Bodhidharma’s Treatise on the Bloodline

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Originally, the minds of all people possess Buddha-nature. Broadly surveying the Chan teachings of the various masters and all the scriptural texts, and tracing their most appropriate principle to its source, there is none that does not speak of the original true Buddha within one’s own nature. When Bodhidharma came from the West, he directly pointed to the human mind: see one’s nature and become a Buddha. This means that one’s own true Buddha does not lie outside one’s single intrinsic nature. Yet people do not trust themselves, and so they race about seeking outwardly.

They suppose that, apart from the true Buddha of their own nature, there is another Buddha. Therefore, all Buddhas and patriarchs expound the Dharma in order to have people awaken to their own original true Buddha, which need not be sought externally. Yet because Dharma sayings of every kind are numerous and disparate, they instead cause students to become confused about their own intrinsic nature, leaving them with no point of entry into awakening. Only Bodhidharma’s Bloodstream Treatise and Huangbo’s Essentials of the Transmission of Mind are the most essential discourses. They can directly verify one’s own Buddha-nature and make it easy for people to understand. Compared with seeking teachers and visiting masters, searching through old papers, sitting in meditation, and traveling on foot, which wildly waste one’s effort, they differ by ten thousandfold. This is no small benefit.

Preface by Elder Jiandu, Ren Zhe, in the guiyou year of the Shaoxing era.

Bloodstream Treatise of Bodhidharma

The three realms arise in confusion and all return to the one mind. The Buddhas of the past and future transmit mind to mind, without establishing written words.

Question: If written words are not established, what is meant by mind?

Answer: Your questioning me is your mind; my answering you is my mind. If I had no mind, how could I answer you? If you had no mind, how could you question me? Your questioning me is your mind. From beginningless, vast kalpas until now, in all actions and movements, at every time and in every place, it is your original mind; it is your original Buddha. Mind itself is Buddha; it is also just so. Apart from this mind, no other Buddha can ever be found. To seek bodhi or nirvāṇa apart from this mind is impossible. The true reality of self-nature is neither cause nor effect. Dharma is the meaning of mind; one's own mind is nirvāṇa.

If one says that there is a Buddha or bodhi to be attained outside the mind, this is impossible. Where are Buddha and bodhi to be found? It is like someone trying to lift empty space with his hand—can he do so? Empty space has only a name and no form or appearance; it can neither be grasped nor discarded, for empty space cannot be seized. Apart from this mind, one can never see Buddha.

Buddha is made by one's own mind. Why seek Buddha apart from this mind? The Buddhas of the past and future speak only of this mind. Mind is Buddha, and Buddha is mind. Outside mind there is no Buddha; outside Buddha there is no mind. If one says that there is a Buddha outside the mind, where is that Buddha? Since there is no Buddha outside the mind, how can a view of Buddha arise? Deceiving one another, people cannot understand their original mind; they are taken in by insentient things and have no freedom. If you do not believe this, deceiving yourself is of no benefit. Buddha has no faults; sentient beings are inverted and fail to realize or know that their own mind is Buddha. If one knows that one's own mind is Buddha, one should not seek Buddha outside the mind.

Buddha does not liberate Buddha. Those who seek Buddha with mind do not recognize Buddha. Yet all who seek Buddha outwardly fail to recognize that their own mind is Buddha. Nor should one use Buddha to bow to Buddha, or use mind to recollect Buddha. Buddha does not recite sūtras; Buddha does not uphold precepts; Buddha does not violate precepts. Buddha neither upholds nor violates, and neither creates good nor evil. If you wish to seek Buddha, you must see your nature; seeing your nature is Buddha.

If one does not see one's nature, Buddha-recitation, sūtra recitation, fasting, and upholding the precepts are of no benefit. Buddha-recitation brings karmic cause and

effect; sūtra recitation brings intelligence; upholding the precepts brings rebirth in heaven; giving brings karmic blessings—but one will never find Buddha. If you yourself do not understand clearly, you must consult a genuine spiritual teacher and resolve the fundamental matter of birth and death.

