

# ***A Discourse on the Sūtra of the Dharma Wheel about Non-Regression***

## Preface

The attainment of direct realization of the Buddha Dharma by practitioners of the True Enlightenment Practitioners Association (“Association”) has been well documented and disseminated since the first volume of the *My Bodhi Way* series was published. Imitators then began to appear in Taiwan and mainland China, claiming to have also achieved enlightenment and beginning to conduct four-day and three-night Chan retreats while requiring their disciples to write reports similar to those written by the enlightened practitioners of the Association. However, the contents of all their reports are predicated on incorrect Buddhist doctrines and resemble the true Buddha Dharma only in appearance. Their reports have nothing to do with the cultivations on the Path of Vision because their alleged realization of the eighth consciousness, *tathāgatagarbha*, causes them to remain within the five concealments and be unable to eradicate them. This is another regrettable, meaningless chapter of cultivation in the unofficial history of the Buddhist practice of the Dharma-ending period.

Owing to this extreme difficulty for practitioners to attain the Path of Vision in *Mahāyāna* Buddhism, let alone to write reports on their enlightenment using teachings that merely bear a superficial resemblance to the Buddha Dharma. Due to the profundity and unfathomable wondrous dharma of the eighth consciousness, *tathāgatagarbha*, it is difficult to believe in and accept it even upon hearing the teaching. Still, a truly enlightened mentor appearing in this world is rare. When we examine the views of Buddhist practitioners such as Shi Yinshun, we notice that these practitioners ardently inherited the misconceptions of the six-consciousnesses theory from ordinary sound-hearer practitioners of Sectarian Buddhism from ancient India. Such misconceptions are no different from and essentially the same as the views of eternalism based on the same six-consciousnesses doctrine propagated by Tibetan Tantric Prāsaṅgika Madhyamaka gurus in the past or present. However, they refuse to admit their mistakes, even at the point of death. Instead, they cling to their false views and teachings and reject those who criticize them. They vigorously attack their critics, except for Pingshi, the author of this series, whom they have seemingly overlooked. For more than ten years, Pingshi has publicly commented on their various

fallacies in different aspects and included these comments in my publications. However, they have acted as if they know nothing about these or see no irregularities in their teachings, or have strangely accepted in silence Pingshi's comments about the fallacies they have committed. We can conclude that the *Mahāyāna* teachings about the meaning of the true realization of the Buddha Dharma are extremely difficult for practitioners to know, think about, discuss, witness, and transmit.

This dharma denotes the eighth consciousness, *tathāgatagarbha*, which is also known by many other names, including reality-suchness, *ālaya*-consciousness, maturational consciousness, and immaculate consciousness. Other names for it are also taught in the Chan School during the transmission of the Dharma outside the scriptures, such as one's true nature, *mo-xie* blade, anther railing, green tile, and the original face before birth from one's parents. The Buddha called this the "nameless dharma, the non-conceptual dharma" in the *Buddha Treasury Sūtra* because *tathāgatagarbha* is not within the scope of labels or distinctions when it operates at all times. Practitioners can realize this consciousness (*viññāna*) at any time after eliminating their ignorance. They will also be able to instantly gain a direct comprehension of *prajñā*, which is referred to as the notion of "direct witnessing of the truth" in the Buddha Bodhi, and they will then enter the Seventh Abiding stage without retrogression. Those who slandered the wondrous dharma of the eighth consciousness in countless *asamkhyā* eons in the past would have already fallen into the *avīci* hells and transmigrated successively in the three evil paths, where they would have experienced various kinds of sufferings for countless *asamkhyā* kalpas. Finally, after exhausting this karma, they would have been reborn in the human world, where they would have had to come across 9.9 billion Buddhas whom they had to serve, make offerings to, and study diligently. Eventually, even after coming under Buddha Śākyamuni to learn again, they still would not have been able to attain compliance forbearance for this wondrous dharma. It would have been impossible for these practitioners to even realize the fruition of sound hearers, let alone the fruition of *Mahāyāna* Bodhi, as they felt uneasy upon hearing about the wondrous dharma of the eighth consciousness, *tathāgatagarbha*. As such, it is very difficult for practitioners to hear, believe, understand, realize, embrace, or acquiesce to the wondrous dharma of the eighth consciousness. This dharma is now elaborated again in the *Sūtra on the Dharma Wheel about Non-Regression* so that all Buddhist learners who have heard "this *sūtra*" and the sacred name of "Buddha Śākyamuni" will never regress from this wondrous dharma—the eighth consciousness—in the unforeseeable future. They will also be able to attain non-regression on the *Mahāyāna* Dharma Wheel.

As aforesaid, this discourse is especially dedicated to Buddhist learners. The lectures were completed and compiled for the benefit of the four Buddhist assemblies. I wish that all sentient beings would be able to grow rapidly in faith and practice the Buddha Dharma with earnest diligence. They will definitely achieve enlightenment shortly and join the ranks of the bodhisattva *saṃgha* one day. This is what I hope for.

Respectfully,

Buddha's Son Pingshi

Early summer of 2022 in the Pine Mountain Lodge

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