept the view of this phrase expressed by Zen master D.T. Suzuki when he called it "the first proclamation made by Hui-neng" and "a bomb thrown into the camp of great master Shen-hsiu and his predecessors." Zen master Kuei-feng disdained the sectarianism between Zen schools of his age. He claimed to regard the division between Northern "gradualist" and Southern "sudden" viewpoints as fundamentally artificial. He was impatient with the extreme teaching methods that he felt resulted from overemphasis on "sudden" teaching methods. He thus especially criticized the Hanzhou of Mazu and its descendents, disdaining some teachers' repudiation of established Buddhist practices. What follows is an excerpt from the introduction to *The Complete Compilation of the Sources of Zen*. Zen is an Indian word. It comes from the complete word "Cha-na" (dhyana). Here, we say that this word means "the practice of mind" or "quiet contemplation." These meanings can all be put under the title of "meditation." The source of Zen is the true enlightened nature of all beings, which is also called "Buddha-nature," or "mind-ground." Enlightenment is called "wisdom." Practice is called "meditation." "Chan" is the unity of these two terms.

A Summary of the Northern Gradual Zen School & the Five Means of This School After the Time of Great Master Hung-Jen: An Overview of the Northern Gradual Zen School After the Time of Great Master Hung-Jen: It should be noted that from Bodhidharma to the fifth patriarch Hung-Jen, the school was undivided. From the sixth patriarch Hui-Neng, began a division: Hui-Neng founded the southern school, which prevailed; while Shen-Hsiu established the northern which died out decades later. Hung-Jen was a great Zen Master, and had many capable followers, but Hui-Neng and Shen-Hsiu stood far above the rest. During that time Zen came to be divided into two schools, the Northern and Southern. The Northern School teaches that all beings are originally endowed with Enlightenment, just as it is the nature of a mirror to illuminate. When the passions veil the mirror it is invisible, as thought obscured with dust. If, according to the instructions of Shen-Hsiu, erroneous thoughts are subdued and annihilated, they cease to rise. The the mind is enlightened as to its own nature, leaving nothing unknown. It is like brushing the mirror. When there is no more dust the mirror shines out, leaving nothing unilluminated. Therefore, Shen-Hsiu, the great Master of the Northern School, writes, in his gatha presented to the Fifth Patriarch:

“This body is the Bodhi tree
 The mind is like a mirror bright;
 Take heed to keep it always clean
 And let not dust collect upon it.”

The Northern school placed great value on the study and intellectual penetration of the scriptures of Buddhism, especially the Lankavatara Sutra, and held the view that enlightenment is reached 'gradually' through slow progress on the path of meditative training; the Southern stresses the 'suddenness' of the enlightenment experience and the primacy of direct insight into the true nature of existence over occupation with conceptual affirmations about this. This dust-wiping attitude of Shen-Hsiu and his followers inevitably leads to the quietistic method of meditation, and it was indeed the method which they recommended. They taught the entering into a samadhi by means of concentration, and the purifying of the mind by making it dwell on one thought. They further taught that by awakening of thoughts an objective

world was illumined, and that when they were folded up an inner world was perceived.

Supreme Bodhi Must Be Obtained At the Very Moment of Speaking: After reading the Shen Hsiu's verse, "The body is a Bodhi tree, the mind like a bright mirror stand, time and again brush it clean, and let no dust alight." The Patriarch already knew that Shen Hsiu had not yet entered the gate and seen his own nature. At daybreak, the Patriarch called Court Artist Lu Chen to paint the wall of the south corridor. Suddenly, he saw the verse and said to the court artist, "There is no need to paint. I am sorry that you have been troubled by coming so far, but the Diamond Sutra says, 'Whatever has marks is empty and false.' Instead leave this verse for people to recite and uphold. Those who cultivate in accordance with this verse will not fall into the evil destinies and will attain great merit." He then ordered the disciples to light incense and bow before it and to recite it, thus enabling them to see their own nature. The disciples all recited it and exclaimed, "Excellent!" At the third watch, the Patriarch called Shen Hsiu into the hall and asked him, "Did you write this verse?" Shen Hsiu said, "Yes, in fact, Hsiu did it. He does not dare to claim to the position of Patriarch but hopes the High Master will compassionately see whether or not this disciple has a little bit of wisdom." The Patriarch said, "The verse which you wrote shows that you have not yet seen your original nature but are still outside the gate. With such views and understanding, you may seek supreme Bodhi but in the end will not obtain it. Supreme Bodhi must be obtained at the very moment of speaking. In recognizing the original mind at all times in every thought, you yourself will see that the ten thousand Dharmas are unblocked; in one truth is all truth and the ten thousand states are of themselves "thus"; as they are. The 'thusness' of the mind; that is true reality. If seen in this way, it is indeed the self nature of Supreme Bodhi." The Patriarch continued, "Go and think it over for a day or two. Compose another verse and bring it to me to see. If you have been able to enter the gate, I will transmit the robe and Dharma to you." Shen Hsiu made obeisance and left. Several days passed but he was unable to compose a verse. His mind was agitated and confused; his thoughts and moods were uneasy. He was as if in a dream; whether walking or sitting down, he could not be happy. Two days later, a young boy chanting that verse

passed by the threshing room. Hearing it for the first time, Hui Neng knew that the writer had not yet seen his original nature. Although he had not yet received a transmission of the teaching, he already understood its profound meaning. He asked the boy, "What verse are you reciting?" "Barbarian, you know nothing," replied the boy. The Great Master said that birth and death are profound concerns for people in the world. Wishing to transmit the robe and Dharma, he ordered his disciples to compose verses and bring them to him to see. The person who has awakened to the profound meaning will inherit the robe and Dharma and become the Sixth Patriarch. Our senior, Shen Hsiu, wrote this 'verse without marks' on the wall of the south corridor. The Great Master ordered everyone to recite it, for to cultivate in accordance with this verse is to avoid falling into the evil destinies and is of great merit.

The Five Means by the Northern School: When we understand Shen-Hsiu and what was taught by him, it will be easier to understand Hui-Neng. Unfortunately, however, we are not in possession of much of the teaching of Shen-Hsiu, for the fact that this School failed to prosper against its competitor led to the disappearance of its literature. The Teaching of the Five Means by the Northern School, one of the preserved writings of the Northern School, which is incomplete and imperfect in meaning, and not written by Shen-Hsiu. They were notes taken by his disciples of the Master's lectures. Here the word "Means" or method, upaya in Sanskrit, is not apparently used in any special sense, and the five means are five heads of reference to the Mahayana Sutras as to the teaching in the Northern School: First, Buddhahood is enlightenment, and enlightenment is not awakening the mind. Second, when the mind is kept immovable, the senses are quietened, and in this state the gate of supreme knowledge opens. Third, this opening of supreme knowledge leads to a mystical emancipation of mind and body. This, however, does not mean the absolute quietism of the Nirvana of the Hinayanists, for the supreme knowledge attained by Bodhisattvas involved unattached activity of the senses. Fourth, this unattached activity means being free from the dualism of mind and body, wherein the true character of things is grasped. Fifth, finally, there is the path of Oneness, leading to a world of Suchness which knows no obstructions, no differences. This is Enlightenment.

Southern Sudden Zen School of Hui Neng After the Time of Great Master Hung-Jen: An Overview of Great Master Hui Neng & the Southern Zen School After the Time of Great Master Hung-Jen: The Southern sect, or Bodhidharma school, divided into northern and southern, the northern under Shen-Hsiu, the southern under Hui-Neng, around 700 A.D. The school of Zen derives from Hui-Neng, the sixth patriarch of Chinese Zen. The name “Nam Tông” was used to distinguish with the Northern school founded by Shen-Hsiu. While the Northern school was still strongly influenced by traditional Indian Meditation of gradual enlightenment (enlightenment is reached gradually through slow progress) and placed great value on study and intellectual penetration of the scriptures of Buddhism, the Southern uprooted the Northern school’s beliefs, down played the value of study, and stressed the “Sudden enlightenment.” The Southern school flourished, survived until today, while the Northern school declined just right after Shen-Hsiu and died out together within a few generations. The Southern School is often referred to as “Patriarch Ch’an” because it claims descent from Hui Neng. It should be reminded that Hui-Neng was born in 638 A.D., one of the most distinguished of the Chinese masters during the T’ang dynasty, the sixth patriarch of Intuition or meditation sect (Zen Buddhism) in China. We do have a lot of detailed documents on this Great Zen Master; however, there is some interesting information on him in *The Records of the Transmission of the Lamp (Ch’uan-Teng-Lu)*, Volume V. Hui-Neng came from Hsin-Chou in the southern parts of China. His father died when he was very young. It is said that he was very poor that he had to sell firewood to support his widowed mother; that he was illiterate; that he became enlightened in his youth upon hearing a passage from the Diamond sutra. One day, he came out of a house where he sold some fuel, he heard a man reciting a Buddhist Sutra. The words deeply touched his heart. Finding what sutra it was and where it was possible to get it, a longing came over him to study it with the master. Later, he was selected to become the Sixth Patriarch through a verse someone wrote for him to respond to Shen-Hsiu demonstrating his profound insight. As leader of the Southern branch of Ch’an school, he taught the doctrine of Spontaneous Realization or Sudden Enlightenment, through meditation in which thought, objectively and all attachment are

eliminated. The Sixth Patriarch Hui-Neng never passed on the patriarchy to his successor, so it lapsed. However, the outstanding masters of succeeding generations, both in China, Vietnam (especially Lin-Chi) and Japan, were highly respected for their high attainments.

When he reached Wang-Mei, he came and bowed before the patriarch. The patriarch asked: "Where do you come from?" Hui-Neng replied: "I am a farmer from Hsin-Chou from the southern part of China." The patriarch asked: "What do you want here?" Hui-Neng replied: "I come here to wish to become a Buddha and nothing else." The patriarch said: "So you are a southerner, but the southerners have no Buddha-nature; how could you expect to attain Buddhahood?" Hui-Neng immediately responded: "There may be southerners and northerners, but as far as Buddha-nature goes, how could you make such a distinction in it?" This pleased the master very much. Hui-Neng was given an office as rice-pounder for the Sangha in the temple. More than eight months, it is said, he was employed in this menial labour, when the fifth patriarch wished to select his spiritual successor from among his many disciples. One day the patriarch made an announcement that any one who could prove his thorough comprehension of the religion would be given the patriarchal robe and proclaimed as his legitimate heir. At that time, Shen-Hsiu, who was the most learned of all the disciples and thoroughly versed in the lore of his religion, and who was therefore considered by his fellow monks to be the heir of the school, composed a stanza expressing his view, and posted it on the outside wall of the meditation hall, which read:

The body is like the bodhi tree,
The mind is like a mirror bright,
Take heed to keep it always clean,
And let no dust accumulate on it.

All those who read these lines were greatly impressed and secretly cherished the idea that the author of this gatha would surely be awarded the prize. But when they awoke the next morning they were surprised to see another gatha written alongside of it. The gatha read:

The Bodhi is not like the tree,
(Bodhi tree has been no tree)
The mirror bright is nowhere shining,
(The shining mirror was actually none)

As there is nothing from the first,
 (From the beginning, nothing has existed)
 Where can the dust itself accumulate?
 (How would anything be dusty?)

The writer of these lines was an insignificant layman in the service of the monastery, who spent most of his time inpounding rice and splitting wood for the temple. He has such an unassuming air that nobody ever thought much of him, and therefore the entire community was now set astir to see this challenge made upon its recognized authority. But the fifth patriarch saw in this unpretentious monk a future leader of mankind, and decided to transfer to him the robe of his office. He had, however, some misgivings concerning the matter; for the majority of his disciples were not enlightened enough to see anything of deep religious intuition in the lines by the rice-pounder, Hui-Neng. If he were publicly awarded the honour they might do him harm. So the fifth patriarch gave a secret sign to Hui-Neng to come to his room at midnight, when the rest of the monks were still asleep. Then he gave him the robe as insignia of his authority and in acknowledgement of his unsurpassed spiritual attainment, and with the assurance that the future of their faith would be brighter than ever. The patriarch then advised him that it would be wise for him to hide his own light under a bushel until the proper time arrived for the public appearance and active propaganda, and also that the robe which was handed down from Bodhi-Dharma as a sign of faith should no more be given up to Hui-Neng's successors, because Zen was now fully recognized by the outside world in general and there was no more necessity to symbolize the faith by the transference of the robe. That night Hui-Neng left the monastery.

Three days after Hui-Neng left Wang-Mei, the news of what had happened in secret became noised abroad throughout the monastery, and a group of indignant monks, headed by Hui-Ming, pursued Hui-Neng, who, in accordance with his master's instructions, was silently leaving the monastery. When he was overtaken by the pursuers while crossing a mountain-pass far from the monastery, he laid down his robe on a rock near by and said to Hui-Ming: "This robe symbolizes our patriarchal faith and is not to be carried away by force. Take this along with you if you desired to." Hui-Ming tried to lift it, but it was as heavy

as a mountain. He halted, hesitated, and trembled with fear. At last he said: "I come here to obtain the faith and not the robe. Oh my brother monk, please dispel my ignorance." The sixth patriarch said: "If you came for the faith, stop all your hankerings. Do not think of good, do not think of evil, but see what at this moment your own original face even before you were born does look like." After this, Hui-Ming at once perceived the fundamental truth of things, which for a long time he had sought in things without. He now understood everything, as if had taken a cupful of cold water and tasted it to his own satisfaction. Out of the immensity of his feeling he was literally bathed in tears and perspirations, and most reverently approaching the patriarch he bowed and asked: "Besides this hidden sense as is embodied in these significant words, is there anything which is secret?" The patriarch replied: "In what I have shown to you there is nothing hidden. If you reflect within yourself and recognize your own face, which was before the world, secrecy is in yourself." He also said:

"It was beyond my doubt that:
 The True Nature has originally been serene
 The True Nature has never been born nor extinct.
 The True Nature has been self-fulfilled.
 The True Nature has never been changed.
 The True Nature has been giving rise
 to all things in the world."

One day, a monk asked the Sixth Patriarch, "Who has attained the secrets of Huang-mei?" Hui-neng said, "One who understands Buddhism has attained to the secrets of Huang-mei." The monk asked, "Have you then attained them?" Hui-neng said, "No, I have not." The monk asked, "How is it that you have not?" Hui-neng said, "I do not understand Buddhism." Hui-neng was the Sixth Patriarch of the Zen sect in China, who flourished late in the seventh and early in the eighth centuries, and it was a well-known fact that Hui-neng studied Zen under Hung-jen and succeeded him in the orthodox line of transmission to be the sixth patriarch. Did he not really understand Buddhism? Or is it that not to understand is to understand? In this case, the question was therefore really not a plain regular one, seeking an information about facts. It had quite an ulterior object. As a matter of fact, the truth of Zen requires such contradictions and denials; for Zen has a standard of its

own, which, to our common-sense minds, consists just in negating everything we properly hold true and real. In spite of these apparent confusions, the philosophy of Zen is guided by a thorough-going principle which, when once grasped, its topsy-turviness (perversion of the universe) becomes the plainest truth.

In the Transmission of the Lamp, after returning from his study-pilgrimage, a disciple drew a circle in front of the Master, Hui-neng, stood within it, and bowed. Hui-neng asked, 'Do you wish to make of it a Buddha or not?' The monk answered, 'I do not know how to fabricate the eyes.' Hui-neng remarked, 'I cannot do any better than you.' The disciple made no response." His words are preserved in a work called the Platform Sutra, the only sacred Chinese Buddhist writing which has been honoured with the title Ching or Sutra. He died in 713 A.D. In the Platform Sutra, the Chinese Patriarch Hui Neng relates that after inheriting the Dharma, robes, and bowl from the Fifth Patriarch, he spent years in seclusion with a group of hunters. At mealtimes, they cooked meat in the same pot with the vegetables. If he was asked to share, he would pick just only the vegetables out of the meat. He would not eat meat, not because he was attached to vegetarianism, or non-vegetarianism, but because of his limitless compassion.

“Sudden Teachings” According to the Sixth Patriarch’s Point of View: Sudden-enlightened Zen is a teaching which enables one to attain Enlightenment immediately. It is usually associated with the Avatamsaka and Zen schools. Sudden teaching expounds the abrupt realization of the ultimate truth without relying upon verbal explanations or progression through various stages of practice. The doctrine of “Sudden” Enlightenment (instantly to apprehend, or attain to Buddha-enlightenment) associated with the Southern school of Zen in China, in contrast with the Northern school of “Gradual” Enlightenment, or Hinayana or other methods of gradual attainment. This school was founded by the sixth patriarch Hui-Neng. Immediate awakening or Immediate teaching or practice for awakening for the advanced. When one finally breaks down a mental barrier and suddenly penetrates into the meaning of reality, the resulting experience is called “Sudden enlightenment”. A deep intuitive experience such as “sudden enlightenment” is not a goal in itself, but rather is called to further practice. After a sudden enlightenment, one

still needs to reveal one's Buddha nature even more. Although Zen talks about "sudden enlightenment", it seems like realizations are gained in a gradual manner. What is sudden is the collapsing of the last barrier in a series and the experience of new insight. Zen sect transmitted from Bodhidharma. According to Zen master D.T. Suzuki in the *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, Book I, the differentiation of two schools under the fifth patriarch, by Hui-Neng and Shen-Hsiu, helped the further progress of pure Zen by eliminating unessential or rather undigested elements. Eventually the school of Hui-Neng survived the other proves that his Zen was in perfect accord with Chinese psychology and modes of thinking. Sudden-enlightened Zen is distinguished by four characteristics: It is not established by words; it is a special transmission outside the teachings; it directly points to the human mind; and through it one sees one's own nature and becomes a Buddha. In the *Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra*, Chapter Four, the Sixth Patriarch taught: "Good Knowing Advisors, when people of limited faculties hear this Sudden Teaching, they are like the plants and trees with shallow roots which, washed away by the great rain, are unable to grow. But at the same time, the Prajna wisdom which people of limited faculties possess is fundamentally no different from the Prajna that men of great wisdom possess. Hearing this Dharma, why do they not become enlightened? It is because the obstacle of their deviant views is a formidable one and the root of their afflictions is deep. It is like when thick clouds cover the sun. If the wind does not blow, the sunlight will not be visible. 'Prajna' wisdom is itself neither great nor small. Living beings differ because their own minds are either confused or enlightened. Those of confused minds look outwardly to cultivate in search of the Buddha. Not having awakened to their self-nature yet, they have small roots. When you become enlightened to the Sudden Teaching, you do not grasp onto the cultivation of external things. When your own mind constantly gives rise to right views, afflictions and defilement can never stain you. That is what is meant by seeing your own nature. Good Knowing Advisors, those of future generations who obtain my Dharma, should take up this Sudden Teaching. The Dharma door including those of like views and like practice should vow to receive and uphold it as if serving the Buddhas. To the end of their lives they should not retreat, and they will certainly enter the holy

position. In this way, it should be transmitted from generation to generation. It is silently transmitted. Do not hide away the orthodox Dharma and do not transmit it to those of different views and different practice, who believe in other teachings, since it may harm them and ultimately be of no benefit. I fear that deluded people may misunderstand and slander this Dharma-door and, therefore will cut off their own nature, which possesses the seed of Buddhahood for hundreds of ages and thousands of lifetimes.”

Chapter Forty-Eight

Do Not Pursue the Past

Hui-neng, the Sixth Ancestor, always tells us we will never grasp anything by thinking about it after it has happened. If our minds are clear, we will see our original nature at this moment. If our minds are not fuzzy, not painted over by some fixed ideas, not held in thrall by old ways, old traditions, our original nature can be seen immediately. Hui-neng also says that if we hold onto an evil thought we will destroy the cause of a million years' virtue. What does he mean by an evil thought? One such thought that cause us all a lot of pain is resentment. It may make us feel quite superior to say to someone, 'I forgive you.' Things quiet down, perhaps, but the pain and resentment may be pushed down into our unconsciousness minds, and a rigidity comes to the surface. We may say, 'I'll never do that again.' But how do we know what we will or will not do again? True forgiveness brings a great change in our hearts. We are always talking about openheartedness. Again, it is easy to talk about, but difficult to do. What is it to truly open our hearts in forgiveness? It is to see all the blows of fate we have experienced, all the rejections of the past, present, and future, all our weaknesses, as part of a darkness that has helped to bring us more light.

Chapter Forty-Nine

Seeing One's Own Nature and Becoming A Buddha In the Spirit of the Jewel Platform Sutra

I. An Overview of Seeing Into One's Own Nature In the Point of View of the Zen Schools:

To behold the Buddha-nature within oneself or to see into one's own nature. Semantically "Beholding the Buddha-nature" and "Enlightenment" have virtually the same meaning and are often used interchangeably. In describing the enlightenment of the Buddha and the patriarchs, however, it is often used the word "Enlightenment" rather than "Beholding the Buddha-nature." The term "enlightenment" implies a deeper experience. This is a common saying of the Ch'an (Zen) or Intuitive School. "To see into one's own nature" means "looking into your own nature directly and finding it to be the same as the ultimate nature of the universe." It is, however, the main aim of the Mahayana Meditation, and its attainment is considered to be the real awakening. According to Buddhism, "to see into one's own nature" (enlightenment) is no... haphazard phenomenon. Like a sprout which emerges from a soil which has been seeded, fertilized, and thoroughly weeded, satori comes to a mind that has heard and believed the Buddha-truth and then uprooted within itself the throttling notion of self-and-other. And just as one must nurture a newly emerged seedling until maturity, so Zen training stresses the need to ripen an initial awakening through subsequent koan practice and or shikan-taza until it thoroughly animates one's life. In other words, to function on the higher level of consciousness brought about by kensho (kiến tánh), one must further train oneself to act in accordance with this perception of Truth. This special relationship between awakening and post-awakening zazen is brought out in a parable in one of the sutras. In this story enlightenment is compared to a youth who, after years of destitute wandering in a distant land, one day discovers that his wealthy father had many years earlier bequeathed him his fortune. To actually take possession of this treasure, which is rightly his, and become capable of

handling it wisely is equated with post-kensho zazen, that is, with broadening and deepening the initial awakening.

II. Seeing One's Own Nature and Becoming A Buddha In the Spirit of the Jewel Platform Sutra:

To see one's own nature (Kensho-Jo-Butsu) or to behold the Buddha-nature within oneself or to see into one's own nature. Beholding the Buddha-nature within oneself or to see into one's own nature. Semantically "Beholding the Buddha-nature" and "Enlightenment" have virtually the same meaning and are often used interchangeably. In describing the enlightenment of the Buddha and the patriarchs, however, it is often used the word "Enlightenment" rather than "Beholding the Buddha-nature." The term "enlightenment" implies a deeper experience. This is a common saying of the Ch'an (Zen) or Intuitive School. Through it one sees one's own nature and becomes a Buddha. This is one of the eight fundamental principles, intuitional or relating to direct mental vision of the Zen School.

The Sixth Patriarch, Hui-neng, insists on this in a most unmistakable way when he answers the question: "As yo your commission from the fifth patriarch of Huang-mei, how do you direct and instruct others in it?" The answe was, "No direction, no instruction there is; we speak only of seeing into one's Nature and not of practicing dhyana and seeking deliverance thereby." The sixth Patriarch considered them as "confused" and "not worth consulting with." They are empty-minded and sit quietly, having no thoughts whatever; whereas "even ignorant ones, if they all of a sudden realize the truth and open their mental eyes are, after all, wise men and may attain even to Buddhahood." Again, when the patriarch was told of the method of instruction adopted by the masters of the Northern school of Zen, which consisted in stopping all mental activities. quietly absorbed in contemplation, and in sitting cross-legged for the longest while at a stretch, he declared such practices to be abnormal and not at all to the point, being far from the truth of Zen, and added this stanza:

"While living, one sits up and lies not,
When dead, one lies and sits not;
A set of ill-smelling skeleton!
What is the use of toiling and moiling so?"

Chapter Fifty

A Single Enlightened Thought, the Living Being Is A Buddha, Unenlightened, the Buddha is a Living Being

According to the Platform Sutra, the Second Chapter, the Sixth Patriarch taught: “Good knowing Advisors, **unenlightened, the Buddha is a living being. At the time of a single enlightened thought, the living being is a Buddha.** Therefore, you should know that the ten thousand dharmas exist totally within your own mind. Why don’t you, from within your own mind, suddenly see the truth (true suchness) of your original nature. The Bodhisattva-Sila-Sutra says, ‘Our fundamental self-nature is clear and pure.’ If we recognize our own mind and see the nature, we shall perfect the Buddha Way. The Vimalakirti Nirdeśa Sutra says, ‘Just then, you suddenly regain your original mind.’ Good Knowing Advisors, when I was with the High Master Jen, I was enlightened as soon as I heard his words and suddenly saw the true suchness (truth) of my own original nature. That is why I am spreading this method of teaching which leads students of the Way to become enlightened suddenly to Bodhi, as each contemplates his own mind and sees his own original nature. If you are unable to enlighten yourself, you must seek out a great Good Knowing Advisor, one who understands the Dharma of the Most Superior Vehicle and who will direct you to the right road. Such a Good Knowing Advisor possesses great karmic conditions, which is to say that he will transform you, guide you and lead you to see your own nature. It is because of the Good Knowing Advisor that all wholesome Dharmas can arise. All the Buddhas of the three eras (periods of time), and the twelve divisions of Sutra texts as well, exist within the nature of people, that is originally complete within them. If you are unable to enlighten yourself, you should seek out the instruction of a Good Knowing Advisor who will lead you to see your nature. If you are one who is able to achieve self-enlightenment, you need not seek a teacher outside. If you insist that it is necessary to seek a Good Knowing Advisor in the hope of obtaining liberation, you are mistaken. Why? Within your own mind, there is self-enlightenment, which is a Good

Knowing Advisor itself. But if you give rise to deviant confusion, false thoughts and perversions, though a Good Knowing Advisor outside of you instructs you, he cannot save you. If you give rise to genuine Prajna contemplation and illumination, in the space of an instant, all false thoughts are eliminated. If you recognize your self-nature, in a single moment of enlightenment, you will arrive at the level of Buddha. Good Knowing Advisor, when you contemplate and illuminate with the wisdom, which brightly penetrates within and without, you recognize your original mind. The recognition of your original mind is the original liberation. The attainment of liberation is the Prajna Samadhi, thus no-thought. What is meant by 'no-thought?' No-thought means to view all dharmas with a mind undefiled by attachment. The function of the mind pervades all places but is nowhere attached. Merely purify your original mind to cause the six consciousnesses to go out the six gates, to be undefiled and unmixed among the six objects, to come and go freely and to penetrate without obstruction. That is the Prajna Samadhi, freedom and liberation, and it is called the practice of no-thought. Not thinking of the hundred things and constantly causing your thought to be cut off is called Dharma-bondage and is an extremist view. Good Knowing Advisors, one who awakens to the no-thought dharma completely penetrates the ten thousand dharmas; one who awakens to the no-thought dharma sees all Buddha realms; one who awakens to the no-thought dharma arrives at the Buddha position. Good Knowing Advisors, those of future generations who obtain my Dharma, should take up this Sudden Teaching. The Dharma door including those of like views and like practice should vow to receive and uphold it as if serving the Buddhas. To the end of their lives they should not retreat, and they will certainly enter the holy position. In this way, it should be transmitted from generation to generation. It is silently transmitted. Do not hide away the orthodox Dharma and do not transmit it to those of different views and different practice, who believe in other teachings, since it may harm them and ultimately be of no benefit. I fear that deluded people may misunderstand and slander this Dharma-door and, therefore will cut off their own nature, which possesses the seed of Buddhahood for hundreds of ages and thousands of lifetimes. Good Knowing Advisors, I have a verse of no-mark, which you should all recite. Those at home and those who have left home

should cultivate accordingly. If you do not cultivate it, memorizing it will be of no use. Listen to my verse:

“With speech and mind both understood,
 Like the sun whose place is in space,
 Just spread the ‘seeing-the-nature way’
 Appear in the world to destroy false doctrines.
 Dharma is neither sudden nor gradual,
 Delusion and awakening are slow and quick
 But deluded people cannot comprehend
 This Dharma-door of seeing-the-nature.
 Although it is said in ten thousand ways,
 United, the principles return to one;
 In the dark dwelling of defilements,
 Always produce the sunlight of wisdom.
 The deviant comes and affliction arrives,
 The right comes and affliction goes.
 The false and true both cast aside,
 In clear purity the state of no residue is attained.
 Bodhi is the original self-nature;
 Giving rise to a thought is wrong;
 The pure mind is within the false:
 Only the right is without the three obstructions.
 If people in the world practice the Way,
 They are not hindered by anything.
 By constantly seeing their own transgressions,
 They are in accord with the Way.
 Each kind of form has its own way
 Without hindering one another;
 Leaving the Way to seek another way
 To the end of life is not to see the Way.
 A frantic passage through a life,
 Will bring regret when it comes to its end.
 Should you wish for a vision of the true Way,
 Right practice is the Way.
 If you don’t have a mind for the Way,
 You walk in darkness blind to the Way;
 If you truly walk the Way,

You are blind to the faults of the world.
If you attend to others' faults,
Your fault-finding itself is wrong;
Others' faults I do not treat as wrong;
My faults are my own transgressions.
Simply cast out the mind that finds fault,
Once cast away, troubles are gone;
When hate and love don't block the mind,
Stretch out both legs and then lie down.
If you hope and intend to transform others,
You must perfect expedient means.
Don't cause them to have doubts, and then
Their self-nature will appear.
The Buddhadharma is here in the world;
Enlightenment is not apart from the world.
To search for Bodhi apart from the world
Is like looking for a hare with horns.
Right views are transcendental;
Deviant views are all mundane.
Deviant and right completely destroyed:
The Bodhi nature appears spontaneously.
This verse is the Sudden Teaching,
Also called the great Dharma boat.
Hear in confusion, pass through ages,
In an instant's space, enlightenment.

Chapter Fifty-One

The Three Bodies of the Buddha Exist Within the Self-Nature of Worldly People

I. An Overview of the Trikaya in Buddhist Teachings:

The Buddha's body means Enlightenment. It is formless and without substance. It always has been and always will be. It is not a physical body that must be nourished by ordinary food. It is an eternal body whose substance is Wisdom. Therefore, Buddha will never disappear as long as Enlightenment exists. Enlightenment appears as the light of Wisdom that awakens people into a newness of life and causes them to be born into the world of Buddhas. According to Mahayana doctrine, Buddhas have three bodies: 1) Dharmakaya, or body of the great order, or true body of the Buddha. This is the true nature of the Buddha, which is identical with transcendental reality, the essence of the universe. The dharmakaya is the unity of the Buddha with every thing existing. It represents the law or dharma, the teaching expounded by the Buddha (Sakyamuni); 2) Sambhogakaya, or body of delight, the body of buddhas who in a "buddha-paradise" enjoy the truth that they embody. This is also the result of previous good actions; and 3) Nirmanakaya, or body of transformation, or emanation body, the earthly body in which Buddhas appear to men in order to fulfill the buddhas' resolve to guide all beings to advance to Buddhahood (liberation). The nirmanakaya is embodied in the earthly Buddhas and Bodhisattvas projected into the world through the meditation of the sambhogakayaas a result of their compassion. The three bodies are not one and yet not different. It is because the levels of understanding of human beings are different. Some see the dharma body, still others see the reward body, and still others see the response body. For example, some look at a pearl as a substance which is round and perfect, others see the pure light emitting by the pearl, still others see the pearl reflected within itself. Apart from the substance of the pearl and the light, there is no pure light emitting, nor reflection inside the pearl. Thus the three are one. These are Buddha's three-fold body. A Buddha has three bodies or planes of reality. According to the Yogacara

philosophy, the Triple Body is Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya, and Nirmanakaya. Dharmakaya or Dharma body (Law body) is likened to the field of a specific career; the Sambhogakaya or bliss-body is a person's training by which that person acquires the knowledge of that specific career; and the Nirmanakaya or the body of transformation is likened the application of this knowledge in daily life to earn a living.