If one has not seen one's nature, one cannot be called a genuine spiritual teacher. Otherwise, even if one can expound the teachings of the twelve divisions of scripture, one still cannot escape the cycle of birth and death and suffers in the three realms, with no time of release.

Nature is Buddha, and Buddha is the person of freedom—the person of no affairs and no contrivance. If one does not see one's nature, one remains lost all day long, racing outward in search, and in the end cannot find Buddha. Although not a single thing can be attained, if you seek understanding, you must still consult a genuine spiritual teacher and earnestly seek it, so that your mind may come to understanding. The matter of birth and death is grave; do not let it pass in vain. Deceiving yourself is of no benefit.

Even if one has delicacies piled high as mountains and relatives as numerous as the sands of the Ganges, one sees them upon opening one's eyes—but does one still see them after closing one's eyes? Thus know that conditioned dharmas are like dreams and illusions. If you do not urgently seek a teacher, you will waste an entire life. Yet Buddha-nature is inherently present; without relying on a teacher, one will ultimately not understand it clearly. Those who awaken without a teacher are rare among ten thousand. If, through the convergence of conditions, one personally attains the meaning of the sages, then one need not consult a genuine spiritual teacher. Such a person is born knowing; this surpasses learning.

If one has not yet awakened to understanding, one must diligently and painstakingly study under a teacher; through instruction one may then awaken. If one has already awakened, one may do so without study. This is unlike deluded people who cannot distinguish black from white, falsely claiming to proclaim the Buddha's decree while slandering the Buddha and reviling the Dharma. People of this kind expound the Dharma like rain, yet it is all demonic teaching, not the Buddha's teaching. The teacher is a demon king, and the disciples are demon subjects. Deluded people submit to their direction and, without realizing it, fall into the sea of birth and death.

All those who have not seen their nature and falsely claim to be Buddhas are great sinners. They deceive all sentient beings and lead them into the realm of demons. If one has not seen one's nature, then even speaking the teachings of the twelve divisions of scripture is all demonic speech. Such a person belongs to the demon's household, not among the Buddha's disciples. Since one cannot distinguish black

from white, how can one escape birth and death? If one sees one's nature, one is Buddha. If one does not see one's nature, one is a sentient being.

If Buddha-nature could be attained apart from the nature of sentient beings, where would Buddha now be? The nature of sentient beings itself is Buddha-nature. Outside nature there is no Buddha; Buddha is precisely nature. Apart from this nature, no Buddha can be found; apart from Buddha, no nature can be found.

Question: If one does not see one's nature, can one attain Buddhahood through Buddha-recitation, sūtra recitation, giving, upholding the precepts, diligent practice, and widely undertaking beneficial works?

Answer: No.

Question: Why not?

Answer: If there is even a small dharma to be attained, it is a conditioned dharma; it belongs to cause and effect, karmic retribution, and cyclic rebirth. One cannot escape birth and death—when could one attain Buddhahood? To become a Buddha, one must see one's nature. Without seeing one's nature, talk of cause and effect and the like is the teaching of non-Buddhist paths. A Buddha does not practice the dharmas of non-Buddhist paths. Buddha is beyond karma and beyond cause and effect. If there is even a small dharma to be attained, it is all slander of Buddha; how could one thereby attain Buddhahood? If one clings to a single mind, capacity, understanding, or view, Buddha does not permit it at all.

Buddha neither upholds nor violates precepts. Mind-nature is originally empty, neither defiled nor pure. All dharmas are without cultivation or realization, without cause or effect. Buddha does not uphold precepts, cultivate good, create evil, strive diligently, or become lax. Buddha is a person of no contrivance. If one clings to a mental view of Buddha, it is not permitted. Buddha is not Buddha; do not form an understanding of Buddha. If one does not understand this meaning, then at every time and in every place one fails to understand one's original mind.

