NĀGĀRJUNA'S TREATISE
ON THE TEN GROUNDS

VOLUME I

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BDK English Tripiṭaka Series

NĀGĀRJUNA'S TREATISE ON THE TEN GROUNDS VOLUME I

(Taishō Volume 20, Number 1521)

Translated by

Bhikshu Dharmamitra

BDK America, Inc.
2024

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A Message on the Publication of the English Tripiṭaka

The Buddhist canon is said to contain eighty-four thousand different teachings. I believe that this is because the Buddha's basic approach was to prescribe a different treatment for every spiritual ailment, much as a doctor prescribes a different medicine for every medical ailment. Thus his teachings were always appropriate for the particular suffering individual and for the time at which the teaching was given, and over the ages not one of his prescriptions has failed to relieve the suffering to which it was addressed.

Ever since the Buddha's Great Demise over twenty-five hundred years ago, his message of wisdom and compassion has spread throughout the world. Yet no one has ever attempted to translate the entire Buddhist canon into English throughout the history of Japan. It is my greatest wish to see this done and to make the translations available to the many English-speaking people who have never had the opportunity to learn about the Buddha's teachings.

Of course, it would be impossible to translate all of the Buddha's eighty-four thousand teachings in a few years. I have, therefore, had one hundred thirty-nine of the scriptural texts in the prodigious Taishō edition of the Chinese Buddhist canon selected for inclusion in the First Series of this translation project.

It is in the nature of this undertaking that the results are bound to be criticized. Nonetheless, I am convinced that unless someone takes it upon himself or herself to initiate this project, it will never be done. At the same time, I hope that an improved, revised edition will appear in the future.

It is most gratifying that, thanks to the efforts of more than a hundred Buddhist scholars from the East and the West, this monumental project has finally gotten off the ground. May the rays of the Wisdom of the Compassionate One reach each and every person in the world.

NUMATA Yehan
Founder of the English
Tripiṭaka Project

August 7, 1991

Editorial Foreword

In the long history of Buddhist transmission throughout East Asia, translations of Buddhist texts were often carried out as national projects supported and funded by emperors and political leaders. The BDK English Tripiṭaka project, on the other hand, began as a result of the dream and commitment of one man. In January 1982 Dr. NUMATA Yehan, founder of Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai (Society for the Promotion of Buddhism), initiated the monumental task of translating the complete *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* edition of the Chinese Tripiṭaka (Buddhist canon) into the English language. Under his leadership, a special preparatory committee was organized in April 1982. By July of the same year the Translation Committee of the English Tripiṭaka was officially convened.

The initial Committee included the following members: (late) HANAYAMA Shōyū (Chairperson), (late) BANDŌ Shōjun, (late) ISHIGAMI Zennō, (late) KAMATA Shigeo, (late) KANAOKA Shūyū, MAYEDA Sengaku, (late) NARA Yasuaki, (late) SAYEKI Shinkō, (late) SHIOIRI Ryōtatsu, (late) TAMARU Noriyoshi, (late) TAMURA Kwansei, (late) URYŪZU Ryūshin, and (late) YUYAMA Akira. Assistant members of the Committee were as follows: KANAZAWA Atsushi, WATANABE Shōgo, Rolf Giebel of New Zealand, and Rudy Smet of Belgium.

After holding planning meetings on a monthly basis, the Committee selected one hundred and thirty-nine texts for the First Series of the project, estimated to be one hundred printed volumes in all. The texts selected were not limited to those originally written in India but also included works composed in China and Japan. While the publication of the First Series proceeds, the texts for the Second Series will be selected from among the remaining works; this process will continue until all the texts, in Japanese as well as in Chinese, have been published. Given the huge scope of this project, accomplishing the English translations of all the Chinese and Japanese texts in the Taishō canon may take as long as one hundred years or more. Nevertheless, as Dr. Numata wished, it is the sincere hope of the Committee that this project will continue until completion, even after all the present members have passed away.

Dr. Numata passed away on May 5, 1994, at the age of ninety-seven. He entrusted his son, Mr. NUMATA Toshihide with the continuation and completion of the English Tripiṭaka project. Mr. Numata served for twenty-three years, leading the project forward with enormous progress before his sudden passing on February 16, 2017, at the age of eighty-four. The Committee previously lost its able and devoted first Chairperson, Professor HANAYAMA Shōyū, on June 16, 1995, at the age of sixty-three. In October 1995 the Committee elected Professor MAYEDA Sengaku (then Vice President of Musashino Women's College) as Chairperson, and upon the retirement of Professor Mayeda in July 2016, the torch was passed to me to serve as the third Chairperson. Despite these losses and changes we, the Editorial Committee members, have renewed our determination to carry out the noble ideals set by Dr. Numata. Present members of the Committee are Kenneth K. Tanaka (Chairperson), MAYEDA Sengaku, ICHISHIMA Shōshin, KATSURA Shōryū, MINOWA Kenryō, SAITŌ Akira, SHIMODA Masahiro, WATANABE Shōgo, and YONEZAWA Yoshiyasu.

The Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research was established in November 1984, in Berkeley, California, U.S.A., to assist in the publication of the translated texts. The Publication Committee was organized at the Numata Center in December 1991. In 2010, the Numata Center's operations were merged with Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai America, Inc. (BDK America), and BDK America continues to oversee the publication side of the English Tripiṭaka project in close cooperation with the Editorial Committee in Tokyo.

To date, the project has completed about seventy-five percent of the seven thousand one hundred and eighty-five Taishō pages of texts selected for the First Series. Much work still lies ahead of us but we are committed to the completion of the remaining texts in order to realize the grand vision of Dr. Numata, shared by Mr. Numata and Professor Hanayama, to make the Buddhist canon more readily accessible to the English-speaking world.

Kenneth K. Tanaka
Chairperson
Editorial Committee of
the BDK English Tripiṭaka

Publisher's Foreword

On behalf of the members of the Publication Committee, I am happy to present this volume as the latest contribution to the BDK English Tripiṭaka Series. The Publication Committee members have worked to ensure that this volume, as all other volumes in the series, has gone through a rigorous process of editorial efforts.

The initial translation and editing of the Buddhist scriptures found in this and other BDK English Tripiṭaka volumes are performed under the direction of the Editorial Committee in Tokyo, Japan. Both the Editorial Committee in Tokyo and the Publication Committee, headquartered in Moraga, California, are dedicated to the production of accurate and readable English translations of the Buddhist canon. In doing so, the members of both committees and associated staff work to honor the deep faith, spirit, and concern of the late Reverend Dr. Yehan Numata, who founded the BDK English Tripiṭaka Series in order to disseminate the Buddhist teachings throughout the world.

The long-term goal of our project is the translation and publication of the texts in the one hundred–volume Taishō edition of the Chinese Buddhist canon, along with a number of influential extracanonical Japanese Buddhist texts. The list of texts selected for the First Series of this translation project may be found at the end of each volume in the series.

As Chair of the Publication Committee, I am deeply honored to serve as the fifth person in a post previously held by leading figures in the field of Buddhist studies, most recently by my predecessor, John R. McRae.

In conclusion, I wish to thank the members of the Publication Committee for their dedicated and expert work undertaken in the course of preparing this volume for publication: Managing Editor Marianne Dresser, Dr. Hudaya Kandahjaya, Dr. Carl Bielefeldt, Dr. Robert Sharf, and Rev. Brian Kensho Nagata, Director of the BDK English Tripiṭaka Project.

A. Charles Muller
Chairperson
Publication Committee

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Translator's Introduction

Bhikshu Dharmamitra

As the latest in my series of translations of bodhisattva path texts important in the history of Classic Indian and Chinese Mahayana Buddhism, I present here my English translation of Tripiṭaka Master Kumārajīva's rendering from Sanskrit of Nāgārjuna's *Treatise on the Ten Grounds* (*Daśabhūmika-vibhāṣā*).[1] This is a text devoted to explaining in great detail the aspects of practice involved in ascending through the ten "grounds," "planes," or "levels" of bodhisattva path cultivation that are described in the *Ten Grounds Sutra* (*Daśabhūmika-sūtra*) and in the nearly identical "Ten Grounds" chapter of the *Flower Adornment Sutra* (*Avataṃsaka-sūtra*). In order to encourage and facilitate deeper study of this topic, I have translated both of these closely related texts which are available under separate cover from Kalavinka Press.

Although Dharmarakṣa was the first to translate this text into Chinese, his 265 C.E. translation of this treatise has been lost.[2] The edition of Nāgārjuna's *Treatise on the Ten Grounds* that I have translated here is the only one that exists in any language, namely the seventeen-fascicle *Shizhu piposha lun* 十住毘婆沙論 or *Daśabhūmika-vibhāṣā* that is preserved in the Taishō edition of the Buddhist canon (T. 1521). It was translated from Sanskrit into English by Tripiṭaka Master Kumārajīva as dictated to him from memory by Tripiṭaka Master Buddhayaśas sometime between the latter's arrival in Chang'an in 408 and his return to Kashmir four years later.

Although, having studied it closely, I find this thirty-five-chapter treatise to be beautifully and awesomely complete in itself as a close description of the principles and practices necessary for entering and mastering the first two of the ten bodhisattva grounds, it is probable that this text as translated by Kumārajīva was originally part of a much larger work. Fortunately, the edition that we have is, in and of itself, a wonderfully thorough training manual for moving from the life of a common unenlightened person to that of an irreversible bodhisattva well along on the path to buddhahood.

A Brief Description of the Treatise Contents

As noted above, this text consists of thirty-five chapters[3] in seventeen fascicles that describe in great detail the principles and practices involved in entering the bodhisattva path and in perfecting in correct sequence the practices of the first and second grounds, the "Ground of Joyfulness" and the "Ground of Stainlessness."

Chapter 1. "The Introduction" discusses the author's motivations and aims in composing this treatise. Chapters 2 through 27 explain the practices of the first ground. Chapters 28 through 35 explain the practices of the second ground.

Chapter 2. "Entering the First Ground" through Chapter 17. "On Entering the Temple" focus on the practice methods of the lay bodhisattva. Chapter 18. "The Jointly Shared Practices" through Chapter 27. "Summarizing the Practice [of the First Ground]" focus more on the bodhisattva practices that are common to both the lay bodhisattva and the monastic bodhisattva. Chapter 28. "Distinctions in Courses of Karmic Action on the Second Ground" through Chapter 35. "In Praise of Moral Precepts" focus somewhat more strongly on the practices of the monastic bodhisattva or very advanced lay practitioner.

Due to the length of this treatise, its contents will be published in two volumes. This Volume I includes Chapters 1–18; Volume II will include Chapters 19–35.

A Condensed Description of Each Chapter's Contents[4]

To give the reader a general idea of the content of each of the chapters, I present a brief description immediately below:

Chapter 1. The Introduction. This chapter consists of a general discussion of the whole treatise, a description of Nāgārjuna's motives in writing the treatise, and a close explanation of the "refuge" verse that opens the treatise.

Chapter 2. Entering the First Ground. This chapter lists the names and meanings each of the ten grounds, explains how one enters the first ground, and discusses why this ground is called the "Ground of Joyfulness."

Chapter 3. The Characteristics of the Ground. This chapter describes the character of the first-ground bodhisattva, focusing in particular on this bodhisattva's distinctive features. It also explains why his mind is for the most part joyful and explains the nature of his fearlessness.

Chapter 4. Purification of the Ground. This chapter describes twenty-seven dharmas involved in purifying the first ground.

Chapter 5. The Explanation of the Vows. This chapter describes the bodhisattva's ten great vows in great detail.

Chapter 6. On Producing the *Bodhi* Resolve. This chapter describes and explains the seven causes and conditions involved in generating the resolve to achieve the utmost, right, and perfect enlightenment.

Chapter 7. On Training the Mind. This chapter describes the many different sorts of causes and conditions that might cause the bodhisattva to lose his resolve to reach the enlightenment of a buddha.

Chapter 8. On the *Avaivartika*. This chapter describes the characteristics of the bodhisattva who has fallen into ruination and the characteristics of the bodhisattva who has become irreversible on the path to buddhahood.

Chapter 9. On the Easy Practice. This chapter describes using the path of "the easy practice," mindfulness of the buddhas, to succeed in reaching the ground of the *avaivartika* or "irreversible" bodhisattva.

Chapter 10. Getting Rid of Karma. This chapter describes the methods for purifying past bad karma, specifically referencing repentance, entreating, rejoicing in others' merit, and dedication of merit.

Chapter 11. Distinctions With Regard to Merit. This chapter discusses the merit and karmic rewards of repentance, entreating, rejoicing, and transference of merit and also explains how repentance results in less severe retribution from grave karmic offenses.

Chapter 12. Distinctions With Regard to Giving. This chapter discusses the karmic rewards of giving and also explains what constitutes pure giving and impure giving.

Chapter 13. Distinctions With Regard to the Giving of Dharma. This chapter explains the superiority of Dharma giving over material giving and discusses the qualifications of someone who teaches the Dharma.

Chapter 14. The Characteristics of the [Three] Refuges. This chapter discusses how one takes refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha as well as how one practices mindfulness of the Buddha, mindfulness of the Dharma, and mindfulness of the Sangha.

Chapter 15. The Five Moral Precepts. This chapter explains the practices beneficial to self and beneficial to others while also explaining the dharma of the five lay precepts.

Chapter 16. On Realizing the Faults of the Householder's Life. This chapter details for the lay bodhisattva the faults of the household life, thereby encouraging the layperson to consider the advantages of becoming a monastic. It also describes the practice of the six perfections.

Chapter 17. On Entering the Temple. This chapter describes the practices adopted by the layperson on entering the grounds of stupas and temples, explains how to take and maintain the eight abstinence precepts, and compares lay practice with monastic practice.

Chapter 18. The Jointly Shared Practices. This chapter describes the practices common to both lay and monastic bodhisattvas while also describing a buddha's thirty-two major marks and the karmic causes that bring them about.

Chapter 19. The Fourfold Dharmas. This chapter explains how wisdom is the origin of the thirty-two marks while also setting forth many fourfold lists that explain how wisdom is acquired, how wisdom is lost, how one's roots of goodness are devoured, how one's roots of goodness increase, and so forth.

Chapter 20. Mindfulness of the Buddhas. This chapter describes the method for acquiring the *pratyutpanna samādhi* wherein one is allowed to see the buddhas. It explains that one should cultivate mindfulness and contemplation of the buddhas' form bodies in reliance upon their thirty-two major marks and eighty subsidiary characteristics.

Chapter 21. Forty Dharmas Exclusive to Buddhas (Part 1). This chapter lists forty dharmas exclusive to buddhas and discusses the first nine of those forty dharmas that serve as the basis for practicing mindfulness of all buddhas' Dharma body.

Chapter 22. Forty Dharmas Exclusive to Buddhas (Part 2)—Challenges to the Reality of Omniscience. This entire chapter is devoted to refuting the various challenges to the claim that buddhas are omniscient.

Chapter 23. Forty Dharmas Exclusive to Buddhas (Part 3)—Thorough Knowing of Unfixed Dharmas [and the Other Exclusive Dharmas]. This chapter begins by explaining the tenth of the exclusive dharmas, that of "thorough knowing of matters that are unfixed," continues by explaining the rest of the forty exclusive dharmas, and then ends by introducing an additional forty-four exclusive dharmas.

Chapter 24. Verses Offered in Praise. This chapter explains that one is to use the forty dharmas exclusive to the buddhas in one's practice of mindfulness of the Buddha and then presents praise verses to be used as a means for successfully entering the mindfulness of the Buddha *samādhi*.

Chapter 25. Teachings to Aid the Mindfulness of the Buddha *Samādhi*. This chapter sets forth the method for acquiring the *pratyutpanna samādhi* while also describing the karmic rewards derived from this *samādhi.*

Chapter 26.The Analogy Chapter. This chapter sets forth the analogy of the great guide leading fellow travelers across treacherous terrain to a great city while also describing in greater detail the knowledge essential to deeply understanding and practicing the bodhisattva path.

Chapter 27. A Summarizing Discussion of the Bodhisattva Practices. This chapter presents a general explanation of all the dharmas practiced by the bodhisattva along with a discussion of the differences between the practitioner who is a bodhisattva in name only and the practitioner who truly is a genuine bodhisattva.

Chapter 28. Distinctions in the Second Ground's Courses of Karmic Action. This chapter begins by introducing ten types of resolute intentions that should be adopted by the first-ground bodhisattva wishing to reach the second ground.

It continues then with a detailed explanation of each of the ten courses of good karmic action and the ten courses of bad karmic action.

Chapter 29. Distinctions Pertaining to *Śrāvaka*s and *Pratyekabuddha*s. This chapter begins by asserting that the ten courses of good karmic action enable the practitioner to access the ground of a *śrāvaka* disciple, the ground of a *pratyekabuddha,* and the ground of a buddha. It then describes which sorts of beings may reach the grounds of *śrāvaka* disciples and *pratyekabuddhas* by relying upon the practice of the ten courses of good karmic action.

Chapter 30. [Distinctions Pertaining to] the Great Vehicle. This chapter describes which sorts of beings may reach the ground of a buddha through cultivation of the ten courses of good karmic action. It also asserts that a bodhisattva's cultivation of the ten courses of good karmic action is superior to such cultivation as undertaken by adherents of the *śrāvaka* disciple and *pratyekabuddha* vehicles.

Chapter 31. Guarding the Moral Precepts. This chapter describes the general and specific karmic rewards resulting from cultivating the ten courses of good karmic action. It then presents sixty-five aspects of the perfection of moral virtue in accordance with the *Jeweled Summit Sutra*.

Chapter 32. An Explanation of the *Dhūta* Austerities. This chapter describes the correct practice of the twelve *dhūta* austerities, their benefits, and the conditions under which they may be set aside.

Chapter 33. Aids to Gaining the Fruits of *Śīla*. This chapter describes the dharmas that enable purification of one's practice of moral virtue. It also describes four types of monks, of which the first three are worthy of censure and the fourth is to be emulated.

Chapter 34. In Praise of the Moral Precepts. This chapter begins by asserting that "The bodhisattva who purifies his observance of the moral precepts in this manner is able to gather together all sorts of meritorious qualities and derive all manner of benefits." It then proceeds to quote Akṣayamati Bodhisattva's extensive praise of the moral precepts.

Chapter 35. The Karmic Rewards of the Moral Precepts. This chapter describes the second-ground bodhisattva's manifestation as a wheel-turning king who instructs beings in the practice of the ten course of good karmic action.

On the Completeness and Ultimacy of This Treatise

Although this treatise primarily focuses its discussions on how to understand the principles, how to develop the qualities, and how to master the skills required to reach the first two of the bodhisattva grounds, its utility is not limited to accomplishing that already very amazing, beautiful, and daunting feat. In fact, the broad and deep range of the discussions in this text apply to the entire path to buddhahood. Indeed, if one were to deeply study this text together with the *Ten Grounds Sutra,* one would then already possess a very complete map of how to proceed all the way to the perfect enlightenment of a buddha.

So many other additional aspects of knowledge, wisdom, powers, skills, and qualities are mastered on these first two grounds that I think it would be fair to say that most of us would need to cultivate the bodhisattva path for many hundreds of lifetimes before we could move beyond the teachings presented in this wonderful treatise by Nāgārjuna.

Finally, as noted in Chapter 29, this treatise does indeed provide all of the teachings a practitioner would need to reach all the way to buddhahood: "These ten courses of good karmic action enable the practitioner to reach the grounds of the *śrāvaka* disciples, also enable him to reach the ground of the *pratyeka-buddhas,* and also enable him to reach the ground of the buddhas."

In the very next chapter, Chapter 30, Nāgārjuna answers the question, "Which sorts of beings can the ten courses of good karmic action also cause to reach the ground of buddhahood?", doing so by setting forth with the following verse distinguishing these bodhisattvas from practitioners attracted to the individual liberation paths idealizing arhats and *pratyekabuddha*s:

> The way they practice the ten courses of good karmic action
> is superior to that of the two other classes of practitioners,
> for they engage in measureless extraordinary cultivation
> superior to that of anyone else in the world.
>
> They bring forth vows that are both solid and good,
> perfect the great compassion that cannot be impeded,
> adeptly take on the practice of skillful means,
> and patiently endure every sort of pain and anguish.

They do not abandon any being,
deeply cherish the wisdom of the buddhas,
and delight in those who completely and thoroughly practice
the buddhas' powers and sovereign masteries.

They are able to refute all ideas involving wrong views
and accept and protect the buddhas' right Dharma.
They are valiant, able to endure, and vigorous,
and are possessed of solid resolve in teaching beings.

They do not covet or become attached to their own happiness
or to living a measurelessly long life.
They are supreme in all their endeavors
and free of fault in all the works they do.

They possess every kind of purity
and come forth through the practice of all the supreme bases.[5]
The courses of good karmic action enable these persons
to reach the ground of the bhagavats who possess the ten powers.

A close perusal of the above verses should put to rest any doubts any student of Dharma might entertain about the completeness and ultimacy of this treatise.

In Summation

I first happened on this text many years ago when searching the Buddhist canon for the most important bodhisattva path texts to translate into English. I immediately fell in love with it and started translating it back in 2004, but had to take a break from it for a few years due to health reasons and also because I was preoccupied with fourteen other bodhisattva path manuscripts I published as the first ten Kalavinka Press volumes in 2009.

I finally finished a first draft translation of this treatise in late spring of 2011, which I did not finish revising until early 2018, this because I was deeply involved in creating a translation of the *Ten Grounds Sutra* (now available) and the *Avataṃsaka Sutra* (which, though long since completed, is still being revised and edited).

I have always felt that Nāgārjuna's *Treatise on the Ten Grounds* is one of the most important and most inspiring bodhisattva path texts in the Buddhist canon

and one that simply *must* be translated into English as soon as possible. Hence it gives me great pleasure to finally be able to bring forth this translation for the perusal of English-speaking Dharma students and practitioners devoted to the deep study of the bodhisattva path.

The accuracy and readability of this translation have been greatly improved by many corrections, preview comments, and editorial suggestions generously contributed by Bhikkhu Bodhi, Bhikshu Jianhu, Feng Ling, Nicholas Weeks, and Jon Babcock. Although I have given this translation my best effort and the greatest care to ensure accuracy, I am aware that there may still be room for refinements here and there. That said, I remain very confident that this translation will do much to advance the western reader's understanding of right practice of the bodhisattva path as taught by Ārya Nāgārjuna.

NĀGĀRJUNA'S TREATISE ON THE TEN GROUNDS

20a

(*Daśabhūmika-vibhāṣā*)

(T.1521:20a2–122b13)

Composed by Ārya Nāgārjuna

Translated into Chinese in the Later Qin Era by

Tripiṭaka Master Kumārajīva from the State of Kuchā

Chapter 1

The Introduction

I bow down in reverence to all buddhas,
To their unsurpassable great path,
To those in the bodhisattva sangha
Who, equipped with solid resolve, abide on the ten grounds,

To the *śrāvaka* disciples, to the *pratyekabuddha*s,
And to those free of a self and anything belonging to a self.
I shall now explain the meaning of the ten grounds,
Doing so in accordance with the utterances of the Buddha.

Question: You are now about to explain the meaning of the bodhisattva's ten grounds. What are the reasons for this explanation?

Response: The dangers and difficulties of the six rebirth destinies of the hells, animals, hungry ghosts, humans, *deva*s, and *asura*s are terrifying and induce great fearfulness. In the churning whirlpool currents of the great sea of samsara, the beings therein swirl about, going forth and coming back in accordance with their karma. This is what forms that sea's towering waves. Their tears, milk, flowing sweat, pus, and blood form its masses of noxious spume.

Their leprous sores, emaciation, regurgitated blood, and urinary disorders, their ascendant-energy febrile diseases, their carbuncles and flowing abscesses, their vomiting and bloating—all of these different sorts of diseases are that sea's *rākṣasa*s.

Their worries, anguish, and bitter afflictions form its waters. Their being beset with troubles, weeping and wailing in grief—these are the sounds made by the churning of its waves. All of their feelings of bitterness and affliction—these are its "boiling and burning mountain."[6] Death is that cliff bank on the shore beyond which no one can climb.

The winds of their karma associated with the contaminants and connected to the fetters and afflictions pound and blow at them unpredictably. They are cheated and deceived by the four inverted views.[7] Their delusions and

ignorance create a great black darkness. Throughout the course of beginningless time, these common people, under the sway of their affections, have always moved along in the midst of this. So it is that they come and go in this fashion in the great sea of samsara without ever reaching the far shore.

But there may be those who, having reached it, are also able to rescue and bring across an incalculable number of beings. It is due to these causes and conditions that we now set forth an explanation of the ten grounds of the bodhisattva.

Question: Is it the case that, if a person is unable to cultivate the ten grounds of the bodhisattva, he will not succeed in crossing beyond the great sea of samsara?

Response: Someone cultivating the vehicles of the *śrāvaka* disciples or the *pratyekabuddha*s can cross beyond the great sea of samsara. If, however, someone aspires to use the unsurpassable Great Vehicle to cross beyond the
20b great sea of samsara, this person certainly must perfect the cultivation of the ten grounds.

Question: In the case of those cultivating the vehicle of the *śrāvaka* disciples or the *pratyekabuddha*s, how long must they pursue their practice before they succeed in crossing beyond the great sea of samsara?

Response: In the case of those who cultivate the vehicle of the *śrāvaka* disciples, some may succeed in crossing beyond it in as little as a single lifetime. Some will require two lifetimes and yet others may require an even greater number of lifetimes. This is a matter dependent upon the relative sharpness or dullness of one's faculties. It is also a matter dependent upon the causes and conditions of one's cultivation in earlier lifetimes.

In the case of those cultivating the vehicle of the *pratyekabuddha*s, some will require seven lifetimes to succeed in crossing beyond whereas others will require eight lifetimes.

In the case of those who cultivate the Great Vehicle, some may require a number of great *kalpa*s as numerous as the sands of a single Ganges River, and some may require a number of great *kalpa*s as numerous as the sands in two, three, or four Ganges Rivers, and so forth until we come to those requiring *kalpa*s as numerous as the sands contained in ten, one hundred,

one thousand, ten thousand, or a *koṭi* of Ganges Rivers. They may require an even longer period of time than that.

Only after that may they completely fulfill the cultivation of the bodhisattva's ten grounds and then realize buddhahood. This too is a matter dependent on the relative sharpness or dullness of one's faculties. This too depends on the causes and conditions of one's previous-life cultivation.

Question: The *śrāvaka* disciples, the *pratyekabuddha*s, and the buddhas all succeed in reaching the far shore [of liberation from samsara]. Are there or are there not any differences in the liberation they each achieve?

Response: This matter requires differentiation: As regards the achievement of liberation from the afflictions, there are no differences. It is on the basis of this achievement that one enters the nirvana without residue. In this respect as well, there are no differences. This is because [nirvana] has no distinguishing characteristics.

It is only with respect to the matters of a buddha's degree of liberation from the obstacles to extremely deep *dhyāna* absorption and his degree of liberation from the obstacles to [the knowledge of] all dharmas that there exist distinguishing factors relative to the *śrāvaka* disciples and the *pratyekabuddha*s. The degree of difference in these is so extensive that no amount of description could ever come to the end of it. No accurate comparison can be made even by resort to analogy.

Question: That which all three vehicles take as the goal of training is the nirvana without residue. If there are no distinctions in the nirvana without residue, what use could there be for us in going and coming in samsara for great *kalpa*s as numerous as the Ganges' sands, fulfilling the ten grounds' practices? That would not be nearly as good as using the vehicles of the *śrāvaka* disciples and the *pratyekabuddha*s to put a swift end to all suffering.

Response: This sort of statement is weak and inferior. It is not the beneficial discourse of someone possessed of the great compassion.

Suppose all bodhisattvas emulated your small-mindedness so devoid of kindly or compassionate intent and thereby became unable to energetically and assiduously cultivate the ten grounds. In such a case, how could any śrāvaka disciple or *pratyekabuddha* aspirant ever attain liberation?

What's more, in such a case, there could not even be any differentiation into the three vehicles. How is this the case? All *śrāvaka* disciples and *pratyekabuddha*s come forth in direct reliance upon a buddha. If no buddhas existed, then, on what basis could they come forth? If there was no cultivation of the ten grounds, how could there be any buddhas? If there were no buddhas, there would also be no Dharma and no Sangha. Therefore your statement advocates complete severance of the lineage of the Three Jewels. These are not the wise words of a great man, and they are not such as could survive critical examination. Why [do I say this]?

There are four types of people in the world. The first benefits himself, the second benefits others, the third benefits both, and the fourth benefits no one. Among these, those who benefit both are able to cultivate kindness and compassion and benefit others. These are renowned as superior people.[8] As has been stated:

20c People of the world are so deserving of pity:
They always turn away from what otherwise benefits them,
And, even as they singlemindedly seek wealth and happiness,
They fall on down into the net of false views.

Always haunted by the fear of death,
They flow along, turning about in the six rebirth destinies.
It is those greatly compassionate bodhisattvas
Who, by their ability to rescue them, are rare.[9]

Beings, when confronted by the arrival of death,
Have no one able to rescue or protect them
From their immersion in deep darkness
Wherein they are entangled in the net of afflictions.

If there are those able to bring forth and implement
The greatly compassionate resolve,
Because they shoulder the burden of beings' welfare,
They undertake a heavy responsibility to act on their behalf.

In a case where someone brings forth the resolute determination
To undergo alone all manner of suffering through their diligence

Only to then take the fruits of peace and security gained
And share them as a gift to be bestowed on everyone—

These are the most supreme sorts of persons
That are praised by all buddhas.
They are also those who, rare indeed,
Are great treasuries of meritorious qualities.

There is a saying commonly heard in the world:
"May this family never produce a bad son,"
One only able to benefit himself
While remaining unable to bestow benefit on others.

If, however, they produce a son who is good,
One well able to bring benefit to others—
This one is for them like the moon when full,
For he casts shining brightness upon his entire family.

There are people possessing all manner of merit
Who avail themselves of all different sorts of causes and conditions
To then bestow on others benefit that is as vast as a great ocean
And that is also as expansive as the great earth itself.

There is nothing whatever that they seek from the world.
Rather they abide in it only out of kindness and pity.
The birth of such persons is precious indeed
And the lives that they lead are the most superior of all.

So it is that, although there are no distinctions as regards the liberation from afflictions achieved by *śrāvaka* disciples, by *pratyekabuddha*s, and by buddhas, there are nonetheless still huge distinctions associated with the buddhas' perfect fulfillment of the bodhisattva's ten grounds, with the liberation of countless beings, and with the bestowal of benefit on so many as they abide so long in samsara.

Question: The Buddha does indeed possess the great compassion. For the sake of his disciples, you have set forth all manner of praises. This kindness and pity for beings is truly as you have described. You have used different sorts of reasons and considerations to make clear the distinctions, to invoke

awakening, and to lead beings forth. When those aspiring to practice kindness and compassion hear this, their minds are purified. I have become deeply pleased by this. Please do explain those earlier verses set forth in preparing to explain the ten grounds' meaning.

Response:

[I bow down in reverence to all buddhas,
To their unsurpassable great path,
To those in the bodhisattva sangha
Who, equipped with solid resolve, abide on the ten grounds.…][10]

"Reverence" refers here to the reverently respectful mind. "Bow down" refers to bending down the body and touching someone's feet. "All buddhas" refers to the buddhas of the ten directions and the three periods of time.

"Their unsurpassably great path" refers to the knowing, seeing, and penetrating comprehension in accordance with reality of all dharmas without
21a exception. It is because there are none superior to it that it is said to be "unsurpassable." It is because it is cultivated by great men that it is said to be "the great path."

As for "the bodhisattva sangha," it is by virtue of generating the resolve to practice the unsurpassable path that one is described as a "bodhisattva."

Question: Does one only need to bring forth this resolve to then become a bodhisattva?

Response: How could it be that, by merely generating this resolve, one thereby becomes a bodhisattva? If a person brings forth this resolve, he definitely must be able to accomplish the cultivation of the unsurpassable path. Only then might one qualify as a bodhisattva.

Then again, it may in fact be that the mere production of the resolve also qualifies one as a bodhisattva. How might that be? Apart from that initial generation of this resolve, there could be no realization of the unsurpassable path. This accords with the statement in the large edition of the *Sutra*[11] that declares that one who has but newly brought forth this resolve thereby qualifies as a bodhisattva.

This is comparable to the case of a *bhikṣu* who, even though he has not yet realized the path, is nonetheless referred to as "a man of the path." This

"nominal" bodhisattva then engages in a gradual cultivation whereby he transforms this into a genuinely realized dharma. Later on, in the explanation of the "Ground of Joyfulness," we shall set forth a comprehensive explanation of the characteristics of a bodhisattva who truly qualifies as such.

Now, as for "sangha," all bodhisattvas of the past, future, and present from the stage of the initial generation of the resolve on through to the path of the *vajra* unimpeded liberation[12] all qualify as members of the "sangha."

"Solid resolve" refers to having a resolve comparable to Sumeru, the king of mountains. As such, it cannot be hindered and cannot be destroyed. It is also comparable to the great earth which cannot be moved at all.

"Abiding on the ten grounds" refers to the "Ground of Joyfulness" and the other grounds. These will be extensively discussed later on.

Question: If bodhisattvas possess additional especially superior meritorious qualities, why do you only praise "the solid resolve"?

Response: It is due to the meritorious qualities of a solid resolve that the bodhisattva is able to accomplish his great works and refrain from falling down into the two vehicles' paths.

As for one who possesses only a weak resolve, he becomes terrified of samsara and then thinks to himself, "Why should I dwell for so long in the midst of samsara, enduring all sorts of bitter affliction? That would not be nearly so good as to quickly avail myself of the vehicles of the *śrāvaka* disciples and the *pratyekabuddha*s whereby I might swiftly bring about the cessation of suffering."

So, too, when one who possesses only a weak resolve sees or merely hears of:

The Living Hells (*saṃjīva naraka*);[13]
The Black Line Hells (*kālasūtra naraka*);
The Unification Hells (*saṃghāta naraka*);
The Screaming Hells (*raurava naraka*);
The Great Screaming Hells (*mahāraurava naraka*);
The Burning Hells (*tāpana naraka*);
The Great Burning Hells (*pratāpana naraka*);
Or the Great Non-intermittent Hells (*avīci naraka*)—[14]

Or the subsidiary hells, including:
The Flaming Embers Hells (*kukūla naraka*);
The Boiling Excrement Hells (*kuṇapa naraka*);
The Burning Forest Hells (*ādīptavana naraka*);
The Sword Tree Hells (*asipattravana naraka*);
The Road of Knives Hells (*kṣuramārga naraka*);
The Copper Pillar Hells (*tāmrastambha naraka*);
The Piercing Thorns Hells (*ayaḥśalmalīvana*);
Or the Brine River Hells (*khārodakā nādi naraka*)—

Or the instruments of punishment therein, such as the hatchets, battle axes, daggers, lances, spears, halberds, bows and arrows, iron scrapers, hammers, cudgels, javelins, spikes, short swords, iron nets,[15] iron pestles, or iron wheels—

Or the use of such instruments of punishment to subject one's body to hacking, chopping, slicing, piercing, beating, striking, flaying, splitting open, tying up, shackling, roasting, boiling, interrogating with beatings, grinding up, pounding to a pulp—

Or the foxes, dogs, tigers, wolves, lions, and fearsome beasts struggling forth, gnashing at, pouncing on, and gulping down [the flesh of] one's body—

Or having one's flesh pecked at and devoured by iron-beaked crows, owls, hawks, and vultures—

Or being hotly pursued by fearsome ghosts that force one to climb up sword trees and scramble up and run down flaming mountains, having one's neck run over by flaming iron carriages, being pursued and beaten with hot iron staves, being nailed down with a thousand nails, being cut apart and scraped out with knives, being plunged into darkness in a place with furiously dancing flames and stench, being placed onto a hot iron sheet that
21b scorches the body as one is subjected to the slicing off of one's flesh, having one's skin completely peeled off and then used to tie up one's hands and feet, being thrown into a cauldron of water leaping in a raging boil, having one's body stewed as one is beaten with iron bats until one's head is broken and one's eyes pop out, being run through with an iron spit and plunged into flames where one's entire body is burned by flames as one's blood flows out and spills onto the ground—

Or being immersed in a flowing river of excrement or being driven along, running down a road of horrors where one is sliced and pierced by its knives, swords, and iron thorns, having daggers spontaneously rain down as if in a storm of flying blades that slice away the limbs of one's body, having a horrible flooding river of bitter salt, painful stench and filth swallow up one's body, having one's flesh entirely rot away and its flesh fall off, leaving only a skeleton that the hell minions drag along, kicking it, stamping it, beating it, and striking at it—

There are countless such intensely painful torments in which one's life span is extremely long even as one seeks to die and yet remains unable to do so.

If one possessed of only a weak resolve were to see or merely hear of such experiences as these, how could he not be so stricken with terror that he would seek to be saved by the vehicles of the *śrāvaka* disciples and the *pratyekabuddha*s?

Also, one may fall into the Hells of Cold and Ice:
The Arbuda Hells;
The Nirarbuda Hells;
The Aṭaṭa Hells;
The Hahava Hells;
The Huhuva Hells;
The Blue Lotus Blossom Hells;
The White Lotus Blossom Hells;
The Hells of Varicolored Lotuses;
The Red Lotus Blossom Hells;
Or the Vermilion Lotus Blossom Hells.

One resides in these places of deep darkness and immense terror. One is born therein as retribution for slandering worthies and *āryas*.

