

Anger Burns the Forest of Merits and Virtues

Hi everyone, this is Nancy. Today is Jan. 15th, 2022. How are you doing. In Buddhism, there is a well-known saying: Anger Burns the Forest of Merits and Virtues. Today let's hear the Buddha's words about anger. This story is related to Subhuti, one of the Buddha's great disciples.

After the Buddha was enlightened, he traveled around and instructed people according to conditions. One day, he knew that conditions were ripe for a young dragon king to be rescued, so he manifested as a bhikkhu and meditated by Mount Sumeru. At that time, a golden wing bird king caught the young dragon king from the ocean and flew to the top of Mount Sumeru. The bird king was just about to eat the young dragon king. Right at that moment, when death came near, the dragon king saw the bhikkhu meditating there, so he wholeheartedly pleaded the bhikkhu for help so that he could be liberated from suffering. Shortly after the dragon king was dead, due to his sincere plea, he was able to be born in a good family with rare appearance. His parents named him Subhiti which meant good appearance.

Growing up, Subhiti was very clever and wise, and nobody could match up with him. However, due to accumulated habits, he was irascible and had bad temper. He would get angry with no reason or yell at someone with no ending. Because of this, his parents, neighbors, friends, and relatives all disliked him. So, he left home and lived in the forest alone. But even in the forest, his bad habit still followed him. Birds, animals, wind, or moving grass or tree leaves all could irritate him. There was not a slight of joy in his mind.

In the forest, there was a mountain god. Seeing Subhuti's bad temper, he felt helpless. One day, the mountain god appeared and said to Subhuti, "Why did you leave your warm home to come to this forest? If you don't cultivate a good heart here, remaining the same as when you were at home, then what is the point being here? What you are doing is just in vain. You know, there is a Buddha in the world right now who has great blessing. He is teaching people to cultivate the good and cut off the evil. If you go to meet the Buddha, you will for sure get rid of your hatred and vicious mind.

Hearing the mountain god's words, Subhuti was happy and asked, "Where is the Buddha right now? How do I find him?"

The mountain god said, "The Buddha is in Jetavana-vihāra. Close your eyes and I will bring you there with my god's power.

Subhuti did accordingly. He closed his eyes and just in one moment, he arrived at Jetavana-vihāra. He opened his eyes and saw the Buddha's 32 kinds of good appearance, 80 kinds of goodness. The golden light around the Buddha was

brighter than tens of thousands of sun. Subhuti was joyful. He went ahead and paid homage to the Buddha, and then he sat aside. The Buddha knew Subhuti's past, so he started to preach him. He said, "Anger and hatred are disgusting. They increase ignorance and annoyances; they burn the good roots; they commit various evil deeds; at the end, one bears the retribution and falls into the hell. There, one continues to go through unspeakable sufferings. Even if one day, this person is able to get out of the hell, one would enter other evil realms and be born as dragon, snake, Raksha, and so on. One's mind will still be vicious, and one will continue to hurt each other with no end.

Hearing the Buddha's words about faults and retribution of anger and hatred, Subhuti was frightened; his hair stood up; his heart jumped fast; he repented deeply and sincerely in front of the Buddha. Right at that moment, he became enlightened and attained Sudhahanguo. Suddenly he was full of joy and pleaded the Buddha to allow him to follow him. The Buddha said to Subhuti, "Bhikkhu Shan Lai." So Subhuti's hair fell itself. He put on Bhikkhu's robe and became a Bhikkhu. Subhuti practiced diligently and soon he obtained Arhat fruit.

Amitabha! This is today's Dharma share. We accept and follow the Buddha's words. We continue to stay humble, self-reflect and correct ourselves. Staying to the end means that you really care. Thank you everyone for being here. I will see you next time.