If one does not see one's nature yet continually entertains the thought of non-contrivance, one is a great sinner and a foolish person, fallen into an indeterminate emptiness, dull and muddled like a drunken person, unable to distinguish good from evil. If one intends to cultivate the dharma of non-contrivance, one must first see one's nature and then cease discriminating thoughts concerning conditions. If one has not seen one's nature, attaining Buddhahood is impossible. Some people deny cause and effect, flagrantly commit evil karma, and falsely claim that all is originally empty and that there is no fault in doing evil. Such people fall into the dark, uninterrupted hell, with no prospect of release. A wise person should not hold such views.

Question: Since all actions and movements at every time are the original mind, why is the original mind not seen when the physical body is impermanent?

Answer: The original mind is always present before you, but you do not see it yourself.

Question: Since the mind is already manifest, why do I not see it?

The master said: Have you ever dreamed?

Answer: I have dreamed.

Question: When you were dreaming, was it your own body?

Answer: It was my own body.

Question: Were your speech, actions, and movements distinct from you or not?

Answer: They were not distinct.

The master said: Since they were not distinct, this very body is your original dharmakāya; this very dharmakāya is your original mind. From beginningless, vast kalpas until now, this mind has not differed from what it is now. It has never undergone birth and death; it is unborn and undying.

It neither increases nor decreases, is neither defiled nor pure, neither good nor evil, neither comes nor goes. There is neither right nor wrong, neither male nor female appearance, neither monastic nor layperson, old nor young, sage nor ordinary being. There is neither Buddha nor sentient being, neither cultivation nor realization, neither cause nor effect, neither strength nor appearance. Like empty space, it cannot be grasped or discarded. Mountains, rivers, rocks, and walls cannot obstruct it. It emerges and enters, comes and goes, with sovereign spiritual powers. It passes through the mountain of the five aggregates and crosses the river of birth and death. No karma can bind this dharmakāya.

This mind is subtle and wondrous, difficult to see. This mind is not the same as the mind of material form.

Everyone wishes to see this mind. Those who move their hands and feet within this luminosity are as numerous as the sands of the Ganges; yet when questioned, none can explain it, like wooden figures. All of it is one's own functioning—why do they not recognize it? The Buddha said that all sentient beings are deluded people. Because of this, they create karma and fall into the river of birth and death. Wishing to emerge, they sink again, simply because they have not seen their nature.

If sentient beings were not deluded, why, when questioned about this matter, would not one person be able to understand it? They themselves move their hands and feet—why do they not recognize it? Thus we know that the words of the sages are not mistaken; deluded people simply cannot comprehend them. Thus we know that this is difficult to understand. Only the Buddha can understand this Dharma; all other humans, devas, and sentient beings do not understand it.

When wisdom is clear, this mind is called dharmatā, and it is also called liberation. Birth and death cannot bind it; no dharma can bind it. It is called the Tathāgata, Great Sovereign Freedom; it is also called the inconceivable, the sacred body, everlasting life without death, and the great immortal. Though its names differ, its essence is one. All the sages' various distinctions do not depart from one's own mind.

The mind-capacity is vast, and its functioning is inexhaustible. It responds through the eyes to see forms, through the ears to hear sounds, through the nose to smell fragrances, and through the tongue to know flavors. Even all actions and movements are one's own mind. Whenever the way of words and speech is cut off, that itself is one's own mind. Therefore it is said, “The Tathāgata's forms are inexhaustible; wisdom is likewise so.” Inexhaustible forms are one's own mind. Mind-consciousness capably distinguishes all things; even actions and functions are all wisdom. Mind has no form or appearance, and wisdom too is inexhaustible. Therefore it is said, “The Tathāgata's forms are inexhaustible; wisdom is likewise so.”

