

Eternal Way of Truth  
Part Two

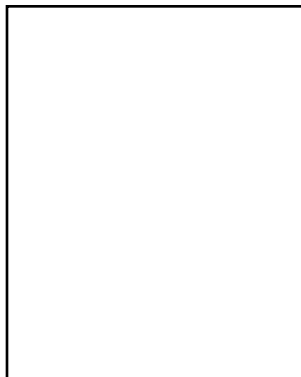
201 - 224

Cycle of Life  
Exoteric and Esoteric Text

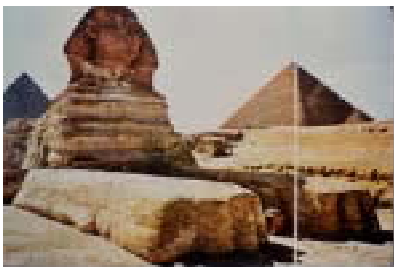


201 In Burma, this Buddhist stupa is guarded by two frightening lions.

Do the guardians of the pearl of wisdom stop you by your inability to give up wealth or suffer pain?



202 The entrance corridor of the Temple of Amun at Luxor is lined with Sphinx. These half animal, half man guardians are symbolic of the necessity for Man to master the animal body before he can enter the Temple of Transformation.



203 The Great Sphinx guarding the causeway to the Great Pyramid. Does the animal aspect of your human nature keep you from saktipata initiation in the golden ratioed great

pyramid?

Do the Sphinx of paranoia keep you doubting your guru?



204 Adam and Eve were expelled by God from the garden of innocence and Yahweh placed a cherubim and a flaming sword at the east of the garden of Eden to guard the way to the tree of life.

Do the cherubim at Eden's gate frighten away your guilt ridden heart?



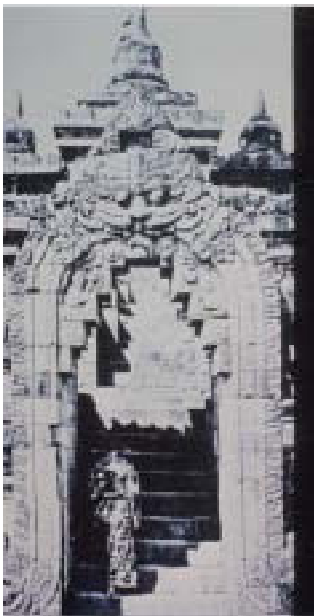
205 This is a Shaivite image called Kirtimukha, or the "Face of Glory." The legend is that an ambitious king, through austerities, had gained the power to unseat the gods and was now sole sovereign of the universe. His name was Jalandhara, Water Carrier. He conceived the impudent notion of challenging even Shiva, the supreme sustainer of the world. His idea was to demand that Shiva should surrender to him the goddess Parvati, and to this end he sent as messenger a terrible monster called Rahu, the Seizer, whose usual role was to seize and eclipse the moon. Rahu approached the Lord of Life and Death, and when he had stated Jalandhara's demand, Shiva simply widened that third eye between his brows, whereupon a flash of lightning shot forth, striking the earth and taking the form of the lion-headed demon we see here. It was insatiably hungry; its throat roared like thunder; its two eyes burned like fire.

Does the eater of the marrow of your bones frighten you away from austerity, the tapas of kundalini.



206 Kirtimukha, again, over the temple doorway at Panataran, Java. Rahu was aghast at the even greater monster and threw himself on Shiva's mercy, and the god, as was his way, granted protection. This, however, only created a new predicament, since the ravenous half-lion, who was hunger incarnate, now had nothing to eat, and he, too, turned to Shiva, imploring him to furnish a new victim. Whereupon Shiva directed that the monster should eat himself, to which work the prodigy immediately turned and the gorgeous banquet began.

At every turn you will find the consumer of your flesh and blood.



207 Kirtimulcha guarding the stairway at Borobudur. As you can see, the monster ate his feet and hands,

continued through his legs and arms. The monster, ravenous and unable to stop, let his teeth go right on chopping through his belly, chest and even his neck, until there was nothing left but a face. Shiva, who was watching, smiled and said, "You shall henceforth be known as the "Face of Glory" and shall abide forever at my door. No one who fails to worship you will ever obtain my grace."

Will the desire to survive as a human keep you from entering the golden door?



208 The Chinese "Glutton" from the Shang Dynasty of more than 1,000 B.C. has the "head but no body" consuming Man and, in a way, protecting him.



209 The central figure is Lucifer, the prince of hell. On the last fifteen days of the world, the sea rises up, then vanishes away, the fish roar, the waters burn, the trees sweat blood, buildings fall, rocks clash together, the earth quakes, the mountains are levelled, the bold come stumbling out of their hiding places, the dead rise, the stars fall, the people perish, and the universe burns. Finally, there occurs Christ's Second Coming. Are you able yet to face all your sins that are stored waiting for you in your mind?

Are you willing to have even your soul, your atman consumed?



