

Mahayana vimsaka
of Nagarjuna

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ADORATION TO THE THREE TREASURES

1

I make my obeisance to the Buddha who is wise, free from all attachment, and whose powers are beyond conception, and who has kindly taught the truth which cannot be expressed by words.

2

In the transcendental truth there is no origination (utpada), and in fact, there is no destruction (nirodha). The Buddha is like the sky (which has neither origination nor cessation), and the beings are like him, and therefore they are of the same nature.

3

There is no birth either on this or the other side (of the world). A compound thing (samskrta) originates from its conditions. Therefore it is sunya by its nature. This fact comes into the range of knowledge of an omniscient one.

4

All things by nature are regarded as reflections. They are pure and naturally quiescent, devoid of any duality, equal, and remain always and in all circumstances in the same way (tathata).

5

In fact, worldings attribute atman to what is not atman, and in the same way they imagine happiness, misery, indifference, passions and liberation.

6 - 7

Birth in the six realms of existence in the world, highest happiness in the heaven, great pain in the hell,—these do not come within the perview of truth (i.e. cannot be accepted as true); nor do the notions that unmeritorious actions lead to the extreme misery, old age, disease, and death, and meritorious actions surely bring about good results.

It is owing to false notions that beings are consumed by fire of passions even as a forest is burnt by forest conflagration and fall into the hells, etc.

As illusion prevails so do beings make their appearance. The world is illusory and it exists only on account of its cause and conditions.

8

As a painter is frightened by the terrible figure of a Yaksa which he himself has drawn, so is a fool frightened in the world (by his own false notions).

9

Even as a fool going himself to a quagmire is drowned therein, so are beings drowned in the quagmire of false notions and are unable to come out thereof.

10

The feeling of misery is experienced by imagining a thing where in fact it has no existence. Beings are tortured by the poison of false notions regarding the object and its knowledge.

11

Seeing these helpless beings with a compassionate heart one should perform the practices of the highest knowledge (bodhicarya) for the benefit of them.

12

Having acquired requisites thereby and getting unsurpassable bodhi one should become a Buddha, the friend of the world, being freed from the bondage of false notions.

13

He who realizes the transcendental truth knowing the pratityasamutpada (or the manifestation of entities depending on their causes and conditions), knows the world to be sunya and devoid of beginning, middle or end.

14

The samsara and nirvana are mere appearances; the truth is stainless, changeless, and quiescent from the beginning and illumined.

15

The object of knowledge in dream is not seen when one awakes. Similarly the world disappears to him who is awakened from the darkness of ignorance.

The creation of illusion is nothing but illusion. When everything is compound there is nothing which can be regarded as a real thing. Such is the nature of all things.

16

One having origination (jati) does not originate himself. Origination is a false conception of the people. Such conceptions and (conceived) beings, these two are not reasonable.

17

All this is nothing but mind (citta) and exists just like an illusion. Hence originate good and evil actions and from them good and evil birth.

18

When the wheel of the mind is suppressed, all things are suppressed. Therefore all things are devoid of atman (independent nature), and consequently they are pure.

19

It is due to thinking the things which have no independent nature as eternal, atman, and pleasant that this ocean of existence (bhava) appears to one who is enveloped by the darkness of attachment and ignorance.

20

Who can reach the other side of the great ocean of samsara which is full of water of false notions without getting into the great vehicle (i.e., Mahayana) ?

How can these false notions arise in a man who thoroughly knows this world which has originated from ignorance?

Here ends the Mahayanavimsaka of Acarya Nagarjuna.

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