The physical body of the four elements is affliction; the physical body undergoes arising and ceasing. The dharmakāya constantly abides without abiding anywhere, for the Tathāgata's dharmakāya never changes. A sūtra says: “Sentient beings should know that Buddha-nature is inherently present.” Kāśyapa merely awakened to his original nature. Original nature is mind; mind is nature; this nature is the same as the minds of all Buddhas. The Buddhas of the past and future transmit only this mind. Apart from this mind, no Buddha can be found. Inverted sentient beings do not know that their own mind is Buddha. They race outward in search, busy all day long, reciting and bowing to Buddha—but where is Buddha? One should not hold views of this kind. Simply know your own mind: outside mind there is no other Buddha.

A sūtra says: “All appearances are illusory.” It also says: “Wherever one is, there is Buddha.” Your own mind is Buddha; one should not use Buddha to bow to Buddha. If an appearance of Buddha, bodhisattva, or the like suddenly appears before you, by no means bow in reverence. My mind is empty and quiescent, originally without such appearances. If one grasps appearances, this is demonry, and one falls entirely into deviant paths. If it is an illusion arising from mind, there is no need to bow to it.

Those who bow do not know; those who know do not bow. Bowing causes one to be taken in by demons. Fearing that students might not understand, I therefore make this distinction. In the essential nature of all Buddhas and Tathāgatas, there are no such appearances at all. You must pay close attention to this.

Whenever unusual states arise, do not attend to them at all. Do not become fearful, and do not give rise to doubt. My mind is originally pure; where could there be so many appearances? Even appearances of devas, nāgas, yakṣas, spirits, Indra, Brahmā, and the like should not give rise to reverence or fear. My mind is originally empty and quiescent; all appearances are false perceptions. Simply do not grasp appearances.

If one gives rise to views of Buddha or Dharma, or to reverence for appearances of Buddhas, bodhisattvas, and the like, one thereby falls into the station of sentient beings. If you wish to understand directly, simply do not grasp any appearance; there is nothing further to say. Therefore a sūtra says: “All appearances are illusory.” None has fixed reality; illusions have no fixed form. These are impermanent dharmas. Simply do not grasp appearances, and you accord with the intent of the sages. Therefore a sūtra says: “Free from all appearances, one is called all Buddhas.”

Question: Why should one not pay homage to Buddhas, bodhisattvas, and the like?

Answer: Māra Pāpīyas and asuras may display spiritual powers and appear in the forms of bodhisattvas. Such transformations are non-Buddhist paths; they are never Buddhas. The Buddha is one’s own mind—do not mistakenly bow in worship.

Buddha is a word from the western countries; in this land it is called awakened nature. Awareness responds to circumstances and engages with things: raising the eyebrows, blinking the eyes, moving the hands, and shifting the feet are all the functioning of one’s own numinous awareness-nature. Nature is mind, mind is Buddha, Buddha is the Way, and the Way is Chan. The word Chan cannot be fathomed by ordinary beings or sages. It is also said: seeing one’s original nature is Chan. If one does not see one’s original nature, it is not Chan.

Even if one can expound a thousand sūtras and ten thousand treatises, if one does not see one’s original nature, one is merely an ordinary being and not one who possesses the Buddha Dharma. The supreme Way is profound and subtle, beyond the reach of speech; how could scriptures and teachings attain it? Simply see your original nature: even one who recognizes not a single written character may do so. Seeing one’s nature is Buddha. The sacred body is originally pure and free of all impurity. All words are functions arising from the minds of sages. The substance of this functioning is originally empty; even names and words cannot reach it. How, then, could the twelve divisions of the Buddhist canon reach it?

The Way is originally complete and perfected; it does not require cultivation or realization. The Way is not sound or form, and is subtle and difficult to perceive. It is like a person drinking water: only that person knows whether it is cold or warm and cannot explain it to another. Only the Tathāgata can know it; other beings, including humans and devas, are all unaware of it. Ordinary beings' wisdom does not reach it, and so they become attached to appearances. Failing to realize that their own mind is originally empty and quiescent, they falsely cling to appearances and to all dharmas, and thus fall into non-Buddhist paths.