These hells may take the form of a building, of a mountain peak, or of a river port hillside where one is blown by a harsh and horribly cold wind that makes a fierce, frightening, and mournful sound that blasts at the bodies [of the hell-dwellers] as if rolling through [fields of] dry grass. The flesh of the body then falls away like leaves dropping in the winter. The cold peels open one's wounds and both pus and blood come flowing forth. The

filth and stench of the body are difficult to bear. The cold wind cuts one open as one experiences excruciating pain and bitter anguish. There is only one's lamentation, grief, weeping, and wailing. There are no other thoughts. Though one screams and wails, one is stranded alone without anyone to rely on. These punishments are all experienced because one has slandered worthies and *ārya*s.

When one who possesses only a weak resolve sees or merely hears of these matters, how could he not become stricken with fear, seeking then to avail himself of the vehicles of the *śrāvaka* disciples and the *pratyekabuddha*s?

Also, among the animals, there are those such as boars, dogs, jackals, cats, foxes, gibbons, rats, monkeys, apes, tigers, wolves, lions, rhinoceroses, leopards, bears, elephants, horses, oxen, sheep, centipedes, venomous snakes, vipers, scorpions, tortoises, fish, turtles, dragons, snails, clams, crows, magpies, owls, hawks, and pigeons. All manner of birds and beasts such as these assail and kill each other.

Moreover, the snares, nets, predation, butchery, and slicing that are found there are not of a single sort. If born there, one is restrained with a halter, one has reins threaded through one's nose and strapped around one's head, one bears burdens, one is subjected to beating with cudgels and staves, and one is afflicted with hooks that pierce one's skin and flesh, causing it to split open and hurt unendurably. One is also immersed in smoke, burned by fire, and caused to endure agonizing pain of a myriad sorts. On dying, one's skin is peeled away, and one's flesh is devoured. One encounters therein countless such sorts of excruciating pain.

When one who possesses only a weak resolve hears of or sees these matters, how could he not become stricken with fear, seeking then to avail himself of the vehicles of the *śrāvaka* disciples and the *pratyekabuddha*s?

Also, among the needle-throated hungry ghosts, there are those such as the fiery-mouthed hungry ghosts, the blazing-goiter hungry ghosts, the vomit-eating hungry ghosts, the rinsings-eating hungry ghosts, the pus-eating hungry ghosts, the excrement-eating hungry ghosts, the *bhūta* ghosts,[16] the
21c *kumbhāṇḍa* ghosts, the *yakṣa* ghosts, the *rākṣasa* ghosts, the *piśāca* ghosts, the *pūtana* ghosts, the *kaṭapūtana* ghosts, and all other such ghosts. They have disheveled beards and hair, long nails, and large noses. Their bodies contain a multitude of insects, and are characterized by dreadful stench and

filth. They are pierced by numerous sorts of torments and are constantly afflicted by the misery of miserliness, jealousy, hunger and thirst.

They are unable to acquire any food. Even when they do succeed in finding it, they are unable to even swallow it. They always seek after impurities such as pus, blood, excrement, urine, snot, spittle, and rinsings. Those that are strong attempt to steal these things by force, yet, even then, still cannot eat them. They are naked, have no clothes, and hence experience doubly intense cold and heat. A vicious wind blows on their bodies, spins them around, and afflicts them with bitter pain. Mosquitoes, horseflies, and poisonous insects bite them and feast upon their bodies. Their bellies are filled only with sensations of constantly burning hunger that roasts them like blazing flames.

When one who possesses only a weak resolve sees or merely hears of these matters, how could he not become stricken with fear, seeking then to avail himself of the vehicles of the *śrāvaka* disciples and the *pratyekabuddha*s?

Moreover, among humans, there are the sufferings of separation from those one loves, encounters with those one detests, the sufferings of aging, sickness, and death, and the sufferings of the poverty-stricken in pursuit of whatever they seek, as well as the countlessly many other such sufferings.

In addition, there are also the sufferings encountered by the *deva*s and the *asura*s when they must fall back again [from their bliss-filled celestial existences].

When one who possesses only a weak resolve observes these sufferings, how then could he not become stricken with fear, seeking then to avail himself of the vehicles of the *śrāvaka* disciples and the *pratyekabuddha*s?

When a person with a solid resolve observes all the sufferings and afflictions endured by those in the hells, among animals, and among the hungry ghosts, *deva*s, humans, and *asura*s, he brings forth the mind of great compassion and has no fear. He makes this vow, saying, "All of these beings have deeply entered into such a deteriorated and afflicted state. They have no one to rescue or protect them and have no place of refuge. If I myself am to realize nirvana, I must also bring about the liberation of beings such as these."

Relying on the mind of great compassion, he is assiduous in his practice of vigor and, before long, achieves what he has vowed to do. It is for this reason that I state that, among all the meritorious qualities of a bodhisattva, solid resolve is foremost.

Additionally, the bodhisattva possesses eight dharmas through which he is able to accumulate all meritorious qualities:

The first is the great compassion;
The second is the solid resolve;
The third is wisdom;
The fourth is skillful means;
The fifth is non-negligence;
The sixth is diligently applied vigor;
The seventh is constantly focused mindfulness;
And the eighth is the good spiritual guide.

Knowing this, one who has only initially generated the resolve therefore swiftly takes up these eight dharmas, doing so with the same urgency as felt by someone whose turban has caught fire. Having done so, he should then cultivate all the other types of meritorious qualities.

> [I also bow down] to the *śrāvaka* disciples, to the *pratyekabuddha*s,
> And to those free of a self and anything belonging to a self.
> I shall now explain the meaning of the ten grounds,
> Doing so in accordance with the utterances of the Buddha.][17]

Additionally, it is in reliance on these same eight dharmas that there come to be the four pairs and eight classes of practitioners within the *śrāvaka* disciple sangha, namely the practitioners on the verge of stream entry, those who have already become three *v*ehicless, and so forth.[18]

As for "the *pratyekabuddha*s, and those free of a self and anything belonging to a self," even when there are neither buddhas nor the Dharma of a buddha currently extant in the world, there are still some who achieve enlightenment that are referred to as "*pratyekabuddha*s."[19] Because all worthies and *ārya*s have transcended the covetous attachment to a self and anything belonging to a self, they are referred to as "those free of a self and anything belonging to a self."

As for "I shall now explain the meaning of the ten grounds in accordance with the utterances of the Buddha," the ten grounds are set forth in proper sequence in the scriptures. Now, we shall accord with that sequence in providing a complete explanation of them.

Question: Your explanations are no different from those contained in the scriptures. Since the meaning of the scriptures is already complete, what need do we have of your additional explanation? Is this not presented simply to display your own abilities and seek fame and benefit?

Response: 22a

It is not for the sake of making a personal display
Of literary adornments,
Nor is it due to coveting profit or support
That I now compose this treatise.

Question: If it is not for such reasons as these, why do you compose this treatise?

Response:

It is because I wish, through kindness and compassion,
To liberally benefit beings.
It is not due to any other cause or condition
That I now compose this treatise.

One observes that beings endure suffering in the six destinies of rebirth while having no one to rescue or protect them. It is from a wish to bring about the liberation of such beings that one summons the power of wisdom to compose a treatise such as this. It is not for the sake of displaying one's own wisdom power, nor is it due to coveting either fame or profit. Nor is there any sort of intention involving jealousy, arrogance, or the seeking of offerings.

Question: This matter of kindly pity in benefiting beings has already been discussed in the scriptures. What need is there to explain it yet again, thus needlessly subjecting yourself to wearisome hardship?

Response:

There are those who, on merely encountering a scripture of Buddha,
Reach a penetrating knowledge of the supreme meaning.
There are others who, only on receiving a well-presented explanation,
Then gain a comprehension of its genuine meaning.

There are those persons possessed of sharp faculties and deep wisdom who, on hearing the profound scriptures spoken by the Buddha, are

immediately able to reach a penetrating comprehension of the supreme meaning. The so-called "profound scriptures" refers to those describing the ten bodhisattva grounds. "The supreme meaning" is just the meaning of the ten grounds as understood in accordance with reality.

There are those treatise-authoring masters possessed of kind and compassionate minds who, in accordance with the utterances of the Buddha, compose treatises in explanation of them that are graced by well-adorned phrases and sentences. There are those persons who, because of these, are then able to gain a penetrating comprehension of the meaning of the ten grounds. This is as described here:

> There are people who are fond of literary finery
> In which there are adornments of passages and sentences.
> There are those who are fond of verses in praise,
> And there are those who are fond of the various sorts of sentences.
>
> There are those who are fond of analogies
> And others who understand through causes and conditions.
> In each case, their preferences differ.
> Hence I adapt explanations to each and thus do not forsake them.

The "passages and sentences" above refer to those in which there is adornment of the meaning contained in the sentences but in which there are no poetic verse lines.

"Verses" refers to descriptive paraphrasing of the import of the sentence passage's meaning in which the lines are based on a fourfold, fivefold, or sevenfold word count, or on some other similar schema. The verse construction is basically of two types. In the case of the first, it is a verse form comprised of four-line stanzas referred to as a *gāthā*. In the case of the second, it is a verse-form comprised of six-line stanzas referred to as a *geya*.

"The various sorts of sentences" refers to the phraseology used in making direct statements. As for "analogies," because people may not understand an especially profound concept, one uses comparative statements to cause them to comprehend. In some cases analogies are factually based, and in other cases they are artificially contrived. As for "causes and conditions," these involve tracing causal origins.

So it is that one adapts to individual preferences "and thereby does not forsake them."

Question: Beings do delight in different things, but what business is that of yours?

Response: Because I have brought forth the resolve determined to pursue the unsurpassable path, I avoid forsaking anyone at all. Thus I endeavor to 22b
benefit them by using whatever powers I may possess. In some cases, this is done by giving material things and in other cases, it is done with Dharma. This is as described here:

> If there be a person possessed of great wisdom
> Who is able to hear a scripture like this,
> One need not explain it for him yet again,
> For he will then fathom the meaning of the ten grounds.

This is to say that, if there be a person possessed of merit and sharp faculties, then, simply by hearing the *Ten Grounds Sutra,* he will immediately comprehend its meaning and thus he will have no need of additional explanations. It is not for persons of this sort that I compose this treatise.

Question: What is it that defines such a good person?

Response: It is one who, on merely hearing the words of the Buddha, is immediately able to spontaneously comprehend them. He is like a grown man able to drink down even intensely bitter medicine when, for little children, one must mix it together with honey.

As for the "good person," generally speaking, there are ten dharmas that qualify one as such. What are the ten? They are:

First, faith;
Second, vigor;
Third, mindfulness;
Fourth, concentration;
Fifth, good physical actions;
Sixth, good verbal actions;
Seventh, good mental actions;
Eighth, an absence of greed;

Ninth, an absence of hatred;
And tenth, an absence of delusion.

As I was explaining:

When people take the text of the scriptures
To be difficult to study and recite,
If one but creates a *vibhāṣā*[20] for them,
This will provide great benefit to people such as these.

If a person with dull faculties is inclined toward indolence and arrogance, because he finds the text of the scriptures to be difficult, he may be unable to study and recite them. By "difficult," we refer to the texts being lengthy, difficult to recite, difficult to expound upon, and difficult to master.

Where there are those who are fond of such things as adorned phrases, refinement achieved through a variety of expressions, analogies, and verses—it is in order to benefit just such persons as these that I compose this treatise. Thus your earlier statement that the scriptures of the Buddha alone are sufficient to provide benefit to beings—this along with your questioning the need for additional explanations—such statements as those are incorrect. As I have stated:

The reflections made in composing this treatise
Have involved the deep-seated generation of a mind of goodness.
Through illuminating these dharmas,
One makes an incomparably fine offering to the Buddha.

Because, when composing this treatise, the reflections and analyses have been accompanied by abundant mindfulness of the Three Jewels and the bodhisattva sangha while also bearing in mind giving, moral virtue, patience, vigor, *dhyāna* concentration, and wisdom, this deep-seated generation of a mind of goodness then becomes a form of self-benefit.

Because I have expounded and elucidated this right Dharma, this also qualifies as an incomparably fine offering to the buddhas. This is what constitutes the benefiting of others. As has been stated:

In explaining the Dharma, one lights the lamp of Dharma
And erects thereby the banner of the Dharma.

This banner serves for worthies and *āryas*
As the emblematic seal of the sublime Dharma.

As I now compose this treatise,
Truth and relinquishment as well as quiescence and wisdom,
These four bases of meritorious qualities,
Are thereby naturally cultivated and accumulated.[21]

Now, in composing this treatise, these four kinds of meritorious qualities are naturally cultivated and accumulated. It is for this reason that the mind remains free of weariness in carrying out this endeavor. 22c

As for "truth," everything that is true and genuine qualifies as "truth." Among all of those things that are genuine, the words of the Buddha are what is truly genuine. This is because they are not subject to change and ruination. As I present an explanation of this Dharma of the Buddha, this constitutes the accumulation of the "truth" basis.

"Relinquishment," refers to giving. Giving is of two sorts, namely the giving of Dharma and the giving of material wealth. Among the two kinds of giving, it is the giving of Dharma that is supreme. This is illustrated by the statement of the Buddha to the *bhikṣu*s wherein he said, "First, one should engage in the giving of Dharma. Second, one should engage in the giving of material wealth. Of the two kinds of giving, it is the giving of Dharma that is supreme." So it is that, when I engage in the giving of Dharma, this constitutes the accumulation of the "relinquishment" basis.

When I explain the meaning of the ten grounds,[22] there is no accumulation of evil karma by body, mouth, or mind. Additionally, there is no arising of thoughts characterized by covetousness, anger, delusion, or any of the other fetters. Because these sorts of karmic offenses are blocked off, this constitutes the accumulation of the "quiescence" basis.[23]

When one explains the Dharma for others, then one gains great wisdom as the karmic result. This act of explaining the Dharma constitutes the accumulation of the "wisdom" basis.

It is in this manner that, in composing such a treatise as this, one accumulates the bases for these four meritorious qualities. Additionally, as I have stated:

As I explain this treatise on the ten grounds,
One's mind becomes purified.

Due to a profound zeal to develop this sort of mind,
One remains intensely diligent and free of weariness.

If anyone hears, accepts, and upholds this
So that his mind becomes possessed of purity,
I, too, find deep delight in this,
And thus singlemindedly proceed with composing this treatise.

The meaning of these two stanzas has already been made clear. Hence it is unnecessary to discuss it again. It is solely for the sake of purifying one's own mind as well as the minds of others that this explanation of the meaning of the ten grounds is undertaken. When this pure mind reaches the point that it should reach, one gains a great karmic reward. This accords with the Buddha's words to Kālodāyin when he said, "Do not feel animosity toward Ānanda. In fact, if Ānanda had not received my prediction that he would attain arhatship after my nirvana, because of this pure mind karma of his, he would have instead been bound for seven successive rebirths as the king of Paranirmitavaśavartin Heaven."[24] This is as extensively described in the scriptures.

Chapter 2

Entering the First Ground

Question: These words you have spoken have awakened my mind and I have been extremely pleased by them. If you were to now explain the ten grounds, there would certainly be many who would benefit. What are the ten grounds?

Response:

The dharma of the ten grounds contained herein
Has been, is now, and shall continue to be explained
By the buddhas of the past, the future, and the present
For the sake of all buddhas' sons,

The first ground is known as the Ground of Joyfulness.
The second is known as the Ground of Stainlessness.
The third is known as the Ground of Shining Light.
The fourth is known as the Ground of Blazing Brilliance.

The fifth is known as the Difficult-to-conquer Ground.
The sixth is known as the Ground of Direct Presence.
The seventh is known as the Far-reaching Ground. 23a
The eighth is known as the Ground of Immovability.

The ninth is known as the Ground of Excellent Intelligence.
The tenth is known as the Ground of the Dharma Cloud.
In analyzing the aspects of the ten grounds,
We shall next present extensive explanations.[25]

"Herein" refers to the sphere of the meaning set forth in the Great Vehicle. "Ten" is simply a term of enumeration. "Grounds" refers to the various stations on which a bodhisattva resides in accordance with his roots of goodness.

"Buddhas" refers to all tathāgatas of the ten directions and three periods of time. "Explaining" refers to instruction and explication. As for "buddhas' sons," the true sons of all buddhas are the bodhisattvas. It is for this reason that the bodhisattvas are referred to as "buddhas' sons."

It is because all buddhas of the past, the future and the present explain these ten grounds that the text says, "has been, is now, and shall continue to be explained."

As the bodhisattva on the first ground begins to gain the flavor of good dharmas, his mind abounds in joyfulness. It is for this reason that it is referred to as the "Ground of Joyfulness" (*pramuditā*).

On the second ground, as one cultivates the path of the ten good karmic deeds, one leaves behind all stains. It is for this reason that it is referred to as the "Ground of Stainlessness" (*vimala*).

On the third ground, as one engages in vastly comprehensive learning and speaks Dharma for beings, one becomes able to provide radiant illumination. It is for this reason that it is referred to as the "Ground of Shining Light" (*prabhākara*).

On the fourth ground, one's giving, moral virtue, and extensive learning so increase that one's awe-inspiring qualities blaze forth abundantly. It is for this reason that it is referred to as the "Ground of Blazing Brilliance" (*arciṣmati*).

On the fifth ground, the power of one's meritorious qualities becomes so completely full that none of the *māra*s are able to bring about one's ruin. It is for this reason that it is referred to as the "Difficult-to-conquer Ground" (*sudurjaya*).

On the sixth ground, the issue of obstruction by *māra*s has come to an end and all path dharmas of the bodhisattva have manifest directly before him. It is for this reason that it is referred to as the "Ground of Direct Presence" (*abhimukha*).

On the seventh ground, one has gone far beyond the three realms and has gained close proximity to the station in which one becomes a Dharma king. It is for this reason that it is referred to as the "Far-reaching Ground" (*dūraṃgama*).

On the eighth ground, one's vows cannot be moved even by *deva*s, by Māra, by Brahmā, by any *śramaṇa,* or by any brahman. It is for this reason that it is referred to as the "Ground of Immovability" (*acala*).

On the ninth ground, one's wisdom becomes ever more radiant, supple, and superior. It is for this reason that it is referred to as the "Ground of Excellent Intelligence" (*sādhumatī*).

On the tenth ground, the bodhisattva becomes able to simultaneously rain down the Dharma rain in countless worlds throughout the ten directions just as when, after the *kalpa*-ending blaze, there then falls a great universally drenching rain. It is for this reason that it is referred to as the "Dharma Cloud Ground" (*dharmamegha*).

Question: Now that we have heard the names of the ten grounds, how does one enter the first ground, gain the characteristic features of that ground, and carry forth cultivation of that ground?

Response:[26]

Having densely planted one's roots of goodness,
Having thoroughly practiced the practices,
Having well accumulated all the provisions,
Having thoroughly made offerings to all buddhas,

Having become protected by the good spiritual friend,
Having completely developed the resolute intentions,
Having become compassionately mindful of beings,
And having resolute faith in the unsurpassable Dharma—

Once one has become completely equipped with these eight dharmas,
At one's own behest, one should bring forth the vow, saying,
"After I have achieved my own liberation,
I shall return and liberate other beings."

For the sake of gaining the ten powers,
One enters the congregation of those at the stage of certainty.[27]
Then one is born into the family of the tathāgatas 23b
That is free of any transgressions or faults.

One immediately turns away from the worldly path
And enters the supreme path that goes beyond the world.
It is because of this that one gains the first ground.
This ground is referred to as the "Ground of Joyfulness."

"Plants one's roots of goodness densely" refers to cultivating and accumulating all forms of meritorious qualities, doing so in a manner that accords with Dharma. This is what is meant by "dense planting of roots of goodness."

"Roots of goodness" refers to not being influenced by greed, not being influenced by hatred, and not being influenced by delusion. It is because all good dharmas are born from these three factors that one is then able to speak of "roots of goodness." So too, all forms of bad dharmas are born from greed, hatred, and delusion. It is because of this that these three are known as "roots of evil."

In the Abhidharma, these are distinguished in various ways whereby they are categorized as connected with the desire realm, as connected with the form realm, as connected with the formless realm, or as having no specific connection, the result being that, taken together, there are twelve such categories. Additionally, they are categorized as being "associated with the mind," or as "not associated with the mind," thus yielding a total of twenty-four categories. Of these [twelve roots of goodness], the roots of goodness free of the contaminants are cultivated and attained in the acquisition of *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi,* whereas the other nine [roots of goodness] are cultivated and accumulated on the bodhisattva grounds.

Additionally, when one has not yet brought forth the resolve, one engages in cultivating and accumulating them over a long period of time. In some cases, three of these categories may be present in a single thought. In some cases, six of these categories may be present in a single thought. In some cases, nine of these categories may be present in a single thought. And in some cases, twelve of these categories may be present in a single thought.

In some cases, one collects only those associated with the mind while not collecting those unassociated with the mind. In some cases, one collects those unassociated with the mind while not accumulating those associated with the mind. In some cases, one collects those associated with the mind as well as those unassociated with the mind. In some cases, one accumulates neither those associated with the mind nor those unassociated with the mind. All such analytic distinctions regarding roots of goodness are such as one will find extensively discussed in the Abhidharma.

The roots of goodness that are relevant here are those that are planted as one strives to realize the unsurpassable path for the sake of beings. All good dharmas that one cultivates may be referred to as "roots of goodness." It is because they are able to produce the wisdom of all-knowledge that they are referred to as "roots of goodness."

In "practicing the practices," "thorough practice" refers to that which is characterized by purity. "The practices" refers to the upholding of the moral precepts. One remains pure in upholding the moral precepts while practicing in accordance with the correct sequence. It is when this upholding of the moral precepts is combined with seven dharmas that it qualifies as "thorough practice."

Which factors constitute these seven? They are as follows:

First, a sense of shame;

Second, a dread of blame;

Third, extensive learning;

Fourth, vigor;

Fifth, mindfulness;

Sixth, wisdom;

And seventh, pure livelihood characterized by pure physical and verbal actions.

As one implements these seven dharmas, one remains perfect in upholding all of the moral precepts. It is this that qualifies as "thorough practice of the practices."

Additionally, it is explained in the scriptures that the *dhyāna*s constitute the stations in which one implements the practices. Hence it is the realization of the *dhyāna*s that constitutes the thorough practice of the practices. In this treatise, we do not assert that it is definitely required that one use the *dhyāna*s in the generation of the resolve. Why is this? When the Buddha was abiding in the world, countless beings brought forth the resolve but did not necessarily possess the *dhyāna*s when they did so. Moreover, the practice of the laity's householders also qualifies as thorough practice."[28]

As for "having well accumulated all the provisions," this refers to the [other] factors mentioned in the above verse, namely:

Densely planting roots of goodness;

Thoroughly practicing the practices;

Making many offerings to the buddhas;

Being protected by the good spiritual friend;

Completely developing the resolute intentions;[29]

Being compassionately mindful of beings;

And having resolute faith in the supreme Dharma.
These are what constitute the "provisions."

Also, the fundamental practice of the good dharmas—these must cer-
23c tainly have been cultivated. These also constitute "provisions." Specifically, these include:

Giving;
Patience;
A straightforward character;
A mind that refrains from flattery;
Dwelling harmoniously with others;
Happiness free of resentment;
Being, by nature, utterly committed [to the practice];
Not concealing one's faults;
Not cherishing one-sided attachments;
Not being perversely cruel;
Not being contentious;
Not being presumptuous;
Not being negligent;
Doing away with arrogance;
Remaining free of affectation;
Not praising oneself;
Being able to endure things as they are;
Possessing a decisive mind;
Being able to courageously accept whatever comes;
Not abandoning or changing teachers;
Finding satisfaction with but few desires;
And being fond of solitude.

Once one's practice accords with all such dharmas, one can then gradually perfect the especially supreme meritorious qualities. It is because these dharmas have not yet become solidly established that they are referred to as "fundamental" practices.[30] If one departs from these dharmas, one cannot advance to realization of the superior and sublime qualities. It is because of this that the combination of these fundamental practices and the above eight dharmas constitute the first ground's "provisions."

Now, as for "thoroughly making offerings to all buddhas," this is just like the practice of those bodhisattvas who, in life after life, always make many offerings to all buddhas, doing so in accordance with the Dharma.

Offerings are of two types. The first involves listening well to the Great Vehicle's right Dharma, no matter whether that presentation is extensive or abridged. The second involves such matters as making offerings of the four requisites while providing respectful and reverential service. It is the complete implementation of these two dharmas in making offerings to the buddhas that qualifies as "thoroughly making offerings to all buddhas."

As for "good spiritual friend," although the bodhisattva has four different types of good spiritual friends, the type that is being referred to here is the one who is able to teach him to enter into the Great Vehicle and to perfect the *pāramitā*s while also being able to cause him to dwell on the ten grounds. This refers then specifically to those buddhas, bodhisattvas, and even *śrāvaka* disciples who are able to instruct, benefit, and inspire him with joy in the Great Vehicle Dharma while also preventing him from retreating from it.

"Protecting" refers to [the good spiritual friend's] ability to always maintain kindness and sympathy as he instructs and influences one to increase his roots of goodness. It is precisely this that is meant by "protection."

"Complete development of resolute intentions" refers to being deeply delighted in the buddha vehicle, the unsurpassable Great Vehicle, the vehicle of all-knowledge. This is what is meant by "completely developing the resolute intentions."

Question: In the "Unity Chapter,"[31] Akṣayamati Bodhisattva tells Śāriputra:

> Every instance of a bodhisattva's production of an intention is a "resolute intention." In proceeding from one ground to another ground, it is known as "the advancing mind." In the increasing of meritorious qualities, it is known as "the excelling mind." In the realization of unsurpassable endeavors, it is known as "the mind of utmost supremacy." In its assimilation of superior dharmas, it is known as "the superior mind."
>
> In its direct manifestation of the acquisition of dharmas of the buddhas, it is known as "the mind of direct manifestation." In its accumulation of beneficial dharmas, it is known as "the mind that engages with conditions." In its penetrating understanding of all dharmas, it is

known as "the mind that achieves liberation." In its tireless fulfillment of vows, it is known as "the resolute mind." In its fulfillment of vows, it is known as "the joyful mind."

In its independent achievement of endeavors, it is known as "the unaccompanied mind." In its abandonment of any signs of corruption, it is known as "the well-trained mind." In its freedom from all forms of evil, it is known as "the mind of goodness." In its separating far from evil people, it is known as "the unmixed mind."

In its making a gift even of one's head, it is known as "the mind that relinquishes what is difficult to relinquish." In its rescuing of persons who have broken precepts, it is known as "the mind that supports those who
24a find difficulty in the precepts." In its enduring of evil inflicted by inferior beings, it is known as "the mind that is patient with what is difficult." In its ability to forgo the realization of nirvana, it is known as "the mind that remains vigorous even when difficult." In its refraining from coveting [states encountered in] *dhyāna,* it is known as "the mind that cultivates *dhyāna* concentration even when it is difficult."

In its insatiable development of the roots of goodness that aid acquisition of the path, it is known as "the mind that maintains wisdom even when it is difficult." In its ability to bring all endeavors to completion, it is known as "the mind that completes all practices." In its skillfulness in carrying on wisdom-based reflection, it is known as "the mind that abandons pride, extreme pride, and pride in oneself."

In its not cherishing any sort of reward, it is known as "the mind that serves as a field of merit for all beings." In its contemplation of the profound dharmas of the buddhas, it is known as "the fearless mind." In its refraining from obstructionism, it is known as "the mind that increases meritorious qualities." In its constant production of vigor, it is known as "the inexhaustible mind." In its ability to shoulder even heavy burdens, it is known as "the undiscouraged mind."

Moreover, as for the meaning of "the resolute intentions," this refers to [the mind of] one who remains equally mindful of beings and brings forth an all-encompassing kindness for all of them. He makes offerings to those who are worthy and good, is compassionately mindful of evil people, and esteems and reveres teachers and elders.

He rescues those who have no one to rescue them. He serves as a refuge for those who have no refuge. He serves as an island for those who have no island. He serves as the ultimate resort for those who have no last resort. He is able to serve as a companion for those who have no companions.

Even in the midst of those who are devious, he practices the straight mind. Even when among those people who have become corrupted, he practices genuine and correct thought. Even when among those who engage in flattery, his mind is free of flattery.

Among those who are ungrateful, he practices gratitude. Among those who are unaware of how to act, he practices the correct way of acting. Among those who are unbeneficial, he is able to act in a beneficial manner.

Among those beings inclined toward deviance, he practices right action. Among arrogant people, he remains free of arrogant behavior. Among those who do not accord with instructions, he does not become resentful or angry. Even among beings who have committed offenses, he always strives to protect them. Even amid all of the transgressions committed by beings, he refrains from focusing on their faults.

He makes offerings to those who serve as fields of merit, accords with their instructions, and finds no difficulty in accepting their transformative teaching. When dwelling in a forest hermitage[32] he is singlemindedly vigorous. He does not seek benefits or offerings and does not indulge any stinting attachment to his own body or life.

Moreover, because his mind is inwardly pure, he is free of deceptiveness. Because he practices good verbal karma, he does not praise himself. Because he is readily satisfied, he does not act in an intimidating fashion. Because his mind is free of defilement, he behaves gently and harmoniously. Because he accumulates roots of goodness, he is able to enter the realm of samsara. Because he acts for the sake of all beings, he patiently endures all forms of suffering.

The bodhisattva possesses an inexhaustible number of such characteristics associated with resolute intentions.[33]

Now, however, you only present a simple explanation of the characteristics of resolute intentions. How is this not a deficient explanation?

Response: No, this is not a deficient presentation. Akṣayamati provides in a single place a comprehensive description of all of the characteristics of the resolute intentions. However, here, we are concerned with their distribution as they occur on the various grounds.

This *Ten Grounds Sutra* provides specific explanations of the characteristics of the resolute intentions as they occur on each succeeding ground. Thus the bodhisattva in every case gains realizations of aspects of the resolute intentions in accordance with the particular ground upon which he abides. The meaning of the resolute intentions is defined according to each particular ground.

Now, on the first ground, we describe two types of resolute intention: The first is the one involved in bringing forth great vows. The second is the one involved in dwelling at the stage of certainty.

Therefore one should realize that it is by according with their respective locations on each of the ten grounds that one presents a thorough explanation of [these various aspects of what constitutes] "the resolute intentions." Thus the circumstantial basis of your challenge, "How is this not a deficient presentation?" is incorrect.

24b Now, as for "having become compassionately mindful of beings," it is on the basis of having completely developed compassion that one is referred to as "compassionate." What then is meant by "compassion"? This refers to a feeling of commiseration and pity for beings that also seeks to rescue them from the sufferings associated with their difficulties.

When it states that "one has resolute faith in supreme dharmas," this means that, with respect to the dharmas of the Buddha, one's power of faith has become completely penetrating.

As for making the vow in which one resolves, "After I have achieved my own liberation, I shall [return and] liberate beings," this vow is the very origin of all buddhas' Dharma.[34] If one abandons this vow, then one cannot succeed in achieving the realization [of buddhahood]. It is for this reason that one brings forth this vow.

Question: Why do you not say, "I shall bring about the liberation of beings," but rather say instead, "After I have achieved my own liberation, I shall then [return and] bring about the liberation of beings"?

Response: If one has as not yet achieved one's own liberation, one cannot liberate others. This is just as when one has oneself sunken down into the mud. How then could one be able to rescue and extricate anyone else? This is also just as when one has been carried away by floodwaters and is thus incapable of rescuing others from drowning. It is for this reason that it says, "After I have achieved my own liberation, I shall then [return and] liberate others." This is as described in the following verse:

> If a person liberates himself from what is fearsome,
> He can then liberate those who take refuge in him.
> If one has not become liberated from doubt and regret,
> How could he liberate those taking refuge in him?
>
> If a person has not yet become good himself,
> He remains unable to influence others to become good.
> If one has not reached quiescent cessation himself,
> How then could he cause others to reach that quiescence?[35]

Therefore one first becomes thoroughly quiescent oneself and then later takes up the transformative teaching of others. This is also just as described in a verse from the *Dharmapada:*

> If one is able to establish himself
> In the station of what is good,
> Afterward, one is able to establish other people
> In that same benefit that one has gained himself.[36]

It is commonly the case that beings first benefit themselves and only afterward are able to benefit others. And why is this? This is as described in the following verse:

> If one accomplishes one's own self-benefit,
> Only then is one able to benefit others.
> If one forsakes oneself wishing to benefit others,
> One fails to be beneficial and later feels distress and regret.

It is for this reason that [the preceding verse] reads, "After I have achieved my own liberation, I shall [return and] liberate beings."

Question: It is in order to acquire what sort of benefit is it that one becomes able to accomplish this endeavor and enter the stage of certainty? Also, with what sort of resolve does one become able to bring forth this vow?

Response: It is in order to acquire a buddha's ten powers that one becomes able to accomplish this endeavor and it is in order to enter the stage of certainty that one becomes able to bring forth this vow.

Question: What then are the ten powers of a buddha?

Response: [As for the ten powers, they are as follows]:[37]

The Buddha possesses a completely penetrating comprehension of the causes and effects involved in all dharmas. This is the first power.

He knows in accordance with reality the past, future, and present stations wherein one creates karma and undergoes retribution as the effect. This is the second power.

He knows in accordance with reality the characteristic aspects of all *dhyāna* absorptions and *samādhi*s, their distinctions, their defilement and purity, and their entry and emergence. This is the third power.

He knows in accordance with reality the relative sharpness or dullness of all faculties possessed by beings. This is the fourth power.

He knows in accordance with reality the differences among beings inclinations. This is the fifth power.

He knows in accordance with reality all the world's many different sorts of realms.[38] This is the sixth power.

He knows in accordance with reality the paths that lead to all destinations. This is the seventh power.

24c He knows in accordance with reality all the circumstances of previous lives. This is the eighth power.

He knows in accordance with reality all circumstances involved in all births and deaths. This is the ninth power.

He knows in accordance with reality the matter of the cessation of the contaminants. This is the tenth power.

For the sake of acquiring ten powers of the buddha such as these, one brings forth the vow with great resolve and then directly enters the group of those who have reached the stage of certainty.

Question: Is it generally so of everyone that, once they first bring forth the resolve, they then possess such a characteristic?

Response: There may be some people who claim that when one first brings forth the resolve, one then possesses such a characteristic. However, this is not actually the case. And why is this? This is a situation in which one should make distinctions. One should not set forth a fixed answer to this. Why? It should not be the case that, when all bodhisattvas first bring forth the resolve, they all then enter the stage of certainty.

In some cases, on first bringing forth the resolve, one *does* immediately enter the stage of certainty. In some cases, however, one gradually cultivates meritorious qualities. Take for example Śākyamuni Buddha. When he first brought forth the resolve, he did not immediately enter the stage of certainty. Rather, it was only after he had accumulated meritorious qualities and encountered Burning Lamp Buddha that he then entered the stage of certainty. Therefore, if you were to assert that all bodhisattvas directly enter the stage of certainty upon first generating the resolve, that would be an erroneous theory.

Question: If it is an erroneous theory, why do you claim that it is in reliance upon this resolve that one enters the stage of certainty?

Response: There are in fact bodhisattvas who, on first generating the resolve, then immediately gain entry into the stage of certainty. In such a case, it *is* in reliance upon this resolve that they become able to gain the first ground. It is on account of this particular category of persons that it is said that, on first generating the resolve, one may then immediately enter the stage of certainty.

Question: What is the nature of these bodhisattvas' initial resolve and Śākyamuni Buddha's initial generation of the resolve?

Response:

This resolve is not admixed with any of the afflictions;
This resolve is continuous and does not wish for any other vehicle;
This resolve is solid and cannot be overcome by any non-Buddhist;
This resolve cannot be destroyed by any of the many sorts of *māra*s;
This resolve is always able to accumulate roots of goodness;
This resolve is able to know the impermanence of all conditioned things;

This resolve, even while remaining unmoving, is able to accumulate the dharmas of a buddha;

This resolve is free of the hindrances and abandons all wrong actions;

This resolve is established in stability because it is unshakable;

This resolve is peerless because it remains free of contradictions;

This resolve is like *vajra* because it possesses a penetrating comprehension of all dharmas;

This resolve is inexhaustible because it accumulates an inexhaustible amount of merit;

This resolve regards others equally because it sees all beings as equal;

This resolve remains free of "high" or "low" due to making no discriminations;

This resolve is pure because, by nature, it is free of defilement;

This resolve is stainless because its intelligence is characterized by radiant illumination;

This resolve remains free of defilement because it never relinquishes its resolute intentions;

This resolve is vast because its kindness is as expansive as empty space;

This resolve is magnanimous because it takes in all beings;

This resolve is unobstructed because it has arrived at unimpeded wisdom;

This resolve is universal in its reach because it never cuts off its great compassion;

This resolve is never cut off because it is able to practice correct dedication of merit;

This resolve is that toward which the multitude proceeds because it is praised by the wise;

This resolve is a fit object of admiring regard because even adherents of the Small Vehicle look up to it;

25a This resolve is difficult to observe, because no being is able to see it;

This resolve is difficult to destroy because it has been able to skillfully enter the Dharma of the Buddha;

This resolve serves as a dwelling because it is the place in which all sources of happiness abide;

This resolve is adorned because it possesses the provision of merit;

This resolve is skillfully selective because it possesses the provision of wisdom;

This resolve is completely generous because it takes giving as one of the provisions;[39]

This resolve is attended by great vows because it possesses the provision of moral virtue;

This resolve is difficult to hinder because it possesses the provision of patience;

This resolve is difficult to overcome because it possesses the provision of vigor;

This resolve is quiescent because it possesses the provision of *dhyāna* absorption;

This resolve is harmless because it possesses the provision of wisdom;

This resolve remains unimpeded by hatred because its mind of kindness is deeply seated;[40]

This resolve is deeply rooted because its mind of compassion is fully established;

This resolve abides in happiness because its mind of sympathetic joy is fully established;

This resolve is unmoved by either pain or pleasure because its mind of equanimity is fully established;

This resolve is the object of protective mindfulness because of the spiritual power of the buddhas;

This resolve remains continuous because the lineage of the Three Jewels remains unsevered.