210 Christ of the Apocalypse from the West portal of Chartres Cathedral is surrounded by the bull of Luke, the lion of Mark, the eagle of John and the manlike angel of Matthew.

Are the animal aspects of your nature yielding to God's mastery yet?



211 The guardians of the four quarters of the cycle of life must be passed through in order to enter the gate to paradise or nirvana from which Adam and Eve have been barred. God's Grace, in the end, is what reopens those gates, removes the fierceness of the guards and gives one strength and the willingness to surrender.

If not, then you will be excluded from paradise until you feel you deserve the Grace of God.



212 In China, the essence of Grace is Kuan-yin, of whose universal compassion the following legend is told.

Kuan yin represents that Grace.



213 In a certain rural western province of old China, there was a time when the Buddha, his Law and his Order we disdained and men devoted themselves rather to riding swift horses and to archery. But the merciful Bodhisattva showered her compassionate benevolence upon them and led them in the way of following Dharma.(213-222)

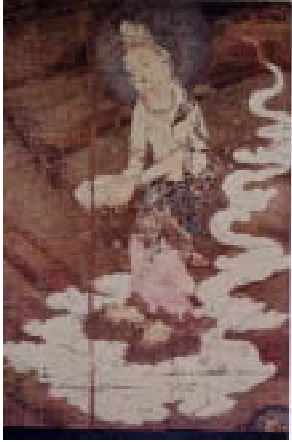
In your own words, describe the meaning of this legend, including the pictures, in the light of what you have learned in the course on Divine Order and in this course on the Cycle of Life.



214 In one of the villages of that province, situated on the banks of a remote upper reach of the Yellow River, there appeared early one summer day a strange young woman of the greatest beauty and most noble grace. Her almond eyes, jet black, flashed from beneath slender brows that were like little bows, and the lovely oval of her placid face was framed by soft waves of blackest hair.



215 She carried a basket in her hands, woven of bamboo, lined with green leaves of the willow and filled with fresh golden-scaled fish of the river. Moreover, as she called her wares her voice suggested the play of a breeze among jade beads. The villagers stared and questioned each other, but none could say whence she had come or who she might be.



216 She appeared this way every morning and as soon as her basket was emptied, she would disappear so quickly that the people would sometimes doubt that she had been among them at all. The young men, of course, had taken notice and daily watched for her appearances. Then one morning they would not let her pass. They began begging her to marry them, but she answered, "Oh honorable young gentlemen, I do certainly wish to marry, but I cannot marry you all. If there were one among you, however, who could recite by heart the entire Sutra of the Compassionate Kuan-yin, he would be the one I would wed."



217 So deep was the darkness of the minds of those young men that they had never even heard of that sutra. Nevertheless, when evening came they met and vied with each other, and when dawn broke there were thirty who had learned the text by heart. The young woman said, when these men accosted her, "But, O honorable young gentlemen, I am only one woman; I cannot marry thirty young men. However, if any one among you can explain the meaning of the sutra, he is the one I shall wed."



218 The following dawn found ten youths waiting to claim the young woman's hand; for ten now understood. But she replied, "O young sirs, I am but one woman; I cannot marry ten husbands. However, if any one of you will in three days have experienced the meaning of the sutra of the compassionate Kuan-yin, him surely shall I marry gladly." And on the morning of that third day there was awaiting for her just one, the young Mero. And when she saw him there, she smiled.



219 "O Son of the House of Me," she said, for she could recognize his bearing, "I perceive that you have indeed realized the meaning of the blessed Sutra of the compassionate Kuan-yin and do gladly accept you as my husband. My house you will find this evening at the river bend, and my parents there to receive you."

220 And so, when evening fell, Mero, alone at the bend of the shore,



searched out and discovered her little house among the reeds and rocks. At its gate there were standing an old man and woman, beckoning. He approached and said to them, "I am from the son of the House of Me, and have come to claim your daughter as my bride." The old man responded, "We have been waiting for you a long time," and the old woman, leading the way, opened the door to her daughter's room and Mero went in.



221 But the room was empty. From the open window he saw a stretch of sand as far as to the river, and in the sand the prints of a woman's feet, which he followed, to find at the water's edge two golden sandals. He looked about in the increasing twilight, and saw no house now among the rocks. There was only a cluster of dry bamboo by the river softly rustling in an evening breeze. And then suddenly he knew; the fishermaid had been none other than the Bodhisattva herself, and he comprehended fully now great is the merciful benevolence of the infinitely compassionate Kuan-yin.



222 She made a bridge of love that he might cross to the shore of bodhi. Oh, Compassionate Avalokiteshvara, most benevolent! And ever since that time in that rural western province, many have known and revered the Dharma of the Buddha.



223 That same Grace came on the 50th day after Christ's resurrection, called Pentacost, when the Holy Spirit came down from God, as Jesus had promised, and opened the golden door of salvation to the first Christians.

The early Christians practised natural meditation. Here they are receiving shaktipata initiation.



224 The ending of the cycle of birth and death comes from the Grace of God, from the Grace of Guru. Swami Kripalvananda blesses us!