



Nancy, 02/28/2021

The Lotus Pond

Hi everyone, this is Nancy. Today is Feb 28th. How are you doing? After Siddhartha was enlightened, each day, he would bath himself in the Neranjara River; he would do walking meditation along the riverbanks and in the forest; he would also sit on the shore or under the Bodhi tree. Children in the nearby villages often came to visit him. He showed them how to sit and follow their breath to calm their minds. He taught them how to walk to refresh their minds and bodies. He taught them how to look deeply at others and at their own actions in order to be able to see, to understand.

In the meantime, he felt the calling inside from his own country, Kapilavatthu. Those who loved him had been waiting for his news. He felt the calling of his former five companions who were still walking on the wrong path and waiting for his instruction. He knew that they had the ability to attain liberation quickly and he needed to find them. He also felt a special affinity with the young King Bimbisara who he met when he was still searching for the Great Way.

One day, Siddhartha walked to a lotus pond not far away which he liked very much. He sat there and contemplated the beautiful lotus flowers.

Looking upon at the lotus pond, he thought of the different growing stages of a lotus. The roots remained buried in the mud. Some stems had not risen above the surface of the water, some had barely emerged to reveal leaves, still curled tightly shut. There were unopened lotus flower buds, flowers with petals just beginning to peek out, and flowers in full bloom. There were seed pods from which all the petals had fallen. All the lotus flowers had different colors, sizes, shapes, petals, and so on.

Siddhartha then reflected that people were just the same with these lotuses. Everyone had his or her own natural character. personality, virtue, intelligence and talent. Different kinds of people could enter and understand the teaching from different perspectives. However, there were no ready-made methods received under the bodhi tree. These methods would need direct interaction with different people. Siddhartha saw the need to return to the society in order to have the Dharma wheel turning and sow the seeds of liberation. So, several weeks after his enlightenment, he decided to start the next journey, propagating the Dharma.

The above is the Hinayana version of what happened after Siddhartha realized enlightenment.

There is also another version of story in Mahayana Buddhism. It's said that after the Buddha was enlightened and obtained his perfection, he contemplated the sentient beings of this world of five turbidities. He saw that the sentient beings were upside-down and would be difficult to teach. He felt that it would not be beneficial to stay in the world and wanted to enter Nirvana right away. At that time, the King of Heaven Mahā-brahmā sensed what the Buddha was thinking, so he came down to see the Buddha. He paid homage to the Buddha, knelt down, joined his palms and pleaded the Buddha to compassionately stay in this world and turn the Dharma wheel. The Buddha told the King of Mahā-brahmā, "All the beings are polluted by the



Nancy, 02/28/2021

worldly dusts. They are greedy of the worldly pleasure, and their original wisdom is covered. Even if I stay and teach, it would be in vain. It's better to enter Nirvana now." The King of Mahā-brahmā pleaded again, "Buddha, now that the Dharma sea is full, and the Dharma banner has been erected, the time is ripe to instruct sentient beings. There are many who can benefit and be rescued. In the past countless kalpas, you vowed to collect Dharma medicines for sentient beings. You even used your life to exchange for one verse. How could you choose to enter Nirvana and leave all the sentient beings behind?"

Amitabha! These are the two versions of the reason behind the Buddha's preaching journey. In these days, there are two words often appearing in my mind: intrinsic characters. Everyone is different and have their own intrinsic characters. Everything outside is just manifestation of the inside. To change the outside, one needs to rouse energy to change the inside first, little by little. Real change comes from changing the intrinsic characters.

Thank you everyone for being here watching this video. Consider subscribing the channel for weekly Dharma talks, meditation sessions, mantras and sutras. I will see you next time. Bye.