Countless meritorious qualities such as these adorn the initial resolve of those that abide in the stage of certainty. This is as extensively described in the "Akṣayamati" chapter.[41]

"This resolve is not admixed with any of the afflictions" refers to the resolve not being conjoined with any of the two hundred and ninety-four afflictions cut off on the path of seeing the truths (*darśana-mārga*) and on the path of meditation (*bhāvanā-mārga*). Hence it is said that "it is not admixed."

As for "this resolve is continuous and does not wish for any other vehicle," as it continues forth from the initial production of the resolve, it does not wish for the vehicles of the *śrāvaka* disciples or the *pratyekabuddha*s. It is because one remains motivated solely by the goal of reaching

anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi that it is referred to as "continuous" and as "not wishing for any other vehicle."

One should understand this forty-statement discussion in this manner.

Question: You are asserting that this resolve is permanently enduring. However, all conditioned dharmas are impermanent. This is as explained in the *Seals of the Dharma Sutra,* wherein it states that the practitioner is to contemplate the world as empty, as devoid of anything that is permanent, and as containing nothing not subject to destruction. How then does this matter not involve a contradiction?

Response: You pose this challenge because you fail to grasp the correct principle of this concept. It is not the case that any claim is being made herein for "permanency" of resolve. Although we spoke of constancy here, this was merely a reference to the fact that one who has initially generated the resolve and reached the stage of certainty is definitely "always able to accumulate roots of goodness." It is because one does not rest and does not desist from doing this that we refer here to such constancy.

[Returning again to the verses],[42] as for "being born into the family of the tathāgatas," "the family of the tathāgatas" is the family of the buddhas. In "the tathāgatas," ("Thus Come Ones"), the "thus" (*tathatā*) is a reference to reality whereas the "come" (*āgata*) is a reference to the ultimate point that is reached. It is because they have arrived at genuine reality that they are referred to as "Thus Come Ones."

What then is it that constitutes "genuine reality"? It is what is referred to as "nirvana." It is because it involves no falseness or deceptiveness that this is referred to as "according with reality." This is as explained in the sutra where the Buddha tells a *bhikṣu,* "The foremost among the truths of the *ārya*s is free of deceptiveness. This is nirvana."[43]

Additionally, "thus" is a reference to being characterized by indestructibility. It is a reference to the so-called "true character of dharmas." "Come" is a reference to wisdom. One is referred to as a "Thus Come One" because, having arrived in the realm of the true character of dharmas, one possesses a penetrating comprehension of its meaning.

Also, it is emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness that qualify as being "thus." When the buddhas "come," they have arrived at these three gates to

liberation while also then being able to cause beings to reach these gates. They are therefore referred to as "Thus Come Ones."

Furthermore, "thus" is a reference to the four truths. It is because they see the four truths in all their modes that they are referred to as "Thus Come Ones."

Moreover, "thus" refers to the six *pāramitā*s, namely: giving, moral virtue, patience, vigor, *dhyāna* concentration, and wisdom. It is because they utilize these six dharmas to "come" and arrive at the ground of buddhahood that they are referred to as "Thus Come Ones."

Additionally, it is in reference to their possession of the four bases of meritorious qualities consisting of truth, relinquishment, quiescence, and wisdom that they are referred to as "the Thus Come Ones." It is because they utilize these four dharmas to "come" and arrive at the ground of buddhahood that they are referred to as "Thus Come Ones."

Also, all of the dharmas of a buddha are synonymous with "suchness" [and hence are "thus"]. It is because this suchness "comes forth" and extends 25b
to all buddhas that they are referred to as "Thus Come Ones."

Then again, all of the bodhisattva grounds including the grounds of "Joyfulness," "Stainlessness," "Shining Light," "Blazing Brilliance," "Difficult-to-conquer," "Direct Presence," "Far-reaching," "Immovability," "Excellent Intelligence," and "Dharma Cloud" are synonymous with "suchness" (*tathatā*). It is because the bodhisattvas "come" and arrive at *anuttarā-samyaksaṃbodhi* by way of these ten grounds that they are therefore known as "*Thus* Come Ones" (tathāgata).

Additionally, it is because they "come forth" by the eightfold path of the *ārya*s that accords with reality that they are referred to as "Thus Come Ones."

Also, it is because they "come forth" and arrive at buddhahood on the two "feet" of provisional means and wisdom that they are referred to as "Thus Come Ones."

And it is because they went forth in "suchness," never to return again, that they are referred to as "Thus Gone Ones" (*tathā* plus *gata*).

"Tathāgatas" is a reference to all buddhas throughout the ten directions and the three periods of time. It is the family consisting of all of these buddhas that is referred to as the "the family of the tathāgatas." It is because these bodhisattvas now travel along the path of the tathāgatas and do so

continuously and unceasingly that one speaks of their "birth into the family of the tathāgatas."

Furthermore, it is because these bodhisattvas are certainly bound to become tathāgatas that one refers to their "birth into the family of the tathāgatas." This is just as when someone possessed of the marks of a wheel-turning king is born into the family of a wheel-turning king. This person will certainly become a wheel-turning king. So too it is in the case of these bodhisattvas who, in this same way, are born into the family of the tathāgatas. It is because they have brought forth this resolve that they will certainly become tathāgatas. This is what is meant by "birth into the family of the tathāgatas."

Now, as for "the family of the tathāgatas," there are those who assert that this is a reference to the four bases of meritorious qualities, namely truth, relinquishment, quiescence, and wisdom. It is because all of tathāgatas are born from these factors that they are collectively referred to as "the family of the tathāgatas."

Then again, there are those who assert that it is based on *prajñā-pāramitā* and skillful means that this is known as "the family of the tathāgatas." This accords with the *Sutra on the Factors Assisting the Path,* wherein it states:

> The perfection of wisdom is the peerless mother
> And it is skillful means that serves as the father.
> It is due to the act of begetting that one is known as a father,
> And due to raising and nourishing that one is known as a mother.

Throughout the world, it is the father and mother that are taken as the basis of the family. It is because these two factors are analogous to a father and mother that they are referred to as the "family."

There are also those persons who claim that goodness and wisdom are what constitute the family of the buddhas. It is from these two dharmas that the buddhas are born. This being the case, these two then constitute the very root of all good dharmas.

This accords with a statement in the scriptures that states, "When these two are practiced to completion, one becomes able to realize right Dharma. Goodness is the father and wisdom is the mother. It is with the coming together of these two that one then refers to 'the family of the buddhas.'" This is as explained in the following verse:

A bodhisattva takes the dharma of goodness as his father 25c
And takes wisdom as his mother.
Every single one of the tathāgatas
Is in every case born from these two.

There are yet others who claim that the *pratyutpanna samādhi*[44] and the great compassion constitute the family of the buddhas and that it is from these two dharmas that all tathāgatas are born. Of these two, it is the *pratyutpanna samādhi* that serves as the father and the great compassion that serves as the mother.

Then again, one may say that the *pratyutpanna samādhi* serves as the father whereas it is the unproduced-dharmas patience that serves as the mother. This accords with a verse from the *Bodhisaṃbhāra*[*-śāstra*], which states:

It is the *pratyutpanna samādhi* that serves as father.
Great compassion and the unproduced [patience] serve as mother.
Every single one of the tathāgatas
is born from these two dharmas.[45]

[Returning to the "grounds entry" verse], as for "the family [of the tathāgatas] having no transgressions or faults,"[46] this is because that family is pure. "Purity" here refers to the six *pāramitā*s, the four bases of meritorious qualities,[47] skillful means, *prajñā-pāramitā,* goodness, wisdom, the *pratyutpanna samādhi,* great compassion, and all of the forms of patient acquiescence. It is because all of these dharmas are themselves pure and "free of any transgressions or faults" that one then refers to the "family" itself as "pure." It is because these bodhisattvas take these dharmas as the basis of their "family" that they qualify as being "free of any transgressions or faults."

They turn away from transgressions and faults. As for their "turning away from the worldly path and entering the supreme world-transcending path," this reference to "the worldly path" is just a reference to that very path in which common people course. "Turning away" refers to "desisting." As for the path of the common person, it is unable to ultimately take one to nirvana, for one is bound therein to always come and go in samsara. This is what is meant by "the path of the common person."

As for "world transcendence," it is by virtue of the fact that, in reliance upon this path, one then succeeds in escaping from the three realms that it is therefore referred to as "the supreme world-transcending path."[48]

As for [that path being described in the verse as] "supreme," it is because it is sublime that one refers to it as supreme. As for "entering" [the supreme path], it is because one engages in right practice of the path that reference is made to "entering." It is in reliance upon this resolve that one enters the first ground, the ground referred to as the "Ground of Joyfulness."

Question: Why is it that the first ground is said to be characterized by "joyfulness"?

Response:

It is just as with one who gains the first fruit
And who is then ultimately bound to reach nirvana.
When the bodhisattva gains this ground,
His mind is always abundantly joyful.

He then naturally succeeds in extending
The lineage of all the buddhas, the tathāgatas.
It is for this reason that a person such as this
Acquires the designation as "one who is worthy and good."

As for its being "just as with one who gains the first fruit," this means that it is just as when someone gains the path of a stream-enterer.[49] He succeeds thereby in completely shutting the gates leading to the three wretched destinies.[50] He has seen the Dharma, entered the Dharma, and gained the Dharma. He abides unshakably in the dharma of stability and is ultimately bound to reach nirvana. Because he has severed the dharmas that are severed at the point of seeing the truths, his mind is filled with immense joyfulness, [for he realizes then that], even if he were to fall asleep or become indolent, he could not stray into some twenty-ninth realm of existence.[51]

[This first-ground bodhisattva's circumstance] is also analogous to that of someone who has sliced a single hair into a hundred parts and then used but a single one of those hair segments to draw forth two or three drops from the great ocean's waters. [He realizes that] the suffering already brought to an end at this point is comparable to all of the waters of the great ocean,

whereas what has not yet been brought to an end is comparable only to those two or three drops. [Because he realizes this], his mind is filled with great joyfulness. 26a

After the bodhisattva has thus gained the first ground, he is then known as one who has been "born into the family of the tathāgatas." At this point, he becomes one worthy of offerings and reverence from all *deva*s, dragons, *yakṣa*s, *gandharva*s, *asura*s, *garuḍa*s, *kiṃnara*s, *mahoraga*s, *deva* kings, Brahmā kings, *śramaṇa*s, the brahmans, all *śrāvaka* disciples, *pratyekabuddha*s, and others. Why? It is because his family is one that is free of any transgressions or faults.

He then "turns away from the worldly path and enters the world-transcending path." He then only delights in revering the buddhas, in establishing himself in the four bases of meritorious qualities, and in gaining the flavor of the six *pāramitā*s. Because he has prevented the severance of the lineage of all buddhas, his mind is filled with great joyfulness.

The entire quantity of this bodhisattva's remaining suffering is comparable to but two or three drops of water. Then, although there might remain a hundred thousand *koṭi*s of *kalpa*s before he gains *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi,* his remaining suffering is still only like two or three drops of water when compared to that great ocean of suffering that he has already successfully brought to an end, namely that suffering that he has endured throughout beginningless lifetimes in samsara. It is for these reasons that this ground is known as the "Ground of Joyfulness."

Chapter 3

The Characteristics of the Ground

Question: What are the characteristics of the bodhisattva who has gained the first ground?

Response:

The bodhisattva who abides on the first ground
Has much that he is able to endure,
He is not fond of struggle or disputation,
And, for the most part, his mind is joyous and pleased.

He always delights in purity.
He has a compassionate mind and feels pity for beings.
He has no thoughts of hatred or anger,
And, for the most part, practices these seven things.

If a bodhisattva reaches the first ground, he immediately acquires these seven characteristics. "Having much that he is able to endure," refers to his ability to cultivate and accumulate measureless merit and roots of goodness in order to accomplish a difficult endeavor. He comes and goes in samsara for countless *kalpa*s as numerous as the sands of the Ganges as he instructs evil beings who are obdurate-minded and difficult to transform. Still, his mind does not retreat or withdraw. It is because he is able to bear taking on such endeavors as these that he is said to be "able to endure."

As for his being "free of struggle and disputation," although he is able to achieve great works, he still refrains from struggling with or opposing others as he does so.

As for his being "joyous," this is a function of his ability to bring about both physical pliancy and a peaceful, stable of mind. As for his being "pleased," his mind becomes buoyantly exultant when encountering ever more superior dharmas.

As for his "purity," he abandons all forms of defilement associated with
26b the afflictions. There are those who explain that it is his resolute conviction that qualifies him as "pure." There are others who explain that it is solid faith that makes him pure.

This pure mind is in regard to the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha jewels, is in regard to the truths of suffering, origination, cessation, and the path, is in regard to the six *pāramitā*s, is in regard to the ten grounds of the bodhisattva, and is in regard to the dharmas of emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness. In short, in every case, his mind abides in pure faith with regard to all of the profound scriptures, with regard to the bodhisattvas, and with regard to all buddha dharmas that they practice.

As for "compassion" with regard to beings, he feels pity for them and strives to rescue and protect them. This compassion gradually increases and develops, thus transforming into the great compassion. There are those who explain that, in its presence within the mind of the bodhisattva, it may be referred to simply as "compassion," whereas, when this compassion actually reaches to other beings, it then qualifies as the "great compassion."

The great compassion is born in reliance upon ten types of causes and conditions. This is as extensively discussed in relation to the third ground.

As for "not hating," because this bodhisattva has not yet completely severed the fetters, it is said of him that, for the most part,[52] he practices goodness and his mind is seldom beset by animosity.

When a bodhisattva such as this abides on the first ground, because his mind is not prone to fearfulness or discouragement, he is therefore said to be able to have patience. It is because he is fond of quiescence that he is said "to not be fond of struggle or disputation."

It is because he is able to accord with [the path to] *anuttarāsamyak-saṃbodhi* and the great compassion that it states "for the most part, his mind is joyous."

It is because he has abandoned the turbidity of all affliction-caused defilements that his mind is always pure in its relationship with the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha jewels, as well as with bodhisattvas.

Because his mind abides in peace and security and remains untroubled, it states here that "his mind is pleased."

It is because he feels profound pity for beings that he is said to be "compassionate."

It is because his mind always delights in practicing kindness that it is said to be "free of hatred."

These are the characteristics of the bodhisattva who dwells on the first ground.

Question: Why not say of the bodhisattva on the first ground that he "possesses" these seven traits rather than say of him that he has them "for the most part"?

Response: Because this bodhisattva has not yet completely done away with the contaminants,[53] there are times when he may be somewhat indolent and thus have temporary lapses in demonstrating these traits. It is because, for the most part, he *does* implement them that the text states "for the most part." On the first ground, he has already acquired these dharmas. On the subsequent grounds, they develop and increase.

Question: On the first ground, the Ground of Joyfulness, this bodhisattva for the most part experiences joyfulness. Is it because he has acquired meritorious qualities that he experiences joyfulness or is it rather because of it simply being an inherent dharma of this ground that one should experience joyfulness? Why is it that he experiences joyfulness here?

Response:

He is always mindful of the buddhas,
Of the great dharmas of the buddhas,
Of those at the station of certain success, and of their rare practices.
It is because of this that he is for the most part joyful.

It is due to reasons for joyfulness such as these that, on the first ground, the bodhisattva's mind is mostly joyful.

As for his "being mindful of the buddhas," he is mindful of Burning Lamp and the other buddhas of the past, is mindful of Amitābha and the other buddhas of the present, and is mindful of Maitreya and the other buddhas of the future. He "is always mindful" of them just as if they were appearing directly in front of him and realizes that, throughout the three realms of existence, there is no one able to be superior to them. It is for this reason that he is mostly joyful. 26c

As for his being mindful of "the great dharmas of the buddhas," to state it briefly, this refers to the forty dharmas exclusive to the Buddha.[54] The first is sovereign mastery in the ability to fly wherever one wishes. The second is sovereign mastery in the ability to perform boundless transformations. The third is sovereign mastery of the unimpeded faculty of hearing. The fourth is sovereign mastery in knowing in countless ways the minds of all beings. Dharmas of these sorts will be extensively discussed later in this work.

In his mindfulness of those bodhisattvas on "the station of certainty," he is aware that, once the bodhisattva receives his prediction of eventual realization of *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi,* he enters "the Dharma position" (*dharma-niyāma*) and acquires the unproduced-dharmas patience whereupon not even armies of thousands of myriads of *koṭi*s of *māra*s would be able to destroy or interfere with him. When one acquires the mind of great compassion and develops the dharmas of a great man, one does not stint even in sacrificing one's own body and life for, in order to realize *bodhi,* one is persistently diligent in practicing vigor. It is in this way that he is mindful of the bodhisattvas who have gained the stage of certainty.

As for his being mindful of "their rare practices," when he brings to mind the supremely rare practices of the bodhisattvas who have gained the stage of certainty, this causes his mind to be filled with joy. They are of a sort that no common person can match them and no *śrāvaka* disciple or *pratyekabuddha*s can practice them. They open forth and demonstrate the Buddha Dharma's unimpeded liberation and wisdom of all-knowledge. He is also mindful of all dharmas practiced on the ten grounds.

This is what is meant when it is said that, for the most part, his mind is joyful. It is for these reasons that the bodhisattva who has succeeded in entering the first ground is said to be "joyful."

Question: There are common persons not yet resolved on realizing the unsurpassable path and there may also be those who have already brought forth the resolve but have not yet reached the Ground of Joyfulness. When these persons are mindful of the buddhas and the great dharmas of the buddhas and also when they are mindful of the bodhisattvas who have gained the stage of certainty and their rare practices—these persons, too, experience joyfulness. What differences are there between the joyfulness of the bodhisattva

who has reached the first ground and the joyfulness experienced by these other persons?

Response:

When the bodhisattva reaches the first ground
His mind is, for the most part, joyful.
Regarding the countless qualities of the buddhas,
He realizes, "I too shall definitely attain them."

When the first-ground bodhisattva at the stage of certainty brings to mind the countless meritorious qualities of the buddhas, he thinks, "I shall definitely gain qualities such as these. Why? Because I have already[55] reached this first ground and have entered the stage of certainty."

Those others do not have this thought. It is for this reason that the bodhisattva on the first ground for the most part experiences joyfulness whereas this is not the case for the others. Why? Although the others are mindful of the buddhas, they cannot think, "I will definitely become a buddha."

This circumstance is analogous to that of a wheel-turning prince born into the family of a wheel-turning king who completely manifests the signs of a wheel-turning king. When he brings to mind the meritorious qualities and venerable nobility of the wheel-turning kings of the past, he thinks, "Now I too have these signs and I too shall acquire just such power, wealth, and venerable nobility as theirs." His mind is then filled with great joy. If one does not have these signs of a wheel-turning king, he does not experience such joyfulness as this.

When the bodhisattva at the stage of certainty brings to mind the buddhas and the great meritorious qualities, awesome deportment, and venerable nobility of the buddhas, he thinks, "I have these qualities. I shall certainly become a buddha." He is then immediately filled with great joyfulness. The 27a
others have no such experience as this.

One whose mind has reached the stage of certainty has so deeply entered the Dharma of the Buddha that his resolve is unshakable. Additionally, when the bodhisattva on the first ground brings to mind the buddhas, he reflects, "Before long, I too shall become one who benefits the entire world."

When he brings to mind the Dharma of the Buddha, he thinks, "I too shall acquire the body adorned with the major marks and minor characteristics, shall

perfect the dharmas exclusive to the Buddha, and shall teach the Dharma in a manner adapted to the roots of goodness planted by beings and to the relative strength of their minds. Moreover, I have already acquired the flavor of good dharmas. Before long, just like the bodhisattva at the stage of certainty, I shall be able to roam about with the power of the spiritual superknowledges."

He also brings to mind the path practiced by the bodhisattva at the stage of certainty that is of a sort that no ordinary worldly being could believe. He then thinks, "I too shall practice it." Having reflected in this way, his mind is then filled with abundant joyfulness. This is not the case with those others. Why? Because this bodhisattva has entered the first ground, his resolve has become definitely fixed, his vows remain unshakable, and he seeks what should be sought.

This is analogous to the case of an elephant in musth which does what only an elephant in musth is able to do and other beasts are unable to do.[56] Therefore the idea that you implied [in the above question] is incorrect.

Additionally, it is because the bodhisattva who has reached the first ground has no fear that his mind experiences abundant joyfulness. If one is beset by fear, one is not joyful.

Question: From which types of fear has this bodhisattva been freed?

Response:

He is free of the fear of not surviving,
The fear of death, the fear of the wretched destinies,
The fear of the Great Assembly's awesome virtue,
The fear of ill repute, and the fear of being disparaged.[57]

As for fear of imprisonment, shackles, and manacles,
And the fear of beatings or capital punishment,
Given that he is free of a self or any possessions of self,
How then could he have any such fears as these?

Question: Why is it that a bodhisattva dwelling on the first ground is free of the fear of not surviving?

Response: It is because he possesses great awesome virtue, because he has the ability to endure whatever comes, because he possesses great wisdom, and because he is easily satisfied.

He thinks to himself, "I have engaged in much cultivation of merit. The clothes, food and drink, and other requisites of a person possessed of merit naturally and immediately come to me."

This is comparable to the circumstance at the beginning of previous *kalpa*s when great men were requested to serve as kings by the government officials and the people. In the case of those who possessed only scant merit, even though they might have been born into the household of a king, they had to rely on their own personal strengths to sustain themselves. If they could not even provide sufficient clothing and food for themselves, how much the less might they be able to provide for the country?

The bodhisattva thinks to himself, "I have engaged in much cultivation of merit. Just as in the beginning of the *kalpa* when the king was able to naturally ascend to his position, so too shall it be with me, for I too shall be bound to once again acquire such circumstances. Hence I should not have any fear of not surviving."

Additionally, even though a person might have only scant merit, still, if he possesses the power to endure whatever comes, then he will diligently cultivate the means to be able to produce clothing and food for himself.

This is as set forth in the scriptures where it states, "There are three causes for acquiring material wealth. The first consists of the skillful means one has utilized in the present lifetime. The second consists of the power that others possess to bestow such things. The third consists of the causes and 27b
conditions relating to one's own merit."

He thinks, "I am able to endure difficult circumstances. Because I also have the power of skillful means in this present life, I should not have any fear of not surviving."

He thinks, "A wise person is able to ensure his own survival merely through instituting a few skillful means. I already possess a measure of wisdom adequate to enable pursuit of the buddha path. Through the benefits arising from this wisdom I shall be able to survive. Therefore I should not have any fear of not surviving."

Moreover, the bodhisattva has this thought, "I dwell within the world. The world is characterized by the presence of gain and loss, slander and prestige, praise and blame, suffering and happiness. How could it be that these eight circumstances might ever not exist? I should not fear failing to survive simply because I do not acquire something."

Furthermore, it is because the bodhisattva is easily satisfied that he adapts to whatever comes his way, remaining at peace whether the circumstances be fine or foul, excellent or deplorable. Thus he realizes that he should not have any fear of not surviving. If one is not easily satisfied, even if he were to acquire enough material possessions to fill up the entire world, his mind would still be unsatisfied. This is as described here:

When a person is poverty-stricken,
He only seeks clothing and food.
Once he has obtained clothing and food,
He then also seeks to obtain what is fine.

Having gotten what is fine,
He then also seeks honor and nobility.
Once he has acquired honor and nobility,
He then strives to rule all lands.

If he gains complete dominion over all lands,
He then also seeks to become king of the *deva*s.
The desires of those in the world
Cannot be satisfied by wealth.

In the case of someone who is easily satisfied, if he obtains a little in the way of wealth or possessions, then he is able to provide for his own benefit in both the present and future lives. Because this bodhisattva delights in giving and because he is fully possessed of wisdom, he is abundantly able to generate the roots of goodness arising from noncovetousness.

If one does not delight in giving or if one engages in a multitude of evil actions, due to the causes and conditions of miserliness and delusion, one increases the roots of non-goodness produced by miserliness. The dharma of insatiability exists because of covetousness. Hence, because the bodhisattva has extensively developed roots of goodness associated with not being covetous, he is therefore easily satisfied. Because he is easily satisfied, he has no fear of not surviving.

Also, as for "having no fear of dying," this comes from extensive creation of merit, from realizing one dies in each successive mind-moment,[58] from realizing it is unavoidable, from realizing that, throughout beginningless

time, one has already practiced experiencing dying in the world, and from extensive cultivation of emptiness.

The bodhisattva reflects in this manner, "If a person has failed to cultivate merit, then he will fear death due to personally dreading descent into the wretched destinies in future lives. However, I have extensively cultivated all manner of merit. Hence, when I die, I will be reborn in a superior place. Therefore I should not fear death." This is as described here:

> One awaits his death as if it were a dearly beloved guest
> And then takes his leave as if going to a grand assembly.
> Having accumulated an abundance of merit,
> When one relinquishes this life, one has no fear.

He also has this thought, "Death refers to that circumstance where, in whichever body one has taken on, one's very last thought is extinguished. That is what defines death. Since this extinguishing of thought is what constitutes death, then, because thoughts are ceasing in every successive mind-moment, every one of these circumstances should itself qualify as 'death.' 27c

"If one fears death, then one should fear every single instance of this moment-after-moment extinguishing of thought. It is not the case that one should only fear the extinction of that very last thought.

"One should then also experience fearfulness with respect to the complete cessation of the immediately previous thought. Why? This is because there is no distinction between the immediately previous thought and one's very last thought as regards their vulnerability to being extinguished.

"If one were to say that it is because he fears falling into the wretched destinies that he dreads the perishing of the very last thought—a person possessed of merit should not fear falling into the wretched destinies. This is as mentioned earlier. I should simply accept this process of perishing that occurs with each successive mind-moment and hence should not have any fear of the death that is just the perishing of the very last thought."

He also has this additional thought, "Throughout the course of beginningless existences in the world, I have come and gone in samsara, undergoing death in measurelessly and boundlessly many *asaṃkhyeya*s[59] of ways. There is no place in which one is able to avoid dying.

"The Buddha declared that samsara is beginningless. If a person were to stack up all of his bones left in death from but a single *kalpa* of his existences, they would exceed the height of the Himalaya Mountains. All of the deaths of this sort have not brought about any benefit for oneself, nor have they benefited others.

"Now, however, I have made the vow to follow the unsurpassable path. I have done this wishing to benefit myself while also benefiting others and also because practicing the path with a diligent mind brings immense benefits. Why then should I be frightened?"

It is in this fashion that the bodhisattva is able to immediately relinquish the fear of death.

Additionally, the bodhisattva has this thought, "This dharma of death is one which I must now definitely accept. There is no one who is able to avoid it. How is this so? Even though all the great kings at the beginning of the *kalpa,* such as King Crown-born, King Joy-to-Behold, and King Radiant Brilliance, all had the thirty-two marks of a great man as physical adornments, were led and followed by their seven treasures,[60] were revered and loved by both *deva*s and men, ruled over the four continents, and practiced the ten good courses of karmic action, still, in each and every case, all of these great kings finally succumbed to death.

"Furthermore, the lesser *kṣatriya*[61] wheel-turning kings who use their own awesome power to rule over Jambudvīpa; whose physical bodies are so handsome as to be comparable to *deva*s; who enjoy unrestrained and unlimited enjoyment of sights, sounds, fragrances, flavors, and touchables; who cause everyone everywhere to submit to them; who do not retreat from anything; and who are so consummately skilled in archery—even all such kings as these who rule as kings over an entire continent—even they as well as all their citizens and retainers—none of them are able to avoid death.

"Additionally, all of the *ṛṣi*s, *ārya*s, Kāśyapa, *jiaojumo,*[62] and all of the others who have practiced the ascetic practices and gained the five types of spiritual superknowledges—these as well as those who created all of the classic scriptures—none of them are able to avoid death.

"Additionally, all buddhas, *pratyekabuddha*s, and arhats, those whose minds have achieved sovereign mastery, who have abandoned the defilements, and who have realized [the fruits of] the path—all of them have been

destroyed by the dharma of death. There are no beings at all who have been able to get past it.

"Having brought forth the resolve to succeed in following the unsurpassable path, I should not fear death.

"Then again, in order to destroy the fear of death, one brings forth the resolve and proceeds vigorously to dispel the fear of death in oneself while also assisting others in dispelling it. One therefore brings forth the resolve to cultivate the path. How then could one feel alarm and fearfulness regarding death?"

The bodhisattva reflects upon impermanence in this way and thus immediately dispels the fear of death.

Additionally, the bodhisattva always cultivates the practice of the dharma of emptiness. Thus he should not fear death. This is as described in the following verse: 28a

> Apart from one who dies, there is no death.
> Apart from death, there is no one who dies.[63]
> It is because of death that one who dies is held to exist.
> It is because of one who dies that death is held to exist.
>
> As for it being death's occurrence that establishes "one who dies,"
> Prior to death, before it has occurred,
> They have no fixed characteristics.
> Hence there is neither any death nor anyone in whom it is established.
>
> If there were someone who dies apart from death itself,
> Then "the one who dies" ought to be self-established.
> However, in truth, apart from the dying itself,
> There is no "one who dies" [whose existence] is established.
>
> Nonetheless, those in the world engage in discriminations, saying:
> "This is death and this is the one who dies."
> Hence they do not understand death or how one comes or goes.
> Consequently, they can never avoid undergoing it.
>
> For reasons such as these,
> One who contemplates the [true] character of dharmas
> Is one whose mind remains unvarying
> And who is never fearful of death.

As for "having no fear of the wretched destinies," because the bodhisattva always cultivates merit, he does not fear falling into the wretched destinies. He reflects to himself, "It is those persons who engage in karmic offenses who fall into the wretched destinies. This does not happen to those who cultivate merit. I do not allow any evil influences to enter even for the space of a single mind-moment and thus I am always bringing forth pure actions of body, speech, and mind. Therefore I have acquired a measureless and boundless number of meritorious qualities. Having developed such a great accumulation of meritorious qualities as this, how could I fear falling into the wretched destinies?"

Additionally, from the very time when the bodhisattva brings forth the resolve, because he does so for the sake of benefiting and bringing peace to all beings and because he is protected by his great kindness and compassion, he abides in the four foundations of meritorious qualities, gains a measureless number of meritorious qualities, and crosses beyond all the wretched destinies.

How is it that this is so? This resolve of his is superior to that of any *śrāvaka* disciple or *pratyekabuddha*. This is as stated in the *Pure Vinaya Sutra,* in which Kāśyapa addressed the Buddha, saying:

> It is rare indeed, O Bhagavat. You have so well explained how it is that, because of his resolve to realize all-knowledge, the bodhisattva is able to surpass all *śrāvaka* disciples and *pratyekabuddha*s.

One reflects, "Given that I have produced such a great amount of merit and have come to abide in such great dharmas as these, why should I have any fear of falling into the wretched destinies?"

One also thinks, "Throughout the course of beginningless time on up to the very present, I have been going and coming in samsara, have fallen into all the wretched destinies, and have undergone measureless suffering and in doing so, it has not been to benefit myself or to benefit others. I now bring forth the unsurpassable great vow in order to fulfill the wish to benefit myself while also benefiting others. Throughout the past on forward to the very present, I have fallen into the wretched destinies without deriving any benefit from it. Now, even if I were to fall into the wretched destinies while striving to benefit other beings, that should not cause me to be fearful."

Moreover, the bodhisattva whose practice is genuine has this thought, "Even if I was caused to fall into the Avīci Hells and undergo suffering for an entire *kalpa* after which I only then succeeded in getting out again, yet, by doing this, I was thus able to cause but a single person to produce a single good thought [and even if I had to continue in this way to cause him] to accumulate an immeasurable number of such good thoughts so that he 28b
eventually developed the capacity to undergo teaching influencing him to set forth in the three vehicles—and if in this same way, I was thereby able to instruct beings as numerous as the Ganges' sands to set forth in the *śrāvaka* disciple vehicle, beings as numerous as the Ganges' sands to set forth in the *pratyekabuddha* vehicle, and beings as numerous as the Ganges' sands to set forth in the Great Vehicle, after which I only then was able to realize *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*—even if this had to be the case, I should still not retreat and fall away from pursuing this course of action. How much the less should I [retreat from this] in the present circumstance wherein, by accumulating a measureless and boundless number of meritorious qualities, I am thereby able to leave the wretched destinies far behind?"

When the bodhisattva ponders the matter in this way, how could he have any fear of falling into the wretched destinies?

Then again, this is as illustrated in the *Sutra on the Screaming Hells* wherein a bodhisattva replies to Māra, saying:

> If on account of giving,
> I were to fall into the Screaming Hells,
> Yet all who received my gifts
> Were thereby able to be reborn in the heavens—
>
> Even if this were to be the case, I should still
> Always practice such giving
> If it results in beings dwelling in the heavens
> And in my enduring the sufferings of the Screaming Hells.

Through many different rationales such as these, the bodhisattva is able to deflect the fear of the wretched destinies.

As for "not having any fear in great assemblies," because he perfects the wisdom gained through learning, the wisdom gained through contemplative thought, and the wisdom gained through cultivation, and also because

he abandons the faults involved in mere theorizing, when this bodhisattva establishes points of discourse, whatever he says is free of error. He is able to use reasoning, analogies, and conclusions that are neither excessive nor deficient, and that leave no room for doubt.

His words have nothing in them that contradicts what is meaningful and nothing in them that tends toward flattery or deception. They are direct, suffused with pliancy, and graced with all manner of adorning phrases. They are easy to understand, conducive to ease in retaining their meaning, and orderly in the sequence of their exposition. They are able to reveal the contents of his own case while refuting the theories of others. His speech is free of the four erroneous types of reasoning and is equipped with the four major types of correct reasoning. Using well-adorned types of discourse such as these, he is fearless when speaking before a great assembly.

As for "having no fear of ill repute" and "having no fear of cursing and scolding," these are a consequence of having no craving for gain and offerings and due to maintaining pure physical, verbal, and mental conduct.

As for "freedom from fear of imprisonment, shackles, manacles, or beatings," this is because one remains free of karmic offenses, because one feels kindness and sympathy for all beings, because one is able to endure all the many different sorts of sufferings and afflictions, and because one relies on karmic actions entailing their results and retributions. [Hence one reflects], "Because it is I who previously performed this act, I am now bound to undergo such retribution in return."

It is for reasons such as these that this bodhisattva has no fear of not surviving, nor does he have any of the other such sorts of fear.

Then again, he delights in contemplating all dharmas as having nothing constituting a self. Therefore he remains free of all fear, for all types of fear are born from the view that assumes the existence of a self. The view that assumes the existence of a self is in every case the root of all sufferings associated with worry about loss. Because this bodhisattva possesses sharp wisdom and because he penetrates deeply into the true character of all dharmas doing so in a manner that accords with reality, he remains free of any concept of a self. Since he has no self, how could he continue to be fearful?

Question: How is it that this bodhisattva has no thoughts of a self?

Response: This is because he delights in the dharma of emptiness and because the bodhisattva contemplates the body as apart from any "self" or anything belonging to a self. This is as explained here:

The thought of "self" is caused by that of "mine." 28c
That of "mine" is produced from that of "self."
Therefore, as for "self" and "mine,"
The nature of both of these is complete emptiness.

As for "self," it has the meaning of "subject."
As for "mine," this refers to whatever belongs to that subject.
If no "subject" exists,
Whatever belongs to a subject is also nonexistent [as such].

If there is nothing that belongs to a subject,
then there is no subject, either.
As for "self," it is just the view imputing existence of a "self."
As for "a self's possessions," it is just the view imputing "mine."
Contemplating in accordance with reality, there is no "self."
In the absence of a self, there is no "nonself."

Because of "experiencing," "one who experiences" is produced.
In the absence of experiencing, there is no "one who experiences."
Apart from "one who experiences," there is no experiencing.
How then could it be established based on "experiencing"?

If it were so that "one who experiences" established "experiencing,"
Then experiencing could not be established.
Because experiencing is thus not established,
Then one cannot establish "one who experiences."

Because an "one who experiences" is empty [of inherent existence],
One cannot speak of it as constituting a self.
Because "experiencing" is empty [of inherent existence],
One cannot speak of it as something belonging to a self.

Therefore "self," "nonself,"
"Both self and nonself,"

And "neither self nor nonself"—
These are all fallacious concepts.

"Mine," "not mine,"
"both mine and not mine,"
and "neither mine nor not mine"—
These too are fallacious concepts.

It is because the bodhisattva always delights in this way in the cultivation of emptiness and nonexistence of self that he abandons all types of fear. And why is this so? This is because the dharmas of emptiness and nonexistence of self are able to cause one to abandon all types of fear.

The bodhisattva who dwells on the Ground of Joyfulness is possessed of characteristics such as these.

Chapter 4

Purification of the Ground

Question: In the case of the bodhisattva who has already gotten to the first ground, how should he go about cultivating its purification?

Response:

The power of faith becomes ever more superior
As one practices deeply the mind of great compassion.
One acts with kindness toward all types of beings
And tirelessly cultivates the mind of goodness.

One finds joyous delight in sublime dharmas,
Always draws close to the good spiritual guide,
Maintains a sense of shame, dread of blame, and reverence,
And makes one's mind gentle and harmonious.

One delights in contemplating dharmas and stays free of attachment,
singlemindedly strives to acquire abundant learning,
Refrains from coveting offerings of benefits and support,
While staying far from treacherous cheating, flattery, and deception.

One does not defile the family of the buddhas 29a
And does not damage moral precepts or cheat the buddhas.
One deeply delights in all-knowledge,[64]
And remains as unmoving as an immense mountain.

One always delights in cultivating and practicing
Ever more superior sublime dharmas.
One delights in the world-transcending dharmas
And does not delight in worldly dharmas.