II. The Three Bodies of the Buddha Exist Within the Self-Nature of Worldly People:

According to the Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch's Dharma Treasure, Chapter 6, the Sixth Patriarch Hui-Neng taught: "There are three bodies of a single substance, the self-nature of the Buddha, so that you may see the three bodies and become completely enlightened to your own self-nature." Good Knowing Advisors, the form-body is an inn; it cannot be returned to. The three bodies of the Buddha exist within the self-nature of worldly people but, because they are confused, they do not see the nature within them and so, seek the three bodies of the Tathagata outside themselves. They do not see that the three bodies of the Buddha are within their own bodies. Listen to what I say, for it can cause you to see the three bodies of your own self-nature within your own body. The three bodies of the Buddha arise from your own self-nature and are not obtained from outside. What is the clear pure Dharma-body Buddha? The worldly person's nature is basically clear and pure and, the ten thousand dharmas are produced from it. The thought of evil produces evil actions and the thought of good produces good actions. Thus, all dharmas exist within self-nature. This is like the sky which is always clear, and the sun and moon which are always bright, so that if they are obscured by floating clouds, it is bright above the clouds and dark below them. But if the wind suddenly blows and scatters the clouds, there is brightness above and below, and the myriad forms appear. The worldly person's nature constantly drifts like those clouds in the sky. Good Knowing Advisors, intelligence is like the sun and wisdom is like the moon. Intelligence and wisdom are constantly bright but, if you are attached to external states, the floating clouds of false thought cover the self-nature so that it cannot shine. If you meet a Good Knowing Advisor, if you listen to the true and right Dharma and cast out your own confusion and falseness, then inside and

out there will be penetrating brightness, and within the self-nature all the ten thousand dharmas will appear. That is how it is with those who see their own nature. It is called the clear, pure Dharma-body of the Buddha.”

Your own mind takes refuge with your self-nature: Good Knowing Advisors, when your own mind takes refuge with your self-nature, it takes refuge with the true Buddha. To take refuge is to rid your self-nature of ego-centered and unwholesome thoughts as well as jealousy, obsequiousness, deceitfulness, contempt, pride, conceit, and deviant views, and all other unwholesome tendencies whenever they arise. To take refuge is to be always aware of your own transgressions and never to speak of other people’s good or bad traits. Always to be humble and polite is to have penetrated to the self-nature without any obstacle. That is taking refuge.”

Good Knowing Advisors, when your own mind takes refuge with your self-nature, it takes refuge with the true Buddha. To take refuge is to rid your self-nature of ego-centered and unwholesome thoughts as well as jealousy, obsequiousness, deceitfulness, contempt, pride, conceit, and deviant views, and all other unwholesome tendencies whenever they arise. To take refuge is to be always aware of your own transgressions and never to speak of other people’s good or bad traits. Always to be humble and polite is to have penetrated to the self-nature without any obstacle. That is taking refuge.”

What is the perfect, full Reward-body of the Buddha? Just as one lamp can disperse the darkness of a thousand years, one thought of wisdom can destroy ten thousand years of delusion. Do not think of the past; it is gone and can never be recovered. Instead think always of the future and in every thought, perfect and clear, see your own original nature. Although good and evil differ, the original nature is non-dual. That non-dual nature is the real nature. Undefined by either good or evil, it is the perfect, full Reward-body of the Buddha. One evil thought arising from the self-nature destroys ten thousand aeons’ worth of good karma. One good thought arising from the self-nature ends evils as numerous as the sand-grains in the Ganges River. To reach the unsurpassed Bodhi directly, see it for yourself in every thought and do not lose the original thought. That is the Reward-body of the Buddha.”

Good Knowing Advisors, the Dharma body of the Buddha is basically complete. To see your own nature in every thought is the Reward body of the Buddha. When the Reward body thinks and calculates, it is the Transformation body of the Buddha. Awaken and cultivate by your own efforts the merit and virtue of your self-nature. That is truly taking refuge. The skin and flesh of the physical body are like an inn to which you cannot return. Simply awaken to the three bodies of your self-nature and you will understand the self-nature Buddha. I have a verse without marks. If you can recite and memorize it, it will wipe away accumulated aeons of confusion and offenses as soon as the words are spoken. The verse runs:

A confused person will foster blessings, but not cultivate the Way
And say, "To practice for the blessings is practice of the way."

While giving and making offerings
bring blessings without limit,
It is in the mind that the three evils
have their origins.

By seeking blessings you may wish
To obliterate offenses
But in the future, though you are
blessed, offenses still remain.

You ought to simply strike the evil
Conditions from your mind
By true repentance and reform
Within your own self-nature.

A sudden awakening: the true repentance and
reform of the Great Vehicle;
You must cast out the deviant, and
practice the right, to be without offense.

To study the Way, always look
within your own self-nature;
You are then the same in kind

And lineage as all Buddhas.

Our Patriarch passed along only
This Sudden Teaching,
Wishing that all might see the nature
And be of one substance.

In the future if you wish
To find the Dharma-body,
Detach yourself from Dharma marks
And inwardly wash the mind.

Strive to see it for yourself
And do not waste your time,
For when the final thought has stopped
Your life comes to an end.

Enlightenment to the Great Vehicle
You can see your nature;
So reverently join your palms
And seek it with all your heart.

The Master said, “Good Knowing Advisors, all of you should take up this verse and cultivate according to it. If you see your nature at the moment these words are spoken, even if we are a thousand miles apart you will always be by my side. If you do not awaken at the moment of speaking, then, though face to face, we are a thousand miles apart, so why did you bother to come from so far? Take care of yourselves and go well.”

The united assembly heard this Dharma and there were none who did not awaken. They received it with delight and practiced in accord with it.

Chapter Fifty-Two

The Three Bodies of the Buddha In the Spirit of the Jewel Platform Sutra

According to the Platform Sutra, Chapter Six, the Sixth Patriarch taught: “Good Knowing Advisors, the Dharma body of the Buddha is basically complete. To see your own nature in every thought is the Reward body of the Buddha. When the Reward body thinks and calculates, it is the Transformation body of the Buddha. Awaken and cultivate by your own efforts the merit and virtue of your self-nature. That is truly taking refuge. The skin and flesh of the physical body are like an inn to which you cannot return. Simply awaken to the three bodies of your self-nature and you will understand the self-nature Buddha. I have a verse without marks. If you can recite and memorize it, it will wipe away accumulated aeons of confusion and offenses as soon as the words are spoken. The verse runs:

A confused person will foster blessings, but not cultivate the Way
 And say, “To practice for the blessings is practice of the way.”
 While giving and making offerings bring blessings without limit,
 It is in the mind that the three evils have their origins.
 By seeking blessings you may wish to obliterate offenses.
 But in the future, though you are blessed, offenses still remain.
 You ought to simply strike the evil conditions from your mind.
 By true repentance and reform within your own self-nature.
 A sudden awakening: the true repentance
 and reform of the Great Vehicle;
 You must cast out the deviant,
 and practice the right, to be without offense to study the Way,
 Always look within your own self-nature;
 You are then the same in kind and lineage as all Buddhas.
 Our Patriarch passed along only this Sudden Teaching,
 Wishing that all might see the nature and be of one substance.
 In the future if you wish to find the Dharma-body,
 Detach yourself from Dharma marks and Inwardly wash the mind.
 Strive to see it for yourself and do not waste your time,

For when the final thought has stopped your life comes to an end.

Enlightenment to the Great Vehicle you can see your nature;

So reverently join your palms, and seek it with all your heart.

The Master said, “Good Knowing Advisors, all of you should take up this verse and cultivate according to it. If you see your nature at the moment these words are spoken, even if we are a thousand miles apart you will always be by my side. If you do not awaken at the moment of speaking, then, though face to face, we are a thousand miles apart, so why did you bother to come from so far? Take care of yourselves and go well.”

Chapter Fifty-Three

Even Name and Described, Buddha-Nature Remains Without Name or Description

One day the Sixth Patriarch addressed the assembly as follows: "I have a thing. It has no head or tail, no name or label, no back or front. Do you all know what it is?" Shen-Hui stepped forward and said, "It is the root source of all Buddhas, Shen-Hui's Buddha nature!" The Master said, "I just told you that it has no name or label, and you immediately call it the root-source of all Buddhas. Go and build a thatched hut over your head! You're nothing but a follower who pursues knowledge and interpretation." Shen-hui said, "**Buddha-nature has neither name nor description**, but because my master asked what it was, name and description are used. However, even name and described, it remains without name or description." The Master hit him three times with his staff. Then, the Sixth Ancestor continued to say, "No matter what I just said, in the future if this youngster heads a monastery, it will certainly bring forth fully realized disciples of our school." The the master dismissed the assembly. In the evening, Hui-neng called Shen-hui in and asked, "Today I struck you. Was it you or Buddha-nature that felt the blow?" When confronted with this question, Shen-hui suddenly came to awakening.

Chapter Fifty-Four

The Setting Up of Marks Is Mind, Separation from Them Is Buddha

Zen Master Fa-Hai Shao-Chou, a Chinese Zen master, one of the Sixth Patriarch Hui-Neng's disciples. We do have a lot of detailed documents on this Zen Master, i.e, the Records of the Transmission of the Lamp (Ch'uan-Teng-Lu), Volume V, and the Platform Sutra; however, there is some interesting information on him in Platform Sutra. According to the Platform Sutra, Chapter Seven, when Bhikshu Fa-Hai of Ch'u-Ch'iang city in Shao-Chou. At first he called on the Sixth Patriarch, he asked, "What teaching dharma will the High Master leave behind so that confused people can be led to see the Buddha-nature?" The Sixth Patriarch said: "**The setting up of marks is mind, and separation from them is Buddha.**" Then, Fa-Hai asked, "Will you please instruct me on the sentence, 'Mind is Buddha'?" The Master said, "When one preceding thoughts are not produced, this is mind." Were I to explain it fully, I would not finish before the end of the present age." Listen to my verse:

"When the mind is called wisdom,
Then the Buddha is called concentration.
When concentration and wisdom are equal.
The intellect is pure.
Understand this Dharma teaching
By practicing with your own nature.
The function is basically unproduced;
It is right to cultivate both."

At these words, Fa-Hai was enlightened and spoke a verse in praise:

"This mind is basically Buddha;
By not understanding I disgrace myself.
I know the cause of concentration and wisdom
Is to cultivate both and separate myself from all things."

Chapter Fifty-Five

To Dwell With the Mind Contemplating Stillness Is Sickness, Not Meditation Practice

The illnesses of meditation, i.e. wandering thoughts, illusions, or the illusions and nervous troubles of the mystic. The sickness that has arisen through Zen practice, which refers to the hindrances and mishaps that one may encounter in the practice of Zen. These are expressions for deceptive sensations and appearances that can come up during the practice of sitting meditation. Any attachment to one's own enlightenment experiences, including the attachment to emptiness is also considered Zen sickness. It is an especially pronounced form of Zen sickness when someone develops great pretensions about his experience on the Zen path and thus considers himself someone special. Also when it is all too obvious that someone has experienced enlightenment, this condition also is referred to as Zen sickness (illness). The story is told of one of Shen-hsiu's students who paid a visit to Hui-neng. When Hui-neng asked him to describe what he had learned so far, he said: "My master asserts that the teaching of all the Buddhas is found in one's own mind, and that to seek the teaching outside of oneself is the same as running away from one's father and abandoning one's home." This much Hui-neng could agree with. But the student went on to say: "We're taught to stop the working of our minds, to control our wandering thoughts, and to sit in meditation for long periods of time without moving." Hui-neng snapped back: "To stop the working of the mind and to sit without moving isn't Zen. It's a disease. There's no profit to be found in such a method." The student asked, then, how one should practice. Hui-neng told him: "While alive, one sits and doesn't lie down; when one is dead, one lies down but doesn't sit. True awakening necessarily occurred suddenly and immediately. Although there may be activity leading up to that experience, the experience itself comes all at once. Our teaching might compare the process to chipping away at a stone barrier. While it could take a long while to pierce the barrier, once one does, the view on the other side becomes visible immediately. So, when practicing, one still

have mundane activities as usual for enlightenment experience could be acquired during activities as mundane as chopping and hauling wood."

Tranquility meditation is a basic method of meditation practice aimed at taming and sharpening the mind. It is also called basic sitting meditation. Tranquility meditation is a kind of basic sitting meditation in which one is sitting in the cross-legged posture follows the breath while observing the working of the mind. The main purpose of shamatha meditation is to settle or tame the mind so that it will stay where one places it. This is one of the best ways to make the mind a pure mind which is free from doubt or defilement. To purify the mind: Enlightenment and Buddhahood is a pure mind, that is, a mind totally free of greed, anger and delusion (a pure mind is enlightenment, is the Pure Land) and all other impurities. One of the three purities of a Bodhisattva. Pure mind, or the purification of the mind, which is the original Buddha-nature in every man. Pure mind is one of the most important entrances to great enlightenment; for with it, there is no defilement. After the passing away of the Fifth Patriarch Hung Jen, Shen-Hsiu's followers continually ridiculed the southern Patriarch, saying that he couldn't read a single word and had nothing in his favor. But Shen Hsiu said, "He has obtained wisdom without the aid of a teacher and understands the Supreme Vehicle deeply. I am inferior to him. Furthermore, my Master, the Fifth Patriarch, personally transmitted the robe and Dharma to him and not without good reason. I regret that I am unable to make the long journey to visit him, as I unworthily receive state patronage here. But do not let me stop you. Go to Ts'ao-Hsi and call on him." One day Shen Hsiu told his disciple Chih-Ch'eng, "You are intelligent and very wise. You may go to Ts'ao-Hsi on my behalf and listen to the Dharma. Remember it all and take careful notes to read to me when you return." As ordered, Chih-Ch'eng proceeded to Ts'ao-Hsi and joined the assembly without saying where he had come from. The Patriarch told the assembly, "Today there is a Dharma thief hidden in this assembly." Chih-Ch'eng immediately stepped forward, bowed and explained his mission. The Master said, "You are from Yu-Ch'uan; you must be a spy." "No," he replied, "I am not." The Master said, "What do you mean?" He replied, "Before I confessed, I was; but now that I have confessed, I am not."

The Master said, "How does your Master instruct his followers?" Chih-Ch'eng replied, "He always instructs us to dwell with the mind contemplating stillness and to sit up all the time without lying down." The Master said, "**To dwell with the mind contemplating stillness is sickness, not Dhyana.** Constant sitting restrains the body. How can it be beneficial? Listen to my verse:

"When living, sit, don't lie.
When dead, lie down, don't sit.
How can a set of stinking bones
Be used for training?"

Chapter Fifty-Six

Deviant Mind Arises, Demons Appear; Correct Mind Arises, Buddhas Appear

According to the Platform Sutra, Chapter Ten, the Sixth Patriarch said, “All of you please, listen carefully. If those of future generations recognize living beings, they will have perceived the Buddha-nature. If they do not recognize living beings, they may seek the Buddha throughout many aeons but he will be difficult to meet. I will now teach you how to recognize the living beings within your mind and how to see the Buddha-nature there. If you wish to see the Buddha, simply recognize living beings for it is living beings who are confused about the Buddha and not the Buddha who is confused about living beings. When enlightened to the self-nature, the living being is a Buddha. If confused about the self-nature, the Buddha is a living being. When the self-nature is impartial, the living being is the Buddha. When the self-nature is biased, the Buddha is a living being. If your thoughts are devious and malicious, the Buddha dwells within the living being but by means of one impartial thought, the living being becomes a Buddha. Our minds have their own Buddha and that Buddha is the true Buddha. If the mind does not have its own Buddha, where can the true Buddha be sought? Your own minds are the Buddha; have no further doubts. Nothing can be established outside the mind, for the original mind produces the ten thousand dharmas. Therefore, the Sutras say, ‘The mind produced, all dharmas are produced; the mind extinguished, all dharmas are extinguished. Now, to say goodbye, I will leave you a verse called the ‘Self-Nature’s True Buddha Verse.’ People of the future who understand its meaning will see their original mind and realize the Buddha Way. The verse runs:

“The true-suchness self-nature is the true Buddha.

Deviant views, the three poisons are the demon king.

At times of deviant confusion, the demon king is in the house;

But when you have proper views, the Buddha is in the hall.

Deviant views, the three poisons produced within the nature,

Are just the demon king come to dwell in the house.

Proper views casting out three poisons of the mind.
 Transform the demon into Buddha True, not False.
 Dharma-body, Reward-body, and Transformation-body:
 Fundamentally the three bodies are one body.
 Seeing that for yourself within your own nature
 Is the Bodhi-cause for realizing Buddhahood.
 The pure nature is originally produced from the Transformation-body.
 The pure nature is ever-present within the Transformation-body.
 One's nature leads the transformation-body down the right road.
 And in the future the full perfection is truly without end.
 The root cause of purity is the lust nature, for once rid of lust,
 the substance of the nature is pure.
 Each of you, within your natures; abandon the five desires.
 In an instant, see your nature, it is true.
 If in this life you encounter the door of Sudden Teaching
 You will be suddenly enlightened to your
 Self-nature and see the Honored of the world.
 If you wish to cultivate and aspire to Buddhahood,
 You won't know where the truth is to be sought
 Unless you can see the truth within your own mind,
 This truth which is the cause of realizing Buddhahood.
 Not to see your self-nature but to seek the Buddha outside:
 If you think that way, you are deluded indeed.
 I now leave behind the Dharma-door of the Sudden Teaching
 To liberate worldly people who must cultivate themselves.
 I announce to you and to future students of the Way:
 If you do not hold these views you will only waste your time."

Thinking very carefully the Sixth Patriarch's teachings, Buddhist practitioners will always see that when deviant mind arises, demons appear; when correct mind arises, Buddhas appear. These teachings will forever be the Truth for all Buddhist practitioners!

Chapter Fifty-Seven

Awaken to the No-thought Dharma

No-thought-ness or No-mind does not mean that we don't have a mind or have no mind, it does mean that we have a mind which is free from attachment to thoughts (free from self-consciousness). No mind is the state of consciousness before the division into duality created by thought takes place. In Zen Buddhism, "No-Mind" describes a state consciousness before the division into duality created by thought takes place. Only when the mind is empty (does not have anything); thus it is called "mind of non-existence." The Buddha taught that in cultivation, practitioners should take this mind to tame the deluded mind. No-mind as a transcendental mind. Patriarch Bodhidharma brought with him to China the Indian view that all this world comes from mind. What we may call Divine Mind, since it is beyond all limitations, just as the sun is beyond all clouds. His successors, up to the Fifth Patriarch, agreed that meditation should be such as to favor the reception of this pure light without stain or dust. The monk's mind was to be "a mirror bright" and must not "gather dust while it reflects," which means that he must be on guard. It was only upon the Hui-Neng's lightning that the doctrine of "No-Mind" came forward. No-mind is primarily derived from "non-ego" (anatman) or "selflessness" which is the principal conception of Buddhism, both Hinayana and Mahayana. With the Buddha this was no philosophical concept, it was his very experience, and whatever theory developed around it was a later intellectual framework to support the experience. When the intellectualization went further and deeper the doctrine of anatman assumed a more metaphysical aspect, and the doctrine of Sunyata developed. So far as the experience itself was concerned it was the same, but the doctrine of Sunyata has a more comprehensive field of application, and as a philosophy it goes deeper into the source of the experience. For the concept of Sunyata is now applied not only to the experience of egolessness, but to that of formlessness generally. The Prajnaparamita Sutra all emphatically deny the notion of a person, of a being, of a creator, of a substance, etc. Anatman and Sunyata are practically the

same teaching. Along with Sunyata there comes Prajna, which no becomes one of the principal topics of the Sutras.

According to Buddhist Zen School, “No-mind-ness” “ Empty Mind” means “No-thought-ness.” This is one of the most effective methods of taming the deluded mind. It is really difficult to find in and English equivalent except the Unconscious, though even this must be used in a definitely limited sense. It is not the unconscious in its usual psychological sense, nor in the sense given it by the analytical psychologists, who find it very much deeper than mere lack of consciousness, but probably in the sense of the ‘abysmal ground’ of the mediaeval mystics, or in the sense of the Divine Will even before it utterance of the word. No-thought is psychological, while no-mind is ontological, and no-abode is moral. The first and the third have a subjective sense, while the second has an objective sense. They all practically and ultimately mean the same thing, but Zen is most interested in psychology, in realizing the Unconscious; in going beyond it, for when this is gained an abode that is no-abode is found, and the mind is altogether detached from form, which also means detachment from the mind itself; and this is a state of “No-thought-ness.” Hitherto this has been studied in connection with Prajna, because Hui-Neng was intensively occupied with the problem of Prajna and Dhyana, reflecting the spirit of his age. According to the Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch’s Dharma Treasure, the Sixth Patriarch, Hui-Neng, taught: “Good Knowing Advisors, **one who awakens to the no-thought dharma completely penetrates the ten thousand dharmas**; one who awakens to the no-thought dharma sees all Buddha realms; one who awakens to the no-thought dharma arrives at the Buddha position.”

No-thought or no-mind literally means thoughtlessness (no-thought) or mindlessness. But in Zen, consciousness or mind means more than thought or mind. No-consciousness or no-mind point to the same state of consciousness. No-mind means beings’ innate Buddhahood. The idea is that when every effort is put forward to achieve some task, and you are finally exhausted and have come to an end of your energy, you give yourself up so far as your consciousness is concerned. In fact, however, your conscious mind is still intensely bent on the work accomplished. “Man’s extremity is God’s opportunity.” This is really what is meant by ‘to accomplish the task by no-mind.’ But there is also

a philosophical construction of the idea of Buddha's no-mind. For, according to Zen philosophy, we are all endowed with the Buddha-nature from which Prajna issues, illumining all our activities, mental and physical. The Buddha-nature does this in the same way as the sun radiates heat and light, or as the mirror reflects everything coming before it, that is to say, unconsciously, with 'no-mind', in its adverbial sense. Hence it is declared that 'Buddha is unconscious' or 'By Buddhahood is meant the unconscious.' Philosophically speaking, therefore, no special conscious strivings are necessary; in fact they are a hindrance to the attainment of Buddhahood. We are already Buddhas. To talk about any sort of attainment is a desecration, and logically a tautology. 'Having no-mind,' or 'cherishing the unconscious,' therefore means to be free from all these artificial, self-created, double-roofing efforts. Even this 'having', this 'cherishing', goes against "no-mind."

According to Zen master Shen-Hui in Chinese Zen Masters, we should not be attached to form. Not to be attached to form means Suchness. What is meant by Suchness? It means No-thought. What is No-thought? It is not to think of being and non-being; it is not to think of good and bad; it is not to think of having limits or not having limits; it is not to think of measurements or of non-measurements; it is not to think of enlightenment, nor is it to think of being enlightened; it is not to think of Nirvana: this is No-thought. No-thought is no other than Prajnaparamita itself. Prajnaparamita is no other than the Samadhi of Oneness. Thus, when practice meditation, whenever thoughts are awakened in our minds, we should turn to our own source of consciousness. When the awakened mind is dead, the conscious illumination vanishes by itself, this is No-thought. This "No-thought" is absolutely free from all conditions, for if there are any conditions, it cannot be known as No-thought. Zen master Shen-Hui also described No-thought as follows: "To see into No-thought is to understand self-nature; to understand self-nature is not to take hold of anything; not to take hold of anything is the Tathagata's Dhyana. Self-nature is from the first thoroughly pure, because its Body is not to be taken hold of. To see it thus is to be on the same standing with the Tathagata, to be detached from all forms, to have all vagaries of falsehood at once quieted, to equip oneself with merits of absolute stainlessness, or to

attain true emancipation.” To those who see No-thought, karma naturally ceases to function, and what is the use for them to cherish an erroneous thought and to try to destroy karma by means of confusion? To go beyond the dualism of being and non-being and love the track of the Middle Way, this is No-thought. No-thought means to be conscious of the absolute one; to be conscious of the absolute one means to have all-knowledge, which is Prajna. Prajna is the Tathagata-Dhyana.

Zen master Ta-Chu-Hui-Hai, a chief disciple of Ma-Tsu, in his *Essential Teaching of the Abrupt Awakening*: “No-thought means to have no-mind in all circumstances, that is to say, not to be determined by any conditions, not to have any affections or hankerings. To face all objective conditions, and yet to be eternally free from any form of stirring, this is No-thought. No-thought is thus known as to be truly conscious of itself. But to be conscious of consciousness is a false form of No-thought. Why? The Sutra states that to make people become conscious of the six vijnanas is to have the wrong consciousness; to cherish the six vijnanas is false; where a man is free from the six vijnanas, he has the right consciousness. ‘To see No-thought’ does not mean any form of self-consciousness, nor is to sink into a state of ecstasy or indifference or apathy, where all traces of ordinary consciousness are wiped out. ‘To see No-thought’ is to be conscious and yet to be unconscious of self-nature. because self-nature is not to be determined by the logical category of being and non-being, to be so determined means to bring self-nature into the realm of empirical psychology, in which it ceases to be what it is in itself. If No-thought, on the other hand, means the loss of consciousness, it then spells death, or at best a temporary suspension of life itself. But this impossible inasmuch as self-nature is the Mind itself as according to the Prajnaparamita sutra and other sutras: ‘To be unconscious in all circumstances is possible because the ultimate nature of all things is emptiness, and because there is after all not a form which one can say one has laid hands on. This unattainability of all things is Reality itself, which is the most exquisite form of the Tathagata.’ No-thought is thus the ultimate reality, the true form, the most exquisite body of Tathagatahood. It is certainly not a hazy abstraction, not a mere conceptual postulate, but a living experience in its deepest sense.

Chapter Fifty-Eight

When Nature Is No More, All Is Dead

According to Buddhist teachings, nature means the Buddha-nature (the Buddha heart or mind) immanent in all beings. The nature is the mind, and mind is Buddha. Mind and nature are the same when awake and understanding, but differ when the illusion. Buddha-nature is eternal, but mind is not eternal; the nature is like water, the mind is like ice; illusion turns nature to mental ice form, awakening melts it back to its proper nature. In Zen, Nature stands in most cases for the ultimate constituent, or something ultimate in the being of a thing or a person, or that which is left after all that accidentally belongs to a thing is taken away from it. It may be questioned what is accidental and what is essential in the constitution of an individual object. Though it must not be conceived as an individual entity, like a kernel or nucleus which is left when all the outer casings are removed, or like a soul which escapes from the body after death. Nature means something without which no existence is possible, or thinkable as such. As its morphological construction suggests, it is 'a heart or mind which lives' within an individual. Figuratively, it may be called 'vital force.' The fifth patriarch of Ch'an in China; the dharma successor of Tao-hsin and the master of Shen-hsui and Hui-Neng. Hung-Jên, a noted monk. He was the fifth patriarch, a disciple of the fourth patriarch Tao-Hsin, and the master of the sixth patriarch Hui-Neng. Hung-Jen came from the same province as his predecessor, Tao-Hsin in Ch'i-Chou. Hung-Jen came to the fourth patriarch when he was still a little boy; however, what he pleased his master at their first interview was the way he answered. When Tao-Hsin asked what was his family name, which pronounced 'hsing' in Chinese, he said: "I have a nature (hsing), and it is not an ordinary one." The patriarch asked: "What is that?" Hung-Jen said: "It is the Buddha-nature (fo-hsing)." The patriarch asked: "Then you have no name?" Hung-Jun replied: "No, master, for it is empty in its nature." Tao-Hsin knew this boy would be an excellent candidate for the next patriarch. Here is a play of words; the characters denoting

'family name' and that for 'nature' are both pronounced 'hsing.' When Tao-Hsin was referring to the 'family name' the young boy Hung-Jen took it for 'nature' purposely, whereby to express his view by a figure of speech. Finally, Hung-Jen became the fifth patriarch of the Chinese Zen line. In the Platform Sutra, the Sixth Patriarch Hui Neng defined 'nature' as follows: "The nature, or mind or heart is the dominion, nature is the lord: the rules over his dominion, there is 'nature' and there is the 'lord'; nature departs, and the lord is no more; nature is and the body and mind subsists, nature is not and the body and mind is destroyed. The Buddha is to be made within nature and not to be sought outside the body. In this, Hui-Neng attempts to give us a clearer understanding of what he means by 'nature.' Nature is the dominating force over our entire being; it is the principle of vitality, physical and spiritual. Not only the body but also the mind in its highest sense is active because of nature being present in them. **When 'nature' is no more, all is dead**, though this does not mean that 'nature' is something apart from the body and mind, which enters into it to actuate it, and depart at the time of death. This mysterious nature, however, is not a logical a priori but an actuality which can be experienced, and it is designated by Hui-Neng as "self-nature" or "self-being," throughout his Platform Sutra.

Chapter Fifty-Nine

The Mind of Buddha In the Point of View of the Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra

Buddha's Mind means the mind of the Buddha or the Buddha within the heart, or from mind is Buddhahood. It also means the Buddha revealed in or to the mind. According to the Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra, the Sixth Patriarch said: "If the preceding thought does not arise, it is mind. If the following thought does not end, it is Buddha. Thus, he advised one should not be afraid of rising thoughts, but only of the delay in being aware of them." In fact, practitioners should never worry about the rising of thoughts, but always be beware if our recognition of them comes too late. If any distracting thoughts arise, do not follow them up, but just recognize them for what they are. According to 'The Three Pillars of Zen', one day Zen Master Bassui Tokusho (1327-1386) entered the hall to teach the assembly: "Do not try to prevent thoughts from arising and do not cling to any that have arisen. Let them appear and disappear as they will, don't struggle with them. You need only unremittingly and with all your heart ask yourself, 'What is my own Mind?' I keep urging this because I want to bring you to Self-realization. When you persistently try to understand what is beyond the domain of intellect, you are bound to reach a dead end, completely baffled. But push on. Sitting or standing, working or sleeping, probe tirelessly to your deepest self with the question 'What is my own Mind?' Fear nothing but the failure to experience your True-nature. This is Zen practice. When the intense questioning envelops every inch of you and penetrates to the very bottom of all bottoms, the question will suddenly burst and the substance of the Buddha-mind be revealed, just as a mirror concealed in a box can reflect its surroundings only after the box is broken apart. The radiance of this Mind will light up every corner of a universe free of even a single blemish... The joy of this moment cannot be put into words." In fact, if we understand this, we can reject false thoughts as soon as they appear. As a matter of fact, if we are determined to keep our mind clear of any thought, false thoughts automatically disappear. This is the simplest way of practicing

meditation. When we are walking, standing, sitting or lying down, whenever a thought arises, we recognize it, but do not follow it, that is practicing of meditation. We do not have to wait for the time to sit down in meditation to practice meditation. Thus, for Zen practitioners, we can practice Zen at any time, anywhere, while at work or at home, just realize the truth. Zen practitioners should always remember that it is very crucial that we maintain a clear mind to gain wisdom and remove ignorance. We must use our perfect wisdom to realize that delusions are false, illusory, and they will automatically disappear.

