

佛學問答

Questions on Buddhism

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Q. Why this world is called Saha?

A. The meaning of Saha is suffering. The beings in this world can suffer ten bad things and don't want to be released from them. And the Bodhisattvas come to this world to save the people suffer from jealousy and bitterness.

Q. What are subdue demon sitting, fortunate sitting and Samadhi Mustra?

A. The sitting posture is of two kinds, the double cross-legged and single cross-legged. When the left leg is over the right leg, it is called the subdue demon sitting; when the right leg is over the left leg, it is called the fortunate sitting. The Samadhi Mustra is a hand posture with right hand on left hand and with the thumbs meet upward.

Q. Is to repeat the Dharanis an Upaya (special method)? What is the difference of usage between it and the repeating of Amitabha?

A. If you repeat with sincerity, the usage is the same.

Q. "It is much better to go to the Pure Land than to go to the super heavens." Why Buddha Sakyamuni didn't tell his mother who was on the Trayastrimsas, the heavens of the thirty-three devas, to go to the Pure Land?

A. The five steps of Buddhist principle and eighty-four preachings are for one person or the whole party. The teaching should fit the listener. Buddhas sometimes speak the truth and sometimes speak the expediency. Buddha's mother Maya, the big magic, was a Bodhisattva and the Buddha preaching to her was an Upaya (expediency) which was an example for the sentient beings. No fixed Dharma to be preached and Bodhi-sattva Ksitigarbha (Tizang) preached to his mother with filial duty.

Q. After the Parinirvana (the great decease) where exists Buddha Sakyamuni?

A. He exists everywhere in a form of super-life. If say in upaya language, he exists in our world of Saha.

Q. I have heard that the Buddhist law of cause and effect is self-made and self-suffering and without a judge and administrator, But I have seen the name Yama, who does the judgement of good and bad deeds, in Buddhist books. why there is a contradiction?

A. Buddhist said: "All events are caused by supermind," and also: "Bitterness and happiness are from Karma (performance), and karma is from Avidya (ignorance)." That is to say that the good and bad rewards are coming from one's own deed and this is the truth. It is like the world killer punished from his own deed. The work of Yama to reward good and bad deeds is also caused by one's own deed and it is an explanation by Upaya. It is just like the world killer punished by police and judge; though it seems that the work is done by police and judge but the original true cause is one's own ill doing. Truth and Upaya are not contradictory but a fact illustrated by two different methods.

Q. Why the Buddha got enlightened by seeing a bright star and we cannot?

A. It is very difficult to explain. I can show you by two similar questions: why Stevenson invented the locomotive by seeing a steam kettle and you cannot; why an ancient man invent shorthand penmanship by seeing sword dance and you cannot.

Q. Where come the Vijnana (consciousness) of the sentient beings from?

A. The true-mind or super-mind is without life and death. The false-mind (Vijnana) has life and death, the false-mind comes from the true-mind.

Q. Is it true that the Vijnanas get birth and death alternately and the whole number of them is always kept the same?

A. You may consider the true-mind as the sea and the false-mind as waves; when the wind blows the waves appear and when the wind stops the waves disappear; do you think that the waves are increasing or decreasing?

Q. A prisoner with several persons in the same room and with the night-stool in the western side, how shall he repeat the Amitabha and salute the Buddha?

A. He can perform his training silently without directly facing the direction of the night-stool.