Even as one cultivates the Ground of Joyfulness,
One is able to cultivate what is difficult to cultivate.

Therefore one is always singleminded
In the diligent practice of these dharmas.

The bodhisattva is able to perfect
Such supremely sublime dharmas as these.
It is this then that constitutes secure abiding
In the bodhisattva's first ground.

The bodhisattva relies on these twenty-seven dharmas in the purifying cultivation of the first ground.

As for "the power of faith becomes ever more superior," "faith" refers here to definitely accepting, without doubts, what one learns and perceives. "Superiority" refers here to "exceptional supremacy."

Question: There are two sorts of "superiority." In the case of the first, it refers to having a greater amount of something. In the case of the second, it refers to being of superior quality. Which is it that you now discuss?

Response: We speak here of both definitions. When the bodhisattva enters the first ground, because he experiences the flavor of the meritorious qualities, his power of faith becomes ever greater. Because of this power of faith, having assessed all buddhas' meritorious qualities and their measurelessly many extremely sublime aspects, he is able then to have faith in and accept them. Hence this mind [of faith] becomes both greater in its extensiveness and more superior in its quality.

As for "one practices deeply the mind of great compassion," it is because one's sympathetic mindfulness of beings penetrates to one's very marrow that its practice is described as "deep." It is because one seeks to realize the buddha path for the sake of all beings that [the practice of compassion as] is described as "great."

As for "the mind of kindness," one always strives to benefit beings and promote their peace and security. There are three kinds of kindness. This should be more extensively discussed later on.

As for "tirelessly cultivating the mind of goodness," the dharma of goodness is what one draws near to and cultivates, and it is what yields desirable results. As one cultivates dharmas such as these, one's mind does not fall into indolence. As for the causes and conditions comprising good dharmas, this

refers to the dharmas comprising the four means of attraction, the ten courses of good karmic action, the six *pāramitā*s, the ten bodhisattva grounds, and all of the meritorious qualities.

As for "one finds joyous delight in sublime dharmas," this means that, if one always reflects on them, cultivates them, and deeply experiences the flavor of these dharmas, after a long while, this produces happiness. This is just as when someone amid flowers and forest groves takes pleasure in sights he finds lovely.

As for "always drawing close to the good spiritual guide," the bodhisattva has four different types of good spiritual guides, a matter that shall be discussed extensively later on. As for the "good spiritual guides" that are intended here, it refers to buddhas and bodhisattvas. One always draws close to them with a mind that is correct and with which one is able to please them.

"A sense of shame and a dread of blame" refers to that mind that happily subjects itself to feeling self-consciously abashed.

"Reverence" refers to bearing in mind someone else's meritorious qualities and revering him for that reason.

"Gentle and harmonious" refers to having a mind that is congenially pleased in dwelling together with others.

In "delighting in contemplating dharmas," "dharmas" refers to the five aggregates, the twelve sense bases, the eighteen sense realms, emptiness, signlessness, wishlessness, and so forth. One always contemplates these dharmas with right mindfulness.

In "staying free of attachment," "attachment" refers to the tendency of the mind to take refuge in the three realms of existence. This is where beings take refuge. There are those who explain that it is the five desires and all 29b
manner of erroneous views that constitute the places in which beings take refuge. Why is this? This is because the minds of beings always become bound up in attachment to them. The sharp wisdom of the bodhisattva is such that his mind has no such desire-based attachments.

As for "singlemindedness," this means that one so esteems the Buddha's Dharma that one does not think of anything else.

"Striving to acquire abundant learning"[65] refers to the ability to exhaustively investigate, cultivate, study, and entirely comprehend the nine

categories of scripture set forth by the Buddha, [realizing that] if one learns but little, one will never completely fathom them.

In "refraining from coveting offerings of benefits and support," "benefits" refers to the acquisition of food and drink, wealth, material possessions, and so forth. "Support" refers to others' reverential respect, ceremonial obeisance, arrangement of a place for one to rest and sit, welcoming one upon one's arrival, and escorting one off when one departs. The bodhisattva should be inclined to provide such assistance to other beings and should not covet and become attached to such things for himself.

"Cheating" refers to deception in weights and measures and to dealing in clothing and other goods that are not genuine.

"Flattery" means one's mind is not upstanding and direct.

"Deception" refers to taking up dharmas associated with the five sorts of wrong livelihood:

> The first is feigning uniqueness;
> The second is taking advantage of a close relationship;
> The third is inducement through instigation;
> The fourth is [manipulation] through praising and blaming;
> And the fifth is seeking to gain benefits based on one's benefits.

As for "feigning uniqueness," there are those persons who, because they covet benefit and support, may wear the patched robes of the forest hermitage dweller, may take up the practice of only accepting food obtained on the almsround, may take up the practice of limiting all food intake to that consumed in but a single sitting, may take up the practice of always sitting [and never lying down,] or may take up the practice of not taking any sort of beverage other than water after midday. They take on the practice of such *dhūta* austerities as these, thinking, "Others who have adopted these practices have been able to come by offerings and reverence. If I take up these practices, perhaps I too shall be able to obtain them." This alteration of one's outward appearance and demeanor for the sake of acquiring benefit and support is what is meant by "feigning uniqueness."

As for "taking advantage of a close relationship," there are those persons who, because they covet benefit and support, therefore visit the households of benefactors[66] and say to them, "You are to me just like and no different

from my father, mother, brother, sister, or other close relative. If there is anything at all that you need, I will be able to assist you with it. If there's anything you need done, I will be able to see that it is done. No matter how far away I might be, I will be able to come and greet you. Actually, if I were to live right here, then that would really be the right course of action for us." Thus, because he seeks offerings, and because he has a covetous attachment to a benefactor, he resorts to particular phrasings that manipulate the minds of other people. Such behaviors as these exemplify what is meant by "taking advantage of a close relationship."

As for "inducement through instigation," there are those who pay no heed to incurring the karmic offense of covetousness, desire to obtain valuable possessions, and so indicate an interest in obtaining material possessions by saying such things as, "This bowl is a fine one," or "This robe is a fine one," or "This house is a fine one," or "This sitting mat[67] is a fine one," or "If I were to somehow obtain such a thing, I would be able to put it to use." They may then add the statement, "It is a rare person who is able to give spontaneously."

He may also go to some benefactor's home and speak in this fashion: "Your household's stew, rice, cakes, and meats are so fragrant and exquisite and your clothes are finer yet. If you were to make a regular practice of making offerings to me, based on the long-standing nature of our close relationship, I would certainly accept your gifts."

And so, in just this sort of fashion, he makes his desires apparent to others. This is what is meant by "inducement through instigation."

As for "manipulation through praising and blaming," there are those who, because they covet benefit and support, speak to a benefactor, saying, "You are the most extremely miserly person. You don't even make gifts to your father or mother, your brothers, your sisters, your wife, your children, or your relatives. Just who is it that might ever be able to receive anything at all from you?" Thereupon the benefactor, feeling ashamed and embarrassed, immediately gives him gifts.

He may then go to yet another household and speak in this fashion: "You have such merit that, indeed, you have not taken on this human rebirth in vain. Even arhats always come and go from your home so that you are able to sit 29c
down and converse with them." He does this thinking, "Perhaps the benefactor

shall now reflect on this and think: 'Nobody else comes and goes from my home,' thereby concluding that this must certainly be referring to me."

These are examples of what is meant by "manipulation through praising and blaming."

As for "seeking to gain benefits based on one's benefits," there are those who take up some item of clothing, a bowl, a *saṃghāṭī* robe, a sitting mat, or other such requisite, hold them in hand, and then say to someone, "This item was given to me by the king," or "by the equal of a king," or "by others among the nobility." He speaks in this fashion, thinking, "Perhaps the benefactor will now be able to conclude, 'If he is one to whom even the king and members of the nobility make offerings, how much the less could someone like me fail to present gifts to this man?'"

It is because he seeks by means of this previously acquired benefit to gain additional benefits that this practice is referred to as "seeking to gain benefits based on one's benefits."

One should therefore leave these sorts of obsequious and fraudulent behaviors far behind.

In "One does not defile the family of the buddhas," just what sorts of things constitute "defilement of the family of the buddhas"?

There are those who say that if someone who has brought forth the resolve to seek the unsurpassable path then later reverts to the *śrāvaka* disciple or *pratyekabuddha* paths so that he is unable to remain in the world to see to the continuance of the lineage of the Three Jewels, this is what constitutes "defiling the family of the buddhas." However, this is a wrong explanation of its meaning. How is this so? The person referenced herein is one who is still able to achieve liberation from samsara. Moreover, he is able to achieve a state of realization of the [five] root faculties, the [five] powers, the [seven] limbs of enlightenment, and the [eightfold] path that is free of the contaminants. Moreover, he is still "a son of the Buddha." How then can one assert that this amounts to "defiling the family of the buddhas"?

As stated in a sutra, "The Buddha told the *bhikṣu*s, 'You are my sons who are born from my mind, are born from my mouth, and who are heirs to the Dharma.'"[68]

Furthermore, *śrāvaka* disciples claim that it is the [four] bases [of meritorious qualities] consisting of truth, relinquishment, quiescence, and wisdom that

constitute the basis for abiding within the family of the buddhas. How so? It is because all buddhas are born from these four factors. If one defiles these four dharmas, then this is what constitutes "defiling the family of the buddhas."

Therefore, if a person acts in a false, miserly, covetous, maniacally deranged or foolish fashion, this is what constitutes "defiling the family of the buddhas." If one is correct in one's implementation of these four bases, then one does not "defile the family of the buddhas."

There are others who claim that the six *pāramitā*s constitute the bases for belonging to the family of the buddhas, doing so because these are the dharmas that give birth to the buddhas. Consequently they infer that, if one acts in a manner that contradicts these six sorts of endeavors, this is what constitutes "defiling the family of the buddhas."

Then again, there are yet others who state that *prajñā-pāramitā* serves as the mother of the buddhas whereas skillful means serve as the father of the buddhas. They hold that these are the factors that serve as the basis for belonging to the family of the buddhas. They claim that, because these two dharmas give birth to all buddhas, if one transgresses against these dharmas, this constitutes "defilement of the family of the buddhas."

Then again, the verse itself explains what constitutes the marks of defilement and nondefilement, in particular referring to "not damaging the moral precepts" and "not cheating the buddhas."

If one takes on the Buddha's moral precepts yet remains unable to guard and uphold them, it is this that constitutes "cheating the buddhas" and "defiling the family of the buddhas." How is this the case? It is because, when one takes on the moral precepts, one is born into the family of the buddhas. If one then breaks the precepts, it is this, then, that constitutes "cheating the buddhas" and it is this, then, that constitutes "defiling the family of the buddhas."

Question: Is it possible that the bodhisattva who has reached the stage of certainty may have instances in which he breaks the moral precepts?

Response: So long as one has not yet cut off the afflictions, this remains as a circumstance to be feared. Thus, when it has still not been long since he achieved entry into the stage of certainty, the bodhisattva may still have instances in which he breaks the precepts. This is as described in the "Dharma of Greatly Supreme Buddha,"[69] wherein it states, "Nanda deliberately broke

precepts. I declare that this possibility still remains as something to be feared." It is only on the basis of the sutras that there is this claim. Because one has
30a faith in the words of the Buddha, one's mind believes and accepts this.

If, having taken on the moral precepts, one does not break them and does not cheat the buddhas, it is this that qualifies as "not defiling the family of the buddhas."

Then again, the moral precepts are synonymous with the three trainings, namely: the training in the moral precepts, the training of the mind [in *dhyāna* meditation], and the training in wisdom. If one breaks with these trainings, then this is "defiling the family of the buddhas." If one takes on the precepts in a context that accords with the Dharma and yet later damages or breaks them, this is "cheating the buddhas."

Thus, when one explains the matter in this fashion, each of these two phrases possesses a particular meaning and implication. As for "cheating the buddhas," if one's making of vows has been merely an empty exercise and thus one does not carry them out in practice in a manner according to one's declarations, one thereby cheats and deceives beings. It is this, then, that constitutes "cheating the buddhas."

Then again, if one fails to practice any of the dharmas in accordance with the way it was taught, this is "cheating the buddhas."

As for "deeply delighting in all-knowledge" and "remaining unmoving like a great mountain," in every vow that he makes, this bodhisattva seeks the goal of all-knowledge so that, no matter what causes and conditions he encounters, even if it entails having to undergo the sufferings of the Great Hells, his resolve is still never shaken. In this, he is just like Sumeru, the king of the mountains, that cannot be moved by the blowing of the winds.

As for "always cultivating ever more superior dharmas," from that very time when one first brings forth the resolve, one always strives to acquire supreme dharmas. Upon entering the first ground, one is even more involved in cultivating superior dharmas. One's resolve then continues insatiably onward in this manner.

As for "delighting in world-transcending dharmas" and "not delighting in worldly dharmas," "worldly dharmas" refers to endeavors that follow along and accord with worldly affairs and prolong one's involvement in samsara. These include the six rebirth destinies, the three realms of existence, the five

aggregates, the twelve sense bases, the eighteen sense realms, the twelvefold chain of causes and conditions, the afflictions, contaminated karmic actions, and so forth.

As for "world-transcending dharmas," this means that, whatever dharmas one puts to use are able to bring about transcendence of the three realms of existence. These include the five root faculties, the five powers, the seven limbs of enlightenment, the eightfold path, the four stations of mindfulness, the four right efforts, the four bases of psychic power, the [three] gates to liberation consisting of emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness, the moral precept codes, extensive learning, the roots of goodness consisting of non-greed, non-aversion, and nondelusion, the mind of renunciation, non-neglectfulness, and so forth.

Because this bodhisattva possesses sharp faculties, he does not delight in the false dharmas of the world. Rather, he delights only in true world-transcending dharmas.

As for "Even as one cultivates the Ground of Joyfulness, one is able to cultivate what is difficult to cultivate," this "cultivation" is a reference to reaching an utterly penetrating unimpeded understanding. Just as when someone splits bamboo, the first section is difficult, but the rest are easy, so too, the first ground is difficult to cultivate, but after one has cultivated it, the rest are naturally easy to cultivate.

How is this the case? This is because, when the bodhisattva abides on the first ground, his strength has not yet become completely developed and his roots of goodness have not yet grown thick, for he has not yet cultivated the dharmas of goodness over a long time. Hence the eye sense faculty and the other sense faculties are all still prone to follow their respective sense objects and the mind has not yet become well controlled. Therefore the afflictions are still able to cause trouble for him. This is just as when someone's strength has not yet become fully developed, one finds it difficult to swim upstream, against the current.

Moreover, because Māra and Māra's minions create more of an obstacle on this ground, one is therefore compelled to use the power of skillful means and be diligent in the practice of vigor. It is for these reasons that this ground is said to be "difficult to cultivate."

So it is that, beginning with "the power of faith becomes ever more superior" as the foremost factor and "does not delight in worldly dharmas" as the last, one proceeds with the practice of these twenty-seven dharmas, carrying out one's cultivation of the bodhisattva's first ground, the Ground of Joyfulness.

It is therefore stated that the bodhisattva ought to always cultivate these dharmas. "Cultivation" refers here to singlemindedness and non-neglectfulness in always practicing them, in always contemplating them, and in getting
30b rid of all transgressions and evils. It is for this reason that it refers here to "cultivation." This is just as when one maintains a walking path and thereby causes it to remain clean.

As for all of these dharmas, they are not cultivated solely on the first ground. Rather, one uses these dharmas on all the grounds.

Question: You have now completed the discussion of the skillful means and purification dharmas used to attain the first ground. How then does the bodhisattva "securely abide" in it so that he does not retreat from it and lose it?

Response: This is a matter of always practicing and completely developing dharmas such as these consisting of "the power of faith becomes ever more superior," and so forth. This is what constitutes the basis for "secure abiding" in the first ground.

Now, as for the "*bodhi*" of bodhisattva, this is a reference to the superior path. "*Sattva*" refers to [a being] that is possessed of resolute intentions. Hence it is because someone deeply delights in *bodhi* that he is referred to as a "bodhisattva." Then again, one may explain that "*sattva*" refers to "beings." Hence it is on the basis of a person's cultivating and accumulating [the bases for realization of] *bodhi,* doing so for the sake of other beings, that one is referred to as a "bodhisattva." "Superior dharmas," refers to dharmas such as "faith" and the others. It is because they enable a person to realize buddhahood that they are referred to as "superior dharmas."

Chapter 5

The Explanation of the Vows

We have now finished explaining the skillful means that are used in entering the first ground and the dharmas that are used in its purification. It is because of his vows that the bodhisattva gains entry into all of the grounds. It is also due to completely developing the meritorious qualities associated with the [above-discussed dharmas beginning with] "the power of faith becoming ever more superior" that one is able to securely abide on one's ground. We shall now proceed with a differentiating discussion of these vows:

[The First Bodhisattva Vow]

> I vow to make offerings to, supply the needs of,
> and extend reverence to all buddhas.
> I vow that in every case I shall protect and uphold
> the Dharma of all buddhas.

This ["making of offerings"] is what constitutes the bodhisattva's first vow.[70] During the interim period between the time when one first brings forth the resolve up until the time one gains *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*, one should make offerings to, supply the needs of, and extend reverence to all buddhas.

"Making offerings" refers to offerings of flowers, incense, strings of jewels, banners, canopies, lamplight, the erecting of stupas with shrines, and so forth. "Supplying needs" refers to providing them with robes, bedding, and necessities. "Reverence" refers to honoring them, treating them as important, making full reverential bows to them, welcoming them on arrival, seeing them off when leaving, placing the palms together, and serving them personally.

Then again, [it may be explained that] "making offerings" refers to using the dharmas of the Small Vehicle to teach beings, "supplying needs" refers to using the dharmas of the *pratyekabuddha* vehicle to teach beings, and "extending reverence" refers to using the dharmas of the Great Vehicle to teach beings.

These constitute the bases of the first vow.

[The Second Bodhisattva Vow]

As for [the second vow], "protecting and upholding the Dharma of all buddhas," the bodhisattva has this thought, "I should guard and protect the Dharma of all past, future, and present buddhas of the ten directions."[71]

Question: All buddhas of the past have already entered nirvana and their Dharma has subsequently also become extinct. The buddhas of the future have not yet come forth and their Dharma does not yet even exist. They have not yet even initiated their turning of the wheel of Dharma, how much the less have they brought forth any other dharmas. How then could one succeed in protecting it? That which one might rightly be able to protect is the Dharma of the buddhas of the present, this because all of those buddhas are still present.

Response: The Dharma of all buddhas of the past, present, and future is in every case of a single substance and of a single character. Hence, if one pro-
30c tects the Dharma of a single buddha, then this constitutes protection of the Dharma of all buddhas of the three periods of time. This is as stated in a sutra:

> The Buddha informed the *bhikṣu*s: "The Dharma of Vipaśyin Buddha—the leaving of the home life, the taking on of the moral precepts, the wearing of the robes, the holding of the bowl, the *dhyāna* absorptions, the wisdom, the proclamation of Dharma, and their transformative teaching—it is all the same as mine."

Thus the challenge you have posed is invalid. This [protection of the Dharma] is what constitutes the second of the vows.

Next, we have the following:

[The Third Bodhisattva Vow]

> From that time when all buddhas depart from Tuṣita Heaven
> And come back to abide in the world,
> On forward to the conclusion of their teaching
> And their eternal entry into the realm [of the nirvana] without residue,
>
> Including when they abide in the womb, take birth,
> Leave the home life, proceed to the *bodhimaṇḍa,*

Conquer Māra, achieve buddhahood,
And begin turning the wheel of the sublime Dharma—

From the time when I respectfully welcome them
And on through to the other occasions throughout their lives,
I vow that in all cases I shall completely
Devote my mind to making offerings to them.[72]

This refers to that entire time beginning with the buddhas' withdrawal from Tuṣita Heaven and descent into the world on up to their entry into the nirvana without residue. During that entire interval, commencing with their entry into the womb, I shall arrange grand presentations of offerings to them, including as well those times when they are born, leave the home life, proceed to the *bodhimaṇḍa,* conquer Māra, the king of the demons, realize buddhahood, and turn the wheel of Dharma. I shall respectfully serve the tathāgatas at these times.

As for "and on through to the other occasions throughout their lives," this refers to when they manifest great spiritual powers, abide in great assemblies of humans and *deva*s, and engage in the extensive liberation of beings. [He vows]: "On such occasions, I shall make offerings to them of flowers, incense, banners, canopies, music, songs, verses, and praises. I shall leave behind the home life, take on the Dharma, and cultivate its practice in accordance with the way it has been taught. And I shall make offerings to the buddhas of the foremost sorts of offering gifts." This is what constitutes the third vow.

[The Fourth Bodhisattva Vow]

Next, we have the following:

I vow to engage in the transformative teaching of beings,
Causing them all to enter the paths.[73]

"Teaching" refers here to the teaching of good dharmas. "Transformation" refers to influencing them to abandon evil dharmas. [One resolves:] "Using these two types of dharmas I shall cause an incalculable number of *asaṃkhyeyas* of beings to abide in the paths of *śrāvaka* disciples and *pratyekabuddha*s." This is what constitutes the fourth of the vows.

[The Fifth Bodhisattva Vow]

Next, we have the following:

> I vow to enable all beings'
> Complete realization of the Buddha's *bodhi*
> Even where there are those tending toward *śrāvaka* disciple
> Or *pratyekabuddha* paths—[74]

In instances where these persons cultivating the paths of the *śrāvaka* disciples and the *pratyekabuddha*s have not yet entered the [right and fixed] Dharma position,[75] I shall teach and transform them, inducing them to instead proceed toward the path to buddhahood. Where there are those who have not taken up the paths of *śrāvaka* disciples or *pratyekabuddha*s, I shall teach and transform them in a manner that influences them to proceed toward the unsurpassable path to buddhahood. In instances where others have already begun to proceed toward the unsurpassable path to buddhahood, I shall reveal [aspects of Dharma], instruct, benefit, and delight them,[76] thereby causing their meritorious qualities to progressively increase. The fifth vow consists of adopting these means in the teaching and transforming of all beings.

[The Sixth Bodhisattva Vow]

Next, we have the following:

> Through resolute faith, I vow
> To cause all dharmas to enter [a state of] uniform equality.[77]

31a "All dharmas" is a general reference to all dharmas whatsoever, including:

Dharmas conducing to liberation and dharmas not conducing to liberation;

Dharmas subsumed within the limbs of enlightenment and dharmas not subsumed within the limbs of enlightenment;

Dharmas constituting provisions assisting the path and dharmas not constituting provisions assisting the path;

Dharmas subsumed within the paths of the *āryas* and dharmas not subsumed within the paths of the *āryas*;

Dharmas that should be cultivated and dharmas that should not be cultivated;

Dharmas to which one should draw near and dharmas to which one should not draw near;
Dharmas one should bring forth and dharmas one should not bring forth;
Dharmas that are produced and dharmas that are unproduced;
Dharmas of the present and dharmas not of the present;
Dharmas that are the product of causes and conditions and dharmas that are not the product of causes and conditions;
Dharmas constituting causes and conditions and dharmas not constituting causes and conditions;
Dharmas produced through meditative contemplation and dharmas not produced through meditative contemplation;
Dharmas that are coarse and dharmas that are subtle;
Dharmas associated with feeling and dharmas not associated with feeling;
Inward dharmas and outward dharmas;
Dharmas belonging to the inward sense bases and dharmas not belonging to inward sense bases;
Dharmas belonging to outward sense bases and dharmas not belonging to outward sense bases;
Dharmas subsumed within the five aggregates and dharmas not subsumed within the five aggregates;
Dharmas subsumed within the five appropriated aggregates and dharmas not subsumed within the five appropriated aggregates;
Dharmas subsumed by the four truths and dharmas not subsumed by the four truths;
Dharmas assisting the world and dharmas not assisting the world;
Dharmas dependent on covetousness and dharmas dependent on transcendence;
Dharmas associated with inverted views and dharmas not associated with inverted views;
Dharmas associated with transformations and dharmas not associated with transformations;
Dharmas associated with regret and dharmas not associated with regret;
Dharmas that are great and dharmas that are small;

Dharmas based in the feeling aggregate and dharmas not based in the feeling aggregate;
Dharmas subject to severance and dharmas not subject to severance;
Dharmas associated with knowledge and vision and dharmas not associated with knowledge and vision;
Dharmas associated with the contaminants and dharmas not associated with the contaminants;
Dharmas involving the bonds and dharmas free of the bonds;
Dharmas characterized by purity and dharmas devoid of purity;
Dharmas that are surpassable and dharmas that are unsurpassable;
Dharmas involving initial ideation (*vitarka*) and dharmas not involving initial ideation;
Dharmas involving mental discursion (*vicāra*) and dharmas not involving mental discursion;
Dharmas in which one can delight and dharmas in which one cannot delight;
Dharmas that are associated [with the mind] and dharmas not associated [with the mind];
Dharmas involving the making of discriminations and dharmas not involving the making of discriminations;
Dharmas associated with formative factors (*saṃskāra*) and dharmas not associated with formative factors;
Dharmas involving conditions and dharmas not involving conditions;
Dharmas involving sequence and dharmas devoid of sequence;
Dharmas that are visible and dharmas that are not visible;
Dharmas that may be opposed [as objective conditions] and dharmas that cannot be opposed [as objective conditions];
Dharmas that are visible and opposable [as objective conditions] and dharmas that are invisible and not opposable;
Dharmas possessing characteristic signs and dharmas that are signless;
Dharmas that can be implemented in practice and dharmas that cannot be implemented in practice;
Dharmas that are conditioned and dharmas that are unconditioned;
Dharmas that are dangerous and dharmas that are not dangerous;
Dharmas possessed of a foundation and dharmas not possessed of any foundation;

Dharmas conducive to transcendence and dharmas not conducive to transcendence;
Dharmas associated with beings and dharmas not associated with beings;
Dharmas of one who is suffering and dharmas of one who is not suffering;
Dharmas associated with the afflictions and dharmas not associated with the afflictions;
Dharmas associated with existence and dharmas not associated with existence;
Dharmas that are contrary and dharmas that are not contrary;
Dharmas associated with the karmic result of happiness and dharmas not associated with the karmic result of happiness;
Dharmas associated with the karmic result of suffering and dharmas not associated with the karmic result of suffering;
Dharmas produced through recollection and dharmas not produced through recollection;
Practice dharmas in which knowledge is foremost and practice dharmas in which knowledge is not foremost;
Practice dharmas in which faith is foremost and practice dharmas in which faith is not foremost;
Practice dharmas in which meditative contemplation is foremost and practice dharmas in which meditative contemplation is not foremost;
Practice dharmas in which vows are foremost and practice dharmas in which vows are not foremost;
Form dharmas and dharmas not associated with form;
Teaching dharmas and non-teaching dharmas;
Dharmas associated with transformationally created phenomena and dharmas unassociated with transformationally created phenomena;
Dharmas associated with roaming wherever one wishes and dharmas unassociated with roaming wherever one wishes;
Dharmas rooted in zeal and dharmas not rooted in zeal;
Dharmas in which the cause is goodness and dharmas in which the cause is not goodness; 31b

Dharmas in which the cause is roots of goodness and dharmas in which the cause is not roots of goodness;
Dharmas that are fixed and dharmas that are unfixed;
Dharmas associated with the physical body and dharmas not associated with the physical body;
Dharmas associated with speech and dharmas not associated with speech;
Dharmas associated with the mind faculty and dharmas not associated with the mind faculty;
Dharmas arising through contact with opposable objects and dharmas not arising through contact with opposable objects;
Dharmas arising through mind faculty contact and dharmas not arising through mind faculty contact;
Evil dharmas and dharmas that are not evil;
Good dharmas and dharmas that are not good;
Dharmas that are able to initiate production and dharmas that are not able to initiate production;
Dharmas destroyed in each successive mind-moment and dharmas not destroyed in each successive mind-moment;
Dharmas that are accumulated and dharmas that are not accumulated;
Dharmas associated with the factors conducing to clear understanding[78] and dharmas not associated with the factors conducing to clear understanding;
Dharmas that are causal and dharmas that are not causal;
Dharmas associated with conditions and dharmas not associated with conditions;
Dharmas associated with causes and conditions and dharmas not associated with causes and conditions;
Dharmas produced through causes and dharmas not produced through causes;
Dharmas that are caused and dharmas that are not caused;
Dharmas associated with singular identity and dharmas associated with difference;
Dharmas associated with cessation and dharmas unassociated with cessation;

Dharmas associated with restraint of the sense faculties and dharmas not associated with restraint of the sense faculties;
Dharmas occurring in conjunction with the mind and dharmas not occurring in conjunction with the mind;
Mind dharmas and dharmas that are not mind;
Dharmas associated with the mind and dharmas unassociated with the mind;
The five dharmas associated with contact and dharmas that are not the five dharmas associated with contact;
Sixteen dharmas, the acquisition of which is held in common, and dharmas unassociated with the sixteen dharmas, the acquisition of which is held in common;
Subtle dharmas and coarse dharmas;
Dharmas associated with dedication of merit and dharmas not associated with dedication of merit;
Good dharmas and dharmas that are not good;
Neutral dharmas;
Dharmas severed on the path of seeing the truths;
Dharmas severed on the path of meditation;
Dharmas that are not severed;
Dharmas of those still in training;
Dharmas of those already beyond training;
Dharmas neither of those still in training nor of those beyond training;
And all of the other incalculably many thousands of myriads of types of dharmas.

In every case one causes all of these dharmas to enter into the gates of emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness so that they are realized to be uniformly equal and beyond duality. This is accomplished through the power of resolute faith. This is the sixth of the vows.

[The Seventh Bodhisattva Vow]

Next, we have the following:

> Having vowed to purify the buddha lands,
> I shall therefore extinguish all the various forms of evil.[79]

"[The various forms of evil]" refers to killing beings, stealing, sexual misconduct, false speech, divisive speech, harsh speech, frivolous or lewd speech, greed, anger, wrong livelihood, consumption of intoxicants, and so forth. Wherever evils of these sorts are present, it is these places that are referred to as "impure."

Additionally, where a land includes the wretched destinies of the hells, animals, hungry ghosts, and such, these too are deemed to be "impure."

Then again, it is also the case that "impurity" refers to circumstances in which beings have become covered over by such qualities as the following:

Absence of faith;
Indolence;
Mental scatteredness;
Stupidity;
Flattery;
Deviousness;
Miserliness;
Jealousy;
Rage;
Enmity;
Gravely erroneous views;
Pride;
Arrogance;
Pride based on estimations of greatness;
Pride based on the view of a self;
Deviancy-based pride;
Feigning uniqueness;
Manipulation of feelings of close relationship;
Inducement through instigation;
31c Manipulation through praising and blaming;
Seeking to gain benefits based on one's benefits;[80]
Esteeming worldly pleasures;
Negligence;
Absence of self-restraint;
Abundant desires;
Evil desires;

Deviant types of desire;
Sexual misconduct;
Failing to acknowledge [one's indebtedness to] one's father or mother, *śramaṇa*s, or brahmans;
Failing to practice patience;
Breaking with the awesome deportment [required by the monastic moral code];
Making oneself difficult to remonstrate with;
Indulging in erroneous forms of initial ideation and secondary mental discursion;
Sensual desire;
Ill will;
[Lethargy and] sleepiness;
Agitated excitedness;
Or doubtfulness.[81]

Yet again, "impurity" is present in circumstances where there are manifestations such as the following:

Vicious birds and beasts;
An abundance of hostile bandits;
An absence of water or other things to drink;
Hunger;
Famine;
Disasters;
Pestilence;
Terror wrought by humans;
Terror wrought by nonhumans;
Rebellion from within [the state];
Pillaging invaders from beyond [the borders];
Excessive rains;
Drought;
Distress associated with [societal] decline;
Or all of the various sorts of suffering and affliction typical of the ending of minor *kalpa*s.

Then again, "impurity" is also present in circumstances where beings are beset by manifestations such as:

A short life span;
A horribly ugly physical body;
Weakness;
An abundance of every sort of worry and suffering;
Insufficient courage or ability;
An abundance of sickness;
Inferior charismatic power;
A small retinue;
An evil retinue;
A retinue that is easily brought to ruin;
Small residences;
Or weak-willed, base, and deviant mendicants.

Also, "impurity" is present wherever there manifest among the householders or renunciates any of the wrong views and wrong practices exemplified by the following:

Seng-qu-yu-jia-you-lou-jia kings;
Na-bo-luo-ta-pi-qu-na-ping-sha kings;
*Na-ji-liao ṛṣi*s;[82]
Elephant *ṛṣi*s;
Those [whose path is merely] celibacy;
Those whose practice is that of "the superior disciple";
The sheepherders;
The "great mind" practitioners;
The "patient ones";
The *qiao-tan-mo-jiu-lan-to-mo* "live ones";
The "deliverers";
The "swimmers";
The *po-luo-sha-jia-na-po-luo-duo-she* practitioners;
The "robe-wearers";
The "robeless ones";
Those wearing leather robes;
Those who dress in skins;

Those who dress in grass;
Those who dress in the lower robe;
Those who dress in horned-owl feathers;
Those who dress in tree bark;
Those who wash three times;
The "adapters";
Those who serve the king of the Brahma Heaven;
Those who serve the *kumāra* virgins;
Those who serve the *piśācī* ghosts;
Those who serve the golden-winged *garuḍa* bird;
Those who serve the *gandharvas*;
Those who serve King Yāma;
Those who serve Vaiśravaṇa;
Those who serve the *guhyapāda vajra* spirits;
Those who serve the *bhūta* spirits;
Those who serve the dragons;
The naked *śramaṇa*s;[83]
The white-robed *śramaṇa*s;[84]
The dyed-robe *śramaṇa*s;
The Maskarī Gośālīputra *śramaṇa*s;[85]
The followers of Piluochizi;[86]
The followers of Jiazhanyannizi;[87]
The followers of Saqizhezi;[88]
Those practicing cow morality;
Those practicing deer morality;
Those practicing dog morality;
Those practicing horse morality;
Those practicing elephant morality;
Those whose morality consists in begging;
Those whose morality is that of the *kumāra* virgins;
Those whose morality is that of *deva*s;
Those whose practice is the "superior" precepts;
Those whose moral code is defined by indulgence of sexual desire;
Those whose moral code is remaining pristinely immaculate;
Those who practice the "fire" morality;

Those who declare nirvana to derive from the extinction of visually perceived forms;
Those who declare nirvana to derive from the extinction of sounds;
Those who declare nirvana to derive from the extinction of smells;
Those who declare nirvana to derive from the extinction of tastes;
Those who declare nirvana to derive from the extinction of touchables;
Those who declare nirvana to derive from the extinction of initial ideation and mental discursion;
Those who declare nirvana to derive from the extinction of joy;
Those who declare nirvana to derive from the extinction of pain and pleasure;[89]
Those who wear the water-robe headdress;
Those whose practice is rooted in purity of water;
Those whose practice is rooted in purity of food;
Those whose practice is rooted in purity of caste;
Those who carry about the mortar and pestle;
Those who are breakers of rocks;
Those who delight in bathing;
Those who float and then sink;
Those who abide out on the open ground;
Those who lie down on sharp thorns;
Those of a worldly nature;
Those who are "the Great Ones";
32a Those whose practice is rooted in the self;
Those who posit identity with forms;
Those who posit identity with sounds;
Those who posit identity with smells;
Those who posit identity with tastes;
Those who posit identity with touchables;
The earth realizers;
The water realizers;
The fire realizers;
The wind realizers;
The space realizers;
The unity realizers;

The transformation realizers;
The eye faculty realizers;
The ear faculty realizers;
The nose faculty realizers;
The tongue faculty realizers;
The physical body realizers;
The mind faculty realizers;
The spirit realizers.

All such instances of the many different sorts of wrong views and wrong practices on the part of householders and renunciates qualify as "impure."

Then again, "impurity" is involved wherever the lands are characterized by the following:

Precipitous terrain;
Abysses;
Steep coastlines;
Dense thickets;
Brambles and thorns;
Many sorts of obstacles;
Lands characterized by dustiness, dirtiness, muddiness, flooding, or quicksand pits;
Fearsome mountains with precipitous terrain and peaks;
Twisting defiles;
Deep obstructing inlets;
Rows of mountain peaks obstructing travel;
Towering cliffs;
Places that are difficult to ascend;
Saline waters;
Parched sands;
Terrains marked by stones, rubble, and rocks;
The various fruits characterized by merely weak flavor and deficient appearance and fragrance;
Unbeneficial herbs and plants possessing only scant and feeble potency;
A relative rarity of marvelous forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and touchables;

Only rare encounters with parks and groves, viewing towers, freely running streams, bathing ponds, small mountains and buttes to ascend for distant views, or other enjoyable places;
Provinces, counties, and villages that are not in favorable proximity to each other;
Lands full of desolate hills;
Scant populations;
Cities of inferior character where one frequently encounters poverty-stricken people bereft of merit;
Cities of inferior character;
Very few representatives of governing officialdom, magistrates, high ministers, members of the nobility, leaders among the merchant and professional classes, artists, craftsmen, and scholars;
Or extreme difficulties in coming by clothing, bedding, medicines, and conveniences providing enhancement of one's physical existence, and, in instances where they are obtainable, they are not particularly fine.

Places such as these qualify as impure. As a general statement, "impurity" is of two types. Those of the first type arise due to the beings' own causes and conditions. Those of the second type arise due to the causes and conditions of the karma of their actions.

In the case of those that arise due to beings' own causes and conditions, this is because of beings' faults and evils.

As regards that type of impurity that arises due to the causes and conditions of the karma of their karmic actions, these originate with the transgressions and evils of karmic actions. These two matters were already discussed earlier on.

Where one transforms these two types of circumstances, then there are beings with meritorious qualities and karmic actions that are meritorious. These two types of meritorious qualities constitute the bases for lands being referred to as "pure."