In example 34 of the Wu-Men-Kuan, Nan-ch'uan said, "Mind is not Buddha; wisdom is not the Tao." According to Wu Men Hui-Kai in the Wu-Men-Kuan, I must say that Nan-ch'uan got old and knew no shame. He opened his stinking mouth a bit and revealed the family disgrace. Only a few can acknowledge his great kindness. According to Zen Buddhism, the man's mind as intractable as a monkey (as a restless monkey), while the Buddha's mind is without a resting place. Someone asks a Zen master on how to look into one's self-nature. The Zen master replies: "How can? For if there is a cage with six windows, in which there is a monkey. Someone calls at one window, 'O, monkey,' and he replies. Someone else calls at another window, and again he replies. And so on. Human's mind is no different from that monkey." Buddhist practitioners should cultivate with a mental negation of the mind that is negated with regard to myriad phenomena; however, practitioners should also always remember that the myriad things are not non-existent. The meaning of this interpretation is that when the Sutras teach that all dharmas are empty, this means that one should seek physically and mentally to consider them vain and not be attached to them. Therefore, this is called "negation." This does not mean that outer phenomena are empty, or that the phenomenal objects are empty. In other words, practitioners should empty the mind of conceptual thoughts and images concerning phenomena, but this does not mean that phenomena have no objective existence outside the mind. The Buddha always taught his disciples to cling to nothing; that means we should not cling to anything; not to cling to the scriptures, to the dharma doors, or even to our masters. If we still cling to anything, that means we still cling to a form of self-grasping. In ancient times, practitioners clung to nothing; they forgot their body and life. They never noticed

how many years passed by in mountains. They always sat quietly to observe the nature; and when they saw the cherry flowers bloomed, they knew the spring already came. That's all! The mind without resting place is a mind which does not abide anywhere, a mind which let "bygone be bygone." The mind without resting place is a mind which does not abide anywhere, a mind which let "bygone be bygone." The mind without resting place, detached from time and space, the past being past may be considered as a non-past or non-existent, so with present and future, thus realizing their unreality. The nature of the mind is like a monkey, it moves wherever it will. However, the Diamond Sutra suggests: "Cultivate the mind and the awareness so that your mind abides nowhere." The complete sentence which the Buddha taught Subhuti as follows: "Do not act on sight. Do not act on sound, smell, taste, touch or Dharma. One should act without attachments." According to the Diamond Sutra, a Bodhisattva should produce a thought which is nowhere supported, or a thought awakened without abiding in anything whatever. Zen master Hsueh-fêng was one of the most earnest truth seekers in the history of Zen during the T'ang dynasty. He is said to have carried a ladle throughout the long years of his disciplinary Zen peregrinations. His idea was to serve in one of the most despised and most difficult positions in the monastery life, that is, as cook, and the ladle was his symbol. When he finally succeeded Tê-shan-Hsuan-chien as Zen master, a monk approached him and asked, "What is that you have attained under Tê-shan? How serene and self-contained you are!" Hsueh-fêng said, "Empty-handed I went away from home, and empty-handed I returned." According to Zen master Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki in "An Introduction To Zen Buddhism," is not this a practical explanation of the doctrine of "no abiding place"? For Zen practitioners, where is the abiding place for the mind? Zen practitioners' minds should abide where there is no abiding. What is meant by "there is no abiding"? When the mind is not abiding in any particular object, we say that it abides where there is no abiding. But what is meant by not abiding in any particular object? It means not to be abiding in the dualism of good and evil, being and non-being, thought and matter; it means not to be abiding in emptiness or in non-emptiness, neither in tranquility nor in non-tranquility. Where there is no abiding place, this is truly the abiding place for the mind, and the

non-abiding mind is the Buddha-mind. In fact, the mind without resting place, detached from time and space, the past being past may be considered as a non-past or non-existent, so with present and future, thus realizing their unreality. The result is detachment, or the liberated mind, which is the Buddha-mind, the bodhi-mind, the mind free from ideas or creation and extinction, of beginning and end, recognizing that all forms and natures are of the Void, or Absolute. Buddhist practitioners should always remember that a mind without a resting place is the Buddha's Mind, once realizing the truth of nothing obtainable, the immaterial universal reality behind all phenomena. This is the optimum state for Zen practice, in which there is no goal or object, no intention for self gain or profit, no place to rest on.

Chapter Sixty

Mind Is Buddha In the Spirit of the Jewel Platform Sutra

Mind is Buddha or the mind of the Buddha which means the Buddha within the heart, or from mind is Buddhahood. It also means the Buddha revealed in or to the mind. According to the Jewel Platform Sutra, Chapter 7, a Bhikshu named Fa-Hai of Ch'u-Ch'iang city in Shao-Chou, first called on the Patriarch, he asked, "Will you please instruct me on the sentence, 'Mind is Buddha'?"

The Master said, "When one preceding thoughts are not produced, this is mind; when one's subsequent thoughts are not extinguished, this is Buddha. The setting up of marks is mind, and separation from them is Buddha. Were I to explain it fully, I would not finish before the end of the present age." Listen to my verse:

"When the mind is called wisdom,
Then the Buddha is called concentration.
When concentration and wisdom are equal.
The intellect is pure.

Understand this Dharma teaching
By practicing with your own nature.
The function is basically unproduced;
It is right to cultivate both."

At these words, Fa-Hai was enlightened and spoke a verse in praise:

"This mind is basically Buddha;
By not understanding I disgrace myself.
I know the cause of concentration and wisdom
Is to cultivate both and separate
myself From all things."

According to the Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra, the Sixth Patriarch clearly taught: "If the preceding thought does not arise, it is mind. If the following thought does not end, it is Buddha. Thus, he advised one should not be afraid of rising thoughts, but only of the delay in being

aware of them.” According to Buddhist teachings, Buddha is an epithet of those who successfully break the hold of ignorance, liberate themselves from cyclic existence, and teach others the path to liberation. The word “Buddha” derived from the Sanskrit root *budh*, “to awaken,” it refers to someone who attains Nirvana through meditative practice and the cultivation of such qualities as wisdom, patience, and generosity. Such a person will never again be reborn within cyclic existence, as all the cognitive ties that bind ordinary beings to continued rebirth have been severed. Through their meditative practice, buddhas have eliminated all craving, and defilements. The Buddha of the present era is referred to as “Sakyamuni” (Sage of the Sakya). He was born Siddhartha Gautama, a member of the Sakya clan. With Zen practitioners, the problem of emancipation is important, but the still more important one is, “Who or what is the Buddha?” When this is mastered, practitioners have rendered their full services. Meanwhile, “Mind” is another name for *Alaya-vijnana*. Unlike the material body, immaterial mind is invisible. We are aware of our thoughts and feelings and so forth by direct sensation, and we infer their existence in others by analogy. The mind is the root of all dharmas. In *Contemplation of the Mind Sutra*, the Buddha taught: “All my tenets are based on the mind that is the source of all dharmas.” The mind has brought about the Buddhas, the Heaven, or the Hell. It is the main driving force that makes us happy or sorrowful, cheerful or sad, liberated or doomed. The term “Mind” is used for heart, mind, soul and spirit. Ancient people believed that ‘mind’ is in the chest area. In Zen, it means either the mind of a person in the sense of all his powers of consciousness, mind, heart and spirit, or else absolutely reality, the mind beyond the distinction between mind and matter. It is for the sake of giving practitioners an easier understanding of Mind, Buddhist teachers usually divide the mind into aspects or layers, but to Zen, Mind is one great Whole, without parts or divisions. The manifesting, illuminating, and nonsubstantial characteristics of Mind exist simultaneously and constantly, inseparable and indivisible in their totality. Later, according to the *Zen Teaching of Huang Po*, one day, Zen Master Huang Po entered the hall to preach the assembly: “Mind is Buddha, while the cessation of conceptual thought is the Way.” According to example 30 of the *Wu-Men-Kuan*, the identity of mind

and Buddha, one day, Ta-mei asked Ma-tsu, "What is Buddha?" Ma-tsu said, "This very mind is Buddha." According to Wu Men Hui-Kai in the Wu-Men-Kuan, if you can grasp this point directly, you wear Buddha's robes, eat Buddha's food, speak Buddha's words, take Buddha's role. That is, you yourself are Buddha. Ta-mei, however, misled quite a few people into trusting a broken scale. Don't you know you should rinse out your mouth for three days when you utter the name Buddha? If you are genuine, you'll run away holding your ears upon just hearing the words, "This very mind is Buddha."

Chapter Sixty-One

The Ultimate Prajna-Truth In the Jewel Platform Sutra

I. An Overview of Prajna In Buddhist Teachings:

It should be remembered that the Prajnaparamita Period or the Lotus period was one of the five periods of the Buddha's teachings. The period of Prajnaparamita-Sutra or Lotus-Sutra. The Time of Wisdom mainly teaches the Round Doctrine and yet is linked with the Common and Distinct Doctrines. Therefore, it is not quite perfect or complete. This phase lasted twenty-two years, in which the Buddha expounded a higher level of provisional Mahayana and refuted his disciples' attachment to the distinction between Theravada and Mahayana by teaching the doctrine non-substantiality or emptiness. He taught the teachings of shunyata in the Prajnaparamita-sutra. Prajna is ordinarily translated as "knowledge" in English, but to be exact "intuition" may be better. It is sometimes translated as "transcendental wisdom." The fact is even when we have an intuition, the object is still in front of us and we sense it, or perceive it, or see it. Here is a dichotomy of subject and object. In prajna this dichotomy no longer exists. Prajna is not concerned with finite objects as such; it is the totality of things becoming conscious of itself as such. And this totality is not at all limited. An infinite totality is beyond our ordinary human comprehension. But the prajna-intuition is this "incomprehensible" totalistic intuition of the infinite, which is something that can never take place in our daily experience limited to finite objects or events. The prajna, therefore, can take place, in other words, only when finite objects of sense and intellect are identified with the infinite itself. Instead of saying that the infinite sees itself, it is much closer to our human experience to say that an object regarded as finite, as belonging in the dichotomous world of subject and object, is perceived by prajna from the point of view of infinity. Symbolically, the finite then sees itself reflected in the mirror of infinity. The intellect informs us that the object is finite, but prajna contradicts, declaring it to be the infinite beyond the realm of relativity. Ontologically, this means that all finite

objects or beings are possible because of the infinite underlying them, or that the objects are relatively and therefore limitedly laid out in the field of infinity without which they have no moorings.

II. The Truth of Prajna In The Jewel Platform Sutra:

According to the Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch's Dharma Treasure, the Sixth Patriarch, Hui-Neng, taught: "Good Knowing Advisors, Maha Prajna Paramita is a Sanskrit word which means 'great wisdom which has arrived at the other shore.' It must be practiced in the mind, and not just recited in words. When the mouth recites and the mind does not practice, it is like an illusion, a transformation, dew drops, or lightning. However, when the mouth recites and the mind practices, then mind and mouth are in mutual accord. One's own original nature is Buddha; apart from the nature there is no other Buddha. Good Knowing Advisors, what is meant by 'Prajna?' Prajna in our language means wisdom. Everywhere and at all times, in thought after thought, remain undeluded and practice wisdom constantly; that is Prajna conduct. Prajna is cut off by a single deluded thought. By one wise thought, Prajna is produced. Worldly men, deluded and confused, do not see Prajna. They speak of it with their mouths, but their minds are always deluded. They constantly say of themselves, 'I cultivate Prajna!' And though they continually speak of emptiness, they are unaware of true emptiness. Prajna, without form or mark, is just the wisdom of the mind. If thus explained, this is Prajna wisdom. Prajna is a Sanskrit term which means wisdom. There are three kinds of prajna: real mark prajna, contemplative prajna, and literary prajna. Prajna also means the real power to discern things and their underlying principles and to decide the doubtful. The Prajna-paramita-sutra describes "prajna" as supreme, highest, incomparable, unequalled, unsurpassed. Prajna means real wisdom or transcendental wisdom. According to the Mahayana Buddhism, only an immediate experienced intuitive wisdom, not intelligence can help man reach enlightenment. Therefore, to achieve prajna is synonymous with to reach enlightenment. One of the two perfections required for Buddhahood—The wisdom which enables us to transcend desire, attachment and anger so that we will be emancipated (not through the mercy of any body, but rather through

our own power of will and wisdom) and so that we will not be reborn again and again in “samsara” or transmigration.

At anywhere and at all time, Devout Buddhists’ actions must be in accordance with “Prajna” at all time. Worldly people always brag with their mouths, but their minds are always deluded. This is one of the three kinds of Prajna, the prajna or wisdom of meditative enlightenment on reality, for prajna is wisdom for salvation, and through wisdom is the mother or source of all Buddhas. Prajna is the spear of wisdom, which is able to cut off illusion and evil. Prajna is the intuitive understanding. In general, this refers to the development of intuitive understanding of key Buddhist concepts. According to the Mahayana Buddhism, the “prajna paramita” or the “perfection of wisdom” is the sixth of the perfections that a Bodhisattva cultivates on the path to Buddhahood, and only an immediate experienced intuitive wisdom, not intelligence can help man reach enlightenment. Therefore, to achieve prajna is synonymous with to reach enlightenment. One of the two perfections required for Buddhahood. The wisdom which enables us to transcend desire, attachment and anger so that we will be emancipated (not through the mercy of any body, but rather through our own power of will and wisdom) and so that we will not be reborn again and again in “samsara” or transmigration. Prajna is abruptly seeing. Prajna is really a dialectical term denoting that this special process of knowing, known as “abruptly seeing,” or “seeing at once,” does not follow general laws of logic; for when prajna functions one finds oneself all of a sudden, as if by a miracle, facing Sunyata, the emptiness of all things. This does not take place as the result of reasoning, but when reasoning has been abandoned as futile, and psychologically when the will-power is brought to a finish. The use of prajna contradicts everything that we may conceive of things worldly; it is altogether of another order than our usual life. But this does not mean that Prajna is something altogether disconnected with our life and thought, something that is to be given to us by a miracle from some unknown and unknowable source. If this were the case, prajna would be no possible use to us. It is true that the functioning of Prajna is discrete, and interrupting to the progress of logical reasoning, but all the time it underlies it, and without Prajna we cannot have any reasoning whatever. Prajna is at once above and in the process of

reasoning. This is a contradiction, formally considered, but in truth this contradiction itself is made possible because of Prajna.

That most of religious literature is filled with contradictions, absurdities, paradoxes, and impossibilities, and demands to believe them, to accept them, as revealed truths, is due to the fact that religious knowledge is based on the working of Prajna. Once this viewpoint of Prajna is gained, all the essential irrationalities found in religion become intelligible. It is like appreciating a fine piece of brocade. On the surface there is an almost bewildering confusion of beauty, and the professional fails to trace the intricacies of the threads. But as soon as it is turned over all the intricate beauty and skill is revealed. Prajna consists in this turning-over. The eye has hitherto followed the surface of the cloth, which is indeed the only side ordinarily allows us to survey. Now the cloth is abruptly turned over; the course of the eyesight is suddenly interrupted; no continuous gazing is possible. Yet by this interruption, or rather disruption, the whole scheme of life is suddenly grasped; there is the "seeing into one's self-nature." It is Prajna which lays its hands on Emptiness, or Suchness, or self-nature. And this laying-hands-on is not what it seems. This is self-evident from what has already been said concerning things relative. Because the self-nature is beyond the realm of relativity, its being grasped by Prajna cannot mean a grasping in its ordinary sense. The grasping must be no-grasping, a paradoxical statement which is inevitable. To use Buddhist terminology, this grasping is accomplished by non-discrimination; that is, by discrete, an act of the conscious; not an unconscious act but an act rising from self-nature itself, which is the unconscious.

Prajna must once be awakened in self-nature; for unless this is experienced we shall never have a chance of knowing the Buddha not only in ourselves but in others. But this awakening is no particular deed performed in the realm of empirical consciousness, and for this reason it is like a lunar reflection in the stream; it is neither continuous nor discrete; it is beyond birth and death; even when it is said to be born, it knows no birth; even when it is said to have passed away, it knows no passing away; it is only when no-mind-ness or the Unconscious is seen that there are discourses never discoursed, that there are acts that never acted. According to the Sixth Patriarch Hui Neng in the Platform

Sutra, Prajna is awakened in self-nature abruptly, and the term “abrupt” not only means ‘instantaneously’, ‘unexpectedly’ or ‘suddenly’, but signifies the idea that the act of awakening which is seeing is not a conscious deed on the part of self-nature. In other words, Prajna flashes from the Unconscious and yet never leaves it; it remains unconscious of it. This is the sense of saying that “seeing is no-seeing, and no-seeing is seeing,” and that the Unconscious or self-nature becomes conscious of itself by means of Prajna, and yet in this consciousness there is no separation of subject and object. Therefore, Hui-Neng says: “One who understands this truth is without thought, without memory, and without attachment.” But we must remember that Hui-Neng never advocated the doctrine of mere nothingness, or mere-doing-nothing-ness, nor assumed an unknown quantity in the solution of life. Also according to Hui-Neng, Prajna is the name given to self-nature, or the Unconscious, as we call it, when it becomes conscious of itself, or rather to the act itself of becoming conscious. Prajna therefore points in two directions to the Unconscious and to the world of consciousness which is now unfolded. The one is called the Prajna of non-discrimination and the other the Prajna of discrimination. When we are so deeply involved in the outgoing direction of consciousness and discrimination as to forget the other direction of Prajna pointing to the Unconscious, we have what is technically known as “Prapanca,” imagination. Or we may state this conversely: when imagination asserts itself, Prajna is hidden, and discrimination has its own sway, and the pure, undefiled surface of the Unconscious or self-nature is now dimmed. The advocates of “no-thought” or “no-mind” want us to preserve Prajna from going astray in the direction of discrimination, and to have our eyes looking steadily in the other direction. To attain “no-mind” means to recover, objectively speaking, the Prajna or non-discrimination. When this idea is developed in more detail we shall comprehend the significance of “no-mind” in Zen thought.

III. According to the Jewel Platform Sutra, the Ultimate Prajna-Truth Cannot Be Defined & Grasped By Ordinary Intellect:

After the period of the Sixth Patriarch Hui-nêng (638-713), Zen gradually became an "Art", a unique art for transmitting the Prajna-Truth, refusing, as all great arts do, to follow any set form, pattern, or

system in expressing itself. This exceptionally liberal attitude gave birth to those radical and sometimes "wild" Zen expressions, which also contribute so greatly to the complexity and incomprehensibility of the subject. Zen practitioners should always remember that the ultimate Prajna-Truth that Zen tries to convey cannot be a thing that is narrow, finite, or exclusive; it must be something vast, universal, and infinite; all-inclusive and all-embracing; defying definition and designation. That's why the ultimate Prajna-Truth cannot be defined and grasped by ordinary intellect. This indefinable and ungraspable nature of Zen-truth is well illustrated in the following koans. According to the Platform Sutra, Chapter Seven, Nan-Yueh came to Tsao-Xi to study with Hui-Neng. Hui-Neng said to Nan-Yueh: "Where did you come from?" Nan-Yueh said: "From Mount Song." Hui-Neng said: "What is it that thus come?" Nan-Yueh couldn't answer. After eight years, Nan-Yueh suddenly attained enlightenment. He informed the Sixth Patriarch of this, saying: "I have an understanding." The Sixth Patriarch said: "What is it?" Nan-Yueh said: "To say it's a thing misses the mark." The Sixth Patriarch said: "Then can it be made evident or not?" Nan-Yueh said: "I don't say it can't be made evident, but it can't be defiled." The Sixth Patriarch said: "Just this that is undefiled is what is upheld and sustained all Buddhas. You are thus. I am also thus. "Prajnadhara has foretold that from beneath your feet will come a horse which will trample to death everyone in the world. Bear this in mind but don't soon repeat it." And here is another koan: Fu Ta Shih said in his famous stanza:

"Empty-handed I go,
but a spade is in my hand;
I walk on my feet,
yet I am riding on the back of a bull;
When I pass over the bridge,
The bridge, but not the water, flows!"

As a matter of fact, according to Chang Chen-Chi in the "Practice of Zen (p.17)," the very word "defining" suggests a finger pointing to a particular object, and the word "grasping", a hand holding something tightly and not letting it go. These two pictures vividly portray the narrow, tight, and clinging nature of the human mind. With this deplorable limitation and tightness deeply rooted in the human way of

thinking, no wonder the free and all-inclusive Prajna-Truth becomes an evasive shadow forever eluding one's graps.

Chapter Sixty-Two

Maha-Prajna-Paramita In the Jewel Platform Sutra

I. An Overview of the Prajna-Paramita:

The wisdom which enables one to reach the other shore, i.e. wisdom for salvation; the highest of the six paramitas, the virtue of wisdom as the principal means of attaining nirvana. It connotes a knowledge of the illusory character of everything earthly, and destroys error, ignorance, prejudice, and heresy. The prajna-paramita is a gate of Dharma-illumination; for with it, we eradicate the darkness of ignorance. Among the basic desires and passions, ignorance has the deepest roots. When these roots are loosened, all other desires and passions, greed, anger, attachment, arrogance, doubt, and wrong views are also uprooted. The prajna wisdom which enables one to reach the other shore, i.e. wisdom for salvation; the highest of the six paramitas, the virtue of wisdom as the principal means of attaining nirvana. It connotes a knowledge of the illusory character of everything earthly, and destroys error, ignorance, prejudice, and heresy. In order to obtain wisdom-paramita, practitioner must make a great effort to meditate on the truths of impermanence, no-self, and the dependent origination of all things. Once the roots of ignorance are severed, we can not only liberate ourselves, but also teach and guide foolish beings to break through the imprisonment of birth and death.

II. Maha-Prajna-Paramita In the Jewel Platform Sutra:

The great wisdom method of crossing the stream (shore) to nirvana. According to the Platform Sutra, the Second Chapter, one day, Master Hui-Neng took his seat and said to the great assembly, “All of you purify your minds and think about Maha Prajna Paramita.” He then said, “All-Knowing Advisors, the wisdom of Bodhi and Prajna is originally possessed by worldly people themselves. It is only because their minds are confused that they are unable to enlighten themselves and must rely on a great Good Knowing Advisor who can lead them to

see their Buddha-nature. You should know that the Buddha-nature of stupid and wise people is basically not different. It is only because confusion and enlightenment are different that some are stupid and some are wise. I will now explain for you the Maha Prajna Paramita Dharma in order that each of you may become wise. Pay careful attention and I will explain it to you.” Good Knowing Advisors, worldly people recite ‘Prajna’ with their mouths all day long and yet do not recognize the Prajna of their self-nature. Just as talking about food will not make you full, so, too, if you speak of emptiness you will not see your own nature in ten thousand ages. In the end, you will not have obtained any benefit. Good Knowing Advisors, Maha Prajna Paramita is a Sanskrit word which means ‘great wisdom which has arrived at the other shore.’ It must be practiced in the mind, and not just recited in words. When the mouth recites and the mind does not practice, it is like an illusion, a transformation, dew drops, or lightning. However, when the mouth recites and the mind practices, then mind and mouth are in mutual accord. One’s own original nature is Buddha; apart from the nature there is no other Buddha. What is meant by Maha? Maha means ‘great.’ The capacity of the mind is vast and great like empty space, and has no boundaries. It is not square or round, great or small. Neither is it blue, yellow, red, white. It is not above or below, or long or short. It is without anger, without joy, without right, without wrong, without good, without evil, and it has no head or tail. All Buddha-lands are ultimately the same as empty space. The wonderful nature of worldly people is originally empty, and there is not a single dharma which can be obtained. The true emptiness of the self-nature is also like this. Good Knowing Advisors, do not listen to my explanation of emptiness and then become attached to emptiness. The most important thing is to avoid becoming attached to emptiness. If you sit still with an empty mind you will become attached to undifferentiated emptiness. Good Knowing Advisors, The emptiness of the universe is able to contain the forms and shapes of the ten thousand things: the sun, moon, and stars; the mountains, rivers, and the great earth; the fountains, springs, streams, torrents, grasses, trees, thickets, and forests; good and bad people, good and bad dharmas, the heavens and the hells, all the great seas, Sumeru and all mountains; all are contained within emptiness. The emptiness of the nature of worldly men is also like this. Good Knowing

Advisors, the ability of one's own nature to contain the ten thousand dharmas is what is meant by 'great.' The myriad dharmas are within the nature of all people. If you regard all people, the bad as well as the good, without grasping or rejecting, without producing a defiling attachment, your mind will be like empty space. Therefore, it is said to be 'great,' or 'Maha.' Good Knowing Advisors, the mouth of the confused person speaks, but the mind of the wise person practices. There are deluded men who sit still with empty minds, vainly thinking of nothing and declaring that to be something great. One should not speak with these people because of their deviant views. Good Knowing Advisors, the capacity of the mind is vast and great, encompassing the Dharma realm. Its function is to understand clearly and distinctly. Its correct function is to know all. All is one; one is all. Coming and going freely, the mind's substance is unobstructed. That is Prajna. Good Knowing Advisors, all Prajna wisdom is produced from one's own nature; it does not enter from outside. Using the intellect correctly is called the natural function of one's true nature. One truth is all truth. The mind has the capacity for great things, and is not meant for practicing petty ways. Do not talk about emptiness with your mouth all day and in your mind fail to cultivate the conduct that you talk of. That would be like a common person calling himself the king of a country, which cannot be. People like that are not my disciples. Good Knowing Advisors, what is meant by 'Prajna?' Prajna in our language means wisdom. Everywhere and at all times, in thought after thought, remain undeluded and practice wisdom constantly; that is Prajna conduct. Prajna is cut off by a single deluded thought. By one wise thought, Prajna is produced. Worldly men, deluded and confused, do not see Prajna. They speak of it with their mouths, but their minds are always deluded. They constantly say of themselves, 'I cultivate Prajna!' And though they continually speak of emptiness, they are unaware of true emptiness. Prajna, without form or mark, is just the wisdom of the mind. If thus explained, this is Prajna wisdom.

What is meant by Paramita? It is a Sanskrit word which in our language means 'arrived at the other shore,' and is explained as 'apart from production and extinction.' When one is attached to states of being, production and extinction arise like waves. States of being, with no production or extinction, is like free flowing water. That is what is

meant by 'the other shore.' Therefore, it is called 'Paramita.' Good Knowing Advisors, deluded people recite with their mouths, but while they recite they live in falsehood and in error. When there is practice in every thought, that is the true nature. You should understand this dharma, which is the Prajna dharma; and cultivate this conduct, which is the Prajna conduct. Not to cultivate is to be a common person, but in a single thought of cultivation, you are equal to the Buddhas. Good Knowing Advisors, common people are Buddhas and affliction is Bodhi. The deluded thoughts of the past are thoughts of a common person. Enlightened future thoughts are the thoughts of a Buddha. Past thoughts attached to states of being are afflictions. And, future thoughts separate from states of being are Bodhi. Good Knowing Advisors, Maha Prajna Paramita is the most honored, the most supreme, the foremost. It does not stay; it does not come or go. All Buddhas of the three periods of time emerge from it. You should use great wisdom to destroy affliction, defilement and the five skandhic heaps. With such cultivation as that, you will certainly realize the Buddha Way, transforming the three poisons into morality, concentration, and wisdom. Good Knowing Advisors, my Dharma-door produces 84,000 wisdom from the one Prajna. Why? Because worldly people have 84,000 kinds of defilement. In the absence of defilement, wisdom is always present since it is not separate from the self-nature. Understand this dharma is simply no-thought, no-remembrance, non-attachment and the non-production of falsehood and error. Use your own true-suchness nature and, by means of wisdom, contemplate and illuminate all dharmas without grasping or rejecting them. That is to see one's own nature and realize the Buddha Way. Good Knowing Advisors, if you wish to enter the extremely deep Dharma realm and the Prajna samadhi, you must cultivate the practice of Prajna. Hold and recite the 'Diamond Prajna Paramita Sutra' and that way you will see your own nature. You should know that the merit and virtue of this sutra is immeasurable, unbounded, and indescribable, as the Sutra text itself clearly states. This Dharma-door is the Superior Vehicle, that is taught to the people of great wisdom and superior faculties. When people of limited faculties and wisdom hear it, their minds give rise to doubt. Why is that? Take this example, the rains which the heavenly dragons shower on Jambudvipa. Cities and villages drift about in the flood like

thorns and leaves. But if the rain falls on the great sea, its water neither increases nor decreases. If people of the Great Vehicle, the Most Superior Vehicle, hear the Diamond Sutra, their minds open up, awaken and understand. Then they know that their original nature itself possesses the wisdom of Prajna. Because they themselves use this wisdom constantly to contemplate and illuminate. And they do not rely on written words. Take for example, the rain does not come from the sky. The truth is that the dragons cause it to fall in order that all living beings, all plants and trees, all those with feeling and those without feeling may receive its moisture. In a hundred streams, it flows into the great sea and there unites in one substance. The wisdom of the Prajna of the original nature of living beings acts the same way. Good Knowing Advisors, when people of limited faculties hear this Sudden Teaching, they are like the plants and trees with shallow roots which, washed away by the great rain, are unable to grow. But at the same time, the Prajna wisdom which people of limited faculties possess is fundamentally no different from the Prajna that men of great wisdom possess. Hearing this Dharma, why do they not become enlightened? It is because the obstacle of their deviant views is a formidable one and the root of their afflictions is deep. It is like when thick clouds cover the sun. If the wind does not blow, the sunlight will not be visible. 'Prajna' wisdom is itself neither great nor small. Living beings differ because their own minds are either confused or enlightened. Those of confused minds look outwardly to cultivate in search of the Buddha. Not having awakened to their self-nature yet, they have small roots. When you become enlightened to the Sudden Teaching, you do not grasp onto the cultivation of external things. When your own mind constantly gives rise to right views, afflictions and defilement can never stain you. That is what is meant by seeing your own nature. Good Knowing Advisors, the ability to cultivate the conduct of not dwelling inwardly or outwardly, of coming and going freely, of casting away the grasping mind, and of unobstructed penetration, is basically no different from the Prajna Sutra. Good Knowing Advisors, all sutras and writings of the Great and Small Vehicles, the twelve divisions of sutras, have been devised for people and established based on the nature of wisdom. If there were no people, the ten thousand dharmas would not exist. Therefore you should know that all dharmas are

originally postulated for people and all sutras are spoken for their sake. Some people are deluded and some are wise; the deluded are small people and the wise are great people. The deluded people question the wise and the wise people teach Dharma to the deluded people. When the deluded people suddenly awaken and understand, their minds open to enlightenment and, therefore they are no longer different from the wise.

