



Supreme Enlightenment

Next day the Fifth Patriarch went to the room where Hui Neng was pounding rice with a stone pestle. The Fifth Patriarch said, “A seeker of the way risks his life for the *dharmā*. Should he do so?” Then he asked, “Is the rice ready?”

Hui Neng replied, “The rice was ready a long time ago, only waiting for the sieve.” The Fifth Patriarch hit the mortar three times with his cane and left.

Hui Neng got the subtle message. At the third watch of the night, he went to the room of the Fifth Patriarch, who covered the window with a robe so that no one could see inside. Then the Fifth Patriarch expounded *The Diamond Sutra* for him. When he came to the sentence, “One should use one’s mind without attachment,” Hui Neng immediately attained complete enlightenment and realized that all things in the universe are not separate from the essence of mind.