One should realize that this purifying of the lands is associated with the causes and conditions of bodhisattvas' original vows. Because the bodhisattvas are able to implement immense vigor many ways, what they vow to bring about is itself so measurelessly vast as to be impossible to fully

describe. Consequently we shall now only provide a summary description explaining the main points of the matter. As for the remaining aspects, one should be able to understand them as of essentially the same sort.

As for a general description of the characteristics of pure lands, they include:

A bodhisattva who has thoroughly realized *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*;
The complete presence of the dharmas associated with a buddha's meritorious qualities and powers;
The complete presence of the Dharma;
The complete presence of *śrāvaka* disciples;
The completeness of the *bodhi* tree;
A world that is adorned;
Beings that are well endowed with good fortune;
The abundant presence of beings capable of achieving liberation;
The gathering of an immense congregation;
And completeness in the powers of a buddha.

"Thorough realization of *bodhi*" refers to the presence of ten enhancing factors:

First, the abandonment of asceticism.
Second, the absence of weak thoughts of renunciation.
Third, the rapid achievement of realization.
Fourth, the absence of anything sought from non-Buddhist gurus.
Fifth, the complete presence of bodhisattvas.
Sixth, the absence of demon adversaries.
Seventh, the absence of any of the entangling difficulties.
Eighth, the presence of immense *deva* congregations.
Ninth, the complete presence of rarely encountered phenomena.
And tenth, its occurrence at the perfect time.

"Abandonment of ascetic practices" means that, when the bodhisattva 32b
leaves the home life for the sake of realizing *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi,* he does not undertake ascetic practices.[90] In particular, this refers to practices such as going four days, six days, eight days, a half month, or even a month during which one eats as little as a single sesame seed, a single rice grain, or a single piece of fruit, drinks only water, or only ingests subtle energy. He does

not resort to ascetic practices of this sort in striving to reach enlightenment. He sits peacefully in the *bodhimaṇḍa* and thereby realizes buddhahood.

"Absence of weak thoughts of renunciation" means that, when a bodhisattva is able to bring forth even a minor thought of renunciation, he immediately abandons the home life.

"Rapid achievement of realization" means that, once the bodhisattva has left the home life, he soon reaches *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*.

"Refraining from seeking anything from non-Buddhist gurus" means that, once the bodhisattva has left behind the home life, even if there is a great non-Buddhist guru, one who has become very famous, still, he does not go to consult him, inquiring, "What dharma is it that you proclaim? What topics do you discuss? What is it that you set forth as beneficial?" Nor does he wander off in any of the four directions searching out [such gurus].

"The complete presence of bodhisattvas" means that, when the bodhisattva is on the verge of realizing buddhahood, all of the bodhisattvas throughout the great trichiliocosm as well as the bodhisattvas from other regions—they each take up offerings and they all come and surround him. Then, having waited until that buddha has realized buddhahood and emanated great radiance, they each present their offerings. They have heard the Dharma from the buddhas, have all become irreversible on the path, and have reached the stage of having but one life remaining prior to realizing buddhahood.

"Absence of demon adversaries" means that, when that bodhisattva is about to achieve buddhahood, there are no armies of Māra able to come forth and destroy him.

As for there being "the absence of any entangling difficulties," when the bodhisattva is about to attain the realization of buddhahood, there is not even the most infinitesimally minor degree of affliction that enters his mind.[91]

As for there being "immense congregations that convene," when the bodhisattva is about to gain buddhahood, the *deva*s from the Heaven of the Four Heavenly Kings, the *deva*s from Trāyastriṃśa Heaven, and the *deva*s from Yāma Heaven, Tuṣita Heaven, Nirmāṇarati Heaven, Paranirmitavaśavartin Heaven, Brahma Heaven, and the others up to and including Akaniṣṭha Heaven—these, together with the dragons, the spirits, the *yakṣa*s, the *gandharva*s, the *asura*s, the *garuḍa*s, the *kiṃnara*s, the *mahoraga*s, and all of the other sorts of spirits from all of the immeasurably many worlds throughout

the ten directions—each of them takes up the most superior and marvelous of offerings and comes forth to make offerings to the bodhisattva. It is this that constitutes the convening of an immense congregation.

Then again, the *śrāvaka* disciples explain that, when all the *deva*s abiding in ten world systems come forth, it is this that constitutes an immense congregation of *deva*s.

As for there being "the complete presence of rarely encountered phenomena,"[92] when the Bodhisattva realizes buddhahood, rarely encountered phenomena occur: The earth moves and shakes in six ways; throughout the worlds of the ten directions' countless great trichiliocosms, all of the *māra*s' palaces deteriorate and no longer shine forth with radiance; the countless Sumeru mountains shake; the measurelessly vast seas are all roiled; throughout all worlds, the blossoms bloom out of season; a rain of powdered sandalwood incense descends; and there is a rain of the most renowned celestial flower blossoms.

As for "it occurs at a perfect time," this refers to a time when there is no pestilence, famine, war, or fleeing refugees. It is free of torrential rains and 32c
flooding. There are never any disasters. All the kings and other [authorities] govern in accordance with the Dharma. The people are at peace and their lives are long. There are no enemy insurgents, terrible birds and beasts, poisonous insects, or ghosts and spirits that harass and harm beings.

As for [complete presence of the dharmas associated with] "a buddha's meritorious qualities and powers," the awesome powers, meritorious qualities, wisdom, and immeasurably many profound dharmas of the buddhas of the past, present, and future are the same and no different. There are only [distinctions] in accordance with the causes and conditions of each buddha's original vows. Thus, in some cases, he may possess an immeasurably long life span. In other cases, if one but sees him, one immediately gains the stage of certainty. Or it may be that, upon hearing his name, one also becomes able in that way to gain the stage of certainty. Or it may be that when women see him, they are able to immediately gain the body of a man. Or it may be that on hearing his name, they are immediately able to transform that woman's body. It may be as well that, upon hearing his name, they are immediately able to go off to rebirth [in accordance with their wishes].

In some cases, he has measureless radiance that, when beings encounter it, they leave behind all impeding hindrances. In some cases, due to encountering such light, beings immediately enter the stage of certainty. It may also happen that, on encountering such light, they extinguish all suffering and afflictions.

As for the possession of "an immeasurably long life span," it may be that his life span extends in its duration to immeasurably many *kalpa*s beyond counting, extending for a *kalpa,* a hundred *kalpa*s, a thousand *kalpa*s, a myriad *kalpa*s, a *koṭi* of *kalpa*s, or even a hundred thousand myriads of *koṭi*s of *nayuta*s of *asaṃkhyeya*s of *kalpa*s. He may abide for such a long time in order to benefit beings and because of his pity for beings.

Although all buddhas possess the power to extend their life spans for an immeasurably long time, due to differences in their original vows, there are those who do dwell in the world for a long time and those who do not dwell in the world for a long time.

As for "being able to gain the stage of certainty on seeing [a buddha]," there are beings who, upon seeing a buddha, become immediately able to dwell on the ground of the *avaivartika*'s [irreversibility] with respect to the attainment of *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*. How is this the case? It is because, when these beings see the body of a buddha, their minds are filled with great delight, joy, and pure happiness. Their minds immediately become focused and acquire a bodhisattva *samādhi* of this sort. Due to the power of this *samādhi,* they achieve a penetrating understanding of the true character of all dharmas. They then become able to immediately enter the ground of certainty with respect to the attainment of *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*. Due to their resolute intentions that have persisted during the long night [of previous lifetimes], beings of this sort have planted those roots of goodness whereby, upon seeing a buddha, they enter the stage of certainty.

This is because they have taken the mind of great compassion as foremost, because their goodness is sublime and pure, because they have sought to achieve a penetrating understanding of all the dharmas of a buddha, because they have sought to liberate all beings, and because the time has arrived for the perfection of these roots of goodness that they therefore succeed in meeting this buddha. Additionally, it is due to the particular causes and conditions of that buddha's original vows. It is because of the coming together of these two factors that this circumstance is then able to occur.

As for "entering the stage of certainty upon hearing the name of a buddha," a buddha may have made an original vow, declaring, "If there be anyone who so much as hears my name, then he shall immediately enter the stage of certainty." Hence, just as with the case of seeing a buddha, so too it is in this case of hearing a buddha's name.

As for a woman "being able to transform the woman's body as a result of having seen a buddha," if there be someone who singlemindedly wishes to change away from her female form and who has herself developed a profound renunciation for the troubles it involves, and who, based on the power of resolute faith, has vowed to seek instead the physical form of a male—when a woman of this sort succeeds in seeing such a buddha, she immediately transforms and leaves behind the female body.

In the event that a woman does not have karmic causal conditions of this sort and also has not yet exhausted the karma that brings about birth in a female body, she will remain unable to encounter a buddha of this sort.

As for a woman "being able to transform and leave behind the female form upon hearing the name" of a given buddha, the causal conditions for this are just as explained with regard to achieving this by seeing a buddha. 33a

As for "being enabled to go forth to rebirth" upon hearing the name of a buddha, if a person is possessed of much power arising from his resolute faith, if his roots of goodness have become completely developed, and if his karmic obstacles have already become exhausted, where this corresponds to the causes and conditions of the original vows of buddhas, when such a person hears the name of one of these buddhas, he will then be able to go forth to rebirth [in accordance with his wishes].

As for "measureless light," the illumination from the light of all buddhas is such that the distance it reaches accords with their wishes. The "measureless light" we speak of here is the illumination that they always emanate. Their always-emanated illumination is not limited to any given number of *yojanas* of distance whereby one might say of it that it extends universally in the eastern direction a given number of hundreds of thousands of myriads of *koṭi*s of *yojana*s. It is not even amenable to calculation. This applies as well to its reach to the south, west, north, the four midpoints, the zenith, and the nadir. One may only know of it that it is measureless and no one knows its bounds.

As for "becoming able to get rid of all hindrances due to encountering this light," this is an effect brought about by the power of the original vows made by buddhas. Sensual desire, ill will, lethargy and sleepiness, excitedness and regretfulness, and doubtfulness—one gets rid of these hindrances.

When beings encounter such light, they immediately become able to abide in mindfulness of the Buddha. Due to this mindfulness of the Buddha, they then become mindful of the Dharma. Due to becoming mindful of the Dharma, they then become able to rid themselves of these hindrances.

When it is said that the contact of such illumination with the body brings about "the extinguishing of suffering and affliction," this refers to instances in which beings who have descended into the hell realms, animal realms, hungry ghost realms, and other nonhuman realms undergo the manifold sufferings and afflictions characteristic of these realms. Due to the power produced by a buddha's original vows and spiritual superknowledges, when that buddha's light touches their bodies, they immediately become able to abandon such sufferings.

As for there being "the complete presence of the Dharma," there is the complete presence of the Dharma of all buddhas. There is no such thing as [there being buddhas who] completely possess it as opposed to those who do not completely possess it. Because all buddhas are identical as regards the Dharma that they proclaim, the Dharma of each of them is therefore perfectly complete. It is solely a function of the causal conditions specific to their original vows that there are differences whereby their Dharma may remain for a long time or not remain for a long time. That's all.

What is meant by "the complete presence of the Dharma"? [When it is completely present], the Dharma includes:

Concise explanations;

Extensive explanations;

Explanations that are both concise and extensive;

Complete presence of the *śrāvaka* disciple vehicle;

Complete presence of the *pratyekabuddha* vehicle;

Complete presence of the Great Vehicle;

Protection by the power of the spiritual superknowledges;

Prevention of ruination by non-Buddhist traditions;

Invulnerability to destruction by *māra*s;
And long endurance in the world.

In "concise explanations" one uses but a few words and phrases that embrace an abundance of meanings. When those with sharp faculties hear it, they immediately become awakened.

In "extensive explanations," for the sake of those with dull faculties or those who delight in making distinctions, one presents a lengthy explanation of all of the causes and conditions associated with a single matter or single meaning.

In "explanations that are both concise and extensive," one both uses single statements to comprehensively include a wide range of meanings and also uses many different explanations to spread forth [the nuances of] a single meaning.

As for "complete presence of the *śrāvaka* disciple vehicle, complete presence of the *pratyekabuddha* vehicle, and complete presence of the Great Vehicle," these are matters that shall be extensively discussed later on.

"Protection by the power of the spiritual superknowledges" refers to the use of the Buddha's spiritual powers in providing his protective mindfulness of this Dharma and it also refers to its being sealed with the seal of the buddhas.

"The seal of the buddhas" refers to [the Dharma's] association with the four great causal factors and its abandonment of the four black causes.

"Prevention of ruination by non-Buddhist traditions" refers to [the Dharma's countering of] all the deviant views of non-Buddhist *śramaṇas*, brahmans, and treatise masters by presenting [correct] teachings on arising, 33b
passing away, enjoyment, danger, and escape.[93]

Additionally, it refers to instigating awareness of all forms of goodness and explaining the causes and conditions that could bring about their ruination.

As for "invulnerability to destruction by *māra*s," because the buddhas possess a measureless and boundless number of meritorious qualities, wisdom, skillful means, and the powers of the spiritual superknowledges, even though *māra*s are themselves possessed of powers, they still cannot destroy [the Dharma].

It is also because of the powers possessed by the bodhisattvas that the *māra*s cannot destroy [the Dharma].

As for the Dharma's "long endurance," it may even be for so long as an entire *kalpa* or somewhat less than an entire *kalpa,* and in fact it may even extend for even longer to a hundred *kalpa*s, a thousand *kalpa*s, a myriad *kalpa*s, ten myriads of *kalpa*s, a hundred myriads of *kalpa*s, a thousand myriads of *kalpa*s, a myriad myriads of *kalpa*s, for an immeasurable number of thousands of myriads of *koṭi*s of *nayuta*s of *asaṃkhyeya*s of *kalpa*s, and so forth on up to a measureless and boundless number of *kalpa*s during which it continues to endure.

As for "the complete presence of the *śrāvaka* disciple [vehicle]," all buddhas are attended by a perfectly complete *śrāvaka* disciple sangha. The fact that there are a lesser or greater number of distinctions between one instance and another instance is solely a reflection of the original vows of each respective buddha.

What then is it that is meant here by "complete presence"? This is to say that the Tathāgata's *śrāvaka* disciple congregation is perfectly complete as regards observance of the moral prohibitions and accomplishment in the *dhyāna* absorptions, wisdom, liberation, and the knowledge and vision of liberation. They are identical in their equality, are pure, and are all possessed of sharp faculties. They benefit the bodhisattvas and are possessed of physical forms that are dignified and pure.

"Completeness in the observance of the moral prohibitions" means that they have abandoned any killing of beings, stealing, sexual misconduct, false speech, divisive speech, harsh speech, frivolous or lewd speech, consumption of intoxicants, wrong livelihood, and all of the other sorts of evil dharmas. Moreover, they have abandoned whatever is restricted by the Vinaya and they are also able to completely develop their observance of the moral precepts so that is free of the contaminants.

As for "completeness in the *dhyāna* absorptions," this refers to such accomplishments as acquisition of the four *dhyāna*s, the four immeasurable minds, the four formless absorptions, the eight liberations (*aṣṭā vimokṣa*),[94] [otherwise known as] the eight abandonments, the eight bases of mastery (*abhibhvāyatana*), and the ten universal meditation bases (*daśa kṛtsnāyatana*)[95] as well as the acquisition of the *dhyāna* absorptions free of the contaminants.

"Completeness in wisdom" refers to bringing the four types of wisdom to completion: that which arises through extensive learning; that which arises through meditative reflection; that which arises through cultivation and accumulation; and that which arises as the result of the karmic causes and conditions of previous lives.

"Completeness in liberation" refers to having gained liberation from all afflictions. Additionally, it refers to becoming liberated from all the hindrances.

In "completeness in the knowledge and vision of liberation," "knowledge" refers to the cognitive awareness of phenomena whereas "vision" refers to a complete understanding of those matters. Thus, in one's liberation, one gains a complete and utter knowledge and vision that is entirely free of doubts. Then again, one may also explain that "knowledge" refers to the knowledge of the destruction [of the contaminants], whereas "vision" refers to the seeing of the four truths.

As for "identical in their equality," all those who attain the fruit of a stream-enterer are entirely equal. So too, all those [who attain the higher fruits of the path] on up to arhatship are just the same.

"Purity" refers to having completely developed the three types of purity, namely purity in physical actions, purity in verbal actions, and purity in mental actions.

"Sharp wisdom"[96] means that, when one merely hears a few words, one is able to gain a vast understanding through which one penetrates a meaning's import. Thus one is able to provide extensive presentations of concise [teachings], is able to provide concise presentations of extensive [teachings], and in an instance where the principle is subtle and obscure, one is able to render it easily understandable.

As for "benefiting the bodhisattvas," they remain mindful of the bodhisattvas, including even those who have only initially produced the resolve, and have no slighting arrogance toward them, this because they have a deep affection and respect for them. They always provide instruction in [the distinctions] between good and bad and explain for them the causes and conditions of the buddha path's skillful means.

As for their having "physical forms that are dignified and pure," this means their bodies have an especially fine presence and their appearance 33c

is complete with the major marks and secondary characteristic signs. Consequently, those who observe them are filled with delight in the same way as when they behold a *pratyekabuddha*. Thus, in their walking forth, their advancing, stopping, sitting, lying down, sleeping, awakening, partaking of food and drink, bathing, donning the robe, and holding the bowl, their awesome deportment accords with the correct sequence and remains free of any defects or omissions. Thus, when a person observes this, his mind is then purified.

As for "completeness of the *bodhi* tree," the rest of all the great trees there such as the *śāla* tree, the *tāla* tree, the *tiluojia* tree, the *duomoluo* tree, the *poqiuluo* tree, the *campaka* tree, the *aśoka* tree, the *suohejialuo* tree, the *fennamo* tree, the *namo* tree, the *nāga* tree, the *śirīṣa* tree, the *niequtuo* tree, the *āśvattha* tree, the *bolecha* tree, the *uḍumbara* tree, and so forth—no matter which of these great trees we speak of, when growing out on level land, they are tall, broad, perfect in the growth of their roots, trunk, branches, and leaves, and are perfect in their luster and luxuriant fullness. The coloration of their blossoms is fresh, bright, and free of any defects from damage.

His [*bodhi*] tree rises to a height of fifty *yojana*s. It is perfectly erect and level. It is lustrously smooth and free of any contorted branches. Its bark is fine and soft and its coloration is white, fresh, and clean. It has no thorns and is free of any internal decay. Additionally, it is not hollow and is free of any injury or gnawing by insects. Its roots are deep in their penetration, solid, and orderly in their interwoven plaiting. Its flowers gracefully adorn it, just as when one is graced by a floral garland and gemstone necklace.

Its branches and leaves are luxuriant and full in their growth and are comparable to a circular pavilion in their shape. It is orderly and sequential in the way that it spreads out and, in its gracefulness, it is more distinctive than anything made by man. Its leaves are green and fresh and comparable in color to jewels. Its branches are free of any distorting crisscrossing, yellowness caused by withering, or dried-out leaves, and it has no insects such as moths,[97] mosquitoes, midges, horseflies, or ants.

The ground below is pure and spread with golden sands. It emanates all manner of illumination and sends forth shining brightness all around. Sandalwood-scented waters are sprinkled over its grounds that are themselves level, soft, cool, and pleasing. Fine powder of oxhead sandalwood is spread

over it. The *deva*s always rain down *māndārava* flowers. The fragrance of burning aloe wood incense wafts all about. Five-colored celestial banners are suspended at intermittent intervals. A subtle breeze gently moves them, causing them to ripple and flutter in response to it. Birds and animals quietly roam about off to the sides, making no sounds.

To its left and right, *deva*s are always sprinkling down flowers of the many marvelous and varied colors that naturally intersperse as they descend like strands of jewels like the golden flower garlands worn on the bodies of the dragons. A jeweled net hangs down from the larger branches on all four sides. The many sorts of jewels adorn it, making it appear like a purple-golden mountain. It stands there in awe-inspiring grandeur, distinctive and sublime, like Indra's canopy.

This is an effect brought about as a result of the Bodhisattva's hundreds of thousands of myriads of *koṭi*s of *asaṃkhyeya*s of *kalpa*s of cultivating and accumulating meritorious qualities deriving from the practice of goodness. The many different sorts of marvelous jewels have been used to create the appearance of the king of lions. On the crowns of four lions, there rests a broad and grand jeweled platform cushioned with celestial tapestries. The *deva*s from the Heaven of the Four Heavenly Kings, Trāyastriṃśa Heaven, Yāma Heaven, Tuṣita Heaven, Nirmāṇarati Heaven, Paranirmitavaśavartin Heaven, Brahma Heaven, and so forth all the way up to Akaniṣṭha Heaven—all of them appear riding along in their palaces composed of the many sorts of precious jewels consisting of such jewels as lapis lazuli, *musāra-galva,* carnelian, *mahānīla* sapphires, *indranīla* sapphires, *vajra,* and *sphaṭika*. They 34a
emanate an incomparable colored light that illuminates even to a great distance. They all assemble at the bejeweled tree, circumambulating it and presenting offerings.

Additionally, in accordance with their original vows, all of the congregations of bodhisattvas from the countless worlds throughout the ten directions, having prepared in abundance all of the various sorts of offerings, rain down the many sorts of precious gifts, including flowers, incense, banners, canopies, the many different sorts of music, and other such offerings. This is what is meant by "completeness of the *bodhi* tree."

As for "a world that is adorned," the bodhisattvas contemplate the most marvelous among all the pure lands throughout the ten directions and then

make a great vow, "The land that I acquire through the cultivation of meritorious qualities shall even be superior to these. It shall be foremost and incomparable."

As for "the beings being well-endowed with good fortune,"[98] the beings there are fine in appearance, free of any sort of physical afflictions or calamities, and are not troubled by aging and sickness. Their life spans extend for a measureless number of *asaṃkhyeya*s of *kalpa*s. In all cases, they are born there through transformation. Their bodies are free of the many sorts of defilement. They are possessed of the thirty-two major marks. They radiate measureless light. Their afflictions are merely subtle and slight and they are easily taught and led across to liberation.

As for being "complete in those capable of achieving liberation," during but a single sitting in which he teaches the Dharma, beings as numerous as the sands of the Ganges all simultaneously attain liberation. [This may be contrasted with the circumstance of] other buddhas for whom, in a single instance of proclaiming Dharma, they bring one or two people across to liberation. These beings have all planted roots of goodness in previous lives. Their fetters are but slight and scant, so much so that, when hearing an explanation, they awaken immediately.

As for "the gathering of an immense congregation," there are buddhas whose great assemblies fill up an area one *yojana* across, or in some cases, ten *yojana*s, or in some cases a hundred thousand myriads of *koṭi*s of *yojana*s, or in some cases, they fill the worlds of an entire great trichiliocosm.

As for the "immense congregation" referred to here, it is one equal in scope to world systems as numerous as the sands in all the Ganges Rivers throughout the ten directions. This is what constitutes "an immense congregation." Moreover, the people in his assembly are only those who have accumulated merit. Also included in the congregations are all the *deva*s, the beings in the eight divisions [of ghosts and spirits], and the bodhisattvas from the first through the tenth grounds. They have all come together there, with the sole exception of the buddhas themselves.

"Completeness in the powers of a buddha" refers to the forty dharmas exclusive to the buddhas that all buddhas practice. For each and every one of these dharmas, the places in which they have been practiced are all measurelessly and boundlessly many. This is the seventh vow.

[The Eighth Bodhisattva Vow]

Next, we have:

> When joining together with others in doing any single endeavor,
> I vow that there will be no enmity or contentiousness.[99]

In all merit-generating deeds a bodhisattva does, whether it be through the practice of giving, upholding moral precepts, patience, vigor, *dhyāna* meditation, or wisdom, whether it be through the four bases of meritorious qualities consisting of truth, relinquishment, quiescence, and wisdom, or whether it be through other endeavors in which, due to one's great vows, one pursues the attainment of buddhahood, one should make this vow: "In circumstances where others join with me in practicing the six *pāramitā*s or the four bases of meritorious qualities, doing so with the aim of attaining buddhahood, I vow that I shall not create enmity or contention with others over the causes and conditions involved in such creation of merit." Why? The wise say that, among those jointly carrying out a single endeavor, the signs of enmity may develop. So, too, these sorts of circumstances appear in the world even now. It is in order to do away with such transgressions as these that one brings forth this great vow. This is the eighth vow.

[The Ninth Bodhisattva Vow]

Next, we have:

> I vow to practice the bodhisattva path
> And set turning the irreversible wheel,
> Thereby enabling the dispelling of all afflictions 34b
> And the entry into faith that is pure.[100]

"The wheel" is a reference to the wheel of Dharma. That it is "irreversible" signifies that there is no one who is able to interfere [with its continuing to turn]. The bodhisattva should bring forth a vow such as this: "I shall practice the path just as it has been taught and will certainly set turning the irreversible wheel of Dharma. I shall turn this wheel of Dharma to dispel beings' afflictions born of the three poisons, to cause them to turn away from samsara and enter the domain of the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, and to

cause them to accomplish their own purification through [the teaching of] suffering, origination, cessation, and the path." This is the ninth vow.

[The Tenth Bodhisattva Vow]

Next, we have:

> I vow that, in all worlds,
> I shall manifest the realization of *bodhi.*[101]

In whichever worlds that are appropriate as places for the appearance of the works of a buddha, one manifests the realization of *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi* in all of them, doing so for the sake of bringing peace and happiness to all beings and for the sake of leading all beings to nirvana. It is due to the greatness of *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi* that its attainment is the only one [of a buddha's deeds] that is mentioned here. As for all the other deeds including entering the womb, taking birth, growing up in the home, leaving behind the home life, taking on the moral precepts, taking up the practice of austerities, conquering Māra's demon hordes, accepting the entreaties of the Brahma Heaven King, turning the wheel of Dharma, assembling an immense congregation, liberating beings on a vast scale, displaying great spiritual powers, and manifesting the great passing into final nirvana, one should accomplish all such deeds as these in this same way.

One knows from this that, where one possesses immeasurable powers such as these whereby one is capable of benefiting an incalculable and boundless number of beings, one should not merely manifest the realization of buddhahood in but a single land. There are those who state that, within a single buddha's domain consisting of the four continents, it is the entirety of the continent of Jambudvīpa that constitutes that single buddha's buddha land and anything beyond that is a matter comprehensible only to a buddha. However, this is not actually the case. This is the tenth vow.

Next, we have:

> For all such bodhisattvas as these,
> It is the ten great vows that are foremost.
> They are as vast as empty space
> And exhaust even the bounds of the future.

This extends to all of their other measurelessly many vows
As well as to their distinguishing and explanation of each of them.

"Vows" is a reference to what the mind wishes for and what it is determined to definitely achieve. "Ten" is a reference to the existence of ten such gateways.

"They are as vast as empty space" refers to the fact that the regions taken as the objective focus of the vows are equal in their extensiveness to all of empty space. The scope of the vows is so very vast as this.

"Exhausting even the bounds of the future" means that the length of time during which these vows shall abide will exhaust the bounds of the future births and deaths of all beings.

There are others who claim that *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi* itself is what sets the bounds of future births and deaths. Or they may assert that, when buddhas enter the nirvana without residue, it is this that constitutes the bounds of future births and death. Or they may say that, although the bodhisattva's vows may be endless, in fact, they end with the realization of buddhahood.

All of the great bodhisattvas throughout the worlds of the ten directions have made these vows. "All of their other measurelessly many vows" refers to the fact that, because all bodhisattvas perfect measurelessly many rare meritorious qualities, one could never exhaustively describe all the vows that they have made.

Next, we have: 34c

As the bodhisattva makes ten great vows such as these,
[He does so in ways by which] they are ultimately enduring.

These ten great vows have ten ways in which they are caused to be ultimately enduring.

Question: What then are those ten ways?

Response:

They are made until the end of realms of beings, of realms of worlds,
Of realms of empty space, of the Dharma realm,
Of the realm of nirvana, of the realms in which buddhas are born,

Of the realms of all buddhas' knowledge—[102]
Until the end of anything taken as an object of mind,
The end of the knowledge associated with buddhas' range of actions,
And of the permutations of their knowledge of worldly dharmas.
These are the ten ways they are ultimately enduring.

[Hence these vows are made]:

First, until the end of the realms of beings;
Second, until the end of the realms of worlds;
Third, until the end of the realms of empty space;
Fourth, until the end of the Dharma realm;
Fifth, until the end of the realm of nirvana;
Sixth, until the end of the realms in which buddhas are born;
Seventh, until the end of the realms of all buddhas' knowledge;
Eighth, until the end of everything that can be taken as an object of mind;
Ninth, until the end of the knowledge associated with all buddhas' range of actions;[103]
And tenth, until the end of the permutations of their knowledge of worldly dharmas.

These are the ten ways they are ultimately enduring.

Question: You speak of an ultimate "end." What is it that constitutes an ultimate "end"? You should distinguish what is meant by this.

Response:

If the realms of beings were to come to an end,
Only then would my vows also come to an end.
Just as it is with the ending of beings and the other things,
So too it is with the ending of these vows.
The meaning of "end" then is that there is no end,
Hence my roots of goodness are endless.

As for "if the realms of beings were to come to an end," this is to say: "If all beings became entirely extinct, my vows should then also cease." Thus, if even the realms of the world were to come to an end, if even the realms of

empty space were to come to an end, if even the Dharma realm were to come to an end, if even the realm of nirvana were to come to an end, if even the realms in which buddhas are born were to come to an end, if even the realms of all buddhas'[104] knowledge were to come to an end, if even the realms of conditions taken by all beings as objects of mind were to come to an end, if even the realms of the knowledge that fathoms the Buddha's Dharma were to come to an end, and if even the permutations of worlds, permutations of dharmas, and permutations of knowledge were to come to an end, then and only then would my ten vows finally come to an end.

However, as a matter of fact, these ten phenomena consisting of "the realms of beings" and so forth will never come to an end. Hence my merit and roots of goodness will never come to an end and will never cease.

As for the meaning of "will not cease," it refers to never ceasing even after a period of time that is immeasurable, boundless, inconceivable, and beyond calculation. It is because, throughout the ten directions, worlds of the sort that exist in this great trichiliocosm are measurelessly, boundlessly, and incalculably numerous that worlds are said to be boundless. It is because the beings within all of these worlds' three realms of existence and six rebirth destinies are boundlessly numerous that the realms of beings are said to be boundlessly many.

It is because the realms of the two types of empty space both within and beyond all these worlds are boundless that we refer here to the boundlessness of the realms of empty space.

It is because of the boundlessness of the conditioned dharmas contained within all these worlds' desire realms, form realms, formless realms, and uncontaminated realms that we refer here to the boundlessness of the Dharma realm.

Even if all beings attained nirvana, still the realm of nirvana would neither increase nor decrease. Therefore the realm of nirvana is boundless.

Because the buddhas of the past throughout the ten directions were immeasurably and boundlessly many, because the buddhas of the present 35a
throughout the ten directions are immeasurably and boundlessly many, and because the buddhas of the future throughout the ten directions will be immeasurably and boundlessly many, the realms into which buddhas are born are therefore boundlessly many.

Because the buddhas' knowledge is measurelessly vast, indescribable, immeasurable, unequaled, equal to the unequaled, unrivaled, and incomparable, therefore the realms of all buddhas' knowledge are also measureless and boundless. This is just as stated by the Buddha when he told Ānanda, "The knowledge possessed by these *śrāvaka* disciples and by all buddhas is measureless." Therefore the realms of the knowledge possessed by the buddhas are measureless and boundless.

The mind states produced by each and every one of all beings throughout the past were measurelessly and boundlessly many. All of these mind states had corresponding objective conditions serving as the bases of their arising. So too shall this be so of the mind states produced by the beings of the future. So too, the mind states produced by all the beings of the present era are measurelessly and boundlessly many. In every case, they have corresponding objective conditions that serve as the bases of their arising. Therefore the objective conditions taken as the object of those mind states are themselves also measurelessly and boundlessly many.

As for the powers of all buddhas, briefly speaking, they are manifested in the forty dharmas exclusive [to buddhas]. As for these forty exclusive dharmas, the range of implementation of each and every one of these dharmas is measureless and boundless. Because their range of implementation is measureless and boundless, so too then, their corresponding knowledge is also measureless and boundless. It is for this reason that it is stated here that the knowledge associated with the range of all buddhas' actions is itself measureless and boundless.

As for the permutations of worlds, the permutations of dharmas, and the permutations of wisdom, this "permutation" is a designation used to refer to the fact that each of these dharmas has transformational permutations.

As for the reference here to "worlds," worlds are of two types, namely the world that consists of lands and the world that consists of beings themselves. We speak here of the world of beings wherein all buddhas as well as all bodhisattvas guide beings by using the power of a measureless and boundless number of skillful means.

"Permutations of dharmas" refers to the use of measurelessly and boundlessly voluminous roots of goodness and merit in gathering together and acquiring all dharmas of a buddha.

As for "permutations of knowledge," one uses an incalculable number of good dharmas associated with the six *pāramitā*s and the ten grounds to gather together and acquire the knowledge of a buddha. Hence the permutations of knowledge are boundless. Because these three factors [of worlds, dharmas, and knowledge] are the same in their involvement of transformational permutations, they are therefore gathered together in a single pledge.

Because each and every [one of the ten great] vows of this bodhisattva is firm and solid, he establishes [for each of them] these ten pledges of endless duration, declaring those vows to be as spatially vast as empty space and as long-enduring as the bounds of future time. It is in this way that, using these condensed discussions and extensive discussions, we come to the end of this explanation of these ten vows' ultimately enduring duration.

Chapter 6

On Producing the *Bodhi* Resolve

Question: The initial production of the resolve [to attain buddhahood] is the root of all vows. What then is meant by this "initial production of resolve"?

Response:

The initial resolve to attain *bodhi*
May involve three reasons or four reasons.

When beings initially produce the resolve to attain *bodhi,* this may find its origin in [one of] three reasons or else in [one of] four reasons.[105] Thus, when one combines them, there are a total of seven causes and conditions associated with producing the resolve to attain *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*.

Question: What then are those seven?

Response:

In the case of the first, a tathāgata
May influence one to bring forth the resolve to attain *bodhi.*
As for the second, observing that the Dharma is about to be destroyed, 35b
One produces the resolve in order to guard and protect it.

In the case of the third, with respect to beings,
One feels great compassion for them and thus produces the resolve.
As for the fourth, there may be a bodhisattva
Who instructs one in the production of the resolve to attain *bodhi.*

In the case of the fifth, one may observe the conduct of a bodhisattva
And also then consequently produce the resolve.
Or, alternatively, following upon an act of giving,
One may produce the resolve to attain *bodhi* [based on that].

Or else, having observed the marks of a buddha's body,
One may feel delight and then proceed to produce the resolve.
Thus it may be due to [any one of] these seven causes and conditions
That one produces the resolve to attain *bodhi*.

In the case where a buddha "influences one to bring forth the resolve," a buddha uses the buddha eye to observe beings. He may then realize that a person's roots of goodness have become so completely ripe that he is capable of taking on this endeavor and that he will be able to realize *anuttarā-samyaksaṃbodhi*. For a person such as this, the Buddha instructs him and enjoins him to bring forth the resolve, saying to him, "Son of good family, come forth. You may now bring forth that resolve by which you should bring suffering and afflicted beings across to liberation."

Or then again there may be a person born into a dreadful era who, on observing that the Dharma is on the verge of destruction, then, for the sake of protecting it, brings forth the resolve, reflecting as follows, "Alas! From a time in the past an immeasurable and boundless number of hundreds of thousands of myriads of *kotī*s of *asaṃkhyeya*s of *kalpa*s ago on forth to the very present, there has only been:

A single person;
On two bases;
Whose practice has transcended the three realms;
Who has served as the great guide to the four truths of the *āryas*;
Who is that one who has known the fivefold treasury of Dharma;
Who has gained liberation from the six destinies of rebirth;
Who has taken possession of the great jewel of the seven kinds of right Dharma;[106]
Who has deeply practiced the eight liberations;
Who uses the nine categories of sutra text in teaching;
Who has taken possession of the ten great powers;
Who has described the eleven kinds of meritorious qualities;[107]
Who has skillfully set forth the continuous cycle of the twelve causes and conditions;
Who has explained the thirteen dharmas assisting realization of the path of the *ārya*s;

Who has taken possession of the great jewel of the fourteen factors fundamental to awakening;
Who has dispelled the fifteen kinds of craving;
Who has both attained the realization of the sixteen mind states involved in unimpeded liberation and has also extricated beings from the sixteen kinds of hells;
Who has also mastered the seventeen physical dharmas;[108]
Who has completely perfected the eighteen dharmas exclusive [to the buddhas];
Who has skillfully distinguished the nineteen stations of persons who have gained the fruits [of the path];
And who has well known and distinguished the twenty kinds of faculties [consisting of five each] for those still in training, the arhats, the *pratyekabuddha*s, and all buddhas.[109]

"This greatly compassionate one, this great lord of generals, this great lord of assemblies, this great king of physicians, this great guide, this great captain of the ship—only after a very long time then acquired this Dharma, and only after cultivating those ascetic practices so difficult to practice then acquired this Dharma. But now, it is on the verge of destruction. I should bring forth the resolve to attain *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi,* should plant thick roots of goodness, should thus attain buddhahood, and thus should cause the Dharma to abide for a long time, enduring even for countless *asaṃkhyeya*s of *kalpa*s."

[Of this same sort are those who], while cultivating the bodhisattva path, strive with diligence and vigor to guard and uphold the Dharma of the incalculably many buddhas.