III. Cultivation of Prajna Wisdom:

As mentioned above, Prajna in our language means wisdom. Everywhere and at all times, in thought after thought, remain undeluded and practice wisdom constantly; that is Prajna conduct. Prajna is cut off by a single deluded thought. By one wise thought, Prajna is produced. Worldly men, deluded and confused, do not see Prajna. They speak of it with their mouths, but their minds are always deluded. They constantly say of themselves, 'I cultivate Prajna!' And though they continually speak of emptiness, they are unaware of true emptiness. Prajna, without form or mark, is just the wisdom of the mind. If thus explained, this is Prajna wisdom. Prajna is a Sanskrit term which means wisdom. There are three kinds of prajna: real mark prajna, contemplative prajna, and literary prajna. Prajna also means the real power to discern things and their underlying principles and to decide the doubtful. The Prajna-paramita-sutra describes "prajna" as supreme, highest, incomparable, unequalled, unsurpassed. According to the Mahayana Buddhism, only an immediate experienced intuitive wisdom, not intelligence can help man reach enlightenment. Therefore, to achieve prajna is synonymous with to reach enlightenment. One of the two perfections required for Buddhahood. The wisdom which enables us to transcend desire, attachment and anger so that we will be emancipated (not through the mercy of any body, but rather through our own power of will and wisdom) and so that we will not be reborn again and again in "samsara" or transmigration. Prajna is ordinarily translated as "knowledge" in English, but to be exact "intuition" may be better. It is sometimes translated as "transcendental wisdom." The fact is even when we have an intuition, the object is still in front of us and we sense it, or perceive it, or see it. Here is a dichotomy of subject and object. In prajna this dichotomy no longer exists. Prajna is not

concerned with finite objects as such; it is the totality of things becoming conscious of itself as such. And this totality is not at all limited. An infinite totality is beyond our ordinary human comprehension. But the prajna-intuition is this “incomprehensible” totalistic intuition of the infinite, which is something that can never take place in our daily experience limited to finite objects or events. The prajna, therefore, can take place, in other words, only when finite objects of sense and intellect are identified with the infinite itself. Instead of saying that the infinite sees itself, it is much closer to our human experience to say that an object regarded as finite, as belonging in the dichotomous world of subject and object, is perceived by prajna from the point of view of infinity. Symbolically, the finite then sees itself reflected in the mirror of infinity. The intellect informs us that the object is finite, but prajna contradicts, declaring it to be the infinite beyond the realm of relativity. Ontologically, this means that all finite objects or beings are possible because of the infinite underlying them, or that the objects are relatively and therefore limitedly laid out in the field of infinity without which they have no moorings.

For Zen practitioners, prajna also has some following meanings: ***First, the Intuitive Understanding:*** In general, this refers to the development of intuitive understanding of key Buddhist concepts. According to the Mahayana Buddhism, the “prajna paramita” or the “perfection of wisdom” is the sixth of the perfections that a Bodhisattva cultivates on the path to Buddhahood, and only an immediate experienced intuitive wisdom, not intelligence can help man reach enlightenment. Therefore, to achieve prajna is synonymous with to reach enlightenment. One of the two perfections required for Buddhahood. The wisdom which enables us to transcend desire, attachment and anger so that we will be emancipated (not through the mercy of any body, but rather through our own power of will and wisdom) and so that we will not be reborn again and again in “samsara” or transmigration. ***Second, the Abruptly Seeing:*** Prajna is really a dialectical term denoting that this special process of knowing, known as “abruptly seeing,” or “seeing at once,” does not follow general laws of logic; for when prajna functions one finds oneself all of a sudden, as if by a miracle, facing Sunyata, the emptiness of all things. This does not take place as the result of reasoning, but when reasoning

has been abandoned as futile, and psychologically when the will-power is brought to a finish.

Zen practitioners should always remember that the use of prajna contradicts everything that we may conceive of things worldly; it is altogether of another order than our usual life. But this does not mean that Prajna is something altogether disconnected with our life and thought, something that is to be given to us by a miracle from some unknown and unknowable source. If this were the case, prajna would be no possible use to us. It is true that the functioning of Prajna is discrete, and interrupting to the progress of logical reasoning, but all the time it underlies it, and without Prajna we cannot have any reasoning whatever. Prajna is at once above and in the process of reasoning. This is a contradiction, formally considered, but in truth this contradiction itself is made possible because of Prajna.

That most of religious literature is filled with contradictions, absurdities, paradoxes, and impossibilities, and demands to believe them, to accept them, as revealed truths, is due to the fact that religious knowledge is based on the working of Prajna. Once this viewpoint of Prajna is gained, all the essential irrationalities found in religion become intelligible. It is like appreciating a fine piece of brocade. On the surface there is an almost bewildering confusion of beauty, and the professional fails to trace the intricacies of the threads. But as soon as it is turned over all the intricate beauty and skill is revealed. Prajna consists in this turning-over. The eye has hitherto followed the surface of the cloth, which is indeed the only side ordinarily allows us to survey. Now the cloth is abruptly turned over; the course of the eyesight is suddenly interrupted; no continuous gazing is possible. Yet by this interruption, or rather disruption, the whole scheme of life is suddenly grasped; there is the "seeing into one's self-nature."

Zen practitioners should also remember that it is Prajna which lays its hands on Emptiness, or Suchness, or self-nature. And this laying-hands-on is not what it seems. This is self-evident from what has already been said concerning things relative. Because the self-nature is beyond the realm of relativity, its being grasped by Prajna cannot mean a grasping in its ordinary sense. The grasping must be no-grasping, a paradoxical statement which is inevitable. To use Buddhist terminology, this grasping is accomplished by non-discrimination; that

is, by discrete, an act of the conscious; not an unconscious act but an act rising from self-nature itself, which is the unconscious. According to the Sixth Patriarch Hui Neng in the Platform Sutra, Prajna is awakened in self-nature abruptly, and the term “abrupt” not only means ‘instantaneously’, ‘unexpectedly’ or ‘suddenly’, but signifies the idea that the act of awakening which is seeing is not a conscious deed on the part of self-nature. In other words, Prajna flashes from the Unconscious and yet never leaves it; it remains unconscious of it. This is the sense of saying that “seeing is no-seeing, and no-seeing is seeing,” and that the Unconscious or self-nature becomes conscious of itself by means of Prajna, and yet in this consciousness there is no separation of subject and object. Therefore, Hui-Neng says: “One who understands this truth is without thought, without memory, and without attachment.” But we must remember that Hui-Neng never advocated the doctrine of mere nothingness, or mere-doing-nothing-ness, nor assumed an unknown quantity in the solution of life. Prajna must once be awakened in self-nature; for unless this is experienced we shall never have a chance of knowing the Buddha not only in ourselves but in others. But this awakening is no particular deed performed in the realm of empirical consciousness, and for this reason it is like a lunar reflection in the stream; it is neither continuous nor discrete; it is beyond birth and death; even when it is said to be born, it knows no birth; even when it is said to have passed away, it knows no passing away; it is only when no-mind-ness or the Unconscious is seen that there are discourses never discoursed, that there are acts that never acted.

Also according to Hui-Neng, Prajna is the name given to self-nature, or the Unconscious, as we call it, when it becomes conscious of itself, or rather to the act itself of becoming conscious. Prajna therefore points in two directions to the Unconscious and to the world of consciousness which is now unfolded. The one is call the Prajna of non-discrimination and the other the Prajna of discrimination. When we are so deeply involved in the outgoing direction of consciousness and discrimination as to forget the other direction of Prajna pointing to the Unconscious, we have what is technically known as “Prapanca,” imagination. Or we may state this conversely: when imagination asserts itself, Prajna is hidden, and discrimination has its own sway, and the pure, undefiled surface of the Unconscious or self-nature is now

dimmed. The advocates of “no-thought” or “no-mind” want us to preserve Prajna from going astray in the direction of discrimination, and to have our eyes looking steadily in the other direction. To attain “no-mind” means to recover, objectively speaking, the Prajna or non-discrimination. When this idea is developed in more detail we shall comprehend the significance of “no-mind” in Zen thought.

Prajna is also the awakening of consciousness in the Unconscious, functions in a twofold direction. The one is towards the Unconscious and the other towards the conscious. The Prajna which is orientated to the Unconscious is Prajna properly so called, while the Prajna of consciousness is now called mind with the small initial letter. From this mind a dualistic world takes its rise: subject and object, the inner self and the external world, and so on. In the Mind, therefore, two aspects are also distinguishable: Prajna-mind of non-discrimination and dualistic mind. The mind of the first aspect belongs to this world, but so long as it is linked with Prajna it is in direct communication with the Unconscious, it is the Mind; whereas the mind of the second aspect is wholly of this world, and delighted with it, and mixes itself with all its multiplicities. The mind of the second aspect, Hui-Neng called “thought.” Here, mind is thought, and thought is mind. From the relative point of view, the mind of the first aspect may be designated “no-mind” in contradistinction to the mind of the second aspect. As the latter belongs to this side of our ordinary experience, so called, the former is a transcendental one in terms of Zen philosophy is “that which is not the mind,” or “no-mind” or “no-thought.”

Chapter Sixty-Three

When the Mind Is Confused, the Dharma Flower Turns It; The Enlightened Mind Will Turn the Dharma Flower

According to the Platform Sutra, Chapter Seven, Bhikshu Fa-Ta of Hung-Chou left home at age seven and constantly recited the Dharma Flower Sutra, but when he came to bow before the Sixth Patriarch, his head did not touch the ground. The Master scolded him, saying, “If you do not touch the ground, isn’t it better not to bow? There must be something on your mind. What do you practice?” “I have recited the Dharma Flower Sutra over three thousand times,” Fa-Ta replied. The Master said, “I don’t care if you have recited it ten thousand times. If you understood the Sutra’s meaning, you would not be so overbearing, and you could walk along with me. You have failed in your work and do not recognize your error. Listen to my verse:

“As bowing is basically to cut off arrogance,
Why don’t you touch your head to the ground?
When you possess an ego, offenses arise,
But forgetting merit brings supreme blessings.”

The Master asked further, “What is your name?” “Fa-Ta,” he replied. The Master said, “Your name means ‘Dharma Penetration,’ but what dharma have you penetrated?” The Master then spoke a verse:

“Your name means Dharma Penetration,
And you earnestly recite without pause to rest.
Recitation is merely sound,
But one who understands his mind is called a Bodhisattva.
Now, because of your karmic conditions,
I will explain it to you:
Believe only that the Buddha is without words,
And the lotus blossom will bloom from your mouth.”

Hearing the verse, Fa-Ta was remorseful and he said, “From now on I will respect everyone. Your disciple recites the Dharma Flower Sutra but, has not yet understood its meaning. His mind often has

doubts. High Master, your wisdom is vast and great. Will you please explain the general meaning of the Sutra for me?" The Master said, "Dharma Penetration, the Dharma is extremely penetrating but, your mind does not penetrate it. There is basically nothing doubtful in the Sutra. The doubts are in your own mind. You recite this Sutra but what do you think its teaching is?" Fa-Ta said, "This student's faculties are dull and dim. Since I have only recited it by heart, how could I understand its doctrine?" The Master said, "I cannot read, but if you take the Sutra and read it once, I will explain it to you." Fa-Ta recited loudly until he came to the 'Analogies Chapter.' The Master said, "Stop! This Sutra fundamentally is based on the principle underlying the causes and conditions of the Buddha's appearance in the world. None of the analogies spoken go beyond that. What are the causes and conditions? The Sutra says, 'All Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, appear in the world for the causes and conditions of the One Important Matter.' The One Important Matter is the knowledge and vision of the Buddha. Worldly people, deluded by external world, attach themselves to marks, and deluded by their inner world, they attach themselves to emptiness. The Sixth Patriarch also said, "If you can live among marks and yet be separate from it, then you will be confused by neither the internal nor the external. If you awaken to this Dharma, in one moment your mind will open to enlightenment. The knowledge and vision of the Buddha is simply that. The Buddha is enlightenment. There are four divisions: Opening to the enlightened knowledge and vision; demonstrating the enlightened knowledge and vision; awakening to the enlightened knowledge and vision; and entering the enlightened knowledge and vision. If you listen to the opening and demonstrating of the Dharma, you can easily awaken and enter. That is the enlightened knowledge and vision, the original true nature becoming manifested. Be careful not to misinterpret the Sutra by thinking that the opening, demonstrating, awakening, and entering of which it speaks is the Buddha's knowledge and vision and that we have no share in it. To explain it that way would be to slander the Sutra and defame the Buddha. Since he is already a Buddha, perfect in knowledge and vision, what is the use of his opening to it again? You should now believe that the Buddha's knowledge and vision is simply your own mind, for there is no other Buddha. But, because living beings cover

their brilliance with greed, and their love with states of defilement; external conditions and inner disturbance make slaves of them. That troubles the World-Honored One to rise from Samadhi, and with various reproaches and expedients, he exhorts living beings to stop and rest, not to seek outside themselves, and to make themselves the same as he is. That is called ‘Opening the knowledge and vision of the Buddha.’ I, too, am always exhorting all people to open to the knowledge and vision of the Buddha within their own minds. The mind of worldly people are deviant. Confused and deluded, they commit offenses. Their speech may be good, but their minds are evil. They are greedy, hateful, envious, given to flattery, deceit and arrogance. They oppress one another and harm living creatures, thus, they open not the knowledge and vision of Buddha but that of living beings. If you can with an upright mind constantly bring forth wisdom, contemplating and illuminating your own mind, and if you can practice the good and refrain from evil, you, yourself will open to the knowledge and vision of the Buddha. In every thought you should open up to the knowledge and vision of the Buddha; do not open up to the knowledge and vision of living beings. To be open to the knowledge and vision of the Buddha is transcendental; to be open to the knowledge and vision of living beings is mundane. If you exert yourself in recitation, clinging to it as a meritorious exercise, how does that make you different from a yak who loves his own tail?” Fa-Ta said, “If this is so, then I need only to understand the meaning and need not to exert myself in reciting the Sutra. Isn’t that correct?” The Master replied, “What fault does the Sutra have that would stop you from reciting it? Confusion and enlightenment are in you. Loss or gain comes from yourself. If your mouth recites and your mind practices, you ‘turn’ the Sutra, but if your mouth recites and your mind does not practice, the Sutra ‘turns’ you. Listen to my verse:

**“When the mind is confused,
the Dharma Flower turns it.**

The enlightened mind will turn the Dharma Flower.
Reciting the Sutra so long without understanding
Has made you an enemy of its meaning.
Without a thought your recitation is right.
With thought, your recitation is wrong.

With no 'with' and no 'without'
 You may ride forever in
 the White Ox Cart."

Fa-Ta heard this verse and wept without knowing it. At the moment the words were spoken, he achieved a great enlightenment and said to the Master, "Until today I have never actually turned the Dharma Flower; instead it has turned me." Fa-Ta asked further, "The Lotus Sutra says, 'If everyone from Sravakas up to the Bodhisattvas were to exhaust all their thought in order to measure the Buddha's wisdom, they still could not fathom it.' Now, you cause common people merely to understand their own minds, and you call that the knowledge and vision of the Buddha. Because of this, I am afraid that those without superior faculties will not be able to avoid doubting and slandering the Sutra. The Sutra also speaks of three carts. How do the sheep, deer, and ox carts differ from the White Ox Cart? I pray the High Master will once again instruct me." The Master said, "The Sutra's meaning is clear. You yourself are confused. Disciples of all three vehicles are unable to fathom the Buddha's wisdom; the fault is in their thinking and measuring. The more they think, the further they go. From the start, the Buddha speaks for the sake of common people, not for the sake of other Buddhas. Those who chose not to believe were free to leave the assembly. Not knowing that they were sitting in the White Ox Cart, they sought three vehicles outside the gate. What is more, the Sutra text clearly tells you 'There is only the one Buddha Vehicle, no other vehicle, whether two or three, and the same is true for countless expedients, for various causes and conditions, and for analogies and rhetoric. All these Dharma are for the sake of the One Buddha Vehicle. Why don't you wake up? The three carts are false because they are preliminary. The one vehicle is real because it is the immediate present. You are merely taught to go from the false and return to the real. Once you have returned to reality, the real is also nameless. You should know that all the treasure and wealth is ultimately your own, for your own use. That is called maintaining the Dharma Flower Sutra. Then from aeon to aeon, your hands will never let go of the scrolls; from morning to night you will recite it unceasingly." Fa-Ta received this instruction and, overwhelmed with joy, he spoke a verse:

"Three thousand Sutra recitations:

At Ts'ao-Hsi not one single world.
Before I knew why he appeared in the world,
How could I stop the madness of accumulated births?
Sheep, deer, and ox provisionally set up;
Beginning, middle, end, well set forth.
Who would have thought that within the burning house
Originally the king of Dharma dwelt?"

The Master said, "From now on you may be called the monk mindful of the Sutra." From then on, although Fa-Ta understood the profound meaning, he continued to recite the Sutra unceasingly.

Chapter Sixty-Four

The Wind Is Not Moving, Nor Is the Flag, Your Minds Are Moving

According to the Records of the Transmission of the Lamp (Ch'uan-Teng-Lu), Volume III and the Platform Sutra, the First Chapter, one day Hui Neng thought, "The time has come to spread the Dharma. I cannot stay in hiding forever." Accordingly, he went to Fa Hsing Monastery in Kuang Chou where Dharma Master Yin Tsung was giving lectures on The Nirvana Sutra. At that time there were two bhikshus who were discussing the topic of the wind and a flag. One said, "The wind is moving." The other said, "The flag is moving." They argued incessantly. Hui Neng stepped forward and said, "**The wind is not moving, nor is the flag. Your minds, Kind Sirs, are moving.**" Everyone was startled. Dharma Master Yin Tsung invited him to take a seat of honor and sought to ask him about the hidden meaning. Seeing that Hui Neng's demonstration of the true principles was concise and not based on written words. According to Zen Master in Dropping Ashes on the Buddha, long ago in China, in the same way, with the leaves, wind, anger, etc., when your mind is moving, the actions appear. But when your mind is not moving, the truth is just like this. The falling of the leaves is the truth. The sweeping is the truth. The wind's blowing them away is the truth. If your mind is moving, you can't understand the truth. You must first understand that form is emptiness, emptiness is form. Next, not form, no emptiness. Then you will understand that form is form, emptiness is emptiness. Then all these actions are the truth. And then you will find your true home. According to Wu Men Hui-Kai in the Wu-Men-Kuan, it is not the wind that moves. It is not the flag that moves. It is not the mind that moves. How do you see the Ancestral Teacher here? If you can view this matter intimately, you will find that the two monks received gold when they were buying iron. The Ancestral Teacher could not repress his compassion and overspent himself. Zen practitioners should always remember that we can see a flag waving in the wind, our mind is moving in that, for our mind is not a thing, and it has neither shape nor

shadow. Existence is the mind manifesting; its true nature is the Emptiness. Be careful!

Chapter Sixty-Five

Vision of the Tathagata

According to the Platform Sutra, Chapter Seven, Bhikshu Chih-Ch'ang, a native of Kuei-Hsi in Hsin-Chou, left home when he was a child and resolutely sought to see his own nature. One day he called on the Sixth Patriarch, who asked him, "Where are you from and what do you want?" Chih-Ch'ang replied, "Your student has recently been to Pai-Feng Mountain in Hung-Chou to call on the High Master Ta-T'ung and received his instruction on the principle of seeing one's nature and realizing Buddhahood. As I have not yet resolved my doubts, I have come from a great distance to bow reverently and request the Master's compassionate instruction." The Master said, "What instruction did he give you? Try to repeat it to me." Chih-Ch'ang said, "After arriving there, three months passed and still I had received no instruction. Being eager for the Dharma, one evening I went alone into the Abbot's room and asked him, 'What is my original mind and original substance?' But Ta-T'ung then said to me, 'Do you see empty space?' 'Yes,' I said, 'I see it.' Ta-T'ung said to me, 'Do you know what appearance it has?' Chih-Ch'ang replied, 'Empty space has no form. How could it have an appearance?' Ta-T'ung said, 'Your original mind is just like empty space. To understand that nothing can be seen is called right seeing; to know that nothing can be known is called true knowing. There is nothing blue or yellow, long or short. Simply seeing the clear, pure original source, the perfect bright enlightened substance, this is what is called 'seeing one's nature and realizing Buddhahood. It is also called 'the knowledge and vision of the Tathagata.'" Although I heard this instruction, I still do not understand and beg you, O Master to instruct me." The Master said, "Your former master's explanation still retains the concepts of knowing and seeing; and that is why you have not understood. Now, I will teach you with a verse:

Not to see a single dharma still retains no-seeing,
Greatly resembling floating clouds covering the sun.
Not to know a single dharma holds to empty knowing,
Even as a lightning flash comes out of empty space.

This knowing and seeing arise in an instant.
 When seen wrongly, can expedients being understood?
 If, in the space of a thought, you can know your own error,
 Your own spiritual light will always be manifested.

Hearing the verse, Chih-Ch'ang understood it with his heart and mind, and he composed this verse:

Without beginning, knowing and seeing arise.
 When one is attached to marks Bodhi is sought out.
 Clinging to a thought of enlightenment,
 Do I rise above my former confusion?
 The inherently enlightened substance of my nature
 Illuminates the turning twisting flow.
 But had I not entered the Patriarch's room,
 I'd still be running, lost between the two extremes.

Chapter Sixty-Six

All Dharmas Are Discriminated Without a Thought of Discrimination Arising

According to the Platform Sutra, Chapter Seven, Bhikshu Chih-Tao, a native of Nan-Hai in Kuang-Chou, asked a favor: “Since leaving home, your student has studied the Nirvana Sutra for over ten years and has still not understood its great purpose. I hope that the High Master will bestow his instruction.” The Master said, “What point haven’t you understood?” Chih-Tao replied: “All activities are impermanent, characterized by production and extinction; when production and extinction are extinguished. That still extinction is bliss, my doubts are with respect to this passage.” The Master said, “What are your doubts?” Chih-Tao replied, “All living beings have two bodies, the physical body and Dharma-body. The physical body is impermanent and is produced and destroyed. The Dharma-body is permanent and is without knowing or awareness. The Sutra says that the extinction of production and extinction is bliss, but I do not know which body is in tranquil extinction and which receives the bliss. How could it be the physical body which receives the bliss? When this physical body is extinguished, the four elements scatter. That is total suffering cannot be called bliss. If the Dharma-body were extinguished it would become like grass, trees, tiles, or stones; then what would receive the bliss? Moreover, the Dharma-nature is the substance of production and extinction and the five heaps are the function of production and extinction. With one body having five functions, production and extinction are permanent; at the time of production, the functions arise from the substance, and at the time of extinction, the functions return to the substance. If there were rebirth then sentient beings would not cease to exist or be extinguished. If there were not rebirth, they would return to tranquil extinction and be just like insentient objects. Thus, all dharmas would be suppressed by nirvana and there would not even be production. How could there be bliss?” The Master said, “You are a son of Sakya! How can you hold the deviant views of annihilationism and permanence which belongs to

other religions and criticize the Supreme Vehicle Dharma! According to what you say, there is a Dharma-body that exists apart from physical form a tranquil extinction to be sought apart from production and extinction. Moreover, you propose that there is a body which enjoys the permanence and bliss of Nirvana. But, that is to grasp tightly onto birth and death and to indulge in worldly bliss. You should now know that deluded people mistook the union of five heaps for their own bodies and determined the dharmas as external to themselves. They loved life, dreaded death and drifted from thought to thought, not knowing that this illusory dream is empty and false. They turned vainly around on the wheel of birth and death and mistook the permanence and bliss of Nirvana for a form of suffering. All day long they sought after something else. Taking pity on them, the Buddha made manifest in the space of an instant the true bliss of Nirvana, which has no mark of production or extinction; it has no production or extinction to be extinguished. That, then, is the manifestation of tranquil extinction. Its manifestation cannot be reckoned; it is permanent and blissful. The bliss has neither an enjoyer nor a non-enjoyer. How can you call it 'one substance with five functions?' Worse, how can you say that Nirvana suppresses all dharmas, causing them to be forever unproduced? That is to slander the Buddha and defame the Dharma. Listen to my verse:

Supreme. Great Nirvana is bright
 Perfect, permanent, still, and shining.
 Deluded common people call it death,
 Other teachings hold it to be annihilation.
 All those who seek two vehicles
 Regard it as non-action.
 Ultimately these notions arise from feeling,
 And form the basis for sixty-two views,
 Wrongly establishing unreal names.
 What is the true, real principle?
 Only one who has gone beyond measuring
 Penetrates without grasping or rejecting,
 And knows that the dharma of the five heaps
 And the self within the heaps,
 The outward appearances, a mass of
 images, the mark of every sound,

Are equally like the illusion of dreams,
 For him, views of common and holy do not arise
 Nor are explanations of Nirvana made.
 The two boundaries, the three limits are cut off.

All organs have their function,

But there never arises the thought of the function.

All dharmas are discriminated

Without a thought of discrimination arising.

When the fire at the aeon's end burns the bottom of the sea

And the winds blow the mountain against each other,

The true, permanent, still extinct bliss,

The mark of Nirvana is 'thus.'

I have struggled to explain it,

To cause you to reject your false views.

Don't understand it by words alone

And maybe you'll understand a bit of this."

After hearing this verse, Chih-Tao was greatly enlightened.
 Overwhelmed with joy, he made obeisance and withdrew.

Chapter Sixty-Seven

Three Bodies & Four Wisdoms In the Jewel Platform Sutra

According to the Platform Sutra, Chapter Seven, Bhikshu Chih-T'ung, a native of An-feng in Shou-Chou, had read the Lankavatara Sutra over a thousand times but still did not understand the three bodies and the four wisdoms. He made obeisance to the Master, seeking an explanation of the meaning. The Master said, "The three bodies are: the clear, pure Dharma-body, which is your nature; the perfect, full Reward-body, which is your wisdom; and the hundred thousand myriad Transformation-bodies, which are your conduct. To speak of the three bodies as separate from your nature is to have the bodies but not the wisdom. To remember that the three bodies have no self-nature is to understand the four wisdom of Bodhi. Listen to my verse:

"Three bodies complete in your own self-nature
When understood become four wisdoms.
While not apart from seeing and hearing
Transcend them and ascend to the Buddha realm.
I will now explain it for you.
If you are attentive and faithful, you will never be deluded.
Don't run outside in search of them,
By saying 'Bodhi' to the end of your days."

According to the Shingon Sect, there are five kinds of wisdom. From the second to the fifth are similar to that of the Jewel Platform Sutra. First, Dharmadhatu-prakrti-jnana or the wisdom derived from the pure consciousness (amala-vijnana). The wisdom of the embodied nature of dharmadhatu, defined as the six elements, and is associated with Vairocana in the center. Second, Adarsana-jnana, the great ground mirror wisdom, derived from alaya-vijnana (alaya consciousness), reflecting all things; corresponds to the earth, and is associated with Aksobhya and the east. Third, Samata-jnana, the wisdom which derived from manovijnana or mano consciousness, wisdom in regard to all things equally and universally, corresponds to fire and is associated with Ratnasambhava and the south. Fourth,

Pratyaveksana-jnana, the wisdom derived from wisdom of profound insight (ý thức), or discrimination, for exposition and doubt-destruction; corresponds to water, and is associated with Amitabha and the west. According to the T'ien-T'ai and Shingon, Amita is superior over the five Wisdom Buddhas (Dhyani-Buddhas), even though he governs the Western Quarter, not the center. Of the five Wisdom Buddhas, Amitabha of the West may be identical with the central Mahavairocana, the Buddha of homo-cosmic identity. Amitabha's original vows, his attainment of Buddhahood of Infinite Light and Life, and his establishment of the Land of Bliss are all fully described in the Sukhavati text. Fifth, Krtyanusthana-jnana, the wisdom derived from the five senses (ngũ căn), the wisdom of perfecting the double work of self-welfare and the welfare of others; corresponds to the air and is associated with Amoghasiddhi (Di Lặc Maitreya) and the north.

Chih-T'ung asked further, "May I hear about the meaning of the four wisdoms?" The Master said, "Since you understand the three bodies, you should also understand the four wisdom. Why do you ask again? To speak of the four wisdoms as separate from the three bodies is to have the wisdoms but not the bodies, in which case the wisdom becomes non-wisdom." He then spoke the verse:

"The wisdom of the great, perfect mirror
 Is your clear, pure nature.
 The wisdom of equal nature
 Is the mind without disease.
 Wonderfully observing wisdom
 Is seeing without effort.
 Perfecting wisdom is
 The same as the perfect mirror.
 Five, eight, six, seven,
 Effect and cause both turn;
 Merely useful names:
 They are without real nature.
 If, in the place of turning,
 Emotion is not kept,
 You always and forever dwell
 In Naga concentration.

Instantly enlightened to the nature of wisdom, Chih-T'ng submitted the following verse:

“Three bodies are my basic substance,
 Four wisdoms my original bright mind.
 Body and wisdom in unobstructed fusion
 In response to beings I accordingly take form.
 Arising to cultivate them is false movement.
 Holding to or pondering over them a waste of effort.
 Through the Master I know the wonderful principle,
 And, in the end, I lose the stain of names.”

According to the Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra, Chapter Seventh, there are four knowledges: First, the great perfect mirror wisdom of Aksobhya. The wisdom of the great, perfect mirror is the clear and pure nature of all sentient beings (the eighth consciousness turned to become the wisdom of Great Perfect Mirror). Second, the wisdom of Equality or the universal wisdom of Ratnaketu. The wisdom of equal nature is the mind without disease of sentient beings (the seventh consciousness turned to become the Wisdom of Equal Nature). Third, the wisdom of wonderful contemplation or the profound observing wisdom of Amitabha. The profound or wonderful observing wisdom is seeing without effort of sentient beings (the sixth consciousness turned to become the Wonderfully Observing Wisdom). Fourth, the wisdom that accomplishes what is done. The perfecting wisdom of Amoghasiddhi. The Perfect wisdom is the same as the perfect mirror (the first five consciousnesses turned to become the perfecting wisdom).

Note: The transformation of consciousness into wisdom has been described. The teaching says, “The first five consciousnesses turned become the perfecting wisdom; the sixth consciousness turned becomes the wonderfully observing wisdom; the seventh consciousness turned becomes the wisdom of equal nature; the eighth consciousness turned becomes the wisdom of great perfect mirror. Although the sixth and seventh are turned in the cause and the first five and the eighth in the effect, it is merely the names which turn. Their substance does not turn.”

Chapter Sixty-Eight

Nature Is Within Your Self-Nature

Nature stands in most cases for the ultimate constituent, or something ultimate in the being of a thing or a person, or that which is left after all that accidentally belongs to a thing is taken away from it. It may be questioned what is accidental and what is essential in the constitution of an individual object. Though it must not be conceived as an individual entity, like a kernel or nucleus which is left when all the outer casings are removed, or like a soul which escapes from the body after death. Nature means something without which no existence is possible, or thinkable as such. As its morphological construction suggests, it is 'a heart or mind which lives' within an individual. Figuratively, it may be called 'vital force.' In the Platform Sutra, the Sixth Patriarch Hui Neng defined 'nature' as follows: "The nature, or mind or heart is the dominion, nature is the lord: the rules over his dominion, there is 'nature' and there is the 'lord'; nature departs, and the lord is no more; nature is and the body and mind subsists, nature is not and the body and mind is destroyed. The Buddha is to be made within nature and not to be sought outside the body. In this, Hui-Neng attempts to give us a clearer understanding of what he means by 'nature.' Nature is the dominating force over our entire being; it is the principle of vitality, physical and spiritual. Not only the body but also the mind in its highest sense is active because of nature being present in them. When 'nature' is no more, all is dead, though this does not mean that 'nature' is something apart from the body and mind, which enters into it to actuate it, and depart at the time of death. This mysterious nature, however, is not a logical a priori but an actuality which can be experienced, and it is designated by Hui-Neng as "self-nature" or "self-being," throughout his Platform Sutra. Also according to the Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra, the Sixth Patriarch taught about Nature as follows: "Nature means Buddha-Nature, or, more particularly from the intellectual point of view, Prajna. This Prajna is possessed by every one of us, but owing to the confusion of thought we fail to realize it in ourselves. Therefore, we must be instructed and

properly guided by an adept in Zen Buddhism, until we can open a spiritual eye ourselves see into the Nature. This Nature knows no multiplicity, it is absolute oneness, being the same in ignorant as well as in the wise. This Nature fills the universe, and never rests from work. It is free, creative, and at the same time it knows itself. It knows all in one and one in all. This mysterious working of Prajna issued from your own Nature. Do not depend on letters but let your own Prajna illumine within yourself!" According to the Platform Sutra, Chapter Six, seeing the scholars and common people of Kuang-Chou and Shao-Kuan and the four directions assembled on the mountain to hear the Dharma, the Sixth Patriarch Hui-Neng took his seat and spoke to the assembly saying: "Come, each of you, Good Knowing Advisors! This work must begin within your self-nature. At all times, in every thought, purify your mind, cultivate your own conduct, see your own Dharm-body and the Buddha of your own mind. Take yourself across; discipline yourself. Only then will your coming here have not been in vain."