If one knows that all dharmas arise from mind, one should not cling to them; to cling is not to know. If one sees one's original nature, the twelve divisions of the Buddhist canon are altogether idle words. A thousand sūtras and ten thousand treatises merely clarify the mind. If one accords with this directly upon hearing the words, what use are teachings? The ultimate principle transcends words. Teachings are words and phrases; they are not truly the Way. The Way is originally wordless; speech is delusion.

If at night in a dream you see such appearances as towers, palaces, elephants, horses, trees, groves, ponds, and pavilions, do not give rise to a single thought of delighted attachment. These are all places of rebirth; you must be especially attentive. At the time of death, do not grasp appearances, and obstacles will be removed. If a thought of doubt suddenly arises, Māra will seize you. The dharmakāya is originally pure and does not undergo retribution; only because of delusion, without awareness or understanding, do beings falsely undergo karmic retribution.

Thus, through delighted attachment, one cannot be free. If you now awaken to the original nature of body and mind, you will not be tainted by habitual tendencies. If sages enter among ordinary beings and manifest various kinds of forms, becoming themselves sentient beings, then sages are free and at ease in favorable and adverse circumstances alike, and no karma can bind them. Sages long ago perfected great majestic virtue; the karma of all classes of beings is transformed by these sages. Heaven and hell can do nothing to them.

The consciousness of ordinary beings is dark and obscured, unlike that of sages, which is clear and penetrating within and without. If there is doubt, do not act; once you act, you drift through birth and death, and afterward there is nowhere to seek help. Poverty and hardship all arise from deluded thoughts. If you understand that this is mind, encourage one another. Act without acting, and you will enter the knowledge and vision of the Tathāgata.

For those who have first aroused the resolve, consciousness is generally unsettled. If you frequently see unusual realms in dreams, do not doubt them; they all arise from

your own mind and do not come from outside. If, in a dream, you see light appearing that surpasses the sun's orb, your remaining habitual tendencies will suddenly be exhausted, and the nature of the dharma realm will be seen. If this occurs, it is a cause of realizing the Way. Know it only for yourself; do not tell others.

Whether walking, standing, sitting, or lying down in a quiet grove, if your eyes see light, whether great or small, do not tell others, and do not grasp it. It is also the light of your own nature. Or if, while walking, standing, sitting, or lying down in the still darkness of night, you see light and it is no different from daytime, do not be startled; it is because your own mind wishes to become manifest. Or if in a night dream you see the stars and moon distinctly, this too is because the mind's various conditions are about to cease; do not tell others. If dreams are dim, as though walking in darkness, this too is because the affliction-obstructions of your own mind are heavy. You will know it yourself.

If one sees one's original nature, there is no need to read sūtras or recite the Buddha's name; extensive learning and much knowledge are of no benefit, and consciousness becomes increasingly obscured. The establishment of teachings serves only to indicate the mind; if one recognizes the mind, what use is there in studying teachings? If one is to enter sagehood from ordinary life, one must cease creating karma, nourish the spirit, and live each day according to one's circumstances. If one is often angry, one's nature increasingly conflicts with the Way, and one only deceives oneself to no benefit.

Sages freely appear and disappear amid birth and death, revealing or concealing themselves unpredictably; no karma can bind them. Sages overcome Māra and evil influences. Once all sentient beings see their original nature, their remaining habitual tendencies suddenly cease. When consciousness is not obscured, one must understand directly and immediately, right here and now. If you truly wish to understand the Way, do not cling to any dharma. Cease creating karma and nourish the spirit; your remaining habitual tendencies will also cease, and you will naturally become clear, without the need for deliberate effort.

Those of non-Buddhist paths do not understand the Buddha's intent, though they exert themselves most diligently. They oppose the intent of sages: all day long they busily recite the Buddha's name and turn the sūtras, while remaining deluded about their own spiritual nature, unable to escape rebirth. The Buddha is one at leisure; why busily pursue fame and profit so extensively? What use will it be later? Yet those who have not seen their original nature read sūtras, recite the Buddha's name, study constantly and strive diligently; they practice the Way during the six periods of the day and sit for long periods without lying down. They learn extensively and hear much, taking this to be the Buddha Dharma. Such sentient beings all slander the Buddha Dharma.