Or, alternatively, there may be those who observe:
That beings, beset as they are by bitter afflictions, are pitiful;
That they have no one to rescue them, no refuge, and no one on whom they can rely;
That they flow along in samsara's dangerous and difficult wretched destinies;
That they are afflicted by great enemies, by all manner of fearsome insects and animals, by the terrors involved in births and deaths, by all manner of fearsome ghosts, and so forth;

35c That they are always beset by the piercing thorns of worry, sadness, pain, and distress;
That they fall into the deep pit of [sufferings associated with] separation from those they love and encounters with those they detest;
That the waters of joy and happiness are only very rarely encountered;
That they travel alone in the midst of intense cold and intense heat;
That they are stranded without shade in the vast wilderness and find it difficult to make their way across to liberation;
That beings in the midst of all this are possessed by every sort of terror and fear;
And that they have no one to rescue them, protect them, or serve as guides for them.

Having observed that beings have entered in this manner into the dangerous and wretched destinies involved in samsara, that they undergo all manner of suffering and affliction, such a person, because of the great compassion, may then bring forth the resolve to attain *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi* and may then proclaim, "I shall become a rescuer for those who have no one to rescue them. I shall become a refuge for those who have no refuge. I will become a support for those with no one to rely on.

"Once I have gained liberation, I shall strive to liberate other beings as well. Once I have gained liberation, I shall then also liberate these beings. Once I have gained peace, I shall also bring peace to other beings."

Then again, there are also those persons who need only hear of this matter from others and then, due to thoughts of resolute belief,[110] and other such factors, they produce the resolve to achieve the unsurpassable enlightenment and reflect, "By always[111] and ceaselessly cultivating wholesome dharmas, I may reach the stage of certainty and realize the unproduced-dharmas patience.[112] Due to accumulating all manner of merit and due to the ripening of roots of goodness, I may then encounter buddhas or may encounter great bodhisattvas who are able to know the relative acuity or dullness of beings' faculties, are able to know from root to branch their deep-seated inclinations and the differences in their individual natures and aspirations, who thoroughly understand the use of skillful means, and who are under the protection of the *prajñā-pāramitā*.

"Those [beings such as these] who are able to carry on the works of a buddha will realize that I have brought forth the vow. Then, because of the ripening of my roots of goodness, they may influence me to abide in the stage of certainty or the unproduced-dharmas patience."[113]

These bodhisattvas [to which he refers] are those who abide on the seventh, eighth, ninth, or tenth bodhisattva grounds. They are those who, like a buddha, thoroughly know the strengths of beings' minds and thereby teach them to produce the resolve.

But it is not solely through their possession of resolute belief and other such factors that they are taught to bring forth the resolve. In addition, there are those persons who [bring forth the resolve] by observing other bodhisattvas practicing the path, cultivating all manner of roots of goodness, proceeding under the protection of the great compassion, and perfecting skillful means as they teach and transform beings. [They observe that]:

They accomplish an abundance of beneficial deeds without indulging any cherishing regard for their own bodies or lives;
They develop vastly extensive learning;
They become especially distinctive people in the world;
They become the most emblematically superior people;
They serve as a source of shade for weary and suffering beings;
They become securely established in the practices of giving, moral virtue, patience, vigor, *dhyāna* concentration, wisdom, a sense of shame, a dread of blame, straightforwardness in character, mental pliancy, and congeniality;
Their minds are pure;
And they deeply delight in good dharmas.

By observing persons such as these, they are inspired to reflect, "I too should practice what these people practice. I too should cultivate the vows and conduct that they cultivate. I should bring forth this vow for the sake of acquiring this Dharma." Having had this thought, they then bring forth the resolve to attain the unsurpassable enlightenment.

Yet again, there are those persons who engage in acts of great giving, acts whereby they present gifts to a buddha or to his sangha, or acts whereby they simply offer food, drink, or robes to a buddha. Due to such acts of giving, these persons may then call to mind those bodhisattvas of the past who were

able to practice giving, bodhisattvas such as Velāma,[114] Viśvantara,[115] Sarvadā, and King Śibi. [Having called them to mind], they may then immediately bring forth the resolve to attain *bodhi* and then dedicate the merit from their act of giving to [their future attainment of] *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*.

36a Yet again, there may be those persons who directly observe or merely hear about the thirty-two marks of the buddhas, namely such marks as:

The evenness of their soles;
The wheel marks on the hands and feet;
The webbing at the roots of their fingers;
The softness of their hands and feet;
The fullness in seven places;
The slenderness and length of their fingers;
The breadth of their heels;
The straightness of their bodies;
Their high and even ankles;
The vertical swirling shape of their bodily hairs;
Their thighs resembling those of the *aiṇeya* antelope;
Their arms whereby the fingers reach even below the knees;
Their genital ensheathment like that of a stallion;
The gold color of their bodies;
The softness and thinness of their skin;
The placement of but a single hair in each and every pore;
Their white "hair mark" between their brows;
Their lionlike bodies;
Their round and large shoulders;
The fullness of the axillary region;
Their ability to distinctly know sublime flavors;
Their physical girth like that of the *nyagrodha* tree;
Their fleshy prominence atop the crown of their heads;
Their vast and long tongues;
Their voices possessed of the sound like Brahmā;
Their lionlike jaws;
Their forty teeth which are straight, white, and closely set;
Their blue eyes;
And their eyelashes like those of the king of the bulls.

[Having observed or heard of these marks of a buddha's body], they may then become delighted and think, "I too should strive to gain these physical marks and I too should strive to gain those dharmas gained by those who possess such physical marks." They may then immediately produce the resolve to attain *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*.

Thus it may be because of any of these seven causes and conditions that one then brings forth the resolve to attain *bodhi.*

Question: You stated that there are these seven reasons for a person's generation of the bodhisattva's resolve. Will they all result in success or is it instead the case that some will result in success but others will not?

Response: It is not necessarily the case that they will all result in success. They may result in success or they may not result in success.

Question: If that is so, you should explain this.

Response:

Of the seven reasons for generating the resolve,
Where the Buddha has instructed one to produce the resolve,
Where one produces the resolve in order to protect the Dharma,
And where one produces the resolve out of pity for others—

Those who have the three motivations such as these
Will certainly find success in this.
As for the other four types of motivation,
It is not certain that they will all be successful in this.

Among these seven reasons for generating the resolve, in a circumstance where a buddha has contemplated one's origins and then instructed one in a way that one is caused to produce the resolve, that will certainly result in success. This is because [buddhas] do not speak in vain.

So too is this true of those instances where [one's production of the resolve occurs] because one reveres and esteems the Dharma of the buddhas and one is motivated by the determination to protect it.

So too is this true of those instances where [one's production of the resolve occurs] because one has the mind of great compassion for beings.

These three reasons for generating the resolve will definitely result in success, for the roots [of such resolve] are deeply anchored.

In instances where other bodhisattvas have provided instruction which has influenced one to produce the resolve, in instances where one has observed the practices of bodhisattvas and therefore produced the resolve, in instances where one has produced the resolve due to an act of great giving, and in instances where one has produced the resolve because of seeing or hearing about the physical marks of a buddha—for the most part, these four instances of generating the resolve do not result in success, though it may be that there are still those that do succeed. [When these do not result in success], it is due to the relative weakness of the foundations [of their practice].

Chapter 7

36b

On Training the Mind

Question: According to the explanation in the previous chapter, there are three cases where production of the resolve [to attain buddhahood] will definitely result in success whereas, in the remaining four cases, it is not necessarily the case that they will result in success. Why is it that some of these result in success and why is it that some of these do not result in success?

Response: If a bodhisattva has brought forth the *bodhi* resolve, yet practices dharmas conducing to loss of the *bodhi* resolve, this will not meet with success. If he practices the dharmas not conducing to losing the *bodhi* resolve, this will certainly result in success. Hence this verse says:

> The bodhisattva should abandon
> any dharmas conducing to loss of the *bodhi* resolve
> and should singlemindedly cultivate
> those dharmas that prevent loss of *bodhi.*

By "abandonment," it is meant that one entirely extinguishes those dharmas that are bad and thus prevents them from entering one's mind. If they do enter, one swiftly extinguishes them. "Loss" refers to the forgetting, either in the present life or the future life, of one's resolve to realize *bodhi* whereupon one would no longer pursue it through cultivation of the practices. One must leave such dharmas far behind. If one is to succeed in avoiding losing those dharmas facilitating the realization of *bodhi,* and if one is to avoid forgetting the resolve to realize *bodhi,* then one should always pursue singleminded and diligent practice.

Question: Which sorts of dharmas result in loss of the *bodhi* resolve?

Response:

> The first is failing to revere and esteem the Dharma.
> The second is possessing an arrogant mind.

The third is false speech or being untruthful.
The fourth is failing to revere spiritual guides.

Those possessed of any of these four dharmas—whether it be at the time of death in this present lifetime or whether it be in a subsequent lifetime—they will forget and lose their *bodhi* resolve. Thus they will become unable to realize, "I am a bodhisattva," and so they will no longer bring forth the vow. Thus the dharmas of bodhisattva practice will no longer manifest before them.

As for "failing to revere and esteem the Dharma," "Dharma" refers to the superior, middling, and lesser vehicles set forth by all buddhas. To take up what is essential here, it refers to all of those dharmas that all buddhas, all tathāgatas, have used in providing instruction. If, with respect to these dharmas, one does not revere them, does not make offerings to them, does not honor and esteem them, does not praise them, does not produce thoughts regarding them as rare, does not think of them as difficult to encounter, does not think of them as precious objects, or does not think of them as the means for the fulfillment of one's aspirations, these very dharmas [of non-esteem] can bring about the loss of one's *bodhi* resolve.

As for an "arrogant mind," this refers to elevating the status of one's own mind and then claiming to have gained what one has not yet gained and claiming to have realized what one has not yet realized, claiming for instance that one has realized emptiness, signlessness, or wishlessness or the unproduced-dharmas patience, the six *pāramitā*s, the ten bodhisattva grounds or any of the other dharmas that arise through cultivation. With regard to these dharmas, even though one has not yet attained them, one nonetheless claims to have attained them.

36c As for "false speech," there are instances that constitute *duṣkṛta* offenses, those that constitute *pāyantika* offenses, those that constitute *sthūlātyaya* offenses, those that constitute *saṃghāvaśeṣa* offenses, and those that constitute *pārājika* offenses.[116] There may be others who claim that there exists a sixth category of false speech. This refers to when one brings forth repentance with a mind that itself involves an instance of false speech.

Among the above five categories of false speech, the first is the lightest form of offense whereas the last is the most severe form of offense. The sixth category is the lightest of them all.

In the case of the *pārājika* offense, this is an instance where one does not in fact possess any of the superhuman dharmas but nonetheless tends to use various means to create the impression that he possesses such qualities, whether this impression be created through what is spoken by the mouth or what is signaled by the body.

As for the *saṃghāvaśeṣa* offense, this refers to an instance where, with respect to any one of those four circumstances [constituting *pārājika* offenses] for a *bhikṣu*, whether through spoken words or physical signs, [a fully ordained *bhikṣu* or *bhikṣuṇī*] commits a slander [of another *bhikṣu* or *bhikṣuṇī*] by [testifying to the existence of] any one of the bases [for a *pārājika* offense] when in fact there was no such basis [for such an accusation].

As for the *sthūlātyaya* offense, this refers to an instance where, wishing to slander someone, one brings forth either a plausible or baseless allegation, but that allegation is then not established [as truthful].[117]

As for the *pāyantika* offense, this refers to when one commits a slander in a circumstance involving a baseless *saṃghāvaśeṣa* allegation.

As for the *duṣkṛta* offense, this refers to any instance of false speech not subsumed among the other four categories of false speech.

As for those instances [of abandonment] where one is able to extinguish [bad dharmas] from one's own mind,[118] this refers to when, at the time when the precepts are being recited [each half month], one realizes that one has committed a minor offense but cannot bring oneself to declare it to anyone else, yet one nonetheless immediately repents of it in one's own mind.

Question: These types of "false speech" are exclusive to *bhikṣu*s and irrelevant to laity and yet this treatise is ostensibly intended to address both laity and monastics.

Response: Whenever anyone knows that some circumstance is actually this particular way and yet speaks of it in a manner that differs from what one knows to be the case, that is what we refer to in this treatise as generally constituting a lie. Due to distinctions in types of beings, distinctions in circumstances, distinctions in the time of commission, distinctions in five classes of transgressions, and distinctions in dwelling place, the transgression may be either minor or grave.

Also, although a given transgression may be relatively minor, when it is repeated for a long time, then it qualifies as grave and may cause one to lose the resolve to attain *bodhi*.

"Distinctions in types of beings" refers to instances involving lying transgressions committed by those with wrong views who have severed their roots of goodness or lying transgressions committed by others who are beset with heavy afflictions. These are grave transgressions.

"Distinctions in circumstances" refers for instance to untruthful claims to possess superhuman attainments and to those that create a schism in the monastic sangha.

As for "distinctions in the time of commission" if someone tells a lie when they are monastic, this is a grave transgression.

"Distinctions in five classes of transgressions," if one commits either a *pārājika* or a *saṃghāvaśeṣa* offense, these are grave transgressions.[119]

Distinctions according to the location: Lies committed by monastics at times of certification are grave transgressions.[120]

"Failing to revere good spiritual guides" refers to failing to have thoughts of reverence and awe toward them.

If one often engages in these four [behavioral] dharmas, then one is bound to lose the resolve to attain *bodhi*.

Question: Are there only these four dharmas by which one is able to lose the *bodhi* resolve or are there additional dharmas leading to the same outcome?

Response:

If one is stingy with the most essential dharmas,
If one covets and delights in the Small Vehicle,
If one slanders bodhisattvas,
Or if one slights those who practice *dhyāna* meditation—

"If one is stingy with the most essential dharmas" refers to circumstances where a teacher [of Dharma] understands an extremely profound and rare principle beneficial to many, yet, because he covets offerings and fears others might equal him [in his understanding of Dharma], he keeps that teaching secret, cherishes it as his own, and refrains from explaining it to others.

"If one covets and delights in the Small Vehicle" refers to circumstances in which, because one fails to realize and appreciate the flavor of the Great

Vehicle, one instead covets and delights in [the paths taught by followers of] the two vehicles.[121] 37a

In "if one slanders bodhisattvas," "slander" refers to [maliciously] ascribing an offense to one who has not committed an offense. The meaning of "bodhisattva" has already been explained. This refers to an instance where there has been no offense at all and yet this person falsely claims [that a particular bodhisattva] has committed an offense.

If [some bodhisattva practitioner] truly *has* committed a transgression and one then discusses the matter with others, although this itself constitutes a transgression, it is relatively light compared to the former case. What is the basis for this? The scriptures state that, whether or not any bodhisattva has committed a karmic offense, one should not discuss the matter in any case.

As for "if one slights those who practice *dhyāna* meditation," this refers to a case where, for the sake of cutting off afflictions, someone, either a layperson or a monastic, practices [*dhyāna* meditation] with diligence and vigor in order to block off the arising of any of the afflictions and in order to assemble dharmas supporting progress on the path to buddhahood. Such persons may not be skillful in doctrinal discourse, may be lacking in eloquence, or may have no esteem for the awe-inspiring deportment. Still, if some unwise person therefore slights or disparages them, he thereby commits a grave offense.

Next we have the following:

> If one harbors enmity
> Toward a good spiritual guide
> And also if one is possessed of flattering, devious thoughts
> Covetous of obtaining offerings and such,[122]

The meaning of "good spiritual guide" has already been explained. If one has thoughts of enmity toward this person when he is engaged in teaching and speaking on the Dharma, one thereby commits a grave karmic offense comparable to that of cherishing enmity toward one's own father or mother.

"Flattering" refers to the intention to ingratiate oneself with others. "Devious" refers to instances where one displays physical and verbal actions that create the [false] impression of having accomplished something. "Covetous of obtaining offerings and such" refers to seeking for and being attached to gaining benefit, pleasures, praise, or a fine reputation. It is because such

dharmas damage one's straightforwardness of character, one becomes unable to develop deeply anchored roots of goodness. This is just as when a robe that has been dyed an ugly color cannot then be dyed a fine color.

Next, we have the following:

> If one fails to become aware of the works of *māra*s,
> If one's *bodhi* resolve is inferior and weak,
> Or if one encounters karmic obstacles or Dharma obstacles,
> Then, too, one is bound to lose the resolve to attain *bodhi.*

As for "if one fails to become aware of the works of *māra*s," if one remains unaware of the various works of *māra*s, then one cannot control and overcome them. If one fails to control and overcome then, then one is bound to lose the resolve to attain *bodhi.*

Question: What all is meant by "the works of *māra*s"?

Response: [These are illustrated by the following examples:]

When, in explaining how one ought to take up the *pāramitā*s of giving, moral virtue, patience, vigor, *dhyāna,* and wisdom or when explaining profound ideas included within the Great Vehicle, one does not readily delight in speaking about them or delights in speaking of them, but then becomes scattered and confused in discussing peripheral topics.

Whether one is involved in writing out, studying, setting forth explanations, discussing points of doctrine, or listening to and absorbing teachings, one becomes haughty, full of oneself, and one's mind becomes so scattered and disordered that one focuses one's thoughts on peripheral topics.

One mistakenly brings to mind frivolous or joking topics or becomes involved in mutually ridiculing dialogue resulting in the two people involved become disharmonious and unable to penetrate through to the actual meaning of the topic at issue.

One gets up from his seat and departs, thinking to himself, "There is no way that my capacities would be acknowledged here. Their minds are not pure and, what's more, they will not deign to engage in any discussion concerning my city, village, clan, or birthplace." Consequently one does not wish to listen to the Dharma, fails to realize its flavor, gets up from his seat, and then leaves.

One may relinquish the *pāramitās* discussed in the Great Vehicle and may even then seek all-knowledge through the scriptures of *śrāvaka* disciples and *pratyekabuddhas* that promote individual training and liberation.

When one is involved in writing out, studying, setting forth explanations, listening to absorbing teachings, and so forth, one may wish instead to delight in speaking of various other sorts of topics, thereby demolishing and scattering [discussions focused on] *prajñā-pāramitā,* doing so through 37b
turning the discussion toward topics related to the country, one's village or city, parks and forests, matters to do with military commanders, matters to do with bandits, military armor or weaponry, hate and love, pain and pleasure, parents, siblings, men and women, wives and children, apparel, food and drink, bedding and cushions, medicines, or other things serving as supplementary aspects of one's life. Thus one's mind then becomes so scattered and disordered that one loses [the focus on] *prajñā-pāramitā*.

It might also be that one speaks of matters involving greed, hatred, stupidity, adversaries, close relationships, when times were good, when times were bad, singing, dancing, performances, music, worrisome topics, playful joking and laughter, the classics, literature, poetry, ancient times, traditional stories, rulers of the state, emperors and kings, earth, water, fire, and wind, the five objects of desire, wealth and aristocratic birth, and also offerings and other such worldly matters that tend to delight one's mind.

Or it could be that a *māra* transforms himself into the appearance of a *bhikṣu* or *bhikṣuṇī,* causes one to encounter scriptures of the *śrāvaka* disciples or the *pratyekabuddha*s, and says, "You should study these scriptures and set aside what you were originally practicing."

Or it may be that those listening to explanations of Dharma do not delight in listening to or accepting the teachings. Alternatively, the Dharma teacher's mind may fall prey to indolence, or then again, each of the parties may have other conditions [to which they are drawn].

It may be that, although those who come to listen have a need to hear the Dharma, the teacher explaining it prefers instead to move on to some other place.

It might also be that, although the teacher delights in providing explanations, those listening desire to go somewhere else instead.

It may happen that someone explaining Dharma has an inordinate desire to receive offerings or that those listening do not feel any motivation to give.

Then again, it may be that those listening have faith-filled minds, delight in the Dharma, and wish to hear teachings on Dharma whereas the one who explains it does not enjoy speaking it for them. Alternatively, it may be that someone explaining Dharma delights in discussing it but those listening do not wish to hear it.

There may be times when discussions turn to the sufferings in the hells, whereupon [the Dharma teacher] may claim that nothing would be quite so fine as putting an utter end to suffering in this very life. He may then recommend that the most beneficial option would be to choose an early entry into nirvana.

Or else, when the discussion turns to the measureless suffering and torments of the animal realm or turns to the many different sorts of faults associated with [rebirth in the realms of] the hungry ghosts and *asuras*, [the Dharma teacher] may explain that all realms of samsara are beset by misery. He may then recommend, "It would be most beneficial for you to choose, in this very life, an early entry into nirvana."

Or else he may praise the wealth and happiness of the world's aristocrats.

Or he may instead praise the meritorious qualities, bliss, and excellence of life in the form realm and formless realm [heavens], claiming then that great benefit can be realized by pursuing rebirth in those places.

Then again, he may praise the benefits associated with the qualities of the fruits of the path acquired by stream-enterers and the others up to and including the arhats. He may then claim, "It would be most beneficial for you to gain these realizations in this very life."

It might be that the teacher delights in having a retinue of followers, but those who listen to Dharma do not wish to follow him. It might also be that the speaker of Dharma decides he wishes to go to some unsafe country afflicted with famine and civil disorder, telling those who listen to his teachings, "What use would there be in your following me to such countries?" Consequently they become disenchanted with the idea and decline to follow along with him.

It could also be that the speaker of Dharma esteems benefactors and repeatedly goes off to pay his respects to them, thereby causing those who listen to Dharma teachings to no longer be able to hear and absorb them.

Then again, he may cause listeners to produce doubts regarding the most profound Dharma, saying such things as, "That is not the Dharma proclaimed by the buddhas in the sutras. However, the Dharma as I explain it corresponds to the Dharma set forth by the Buddha in the sutras. If a bodhisattva is able to practice this version of the Dharma, he will attain the realization of ultimate reality."

For all sorts of reasons such as these, the two parties may fail to abide in harmony. One should realize that any circumstances such as these are the work of *māra*s. To sum it up, all situations in which obstacles arise to the prevalence of good dharmas—these are all the work of *māra*s.

As for "if one's *bodhi* resolve is inferior and weak," this refers to circumstances wherein, due to the power of the afflictions, one's resolve to pursue 37c
the path becomes so weak and devoid of strength that the vow to attain *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi* becomes cut off forever.

As for "karmic obstacles," although[123] there are many different types of karmic obstacles, this refers to those capable of causing a person in quest of the Great Vehicle to turn back from that resolve.

"Dharma obstacles" here refers to delight in the practice of unwholesome dharmas and to dislike of emptiness, signlessness, wishlessness, and the other profound and sublime dharmas associated with the *pāramitā*s and other such teachings.

Dharmas of the same sort as the above four[124] are able to bring about loss of the resolve to attain *bodhi*.

Next, we have the following:

> If one pledges a gift to a teacher, but deceives him,
> The karmic offense incurred is extremely grave.
> If someone is free of doubts
> But one then forcefully causes him to develop doubts and regrets—
>
> If one directs an extreme degree of intense hatred and anger
> Toward someone who has resolute faith in the Great Vehicle,
> Vilifying him and speaking in a way that gives him a bad reputation,
> Spreading such talk broadly about in place after place—
>
> Or if, when participating in joint endeavors,
> One's mind is much given to flattery and deviousness—

If one's actions resemble any of these four black dharmas,
Then one is bound to lose the resolve to attain *bodhi*.

As for "pledging a gift to a teacher" but then not giving it, this refers to something that, whether or not one has already pledged it, one should nonetheless bestow it on one's teacher and yet, even so, one ends up not giving it. Also, if in giving, one gives at the wrong time, gives at the wrong place, or gives in a manner not according with the Dharma, these are methods typical of the world's non-Buddhist traditions.

Within the Buddha's Dharma, it is from one's teacher that one obtains the Dharma of the sutras. If one is possessed of some measure of wealth, then, in order to make offerings to the Dharma, one gives to one's teacher. If one has nothing to give, then there is no fault in that.

As for "if someone is free of doubts, but one then forcefully causes him to develop doubts and regrets—," this refers to an instance where someone has not actually broken any precept but merely appears to have committed some minor transgression and yet one claims he has committed a major offense against the moral code. Whether someone has departed from standard deportment in regard to right livelihood or has committed some infraction with regard to right doctrinal views, one then causes him to give birth to doubts and regrets.

"Hatred toward someone [with firm belief] in the Great Vehicle" refers to directing hatred toward those who have taken up the practice of the Great Vehicle, the unsurpassable vehicle, the vehicle of the Tathāgata, the vehicle of the great men, the vehicle of those possessed of omniscience, doing so even with regard to those who have only just brought forth the initial resolve to pursue that path. One feels intense hatred toward these people, rebuking and ridiculing them, and spreading claims about them that give them a bad reputation that is then caused to circulate widely.

"Flattery and deviousness in the midst of joint endeavors" refers to failing to use a straightforward mind, resorting instead to devious means to establish close relations with monastic preceptors, monastic Dharma teachers,[125] and good spiritual guides, even going so far as to use flattery and deviousness to curry favor with those one has never met.

In "the four black dharmas," "black" refers here to something dirty and impure that is capable of causing one to lose one's resolve to attain *bodhi.* This is as described here:

> If one turns away from these five sets of four dharmas
> And cultivates wholesome actions in life after life,
> One will thereby prevent the loss
> Of one's resolve to attain the unsurpassable *bodhi.*

Five sets of four dharmas make twenty dharmas. It is because of these that one loses one's *bodhi* resolve. If one turns away from these dharmas in one's cultivation of the practices, then, even across the course of lifetimes, one will not forget one's resolve to attain *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*.

"Turning away from" refers to turning away from the above five sets of four dharmas, doing so as follows: 38a

> By revering and esteeming the Dharma,
> By doing away with arrogance,
> By abandoning false speech,
> And by deeply revering and esteeming good spiritual guides.

As for the rest, one should understand them in this same manner.

Question: Through which dharmas might one cause increase and growth in one's vow to attain *bodhi,* doing so across the course of lifetimes while also additionally causing one later on to be able to bring forth the great vows yet again?

Response:

> Even at the cost of losing one's life
> Or of losing the throne of a wheel-turning king—
> Even in such instances as these—one still should not
> Commit false speech or engage in flattery or deviousness.
>
> One is able through this to cause the entire world,
> Including all the beings within it,
> To develop thoughts of reverence
> Toward the community of bodhisattvas.

If there is anyone able to practice
Such good dharmas as these,
In each successive lifetime, he will succeed in increasing
[The strength of] his vows to realize the unsurpassable *bodhi*.

Employing these dharmas, the bodhisattva increases [the strength of] his vows to attain *bodhi* and also becomes able yet again to bring forth these pure and great vows. If, due to telling the truth, one thereby dies or loses the position of the wheel-turning king or even loses a position as one of the *deva* kings, even then, he should speak the truth and should not engage in false speech. How much the less might one fail to tell the truth in matters of only minor consequence.

In addition, one abandons flattery and deviousness in interactions with one's own retinue and with outsiders as well.

Furthermore, one brings forth thoughts of reverence toward all bodhisattvas from the very moment they bring forth their initial resolve, honoring, esteeming, and praising them no differently than if they were buddhas.

One should also do whatever is in one's powers to influence others to abide in the Great Vehicle.

Chapter 8

On the *Avaivartika*

Question: These bodhisattvas are of two kinds: First, those who are *vaivartika* (reversible), and second, those who are *avaivartika* (irreversible). One should explain the characteristics that determine whether one is a *vaivartika* or an *avaivartika*.

Response:

He maintains a mind of equal regard toward beings,
Does not envy the benefits and support obtained by others,
And, even at the cost of his own body and life,
Does not speak of a Dharma master's transgressions.

He has resolute faith in the profound and sublime Dharma
And does not crave to be the object of others' reverence.
One who embodies these five dharmas
Is an *avaivartika*.

As for "maintaining a mind of equal regard toward beings," beings are those within the six rebirth destinies. One's mind remains free of discriminating judgments by which one might regard them as either superior, middling, or inferior. This is a defining quality of an *avaivartika*.

Question: As has been explained, one should bring forth a mind of supreme reverence for buddhas and bodhisattvas. As for the other beings, this is not the case. Moreover, it has been stated that one should draw close to buddhas and bodhisattvas, revere them, and making offerings to them. As for the other beings, they are not to be treated in this way. Why then do you claim here that one maintains a mind of equal regard toward all beings and refrains from any duality in this?

Response: Each of these statements is principled and such as one should neither doubt nor challenge. 38b

As for "maintaining a mind of equal regard toward beings," there are beings who look upon the bodhisattva as if he were an enemy, those who look upon him as if he were a father or mother, and those who look upon him as a neutral person. It is because he maintains a mind of equal regard toward these three categories of beings as he benefits and strives to liberate them that he does not indulge any notions of differences among them. Hence you should not pose any challenge on this account.

As for "not envying the benefits and support obtained by others," in a case where someone else obtains robes, food and drink, bedding, medicines, dwellings, property, gold, silver, precious gems, villages, towns, states, cities, male and female attendants, and so forth, one does not feel envy toward them. Not only does one refrain from harboring any hostility toward them, one's mind is instead pleased by this.

As for "He does not speak of a Dharma master's transgressions," in a case where someone is teaching the Great Vehicle dharmas of emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness, the six *pāramitā*s, the four bases of meritorious qualities, the bodhisattva's ten grounds, or any other such Great Vehicle dharmas, even if it would cost one his own life to do this, one still refrains from exposing any of that person's transgressions or negative aspects. How much the less might one create a bad situation for him.

As for "he has a resolute faith in the profound and sublime Dharma," "profound Dharma" refers to emptiness, signlessness, wishlessness and all of the abstruse scriptures such as the *Prajñāpāramitā,* the *Bodhisattva-piṭaka,* and other such scriptures. One maintains a singleminded resolute faith in this Dharma and has no doubts about it. Because one has obtained the flavor of the profound scriptures, one does not find this sort of delight in anything else.

As for "not craving to be the object of others' reverence," because one has reached a penetrating understanding of the true character of dharmas,[126] one sees no difference between esteem and disgrace, gain and absence of gain, and so forth.[127]

As for "embodying these five dharmas," they are those just listed above.

One does not retreat from *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi,* nor does one allow one's efforts in pursuit of it to deteriorate through indolence. These are the factors that characterize one who is *avaivartika* (irreversible). The opposite qualities characterize one who is *vaivartika* (reversible).

Among those who are *vaivartika* (reversible) bodhisattvas, there are two types, those who fall into ruination and those who gradually develop and advance until they become *avaivartika*s (irreversible).

Question: As for those described as having fallen into ruination, what are their characteristic qualities?

Response:

In a case where one has no determination and ability,
Delights in inferior dharmas,
Is deeply attached to fame and offerings,
Or has a mind that is not upright and straight—

Where one feels a miserly cherishing toward others' households,[128]
Does not have a resolute belief in the dharma of emptiness,
And only esteems all manner of verbal discourse—
These are the marks of one fallen into ruination.

In the case of "one who has no determination and ability," his countenance is lackluster in appearance and whatever awe-inspiring personal qualities he might have are only shallow and scant.

Question: It is not on the basis of a dignified physical appearance that one is an *avaivartika*. That being the case, what meaning is there in making such a statement?

Response: This is a meaningful statement and should not be a cause for doubt. I am saying that, because, inwardly, one possesses meritorious qualities, the body manifests a correspondingly awe-inspiring personal presence. This is not simply a case of claiming that, [independent of these causes], he has a handsome physical appearance and countenance.

As for "determination and ability," this is what may be referred to as the power of one with an awe-inspiring personal presence.

If a person is able to cultivate and accumulate good dharmas while rid- 38c
ding himself of bad dharmas and then develops strength in accomplishing this endeavor, he then becomes one who possesses this "determination and ability." Even though one might possess a body like that of a king of the *deva*s and radiance comparable to the sun and moon, so long as one is unable

to cultivate and accumulate good dharmas and entirely rid oneself of bad dharmas, one is still a person who is devoid of "determination and ability."

[On the other hand], even though one's physical appearance might be ugly and one might have the physique of a hungry ghost, if he is able to cultivate the good and get rid of the bad, he then becomes one who possesses "determination and ability."

It is for these reasons that the challenge you have posed here has no merit.

As for "delighting in inferior dharmas," when compared to the buddha vehicle, with the exception of the buddha vehicle, all other vehicles are small in scope, inferior, and incapable of measuring up to it. It is for these reasons that they are referred to as "inferior," not because they are "bad" per se. Still, any other peripheral unwholesome factors would indeed also qualify as "inferior."

Whatever has been achieved by adherents of the two vehicles is relatively inferior when compared with the Buddha, that's all. Still, because they have entirely escaped the world and have entered the nirvana without residue, this cannot be said to be "bad."

It is for reasons such as these that, if someone distances himself from the buddha vehicle and instead has a resolute belief in the two vehicles, this amounts to delighting in inferior dharmas. Although such persons do delight in superior endeavors, because they have anchored their resolute faith in the teachings of the two vehicles and have abandoned the Great Vehicle, they are still referred to as "delighting in inferior dharmas."

Then again, "inferior" refers as well to matters that are themselves "bad," namely the five objects of desire,[129] annihilationism, eternalism, and the rest of the sixty-two wrong views, all of the doctrinal tenets typical of non-Buddhist traditions, and any preoccupations that would increase one's entanglement in samsara. These are "inferior dharmas." It is due to practicing these sorts of dharmas that one is said to delight in inferior dharmas.

Being "deeply attached to fame and offerings" refers to having deep-seated inclinations to focus one's thoughts on skillfully arranging ways to receive gifts of material wealth and other sorts of offerings and praises. It is due to failing to experience the flavor of the pure Dharma that one may then covet and delight in such matters.

As for "the mind not being upright and straight," this refers to someone whose nature is given over to flattery and deviousness and who delights in being deceptive.

In the case of one who "feels a miserly cherishing toward others' households," this person, no matter which household he enters, whenever he witnesses others receiving offerings, reverence, or praise, he immediately becomes envious, saddened, and displeased. Because his mind is impure and because he is deeply habituated to conceiving of the existence of a self, he is covetous of and attached to offerings, has thoughts of jealousy, and harbors resentment toward others' benefactors.

As for "not having a resolute belief in the dharma of emptiness," the buddhas have three ways in which they discuss the dharma of emptiness, namely the three gates to liberation. As for these dharmas associated with emptiness, this person does not believe in them, does not delight in them, and does not esteem them as precious. This is because his mind has not achieved a penetrating comprehension of them.

As for "only esteeming all manner of verbal discourse," this means that one only delights in words and phrases, but cannot practice in accordance with them. One is only able in such a case to carry on verbal discourse, but still cannot develop a resolute belief in these dharmas to the degree that one realizes their true import and flavor.

As for "these are the marks of one fallen into ruination," if someone has formerly brought forth the *bodhi* resolve but then displays signs such as these, one should realize that this is a bodhisattva who has fallen into ruination.

"Fallen into ruination" designates the quality of not being well trained or compliant. For instance, a poorly bred, ill-tempered horse might appropriately be thought of as "ruined." It merely bears the name "horse" without having any of a horse's uses.

A bodhisattva fallen into ruination is just like this, bearing only an empty designation while not carrying on any genuine practice. If one wishes to avoid becoming a bodhisattva fallen into ruination, one should rid himself of bad dharmas and accord with the Dharma in a manner worthy of one's name.

Question: You stated that there are two kinds of bodhisattvas still on the grounds of the *vaivartika* (reversible) bodhisattva: First, the bodhisattva 39a

fallen into ruination and, second, someone who, after the consistent application of vigor, gradually becomes an *avaivartika* (irreversible) bodhisattva. Having already explained what is meant by "the bodhisattva fallen into ruination," you could now explain what is meant by the one who, after consistent application of vigor, gradually becomes *avaivartika* (irreversible).

Response:

The bodhisattva does not apprehend the existence of any self
And also does not apprehend the existence of any being.
He does not engage in discriminations as he discourses on Dharma,
Nor does he apprehend the existence of *bodhi.*

He does not see a buddha by his signs.
It is because of these five meritorious qualities
That he can be referred to as a great bodhisattva
Who is bound to become an *avaivartika*.

If a bodhisattva implements these five meritorious qualities, he thereby proceeds directly to the stage of the *avaivartika*.

As for "not apprehending the existence of any self," this is due to having abandoned attachment to the existence of any self. When this bodhisattva searches among the inwardly related and outwardly related five aggregates, twelve sense bases, and eighteen sense realms, he cannot apprehend the existence of a self anywhere among them. He contemplates thus:[130]

If it were the case that the aggregates constituted a self,
Then that "self" would be characterized by birth and destruction.
How could one, merely on the basis of feelings,
Immediately create some entity that experiences feelings?

If a self were to exist apart from the aggregates,
One should be able to apprehend it apart from the aggregates.
But how could one take it that feelings
Are something separate from what experiences feelings?

If it were the case that the self possessed the five aggregates,
That self would be something apart from the five aggregates

In the same way that it is commonly said in worldly parlance
That an ox is different from the ox herder.

It is on the basis of the conjunction of different things
That this phenomenon is said to exist.
Therefore, if it were the case that some self possessed the aggregates,
That self would be something different from the aggregates.

If it were the case that the self existed within the aggregates,
Then this is just like there being a person inside of a room
Or like there being someone there on a couch, listening.
The self then should be something different from the aggregates.

If it were the case that the aggregates existed within a self,
This would be analogous to fruit being contained in a bowl
Or like milk in which there are flies.
The aggregates then would be different from the self.

This is just as with a combustible not being the burning itself
Even as burning cannot occur apart from a combustible.
Combustion does not possess its combustible
Nor does combustion itself abide within what is combustible.

A self isn't identical with nor separate from the aggregates,
Nor does a self possess the aggregates.
There is no self within the five aggregates
And there are no five aggregates within a self.

Similarly analogous are dye and that which is dyed,
The afflictions and whoever is affected by the afflictions,
A vase [and its clay], cloth [and its threads], and so forth.
All of these phenomena should be understood in this same way.

If someone asserts that the self exists as a fixed entity 39b
Or that dharmas are possessed of differentiating characteristics,
One should realize that such a person
Has not realized the flavor of the Buddha's Dharma.

