

Five Hundred Disciples Receive Predictions

Chapter 8

At that time Purnamaitreyaniputra, having heard about wisdom and the expedients from the Buddha who speaks of Dharma in accord with what is appropriate, having heard all the great disciples receive predictions of anuttarasamyaksambodhi; and in addition having heard of the matters of causes and conditions of former lives, and furthermore, having heard of the Buddha's great comfort and the power of his spiritual penetrations, obtained what he had never had, his mind was purified and he rejoiced.

Thereupon, he rose from his seat, bowed with his head at the Buddha's feet, and withdrew to one side, gazing unblinkingly at the honored one's countenance.

He then thought, "the World Honored One is most unique. His deeds are rare. He accords with all the various dispositions of beings in the world, employing expedient devices with knowledge and vision. He speaks the Dharma for them, releasing them from various types of greed and attachment. We could never fully express in words the merit and virtue of the Buddha. Only the Buddha, the World Honored One can know our deepest thoughts and past vows."

At that time, the Buddha told the Bhikshus, "Do you see this Purnamaitreyaniputra? I constantly praise him as being foremost of those who speak the Dharma, and I extol his various meritorious qualities, his vigorous and diligent support in

helping to proclaim my Dharma. In the midst of the fourfold assembly, he can demonstrate the teaching to the delight and advantage of all. He perfectly interprets the Proper Dharma of the Buddha, greatly benefiting his fellow practitioners of Brahman conduct. Except for the Thus Come One, no one can fully appreciate his eloquence in discussion.”

“You should not say that Purnamaitreyaniputra is only able to protect, support, and help propagate my Dharma alone. He has also, in the presence of ninety million Buddhas of the past, protected, supported, and helped to propagate those Buddhas' Proper Dharma, being foremost among the speakers of Dharma.

Further, he has thoroughly understood the Dharma of emptiness taught by those Buddhas, and gained the four unobstructed wisdoms. He is always able to speak the Dharma, purely and precisely, without doubts. He has perfected the power of the Bodhisattva's spiritual penetrations.

Throughout his entire life, he has cultivated Brahman conduct. The Buddhas' contemporaries all spoke of him as actually a Hearer, but this was just an expedient device he used in order to benefit limitless hundreds of thousands of living beings. He further transformed limitless asamkhyeyas of people, causing them to stand in anuttarasamyaksambodhi. In order to purify the Buddhalands, he constantly performs the Buddha's work in teaching and transforming living beings.”

“O Bhikshus, Purnamaitreyaniputra has been the foremost speaker of the Dharma for the past seven Buddhas, and he is also foremost speaker

of Dharma under me. He will also be the foremost speaker of Dharma under all the Buddhas to come in the Worthy Kalpa, for whom he will protect, uphold and help in propagating the Buddhadharma. He shall also protect, uphold and help the Dharma of limitless, boundless numbers of future Buddhas, teaching, transforming and benefiting limitless living beings, causing them to stand in anuttarasamyaksambodhi. In order to purify the Buddhalands, he will be ever vigorous and diligent in teaching and transforming living beings.”

He will gradually perfect the Bodhisattva Path, and after limitless asamkhyeyaeons he will in this land attain anuttarasamyaksambodhi. His name will be Dharma Brightness Thus Come One, One Worthy of Offering, One of Proper and Universal Knowledge, One of Perfect Clarity and Conduct, Well-Gone One Who Understands the World, Supreme Lord, A Hero Who Subdues and Tames, A Teacher of Gods and Humans, The Buddha, The World Honored One.

This Buddha shall take great trichiliocosms as many as the sands in the Ganges River as his Buddhaland, with the seven jewels for earth. The land will be as level as the palm of one's hand. It shall have no mountains or hills, gorges, gullies or ditches. It will be filled with pavilions and palaces of the seven jewels. The palaces of the gods will be located in space nearby so the humans and gods may consort and see one another.

There will be no evil paths and no women. All the living beings will be born by transformation and have no sexual desire.

They will obtain great spiritual penetrations. Their bodies will emit light, and they will be able to fly at will. Their resolve will be solid. They will be vigorous and wise. They will be golden colored, and adorned with the thirty-two marks. The living beings in that land will always take two kinds of food: The first, the food of Dharma joy and the second, the food of Dhyana happiness.

The host of Bodhisattva will number in the limitless asamkhyeyas, of thousands of myriads of millions of nayutas. They will attain great spiritual penetrations and the Four types of Unobstructed Wisdom, they will be skilled at teaching and transforming all kinds of living beings. The host of Hearers will be uncountable and unreckonable in number. All will perfect the Six Penetrations, the Three Clarities and the Eight Liberations.

The realization of this Buddhaland will be thus adorned with limitless meritorious virtues.

The eon will be named "Jeweled Brightness."
The country will be named "Well Purified."

The life span of that Buddha will be limitless asamkhyeyaeons and his Dharma will abide for a very long time.

After that Buddha's extinction, stupas of the seven jewels will be built everywhere in that land.

