

On Emptiness

Dear Friend,

"Live long and prosper, image of Zorak". Thought it was great that several places (like Jon Stewart's Daily Show) used a clip from Leonard Nimoy's appearance on the Simpsons in their tributes.

My Buddhist study is going well. I am going through the five Maitreya teachings. Maitreya was a disciple of Shakyamuni Buddha, became a Bodhisattva, and is the Buddha's regent - the next world Buddha. He passed on teachings on sublime aspects of Buddha's teachings to one of the great Buddhist teachers Asanga. The texts just cut right to the core of the reality the Buddha was opening the door of realization to for those on the path. My clarity is increasing along with my dedication to seeing the path through for the benefit of all beings. One teacher puts it this way "it's so simple, it's hard". Because, when it comes down to it, the Buddha is teaching us to be right here and now with this manifested world just as it is. Here in this reality as it is. Now in this moment completely. And that's it. Just calmly abide in that pure space. With pure primordial awareness, what the Buddha calls suchness. The union of wisdom (the realization of the emptiness of all things, that all apparent phenomena are insubstantial and impermanent) and compassion (the realization of the interconnectedness/oneness of all life). Stripping away everything down to the wise/compassionate intelligence that engages this world, that in essence is this world, it's building block. Simple, yet hard to wrap one's head around. My brain actually hurts meditating on Maitreya's teaching on emptiness. I think it is supposed to. The teaching centers on the nature of emptiness of self and all phenomena. That everything does not exist in an unchanging, permanent way and simultaneously does not not exist. It's empty, but it is spontaneously present due to the nature of suchness, of Buddha nature. The middle way is the balanced fusion of the ultimate and relative views of reality - denying neither, but simultaneously having clarity about the nature of that reality. Maybe it's a kind of koan. It wears your mind out trying to grok it, and this evaporation of "thinking" leaves you with what's beyond your mind - pure enlightened awareness. A wonderful journey indeed.