

Cudapanthaka's Realization

Hi everyone, this is Nancy. Today is Sep. 4th, 2021. How are you doing? The Buddha showed great compassion to all beings and gave teachings whenever possible. He understood that everyone was different and could enter the Dharma door in their own way. He delivered many special and unique teachings to the people he met when traveling and touched countless people's heart. Though most of these adapted teachings were not recorded, some were written down, and from these stories we could have a glimpse of how the Buddha treated each person with compassion.

When the Buddha was residing at Jetavana Monastery, one day, he was walking and saw one bhiksu, Cudapanthaka, crying. Cudapanthaka was not an intelligent man, but the Buddha knew that he was good-hearted. The Buddha had sympathy toward him and ask, "Why are you here crying?"

Cudapanthaka replied, "Buddha, I know I am not smart. I followed my brother here to become a bhiksu, but when he tries to teach me something, I can't remember anything. He said I am hopeless and told me to go back home. This is why I am crying. Please Buddha, let me stay."

The Buddha comforted Cudapanthaka kindly and said, "Is that so? Don't worry. Follow me to my place. Anyone who knows their own imperfections is truly wise. Often, it is those who think themselves are smart are not."

After the Buddha returned to his place, he told Ananda to teach Cupapanthaka. But Ananda later returned and complained that he couldn't teach Cupapanthaka himself either.

So it was up to the Buddha to personally instruct Cupapanthaka. The Buddha went to Cupapanthaka and taught him to recite this phrase "Sweep the dust away". However, even this phrase, Cupapanthaka had problem remembering it. The Buddha then told Cupapanthaka to take a broom to sweep the ground, and also help the other bhiksus clean their robes and wipe the dust off various things. He told Cupapanthaka to recite the phrase "Sweep the dust" when doing these chores.

Cupapanthaka practiced what the Buddha taught him. At first, the other bhiksus did not like Cupapanthaka to clean their robes and other stuff, but the Buddha announced that those were his wishes. Gradually, bhiksus did not complain or laugh at Cupapanthaka anymore. They even reminded him the phrase and helped him memorize it, "Sweep the dust away."

Cupapanthaka was very diligent in his work. He swept the dust, helped other bhiksus and recited the phrase. Over time, he slowly began to understanding the meaning of the phrase. He talked to himself, "There are internal dust and external dust. The external dust is dirt and stone, and the internal dust is the suffering of greed, anger and ignorance. The broom can sweep away the external dust, but the internal dust can only be swept away by wisdom."

When Cupapanthaka came to understand this, his mind became clear, not cloudy anymore. His original wisdom appeared. He thought, "Cravings are bad. Wise people seek to eliminate them because if we don't end cravings, then the cycle of sufferings will continue. Cravings are the causes for various disasters. Disasters take away people's freedom and bring them fear. But if cravings end, the heart will become pure and free, and also can see the truth."

Cupapanthaka smiled. He continued to recite the phrase, sweep the floor, and do the chores. At the same time, he observed his mind and let go of all the greed and anger in his mind. He

entered the state of equanimity, and he was not disturbed by all those negative states or affected by any good or bad occurrences around him. He opened his mind and escaped the shell of ignorance, the prison of the mind.

Later, Cupapanthaka came to the Buddha, bowed and said, "Buddha, I swept away the dust in my mind and finally understood."

The Buddha was delighted and addressed to the bhiksus, "Reciting the words of the teachings without understanding them is not enough. But if one takes a single verse, reflects upon it and practices it wholeheartedly, one will see the path. See how Cupapanthaka did it."

Amitabha! This is today's Dharma share. May the Buddha's compassion touch every being; May the darkness of the world be expelled by the Buddha's Great wisdom. Thank you everyone for being here. I will see you next time.