At that time, the World Honored One, wishing to restate this meaning, spoke verses saying,

“All of you Bhikshus listen well,
The path walked by the Buddha's sons,
Because they thoroughly studied the
expedient devices,
Was inconceivable.

Knowing that the multitudes delight in
lesser dharmas,
And also that they fear great wisdom,
Therefore the Bodhisattvas
Become Hearers and Conditioned
Enlightened Ones.

Employing countless expedient devices,
They transform all the varieties of living
beings.
They speak of themselves as being
Hearers,
Very far from the Path of the Buddha.

They cross over limitless multitudes,
Bringing them all to accomplishment.
Even those of little zeal and who are
remiss
Are gradually caused to become
Buddhas.

Inwardly they practice as Bodhisattvas,
While outwardly they manifest as
Hearers
Of few desires, who despise birth and
death,
While in reality they are purifying their
Buddhalands.

Displaying to the multitudes the three
poisons,
Appearing to have deviant views
In this way my disciples,

Expediently save living beings.

Were I to speak fully,
Of their various deeds of transformation
Living beings, hearing it,
Would harbor doubts within their minds.

Now, this Purnamaitreyaniputra,
In the past under thousands of millions
of Buddhas,
Has cultivated diligently his practice of
the Path.
Proclaiming and protecting the Dharma
of all Buddhas.

Seeking supreme wisdom,
In the presence of the Buddhas,
He appeared as the head of the
disciples.
With much learning and with wisdom
He spoke without fear,
Leading the assembly to rejoice,
And never did he grow weary,
Participating in the Buddha's work.

Having already crossed over into great
spiritual penetrations,
And having perfected the four
unobstructed wisdoms,
He knew the faculties of beings, sharp or
dull,
And always spoke pure Dharma.

Proclaiming principles such as this,
He taught thousands of millions of
multitudes,
To dwell in the Dharma of the Great
Vehicle,
While he purified his own Buddhaland.

In the future, too, he will make offerings,
To limitless, countless Buddhas.

Helping to proclaim the Proper Dharma,
And also purifying his own Buddhaland.
Always using expedient devices,
He will speak the Dharma without fear,
Saving incalculable multitudes,
So that they accomplish All-Wisdom.

Having made offerings to Thus Come
Ones
And protected and upheld the precious
storehouse of Dharma,
He will then become a Buddha
By the name Dharma Brightness.

His country will be named "Well Purified"
made of the seven jewels.
The eon will be named "Jeweled
Brightness"

The host of Bodhisattvas, very great,
Will entirely fill that land,
Numbering in the limitless millions,
All with great spiritual penetrations,
And the perfect power of awesome
virtue
The Hearers also will be countless.

Having the Three Clarities and the Eight
Liberations
And the Four Unobstructed Wisdoms,
They will constitute the Sangha there.
The living beings in that land,
Will all have severed sexual desire,
Born purely from transformation,
Their bodies adorned with perfect marks.
Taking Dharma-joy and Dharma-

happiness as food,
They will have no thoughts of other
kinds of food.
There will be no women there,

Nor any of the evil paths.
The Bhikshu Purna
Having perfected his virtue
Will gain such a pure land,
With a host of very many worthy sages.
Such are the limitless things, of which
I have now but spoken in a general way.”

At that time, the twelve hundred Arhats whose minds had attained self-mastery had this thought, “We all rejoice, having attained what we never had before. If the World Honored One would see to conferring upon us a prediction as he has the other great disciples, would this not be a cause for rejoicing?”

The Buddha, knowing the thoughts in their minds, told Mahakashyapa: “I now confer upon these twelve hundred Arhats in succession a prediction of anuttarasamyaksambodhi.”

“In this assembly, my great disciple, the Bhikshu Kaundinya, will make offerings to sixty-two thousands of millions of Buddhas. Having done so, he will then become a Buddha by the name of Universal Brightness Thus Come One, One Worthy of Offerings, One of Proper and Universal Knowledge, One of Perfect Clarity and Conduct, Well-Gone One Who Understands the World, Unsurpassed Lord, A Taming and Regulating Hero, Teacher of People and Gods, a Buddha, the World Honored One.”

“The five hundred Arhats, Uruvilvakashyapa, Gayakashyapa, Nadikashyapa, Kalodayin, Udayin, Aniruddha, Revata, Kapphina, Vakkula, Cunda, Svagata, and others all will attain anuttarasamyaksambodhi, all of them with the same name Universal Brightness.”

At that time the World Honored One, wishing to restate his meaning, spoke verses, saying:

“The Bhikshu Kaundinya,
Will see limitless Buddhas,
And after asamkhyeya eons,
Will realize Equal Proper Enlightenment.

Ever putting forth great light,
Perfecting all spiritual powers,
His name will be heard in the ten directions,
And he shall be revered by all.

He will always speak the Unsurpassed Path,
And will therefore be called Universal Brightness.
His land will be pure,
With courageous and heroic Bodhisattvas.