All Buddhas, before and after, speak only of seeing one's original nature. All conditioned activities are impermanent. If one has not seen one's original nature yet falsely claims, "I have attained unsurpassed bodhi," one is a person of great sin. Among the ten great disciples, Ānanda was foremost in extensive learning, yet he did not recognize the Buddha; he merely pursued extensive learning. The two vehicles and non-Buddhist paths alike do not recognize the Buddha. They recognize only enumerations and cultivation and realization, and thus fall within cause and effect. This is the karmic retribution of sentient beings; they cannot escape birth and death. Far from the Buddha's intent, they are sentient beings who slander the Buddha, and killing them incurs no offense. The sūtras say: "Icchantikas do not give rise to faith; killing them incurs no offense." If one has faith, that person is one of the Buddha's rank.

If one has not seen one's original nature, one should not casually slander good people; one only deceives oneself to no benefit. Good and evil are clearly distinct, and cause and effect are plain. Heaven and hell are right before one's eyes. Foolish people do not believe this and presently fall into the dark hells; yet they neither perceive nor know it. This is solely because their karma is heavy, and thus they do not believe.

For example, a blind person does not believe there is light. Even if you explain it, that person will not believe, simply because of blindness; how could they distinguish sunlight? Foolish people are likewise. They presently fall among the various kinds of animals, are born into poverty and low status, and can neither live as they wish nor die as they wish. Though suffering in this way, if directly asked, they say, "I am happy now," no different from being in heaven.

Therefore know that all sentient beings take the place into which they are born to be pleasant, yet they neither perceive nor know this. Such evil people cannot give rise to faith solely because their karmic obstacles are heavy; it is not within their own power. If one sees that one's own mind is Buddha, one need not shave off one's beard and hair; a layperson in white robes is also a Buddha. If one does not see one's original nature, even after shaving off one's beard and hair one is still on a non-Buddhist path.

Question: Laypeople have wives and children, and their sexual desire has not been eliminated. How can they become Buddhas?

Answer: We speak only of seeing one's original nature, not of sexual desire. Sexual desire persists only because one has not seen one's original nature. Once one sees one's original nature, sexual desire is originally empty and quiescent; it ceases of itself, and one no longer delights in attachment to it. Even if residual habits remain, they can do no harm. Why? Because one's nature is originally pure. Though one

dwells in the physical body of the five aggregates, one's nature is originally pure and cannot be defiled.

The dharmakāya originally undergoes no retribution: it has no hunger or thirst, no cold or heat, no illness, no affection or love, no family, no suffering or pleasure, no likes or dislikes, no shortness or length, no strength or weakness. Originally, not a single thing can be obtained. Only through clinging to this physical body do appearances such as hunger, thirst, cold, heat, miasmic illness, and the like arise. If one does not cling, one may simply let things be.

If one attains freedom in birth and death and transforms all dharmas, one is unobstructed and free, like a sage endowed with spiritual powers, and at ease everywhere. If the mind harbors doubt, one will certainly not pass through all realms of experience. Not acting is best; once one acts, one cannot avoid the cycle of birth and death. If one sees one's original nature, even a caṇḍāla may become a Buddha.

Question: A caṇḍāla kills living beings and creates karma. How can such a person become a Buddha?

Answer: We speak only of seeing one's original nature, not of creating karma. Though their actions and karma may differ, no karma can bind them. From beginningless, vast kalpas onward, beings have fallen into hell because they did not see their original nature; thus they create karma and revolve through birth and death. From the moment one awakens to one's original nature, one never creates karma. If one does not see one's original nature, reciting the Buddha's name cannot spare one from karmic retribution, much less in the case of killing living beings. If one sees one's original nature, doubts suddenly cease; even killing living beings cannot prevail against such a person.