When the bodhisattva carries out such contemplations, he immediately abandons any view imputing the existence of a self. Because he abandons any view conceiving of the existence of a self, he becomes unable to apprehend the existence of any self at all.

As for his being unable "to apprehend the existence of any being," the term "being" here refers to any entity other than this bodhisattva. Because he has abandoned any view clinging to the existence of a self, he contemplates thus: "If others truly had a self, then they would constitute an 'other.' It is based on the existence of a self that one is able to regard someone else as constituting an 'other.' However, in reality, when one seeks to find some 'self,' it cannot be apprehended. Because an 'other' cannot be apprehended, either, then there is neither any 'other' nor any 'self.'" It is in this manner that the bodhisattva remains unable to apprehend any [being that is] "other," either.

As for "he does not engage in discriminations as he discourses on Dharma," because this bodhisattva has a resolute belief in the nonduality of all dharmas, in the nonexistence of any distinctions among them, and in their being characterized by a singular character, he contemplates thus, "All dharmas arise from erroneous perceptions and discriminations. They are false and deceptive." This bodhisattva extinguishes all discriminations, becomes free of all distress, immediately enters into the unsurpassable supreme meaning's dharma of conditioned origination, and then no longer needs to rely upon the wisdom imparted by others.

> The nature of reality is not something that exists,
> Nor is it the case that it does not exist,
> Nor does it both exist and not exist,
> Nor does it neither exist nor not exist.[131]
>
> Nor does it abide in verbal expressions,
> Nor is it something apart from verbal expressions.
> So it is that the meaning of ultimate reality
> Can never be expressed by resort to speech.
>
> The speaker and the words that can be spoken—
> These are all characterized by quiescent cessation.

Whatsoever has the nature of quiescent cessation
Is neither existent nor nonexistent.

No matter what one might wish to speak about
And no matter which means one might choose to speak,
How could there be someone who is wise and yet [still conceives]
Of there being any "speaking" that takes place with some "speaker."

If the nature of all dharmas is emptiness,
Then dharmas are devoid of any [inherently existent] nature.
Consequently whatever dharmas are empty [of inherent existence],
Those very dharmas are ineffable.

One cannot fail to have words that one speaks,
Hence we borrow words to speak about emptiness.
The true meaning is neither empty
Nor non-empty,

Nor both empty and not empty,
Nor neither empty nor not empty.
It is not false nor is it true,
Nor is it spoken, nor is it not spoken.

And yet, in truth, there is nothing that exists,
and yet it is not the case that nothing exists at all.
This constitutes the complete relinquishment
of the discrimination of anything at all as existent.

Causes as well as whatever arises from causes—
All such dharmas as these
Are in every case characterized by quiescent cessation. 39c
There is neither any seizing on them nor any relinquishing of them.

Without ash soap, a robe cannot be made clean,
But still, ashes may have the contrary effect of staining a robe.
[So too], were it not for words, one could not proclaim the truth.
Still, if one uses words and speech, that too may have its faults.[132]

It is in this manner that the bodhisattva contemplates, develops resolute belief in, and then achieves a penetrating understanding whereby, in his discoursing on the Dharma, "he does not engage in discriminations."

As for being "unable to apprehend the existence of *bodhi,*" because this bodhisattva possesses a resolute belief in the dharma of emptiness, his "apprehension" here is not of the same sort as the common person's apprehension of *bodhi.* He contemplates in this manner:

> The buddhas have not apprehended *bodhi*
> And those who are not buddhas do not apprehend it, either.
> As for the fruits of the path and the other related dharmas,
> In every case, this also applies in the same way to them.
>
> Where there is a buddha, there is *bodhi.*
> But to hold that a buddha has "apprehended" it is just eternalism.
> Without a buddha, there is no *bodhi.*
> But to hold that it cannot be apprehended is just annihilationism.
>
> Apart from a buddha, there is no *bodhi*
> And apart from *bodhi,* there is no buddha.
> If they are singular, their difference cannot be established.
> So how could there be any sort of conjoining of them?
>
> In general, as regards all dharmas,
> It is because they are different that they may be conjoined.
> But *bodhi* is not something distinctly different from a buddha.
> Therefore, in the case of these two, there is no conjoining.
>
> In the case of a buddha and *bodhi,*
> Neither their difference nor their conjoining can be established.
> There is no third alternative apart from these two.
> How then could [such concepts] be validly established?
>
> Therefore buddhas are characterized by quiescent cessation.
> So too is *bodhi* characterized by quiescent cessation.
> Because these two are characterized by quiescent cessation,
> Everything is characterized by quiescent cessation.

As for "he does not see a buddha by his signs," this bodhisattva has a resolute belief in and an utterly penetrating understanding of the dharma of signlessness. He reflects thus:[133]

If everything is signless,
Then everything is identical with whatever possesses signs.
Quiescent cessation is signless
And is identical with whatever is possessed of signs.[134]

If one contemplates the dharma of signlessness,
Whatever is signless is [seen to be] the same as what possesses signs.
If one says that one is cultivating signlessness,
That is just a noncultivation of signlessness.

Were one to relinquish all covetousness[135]
And designate that as constituting signlessness,
Such seizing on this sign of having relinquished covetousness[136]
Then becomes the very absence of liberation.

In general, it is because of the existence of grasping
That then, because of that grasping, there is relinquishing.
There is someone who grasps and something that is grasped[137]—
Tt is on this basis that one then refers to "relinquishing."

As for the one who grasps, the grasping to which he resorts,
And also that dharma that is subject to being grasped—
Whether as conjoined or separate, they all do not exist,[138] 40a
For these are all synonymous with quiescent cessation.

If a dharma's signs are established on the basis of causes,
This is just something devoid of any [inherently existent] nature.
Whatever is devoid of any [inherently existent] nature—
This is just something devoid of any [inherently existent] signs.

If a dharma has no [inherently existent] nature—
This is just something that is signless.
How can one assert that it has no [inherently existent] nature?
It is precisely because it is signless.[139]

If one uses [such terms as] "existence" and "nonexistence,"
"Both" and "neither" should be permissible as well,[140] for,
Although one may speak thus, so long as one's mind is not attached,
One thereby remains free of any fault in doing so.

Where has there ever first existed some dharma
That, afterward, was not destroyed?
Wherever there has first existed some fire
That, afterward, was then extinguished,
The quiescent cessation of these existent signs
Is identical to the quiescent cessation of whatsoever is signless.

Therefore, as for these words about quiescent cessation
As well as the one who speaks about quiescent cessation,
From the beginning, too, they have not been quiescent[141]
Nor have they been non-quiescent,
Nor have they been both quiescent and non-quiescent,
Nor have they been neither quiescent nor non-quiescent.

Because this bodhisattva has such a penetrating comprehension of the wisdom of signlessness, he is free of any doubts or regrets. He does not see a buddha in terms of the signs of his physical form, nor does he see a buddha in terms of feelings, perceptions, formative factors, or consciousness.

Question: How is it that he does not see a buddha by the signs of his physical form? And how is it that he does not see a buddha in terms of feelings, perceptions, formative factors, or consciousness?

Response: It is not the case that physical form is a buddha, nor is it the case that feelings, perceptions, formative factors, or consciousness are what constitute a buddha.[142]

Nor is it the case that a buddha exists apart from physical form, nor is it the case that he exists apart from feelings, perceptions, formative factors, or consciousness.

Nor is it the case that a buddha possesses physical forms, nor is it the case that a buddha possesses feelings, perceptions, formative factors, or consciousness.

Nor is it the case that a buddha exists within physical form. Nor is it the case that a buddha exists within feelings, perceptions, formative factors, or consciousness.

Nor is it the case that physical form resides within a buddha. Nor is it the case that feelings, perceptions, formative factors, or consciousness reside within a buddha.

The bodhisattva who does not seize on any signs of these five aggregates succeeds in reaching the ground of the *avaivartika*.

Question: Now that we already know that one who acquires these dharmas is an *avaivartika,* what characteristic signs does the *avaivartika* possess?

Response:

The *Prajñāpāramitā* has already extensively explained
The characteristic signs of the *avaivartika*.

If, in contemplating the ground of the common person, the grounds of the *śrāvaka* disciple, the ground of the *pratyekabuddha,* and the ground of a buddha, a bodhisattva does not engage in duality-based perceptions, does not engage in discriminating thoughts, and has no doubts or regrets, one should realize that this is an *avaivartika*.

Whenever an *avaivartika* speaks, it is beneficial in some way.

He does not contemplate others' relative strengths and shortcomings or good and bad aspects.

He does not long to hear the discourses of non-Buddhist *śramaṇas*.

What should be known, he immediately learns. Whatever should be seen, he then sees.

He does not revere or serve others' deities, nor does he make offerings to them of flowers, incense, banners, or canopies. Nor does he venerate or 40b
serve the gurus of those other traditions.

He does not fall into the wretched destinies nor, when reborn, does he take on a female body.

He always cultivates the ten courses of good karmic action himself while also teaching them to others, thereby causing them to practice them.

He always uses good dharmas in revealing [truths], instructing, benefiting, and delighting others. Even in his dreams, he never relinquishes the ten

courses of good karmic action and never engages in any of the ten courses of bad karmic action.

The roots of goodness that he plants through physical, verbal, and mental actions are all done in order to facilitate beings' peace and happiness and their liberation [from samsara]. He shares with other beings the karmic rewards that result from his endeavors.

Whenever he hears discussions of profound dharmas, he does not develop either doubts or regrets.

He tends to be one of relatively few words. His discourse is beneficial and peaceful, agreeable and pleasing, soft and pliant.

He sleeps but little and, whether going or coming, moving along or stopping, his mind is not scattered. He is refined in his deportment and his thoughts are stable and resolute.

His body is free of parasites. His robes and mat are clean and unstained. He is pure in both body and mind and he is serene and uninvolved in extraneous matters.

His mind is free of flattery and deviousness nor does it tend toward miserliness or jealousy.

He does not prize offerings, robes, food and drink, mats, medicines, or other physical necessities.

He has no tendency to engage in disputation over profound dharmas. He listens singlemindedly to explanations of the Dharma and always wishes to be in front [wherever it is taught].

Through the merit gained in these various ways, he succeeds in perfecting his practice of the *pāramitā*s.

He excels over others in mastery of the world's cultural skills and arts.

He contemplates all dharmas in accordance with the nature of dharmas.

Even if Māra, the Evil One, were to manifest an apparition of the eight great hells while transformationally appearing before him as a bodhisattva, saying, "If you do not relinquish the resolve to attain *bodhi,* you will be reborn here"—even when witnessing such a terrifying circumstance as this, his mind would still refuse to relinquish its resolve.

Should Māra, the Evil One, then also say, "The sutras of the Mahayana were not spoken by the Buddha"—even when hearing this declaration, his

resolve would remain unchanged. He continues to rely on the characteristic aspects of the Dharma and does not follow others.

He is not terrorized by the sufferings of samsara. Even were he to hear of bodhisattvas who finally fell back and retreated [from the *bodhi* resolve] after *asaṃkhyeya*s of *kalpa*s of cultivating and accumulating roots of goodness, his resolve would still not sink away as a result.

Also, were he to hear of a bodhisattva that had retreated to become an arhat, even then, he would still not retreat from his resolve to acquire the *dhyāna* absorptions, proclaim the Dharma, and liberate others [from samsara].

He is always able to become aware of and recognize all actions of *māra*s. Even if he were to be informed that omniscience is empty, that the Great Vehicle's ten grounds are empty, that the beings amenable to liberation [from samsara] are empty, and that all dharmas are nonexistent and like empty space—were he to be told such things by someone attempting to throw his mind into confusion, someone wishing thereby to influence him to turn back due to weariness and diminishing intensity of effort—this bodhisattva would still respond by redoubling his practice of vigor and his deep practice of kindness and compassion.

Whenever he wishes to enter the first *dhyāna*, second *dhyāna*, third *dhyāna*, or fourth *dhyāna* meditation states, though he may do so, he nonetheless refrains from taking rebirth in those corresponding *dhyāna* [heavens], but rather returns and takes up dharmas suitable for practice within the desire realm.

He crushes and expels any potential arrogance, does not prize the praise of others, and keeps his mind free of the hindrance of hatred.

In lives spent as a householder, he remains unstained by the five objects of desire, merely taking them on with a mind of renunciation just as one would take medicine when beset with disease.

He does not live by wrong livelihoods and does not live in a manner that disrupts others' lives.

It is only for the sake of bringing peace and happiness to beings that he might abide in the role of a householder.

Traceless *vajra*-wielding Dharma protectors[143] always follow him, serving and protecting him and ensuring that he cannot be harmed or interfered with by any human or nonhuman being. 40c

All of his faculties are normally intact and free of defect. He does not use magical spells or noxious elixirs to subdue people or harm beings.

He is not fond of disputation and does not elevate himself or degrade others.

He does not perform divinations to determine auspiciousness or misfortune.

He is not fond of discussing manifold topics, topics such as: kings, ministers and the people, the state and its frontier lands, wars and battles, weaponry, clothing, possessions, alcoholic beverages and cuisine, matters associated with women, historical happenings, or maritime matters. He does not delight in discussing any matters such as these.

He does not attend, watch, or listen to singing, dancing, or music.

He only wishes to discuss the meaning of the *pāramitā*s and only wishes to discuss dharmas related to the *pāramitā*s, seeking thereby to cause those listening to gain increased benefit from this.

He abandons all disputation and always wishes to see the Buddha. If he hears of there now being a buddha in some other region, he wishes to take rebirth there. He is always reborn in a country central [to the presence of Dharma]. He never entertains doubts in himself whereby he wonders, "Am I or am I not an *avaivartika?*" He knows with complete certainty that he is an *avaivartika*.

He recognizes the various works of the *māra*s, but does not accord with them. [His resolve is so solid that], even after he has taken rebirth, he does not then generate any aspiration to follow the paths of *śrāvaka* disciples or *pratyekabuddha*s. Even if Māra, the Evil One, were to manifest before him in the body of a buddha, telling him, "You must attain arhatship. I shall now speak the Dharma for you so that you may immediately achieve arhatship right here," even then, he would refuse to believe or accept this.

He does not spare even his own body or life in his efforts to preserve the Dharma and always practices vigor.

When explaining the Dharma, he is free of doubt or uncertainty and does so in a manner that is free of any deficiencies or errors.

It is factors such as these that constitute the characteristic signs of an *avaivartika*. One should realize that whoever is able to perfect these signs is an *avaivartika*. It might also happen that one encounters those who have

not yet completely developed these signs. What sort of individual is this? This individual will, before long, ascend to the ground of the *avaivartika*. He is one who, after having cultivated and accumulated roots of goodness on later grounds and after having developed ever deeper roots of goodness, shall then acquire these characteristic signs of the *avaivartika*.

Chapter 9

On the Easy Practice

Question: Given that this *avaivartika* bodhisattva's initial endeavors are such as previously discussed, one aspiring to reach the ground of the *avaivartika* would have to practice all manner of difficult practices for a long time and only then be able to reach it. [This being the case], he might become prone then to fall down onto the grounds of the *śrāvaka* disciples or *pratyekabuddha*s. If that were the case, this would be for him an immensely ruinous calamity. As stated in the Dharma of the *Bodhisaṃbhāra-śāstra* (*Provisions Essential for Bodhi*):[144] 41a

If one were to fall onto the ground of the *śrāvaka* disciples
Or onto the ground of the *pratyekabuddha*s,
This amounts to "death" for a bodhisattva,
For he then loses all beneficial effects [of his bodhisattva practice].

If one faced the prospect of falling into the hells,
He would not become filled with such fear as this.
If one were to [contemplate] falling onto the two vehicles' ground,
Then this would bring about great terror.

If one were to fall into the hells,
He could still ultimately succeed in reaching buddhahood.
If one were to fall onto the grounds of the two vehicles, however,
This would ultimately block the realization of buddhahood.

In the scriptures, the Buddha himself
Explained matters such as these, stating that
This is just as with a person who covets a long life span:
If he is faced with decapitation, he is then filled with great fear.

The bodhisattva is also just like this.
If [confronted with the prospect of] the *śrāvaka* disciples' ground

Or the *pratyekabuddha*s' ground,
He should react with great terror.

Therefore, if, as a skillful means, the buddhas have mentioned the existence of an easily practiced path by which one might rapidly succeed in arriving at the ground of the *avaivartika,* then please explain it for me.

Response: Statements such as you have just made are symptomatic of a weak, pusillanimous, and inferior mind devoid of the great resolve. These are not the words of a heroic man possessed of determination and ability.

How is this so? If a person has brought forth the vow to strive for the realization of *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi,* during that interim period in which he has not yet gained the *avaivartika* stage, he must not be sparing of even his own body or life. Rather he should strive with vigor both day and night, acting with the same urgency to save himself as someone whose turban has just caught fire. This is as stated in the *Bodhisaṃbhāra-śāstra:*

So long as the bodhisattva has not yet succeeded in reaching
The ground of the *avaivartika,*
He should always diligently practice vigor,
Acting with the urgency of one whose turban has caught fire.

Taking up the heavy burden
For the sake of striving to attain *bodhi,*
He should always act with diligent vigor,
Refraining from developing an indolent mind.[145]

Even were one to seek the *śrāvaka* disciples' vehicle
Or the *pratyekabuddha*'s vehicle,
Thus seeking only to perfect one's own benefit,
Even then, one should always diligently practice vigor.

How much the more should this be so in the case of the bodhisattva,
One who strives to liberate both himself and others.
Compared to these men of the two vehicles,
He should be a *koṭi*'s number of times more vigorous than
they are.[146]

In speaking of the practice of the Great Vehicle, the Buddha described it thus: "As for generating the vow to attain buddhahood, it is a challenge heavier than lifting all of the worlds in a great trichiliocosm."

As for your saying, "This dharma of the *avaivartika* ground is so extremely difficult to accomplish that one can only reach it after a long time" and "If there were only some easily traveled path by which one could swiftly reach the *avaivartika* ground," these are the words of those who 41b
are weak and inferior. These are not statements of a great man possessed of determination and ability. Still, if you definitely do wish to hear of this skillful means, then I shall now explain it for you.

The Dharma of the Buddha has measurelessly many gateways. This is just as with the world's various routes among which there are those that are difficult and those that are easy. When taking overland routes, the traveling may involve suffering, whereas in the case of water routes where one boards a boat, it may instead be pleasurable.

So too it is in the case of the bodhisattva path. In some instances, one is diligently devoted to the practice of vigor, whereas in others that involve faith and skillful means, one adopts an easy practice by which one swiftly arrives at the station of the *avaivartika*. This is as described in the following verse:

> In the east, there is Meritorious Qualities Buddha.
> In the south, there is Candana Qualities Buddha.
> In the west, there is Measureless Light Buddha.
> In the north, there is Emblematic Qualities Buddha.
>
> In the southeast, there is Sorrowless Qualities Buddha.
> In the southwest, there is Giver of Jewels Buddha.
> In the northwest, there is Floral Qualities Buddha.
> In the northeast, there is Three Vehicles' Practices Buddha.[147]
>
> Toward the nadir, there is Brilliant Qualities Buddha.
> Toward the zenith, there is Vast Multitude of Qualities Buddha.
> Bhagavats such as these
> Now abide throughout the ten directions.
>
> If a person wishes to swiftly reach
> The ground of irreversibility,

He should, with a reverential mind,
Take up and maintain the practice of invoking these buddhas' names.

If a bodhisattva wishes in this very body to succeed in reaching the ground of the *avaivartika* and then attain *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi,* then he should bear in mind these buddhas of the ten directions and invoke their names. This is just as explained in the *"Avaivartika"* chapter of the *Sutra Spoken in Response to the Questions of the Youth Precious Moon,*[148] in which the Buddha told Precious Moon:

> Off in the east, going beyond a number of buddha lands equal to the sands in a measureless, boundless, and inconceivable number of Ganges Rivers, there is a world system named Sorrowless. Its ground is level and composed of the seven precious things. Strands of purple powdered gold are woven throughout that realm and rows of jeweled trees serve as adornments there.
>
> There are no destinies of the hells, animals, hungry ghosts, or *asuras*, nor are there any places beset by difficulties. It is pure, free of any filth, and also free of gravel, ceramic shards, stones, mountains, hillocks, deep pits, and dark ravines. The *deva*s always rain down flowers that cover its ground.
>
> That world now has a buddha named Meritorious Qualities Tathāgata, Worthy of Offerings, of Right and Universal Enlightenment, Perfect in Knowledge and Conduct, Well Gone One, Knower of the Worlds, Unsurpassable One, Tamer of Those to Be Tamed, Teacher of *Deva*s and Humans, Buddha, Bhagavat. He is respectfully surrounded by an assembly of great bodhisattvas. His body's characteristic radiance and appearance are like a great flaming gold mountain and like a great aggregation of precious jewels.
>
> For the sake of everyone in that great assembly, he extensively proclaims the right Dharma that is good in the beginning, middle, and end, that is eloquently presented and meaningful. Whatever he proclaims is free of admixture, perfect in its purity, accordant with reality, and free of error.
>
> What is meant by "free of error"? It is free of any error with respect
41c to the [four great elements of] earth, water, fire, and wind, is free of any error with respect to the desire realm, the form realm, and the formless

realm and is free of error with respect to [the five aggregates of] form, feelings, perceptions, formative factors, and consciousness.

Precious Moon, from the time this buddha achieved buddhahood until the present, sixty *koṭi*s of *kalpa*s have passed. Moreover, in that buddha's country, there is no difference between the day and the night. It is only by reference to the enumeration of days, months and years of Jambudvīpa that one describes his lifetime in terms of a particular number of *kalpa*s.

The light from that buddha always illuminates that world. In the course of a single discourse on Dharma, he causes a measureless and boundless number of thousands of myriads of *koṭi*s of *asaṃkhyeya*s of beings to abide in the unproduced-dharmas patience. Twice this number of people are thereby caused to abide in the first, second, and third type of patience.

Precious Moon, the power of that buddha's original vows is such that, if there are any beings in other regions who have planted roots of goodness under a previous buddha, he need only be touched by this buddha's light in order to immediately attain the unproduced-dharmas patience.

Precious Moon, if there is a son or daughter of good family who but hears this buddha's name and is then able to have faith and accept him, such a person will immediately achieve irreversibility with respect to the attainment of *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*.

The circumstances related to the other nine buddhas are just like this. Now we shall explain the names of those buddhas as well as the names of their lands.

As for "Meritorious Qualities Buddha," his qualities are associated with pure goodness and the possession of peace and happiness. They are unlike the meritorious qualities of *deva*s, dragons, and spirits which delude and trouble beings.

As for "Candana Qualities Buddha," in the south, off at a distance from here of buddha lands as numerous as the sands in incalculably and boundlessly many Ganges Rivers, there is a world named Delightful. The name of the buddha there is Candana Qualities. He is right now proclaiming the Dharma that is as fragrant and cooling as *candana*.[149] The fame of that buddha's name is heard afar, circulating and spreading about like the fragrance of incense. It extinguishes the heat from the fire of beings' three poisons and thereby causes them to experience refreshing coolness.

As for "Measureless Light Buddha," off in the west, at a distance from here of buddha lands as numerous as the sands in incalculably and boundlessly many Ganges Rivers, there is a world named Excellence. That buddha is named Measureless Light. He is at this very time proclaiming the Dharma. The light from that buddha's body and the brilliant illumination from his wisdom reach an incalculable and boundless distance.

As for "Emblematic Qualities Buddha," off in the north, at a distance from here of buddha lands as numerous as the sands in incalculably and boundlessly many Ganges Rivers, there is a world known as Immovable. Its buddha is known as Emblematic Qualities. He is right now proclaiming the Dharma. That buddha's meritorious qualities are lofty and prominently displayed, appearing like a banner.

As for "Sorrowless Qualities Buddha," in the southeast, off at a distance from here of buddha lands as numerous as the sands in incalculably and boundlessly many Ganges Rivers, there is a world named Lunar Brilliance. The buddha who abides there is named Sorrowless Qualities. He is even now proclaiming the Dharma. That buddha's spiritual qualities are such that they cause all of the *deva*s and men there to be free of any sort of sorrow.

As for "Giver of Jewels Buddha," in the southwest, off at a distance from here of buddha lands as numerous as the sands in incalculably and boundlessly many Ganges Rivers, there is a world named Multitude of Signs. The buddha who abides there is known as Giver of Jewels. Even now he is proclaiming the Dharma. That buddha always bestows on beings the jewels of the uncontaminated root faculties, powers, limbs of enlightenment, the path, and so forth.

As for "Floral Qualities Buddha," in the northwest, off at a distance from here of buddha lands as numerous as the sands in incalculably and boundlessly many Ganges Rivers, there is a world known as Multitude of Sounds. The buddha who abides there is known as Floral Qualities. Even now, he is proclaiming the Dharma. That buddha's physical body is like a marvelous flower and his meritorious qualities are incalculably numerous.

42a

As for "Three Vehicles' Practices Buddha," in the northeast, off at a distance from here of buddha lands as numerous as the sands in incalculably and boundlessly many Ganges Rivers, there is a world known as Peaceful and Secure. The buddha who abides there is known as Three Vehicles' Practices Buddha. Even now, he is proclaiming the Dharma. That buddha

always explains the practices of the *śrāvaka* disciples, the practices of the *pratyekabuddha*, and the practices of the bodhisattvas. There are those who state that it is because he explains the superior, the middling, and the lesser levels of vigor that he is named Three Vehicles' Practices.

As for "Brilliant Qualities Buddha," in the nadir, off at a distance from here of buddha lands as numerous as the sands in incalculably and boundlessly many Ganges Rivers, there is a world known as Expansive. The buddha who abides there is known as Brilliant Qualities. Even now he is proclaiming the Dharma. "Brilliant" refers to the light that shines from his body, the light of his wisdom, and the light that shines from his jeweled tree. These three kinds of brilliance always illuminate that world.

As for "Vast Multitude of Qualities Buddha," in the zenith, off at a distance from here of buddha lands as numerous as the sands in incalculably and boundlessly many Ganges Rivers, there is a world known as Many Moons. The buddha who abides there is known as Vast Multitude of Qualities. Even now he is proclaiming the Dharma. It is because the meritorious qualities of that buddha's disciples are vast that he is known as Vast Multitude of Qualities.

Now, as for these buddhas of the ten directions, beginning with Meritorious Qualities Buddha and concluding with Vast Multitude of Qualities Buddha, if a person singlemindedly invokes their names, he will thereby immediately succeed in gaining irreversibility with respect to the attainment of *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*. This is as described in a verse:

> If there is a person who is able to hear
> The utterance of all these buddhas' names,
> He will immediately acquire countless meritorious qualities,
> Just as was explained for Precious Moon.
>
> I bow in reverence to these buddhas
> Presently abiding throughout the ten directions.
> Whosoever invokes their names
> Immediately attains irreversibility.
>
> Off in the east, in the realm known as Sorrowless,
> That buddha named Meritorious Qualities
> Has a form resembling a mountain of gold.
> The reach of his fame is boundless.

If a person so much as hears his name,
He immediately attains irreversibility.
With palms pressed together, I now bow in reverence to him
And pray that worries and afflictions may be entirely dispelled.

Off in the south, in the realm known as Delightful,
There is a buddha named Candana Qualities.
His countenance is as pristine as the full moon
And the radiance of his light is measureless.

He is able to bring about the extinguishing of beings'
Fiery afflictions produced by the three poisons.
If one but hears his name, he then attains irreversibility.
I therefore bow down in reverence to him.

Off in the west, in a realm known as Excellence,
There is a buddha known as Limitless Light.
The light from his body and the brilliance of his wisdom
Are boundless in the range of their illumination.

42b If there be anyone who but hears his name
He will immediately attain irreversibility.
I now bow down in reverence to him,
Praying that I may put an end to the limits imposed by samsara.

Off in the north, in a realm known as Immovable,
There is a buddha named Emblematic Qualities.
His body is replete with the many signs and minor characteristics
With which he is personally adorned.

He utterly defeats the hordes of Māra, the enemy,
And skillfully teaches both humans and *deva*s.
Those who hear his name attain irreversibility.
I therefore bow down in reverence to him.

Off in the southeast, in a world known as Lunar Brilliance,
There is a buddha named Sorrowless.
His illumination surpasses that of the sun and moon.
Those who encounter it are thereby able to extinguish their afflictions.

He always explains the Dharma for the sake of the multitude,
Thus ridding them of all inward and outward sufferings.
The buddhas of the ten directions praise him.
I therefore bow down in reverence to him.

Off in the southwest, in a realm known as Multitude of Signs,
There is a buddha named Giver of Jewels.
He always uses all manner of Dharma jewels
To engage in extensive universal giving.

All the *deva*s bow down in reverence to him
So that their jeweled crowns are brought low at his feet.
I now, bowing in reverence with all five extremities,
Take refuge in the Bhagavat, Giver of Jewels.

Off in the northwest, in a world known as Multitude of Sounds,
There is a buddha named Floral Qualities.
That world is graced with an abundance of jeweled trees
That send forth sounds expounding the sublime Dharma.

He always uses the flowers of the seven limbs of enlightenment
To bestow adornments on those beings.
His mid-brow white hair tuft mark is like the moon.
I now bow down in reverence to him.

Off in the northeast, in a world known as Peaceful and Secure,
One that is composed of all manner of jewels,
There is a buddha named Three Vehicles' Practices
Whose body is adorned with the measureless marks.

The light from his wisdom is measureless.
It is able to dispel the darkness of ignorance
And cause beings to become free of worry and afflictions.
I therefore bow down in reverence to him.

Off toward the zenith, in a world known as Many Moons,
Adorned with the many types of jewels,
Attended by a congregation of greatly virtuous *śrāvaka* disciples
And bodhisattvas who are incalculable in number,

There is a lion among the *ārya*s
Named Vast Multitude of Qualities.
He is feared by all the *māra*s.
I therefore bow down in reverence to him.

Off toward the nadir, there is world known as Expansive
In which there is a buddha named Brilliant Qualities.
His physical marks are far more marvelous
Even than a mountain of *jāmbūnada* gold.

He always uses the sun of his wisdom
To open the blossoms of beings' roots of goodness.
42c His land of jewels is extremely vast.
From afar, I bow down in reverence to him.

In the past, countless *kalpa*s ago,
There was a buddha named Oceanic Meritorious Qualities.
These buddhas of the present era
All made their vows under him.

His life span was incalculably long
And the reach of his light's illumination was endless.
His country was extremely pure.
Those hearing his name became definitely bound for buddhahood.

These [buddhas] who now abide in the ten directions
Are completely equipped with the ten powers.
I therefore bow down in reverence to them,
These most venerable ones among all humans and *deva*s.

Question: Is it the case that one may only be able to reach irreversibility with respect to *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi* through hearing these ten buddhas' names and bearing them in mind? Or is it the case that there are yet other buddhas' and other bodhisattvas' names through which one may succeed in reaching the station of the *avaivartika*?

Response:

There is Amitābha and also other such buddhas
As well as the great bodhisattvas.

If one invokes their names and singlemindedly bears them in mind,
One will also thereby attain irreversibility.

In addition, there is Amitābha as well as other buddhas to whom one should also respectfully bow down in reverence and utter their names. I shall now set forth their names in full:

Limitless Life Buddha, King of Sovereign Mastery in the World Buddha, Lion Mind Buddha, Dharma Mind Buddha, Brahman Signs Buddha, World Signs Buddha, Sublimity of the World Buddha, Kindness and Compassion Buddha, World King Buddha, King Among Men Buddha, Moonlike Virtues Buddha, Precious Virtues Buddha, Qualities of the Marks Buddha, Great Marks Buddha, Jeweled Canopy Buddha, Lion Mane Buddha, Destroyer of Ignorance Buddha, Flower of Wisdom Buddha, Tamālapattra Candana Fragrance Buddha, and Upholder of Great Meritorious Qualities Buddha.

There are also Rain of the Seven Precious Things Buddha, Excellent Bravery Buddha, Enmity Transcendence Buddha, Great Adornment Buddha, Signlessness Buddha, Jewel Treasury Buddha, Summit of Virtue Buddha, Tagara Fragrance Buddha, Candana Incense Buddha, Lotus Fragrance Buddha, Adorned Path Buddha, Dragon Canopy Buddha, Rain of Flowers Buddha, Scatterer of Flowers Buddha, Floral Radiance Buddha, Solar Voice Buddha, Eclipsing the Sun and Moon Buddha, Lapis Lazuli Treasury Buddha, Brahman Sound Buddha, and Pure Radiance Buddha.

There are also Treasury of Gold Buddha, Sumeru Summit Buddha, King of the Mountains Buddha, Masterful Voice Buddha, Pure Eyes Buddha, Lunar Radiance Buddha, Mount Sumeru Likeness Buddha, Sun and Moon Buddha, Acquirer of Multitudes Buddha, Flower-born Buddha, Proclaimer of the Brahman Sounds Buddha, Lord of the Worlds Buddha, Lionlike Practice Buddha, Sublime Dharma Mind Lion's Roar Buddha, Pearl Canopy Coral Appearance Buddha, Dispeller of the Darkness of Delusion and Desire Buddha, Water Moon Buddha, Multitude of Flowers Buddha, Opener of Wisdom Buddha, and Retainer of Various Jewels Buddha.

There are also Bodhi Buddha, Flower Transcendence Buddha, Radiance of True Lapis Lazuli Buddha, Outshining Sunlight Buddha, Retainer of Great Qualities Buddha, Realizer of Right Wisdom Buddha, Heroic Strength Buddha, Beyond Flattery and Deception Buddha, Dispensing with Planting Roots of Evil Buddha, Great Fragrance Buddha, Path Splendor Buddha, 43a

Water Light Buddha, Roamer in Oceanic Clouds of Wisdom Buddha, Virtue Summit Flower Buddha, Floral Adornment Buddha, Solar Voice Buddha, Lunar Supremacy Buddha, Lapis Lazuli Buddha, Brahmā-like Voice Buddha, and Light Buddha.[150]

There are also Treasury of Gold Buddha, Mountain Summit Buddha, Mountain King Buddha, Sound King Buddha, Dragon Vigor Buddha, Stainless Buddha, Pure Countenance Buddha, Lunar Countenance Buddha, Sumeru Semblance Buddha, Candana Fragrance Buddha, Awesome Strength Buddha, Blazing Lamp Buddha, Difficult to Overcome Buddha, Precious Virtue Buddha, Joyous Sound Buddha, Radiance Buddha,[151] Dragon Supremacy Buddha, Defilement Transcendence Light Buddha, Lion Buddha, and King Among Kings Buddha.

And there are also Supremacy of Powers Buddha, Floral Garden Buddha,[152] Fearless Brilliance Buddha, Fragrant Summit Buddha, Universally Worthy Buddha, Universal Flower Buddha, and Precious Signs Buddha.

These buddhas, bhagavats, abide now in pure worlds throughout the ten directions. One should invoke the names of all of them and bear them in mind.

The original vows of Amitābha are of this sort: "If any person bears me in mind, invokes my name, and takes refuge in me, he will immediately enter the stage of certainty with respect to attaining *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*."

One should therefore always remain mindful of him. I set forth his praises here in verse:

> He possesses boundless illumination and wisdom
> And his body is like a mountain of gold.
> Paying homage to him with body, speech, and mind, I now
> Place my palms together and bow down in reverence to him.
>
> His marvelous golden-colored light
> Everywhere streams into all worlds,
> Increasing in its brilliance in response to each being.
> I therefore bow down in reverence to him.
>
> If, when life's end comes, a person
> Succeeds in being reborn in that land,

He immediately acquires countless meritorious qualities.
I do therefore take refuge in him.

Whoever is able to bear in mind this buddha
Possessed of measureless powers and awe-inspiring qualities
Will immediately enter the stage of certainty.
I do therefore always bear him in mind.

That land is such that if, at the end of one's life,
One should otherwise undergo all manner of suffering,
Even so, one will not then fall into those terrible hells.
Therefore, taking refuge in him, I now bow down in reverence.

If a person gains rebirth in his land,
He will never again fall into the three wretched destinies
Or into the realms of the *asura*.
Taking refuge in him, I now bow down in reverence.

Though his body is similar to that of humans and *deva*s,
It resembles the summit of a mountain of gold.
This is the place to which all supreme [qualities] return.
I therefore bow down in reverence to him.

Those who have been reborn in his land
Gain the powers of the heavenly eye and ear
That reach unimpededly throughout the ten directions.
I bow down in reverence to the one honored among the *ārya*s.

All the beings in his land
Perform supernatural transformations, know others' thoughts,
And are endowed with the knowledge of past lives as well. 43b
Therefore, taking refuge in him, I bow down in reverence.

Those who are reborn in his land
Have no conception of either "I" or "mine."
They do not have thoughts conceiving of "others" or "self."
I therefore bow down in reverence to him.

He has stepped beyond the prison of the three realms.
His eyes are like the petals of a lotus.
The assembly of *śrāvaka* disciples there is measurelessly vast.
I therefore bow down in reverence to him.

All the beings in his land
Are in nature gentle and harmonious
And they naturally practice the ten good deeds.
I bow down in reverence to this king of the many *ārya*s.

It is from such goodness that his pure light is produced
That, in the number of its rays, is measureless and boundless.
He is foremost among those who stand on two feet.
I do therefore take refuge in him.

If a person vows to become a buddha
And then bears in mind Amitābha,
When the time is right, he will appear for his sake.
I do therefore take refuge in him.

Through the power of that buddha's vows
The bodhisattvas of the ten directions
Come to make offerings and listen to the Dharma.
I therefore bow down in reverence to him.

All the bodhisattvas in his land
Are endowed with all the major marks and secondary characteristics
By which they thereby adorn their own bodies.
Taking refuge in him, I now bow down in reverence.