All will mount wonderful towers,
And roam through the ten direction lands,
With supreme offerings
They will present to all the Buddhas.

Having made these offerings,
With minds full of rejoicing,
They will instantly return to their own lands,
Such are the spiritual powers they will have.

The life span of that Buddha will be sixty thousand eons,
His Proper Dharma will dwell twice that long.
The Dharma Image Age will be twice the length of that.
When the Dharma is extinguished, the gods and people will

mourn.

These five hundred Bhikshus
Shall in turn become Buddhas
All by the name of Universal Brightness.
Each shall bestow predictions on his successors
Saying, "After my extinction
Such and such shall become a Buddha."

The world in which he will teach
Will be like mine today.
The adornments of his land
And his spiritual powers,
The host of Bodhisattvas and Hearers,
The Proper Dharma and Dharma Image Ages,
The numbers of eons in his life span,
Will be as just stated.

Kashyapa, you should know
About these five hundred who have attained self-mastery.
As for the remaining Hearers,
They shall be likewise.
To those not present in this assembly,
You should expound these matters."

At that time, the five hundred Arhats, having received predictions from the Buddha, jumped for joy.

They rose from their seats and went before the Buddha, bowing with their heads at his feet. Repenting of their errors, they reproached themselves, saying, "World Honored One, we had always thought that we had already gained ultimate extinction. Now we know that we were like unknowing ones. Why is this? We should have obtained the Thus Come One's wisdom, but were content instead with lesser knowledge."

"World Honored One, it is like a person who goes to a close friend's house, gets drunk on wine, and lies down. His friend who is about to go away on official business, sews a priceless pearl inside his clothing as a gift, and then leaves."

“That person, in a drunken stupor, is not aware of anything.”

“On arising, he sets out on his travels and reaches another country, where, for the sake of clothing and food, he expends much effort, endures great hardships, and is content with whatever little he may get.”

Later, his close friend happens to meet him again and says, “Hey man! How can you, for the sake of food and clothing, have come to this?”

Long ago, wishing you to gain peace, happiness, and enjoyment of the five desires, on such and such a day, month, and year, I sewed a priceless pearl into your clothing. From of old until now, it has been present, but you did not know of it. Thus you have toiled and suffered to gain your livelihood. How stupid of you!

You may now take this jewel, exchange it for what you need, and you will always have whatever you wish and be free from want.

The Buddha is also like this. When he was a Bodhisattva, he taught and transformed us, causing us to bring forth the thought of All-Wisdom.

But, we later completely forgot, and were unknowing and unaware.

Having attained the way of Arhatship, we said of ourselves that we had gained extinction. In the difficulty of maintaining our livelihood, we were content with what little we had gained.

Still, our vows for All Wisdom remain; they have not been lost. Now, the World Honored One has caused us to wake up, saying, “Bhikshus! What you have obtained is not ultimate extinction!”

‘For a long time, I have been leading you to plant good roots with the Buddha. As an expedient device, I manifested the marks of Nirvana. You said of yourself however, that you had actually attained extinction.’

“World Honored One, now at last we know that we are actually Bodhisattvas; having obtained a prediction for anuttarasamyaksambodhi. For this reason we rejoice greatly, having gained what we never had

before.”

At that time, Ajnatakaundinya and the others, wishing to restate this meaning spoke verses saying,

“Hearing the supreme sound
Of the prediction of peace and tranquility,
We rejoice, gaining what we never had,
And bow before the Buddha of limitless wisdom.

Now, in the presence of the World Honored One,
We repent of our faults and mistakes.
Of the limitless jewels of the Buddha,
We had gained but a small portion of Nirvana,
And, like unknowing, senseless people,
Contented ourselves with that.

It is like a poor person,
Who goes to a close friend's home,
A very wealthy household,
Stocked with delicacies.

Taking a priceless pearl
The friend sews it in the poor man's clothing
And silently departs,
While the poor man sleeps unaware.

When the man arises,
He travels to another land,
Where, seeking food and clothes to stay alive,
He suffers many difficulties, and
Satisfied with what little he may get,
Wishes for nothing better.
He is unaware that within his clothing
There is a priceless pearl.

The friend who gave him the pearl
Later sees the poor man again,
And having bitterly rebuked him,
Shows him the pearl he sewed in his clothing.

Seeing the pearl, the poor man's heart
Gave rise to great rejoicing.
Rich with much wealth
He enjoys the five desirable objects.

We, too, are like this
In the long night, the World Honored One
Has constantly pitied, seen, taught and transformed us.
Causing us to plant the supreme vows.

But, because we lacked wisdom
We were unaware and did not know,
And, gaining a small portion of Nirvana
We were satisfied and sought nothing more.

Now the Buddha has awakened us,
Saying this is not really extinction.
Gaining the Buddha's supreme wisdom,
That is true extinction.

Now, having heard from the Buddha
Of the matters of predictions and adornments,
And these predictions having been bestowed in succession,
We rejoice in body and in mind.