Chapter Sixty-Nine

Prajna Wisdom Must Be Practiced in the Mind, and Not Just Recited in Words!

According to the Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra, the Sixth Patriarch said: “If the preceding thought does not arise, it is mind. If the following thought does not end, it is Buddha. Thus, he advised one should not be afraid of rising thoughts, but only of the delay in being aware of them.” The following day, at the invitation of Magistrate Wei, the Master took his seat and said to the great assembly, “All of you purify your minds and think about Maha Prajna Paramita.” He then said, “All-Knowing Advisors, the wisdom of Bodhi and Prajna is originally possessed by worldly people themselves. It is only because their minds are confused that they are unable to enlighten themselves and must rely on a great Good Knowing Advisor who can lead them to see their Buddha-nature. You should know that the Buddha-nature of stupid and wise people is basically not different. It is only because confusion and enlightenment are different that some are stupid and some are wise. I will now explain for you the Maha Prajna Paramita Dharma in order that each of you may become wise. Pay careful attention and I will explain it to you.” Good Knowing Advisors, worldly people recite ‘Prajna’ with their mouths all day long and yet do not recognize the Prajna of their self-nature. Just as talking about food will not make you full, so, too, if you speak of emptiness you will not see your own nature in ten thousand ages. In the end, you will not have obtained any benefit. Good Knowing Advisors, Maha Prajna Paramita is a Sanskrit word which means ‘great wisdom which has arrived at the other shore.’ It must be practiced in the mind, and not just recited in words. When the mouth recites and the mind does not practice, it is like an illusion, a transformation, dew drops, or lightning. However, when the mouth recites and the mind practices, then mind and mouth are in mutual accord. One’s own original nature is Buddha; apart from the nature there is no other Buddha. What is meant by Maha? Maha means ‘great.’ The capacity of the mind is vast and great like empty space, and has no boundaries. It is not square or round, great or small. Neither

is it blue, yellow, red, white. It is not above or below, or long or short. It is without anger, without joy, without right, without wrong, without good, without evil, and it has no head or tail. All Buddha-lands are ultimately the same as empty space. The wonderful nature of worldly people is originally empty, and there is not a single dharma which can be obtained. The true emptiness of the self-nature is also like this. Good Knowing Advisors, do not listen to my explanation of emptiness and then become attached to emptiness. The most important thing is to avoid becoming attached to emptiness. If you sit still with an empty mind you will become attached to undifferentiated emptiness. Good Knowing Advisors, The emptiness of the universe is able to contain the forms and shapes of the ten thousand things: the sun, moon, and stars; the mountains, rivers, and the great earth; the fountains, springs, streams, torrents, grasses, trees, thickets, and forests; good and bad people, good and bad dharmas, the heavens and the hells, all the great seas, Sumeru and all mountains; all are contained within emptiness. The emptiness of the nature of worldly men is also like this. Good Knowing Advisors, the ability of one's own nature to contain the ten thousand dharmas is what is meant by 'great.' The myriad dharmas are within the nature of all people. If you regard all people, the bad as well as the good, without grasping or rejecting, without producing a defiling attachment, your mind will be like empty space. Therefore, it is said to be 'great,' or 'Maha.' Good Knowing Advisors, the mouth of the confused person speaks, but the mind of the wise person practices. There are deluded men who sit still with empty minds, vainly thinking of nothing and declaring that to be something great. One should not speak with these people because of their deviant views. Good Knowing Advisors, the capacity of the mind is vast and great, encompassing the Dharma realm. Its function is to understand clearly and distinctly. Its correct function is to know all. All is one; one is all. Coming and going freely, the mind's substance is unobstructed. That is Prajna. Good Knowing Advisors, all Prajna wisdom is produced from one's own nature; it does not enter from outside. Using the intellect correctly is called the natural function of one's true nature. One truth is all truth. The mind has the capacity for great things, and is not meant for practicing petty ways. Do not talk about emptiness with your mouth all day and in your mind fail to cultivate the conduct that you talk of. That

would be like a common person calling himself the king of a country, which cannot be. People like that are not my disciples. Good Knowing Advisors, what is meant by 'Prajna?' Prajna in our language means wisdom. Everywhere and at all times, in thought after thought, remain undeluded and practice wisdom constantly; that is Prajna conduct. Prajna is cut off by a single deluded thought. By one wise thought, Prajna is produced. Worldly men, deluded and confused, do not see Prajna. They speak of it with their mouths, but their minds are always deluded. They constantly say of themselves, 'I cultivate Prajna!' And though they continually speak of emptiness, they are unaware of true emptiness. Prajna, without form or mark, is just the wisdom of the mind. If thus explained, this is Prajna wisdom. What is meant by Paramita? It is a Sanskrit word which in our language means 'arrived at the other shore,' and is explained as 'apart from production and extinction.' When one is attached to states of being, production and extinction arise like waves. States of being, with no production or extinction, is like free flowing water. That is what is meant by 'the other shore.' Therefore, it is called 'Paramita.' Good Knowing Advisors, deluded people recite with their mouths, but while they recite they live in falsehood and in error. When there is practice in every thought, that is the true nature. You should understand this dharma, which is the Prajna dharma; and cultivate this conduct, which is the Prajna conduct. Not to cultivate is to be a common person, but in a single thought of cultivation, you are equal to the Buddhas. Good Knowing Advisors, common people are Buddhas and affliction is Bodhi. The deluded thoughts of the past are thoughts of a common person. Enlightened future thoughts are the thoughts of a Buddha. Past thoughts attached to states of being are afflictions. And, future thoughts separate from states of being are Bodhi. Good Knowing Advisors, Maha Prajna Paramita is the most honored, the most supreme, the foremost. It does not stay; it does not come or go. All Buddhas of the three periods of time emerge from it. You should use great wisdom to destroy affliction, defilement and the five skandhic heaps. With such cultivation as that, you will certainly realize the Buddha Way, transforming the three poisons into morality, concentration, and wisdom. Good Knowing Advisors, my Dharma-door produces 84,000 wisdom from the one Prajna. Why? Because worldly people have

84,000 kinds of defilement. In the absence of defilement, wisdom is always present since it is not separate from the self-nature. Understand this dharma is simply no-thought, no-remembrance, non-attachment and the non-production of falsehood and error. Use your own true-suchness nature and, by means of wisdom, contemplate and illuminate all dharmas without grasping or rejecting them. That is to see one's own nature and realize the Buddha Way. Good Knowing Advisors, if you wish to enter the extremely deep Dharma realm and the Prajna samadhi, you must cultivate the practice of Prajna. Hold and recite the 'Diamond Prajna Paramita Sutra' and that way you will see your own nature. You should know that the merit and virtue of this sutra is immeasurable, unbounded, and indescribable, as the Sutra text itself clearly states. This Dharma-door is the Superior Vehicle, that is taught to the people of great wisdom and superior faculties. When people of limited faculties and wisdom hear it, their minds give rise to doubt. Why is that? Take this example, the rains which the heavenly dragons shower on Jambudvipa. Cities and villages drift about in the flood like thorns and leaves. But if the rain falls on the great sea, its water neither increases nor decreases. If people of the Great Vehicle, the Most Superior Vehicle, hear the Diamond Sutra, their minds open up, awaken and understand. Then they know that their original nature itself possesses the wisdom of Prajna. Because they themselves use this wisdom constantly to contemplate and illuminate. And they do not rely on written words. Take for example, the rain does not come from the sky. The truth is that the dragons cause it to fall in order that all living beings, all plants and trees, all those with feeling and those without feeling may receive its moisture. In a hundred streams, it flows into the great sea and there unites in one substance. The wisdom of the Prajna of the original nature of living beings acts the same way. Good Knowing Advisors, when people of limited faculties hear this Sudden Teaching, they are like the plants and trees with shallow roots which, washed away by the great rain, are unable to grow. But at the same time, the Prajna wisdom which people of limited faculties possess is fundamentally no different from the Prajna that men of great wisdom possess. Hearing this Dharma, why do they not become enlightened? It is because the obstacle of their deviant views is a formidable one and the root of their afflictions is deep. It is like when thick clouds cover

the sun. If the wind does not blow, the sunlight will not be visible. 'Prajna' wisdom is itself neither great nor small. Living beings differ because their own minds are either confused or enlightened. Those of confused minds look outwardly to cultivate in search of the Buddha. Not having awakened to their self-nature yet, they have small roots. When you become enlightened to the Sudden Teaching, you do not grasp onto the cultivation of external things. When your own mind constantly gives rise to right views, afflictions and defilement can never stain you. That is what is meant by seeing your own nature. Good Knowing Advisors, the ability to cultivate the conduct of not dwelling inwardly or outwardly, of coming and going freely, of casting away the grasping mind, and of unobstructed penetration, is basically no different from the Prajna Sutra. Good Knowing Advisors, all sutras and writings of the Great and Small Vehicles, the twelve divisions of sutras, have been devised for people and established based on the nature of wisdom. If there were no people, the ten thousand dharmas would not exist. Therefore you should know that all dharmas are originally postulated for people and all sutras are spoken for their sake. Some people are deluded and some are wise; the deluded are small people and the wise are great people. The deluded people question the wise and the wise people teach Dharma to the deluded people. When the deluded people suddenly awaken and understand, their minds open to enlightenment and, therefore they are no longer different from the wise.

Chapter Seventy

Being Reborn in the Buddha's Pure Land In the Point of View of the Jewel Platform Sutra

I. An Overview & Meanings of Rebirth in the Pure Land:

The main meaning here of “Rebirth in the Pure Land” is to go or to be reborn in the Pure Land of Amitabha, or to have a rebirth in the Western Paradise. According to the Pure Land tradition, if a person merely repeat the name of Amitabha, no matter how evil his life may have been in the past, will acquire the merits of Amitabha and be received into Western Paradise. According to the Pure Land Sect, there are two conditions of rebirth to the Pureland: to gain rebirth to the main land and to be reborn to the outer border of the Pureland. First, to gain rebirth to the main land. This condition is reserved for those who regularly and diligently practice Buddha Recitation, those who have a sincere and faithful mind without regression. They will know beforehand the time and place of their death, having clear and proper thoughts, they will bathe themselves, changing clothes, or receive the great lights of the Buddha shine to their bodies. Or they may see the enlightened characteristics of the Buddhas and an assembly of enlightened beings appearing in the sky often walking in meditation before their eyes. All the various good and wholesome images will appear clearly, within a split moment, these people will gain rebirth to the Pure land, be near the most supremely virtuous beings, and earn a place among the nine levels of the lotus throne. They will often be able to hear the dharma sounds of the Buddhas and ultimately they will attain the enlightenment fruit of Buddhahood. Second, to be reborn to the outer border of the Pureland (those who keep precepts but are not diligent and lack faith). This condition is reserved for those who normally maintain precepts, who practice Buddha Recitation but are not diligent and lack faith. Thus, when death arrives, they do not have any good or evil thoughts, but close their eyes similar to a sleeping person. Because those people’s doubts are not eliminated. They may practice Buddha Recitation, but do not have absolute faith. They do not gain rebirth directly to the main land. Instead, they are born to a

domain on the outskirts of the Pureland. That domain is called “Doubtful Land.” People who are born to that domain have a life expectancy of 500 years (a day in that land equals a 100 years in the human realm). After living out their existence, they must return to the six paths of the cycle of rebirths. However, Bodhisattvas come there everyday to expound sutras and to encourage them to diligently recite the Buddha’s name. For those who diligently cultivate, when their lives come to an end, they will gain rebirth in the main land. According to the Vimalakirti Sutra, chapter ten, the Buddha of the Fragrant Land, Upasaka Vimalakirti told Bodhisattvas from the Fragrant Land about “Being reborn in the Buddha’s Pure Land”. The Bodhisattvas from the Fragrant Land asked: “How many Dharmas should a Bodhisattva achieve in this world to stop its morbid growth (defilements) in order to be reborn in the Buddha’s pure land?” Vimalakirti replied: “A Bodhisattva should bring to perfection eight Dharmas to stop morbid growth in this world in order to be reborn in the pure land. What are they ? First, benevolence towards all living beings with no expectation of reward. Second, endurance of sufferings for all living beings dedicating all merits to them. Third, impartiality towards them with all humility free from pride and arrogance. Fourth, reverence to all Bodhisattvas with the same devotion as to all Buddhas (i.e. without discrimination between Bodhisattvas and Buddhas). Fifth, absence of doubt and suspicion when hearing (the expounding of) sutras which he has not heard before. Sixth, abstention from opposition to the sravaka Dharma. Seventh, abstention from discrimination in regard to donations and offerings received with no thought of self-profit in order to subdue his mind. Eighth, self-examination without contending with others. Thus he should achieve singleness of mind bent on achieving all merits; these are the eight Dharmas. After Vimalakirti and Manjusri had thus expounded the Dharma, hundreds and thousands of devas developed the mind set on supreme enlightenment, and ten thousand Bodhisattvas realized the patient endurance of the uncreate.

II. Being Reborn in the Buddha’s Pure Land In the Point of View of the Jewel Platform Sutra:

According to the Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra, Chapter Three (Doubts and Questions), the Sixth Patriarch Hui-Neng told the

assembly about “Being reborn in the Buddha’s Pure Land” as follows: One day, Magistrate Vi asked the Sixth Patriarch, Hui-Neng: “Your disciple has often seen the Sangha and laity reciting ‘Amitabha Buddha,’ vowing to be reborn in the West. Will the High Master please tell me if they will obtain rebirth there and, so, dispel my doubts?” The Master said, “Magistrate, listen well. Hui Neng will explain it for you. When the World Honored One was in Shravasti City, he spoke of being led to rebirth in the West. The Sutra text clearly states, ‘it is not far from here.’ If we discuss its appearance, it is 108,000 miles away but in immediate terms, it is explained as far distant for those of inferior roots and as nearby for those of superior wisdom. There are two kinds of people, not two kinds of Dharma. Enlightenment and confusion differ, and seeing can be quick or slow. The deluded person recites the Buddha’s name, seeking rebirth there, while the enlightened person purifies his own mind. Therefore, the Buddha said, ‘As the mind is purified, the Budhaland is purified.’ Magistrate, if the person of the East merely purifies his mind, he is without offense. Even though one may be of the West, if his mind is impure, he is at fault. The person of the East commits offenses and recites the Buddha’s name, seeking rebirth in the West. When the person of the West commits offenses and recites the Buddha’s name, in what country does he seek rebirth? Common, deluded people do not understand their self-nature and do not know that the Pure Land is within themselves. Therefore, they make vows for the East and vows for the West. To enlightened people, all places are the same. As the Buddha said, ‘In whatever place one dwells, there is constant peace and happiness.’ Magistrate, if the mind-ground is only without unwholesomeness, the West is not far from here. If one harbors unwholesome thoughts, one may recite the Buddha’s name but it will be difficult to attain that rebirth. Good Knowing Advisors, I now exhort you all to get rid of the ten evils first and you will have walked one hundred thousand miles. Next get rid of the eight deviations and you will have gone eight thousand miles. If in every thought you see your own nature, always practice impartiality and straightforwardness, you will arrive in a finger-snap and see Amitabha. Magistrate, merely practice the ten wholesome acts; then what need will there be for you to vow to be reborn there? But if you do not rid the mind of the ten evils, what Buddha will come to welcome

you? If you become enlightened to the sudden dharma of the unproduced, you will see the West in an instant. Unenlightened, you may recite the Buddha's name seeking rebirth but since the road is so long, how can you traverse it? Hui-Neng will move to the West here in the space of an instant so that you may see it right before your eyes. Do you wish to see it?" At that time, the entire assembly bowed and said, "If we could see it here, what need would there be to vow to be reborn there? Please, High Master, be compassionate and make the West appear so that we might see it." The Master said, "Great assembly, the worldly person's own physical body is the city, and the eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body are the gates. Outside there are five gates and inside there is a gate of the mind. The mind is the 'ground' and one's nature is the 'king.' The 'king' dwells on the mind 'ground.' When the nature is present, the king is present but when the nature is absent, there is no king. When the nature is present, the body and mind remain, but when the nature is absent, the body and mind are destroyed. The Buddha is made within the self-nature. Do not seek outside the body. Confused, the self-nature is a living being: enlightened, it is a Buddha. 'Kindness and compassion' are Avalokitesvara and 'sympathetic joy and giving' are Mahasthamaprapta. 'Purification' is Sakyamuni, and 'equanimity and directness' are Amitabha. 'Others and self' are Mount Sumeru and 'deviant thoughts' are the ocean water. 'Afflictions' are the waves. 'Cruelty' is an evil dragon. 'Empty falseness' is ghosts and spirits. 'Defilement' is fish and turtles, 'greed and hatred' are hell, and 'delusion' is animals. Good Knowing Advisors, always practice the ten good practices and the heavens can easily be reached. Get rid of others and self, and Mount Sumeru topples. Do away with deviant thought, and the ocean waters dry up. Without defilements, the waves cease. End cruelty and there are no fish or dragons. The Tathagata of the enlightened nature is on your own mind-ground, emitting a great bright light which outwardly illuminates and purifies the six gates and breaks through the six desire-heavens Inwardly, it illuminates the self-nature and casts out the three poisons. The hells and all such offenses are destroyed at once. Inwardly and outwardly, there is a bright penetration. This is no different from the West. But if you do not cultivate, how can you go there?" On hearing this speech, the members

of the great assembly clearly saw their own natures. They bowed together and exclaimed, "This is indeed good! May all living beings of the Dharma Realm who have heard this awaken at once and understand."

Chapter Seventy-One

Cultivation of the Non-Movement in the Spirit of the Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra

The term "Imperturbable" means motionless, unvarying, or unchanging as the position of the North Pole Star. The Buddha in the Eastern Heaven of Abhirati, the realm of joy. One of the five Wisdom or Dhyana Buddhas (Vairocana, Aksobhya, Ratnasambhava, Amitabha, and Amoghasiddhi). He is mentioned in quite a number of Mahayana Sutras. His worship must have been fairly widespread, but only fragments of his legend have survived. The term is used for the unvarying or unchanging, for the pole-star, for fearlessness, for indifference to passion or temptation. Imperturbable also means extinction by a motionless state of heavenly meditation. A state of being unmoved by pleasure or pain. In the stage of immobility in which one dwell firmly in the truth of the Middle Way. Immovable ground, the eighth of the ten stages in a Buddha's advance to perfection. The immovable land (the stage of immovability), or the ground of immovability. When the Bodhisattva reaches here, he experiences the anutpattika-dharma-ksanti or the acquiescence in the unoriginatedness of all phenomena. He knows in detail the evolution and involution of the universe. In this stage, he gets rid of discrimination and has a thorough understanding of the nature of existence, realizing why it is like maya, etc., how discrimination starts from our inmate longing to see existence divided into subject and object, and how the mind and what belongs to it are stirred up; he would then practice all that pertains to the life of a good Buddhist, leading to the path of truth all those who have not yet come to it. This is the Bodhisattvas' nirvana which is not extinction. According to the Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch's Dharma Treasure, the Sixth Patriarch, Hui-Neng, taught: Good Knowing Advisors, one who cultivates non-movement does not notice whether other people are right or wrong, good or bad, or whether they have other faults. That is the non-movement of the self-nature. Good Knowing Advisors, although the body of the confused person may not move, as soon as he opens his mouth he speaks of what

is right and wrong about others, of their good points and shortcomings and so, he turns his back on the way. Attachment to the mind and attachment to purity are obstructions to the Way.”

Chapter Seventy-Two

Four Divisions of the Enlightened Knowledge In the Jewel Platform Sutra

I. An Overview of Four Divisions of the Enlightened Knowledge: Introduction-Guidance-Awaken-Penetration:

The four reasons for a Buddha's appearing in the world: First, Introduction: To disclose, or to open up treasury of truth, or to introduce and open the Buddhas' views and knowledge to sentient beings; so they can follow, learn, understand the truths, and clearly distinguish right from wrong. Second, Guidance: To display or to indicate the meanings of Buddhas' teachings, or to teach sentient beings to learn and practice the views and knowledge introduced by Buddhas, to help them know clearly the proper path from the improper path, right from wrong, in order to eliminate the various false views and knowledge. Third, Awaken: Awaken means to realize or to cause men to apprehend it, or to be awakened to the Buddha Dharmas, avoid false doctrines in order to escape from sufferings of births and deaths in the three evil paths of hell, hungry ghost, and animal, and be able to be reborn in the more peaceful and happier realms of heaven and human. Fourth, Penetration: To enter, or to lead them into it, or to penetrate deeply into the enlightenment fruit of the saintly beings, being able to transcend and to find liberation from the cycle of rebirths.

II. Four Divisions of the Enlightened Knowledge In the Jewel Platform Sutra:

According to the Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra, the Sixth Patriarch taught: "Good Knowing Advisors! If you can live among marks and yet be separate from it, then you will be confused by neither the internal nor the external. If you awaken to this Dharma, in one moment your mind will open to enlightenment. The knowledge and vision of the Buddha is simply that. The Buddha is enlightenment. There are four divisions. First, opening to the enlightened knowledge and vision. Second, demonstrating the enlightened knowledge and vision. Third,

awakening to the enlightened knowledge and vision. Fourth, entering the enlightened knowledge and vision. If you listen to the opening and demonstrating of the Dharma, you can easily awaken and enter. That is the enlightened knowledge and vision, the original true nature becoming manifest. Be careful not to misinterpret the Sutra by thinking that the opening, demonstrating, awakening, and entering of which it speaks is the Buddha's knowledge and vision and that we have no share in it. To explain it that way would be to slander the Sutra and defame the Buddha. Since he is already a Buddha, perfect in knowledge and vision, what is the use of his opening to it again? You should now believe that the Buddha's knowledge and vision is simply your own mind, for there is no other Buddha. But, because living beings cover their brilliance with greed and with the love or states of defilement, external conditions and inner disturbance make slaves of them. That troubles the World-Honored One to rise from Samadhi, and with various reproaches and expedients, he exhorts living beings to stop and rest, not to seek outside themselves, and to make themselves the same as he is. That is called 'Opening the knowledge and vision of the Buddha.' I, too, am always exhorting all people to open to the knowledge and vision of the Buddha within their own minds. The mind of worldly people are deviant. Confused and deluded, they commit offenses. Their speech may be good, but their minds are evil. They are greedy, hateful, envious, given over to flattery, deceit, and arrogance. They oppress one another and harm living creatures, thus they open not to the knowledge and vision of Buddha, but that of living beings. If you can with an upright mind constantly bring forth wisdom, contemplating and illuminating your own mind, and if you can practice the good and refrain from evil, you, yourself will open to the knowledge and vision of the Buddha. In every thought you should open up to the knowledge and vision of the Buddha; do not open up to the knowledge and vision of living beings. To be open to the knowledge and vision of the Buddha is transcendental; to be open to the knowledge and vision of living beings is mundane. If you exert yourself in recitation, clinging to it as a meritorious exercise, how does that make you different from a yak who loves his own tail?"

Chapter Seventy-Three

Thirty-Six Pairs of Opposites

According to the Platform Sutra, Chapter Ten, one day the Master summoned his disciples Fa-Hai, Chih-Ch'eng, Fa-Ta, Shen-Hui, Chih-Ch'ang, Chih-T'ung, Chih-Ch'e, Chih-Tao, Fa-Chen and Fa-Ju, and said to them, "You are not like other people. After my passage into extinction, you should each be a master in a different direction. I will now teach you how to explain the Dharma without deviating from the tradition of our school. First, bring up the three classes of Dharma-doors and then, use the thirty-six pairs of opposites, so that, whether coming or going, you remain in the Bodhimandala. While explaining all the dharmas, do not become separate from your self-nature. Should someone suddenly ask you about a dharma, answer him with its opposite. If you always answer with the opposite, both will be eliminated and nothing will be left since each depends on the other for existence. The three classes of Dharma-doors are the heaps, the realms and the entrances. The five heaps are: form, feeling, perception, impulses and consciousness. The twelve entrances are the six sense objects outside: forms, sounds, smells, tastes, tangible objects and objects of the mind; and the six sense organs within: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind. The eighteen realms are the six sense objects, the six sense organs and the six consciousnesses. The self-nature is able to contain all dharmas; it is the 'store-enveloping consciousness.' If one gives rise to a thought, it turns into consciousness, and the six consciousnesses are produced, which go out the six organs and perceive the six sense objects. Thus, the eighteen realms arise as a function of the self-nature. If the self-nature is wrong, it gives rise to the eighteen wrongs; if the self-nature is right, it gives rise to eighteen rights. Evil functioning is that of a living being, while good functioning is that of a Buddha. What is the functioning based on? It is based on opposing dharmas within the self-nature. External insentient things have five pairs of opposites: heaven and earth, sun and moon, light and darkness, positive and negative (yin and yang) and water and fire. In speaking of the marks of dharmas one should delineate twelve

opposites: speech and dharmas, existence and non-existence, form and formless, the marked and the unmarked, the presence of outflows and the lack of outflows, form and emptiness, motion and stillness, clarity and turbidity, the common and the holy, membership in the Sangha and membership in the laity, old age and youth, and largeness and smallness. From the self-nature nineteen pairs of opposites arise: length and shortness, deviance and orthodoxy, foolishness and wisdom, stupidity and intelligence, confusion and concentration, kindness and cruelty, morality and immorality, Straightness and crookedness, reality and unreality, danger and safety, affliction and Bodhi, permanence and impermanence, compassion and harm, joy and anger, generosity and stinginess, advance and retreat, production and extinction, the Dharma-body and the form-body, the Transformation-body and the reward-body. The Master said, "If you can understand and use these thirty-six pairs of opposites you can connect yourself with the dharmas of all the Sutras and avoid extremes, whether coming or going. When you act from your self-nature in speaking with others, you are separate from external marks while in the midst of them and separate from inward emptiness while in the midst of emptiness. If you are attached to marks, you will add to your wrong views and if you grasp at emptiness, you will increase your ignorance. Those who grasp at emptiness slander the Sutras by maintaining that written words have no use. Since they maintain they have no need of written words, they should not speak either because written words are merely the marks of spoken language. They also maintain that the direct way cannot be established by written words, and yet these two words 'not established', are themselves written. When they hear others speaking, they slander them by saying that they are attached to written words. You should know that to be confused as they are may be permissible but to slander the Buddha's Sutras is not. Do not slander the Sutras for if you do, your offense will create countless obstacles for you. One who attaches himself to external marks and practice dharmas in search of truth, or who builds many Bodhimandalas and speaks of the error and evil of existence and non-existence will not see his nature for many aeons. Listen to the Dharma and cultivate accordingly. Do not think of hundreds of things, for that will obstruct the nature of the Way. Listening without cultivating will cause others to form deviant views.

Simply cultivate according to the Dharma, and do not dwell in marks when bestowing it. If you understand, then speak accordingly, function accordingly, practice accordingly, and act accordingly, and you will not stray from the basis of our school. If someone ask you about a meaning, and the question is about existence, answer with non-existence; if you are asked about non-existence, answer with existence; asked about common life, answer with the holy life; asked about the holy life, answer with the common life. Since in each case the two principles are interdependent, the meaning of the Middle Way will arise between them. If you answer every question with an opposite, you will not stray from the basic principle. Suppose someone asks, 'What is darkness?' You should answer 'Brightness is the cause and darkness the condition. When there is no brightness, there is darkness. Brightness reveals darkness and darkness reveals brightness.' Since opposites are interdependent, the principle of the Middle Way is established. Answer every question that way, and in the future, when you transmit the Dharma, transmit it in the way I am instructing you. Then you will not stray from the tradition of our school."

Chapter Seventy-Four

Original Mind & Original Nature in the Spirit of the Jewel Platform Sutra

I. An Overview of Original Mind & Original Nature in Buddhist Teachings:

In Buddhism, the inner self is the original heart or mind from the original times. When one gives up their attachment, imagination, false discrimination, and so on, one restores the purity of their original mind, then both body and mind would be free from defilement and suffering. According to the Buddhist teachings, no matter how confused or deluded we may be at the moment, the fundamental nature of being is clear and pure. In the same way, clouds can temporarily obscure but cannot damage the light-giving power of the sun, so does the temporary afflictions of body and mind. The ultimate goal of all Buddhists, regardless of sects, is to uncover and make contact with this fundamental pure nature. According to Buddhist terminology, the ultimate goal of our individual human evolution is enlightenment or Buddhahood. This state can be achieved by everyone. This state can be achieved when all the delusions, greed, hatred, ignorance, etc presently obscure our mind have been completely removed.

Nature stands in most cases for the ultimate constituent, or something ultimate in the being of a thing or a person, or that which is left after all that accidentally belongs to a thing is taken away from it. It may be questioned what is accidental and what is essential in the constitution of an individual object. Though it must not be conceived as an individual entity, like a kernel or nucleus which is left when all the outer casings are removed, or like a soul which escapes from the body after death. Nature means something without which no existence is possible, or thinkable as such. As its morphological construction suggests, it is 'a heart or mind which lives' within an individual. Figuratively, it may be called 'vital force.'

In Buddhist teachings, original nature refers to the absolute, the true nature of all things. Original nature is also explained as "Immutable" or

“Immovable” or “Permanent.” It is beyond all concepts and distinctions. Bhutatathata, the suchness of existence, the reality as opposed to the appearance of the phenomenal world. Bhutatathata is immutable and eternal, whereas forms and appearances arise, change and pass away. Bhutatathata means permanent reality underlying all phenomena, pure and unchanged, such as the sea in contrast with the waves. According to Madhyamaka Philosophy, Tathata is the Truth, but it is impersonal. In order to reveal itself, it requires a medium. Tathagata is that medium. Tathagata is the epiphany of Reality. He is Reality personalized. Tathagata is an amphibious being partaking both of the Absolute and phenomena. He is identical with Tathata, but embodied in a human form. That is why Tathata is also called the womb of Tathagata (Tathagatagarbha).

II. Original Mind & Original Nature (Original Substance) in the Spirit of the Jewel Platform Sutra:

According to the Jewel Platform Sutra, Chapter 7, a Bhikshu named Chih-Ch’ang, a native of Kuei-Hsi in Hsin-Chou, left home when he was a child and resolutely sought to see his own nature. One day he called on the Master, who asked him, “Where are you from and what do you want?”

