



## **Introduction of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva/ Earth Store Bodhisattva/ Jizo**

Hi everyone, welcome to my channel, Rising of Bodhisattvas! This is Nancy from the International Buddha Dharma Society for Cosmic Law in America. Today is January 9<sup>th</sup>. Our subject of the month is non-ego and being unconditional. The Buddha said: All conditioned phenomena are impermanent; all phenomena have no separated self; nirvana is perfect tranquility, these are the three Dharma Seals. The false self is the ultimate reason of all the problems and cultivation is all about realizing non-self. Bodhisattvas have no self. Their existence is to transform and rescue sentient beings. There are four well known Bodhisattvas in East Asia, and Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva is one of them. Today, I am going to share with you one story of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva who is well known for his Great Vow: I vow not to achieve Buddhahood until all hells are emptied. You will see how Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva brought up his Bodhi vows and demonstrated non-self and being unconditional.

Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva is often considered a Bodhisattva of the hell beings because of his Great Vow though he is actually present in all the six realms and he also vowed to transform all the beings in the six realms after Sakyamuni Buddha entered Nirvana and before the future Maitraya Buddha descends to the earth to become a Buddha which is a long period.

Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva has different names, such as Di Zang Pu Sa for Chinese, Earth Store Bodhisattva or Earth treasury Bodhisattva for some English speaking people, and Jizo Bosatsu for Japanese. Unlike other Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, the image of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva is often depicted as a Buddhist monk with shaved head and in a monk's robe, or kasaya. He normally holds a staff in one hand and a wish-fulfilling jewel in the other. It's said that the staff is used to force open the door to the hell and the wish-fulfilling jewel is used to light up the darkness. In some pictures, Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva wears a Vairocana hat which has five Buddhas of the five directions on it; also in some pictures, Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva rides a deity creature whose name is Di Ting which means to listen carefully. It's said that it can hear people's mind. Today, I will share with you one story about Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva which was taken from the sutra of Fundamental Vows of the Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva.

During the Dharma-fading period of the Tranquil Lotus Eye Buddha, there was an arhat who had accumulated merit and was transforming sentient beings. He encountered a woman who name was Shining Eye and she arranged a meal for him. The arhat asked her, "What is it that you want?"

The woman Shining Eye answered, "On the day that my mother died, I did meritorious acts to rescue her, but I don't know where she is now."

The arhat pitied her. He entered into samadhi and saw that Shining Eye's mother had fallen into evil destiny and was in terrible torments right now.

The arhat then asked Shining Eye, "When your mother was alive, what did she do? She is now in a bad destiny and being tortured."

Shining Eye replied, "My mother enjoyed eating things like fish, turtles, and especially their eggs, and she often fried or broiled them. She was indulged in eating these. If their lives are



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counted, the number must be millions. Please master, be compassionate! How can I rescue her?”

The arhat was sympathetic to her and said, “Sincerely call upon the Buddha of the Tranquil Lotus Eye. Have paintings or statues of the Buddha made. The benefit will go to both the living and the dead.”

Shining Eye did accordingly. She sold everything she loved, had the Buddha’s paintings and statues made, and made offerings to them. With a humble and respectful heart, she knelt before them, crying.

Toward dawn, in the dream, she saw the Tranquil Lotus Eye Buddha, in gleaming gold, like Mt. Sumeru, radiating brilliant light.

Not long after, a maidservant in Shining Eye’s home delivered a baby. After two to three days, the baby shed tears and talked to Shining Eye, “I am your mother. After death, for a long time, I was in the darkness. I had fallen over and over in the great hells. Through your merit, I have received rebirth, but as a lowly person and with a short life. In 13 years, I shall fall once again into the evil paths. Do you have any way to help me?”

Hearing this, Shining Eye knew that this baby was her mother with no doubt. She sobbed with grief. She asked the baby, “Since you are my mother, you should know your sins. What caused you to fall into the evil paths?”

The baby replied, “Killing and verbal abuse. Your merit saved me from those hardships.”

Shining Eye asked, “What was it like in the hell?”

The baby answered, “I don’t even want to talk about the sufferings. It would be hard to describe them all even in a hundred thousand years.”

Hearing this, Shining Eye stopped sobbing, and she exclaimed to the empty air,

“I vow that my mother shall be liberated from the hells forever. After thirteen years, she will not bear heavy sins any more, and she shall also not pass along evil paths. O Buddhas of the Ten Directions, please have compassion and sympathy on me. Listen to the great vow that I am making for my mother: If my mother never again enters the three lowest evil paths, and is not born into a lowly class, or born as a woman, then I vow, before the statue of the Buddha of the Tranquil Lotus Eye, that from now on through countless billions of kalpas, I shall respond to those on the earth, toss in all the hells, those in the three evil paths, and all those who are suffering for their sins. I will save them all and lead them away from the hells, from becoming animals being born as hungry ghosts, and so on. Only after all these who are suffering become buddhas, will I attain enlightenment.”

After Shining Eye made her vow, she heard the Tranquil Lotus Eye Buddha saying to her, “Shining Eye, the virtue of your great compassion and sympathy shall profit your mother with this great vow. I see your mother in thirteen years, finishing her present retribution and being born as a Brahman and living a hundred years. After that life, she will be born in lands without



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sorrow and living there for countless kalpas. After that, she will achieve her buddhahood, rescuing people and gods alike, as many as the grains of sand in the Ganges.”

This is the story of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva. And now, Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva is still transforming and rescuing sentient beings in the six realms of the worlds of ten directions.

Amitabha! Bodhisattvas have no self. They consider all the sentient beings as themselves. Bodhisattvas are unconditional. They tirelessly transform sentient beings because they know all the sentient beings are themselves and all are ONE. Thank you everyone for watching this video. I will see you next time. Bye.