

THE GREAT FAITH OF THE THIRD UNIVERSAL AMNESTY TÂY NINH HOLY SEE

SERMONS OF HIS HOLINESS HỘ PHÁP ON THE DIVINE PATH TO ETERNAL LIFE

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5. The Paradise of Extreme Joy & The Image of the Divine Mother

The Holy See, the 19th day of the 9th month Mậu Tý year (1948)

Tonight, we should ask each other to make further progress on the Path to Eternal Life... When we exit the Bát Quái Đài (the Eight-trigram realm), we feel such joy that words cannot describe. Is that the place where we achieve our holy body? When we achieve our holy form, we look, as the Buddhists say, “like an Immortal.” When we leave the Bát Quái Đài, there is no one in that Realm who is not our friend. Soon those souls will be our relatives. In time, brothers and sisters you will experience three special joys, a three-fold special happiness which we can never have in the earthly realm...

One thing we are most surprised by is the way in which our progression along the holy path allows us to meet beings who may have been indifferent to each other on earth but who now warmly welcome everyone they meet. After walking through the Bát Quái Đài, they will welcome us as though they were our kinsfolk; tears come to their eyes as they meet us. They will appear in front of us upon our wish. In that atmosphere of welcome, one's reception is so blissful and so gracious that it is beyond anything experienced on earth by even the greatest of monarchs...

We see that even animals have great affection for us. It is a love and high regard that is impossible to describe; the birds, the animals, and the plants all share a special affinity with us. Of all the handsome men and beautiful women on this earth, Bản Đạo can surely say that none of them can compare with the

spirits in this great and sacred realm. In this realm, there are none who are not beautiful. There is no need for make-up and fine clothing. Whatever you want, whatever comes into your mind, there it is. For example, whatever things of beauty you want they are presented to you, especially you girls - whatever you want it will be yours; a lifetime in this earthly realm is nothing but illusion. One other great thing is that if the poor of this world are able to attain Buddhahood/ Immortality then their happiness will be unbounded...

This Paradise of Extreme Joy - Bần Đạo cannot see any realm that is better than this. This is what the Buddha called Cực-Lạc Thế-Giới (Paradise of Extreme Joy/ the Pure Land).

As we go inside (a tunnel to the next place), we see a throne, and in coming before this honourable seat we look up and see a Venerable Being. We can describe this Venerable Being as the Old Lady; if we think of a female immortal then we have before us a female immortal, if we want to see her as old then she is old, or if we want to see her as young then so she is. It is very mysterious. When we are allowed to enter, we see our own mother!

A grandfather looks up and sees his mother; a grandchild looks up and also sees his mother. Our personal love will be directed towards this image of love. On earth, mothers often scold, unlike our heavenly Mother who is so full of love.

When we see Her, all our past love returns. It is indescribable. Even those who are hard-hearted will be moved to tears upon seeing the noble love embodied in this great Mother. Bần Đạo assures you that there are many people who believe in the Way and understand the Way, but they do not know this. Even the Maitreya Buddha/ Đức Phật Di-Lạc who holds such a lofty and honourable position as the Lord of many heavens is still a child of his mother. This is a difficult thing to say. If you would like to know of the love of the mother for her child, look at the statue of the Divine Mother. You can see how the Maitreya Buddha kneels behind Her in deep respect. Even without explanation of the relationship between the Divine Mother and Maitreya Buddha, all of you can easily understand how high the power of the mother can be...

Even though Bàn Đạo holds such a position in this religion, as a child I must still place filial piety first. Respect for our mothers should always come first.