Chih-Ch’ang replied, “Your student has recently been to Pai-Feng Mountain in Hung-Chou to call on the High Master Ta-T’ung and received his instruction on the principle of seeing one’s nature and realizing Buddhahood. As I have not yet resolved my doubts, I have come from a great distance to bow reverently and request the Master’s compassionate instruction.”

The Master said, “What instruction did he give you? Try to repeat it to me.”

Chih-Ch’ang said, “After arriving there, three months passed and still I had received no instruction. Being eager for the Dharma, one evening I went alone into the Abbot’s room and asked him, ‘What is my original mind and original substance?’

But Ta-T’ung then said to me, ‘Do you see empty space?’

‘Yes,’ I said, ‘I see it.’

Ta-T’ung said, ‘Do you know what appearance it has?’

Chih-Ch'ang replied, 'Empty space has no form. How could it have an appearance?'

Ta-T'ung said, "Your original mind is just like empty space. To understand that nothing can be seen is called right seeing; to know that nothing can be known is called true knowing. There is nothing blue or yellow, long or short. Simply seeing the clear, pure original source, the perfect bright enlightened substance, this is what is called 'seeing one's nature and realizing Buddhahood.' It is also called 'the knowledge and vision of the Tathagata.' Although I heard this instruction, I still do not understand and beg you, O Master to instruct me."

The Master said, "Your former master's explanation still retains the concepts of knowing and seeing; and that is why you have not understood. Now, I will teach you with a verse:

Not to see a single dharma still retains no-seeing,
Greatly resembling floating clouds covering the sun.
Not to know a single dharma holds to empty knowing,
Even as a lightning flash comes out of empty space.
This knowing and seeing arise in an instant.
When seen wrongly, can expedients being understood?
If, in the space of a thought, you can know your own error,
Your own spiritual light will always be manifested.

Hearing the verse, Chih-Ch'ang understood it with his heart and mind, and he composed this verse:

Without beginning, knowing and seeing arise.
When one is attached to marks
Bodhi is sought out.
Clinging to a thought of enlightenment,
Do I rise above my former confusion?
The inherently enlightened substance of my nature
Illuminates the turning twisting flow.
But had I not entered the Patriarch's room,
I'd still be running, lost between the two extremes.

One day Chih-Ch'ang asked the Master, "The Buddha taught the dharma of the three vehicles and also the Supreme Vehicle. Your disciple has not yet understood that and would like to be instructed."

The Master said, "Contemplate only your own original mind and do not be attached to the marks of external dharmas. The Dharma doesn't

have four vehicles; it is people's minds that differ. Cultivating by seeing, hearing, and reciting is the small vehicle. Cultivating by awakening to the Dharma and understanding the meaning is the middle vehicle. Cultivating in accord with Dharma is the great vehicle. To penetrate the ten thousand dharmas entirely and completely while remaining without defilement, and to sever attachment to the marks of all the dharmas with nothing whatsoever gained in return: that is the Supreme Vehicle. Vehicles are methods of practice, not subjects for debate. Cultivate on your own and do not ask me, for at all times your own self-nature is itself 'thus.'"

Chih-Ch'ang bowed and thanked the Master and served him to the end of the Master's life.

In short, in the Platform Sutra, the Sixth Patriarch Hui Neng defined 'nature' as follows: "The nature, or mind or heart is the dominion, nature is the lord: the rules over his dominion, there is 'nature' and there is the 'lord'; nature departs, and the lord is no more; nature is and the body and mind subsists, nature is not and the body and mind is destroyed. The Buddha is to be made within nature and not to be sought outside the body. In this, Hui-Neng attempts to give us a clearer understanding of what he means by 'nature.' Nature is the dominating force over our entire being; it is the principle of vitality, physical and spiritual. Not only the body but also the mind in its highest sense is active because of nature being present in them. When 'nature' is no more, all is dead, though this does not mean that 'nature' is something apart from the body and mind, which enters into it to actuate it, and depart at the time of death. This mysterious nature, however, is not a logical a priori but an actuality which can be experienced, and it is designated by Hui-Neng as "self-nature" or "self-being," throughout his Platform Sutra.

Chapter Seventy-Five

Four Magnanimous Vows in the Spirit of the Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra

The magnanimous Vows mean the four universal vows of a Buddha or Bodhisattva (four magnanimous Vows or four all-encompassing vows). The four great vows are basically a Mahayana reinterpretation of the Four Holy Truths. In addition to ending one's own suffering, one vows to end the suffering of all living beings. In addition to eliminating one's own afflictions, one vows to end the inexhaustible afflictions of all living beings. In addition to learning only the single Dharma-door necessary for one's own enlightenment, one vows to learn all the Dharma-doors, so that one can teach all living beings appropriately. Rather than being satisfied with reaching the stage of the Arhat, one vows to become a Buddha. However, it is not enough just to recite the vows. You have to return the light and think them over: The vows say that I will save countless number of beings. Have I done so? If I have, it should still be the same as if I had not saved them. Why? It is said that the Thus Come One saves all living beings, and yet not a single living being has been saved. This means that even though you have saved quite a few numbers of living beings, but do not attach to the mark of saving living beings. According to the Mahayana, the four great magnanimous vows, that are part of the Bodhisattva vow as they recited three times successively in a Zen monastery after ending the practice of sitting meditation. These vows are also recited at the end of any Buddhist ceremonies. *First, Vow to Save All Living Beings Without Limits:* Sentient beings are numberless (countless), I vow to save them all. According to the Sixth Patriarch Hui-Neng Sutra, good knowing advisors, did all of you not just say, "I vow to take across the limitless beings? What does it mean? You should remember that it is not Hui-Neng who takes them across. Good Knowing Advisors, the 'living beings' within your mind are deviant and confused thoughts, deceitful and false thoughts, unwholesome thoughts, jealous thoughts, vicious thoughts: and these thoughts are 'living beings' The self-nature of each one of them must take itself across.

That is true crossing over. What is meant by 'the self-nature taking across?' It is to take across by means of right views the living beings of deviant views, affliction, and delusion within your own mind. Once you have right views, use Prajna Wisdom to destroy the living beings of delusion, confusion, and falsehood. Each one takes itself across. Enlightenment takes confusion across, wisdom takes delusion across, goodness takes evil across. Such crossing over is a true crossing. *Second, Vow to Put an End to All Passions and Delusions, Though Innumerable:* Afflictions (annoyances) are inexhaustible (endless), I vow to end (cut) them all. Also according to the Sixth Patriarch Hui-Neng Sutra, 'I vow to cut off the inexhaustible afflictions.' That is to use the Prajna Wisdom of your own self-nature to cast out the vain and false thoughts in your mind. *Third, Vow to Study and Learn All Methods and Means Without End:* Schools and traditions are manifold, I vow to study them all. The teachings of Dharma are boundless, I vow to learn them all. Zen Master Sheng-Yen preached the assembly about the great four vows in Getting the Buddha Mind as follows: "I vow to help all sentient beings; I vow to cut off all vexations; I vow to master all Dharma methods; and I vow to reach Buddhahood. The first vow is the most important. If you think only of helping sentient beings, naturally your own vexations will be lessened. If you have only helping sentient beings in mind, naturally you will learn all the Dharma methods. Finally, if you persist in helping sentient beings until there is no self, at that time sentient beings also disappear. Then you will have attained Buddhahood, for at that point there is no discrimination, no sentient beings, and no self. These vows are made every day by all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas and anyone who wishes to practice seriously."

Also according to the Sixth Patriarch Hui-Neng Sutra, 'I vow to study the immeasurable Dharma-door.' You must see your own nature and always practice the right Dharma. That is true study. *Fourth, Vow to Become Perfect in the Supreme Buddha-Law:* The Buddha-Way (Truth) is supreme (unsurpassed), I vow to complete (realize) it. Also according to the Sixth Patriarch Hui-Neng Sutra, 'I vow to realize the supreme Buddha Way,' and with humble mind to always practice the true and proper. Separate yourself from both confusion and enlightenment, and always give rise to Prajna. When you cast out the true and the false, you see your nature and realize the Buddha-way at

the very moment it is spoken of. Always be mindful; cultivate the Dharma that possesses the power of this vow.”

Chapter Seventy-Six

The Wisdom of Contemplate and Illuminate in the Spirit of the Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra

Bhavana is a Sanskrit term which means “Cultivation,” “Contemplation,” or “Mind development.” Self development by any means, but especially by the method of mind-control, concentration and meditation. A term that is widely applied to meditative practice in Buddhism. Bhavana has two phases. The first phase is samatha, or the development of tranquility, which is the prerequisite for attaining clear seeing; and the second phase is vipashyana, or the period of clear seeing. In general, it can be said to involve familiarization of the mind with an object of observation (alambana), and in meditation treatises it is commonly divided into two main types: 1) Stabilizing meditation (samatha), in which a meditator cultivates the ability to focus on the object of observation without losing the right concentration; and 2) Analytical meditation (vipasyana), in which one analyzes the object in order to determine its final mode of subsistence. In Zen, contemplation means to concentrate one's mind in order to observe, to analyze, or to reflect on a topic that helps practitioners with a stable body and a peaceful and mindful mind. Contemplation is not a simple matter. As a matter of fact, in the world today, based on mechanical and technological advances, our life is totally disturbed by those daily activities that are very tiresome and distressing for mastering; thus, the body is already difficult and if we want to master the mind, it is even more difficult. A person who has not been trained in the practice of mind-control can hardly realize the difficulty of taming his own mind. He takes it for granted that he can order it to think anything he wishes, or direct it to function in accordance with his wills. Nothing could be further from the truth. Only those who have practiced meditation can understand the difficulty encountered in controlling this ungovernable and ever-fluctuating mind. For instance, if we close our eyes and try to visualize an image, we will soon discover how difficult this is. The image is usually hazy and unsteady; it fades, fluctuates, and refuses to stand still or to "come whole". To untrained people this so-called

visualization is, at most, a kind of feeling rather than a seeing. Even though when you been training to visualize just an image of Buddha for years, only once in a while, you could momentarily visualize the whole of the Buddha's image clearly without its wavering or fading out. Buddhism declared centuries ago that human beings do not see things with their eyes, but with their minds. The organs of the eye are stimulated by the differing degrees of light reflected by various objects around us. This stimulation, in turn, is interpreted by the mind and resolved into visual pictures, resulting in what we call sight. Since whatever we see with the eye is necessarily a processed product, no matter how closely or how accurately it has been reproduced, it cannot be a perfect replica of the original. This processed "vision-of-the-eye" compared to the vision projected directly from and seen by the mind, can hardly be considered perfect. If this is valid, the claims of the practitioner are neither exaggerated nor the product of pure imagination. Contemplation is the daily practice of Buddhist adepts for training the body and mind in order to develop a balance between Matter and Mind, between man and the universe. We, Zen practitioners, should contemplate our own presence in thought after thought, not to contemplate others' presence. We should contemplate that we are cultivating, not indulging in idle thoughts with scattered mind. According to the Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch's Dharma Treasure, the Sixth Patriarch, Hui-Neng, taught: "Good Knowing Advisor, when you contemplate and illuminate with the wisdom, which brightly penetrates within and without, you recognize your original mind. The recognition of your original mind is the original liberation. The attainment of liberation is the Prajna Samadhi, thus no-thought. What is meant by 'no-thought?' No-thought means to view all dharmas with a mind undefiled by attachment. The function of the mind pervades all places but is nowhere attached. Merely purify your original mind to cause the six consciousnesses to go out the six gates, to be undefiled and unmixed among the six objects, to come and go freely and to penetrate without obstruction. That is the Prajna Samadhi, freedom and liberation, and it is called the practice of no-thought. Not thinking of the hundred things and constantly causing your thought to be cut off is called Dharma-bondage and is an extremist view.

Chapter Seventy-Seven

Not Practicing Holy Truths

In Buddhism, the four Noble Truths are important teachings. First, *duhkha-aryasat* or suffering is the lot of the six states of existence. Misery is a necessary attribute of sentient beings. Second, *samudya* or the aggregation of suffering by reason of the passions. The accumulation of misery is caused by the passions (customs and habits that lead to sufferings). Third, *nirodha* or the extinction (cessation) of desire and its consequences, and the leaving of the suffering. The extinction of passion is possible. Fourth, *marga* or the way to end all sufferings. *Marga* is the way that procures cessation. The doctrine of the path that leads to the extinction of passion. According to the Platform Sutra, Chapter Seven, Dhyana Master Hsing Szu was born into the Liu Family, which lived in An-Cha'ng district in Chih-Chou. Hearing of the flourishing influence of the Ts'ao-His Dharma Assembly, Hsing-Szu went directly there to pay homage and asked, "What is required to avoid falling into successive stages? (in all that I do, how can I avoid falling into stages of spiritual development?)" The Sixth Patriarch said, "How do you practice?" Xing-Si said, "I don't even practice the four noble truths." The Sixth Patriarch said, "What stage have you fallen into?" Xing-Si said, "Without even studying the four noble truths, what stages could I have fallen into?" The Sixth Patriarch esteemed Xing-Si's ability. Although there were many in the congregation, Xing-Si was selected as head monk. One day the Master said, "You should go elsewhere to teach. Do not allow the teaching to be cut off."

Having obtained the Dharma, Hsing-Szu returned to Ch'ing Yuan Mountain in Chi-Chou, to propagate the Dharma and transform living beings. After his death he was given the posthumous title "Dhyana Master Hung-Chi."

Chapter Seventy-Eight

The Clear, Pure Dharma-Body Buddha

The Dharmakaya Buddha, an epithet given to Vairocana, he is generally considered as an embodiment of the Truth, both in the sense of Dharmakaya and Dharmaratna. The Madhyamika School of Nagarjuna defines the absolute or ultimate reality as the formless which contains all forms, the essence of being, the noumenon of the other two manifestations of the Triratna. In Hinayana the Buddha-nature in its absolute side is described as not discussed, being synonymous with the five divisions of the commandments, meditation, wisdom, release, and doctrine. Dharmakaya is usually rendered “Law-body” or “Truth-body” where Dharma is understood in the sense of “law,” “organization,” “systematization,” or “regulative principle.” But really in Buddhism, Dharma has a very much more comprehensive meaning. Especially when Dharma is coupled with Kaya. Dharmakaya implies the notion of personality. The highest reality is not a mere abstraction, it is very much alive with sense and awareness and intelligence, and, above all, with love purged of human infirmities and defilements. In Buddhism, the body of reality, being forever free from undergoing birth in conditioned states, for this is the absolute Buddha or essence of all life. According to Zen Master D.T. Suzuki in the *Essence of Buddhism*, the Dharmakaya is not the owner of wisdom and compassion, he is the Wisdom or the Compassion, as either phase of his being is emphasized for some special reason. We shall miss the point entirely if we take him as somewhat resembling or reflecting the human conception of man. He has no body in the sense we have a human body. He is spirit, he is the field of action, if we can use this form of expression, where wisdom and compassion are fused together, are transformed into each other, and become the principle of vitality in the world of sense-intellect.

According to the *Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra*, Chapter 6, the Sixth Patriarch taught: “Good Knowing Advisor! What is the clear, pure Dharma-body Buddha? The worldly person’s nature is basically clear and pure, and the ten thousand dharmas are produced from it. The

thought of evil produces evil actions and the thought of good produces good actions. Thus all dharmas exist within self-nature. This is like the sky which is always clear, and the sun and moon which are always bright, so that if they are obscured by floating clouds it is bright above the clouds and dark below them. But if the wind suddenly blows and scatters the clouds, there is brightness above and below, and the myriad forms appear. The worldly person's nature constantly drifts like those clouds in the sky. Good Knowing Advisors, intelligence is like the sun and wisdom is like the moon. Intelligence and wisdom are constantly bright, but if you are attached to external states, the floating clouds of false thought cover the self-nature so that it cannot shine. If you meet a Good Knowing Advisor, if you listen to the true and right Dharma and destroy your own confusion and falseness, then inside and out there will be penetrating brightness, and within the self-nature all the ten thousand dharmas will appear. That is how it is with those who see their own nature. It is called the clear, pure Dharma-body of the Buddha.”

Chapter Seventy-Nine

The Full Reward-Body of the Buddha

I. To See Your Own Nature in Every Thought Is the Reward Body of the Buddha:

According to Buddhism, "Sambhogakaya" is a Sanskrit term for "Enjoyment Body." Re-compensated Body Sambhogakaya is one of the three bodies of a Buddha, according to Mahayana Buddhology (Buddhist Literature). Body of Delight, the body of buddhas who in a "Buddha-Paradise" enjoy the truth that they embody. This is also the result of previous good actions. The Sambhoga-kaya is said to reside in a "pure land" and is only perceivable by advanced practitioners. According to the Platform Sutra, Chapter Six, the Sixth Patriarch taught: "Good Knowing Advisors, the Dharma body of the Buddha is basically complete. To see your own nature in every thought is the Reward body of the Buddha. When the Reward body thinks and calculates, it is the Transformation body of the Buddha. Awaken and cultivate by your own efforts the merit and virtue of your self-nature. That is truly taking refuge. The skin and flesh of the physical body are like an inn to which you cannot return. Simply awaken to the three bodies of your self-nature and you will understand the self-nature Buddha. I have a verse without marks. If you can recite and memorize it, it will wipe away accumulated aeons of confusion and offenses as soon as the words are spoken. The verse runs:

A confused person will foster blessings, but not cultivate the Way
 And say, "To practice for the blessings is practice of the way."
 While giving and making offerings bring blessings without limit,
 It is in the mind that the three evils have their origins.
 By seeking blessings you may wish to obliterate offenses.
 But in the future, though you are blessed, offenses still remain.
 You ought to simply strike the evil conditions from your mind.
 By true repentance and reform within your own self-nature.
 A sudden awakening: the true repentance
 and reform of the Great Vehicle;
 You must cast out the deviant,

and practice the right, to be without offense.
 To study the Way, always look within your own self-nature;
 You are then the same in kind and lineage as all Buddhas.
 Our Patriarch passed along only this Sudden Teaching,
 Wishing that all might see the nature and be of one substance.
 In the future if you wish to find the Dharma-body,
 Detach yourself from Dharma marks and Inwardly wash the mind.
 Strive to see it for yourself and do not waste your time,
 For when the final thought has stopped your life comes to an end.
 Enlightenment to the Great Vehicle you can see your nature;
 So reverently join your palms, and seek it with all your heart.

The Master said, “Good Knowing Advisors, all of you should take up this verse and cultivate according to it. If you see your nature at the moment these words are spoken, even if we are a thousand miles apart you will always be by my side. If you do not awaken at the moment of speaking, then, though face to face, we are a thousand miles apart, so why did you bother to come from so far? Take care of yourselves and go well.”

II. The Full Reward-Body of the Buddha:

According to the Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra, Chapter 6, the Sixth Patriarch taught: “Good Knowing Advisor! What is the perfect, full Reward-body of the Buddha? Just as one lamp can disperse the darkness of a thousand years, one thought of wisdom can destroy ten thousand years of delusion. Do not think of the past; it is gone and can never be recovered. Instead think always of the future and in every thought, perfect and clear, see your own original nature. Although good and evil differ, the original nature is non-dual. That non-dual nature is the real nature. Undefined by either good or evil, it is the perfect, full Reward-body of the Buddha. One evil thought arising from the self-nature destroys ten thousand aeons’ worth of good karma. One good thought arising from the self-nature ends evils as numerous as the sand-grains in the Ganges River. To reach the unsurpassed Bodhi directly, see it for yourself in every thought and do not lose the original thought. That is the Reward-body of the Buddha.”

Chapter Eighty

No Defilement

According to Buddhism, impurity and purity; the thoughts and things of desire are impure, the thoughts and methods of salvation are pure. Contamination or taintedness means deluded, or afflicted by holding on to the illusory ideas and things of life. Taintedness also means the klesa or contaminations of attachment to the pleasures of the senses. Taintedness also means the klesa or contaminations of attachment to false views. Taintedness also means the klesa or contaminations of attachment to moral and ascetic practices. Taintedness also means the klesa or contaminations of attachment to the belief in a self. In the Dharmapada Sutra (16), the Buddha's teaching on Contamination as follows: By oneself the evil is done, by oneself one is defiled or purified. Purity or impurity depend on oneself. No one can purify another. Meanwhile, stained mind or defiled mind means defiled or unclean mental state. A mind contaminated with desire or sexual passion. Though mind-essence is by nature pure and without stain, the condition of ignorance or innocence permits of taint or defilement corresponding to the defiled minds.

According to the Jewel Platform Sutra, Chapter 7, Dhyana Master Huai-Jang was the son of the Tu family in Chin-Chou. He first visited National Master An of Sung Mountain, who told him to go to Ts'ao-His to pay homage. When he arrived, he bowed, and the Master asked him, "What has come?"

He replied, "Sung-Shan."

The Master said, "What is it and how does it come?"

He replied, "To say that it is like a thing is to miss the point."

The Master said, "Then can there still be that which is cultivated and certified?"

He replied, "Cultivation and certification are not absent, but there can be no defilement."

The Master said, "It is just the lack of defilement of which all Buddhas are mindful and protective. You are like that, and I am like that too. In the West, Prajnatara predicted that a colt would run from

under your feet, trampling and killing people under heaven. You should keep that in mind, but do not speak of it too soon.”

(According to the Records of the Transmission of the Lamp (Ch'uan-Teng-Lu), Volume V, one day Zen master Hui-Neng asked Nanyue, "Do you reply on practice and experience or not?" Nanyue said, "Practice-and-experience is not non-existent, but for it to be tainted is impossible." Hui-Neng said, "Just this untaintedness is that which Buddhas guard and desire. You are also like this. I am also like this. And the ancestral masters of India were also like this.")

Huai-Jang suddenly understood. Accordingly he waited upon the Master for fifteen years, daily penetrating more deeply into the profound and mysterious. He later went to Nan-Yao where he spread the Dhyana School. The title “Dhyana Master Ta Hui” was bestowed upon him posthumously.

Chapter Eighty-One

The One Enlightened Overnight: What Discriminates Is Not An Idea Either?

According to the Jewel Platform Sutra, Chapter 7, there was a Dhyana Master Hsuan-Chiao of Yung-Chia, son of a family called Tai in Wen-Chou. When he was young he studied the Sutras and commentaries and was skilled in the T'ien-T'ai Dharma-door of "Stop and Look." Upon reading the Vimalakirti Sutra, he understood the mind-ground. One day he happened to meet the Master's disciple Hsuan-Ch'e and they had a pleasant talk. As Hsuan-Chiao's words were consonant with the words of all the Patriarchs, Hsuan-Ch'e asked him, "Kind Sir, from whom did you obtain the Dharma?"

He replied, "I have heard the Vaipulya Sutras and Sastras, receiving each from a master. Later, upon reading the Vimalakirti Sutra, I awakened to the doctrine of the Buddha-mind, but as yet no one has certified me."

Hsuan-Ch'e said, "That was acceptable before the time of the Buddha called The Awesome-Voiced King. But since the coming of that Buddha, all those who 'self-enlightened' without a master belong to other religions which hold to the tenet of spontaneity."

"Then will you please certify me, Kind Sir?" said Hsuan-Chiao.

Hsuan-Ch'e said, "My words are of little worth, but the Great Master, the Sixth Patriarch, is at Ts'ao-His, where people gather like clouds from the four directions. He is one who has received the Dharma. If you wish to go, I will accompany you."

Thereupon Hsuan-Chiao went with Hsuan-Ch'e to call upon the Master. On arriving, he circumambulated the Master three times, shook his staff, and stood in front of him. The Master said, "Inasuch as a Sramana has perfected the three thousand awesome deportments and the eighty thousand fine practices, where does the virtuous One come from and what makes him so arrogant?"

Hsuan-Chiao said, "The affair of birth and death is great and impermanence comes quickly."

The Master said, “Why not embody non-production and understand that which is not quick?”

He replied, “The body itself is not produced and fundamentally there is no quickness.”

The Master said, “So it is; so it is.”

Hsuan-Chiao then made obeisance with perfect awesome deportment. A short while, later he announced that he was leaving and the Master said, “Aren’t you leaving too quickly?”

He replied, “Fundamentally, I don’t move; how can I be quick?”

The Master said, “Who knows you don’t move?”

He replied, “Kind Sir, you yourself make this discrimination.”

The Master said, “You have truly got the idea of non-production.”

“But does non-production possess an ‘idea’?” asked Hsuan-Chiao.

“If it is without ideas, then who discriminates it?” said the Master.

“What discriminates is not an idea either,” he replied.

The Master exclaimed, “Good indeed! Please stay for a night.”

During his time, he was called “The One Enlightened Overnight” and later he wrote the “Song of Certifying to the Way,” which circulated widely in the world. His posthumous title is “Great Master Wu-Hsiang,” and during his lifetime he was called “Chen-Chiao.”

Chapter Eighty-Two

Enter into Samadhi With a Thoughtful Mind or With a Thoughtless Mind?

In Buddhist teachings, meditative absorption means a state of meditative concentration on a single object. Buddhist meditation literature describes a series of such states, each of which is attained through cultivation of practices designed to lead to its actualization. The development of concentrative calmness itself is never an end of the deliverance. It is only a means to something more sublime which is of vital importance, namely insight (vipassana). In other words, a means to the gaining of Right Understanding, the first factor of the Eightfold Noble Path. Though only a means to an end, it plays an important role in the Eightfold Noble Path. It is also known as the purity of mind (citta-visuddhi), which is brought about by stilling the hindrances. A person who is oppressed with painful feeling can not expect the purity of mind, nor concentrative calm. It is to say that so long as a man's body or mind is afflicted with pain, no concentrative calm can be achieved. According to the Samyutta Nikaya, the Buddha taught: "The mind of him who suffers is not concentrated." In Zen, samadhi means perfect absorption of thought into the one object of meditation. Abstract meditation, the mind fixed in one direction, or field. Collectedness of the mind on a single object through calming of mental activity. In Zen, samadhi is a non-dualistic state of consciousness in which the consciousness of the experiencing object becomes one with the experienced object, thus, is only experiential content. This state of consciousness is often referred to as 'one-pointedness of mind'; this expression, however, is misleading because it calls up the image of 'concentration' on one point on which the mind is directed. However, samadhi is neither a straining concentration on one point, nor is the mind directed from here to there (from subject to object), which would be a dualistic mode of experience. For Zen practitioners, the ability to attain the state of samadhi is a precondition for absorption.

According to the Records of the Transmission of the Lamp (Ch'uan-Teng-Lu), Volume V, and the Platform Sutra, Chapter 7, after twenty years of cultivation, Chih-huang thought he well understood the purport of meditation or samadhi. Hsuan-t'se, learning his attainment, visited him, and said, "What are you doing there?" Chih-huang said, "I am entering into a samadhi." Hsuan-t'se said, "You speak of entering, but how do you enter into samadhi with a thoughtful mind or with a thoughtless mind? If you say with a thoughtless mind, all non-sentient beings such as plants or bricks could attain samadhi. If you say with a thoughtful mind, all sentient beings could attain it." Chih-huang said, "When I enter into samadhi, I am not conscious of either being thoughtful or thoughtless." Hsuan-t'se said, "If you are conscious of neither, you are right in samadhi all the while; why do you then talk at all of entering into it or coming out of it? If, however, there is really entering or coming out, it is not Great Samadhi." Chih-huang did not know how to answer. After a while he asked who was Hsuan-t'se's teacher and what was his understanding of samadhi. Hsuan-t'se said, "The Sixth Patriarch Hui-neng is my teacher, and according to him, the ultimate truth lies mystically serene and perfectly quiet; substance and function are not to be separated, they are of one Suchness. The five skandhas are empty in their nature, and the six sense-objects have no reality. The truth knows of neither entering nor going out, neither being tranquil nor disturbed. Dhyana in essence has no fixed abode, be serene in dhyana. Dhyana in essence is birthless; without attaching yourself to the thought of birth and death, think in dhyana. Have your mind like unto space and yet have no thought of space." Thus learning of the sixth patriarch's view on samadhi or dhyana, Chih-huang came to visit the master. The Sixth Patriarch said, "What Hsuan-t'se told you is true. Have your mind like unto space and yet entertain in it no thought of emptiness. Then the truth will have its full activity unimpeded. Every movement of yours will come out of an innocent heart, and the ignorant and the wise will have an equal treatment in your hands. Subject and object will lose their distinction, and essence and appearance will be of one suchness. When a world of absolute oneness is thus realized, you have attained to eternal samadhi." Just then Chih-Huang attained the great enlightenment. What he had gained in twenty years vanished from his mind without a trace. That night, the people of

Hopei heard a voice in space announcing, 'Today, Dhyana Master Chih-Huang has attained the Way.' Later, he made obeisance and left, returning to Hopei to teach and convert the four assemblies there."

Chapter Eighty-Three

Thoroughly Understand the Nature of Sculpture or Thoroughly Understand the Nature of the Buddha?

According to the Platform Sutra, Chapter Seven, one day Master Hui-neng wanted to wash the robe which he had inherited, but there was no clear stream nearby. He walked about two miles behind the temple where he saw good energies revolving in a dense grove of trees. He shook his staff, stuck it in the ground, and a spring bubbled up and formed a pool. As he knelt to wash his robe on a rock, suddenly a monk came up and bowed before him saying, "I am Fang-Pien, a native of His-Shu. A while ago I was in India, where I visited the Great Master Bodhidharma. He told me to return to China immediately, saying, 'The orthodox Dharma Eye Treasury and the Samghati robe which I inherited from Mahakasyapa has been transmitted to the six generation at Ts'ao-His, Shao-Chou. Go there and pray reverence.' Fang Pien has come from afar, hoping to see the robe and bowl that his Master transmitted." The Master showed them to him and asked, "Superior One, what work do you do?" "I am good at sculpting," he replied. Keeping straight face, the Master said, "Then sculpt something for me to see." Fang-Pien was bewildered but, after several days, he completed a lifelike image of the Patriarch, seven inches high and wonderful in every detail. The Master laughed and said, "You only understand the nature of sculpture; you do not understand the nature of the Buddha." Then the Master stretched out his hand and rubbed the crown of Fang-Pien's head, saying, "You will forever be a field of blessing for gods and humans." The Master rewarded him with a robe, which Fang-Pien divided into three parts: one he used to wrap the sculpture, one he kept for himself and, the third, he wrapped in palm leaves and buried in the ground, vowing, "In the future, when this robe is found again, I will appear in the world to be abbot here and restore these buildings." During the Sung dynasty in the eighth year of the Chia-Yu reign period (1063 A.D.), while Bhikshu Wei Hsien was repairing the hall, he excavated the earth and found the robe which was

like new. The image is at Kao-Ch'uan Temple and those who pray before it obtain a quick response.

Chapter Eighty-Four

Cultivation At Home

Cultivation in Buddhism is to put the Buddha's teachings into practice on a continued and regular basis. Cultivation in Buddhism also means to nourish the seeds of Bodhi by practicing and developing precepts, dhyana, and wisdom. Thus, cultivation in Buddhism is not solely practicing Buddha recitation or sitting meditation, it also includes cultivation of six paramitas, ten paramitas, thirty-seven aids to Enlightenment, etc. According to the Platform Sutra, Chapter Three, the Sixth Patriarch taught: "Good Knowing Advisors, if you wish to cultivate, you may do so at home. You need not be in a monastery. If you live at home and practice, you are like the person of the East, whose mind is good. If you dwell in a monastery but do not cultivate, you are like the person of the West, whose mind is evil. Merely purify your mind; that is the 'West' of your self-nature." The Honorable Wei asked further, "How should those at home cultivate? Please instruct us." The Master said, "I have composed a markless verse for the great assembly. Merely rely on it to cultivate and you will be as if always by my side. If you cut your hair and leave home but do not cultivate, it will be of no benefit in pursuing the Way. The verse runs:

"The mind made straight, why toil following rules?

