

THE COSMIC REWARD

MILTON MOON

The cosmic reward
is not the Pure Land itself.
It is rather a virtue
accomplished for all who suffer
until they develop the three Minds
of sincerity of mind
depth of mind
and aspiration of mind.
Beyond then is
Bodhisattva-hood.
This then is not the final stage
the perfect enlightenment of the
One Vehicle - unknown to anyone,
even the holder.

This is the stage of non-retrogression
that knows no rewards.
The sage T'an-Luan, sometime
in the the late fifth century
or the beginning of the sixth,
made it clear the directing
of minds of great virtue
to feel compassion to
any sentient being who suffers,
that this Pure Land is
impermanent and to return
to the world is one's duty.
It is the nembutsu,
the Tang dynasty master Shan-Tao
reminded us it was the
Buddha Amida's own vows that
are Grasped and Never Abandoned.
'Namu' is taking refuge and
'Amida-butsu' is the refuge of the Primal Vow.
Namu Amida-Butsu.
Namu Amida-Butsu is the Cosmic Reward.