From the twenty-seven patriarchs of the Western Heaven onward, there has only been the successive transmission of the mind-seal. I have now come to this land solely to transmit the sudden teaching of the Mahāyāna: mind itself is Buddha. I do not speak of observing precepts, diligent striving, or ascetic practices. Even entering water and fire, climbing a wheel of swords, eating only one meal, sitting long without lying down—these are all conditioned dharmas of non-Buddhist paths. If you recognize the nature of numinous awareness that acts, moves, and functions, you are the mind of all Buddhas. All Buddhas, before and after, speak only of transmitting the mind; there is no other Dharma. If one recognizes this Dharma, even an ordinary person who does not know a single written character is a Buddha. If one does not recognize the nature of one's own numinous awareness, even if one's body were shattered into particles as fine as dust, one would never find Buddha.

Buddha is also called dharmakāya and is also called original mind. This mind has no form or appearance, no cause and effect, no sinews or bones; it is like empty space and cannot be grasped. It is unlike material obstruction and unlike non-Buddhist paths. Apart from the Tathāgata alone, none can comprehend this mind; the remaining sentient beings are deluded and do not understand it. This mind does not depart from the physical body composed of the four great elements. If this mind departed, there would be no capacity for movement. The body itself has no awareness; it is like plants, trees, tiles, or stones.

The body is without inherent nature; how, then, does it move? When one's own mind moves, then speech, action, movement, seeing, hearing, awareness, and knowing are all the movement and functioning of mind. Movement is the movement of mind, and movement is its function. Apart from movement and function there is no mind; apart from mind there is no movement. Movement is not mind, and mind is not movement. Movement is originally without mind, and mind is originally without movement. Movement does not depart from mind, and mind does not depart from movement. Movement has no mind from which to depart, and mind has no movement from which to depart. Movement is the mind's function; function is the mind's movement. Movement is the mind's function; function is the mind's movement. Without movement there is no function; the substance of function is originally empty. Emptiness is originally without movement. Movement and function are of the same mind, while mind is originally unmoving.

Therefore the sūtras say: "Moving, yet without anything that moves; going and coming all day, yet never having gone; seeing all day, yet never having seen; laughing all day, yet never having laughed; hearing all day, yet never having heard; knowing all day, yet never having known; rejoicing all day, yet never having rejoiced; acting all day, yet never having acted; abiding all day, yet never having abided."

Therefore the sūtras say: "The path of words is cut off, and the sphere of mental activity is extinguished. Seeing, hearing, awareness, and knowing are originally in perfect quiescence." Even anger, joy, pain, and itchiness are no different from those of a wooden person, for when one searches for pain and itchiness, they cannot be found.

Therefore the sūtras say: "Evil karma brings painful retribution, and wholesome karma brings wholesome retribution." It is not only anger that causes one to fall into hell; joy causes one to be born in heaven. If one knows that the nature of anger and joy is empty and simply does not cling, one is freed from karma. If one has not seen one's original nature, there is certainly no basis for lecturing on the sūtras, and one could speak without end. This is only a brief indication of the false and the true; it does not reach even one or two parts of the matter.

A verse says:

Mind, mind, mind—how difficult it is to seek! When broad, it pervades the dharma realm; when narrow, it cannot hold even a needle.

I originally sought mind, not Buddha; I came to know that the three realms are empty and contain no thing.

If you wish to seek Buddha, seek only mind; this very mind, mind, mind is Buddha.

I originally sought mind, and mind itself sustains it; seeking mind, I cannot attain it, but must await mind's knowing.

Buddha-nature cannot be attained apart from mind; when mind arises, that is the time when sin arises.

A gāthā says:

I originally came to this land / To transmit the Dharma and save deluded beings.

One flower opens into five petals; / The fruit ripens naturally.

End of Bodhidharma's Bloodstream Treatise