The practice sure, of what use is Dhyana meditation?

Filial deeds support the father and mother.

Right conduct is in harmony with those above and below.

Deference: the honored and lowly in accord with each other.

Patience: no rumors of the evils of the crowd.

If drilling wood can spin smoke into fire,

A red-petalled lotus can surely spring from mud.

Good medicine is bitter to the taste.

Words hard against the ear must be good advice.

Correcting failings gives birth to wisdom.

Guarded errors expose a petty mind.

Persist daily in just, benevolent deeds.

Charity is not the means to attain the way.

Search out Bodhi only in the mind.

Why toil outside in search of the profound?

Just as you hear these words, so practice:

Heavens then appears, right before your eyes.”

The Master continued, “Good Knowing Advisors, you in this assembly should cultivate according to this verse to see and make contact with your self-nature and to realize the Buddha Way directly. The Dharma does not wait. The assembly may now disperse. I shall now return to Ts’ao-His. If you have questions, come quickly and ask.” At that time, Magistrate Wei, the officials, the good men and faithful women of the assembly all attained understanding, faithfully accepted and honored the teaching and, therefore, practiced it.

Chapter Eighty-Five

Mind of Equanimity and Wisdom

According to Buddhism, mind of renunciation or equanimity means mind of detachment. Mind of detachment or renunciation includes physical (wealth, body, form, sound, smell, taste, touch, etc; and mental renunciation i.e., biased minds, wrong views, self-grasping, ego-grasping, etc. Spiritual wisdom means knowledge of the ultimate truth (reality). Wisdom is the essential clarity and unerring sensibility of a mind that no longer clings to concepts of any kind. It is direct and sustained awareness of the truth, for a Bodhisattva, that meaning and existence are found only in the interface between the components of an unstable and constantly shifting web of relationships, which is everyday life, while prajna is the strength of intellectual discrimination elevated to the status of a liberating power, a precision tool capable of slicing through obstructions that take the form of afflictions and attachments to deeply engrained hereditary patterns of thought and action. Jnana is a very flexible term, as it means sometimes ordinary worldly knowledge, knowledge of relativity, which does not penetrate into the truth of existence, but also sometimes transcendental knowledge, in which case being synonymous with Prajna or Arya-jnana. According to the Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch on the Pristine Orthodox Dharma, the Sixth Patriarch taught: "Equanimity and wisdom are basically one; they are not two. Equanimity is the basis of wisdom. Wisdom is the function of equanimity... When there is virtue in the mouth but not in the mind, equanimity and wisdom are vain and are by no means identical. But if there is virtue in both mind and mouth, and if the internal and external are as one, equanimity and wisdom are identical. When you are engaged in self-realization do not be involved in argument. If you argue about which precedes and which follows, you are just like a deluded person; you have not freed yourself from gain and loss; you are just aggravating your egotism... To what shall we compare equanimity and wisdom? They are like the light of a lamp. Having the lamp you can have light, but with no lamp, there must be darkness, because the lamp is the basis of the light and the light is the

use of the lamp. Though there are two names, their basis is the same.
The doctrine of wisdom and equanimity is just like this."

Chapter Eighty-Six

See & Do Not See

In other words, all things that appear in the world are transient. If you view all appearances as non-appearance, then you will see the true nature of everything.” So if we are attached to the form of anything, we don’t understand the truth. Or speaking in another way, we cannot see the true face of reality. In fact, all things that appear in the world are transient and all appearances are non-appearance; all things come from the seeing. If we can view all things in this way, then we see the true nature of everything. In short, if we are attached to the form of anything, we don’t understand the truth. The Buddha taught in the Diamond Sutra: “All things that appear in the world are transient. If we view all appearances as non-appearance, then we will see the true nature of everything.” According to the Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra, Chapter 8, a young boy thirteen years old named Shen-Hui, who was from a Kao family in Hsiang-Yang, came from Yu-Ch’uan to pay homage.

The master said, “The Knowing One’s journey must have been difficult. Did you bring the original with you? If you have the original, you should know the owner. Try to explain it to me.”

Shen-Hui said, “I take non-dwelling as the original and seeing as the owner.”

The Master said, “This Sramanera imitates the talk of others.”

Shen-Hui then asked, “When you sit in Ch’an, High Master, do you see or not?”

The Master hit him three times with his staff and said, “When I hit you, does it hurt or not?”

Shen-Hui replied, “It both hurts and does not hurt.”

The Master said, “**I both see and do not see.**”

Shen-Hui asked, “How can you both see and not see?”

The Master said, “What I see is the transgression and error of my own mind. I do not see the right, wrong, good or bad of other people. This is my seeing and not seeing. How can you say it both hurts and does not hurt? If it does not hurt you are like a piece of stone but if it

does hurt you are just like a common person and will give rise to hatred. Your 'seeing and not seeing' are two extreme and your 'hurting and not hurting' are production and extinction. You have not even seen your own nature and yet you dare to ridicule others."

Shen-Hui bowed, apologized and thanked the Master. The Master continued, "If your mind is confused and you do not see, then ask a Good Knowing Advisor to help you find the way. If your mind is enlightened, then see your own nature and cultivate according to the Dharma. You yourself are confused and do not see your own mind and, yet, you come to ask me whether or not I see. If I see, I know it for myself but is that of any help to you in your confusion? In the same way your seeing is of no use to me. Why don't you know and see it for yourself, instead of asking me whether or not I see?" Shen-Hui bowed again over one hundred times, seeking forgiveness for his error. He served the Master with diligence, never leaving his side.

One day the Master addressed the assembly as follows: "I have a thing. It has no head or tail, no name or label, no back or front. Do you all know what it is?"

Shen-Hui stepped forward and said, "It is the root source of all Buddhas, Shen-Hui's Buddha nature!"

The Master said, "I just told you that it has no name or label, and you immediately call it the root-source of all Buddhas. Go and build a thatched hut over your head! You're nothing but a follower who pursues knowledge and interpretation."

After the Master's extinction, Shen-Hui went to Ching Lo where he propagated the Ts'ao-His Sudden Teaching. He wrote the Hsien-Tsung Chi which circulated widely throughout the land. He is known as Dhyana Master Ho-Che.

The Master saw many disciples of other schools, all with evil intentions, gathered beneath his seat to ask him difficult questions. Pitying them, he said, "Students of the way, all thoughts of good or evil should be completely cast away. What cannot be named by any name is called the self-nature. This non-dual nature is the real nature and it is within the real nature that all teaching doors are established. At these words you should see it for yourselves." all made obeisance and asked him to be their master.

Chapter Eighty-Seven

Different Important Meanings Between Shen-Hsiu's Teaching and That of Hui-Neng

Hung-Jen was a great Zen Master, and had many capable followers, but Hui-Neng and Shen-Hsiu stood far above the rest. During that time Zen came to be divided into two schools, the Northern and Southern. When we understand Shen-Hsiu and what was taught by him, it will be easier to understand Hui-Neng. Unfortunately, however, we are not in possession of much of the teaching of Shen-Hsiu, for the fact that this School failed to prosper against its competitor led to the disappearance of its literature. The Teaching of the Five Means by the Northern School, one of the preserved writings of the Northern School, which is incomplete and imperfect in meaning, and not written by Shen-Hsiu. They were notes taken by his disciples of the Master's lectures. Here the word "Means" or method, upaya in Sanskrit, is not apparently used in any special sense, and the five means are five heads of reference to the Mahayana Sutras as to the teaching in the Northern School. The Northern School teaches that all beings are originally endowed with Enlightenment, just as it is the nature of a mirror to illuminate. When the passions veil the mirror it is invisible, as thought obscured with dust. If, according to the instructions of Shen-Hsiu, erroneous thoughts are subdued and annihilated, they cease to rise. The the mind is enlightened as to its own nature, leaving nothing unknown. It is like brushing the mirror. When there is no more dust the mirror shines out, leaving nothing unilluminated. The Northern school placed great value on the study and intellectual penetration of the scriptures of Buddhism, especially the Lankavatara Sutra, and held the view that enlightenment is reached 'gradually' through slow progress on the path of meditative training. As Shen-hsiu's gatha suggests, he viewed awakening as something acquired gradually, comparable to the process of burnishing a metal surface so that it slowly reflects a clearer and sharper image. Hui-neng's school, on the other hand, insisted that true awakening necessarily occurred suddenly and immediately. Although there may be activity leading up to that experience, the experience itself comes

all at once. The Southern School might compare the process to chipping away at a stone barrier. While it could take a long while to pierce the barrier, but once one does, the whole view on the other side becomes visible immediately. The Southern stresses the 'suddenness' of the enlightenment experience and the primacy of direct insight into the true nature of existence over occupation with conceptual affirmations about this. This dust-wiping attitude of Shen-Hsiu and his followers inevitably leads to the quietistic method of meditation, and it was indeed the method which they recommended. They taught the entering into a samadhi by means of concentration, and the purifying of the mind by making it dwell on one thought. They further taught that by awakening of thoughts an objective world was illumined, and that when they were folded up an inner world was perceived. And because of its emphasis on gradual "polishing," Shen-hsiu's school not only advocated prolonged periods of meditation, but it also promoted sutra study and chanting as well as other ritual activities that Southern School did not value as highly. Although both the Northern School and the Southern School focused on meditation, but the Southern School also recognized that the enlightenment experience could be acquired as Hui-neng had acquired it during activities as mundane as chopping and hauling wood in the forest. The disagreement between Shen-Hsiu's teaching of Zen and that of Hui Neng is due to Shen-Hsiu's holding the view that Dhyana is to be practiced first and that it is only after its attainment that Prajna is awakened. But according to Hui-Neng's view, the very moment Dhyana and Prajna are present at the same time. Dhyana and Prajna are the same for according to the Nirvana Sutra, when there is more of Dhyana and less of Prajna, this helps the growth of ignorance; when there is more of Prajna and less of Dhyana, this helps the growth of false views; but when Dhyana and Prajna are the same, this is called seeing into the Buddha-nature. Therefore, in his preachings, Hui-Neng always tried to prove his idea of oneness: "O good friends, in my teaching what is most fundamental is Dhyana and Prajna. And, friends, do not be deceived and let to thinking that Dhyana and Prajna are separable. They are one, and not two. Dhyana is the Body of Prajna, and Prajna is the Use of Dhyana. When Prajna is taken up, Dhyana is in Prajna; when Dhyana is taken up, Prajna is in it. When this is understood, Dhyana and Prajna go hand in hand in practice of

meditation. O followers of truth, do not say that Dhyana is first attained and then Prajna awakened, or that Prajna is first attained and the Dhyana awakened; for they are separate. Those who advocate this view make a duality of the Dharma; they are those who affirm with the mouth and negate in the heart. They regard Dhyana as distinct from Prajna. But with those whose mouth and heart are in agreement, the inner and the outer are one, and Dhyana and Prajna are regarded as equal." Hui-Neng further illustrates the idea of this oneness by the relation between the lamp and its light. He says: "It is like the lamp and its light. As there is a lamp, there is light; if no lamp, no light. The lamp is the Body of the light, and the light is the Use of the lamp. They are differently designated, but in substance they are one. The relation between Dhyana and Prajna is to be understood in like manner." We can see Shen-Hui's view on the oneness in his Sayings as follows: "Where no thoughts are awakened, and emptiness and nowhere-ness prevails, this is right Dhyana. When this non-awakening of thought, emptiness, and nowhere-ness suffer themselves to be the object of perception, there is right Prajna. Where this mystery takes place, we say that Dhyana, taken up by itself, is the Body of Prajna, and is not distinct from Prajna, and is Prajna itself; and further, that Prajna, taken up by itself, is the Use of Dhyana, and is not distinct from Dhyana, and is Dhyana itself. Indeed, when Dhyana is to be taken up by itself, there is no Dhyana; when Prajna is to be taken up by itself, there is no Prajna. Why? Because Self-nature is suchness, and this is what is meant by the oneness of Dhyana and Prajna."

Chapter Eighty-Eight

Cultivation of Meditation In the Spirit of the Jewel Platform Sutra

I. Purposes of Meditation Practices In Buddhist Cultivation:

Yes, the ultimate aim of Buddhist meditation is to gain full enlightenment, self-mastery and complete mental health or Nirvana through the conquest of mental defilements. However, apart from this ultimate aim there are other advantages and benefits that can be derived through meditation. It can inspire us to discover our own intelligence, richness and natural dignity. Meditation can also stimulate the latent powers of the mind, aid clear thinking, deep understanding, mental balance and tranquility. It is a creative process which aims at converting the chaotic feelings and unwholesome thoughts into mental harmony and purity. If by meditation is meant mental discipline or mind culture, it goes without saying that all should cultivate meditation irrespective of sex, color, creed or any other division. Modern society is in danger of being swamped by distractions and temptation which can only be controlled if we undertake the difficult task of steadily training our minds. All of us should wake up to the fact that we need to work with our life, we need to practice Zen. We have to see through the mirage that there is an "I" that is separating from our "Original Nature". Our cultivation is to close the gap. Only in that instant when we and the object become one can we see what our life is.

Perhaps everyone of us finds life difficult, perplexing, and oppressive. Even when everything goes well for some time, we still worry that it probably will not keep on that way. This is the very reason for all of us to practice Zen. Speaking of Zen, why do we have to practice Zen? We often hear about 'Samadhi', that is a 'Ch'an' method of meditation to pacify the mind. When the mind is pacified, it is unperturbed, and we attain the one-pointedness of mind. The purpose of Zen is to dissolve our accumulated 'thought-mass'. What is finally left in us is just the real self and eventually we enter into the world of the selfless. And if we do not stop there, if we do not think about this realm or cling to it, we will continue in our practice until we become

one with the Absolute. Then, is Zen method different from any other methods in Buddhism? While reciting the sutra, reading the mantras, and practicing Buddha Recitation, we are sitting still and fixing our mind in reciting the sutra, reading the mantras, and practicing Buddha Recitation. Thus, when practicing reciting the sutra, reading the mantras, and practicing Buddha Recitation, we may have accomplished controlling the body, speech and mind if we want to stop our mind from wandering about. In the same manner, when practicing meditation, may also have accomplished controlling the body, speech and mind if we want to stop our mind from wandering about. It is really difficult to control the mind; however, if we can halt our body and speech still, we earn some merits. If we want to get the highest level of all merits, we have to control our mind. The main purpose of a Zen practitioner is the search for truth, the search for awakening. On our journey, if we move one step, we are one step closer to the truth, one step closer to awakening. The Buddha is the Awakened, so learning the Buddha's teachings is learning about his methods of awakening. Thus, on the way to enlightenment, the more we move forward, the closer we come to awakening.

Meditation and contemplation means practice to obtain the seeing which goes beyond what is ordinary, clear vision. It is not surface seeing or skimming, not seeing mere appearance, but seeing things as they really are. This means seeing everything in terms of the three characteristics, the signs of all phenomenal existence: impermanence, suffering, and egolessness. It is this insight meditation, with calm concentration of mind as its basis, that enables the practitioner to purge his mind of all defilements, to remove ego-illusion, to see reality, and to experience Nirvana. The ultimate purpose of meditation is to eradicate mental impurities from our mind altogether. Before that stage, there are benefits of tranquillity, peace of mind and the ability to accept things as they come. Meditation helps us to see things as they truly are, not as they appear to be. Things appear to be permanent, desirable and substantial, but actually they are not. When we practice meditation, we will see for ourselves the arising and disappearing of mental and physical phenomena. And we will have a clearer comprehension of what is going on in our mind and body. We will be able to accept things as they come to us with less agitation and deal

with situations in a more positive way. Yes, the ultimate aim of Buddhist meditation is to gain full enlightenment, self-mastery and complete mental health or Nirvana through the conquest of mental defilements. However, apart from this ultimate aim there are other advantages and benefits that can be derived through meditation. It can inspire us to discover our own intelligence, richness and natural dignity. Meditation can also stimulate the latent powers of the mind, aid clear thinking, deep understanding, mental balance and tranquility. It is a creative process which aims at converting the chaotic feelings and unwholesome thoughts into mental harmony and purity. Therefore, if we wait until we sit down and compose ourselves to practice meditation for a couple of hours, then what happens to the other hours of our day? Saying that sitting meditation is Zen, we really destroy the true concept of Zen. If we know how to practice meditation, we will certainly make good use of our whole day. In order for us to do this, we should devote our day to Zen while accomplishing our daily tasks.

II. Cultivation of Meditation Takes Concentration and Wisdom As Its Foundation:

According to the Jewel Platform Sutra, the Fourth Chapter, Chapter of Concentration & Wisdom, the Sixth Patriarch Hui-Neng instructed the assembly: “Good Knowing Advisors, this Dharma-door of mine has concentration and wisdom as its foundation. Great assembly, do not be confused and say that concentration and wisdom are different. Concentration and wisdom are one substance, not two. Concentration is the substance of wisdom, and wisdom is the function of concentration. Where there is wisdom, concentration is in the wisdom. Where there is concentration, wisdom is in the concentration. If you understand this principle, you understand the balanced study of concentration and wisdom. Students of the Way, do not say that first there is concentration, which produces wisdom, or that first there is wisdom, which produces concentration: do not say that the two are different. To hold this view implies a duality of dharma. If your speech is good, but your mind is not, then concentration and wisdom are useless because they are not equal. If mind and speech are both good, the inner and outer are alike, and concentration and wisdom are equal. Self-

enlightenment, cultivation, and practice are not a matter for debate. If you debate which comes first, then you are similar to a confused man who does not cut off ideas of victory and defeat, but magnifies the notion of self and dharmas, and does not disassociate himself from the four marks.

Good Knowing Advisors, what are concentration and wisdom like? They are like a lamp and its light. With the lamp, there is light. Without the lamp, there is darkness. The lamp is the substance of the light and the light is the function of the lamp. Although there are two names, there is one fundamental substance. The dharma of concentration and wisdom is also thus.” The Master instructed the assembly: “Good Knowing Advisors, the Single Conduct Samadhi is the constant practice of maintaining a direct, straightforward mind in all places, whether one is walking, standing, sitting or lying down. As the Vimalakirti Sutra says, ‘The straight mind is the Bodhimandala; the straight mind is the Pure Land.’ Do not speak of straightness with the mouth only, while the mind and practice are crooked nor speak of the Single Conduct Samadhi without maintaining a straight mind. Simply practice keeping a straight mind and have no attachment to any dharma. The confused person is attached to the marks of dharmas, while holding to the Single Conduct Samadhi and saying, ‘I sit unmoving and falseness does not arise in my mind. That is the Single Conduct Samadhi.’ Such an interpretation serves to make him insensate and obstructs the causes and conditions for attaining the Way. Good Knowing Advisors, the Way must penetrate and flow. How can it be impeded? If the mind does not dwell in dharmas, the way will penetrate and flow. The mind that dwells in dharmas is in self-bondage. To say that sitting unmoving is correct is to be like Sariputra who sat quietly in the forest but was scolded by Vimalakirti. Good Knowing Advisors, there are those who teach people to sit looking at the mind and contemplating stillness, without moving or arising. They claimed that it has merit. Confused men, not understanding, easily become attached and go insane. There are many such people. Therefore, you should know that teaching of this kind is a greater error.”

The Master instructed the assembly: “Good Knowing Advisors, the right teaching is basically without a division into ‘sudden’ and ‘gradual.’ People’s natures themselves are sharp or dull. When the

confused person who gradually cultivates and the enlightened person who suddenly connects each recognize the original mind and see the original nature, they are no different. Therefore, the terms sudden and gradual are shown to be false names. Good Knowing Advisors, this Dharma-door of mine, from the past onwards, has been established the first with no-thought as its doctrine, no-mark as its substance, and no-dwelling as its basis. No-mark means to be apart from marks while in the midst of marks. No-thought means to be without thought while in the midst of thought. No-dwelling is the basic nature of human beings. In the world of good and evil, attractiveness and ugliness, friendliness and hostility, when faced with language which is offensive, critical, or argumentative, you should treat it all as empty and have no thought of revenge. In every thought, do not think of former states. If past, present, and future thoughts succeed one another without interruption, it is bondage. Not to dwell in dharmas from thought to thought is to be free from bondage. That is to take no-dwelling as the basis. Good Knowing Advisors, to be separate from all outward marks is called 'no-mark.' The ability to be separate from marks is the purity of the Dharma's substance. It is to take no-mark as the substance. Good Knowing Advisors, the non-defilement of the mind in all states is called 'no-thought.' In your thoughts you should always be separate from states; do not give rise to thought about them. If you merely do not think of hundred things, and so completely rid yourself of thought, then as the last thought ceases, you die and undergo rebirth in another place. That is a great mistake, of which students of the Way should take heed. To misinterpret the Dharma and make a mistake yourself might be acceptable but to exhort others to do the same is unacceptable. In your own confusion you do not see, and, moreover, you slander the Buddha's Sutras. Therefore, no-thought is to be established as the doctrine. Good Knowing Advisors, why is no-thought established as the doctrine? Because there are confused people who speak of seeing their own nature, and yet they produce thought with regard to states. Their thoughts cause deviant views to arise, and from that, all defilement and false thinking are created. Originally, not one single dharma can be obtained in the self-nature. If there is something to attain, or false talk of misfortune and blessing, that is just defilement and deviant views. Therefore, this Dharma-door establishes no-thought

as its doctrine. Good Knowing Advisors, ‘No’ means no what? ‘Thought’ means thought of what? ‘No’ means two marks, no thought of defilement. ‘Thought’ means thought of the original nature of True Suchness. True Suchness is the substance of thought and thought is the function of True Suchness. The True Suchness self-nature gives rise to thought. It is not the eye, ear, nose, or tongue which can think. The True Suchness possesses a nature and therefore gives rise to thought. Without True Suchness, the eye, ear, forms, and sounds immediately go bad. Good Knowing Advisors, the True Suchness self-nature gives rise to thought, and the six faculties, although they see, hear, feel, and know, are not defiled by the ten thousand states. Your true nature is eternally independent. Therefore, the Vimalakirti Sutra says, ‘If one is well able to discriminate all dharma marks, then, in the primary meaning, one does not move.’”

III. The Door of Sitting in Meditation Consists Fundamentally of Attaching Oneself Neither to the Mind Nor to Purity; It Is Not Non-Movement:

According to the Jewel Platform Sutra, the Fifth Chapter, Chapter of Sitting in Meditation, the Sixth Patriarch Hui-Neng instructed the assembly: The Master instructed the assembly: “The door of sitting in Ch’an consists fundamentally of attaching oneself neither to the mind nor to purity; it is not non-movement. One might speak of becoming attached to the mind, and yet the mind is fundamentally false. You should know that the mind is like an illusion and, therefore, there is nothing to which you can become attached. One might say that to practice Ch’an is to attach oneself to purity, yet the nature of people is basically pure. It is because of false thinking that the True Suchness is obscured. Simply have no false thinking, and the nature will be pure of itself. If attachment to purity arises in your mind, a deluded idea of purity will result. What is delusory does not exist, and the attachment is false. Purity has no form or mark and yet there are those who set up the mark of purity as an achievement. Those with this view obstruct their own original nature and become bound by purity.” Good Knowing Advisors, one who cultivates non-movement does not notice whether other people are right or wrong, good or bad, or whether they have

other faults. That is the non-movement of the self-nature. Good Knowing Advisors, although the body of the confused person may not move, as soon as he opens his mouth he speaks of what is right and wrong about others, of their good points and shortcomings and so, he turns his back on the way. Attachment to the mind and attachment to purity are obstructions to the Way.” The Master also instructed the assembly, “Good Knowing Advisors, what is meant by ‘sitting in Ch’an?’ In this obstructed and unimpeded Dharma-door, the mind’s thoughts do not arise with respect to any good or evil external state. That is what ‘sitting’ is. To see the unmoving self-nature inwardly is Ch’an. Good Knowing Advisors, what is meant by Ch’an concentration? Being separate from external mark is ‘Ch’an.’ Not being confused inwardly is ‘concentration.’ If you become attached to external marks, your mind will be confused inwardly. If you are separate from external marks, inwardly your mind will be unconfused. The original nature is naturally pure, in a natural state of concentration. Confusion arises merely because states are seen and attended to. If the mind remains unconfused when any state is encountered, that is true concentration. Good Knowing Advisors, being separate from all external marks is Ch’an and being inwardly unconfused is concentration. External Ch’an and inward concentration are Ch’an concentration. The Vimalakirti Sutra says, ‘Just then, suddenly return and regain the original mind.’ The Bodhisattva-Sila Sutra says, ‘Our basic nature is pure of itself.’ Good Knowing Advisors, in every thought, see your own clear and pure original nature. Cultivate, practice, realize the Buddha Way.”

Chapter Eighty-Nine

Hui-Neng's Verses At the Time of Death

On the third day of the eighth month of the year Kuei-Chou, the second year of the Hsien-T'ien reign (around 713 A.D.), after a meal in Kuo-Ên Temple, the Master said, "Each of you take your seat, for I am going to say goodbye." Fa-Hai said, "What teaching dharma will the High Master leave behind so that confused people can be led to see the Buddha-nature?" The Master said, "All of you please, listen carefully. If those of future generations recognize living beings, they will have perceived the Buddha-nature. If they do not recognize living beings, they may seek the Buddha throughout many aeons but he will be difficult to meet. I will now teach you how to recognize the living beings within your mind and how to see the Buddha-nature there. If you wish to see the Buddha, simply recognize living beings for it is living beings who are confused about the Buddha and not the Buddha who is confused about living beings. When enlightened to the self-nature, the living being is a Buddha. If confused about the self-nature, the Buddha is a living being. When the self-nature is impartial, the living being is the Buddha. When the self-nature is biased, the Buddha is a living being. If your thoughts are devious and malicious, the Buddha dwells within the living being but by means of one impartial thought, the living being becomes a Buddha. Our minds have their own Buddha and that Buddha is the true Buddha. If the mind does not have its own Buddha, where can the true Buddha be sought? Your own minds are the Buddha; have no further doubts. Nothing can be established outside the mind, for the original mind produces the ten thousand dharmas. Therefore, the Sutras say, 'The mind produced, all dharmas are produced; the mind extinguished, all dharmas are extinguished. Now, to say goodbye, I will leave you a verse called the 'Self-Nature's True Buddha Verse.' People of the future who understand its meaning will see their original mind and realize the Buddha Way. The verse runs:

The true-suchness self-nature is the true Buddha.

Deviant views, the three poisons, are the demon king.

At times of deviant confusion the demon king is in the house;
 But when you have proper views the Buddha is in the hall.
 Deviant views, the three poisons produced within the nature,
 Are just the demon king come to dwell in the house.
 Proper views casting out three poisons of the mind
 Transform the demon into Buddha True, not False.
 Dharma-body, Reward-body, and Transformation-body:
 Fundamentally the three bodies are one body.
 Seeing that for yourself within your own nature
 Is the Bodhi-cause for realizing Buddhahood.
 The pure nature is originally produced
 from the Transformation- body.
 The pure nature is ever-present within the Transformation-body.
 One's nature leads the Transformation-body down the right road.
 And in the future the full perfection is truly without end.
 The root cause of purity is the lust nature,
 For once rid of lust, the substance of the nature is pure.
 Each of you, within your natures; abandon the five desires.
 In an instant, see your nature, it is true.
 If in this life you encounter the door of Sudden Teaching
 You will be suddenly enlightened to your self-nature
 And see the Honored of the world.
 If you wish to cultivate and aspire to Buddhahood,
 You won't know where the truth is to be sought
 Unless you can see the truth within your own mind,
 This truth which is the cause of realizing Buddhahood.
 Not to see your self-nature but to seek the Buddha outside:
 If you think that way, you are deluded indeed.
 I now leave behind the Dharma-door of the Sudden Teaching
 To liberate worldly people who must cultivate themselves.
 I announce to you and to future students of the Way:
 If you do not hold these views you will only waste your time.

Having spoken the verse the Master continued, "All of you should
 take care. After my extinction, do not act with worldly emotion. If you
 weep in sorrow, receive condolences or wear mourning clothes, you
 are not my disciples, for that is contrary to the proper Dharma. Simply
 recognize your own original mind and see your own original nature,

which is neither moving nor still, neither produced nor extinguished, neither coming nor going, neither right nor wrong, neither dwelling nor departing. Because I am afraid that your confused minds will misunderstand my intention, I will instruct you again so that you may see your nature. After my extinction, continue to cultivate accordingly, as if I were still present. Should you disregard my teaching, then even if I were to remain in the world, you would obtain no benefit." He further spoke this verse:

Firm, firm: Do not cultivate the good.

High, high: Do not do evil.

Still, still: Cut off sight and sound.

Vast, vast: The mind unattached.

After speaking this verse, the Master sat upright until the third watch, when suddenly he said to his disciples, "I am going!" In an instant he changed and a rare fragrance filled the room. A white rainbow linked with the earth and the trees in the wood turned white. The birds and beasts cried out in sorrow. His words are preserved in a work called the Platform Sutra, the only sacred Chinese Buddhist writing which has been honoured with the title Ching or Sutra. Instead of identifying a single individual to carry on his teaching, Huineng had three major heirs: Nanyang Hui-zhung, Nan-yueh Huai-jang, and Ch'ing-yuan Hsing-ssu.

Chapter Ninety

Nirvana in the Spirit of the Jewel Platform Sutra

I. An Overview of Nirvana in Buddhism:

Nirvana consists of ‘nir’ meaning exit, and ‘vana’ meaning craving. Nirvana means the extinguishing or liberating from existence by ending all suffering. So Nirvana is the total extinction of desires and sufferings, or release (giải thoát). It is the final stage of those who have put an end to suffering by the removal of craving from their mind (Tranquil extinction: Tịch diệt, Extinction or extinguish: Diệt, Inaction or without effort: Vô vi, No rebirth: Bất sanh, Calm joy: An lạc, Transmigration to extinction: Diệt độ). In other word, Nirvana means extinction of ignorance and craving and awakening to inner Peace and Freedom. Nirvana with a small “n” stands against samsara or birth and death. Nirvana also refers to the state of liberation through full enlightenment. Nirvana is also used in the sense of a return to the original purity of the Buddha-nature after the dissolution of the physical body, that is to the perfect freedom of the unconditioned state. The supreme goal of Buddhist endeavor. An attainable state in this life by right aspiration, purity of life, and the elimination of egoism. The Buddha speaks of Nirvana as “Unborn, unoriginated, uncreated, and unformed,” contrasting with the born, originated, created and formed phenomenal world. The ultimate state is the Nirvana of No Abode (Apratisthita-nirvana), that is to say, the attainment of perfect freedom, not being bound to one place. Nirvana is used in both Hinayana and Mahayana Buddhist schools. For Zen practitioners, when you understand no-self, that is the peace of nirvana. The word "Nirvana" is translated in different ways, such as "perfect bliss" or "extinction of all desires." But nirvana and impermanence are like front and back. When you understand impermanence, you find peace. When you truly see your life as nirvana, then impermanence is taken care of. So, Zen practitioners rather than figuring out how to deal with impermanence, consider these dharma seals all together as the dharma to be realized. In the Lankavatara Sutra, the Buddha told Mahamati: “Oh Mahamati,

Nirvana means seeing into the abode of reality in its true significance. The abode of reality is where a thing stands by itself. To abide in one's self-station means not to be astir, i.e., to be eternally quiescent. By seeing into the abode of reality as it is means to understand that there is only what is seen of one's own mind, and no external world as such." After the Buddha's departure, most of the metaphysical discussions and speculations centered around the subject of Nirvana. The Mahaparinirvana Sutra, the Sanskrit fragments of which were discovered recently, one in Central Asia and another in Koyasan, indicates a vivid discussion on the questions as to what is 'Buddha-nature,' 'Thusness,' 'the Realm of Principle,' 'Dharma-body' and the distinction between the Hinayana and Mahayana ideas. All of these topics relate to the problem of Nirvana, and indicate the great amount of speculation undertaken on this most important question.

II. Nirvana in the Spirit of the Jewel Platform Sutra:

According to the Jewel Platform Sutra, Chapter 7, Bhikshu Chih-Tao, a native of Nan-Hai in Kuang-Chou, asked a favor: "Since leaving home, your student has studied the Nirvana Sutra for over ten years and has still not understood its great purpose. I hope that the High Master will bestow his instruction."

The Master said, "What point haven't you understood?"

Chih-Tao replied:

"All activities are impermanent,
Characterized by production and extinction;
When production and extinction are extinguished,
That still extinction is bliss.

My doubts are with respect to this passage."

The Master said, "What are your doubts?"

Chih-Tao replied, "All living beings have two bodies, the physical body and Dharma-body. The physical body is impermanent and is produced and destroyed. The Dharma-body is permanent and is without knowing or awareness. The Sutra says that the extinction of production and extinction is bliss, but I do not know which body is in tranquil extinction and which receives the bliss. How could it be the physical body which receives the bliss? When this physical body is extinguished, the four elements scatter. That is total suffering cannot

be called bliss. If the Dharma-body were extinguished it would become like grass, trees, tiles, or stones; then what would receive the bliss? Moreover, the Dharma-nature is the substance of production and extinction and the five heaps are the function of production and extinction. With one body having five functions, production and extinction are permanent; at the time of production, the functions arise from the substance, and at the time of extinction, the functions return to the substance. If there were rebirth then sentient beings would not cease to exist or be extinguished. If there were not rebirth, they would return to tranquil extinction and be just like insentient objects. Thus, all dharmas would be suppressed by nirvana and there would not even be production. How could there be bliss?"

The Master said, "You are a son of Sakya! How can you hold the deviant views of annihilationism and permanence which belongs to other religions and criticise the Supreme Vehicle Dharma! According to what you say, there is a Dharma-body that exists apart from physical form a tranquil extinction to be sought apart from production and extinction. Moreover, you propose that there is a body which enjoys the permanence and bliss of Nirvana. But, that is to grasp tightly onto birth and death and to indulge in worldly bliss. You should now know that deluded people mistook the union of five heaps for their own bodies and determined the dharmas as external to themselves. They loved life, dreaded death and drifted from thought to thought, not knowing that this illusory dream is empty and false. They turned vainly around on the wheel of birth and death and mistook the permanence and bliss of Nirvana for a form of suffering. All day long they sought after something else. Taking pity on them, the Buddha made manifest in the space of an instant the true bliss of Nirvana, which has no mark of production or extinction; it has no production or extinction to be extinguished. That, then, is the manifestation of tranquil extinction. Its manifestation cannot be reckoned; it is permanent and blissful. The bliss has neither an enjoyer nor a non-enjoyer. How can you call it 'one substance with five functions?' Worse, how can you say that Nirvana suppresses all dharmas, causing them to be forever unproduced? That is to slander the Buddha and defame the Dharma. Listen to my verse:

Supreme. Great Nirvana is bright
Perfect, permanent, still, and shining.

Deluded commonpeople call it death,
 Other teachings hold it to be annihilation.
 All those who seek two vehicles
 Regard it as non-action.
 Ultimately these notions arise from feeling,
 And form the basis for sixty-two views,
 Wrongly establishing unreal names.
 What is the true, real principle?
 Only one who has gone beyond measuring
 Penetrates without grasping or rejecting,
 And knows that the dharma of the five heaps
 And the self within the heaps,
 The outward appearances—a mass of
 images—the mark of every sound,
 Are equally like the illusion of dreams,
 For him, views of common and holy do not arise
 Nor are explanations of Nirvana made.
 The two boundaries, the three limits are cut off.
 All organs have their function,
 But there never arises the thought of the function.
 All dharmas are discriminated
 Without a thought of discrimination arising.
 When the fire at the aeon's end burns
 the bottom of the sea
 And the winds blow the mountain against each other,
 The true, permanent, still extinct bliss,
 The mark of Nirvana is 'thus.'
 I have struggled to explain it,
 To cause you to reject your false views.
 Don't understand it by words alone
 And maybe you'll understand a bit of this."

After hearing this verse, Chih-Tao was greatly enlightened.
 Overwhelmed with joy, he made obeisance and withdrew.

Part Three
Appendices

Appendix A

See Not the Mistake of Others

According to Buddhism, generally speaking, it's easy seen are others' faults; but it's extremely hard indeed to see one's own faults. Therefore, the Buddha taught that we should not evade self-responsibility for our own actions by blaming them on circumstances or other kinds of unluckiness. According to the Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra, Chapter 2, the Sixth Patriarch Hui Neng taught:

He who treads the path in earnest,
 See not the mistake of the world.
 If we find faults with others,
 We ourselves are also in the wrong.
 When other people are in the wrong,
 We should ignore it.
 For it is wrong for us to find faults.
 By getting rid of the habit of fault-finding,
 We cut off a source of defilement.
 When neither hatred nor love disturb our mind.
 Serenely we sleep.

Patriarch Hui-neng wanted to remind the cultivators try not to see anybody's faults, but our own because the more time we spend to find other people's faults the farther we are away from the Path.

Appendix B

Path of Truth

According to relative truth all things exist, but in absolute truth nothing is; in absolute truth one sees that all things are devoid of self-nature; however, in relative truth, a perception where there is no self-nature. In the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha's teachings on "True Principle" as follows: In the untruth the foolish see the truth, while the truth is seen as the untruth. Those who harbor such wrong thoughts never realize the truth (Dharmapada 11). What is truth regarded as truth, what is untruth regarded as untruth. Those who harbor such right thoughts realize the truth (Dharmapada 12). According to the Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch's Dharma Treasure, the Sixth Patriarch, Hui-Neng, taught: "Good Knowing Advisors, the Way must penetrate and flow. How can it be impeded? If the mind does not dwell in dharmas, the way will penetrate and flow. The mind that dwells in dharmas is in self-bondage. To say that sitting unmoving is correct is to be like Sariputra who sat quietly in the forest but was scolded by Vimalakirti. Good Knowing Advisors, there are those who teach people to sit looking at the mind and contemplating stillness, without moving or arising. They claimed that it has merit. Confused men, not understanding, easily become attached and go insane. There are many such people. Therefore, you should know that teaching of this kind is a greater error."

Appendix C

Not Establishing

According to Buddhism, self-nature is another expression for the Buddha-nature that is immanent in everything existing and that is experienced in self-realization. Original nature, contrasted to supreme spirit or purusha. Original nature is always pure in its original essence. Self-nature, that which constitutes the essential nature of a thing. In the Lankavatara Sutra, the Buddha told Mahamati: "Oh Mahamati, the nature of existence is not as it is discriminated by the ignorant." Things in the phenomenal world are transient, momentary, and without duration; hence they have no self-nature. Also according to The Lankavatara Sutra, there are seven types of self-nature. According to the Records of the Transmission of the Lamp (Ch'uan-Teng-Lu), Volume V, and the Platform Sutra, one day, Chih Ch'eng asked the Master further, "What is meant by 'not establishing?'" The Master replied, "When your self-nature is free from error, obstruction and confusion when Prajna is present in every thought, contemplating and shedding illumination and when you are constantly apart from the dharma marks and are free and independent, both horizontally and vertically, then what is there to be established? In the self-nature, in self-enlightenment, in sudden enlightenment, and in sudden cultivation there are no degrees. Therefore, not a single dharma is established. All dharmas are still and extinct. How can there be stages?" Chih-Ch'eng made obeisance and attended on the Master day and night without laziness.

Appendix D

A Contested Title

Today Hui-neng is the last of the Chinese Zen Masters to be referred to as a patriarch, but this was not an uncontested title. In Shen-hsiu's epitaph, he also is identified as Hong-ren's successor and Sixth Patriarch. After Hung-Jen passed away, the rival schools founded by the two men, the North and the South. Shen-Hsiu spread Zen Buddhism in northern China. His lineage called the Northern School and became known as the Gradual Teaching and relied on the Lankavatara Sutra as its basic scripture; although patronized by the reigning Emperor, did not last very long, soon later it died out and was replaced by the Hui-Neng School which became known as the Chinese Ch'an School. In contrast to Hui-neng, who was portrayed as an illiterate wood-cutter, Shen-hsiu was a scholar before entering to the Zen tradition. Although he was ordained a monk at the age of twenty, he was fifty by the time he came to study with Hong-ren. He distinguished himself by his knowledge of the Confucian and Daoist texts as well as by the breadth of his understanding of Buddhism, and he quickly rose to the rank of chief monk. Shen-Hsiu is the author of this Poem:

The body is like the bodhi tree,
The mind is like a mirror bright,
Take heed to keep it always clean,
And let no dust accumulate on it.

Appendix E

Great Meditative Mind

The meditative mind or mind fixed on goodness, the mind of Dhyana or the mind of meditation. A heart of concentration in meditation. A settled mind verse A wandering mind. A mind organized by meditation or disorganized by distraction. The characteristic of the saint and sage. A mind fixed on goodness. Collected mind is a state of consciousness in which the mind is fully and integrally collected and absorbed by one thing with which it has become one. This collectedness is not concentration in the conventional sense, which usually refers to a directedness from here (subject) to there (object) and thus, in contrast to collectedness is a dualistic state and is generally brought about by active pushing. In contrast to this, collectedness is characterized by 'passive' though wakeful receptivity. The ability to 'collect the mind' is an essential prerequisite for the practice of sitting meditation (zazen). According to the Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra, the Sixth Patriarch said: "At the highest stage of meditation, the mind is not a mere being, mere abstraction devoid of content and work." Through this teaching we see the Sixth Patriarch Hui Neng wanted to grasp something which lay at the foundation of all his activities mental and physical, and this something could not be mere mathematical point, it must be the source of energy and knowledge. According to The Sixth Patriarch, the will was after all the ultimate reality and that enlightenment was to be understood as more than intellection, more than quietly contemplating the truth. Zen practitioners should always remember that the Mind or Self-Nature was to be apprehended in the midst of its working or functioning. The object of dhyana was thus not to stop the working of Self-Nature but to make us plunge right into its stream and seize it in the very act.

Appendix F

Attainment of the Tao

In Buddhism, Path means the way that leads to the end of all sufferings, the Eightfold Path to the Cessation of Duhkha and afflictions, enumerated in the fourth Noble Truth, is the Buddha's prescription for the suffering experienced by all beings. It is commonly broken down into three components: morality, concentration and wisdom. Another approach identifies a path beginning with charity, the virtue of giving. Charity or generosity underlines morality or precept, which in turn enables a person to venture into higher aspirations. Morality, concentration and wisdom are the core of Buddhist spiritual training and are inseparably linked. They are not merely appendages to each other like petals of a flower, but are intertwined like "salt in great ocean," to invoke a famous Buddhist simile. According to the Sixth Patriarch Hui-Neng, the attainment of the Tao does not involve a continuous movement from error to truth, or from ignorance to enlightenment. Nowadays, all Zen masters agree with the patriarch and proclaim that there is no enlightenment whatever which you can claim to have attained. If you say you have attained something, this is the surest proof that you have gone astray. Therefore, not to have is to have; silence is thunder; ignorance is enlightenment; the holy disciples of the purity-path go to hell while the precept-violating Bhikshus attain Nirvana; the wiping-off means dirt-accumulating; all these paradoxical sayings, and Zen literature is filled with them, are no more than so many negations of the continuous movement from discrimination to non-discrimination, from affectability to non-affectability, etc., and etc.

Appendix G

The Mind That Vows to Save the World

In Buddhism, the term to save the world has two meanings: First, to pass through the world or to pass safely through this life. Second, to help mankind or to save the world. To talk about the mind that vows to save the world, the Sixth Patriarch taught in The Platform Sutra:

"If we truly practice the Dharma,
We will not see fault anywhere.
If we see the deficiencies of others,
Our criticisms are in themselves
manifestations of our own faults.
Others may be wrong, but we do not criticize,
For if we criticize we are already at fault.
We have only to be rid of our censorious minds
To start abolishing our defilements and anxieties.
When the mind is no longer concerned with likes and dislikes,
Then it can be at ease, as if we were asleep
with our legs fully stretched.
If we want to be able to help others,
We must ourselves have the open-minded helpfulness..."

Appendix H

Ever-Shining Wisdom

According to Buddhism, the mind of Ever-Shining Wisdom means the Bodhi Mind. The Sanskrit root of the word Bodhi is “Budh,” meaning “knowledge,” “Understanding,” or “Perfect wisdom.” A term that is often translated as “enlightenment” by Western translators, but which literally means “Awakening.” Like the term BUDDHA, it is derived from the Sanskrit root buddh, “to wake up,” and in Buddhism it indicates that a person has “awakened” from the sleep of ignorance in which most beings spend their lives. The awakened or enlightened mind is the mind that perceives the real behind the seeming, believes in moral consequences, and that all have the Buddha-nature, and aims at Buddhahood. The spirit of enlightenment, the aspiration to achieve it, the mind set on Enlightenment. It involves two parallel aspects: First, the determination to achieve Buddhahood or above is to seek Bodhi. Second, the aspiration to rescue all sentient beings or below is to save or transform all beings. In the Platform Sutra, the Sixth Patriarch declared that those who see the no form or no image of the mind or heart, have attained Bodhi. Hence, Bodhi is the awakening nature, and mind is the ever-shining wisdom inherent in each of us. It has no form. When Hui-k'o could not find the image of his mind, the First Patriarch Bodhidharma told him that his mind was already pacified. The Sixth Patriarch Hui-neng was also aware that all thoughts were delusions and they were not real; they were formless because its nature was empty. Therefore, Zen practitioners should not be attached, or defiled. If we could realize the nature of emptiness, we would enter the Zen gate. Thus, entering the Zen gate means getting an insight into emptiness. From Hui-k'o to Hui-neng, all the Patriarchs got enlightenment when they realized the nature of emptiness, they entered the Zen gate. While we are practicing the way, we have to understand completely the ultimate truth to attain emptiness.

Appendix I

The Words Deeply Touched His Heart

Chinese Zen history gives us clues that the interpretation of the teachings of the previous patriarchs led to a split between a Northern branch, headed by Shen-Hsiu, and a Southern branch, headed by Hui-Neng. The main point of dispute being the question of “gradual” and “sudden” enlightenment. The Southern followers of “sudden enlightenment”, who assumed that our enlightenment must be sudden or instantaneous, not from removing defilements gradually, nor by strenuous practice. However, this branch soon died out. He was born in 638 A.D., one of the most distinguished of the Chinese masters during the T’ang dynasty, the sixth patriarch of Intuitional or meditation sect (Zen Buddhism) in China. Hui-Neng came from Hsin-Chou in the southern parts of China. His father died when he was very young. It is said that he was very poor that he had to sell firewood to support his widowed mother; that he was illiterate; that he became enlightened in his youth upon hearing a passage from the Diamond sutra. One day, he came out of a house where he sold some fuel, he heard a man reciting a Buddhist Sutra. The complete sentence which the Buddha taught Subhuti as follows: “Do not act on sight. Do not act on sound, smell, taste, touch or Dharma. One should act without attachments.” (according to the Diamond Sutra, a Bodhisattva should produce a thought which is nowhere supported, or a thought awakened without abiding in anything whatever). The words deeply touched his heart. Finding what sutra it was and where it was possible to get it, a longing came over him to study it with the master. Later, he was selected to become the Sixth Patriarch through a verse someone wrote for him to respon to Shen-Hsiu demonstrating his profound insight. As leader of the Southern branch of Ch’an school, he taught the doctrine of Spontaneous Realization or Sudden Enlightenment, through meditation in which thought, objectively and all attachment are eliminated. The Sixth Patriarch Hui-Neng never passed on the patriarchy to his successor, so it lapsed. However, the outstanding masters of succeeding generations, both in China, Vietnam (especially Lin-Chi) and Japan, were highly respected for their high attainments.

Appendix J

To Hand Down

According to Buddhism, the mind is like a monkey, let it moves wherever it will; however, the Diamond Sutra suggests: "Cultivate the mind and the awareness so that your mind abides nowhere." In Zen practice, let the mind have no resting place or a mind which does not abide anywhere. A mind which let "bygone be bygone." The mind without resting place, detached from time and space, the past being past may be considered as a non-past or non-existent, so with present and future, thus realizing their unreality. The result is detachment, or the liberated mind, which is the Buddha-mind, the bodhi-mind, the mind free from ideas or creation and extinction, of beginning and end, recognizing that all forms and natures are of the Void, or Absolute. According to Zen Buddhism, the Way must penetrate and flow. According to the Platform Sutra, Chapter Four, the Sixth Patriarch taught: "Good Knowing Advisors, the Way must penetrate and flow. How can it be impeded? If the mind does not dwell in dharmas, the way will penetrate and flow. The mind that dwells in dharmas is in self-bondage. To say that sitting unmoving is correct is to be like Sariputra who sat quietly in the forest but was scolded by Vimalakirti. Good Knowing Advisors, there are those who teach people to sit looking at the mind and contemplating stillness, without moving or arising. They claimed that it has merit. Confused men, not understanding, easily become attached and go insane. There are many such people. Therefore, you should know that teaching of this kind is a greater error."

Appendix K

What Is It That Thus Come?

Zen Master Nan-Yueh-Huai-Jang, name of a Chinese Zen monk in the eighth century. We do not have detailed documents on this Zen Master; however, there is some interesting information on him in The Records of the Transmission of the Lamp (Ch'uan-Teng-Lu), Volume V: Nan-Yueh was born in 677 A.D. in Jing-Chou, one of the famous Zen masters during the T'ang dynasty. He was the great disciple of the Sixth Patriarch. He left home at the age of fifteen to study under a Vinaya master named Hung-Jing. After his ordination, he studied the Vinayapitaka, but he became dissatisfied, and then traveled to see a teacher named Hui-An on Mount Tsung. Although Nan-Yueh made some spiritual progress with Hui-An, he soon continued on to Tsao-Xi to study with the Sixth Patriarch Hui-Neng. According to the Platform Sutra, Chapter Seven, and the Records of the Transmission of the Lamp (Ch'uan-Teng-Lu), Volume V, Nan-Yueh came to Tsao-Xi to study with Hui-Neng. Hui-Neng said to Nan-Yueh: "Where did you come from?" Nan-Yueh said: "From Mount Song." Hui-Neng said: "What is it that thus come?" Nan-Yueh couldn't answer. It took Nan-yueh eight years to resolve this question, and when he did, he told the Sixth Patriarch: "Even when it's said to be something, it's off the mark!"

*Appendix L**The Same Number on
Two Faces of a Dice*

In Zen, the term "same number on two faces of a dice" means there is no difference between two persons. When the Six Patriarch Hui Neng arrived at Huang Mei and made obeisance to the Fifth Patriarch, who asked him: "Where are you from and what do you seek?" Hui Neng replied: "Your disciple is a commoner from Hsin Chou, Ling Nan and comes from afar to bow to the Master, seeking only to be a Buddha, and nothing else." The Fifth Patriarch said: "You are from Ling Nan and are therefore a barbarian, so how can you become a Buddha?" Hui Neng said: "Although there are people from the north and people from the South, there is ultimately no North or South in the Buddha Nature. The body of this barbarian and that of the High Master are not the same, but what distinction is there in the Buddha Nature?" Then, the Fifth Patriarch Hung Jen said: "So you are a southerner, but the southerners have no Buddha-nature; how could you expect to attain Buddhahood?" Hui-Neng immediately responded: "There may be southerners and northerners, but as far as Buddha-nature goes, how could you make such a distinction in it?" This pleased the master very much.

Appendix M

Do You Wish to Make a Circle a Buddha?

In the Transmission of the Lamp, after returning from his study-pilgrimage, a disciple drew a circle in front of the Master, Hui-neng, stood within it, and bowed. Hui-neng asked, 'Do you wish to make of it a Buddha or not?' The monk answered, 'I do not know how to fabricate the eyes.' Hui-neng remarked, 'I cannot do any better than you.' The disciple made no response." Devout Buddhist should always remember that in Buddhism, vain talk or diffusive trivial reasoning means idly talk on inconsequential topics only for amusement wastes our time and others' time. Meaningless argument means frivolous or unreal discourse or talking vainly or idly. Meaningless argument also means idle discussion. In Buddhism, meaningless arguments are hindrances on spiritual progress. Zen practitioners should always remember that Zen ought not to be regarded as a riddle proposed to puzzle you. There is nothing playful about it; if you fail to answer, you are to face the consequences. As you are going to be eternally chained by your own laws of thought, or are you going to be perfectly free in an assertion of life which knows no beginning or end? You cannot hesitate. Grasp the fact or let slip; between these there is no choice. The Zen method of discipline generally consists in putting one in a dilemma, out of which one must contrive to escape, not through logic indeed, but through a mind of higher order.

Appendix N

Eighty-Four Thousand Wisdoms From the One Prajna

Higher intellect or spiritual wisdom; knowledge of the ultimate truth (reality). Jnana is the essential clarity and unerring sensibility of a mind that no longer clings to concepts of any kind. It is direct and sustained awareness of the truth, for a Bodhisattva, that meaning and existence are found only in the interface between the components of an unstable and constantly shifting web of relationships, which is everyday life, while prajna is the strength of intellectual discrimination elevated to the status of a liberating power, a precision tool capable of slicing through obstructions that take the form of afflictions and attachments to deeply engrained hereditary patterns of thought and action. Jnana is a very flexible term, as it means sometimes ordinary worldly knowledge, knowledge of relativity, which does not penetrate into the truth of existence, but also sometimes transcendental knowledge, in which case being synonymous with Prajna or Arya-jnana.

Eighty-four thousand wisdoms are from just one Prajna. Prajna is a Sanskrit term which means wisdom. There are three kinds of prajna: real mark prajna, contemplative prajna, and literary prajna. Prajna also means the real power to discern things and their underlying principles and to decide the doubtful. Prajna means a transcendental knowledge. The Prajna-paramita-sutra describes “prajna” as supreme, highest, incomparable, unequalled, unsurpassed. There are three prajnas or perfect enlightenments: The first part of the prajnaparamita. The wisdom achieved once crossed the shore. The second part of the prajnaparamita. The necessary wisdom for actual crossing the shore of births and deaths. The wisdom of knowing things in their temporary and changing condition. The necessary wisdom for vowing to cross the shore of births and deaths. According to the Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch’s Dharma Treasure, the Sixth Patriarch, Hui-Neng, taught: “Good Knowing Advisors, my Dharma-door produces 84,000 wisdom from the one Prajna. Why? Because worldly people have 84,000 kinds

of defilement. In the absence of defilement, wisdom is always present since it is not separate from the self-nature. Understand this dharma is simply no-thought, no-remembrance, non-attachment and the non-production of falsehood and error. Use your own true-suchness nature and, by means of wisdom, contemplate and illuminate all dharmas without grasping or rejecting them. That is to see one's own nature and realize the Buddha Way."

Appendix O

Contemplate and Illuminate With the Wisdom

According to the Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch's Dharma Treasure, the Sixth Patriarch, Hui-Neng, taught: "Good Knowing Advisor, when you contemplate and illuminate with the wisdom, which brightly penetrates within and without, you recognize your original mind. The recognition of your original mind is the original liberation. The attainment of liberation is the Prajna Samadhi, thus no-thought. What is meant by 'no-thought?' No-thought means to view all dharmas with a mind undefiled by attachment. The function of the mind pervades all places but is nowhere attached. Merely purify your original mind to cause the six consciousnesses to go out the six gates, to be undefiled and unmixed among the six objects, to come and go freely and to penetrate without obstruction. That is the Prajna Samadhi, freedom and liberation, and it is called the practice of no-thought. Not thinking of the hundred things and constantly causing your thought to be cut off is called Dharma-bondage and is an extremist view. In fact, emancipation in Buddhist point of view is nothing other than viewing all dharmas with a mind undefiled by attachment, the function of the mind pervades all places but is nowhere attached. Those who say not to pay attention to the problems of the world like hunger, oppression, social injustice, who say that we should only practice have not understood deeply enough the meaning of Mahayana. Of course, we should practice counting the breath, meditation, and sutra study, but what is the purpose of doing these things? It is to be aware of what is going on in ourselves and in the world. What is going on in the world is also going on within ourselves, and vice versa. Once we see this clearly, we will not refuse to take a position or to act. To be a Buddhist with wisdom and compassion, he will find ways to practice Buddhism while helping other people. To practice Buddhism, it is said, is to see into one's own nature and to become a Buddha. if we cannot see what is going on around us, how can we expect to see our own nature? There is a relationship between the nature of the self and the nature of

suffering and injustice. To see the true nature of these problems is to see into our own true nature."

Appendix P

Four Vehicles

According to the Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra, Chapter Seventh. One day Chih-Ch'ang asked the Master, "The Buddha taught the dharma of the three vehicles and also the Supreme Vehicle. Your disciple has not yet understood that and would like to be instructed." The Master said, "Contemplate only your own original mind and do not be attached to the marks of external dharmas. The Dharma doesn't have four vehicles; it is people's minds that differ." The Master added: "Vehicles are methods of practice, not subjects for debate. Cultivate on your own and do not ask me, for at all times your own self-nature is itself 'thus.'" First, cultivating by seeing, hearing, and reciting is the small vehicle. Second, cultivating by awakening to the Dharma and understanding the meaning is the middle vehicle. Third, cultivating in accord with Dharma is the great vehicle. Fourth, to penetrate the ten thousand dharmas entirely and completely while remaining without defilement, and to sever attachment to the marks of all the dharmas with nothing whatsoever gained in return: that is the Supreme Vehicle.

Appendix Q

Keep the ‘Mind of Emptiness’ In Daily Life

Truly speaking, it's not easy at all to keep the ‘Mind of Emptiness’ in our daily life. However, for Buddhist practitioners, through meditation and contemplation, we will achieve the ‘No’ mind which has no good, no bad, no light, no dark, no sky, no ground, no same, no difference, no emptiness, no form, no anything in it. This is a truly empty mind, not ignorance. Empty mind is the mind which does not appear or disappear. Buddhist practitioners should keep this mind anywhere and at all times. For lay practitioners, if we are not be able to keep this Empty Mind yet, at least we should try to keep the Mind of Seeing Things As They Are. When we keep this kind of mind, seeing is the same as not seeing, hearing is the same as not hearing, working is the same as not working. This is no-attachment thinking. We use our eyes, but there are no eyes. We use your mouth, but there is no mouth. If we keep a clear mind, red is red, white is white. But we are not attached to red or to white, no more no less. There is only red, only white. No attainment with nothing to attain. Devout Zen practitioners should always remember that before thinking there are no words and no speech for a so-called ‘attainment’. If we keep ‘before thinking’ mind, it is natural that there is no-attainment with nothing to attain. When we are able to stay perfectly clear by cutting off all thinking and yet not falling into a trance-like sleep, this is sitting. When inside and outside become one, and no circumstances can hinder you, this is Zen. When we understand sitting Zen, it is synonymous with understanding ourself. In our mind there is a diamond sword. If we want to understand ourself, take it and cut off good and bad, long and short, coming and going, high and low, etc. Cut off all things, this is a real meditation. In the busy life today, if we do not have time to practice sitting meditation, we should understand that true sitting means to cut off all thinking and to keep a ‘not-moving’ mind. True meditation means to become clear. Beautiful words and hard sitting are important. But attachment to them is very dangerous, for if we are attached to them, we will not be able to understand true sitting meditation. If we are not

thinking, we are one with our action. When we drink tea, we are the tea that we are drinking. When we paint, we are the brush that we are painting with. Not-thinking is before thinking. We are the whole universe; the universe is us. This is exactly the Zen mind, absolute mind. It is beyond space and time, beyond the dualities of self and other, good and bad, life and death. The truth is just like this. So when the person is drinking tea, the whole universe is present in the cup of tea. The Buddha said: "When one mind is pure, the whole universe is pure; when one mind is tainted, the whole universe is tainted." Every day we meet people who are unhappy. When their minds are sad, everything that they see, hear, smell, taste, and touch is sad, the whole universe is sad. When the mind is happy, the whole universe is happy. If we desire something, then we are attached to it. If we reject it, because we are just as attached to it. Being attached to a thing means that it becomes a hindrance in our mind. This mind is like the great sea, into which all waters flow, the Indus River, the Mekong River, the Ganges River, Indian water, Vietnamese water, clean water, dirty water, salt water, clear water, and so on. The sea does not say, your water is dirty, you can't flow into me. It accept all waters and mixes them and all become sea. So if we keep the Buddha mind, our minds will be like the great sea. This is the great sea of enlightenment. Zen practitioners should remember that noisy and quiet are made by our thinking. If we think something is noisy, it is noisy; if we think something is quiet, it is quiet. Noisy is not noisy, quiet is not quiet. True quiet is neither quiet nor noisy. If we listen to the sounds in the market with a clear mind, without any concepts, they are just sounds, not noisy, they are only what they are. Noisy and quiet are opposites. The absolute is only like this. Therefore, Zen can be applied at any time and in any circumstances in our daily life.

Practitioners should always remember that to keep the Empty Mind means to keep the "Essence" or the innermost core of the mind. In Zen, the Essence of mind is the Illuminating-Void Suchness. An enlightened Zen Buddhist not only knows the illuminating aspect of the consciousness but, most important of all, he also knows the void aspect of the mind. Illumination with attachment is decried by Zen as "dead water", but illumination without attachment, or the Illuminating-Voidness, is praised as "the great life." The stanza which Shen-hsiu

wrote to demonstrate his understanding of Zen to the Fifth Patriarch showed that he knew only the illuminating, not the void, aspect of the mind. When his mirror-like bright consciousness came up against Hui-neng's "From the beginning not a thing exists!" it became so pitifully insignificant that it made him lose the race for the title of the "Sixth Patriarch of Zen". Hui-neng's "From the beginning not a thing exists!" expresses unmistakably the Essence of Mind as well as the innermost core of Zen. It was because of this deep understanding that Hui-neng became the Sixth Patriarch of Zen. Zen practitioners should always remember that the illuminating consciousness which is a key to all inner realization, basically and qualitatively it is still "clinging-bound". Buddhist enlightenment is not gained through holding on to or inflating one's self-awareness. On the contrary, it is gained through killing or crushing any attachment to this illuminating consciousness; only by transcending it may one come to the innermost core of Mind, the perfect free and thoroughly nonsubstantial illuminating-Voidness. This illuminating-Void character, empty yet dynamic, is the Essence of the mind. Usually, when the word "Essence" is mentioned, people immediately think of something quintessentially envision a dead and static "nothingness". Both of these conceptions miss the meaning of the word "Essence" in the point of view of Zen.

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