Three times every day,
All those great bodhisattvas
Make offerings to the buddhas of the ten directions.
I therefore bow down in reverence.

If a person who has planted roots of goodness
Retains doubts, then the flower will not open.
If one's mind of faith is pure,
The flower will open and one will then see the Buddha.

For many different reasons,
The buddhas of the present throughout the ten directions
Praise the qualities of that buddha.
Taking refuge in him, I now bow down in reverence.

His land is especially majestic in its adornment,
Surpassing in its excellence the palaces of all the *deva*s.
Its qualities are especially profound and abundant.
I therefore bow down in reverence at the feet of the Buddha.

The Buddha's feet carry the sign of the thousand-spoked wheel.
They are soft and, in appearance, resemble the blossoms of a lotus.
Those who see them are all filled with delight
And bow down their heads in reverence at the feet of the Buddha.

The light from the white hair tuft between his brows
Appears like a pristinely shining moon,
Enhancing the radiance displayed by his countenance.
I bow down in reverence at the feet of the Buddha.

When he originally sought out the path to buddhahood,
He performed all manner of distinctive and marvelous works.
These are just as described in the sutras.
I bow down in reverence to him.

That which is proclaimed by that buddha 43c
Eliminates the roots of karmic offenses.
His eloquent discourse brings benefit to many.
I now bow down in reverence to him.

By resorting to such eloquent discourse,
He rescues beings from all maladies arising by clinging to pleasures.
He has already liberated such beings and now liberates yet more.
I therefore bow down in reverence to him.

The *deva*s bow down in reverence
To he who is the most honored of all humans and *deva*s.
Their seven-jeweled crowns are brought low and touch his feet.
I do therefore take refuge in him.

The sangha of all the worthies and the *ārya*s
As well as the multitudes of humans and *deva*s
All join in taking refuge in him.
Therefore I too bow down in reverence to him.

One who boards his ship of the eightfold path,
Will be able to cross beyond that sea so difficult to cross,
Delivering himself to liberation while liberating others as well.
I bow in reverence to he who has achieved sovereign mastery in this.

If, for countless *kalpa*s, the buddhas
Proclaimed their praises of his meritorious qualities,
They would still be unable to come to the end of them.
I take refuge in he who has become such a purified person.

In this same manner, I now proclaim
The praises of his boundless qualities.
I pray that, due to the causes and conditions of this merit,
The Buddha may therefore always bear me in mind.

By whatever merit I have created in the present or previous lives,
Whether it be but little or much,
I pray that my mind will become forever purified
In the very presence of the Buddha.

As for the supremely marvelous qualities that may be acquired
Through the causes and conditions of such merit as this,
I pray that all of the many varieties of beings
Shall all become able to acquire them as well.

One should also bear in mind Vipaśyin Buddha, Śikhin Buddha, Viśvabhū Buddha, Krakucchanda Buddha, Kanakamuni Buddha, Kāśyapa Buddha, and Śākyamuni Buddha, as well as Maitreya, the future buddha. One should bear them all in mind and bow down in reverence to them. I set forth their praises here in verse:

The Bhagavat Vipaśyin
Abides beneath an *aśoka bodhi* tree,[153]

Having perfected all-knowledge
And all of the subtle and marvelous meritorious qualities.

Having rightly contemplated the world,
His mind has succeeded in gaining liberation.
I now, with all five extremities, bow down in reverence,
Taking refuge in that unsurpassable Honored One.

The Bhagavat, Śikhin Buddha,
sat in the *bodhimaṇḍa*
beneath a *puṇḍarīka bodhi* tree
where he then achieved the complete realization of *bodhi*.[154]

His physical appearance is incomparable.
It resembles a mountain of flaming purple-gold.
I now take refuge in the Honored One 44a
Who is unsurpassed by anyone in the three realms of existence.

Viśvabhū Bhagavat
Sits beneath the *śāla* tree
Where he naturally acquired the penetrating comprehension
Of all forms of sublime wisdom.

Among all humans and *deva*s,
He is the foremost and without peer.
I do therefore take refuge in the Honored One
Who is the most supreme among them all.

Krakucchanda Buddha
Succeeded in attaining
anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi
Beneath the *śirīṣa* tree.[155]

He perfected the great wisdom,
And became forever liberated from samsara.
I now take refuge and bow in reverence
To that supreme and incomparable Honored One.

Kanakamuni,
The great *ārya* and unsurpassable Honored One,
Attained the perfect realization of buddhahood
Beneath the *uḍumbara* tree

And reached the penetrating comprehension
Of all the measurelessly and boundlessly many dharmas.
I do therefore take refuge in him,
That foremost and unsurpassable Honored One.

Kāśyapa Buddha, the Bhagavat,
With eyes like a pair of lotus blossoms,
Achieved the perfect realization of buddhahood
Beneath the *nyagrodha* tree.

Throughout the three realms, there is nothing he fears.
His gait is like that of the king of the elephants.
I now take refuge in him, bowing down in reverence
To that insuperable Honored One.

Śākyamuni Buddha,
Beneath the *aśvattha* tree,[156]
Conquered Māra, the enemy,
And perfected the unsurpassable enlightenment.

His countenance is like the full moon,
Pure and free of any blemish.
I now bow down in reverence
To that heroically brave and supreme Honored One.

Maitreya, the buddha of the future,
Sitting beneath the *nāga* tree,
Shall attain the perfect realization of the vast resolve
And then naturally realize buddhahood.

His meritorious qualities are so extremely solid and durable
That no one is able to surpass them.
I do therefore take refuge in him,
That incomparable king of the sublime Dharma.

Additionally, there are Supreme in Meritorious Qualities Buddha, Universal Illumination Buddha, Victorious Over Adversaries Buddha, Marks of the Sovereign[157] Buddha, King of the Marks Buddha,[158] King of Measureless Qualities' Brilliance and Sovereign Mastery Buddha, Unimpeded Medicine King Buddha, Jeweled Traveler Buddha, Precious Flower Buddha, Peacefully Abiding Buddha,[159] and Mountain King Buddha. One should remain mindful of them as well, respectfully bowing in reverence to them. I set forth their praises here in verse:

In the world known as Invincible, 44b
There is a buddha named Supreme in Meritorious Qualities.
I now bow down in reverence to him
As well as to his Dharma jewel and his Sangha jewel.

In a world known as Joy in Whatever One Wishes,
There is a buddha named Universal Illumination.
I now take refuge in him
As well as in his Dharma jewel and his Sangha jewel.

In the world known as Universal Excellence,
There is a buddha named Victorious Over Adversaries.
I now take refuge in him and bow down in reverence to him
As well as to his Dharma jewel and his Sangha jewel.

In the world known as Accumulation of Goodness and Purity,
There is a buddha named Marks of the Sovereign's Banner.
I now bow down in reverence to him
As well as to his Dharma jewel and his Sangha jewel.

In the world known as Accumulation of Stainlessness,
There is a buddha named Measureless Qualities' Brilliance
Whose sovereign mastery extends throughout the ten directions.
I therefore bow down in reverence to him.

In the world known as Undeceptive,
There is a buddha named Unimpeded Medicine King.
I now bow down in reverence to him
As well as to his Dharma jewel and his Sangha jewel.

In the world known as Present Accumulation,
There is a buddha named Jeweled Traveler.
I now bow down in reverence to him
As well as to his Dharma jewel and his Sangha jewel.

In the Beautiful Sound world, there is Precious Flower Buddha.
[So too there are] Peacefully Established and Mountain
King buddhas.
I now bow down in reverence to them
As well as to the Dharma jewel and the Sangha jewel.

All of these tathāgatas now abide
Off in the regions to the east.
With a respectful mind, I spread their praises and,
Taking refuge in them, bow down in reverence to them.

I only pray that the tathāgatas
Will bestow their deep kindness and sympathy
And thus manifest their bodies before me
So that I might be allowed to personally[160] see them all.

Additionally, one should exhaustively and comprehensively bear in mind and respectfully bow in reverence to all buddhas of the past, the future, and the present. I set forth their praises here in verse:

All buddhas of the past
Conquered the many *māra*s, their adversaries
And, using the power of great wisdom,
Provided vast benefit to beings.

The beings who existed in those eras
Were entirely devoted to making offerings to them all,
Showed them reverence, and proclaimed their praises.
I therefore bow down in reverence to them.

The incalculably many buddhas of the present
Throughout the worlds of the ten directions
Are so measurelessly and boundlessly many
As to surpass the number of sands in the Ganges River.

Out of kindness and pity for beings,
They always turn the wheel of the sublime Dharma.
I do therefore accord them respect, 44c
Take refuge in them, and bow down my head to them in reverence.

The buddhas of the future
Shall appear with bodies resembling mountains of gold
That emanate measureless illumination
And display the self-adornment of their many characteristic signs.

They shall appear in the world and liberate beings,
After which they shall then enter nirvana.
To all such bhagavats as these,
I do now bow down in reverence.

Additionally, one should bear in mind the great bodhisattvas, namely: Good Intentions Bodhisattva, Good Eyes Bodhisattva, Moon Hearer Bodhisattva, King Śibi Bodhisattva, Universally Supreme Bodhisattva, Knower of the Great Earth Bodhisattva, Great Medicine Bodhisattva, Kapotagṛha Bodhisattva, Arenemin Bodhisattva, Summit Born King Bodhisattva, Delightful View Bodhisattva, Uttara Bodhisattva, Sarvadāna Bodhisattva, Long Life King Bodhisattva, Kṣānti Bodhisattva, Velāma Bodhisattva, Flashing Light Bodhisattva, Moon Covering Bodhisattva, Brilliant Leader Bodhisattva, Dharma Leader Bodhisattva, Perfecting Benefit Bodhisattva, and Maitreya Bodhisattva.

In addition, there are Vajragarbha Bodhisattva, Vajra Leader Bodhisattva, Treasury of Nondefilement Bodhisattva, Vimalakīrti Bodhisattva, Dispeller of Doubts Bodhisattva, Undefiled Virtue Bodhisattva, Net-like Brilliance Bodhisattva, Immeasurable Brilliance Bodhisattva, Great Brilliance Bodhisattva, Akṣayamati Bodhisattva, Mind King Bodhisattva, Boundless Mind Bodhisattva, Sun Sound Bodhisattva, Moon Sound Bodhisattva, Beautiful Sound Bodhisattva, Beautiful Voice Bodhisattva, Great Voice Bodhisattva, Solid Vigor Bodhisattva, Ever Solid Bodhisattva, and Solidly Generated Bodhisattva.

There are also Adornment King Bodhisattva, Ever Compassionate Bodhisattva, Never Slighting Bodhisattva, Dharma Superior Bodhisattva, Dharma Mind Bodhisattva, Dharma Joy Bodhisattva, Dharma Leader Bodhisattva, Dharma Accumulation Bodhisattva, Generator of Vigor Bodhisattva, Wisdom

Bodhisattva, Pure Awesome Virtue Bodhisattva, Nārāyaṇa Bodhisattva, Good Meditation Bodhisattva, Dharma Meditation Bodhisattva, Bhadrapāla Bodhisattva, Dharma Benefit Bodhisattva, Lofty Virtue Bodhisattva, Lion Traveler Bodhisattva, Joyous Faculties Bodhisattva, and Supreme Jewel Moon Bodhisattva.

There are also Virtue Free of Falseness Bodhisattva, Dragon Virtue Bodhisattva, Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva, Wonderful Sound Bodhisattva, Cloud Sound Bodhisattva, Supreme Mind Bodhisattva, Illuminating Brilliance Bodhisattva, Brave Assembly Bodhisattva, Supreme Assembly Bodhisattva, Awesome Deportment Bodhisattva, Lion Mind Bodhisattva, Superior Mind Bodhisattva, Beneficial Intentions Bodhisattva, Augmented Mind Bodhisattva, Precious Brilliance Bodhisattva, Wisdom Summit Bodhisattva, Peak of Eloquence Bodhisattva, Possessed of Virtue Bodhisattva, Avalokiteśvara King Bodhisattva, and Dhāraṇī Mastery King Bodhisattva.

There are also Great Sovereign Mastery King Bodhisattva, Sorrowless Virtue Bodhisattva, Not Seen in Vain Bodhisattva, Beyond the Wretched
45a Destinies Bodhisattva, Universally Brave and Strong Bodhisattva, Dispeller of Darkness Bodhisattva, Merit Jewel Bodhisattva, Floral Awesome Virtue Bodhisattva, Gold Necklace Brilliant Virtue Bodhisattva, Beyond the Aggregates and Hindrances Bodhisattva, Unimpeded Mind Bodhisattva, Pure in All Actions Bodhisattva, Equal Vision Bodhisattva, Unequaled Vision Bodhisattva, Wandering Joyfully in Samādhi Bodhisattva, Sovereign Mastery in Dharma Bodhisattva, Dharma Marks Bodhisattva, Brilliant Adornment Bodhisattva, Great Adornment Bodhisattva, and Jeweled Summit Bodhisattva.

There are also Jeweled Mudrā Hand Bodhisattva, Ever Raised Hand Bodhisattva, Ever Lowered Hand Bodhisattva, Ever Piteous Bodhisattva, Ever Joyful Bodhisattva, Joy King Bodhisattva, Possessed of Eloquent Voice Bodhisattva, Sound of Thunder in Space Bodhisattva, Upholder of the Jeweled Torch Bodhisattva, Valiant Giving Bodhisattva, Imperial Net Bodhisattva, Horse Light Bodhisattva, Empty and Unimpeded Bodhisattva, Jeweled Supremacy Bodhisattva, Celestial King Bodhisattva, Demon Crusher Bodhisattva, Lightning Virtue Bodhisattva, Sovereign Mastery Bodhisattva, Summit Sign Bodhisattva, and Beyond Transgressions Bodhisattva.

And there are also Lion's Roar Bodhisattva, Cloud Shade Bodhisattva, Able to Conquer Bodhisattva, Mountainous Marks Banner Bodhisattva,

Fragrant Elephant Bodhisattva, Great Fragrant Elephant Bodhisattva, White Fragrant Elephant Bodhisattva, Ever Vigorous Bodhisattva, Never Resting Bodhisattva, Sublime Birth Bodhisattva, Floral Adornment Bodhisattva, Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva, Mahāsthāmaprāpta Bodhisattva, Water King Bodhisattva, Mountain King Bodhisattva, Indra's Net Bodhisattva, Jewel Giving Bodhisattva, Crusher of Demons Bodhisattva, Adorner of Lands Bodhisattva, Golden Topknot Bodhisattva, and Pearl Topknot Bodhisattva.

One should bear in mind all such bodhisattvas and bow down to them in reverence as one seeks to attain the ground of the *avaivartika*.

Chapter 10

Getting Rid of Karma

Question: Is it the case that, in order to become an *avaivartika*, one need only bear in mind Amitābha and those other buddhas while also bearing in mind the others, the bodhisattvas [mentioned above]? Or are there other additional skillful means [that must be used]?

Response: For one who seeks to become an *avaivartika,* it is not the case that one must only remain mindful of them, utter their names, and make reverential obeisance to them, and that is all there is to it. In addition, one should, in the presence of the buddhas, perform repentances, entreat them, rejoice [in their meritorious deeds], and dedicate one's own merit.

Question: How does one go about carrying out these endeavors?

Response:

There is nothing not exhaustively known by
The countless buddhas of the ten directions,
Now, in the presence of them all,
I reveal all of my black and evil deeds.

Three times three, nine kinds in all,[161]
All of them have arisen from the three types of afflictions.
Whether committed in the present body or in prior births,
I repent of all of these karmic offenses.

If I should otherwise be bound to undergo karmic retribution
In the three wretched destinies,
I pray that [my offenses] may instead be repaid in this very body
So that I will not enter the wretched destinies to undergo retribution.

"The buddhas of the ten directions" refers to all of the buddhas of the present whose life faculty has become completely perfected but who have still not yet entered nirvana. "Ten directions" refers to the four directions, the 45b

four midpoints, the zenith, and the nadir. "Buddhas" refers to those who, with regard to all things that should be known, know them all without exception.

"Reveal" means that, in the presence of all buddhas, one reveals all of one's karmic offenses, leaving none hidden, [while also resolving] to not commit them ever again. [In so doing, one's resolve becomes] like a dike that holds back the waters.

As for "black and evil deeds," because one has not had the bright light of wisdom, one has often committed many types of evil deeds, in some cases practicing unwholesome dharmas, and in some cases involving oneself in obscured morally indeterminate dharmas.[162]

"Three times three, nine kinds in all" refers to creation of evil karma on the part of body, mouth, and mind that brings about negative retribution in the present life, negative retribution in the next rebirth, and negative retribution in subsequent lives. [This retribution may arise through] directly committing the deed oneself, instructing others to commit it, or by rejoicing that others have committed it.

As for "all arisen from three types of afflictions," the "three types of afflictions" refers to [those actions] connected to the desire realm, the form realm, or the formless realm, whether promoting the affliction of desire, the affliction of hatred, or the affliction of delusion, and whether involving a supreme degree of affliction, a middling degree of affliction, or a lesser degree of affliction.

As for "whether it be that committed in the present body or in prior births, I repent of all of these karmic offenses," this means that one repents of all of the many kinds of evil deeds committed in this present life and former lives, repenting of them all without exception.

[With regard to "the three wretched destinies,"] there are the hells, namely the eight hot hells and the ten cold and ice hells. There are the animals, including those that are earth-born, water-born, legless, two-legged, or many-legged. And there are the hungry ghosts, in particular those who feed upon spittle, vomit, rinsings, pus and blood, excrement and urine, and other such things.

[The intent here is to state:] "If my karma is such that I should undergo retribution in these three wretched destinies, I pray that I will instead be allowed to undergo that retribution in this very body. If it is to be undergone

in a subsequent rebirth's body, may I not be compelled to undergo it in the hells, among hungry ghosts, or in the animal realm."

Also, the Buddha himself explained the dharma to be used in repentance, indicating that, if a bodhisattva wishes to repent of karmic offenses, he should utter his repentance as follows:

> Facing the buddhas of the present time throughout the worlds of the ten directions, namely those who have realized *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi,* turned the Dharma wheel, rained down the Dharma rain, sounded the Dharma drum, blown the Dharma conch, planted the Dharma banner, and who have, through the giving of Dharma, fulfilled the needs of beings, benefited the many, brought peace and security to the many, taken pity on the world, and abundantly benefited *deva*s and humans—I now, with body, speech, and mind, make full reverential prostrations at the feet of the buddhas of the present, the buddhas who know, who see, who are the eyes of the world, and who are the lamps for the world.
>
> [I hereby reveal] all of the karmic offenses I have created throughout the course of beginningless births and deaths due to being driven along by greed, hatred, and delusion, including:
>
> Sometimes failing to recognize the buddhas, failing to recognize the Dharma, or failing to recognize the Sangha;
>
> Sometimes failing to distinguish between offense-generating karma and meritorious karma;
>
> Sometimes abundantly creating the many sorts of karmic offenses through actions of body, speech, and mind;
>
> Sometimes, with evil intentions, drawing the blood of a buddha;
>
> Sometimes contributing to the destruction of right Dharma;
>
> Sometimes bringing about the destruction of the Sangha;
>
> Sometimes murdering arhats;
>
> Sometimes engaging in the ten courses of bad karmic action;
>
> Sometimes instructing others to engage in them;
>
> Sometimes subjecting others to speech that displeases them;
>
> Sometimes cheating and deceiving others with altered weights and measures;
>
> Sometimes afflicting beings with immoral behavior; 45c
>
> Sometimes failing in filial piety toward parents;

Sometimes stealing belongings from stupas;

Sometimes stealing possessions from the sangha of the four directions;

Sometimes destroying or transgressing against [the teachings of] sutras or moral precept codes originally set forth by the Buddha;

And sometimes disobeying monastic preceptors or monastic Dharma teachers.[163]

Sometimes, when people have set their resolve on realization of the *śrāvaka* disciple vehicle or the *pratyekabuddha* vehicle, or have set their resolve on realization of the Great Vehicle, due to having a mind covered over by hatred or jealousy, I have used evil speech to vilify and slight them.

And sometimes, in the presence of buddhas, I have uttered abusive speech, have claimed right Dharma to be non-Dharma, and have claimed non-Dharma to be right Dharma.

Now, in the presence of the buddhas of the present, those who know, who see, and who have become realized, I entirely reveal all of these karmic offenses, not daring to conceal any of them, and I vow, from this point on, that I shall not dare to commit them again.

If I have committed karmic offenses through which I should fall into the hells, into the animal realm, into the hungry ghost realm, or into the *asura* realm,[164] or if I ought not encounter the three objects of reverence,[165] but rather should be reborn in the midst of the [eight] difficulties,[166] I pray that I may [instead be allowed to] undergo retribution for these karmic offenses in this present life.

Just as all the bodhisattvas of the past who sought realization of buddhahood did themselves repent of offenses created through bad karma, in the very same manner, I too reveal all of my offenses, repent of them, do not dare to conceal any of them, and vow not to commit them again.

Just as all the bodhisattvas of the present who seek realization of buddhahood do repent of offenses created through bad karma, in the very same manner, I too reveal all of my offenses, repent of them, do not dare to conceal any of them, and vow not to commit them again.

Just as all of the bodhisattvas of the future who shall seek realization of buddhahood shall repent of offenses created through bad karma, in the very same manner, I too reveal all of my offenses, repent of them, do not dare to conceal any of them, and vow not to commit them again.

Just as all of the past, future, and present bodhisattvas seeking realization of buddhahood did repent, do repent, and shall repent of offenses created through bad karma, in the very same manner, I too repent of offenses created through bad karma, do not dare to conceal any of them, and vow not to commit them again.

Question: Having already explained the method for repentance, how does one go about "entreating"?

Response:

Whenever any of the buddhas of the ten directions
Now attain buddhahood,
I request them to turn the wheel of Dharma
And bring peace and happiness to all beings.

Whenever any of the buddhas of the ten directions
Are about to relinquish their life spans,
I now make full reverential prostrations to them,
And entreat them to remain for a long time.

As for "turning the wheel of Dharma," this refers to the proclamation of the four truths of the *ārya*s in three turnings, thereby revealing their twelve aspects:

This is the truth of the existence of suffering. This is the origination of suffering. This is the extinguishing of suffering. This is the path leading to the extinguishing of suffering. This is what is meant by the four aspects of the first turning.

This truth of the existence of suffering should be known. This origination of suffering should be cut off. This extinguishing of suffering should be realized. This path leading to the extinguishing of suffering should be cultivated. This is what is meant by the four aspects of the second turning.

This truth of the existence of suffering has been known. This origination of suffering has been cut off. This extinguishing of suffering has been realized. This path leading to the extinguishing of suffering has been cultivated. This is what is meant by the four aspects of the third turning. 46a

As for the four aspects, within the four truths, they correspond to the development of the eyes, the knowledges, the clear knowledges, and the awakenings.[167]

There are those who explain that the *śrāvaka* disciple vehicle, the *pratyekabuddha* vehicle, and the Great Vehicle are what constitute "the Dharma wheel" and that it is the explanation of the meaning of the three vehicles that constitutes the "the turning of the Dharma wheel."

As for "bringing peace and happiness to all beings," the pleasures associated with the five objects of desire do not constitute peace and happiness. Rather, it is entry into the three vehicles for the sake of achieving pure peace and happiness in the present and future lifetimes—this is what is meant by peace and happiness.

This person entreats the buddhas to turn the wheel of Dharma to cause all beings to receive the bliss of nirvana and, so long as they have not yet gained entry into nirvana, to cause them to receive the types of happiness available in the world. It is for this reason that "peace and happiness" are mentioned here.

As for this matter of a "life span," it is due to the causes and conditions involved in undergoing karmic retribution that the continuity of one's life faculty is sustained. It is comparable to an apparition created through a magical conjuration that continues to be sustained in correspondence with [the magician's] mental actions. When those mental actions cease, [that conjuration] is then extinguished.[168]

"Entreat" refers to the most ultimately sincere prayerful beseeching. The buddhas regard all beings [equally], great and small, without treating them differently. Therefore one sets forth this earnest request, hoping that they will accede to one's wishes and refrain from relinquishing their life spans and instead remain in the world for *asaṃkhyeyas* of *kalpa*s in order to liberate beings.

Then again, the Buddha himself described the method to be used in entreating the buddhas, indicating that the bodhisattva should speak as follows, "I bow down in reverence to all buddhas of the present throughout the ten directions." Then, at that time when they have just realized *anuttarā-samyaksaṃbodhi* but have not yet begun to turn the wheel of Dharma, [he is to say:]

> I now beseech you, praying that you will turn the wheel of Dharma, sound the Dharma drum, blow the Dharma conch, plant the Dharma banner, establish the great Dharma rituals, and ignite the great Dharma

torch, using these means of Dharma giving to fulfill the needs of beings so that there will be many who are benefited and many who are made happy. Have pity on the world and bestow abundant benefit on *deva*s and humans. It is for these reasons that I now present this entreaty.

This is what is meant by "entreating." As for entreating the buddhas who have turned the wheel of Dharma to then "remain for a long time," in that case as well, one should address all buddhas of the present throughout the ten directions at just that time when those buddhas are about to relinquish their life spans, saying, "I beseech you to remain for a long time so that there will be many who are benefited and many who are made happy. Have pity on the world and bestow abundant benefit on *deva*s and humans."

Question: Having already explained "repentance" and "entreating," what is meant by "rejoicing"?

Response:

All of the merit produced by giving,
Observance of moral precepts, and *dhyāna* practice—
All of it arising through body, speech, and mind,
All of it created throughout the past, the future, and the present,

All of it created by those who cultivate the three vehicles,
By those who have fulfilled the practice of any of the three vehicles,
And all of the merit created by common people—
I rejoice in accordance with all of it.

As for "the merit produced by giving," it is created through relinquishing the dharma of miserliness.

As for "the merit arising from observance of moral precepts," this is created through being able to subdue the body and speech.

"*Dhyāna* practice" refers to developing all of the *dhyāna* concentrations.

As for "that arising through body and speech," this refers to acts arising because of the body or speech such as giving, observance of the moral precepts, welcoming others when they come, escorting them off when they leave,[169] and other such actions.

As for "that arising through the mind," this refers to the *dhyāna* concentration states[170] as well as to kindness, compassion, and so forth.[171] 46b

As for "all of it created in the past, the future, or the present," this is referring to all merit produced by all beings throughout the three periods of time.

As for "those who cultivate the three vehicles," this refers to those who aspire to success in the *śrāvaka* disciple vehicle, the *pratyekabuddha* vehicle, and the Great Vehicle.

As for "those who have fulfilled the practice of any of the three vehicles," this refers to those who have perfected the cultivation of either the arhat vehicle, the *pratyekabuddha* vehicle, or the buddha vehicle.

"All" means every single instance, exhaustively, excluding none.

"Common people" refers to those who have not yet realized the four truths.

With respect to "merit," there may be two types of actions which may be involved here, namely good actions or unobscured morally indeterminate actions.[172]

"Rejoicing in accordance with it" refers to circumstances where, when others engage in meritorious actions, one's mind is filled with delight and one praises that deed as good.

Question: Since you have already explained "repentance," "entreating," and "rejoicing," what is meant by "dedication"?

Response:

May all of the merit that I have acquired
Be gathered together,
And then, for the sake of all beings,
May it be rightly dedicated to attaining buddhahood.

"I" refers to oneself. "All of the merit," whether produced through physical actions, produced through verbal actions, produced through mental actions, produced through giving, through upholding the moral precepts, through cultivation of *dhyāna* meditation, through rejoicing, or through entreating—all such goodness as this as well as any other goodness—all of these are what constitute "all of the merit."

As for "may it all be gathered together," this refers to a reflection whereby one envisions all of the merit being gathered together and assessed in a manner whereby one becomes aware of its expansiveness.

"All beings" refers to all beings throughout the three realms of existence.

"Rightly" refers to performing this dedication of merit in a manner corresponding to the way it is done by all buddhas. It is that dedication that aligns itself with reality. It is dedication directed toward *bodhi.* This "dedication directed toward *bodhi*" involves dedicating all merit toward the realization of *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*.

Again, these two matters of "rejoicing" and "dedication" were explained by the Buddha himself, who spoke of them as follows:

> Where there is a bodhisattva *mahāsattva* who wishes to engage in rejoicing and in dedication, he should bring to mind all of the roots of goodness and merit of all buddhas, those who have cut off continuous abiding in the three realms of existence, who have extinguished all conceptual elaborations, who have dried up the mud of the afflictions, who have destroyed their piercing thorns, who have thrown off the heavy burden, who have accomplished their own benefit, who have obtained right knowledge and liberation, whose minds have achieved sovereign mastery, and who have put an end to the fetters of existence.
>
> So too, he should bring to mind all of the measurelessly, boundlessly, and inconceivably many *asaṃkhyeya*s of buddhas in each and every one of the measurelessly, boundlessly, and inconceivably many *asaṃkhyeya*s of worlds throughout the ten directions while also bringing to mind all the roots of goodness and merit of all of these buddhas from the time they come forth [into the world] to the time they enter nirvana, from the time they first brought forth their resolve to realize buddhahood to the time they actually realize buddhahood on to that time when they enter the nirvana without residue, and on to all of the remaining time before the Dharma they bequeath finally comes to an end.
>
> He should bring to mind the roots of goodness associated with [bodhisattvas' practice of] the six *pāramitā*s as well as the roots of goodness of those who have received the prediction that they are bound to become *pratyekabuddha*s.
>
> He should also bring to mind the roots of goodness of the *śrāvaka* disciples, whether they are the product of giving, of upholding moral precepts, or of cultivation of *dhyāna* meditation, including in this the uncontaminated roots of goodness those in training and those beyond training.[173]

He should also [bring to mind the roots of goodness] associated with all buddhas' measureless meritorious qualities related to moral precept observance, meditative absorptions, wisdom, liberation, knowledge and vision
46c of liberation, great kindness, and great compassion, including as well that related to all buddhas' proclamation of Dharma, for there are those people who have consequently brought forth faith and understanding in these dharmas, who have then undertaken training in them, and who have then acquired the benefit of these dharmas. Hence he should bring to mind all the roots of goodness planted by these people in relation to these dharmas.

He should also include all the roots of goodness of all common people as well those of all the *deva*s, dragons, *yakṣa*s, *gandharva*s, *asura*s, *garuḍa*s, *kiṃnara*s, and *mahoraga*s who, on being able to hear the proclamation of Dharma, then brought forth thoughts of goodness. He should also include here even [those roots of goodness planted] by animals who heard the Dharma and then brought forth thoughts of goodness. And he should also include here the roots of goodness planted by beings [who gathered together] when the buddhas were about to enter nirvana.

All of these roots of goodness and all of this merit are brought together and assessed, excluding none, and are, then and there, made the object of the most superior rejoicing, of the most sublime rejoicing, of the most excellent rejoicing, of unsurpassable rejoicing, of incomparable rejoicing, and of rejoicing that is equal to the unequaled.

Having rejoiced in all of this, one then takes all of the merit arising from this rejoicing and dedicates it to the realization of *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*. In precisely the same manner, one does this with respect to the merit associated with all buddhas of the future and all buddhas of the present.

One's mind rejoices in all merit created by all these buddhas of the three periods of time, rejoicing as well in all merit produced by others due to the influence of all these buddhas. One then dedicates the merit [produced by this rejoicing] to the realization of *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*.

Therefore we have a verse here that states:

One should repent of karmic offenses in this manner.
As for entreating, rejoicing in merit, and

Dedicating merit to the unsurpassable path,
All of these should be carried out in this manner as well.

Just as taught by the buddhas,
I repent of karmic offenses, entreat,
Rejoice, and also dedicate merit,
All in this very same manner.

Throughout the course of the beginningless time in which one has dwelt in the world, one has committed an immeasurable number of karmic offenses that obstruct one's path to buddhahood. One should repent of these offenses in the presence of all buddhas of the ten directions and, in this same way, one should also present entreaties to all buddhas, rejoice in others' merit, and dedicate one's merit accordingly, [reflecting,] "Just such repentance as does accord with what is known, seen, and permitted by the buddhas—it is in accordance with this that I repent of my own karmic offenses." One's entreaties to all buddhas and one's dedications of merit should also be performed in this way. If one repents, entreats, rejoices, and then dedicates one's merit in this manner, this is what is meant by "right dedication."

Question: Just what is meant by "repentance, entreating, rejoicing, and dedicating merit that accord with what is known, seen, and permitted by the buddhas"?

Response: "Repentance" and "entreating" are as previously explained. As for "rejoicing in merit" and "dedicating merit," they should accord with the following statements in the large edition of the *Prajñāpāramitā* (*Great Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*):[174]

Subhūti addressed the Buddha, saying, "O Bhagavat, as for the aforementioned 'supreme rejoicing' brought forth by the bodhisattva after comprehensively considering and assessing all the merit and roots of goodness of all past, future, and present buddhas, of all their disciples, and of all other beings—O Bhagavat, precisely what is meant by this 'supreme rejoicing'?"

The Buddha then told Subhūti, "It is when, with respect to all dharmas of the past, the future, and the present, a bodhisattva does not seize on them, does not retain them in mind, does not perceive them, does not 47a

apprehend them, and does not make discriminations about them, even as he is still able to reflect in this way:

> All of these dharmas are supposed to exist merely due to perceptions and mental discriminations regarding the coming together of many conditions. In reality, none of these dharmas is ever produced nor do any of them have any place from which they come forth. There is not even a single dharma among them that has ever been produced, is now being produced, or ever will be produced. Nor are there any of them that have ever been destroyed, are now being destroyed, or ever will be destroyed. The character of all dharmas is precisely of this sort.
>
> It is in accordance with the character of dharmas that I rejoice and, having rejoiced, it is then also in accordance with the true character of all dharmas that I dedicate all merit to *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*.

"It is precisely this that constitutes the most supreme rejoicing and dedication.

"Furthermore, Subhūti, a son or daughter of good family striving to follow the path to buddhahood who wishes to refrain from slandering the Buddha should dedicate their roots of goodness in this way and they should think as follows:

> Just as, using the buddha mind, the buddha wisdom, and the buddha eye, all buddhas know and see from root to branch and in terms of substance and signs on which bases this merit and these roots of goodness exist—so too do I also accord with all buddhas' knowledge and vision as I rejoice. And just as all buddhas have permitted it, so too do I also dedicate these roots of goodness.

"If a bodhisattva dedicates merit in this manner, then he will thereby refrain from slandering the buddhas. Thus he will remain free of fault by acting in this way. Dedicating merit with deep-seated aspirations and resolute faith, doing so in a manner that accords with reality—this is what is meant by 'great dedication' and 'perfectly complete dedication.'

"Furthermore, Subhūti, a son or daughter of good family should dedicate roots of goodness and merit in the following manner: This dedication should be done in a way that conforms to the moral precept observance,

meditative absorptions, wisdom, liberation, and knowledge and vision of liberation possessed by worthies and *āryas*. Those dedications are not anchored in the desire realm, are not anchored in the form realm, are not anchored in the formless realm, and are not situated in the past, the future, or the present. Just as those qualities are not anchored anywhere within the three realms, just so should this dedication of merit not be anchored there, either. Nor should the bases for the dedication of merit be anchored in any such way, either.

"If a bodhisattva is able in this way to gain aspirations and resolute faith that accord with reality, this is what is meant by dedication that is free of error, dedication that is free of the poisons, and dedication that accords with the nature of dharmas.

"If, however, in performing dedications of merit, a bodhisattva were to seize on any signs or were to have any fond attachment to them, this would constitute wrong dedication.

"Therefore, all bodhisattvas and *mahāsattvas* should understand the character of dharmas as it is known by buddhas. When one dedicates merit in a manner that accords with the character of dharmas, one becomes able to reach *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*. This is what is meant by 'right dedication.'"

Chapter 11

47b

Distinctions with Regard to Merit

Question: In what way should one carry out repentance, entreating, rejoicing, and dedication? How many times during the course of the day and night should one perform these actions?

Response:

With the right knee touching the ground
And with the right shoulder bared,
Place the palms together and, with reverential mind,
Do these three times each day and night.

Because these actions are emblematic of reverential behavior, one touches the right knee to the ground, bares the right shoulder, and presses one's palms together. This observance should be carried out at the beginning of the night as one simultaneously pays reverence to all buddhas, repents, entreats, rejoices, and dedicates merit. One does so yet again in this same way in the middle of the night and again at the end of the night.

One proceeds in this same way at the beginning of the day, again in the middle of the day, and again at the end of the day, doing so altogether six times in the day and night, doing so while singlemindedly bringing to mind all buddhas, envisioning them as if they were manifesting right before one's very eyes.

Question: What karmic result ensues from acting in this way?

Response:

If one were to practice this but a single time
And the associated merit were to have physical form,
Not even world systems as numerous as the Ganges' sands
Would be capable of holding it all.

If one were to carry out this procedure even once and if the resulting merit was given physical form, that merit would be so immense that it could not

be contained even in a measureless, boundless, and inconceivable number of great trichiliocosms equal the number of sands in the Ganges River. This is as described in the "Getting Rid of Karmic Offenses" chapter of the *Three Branches Sutra*:[175]

> The Buddha told Śāriputra, "Even if a son or daughter of good family made an offering to the buddhas of a quantity of the seven precious things sufficient to fill up the worlds of great trichiliocosms equal in number to the sands of the Ganges, that merit would still be superseded by the amount of merit created by some other person who entreated the buddhas to turn the wheel of Dharma."

Moreover, in the "Rejoicing and Dedication" chapter of the [*Mahā*]*prajñā-pāramitā*[*-sūtra*], the Buddha said:[176]

> It is good indeed, good indeed, Subhūti, that you are able to carry on the work of the Buddha by explaining to the bodhisattvas this dharma of dedicating [merit]. Suppose a bodhisattva were to engage in the following reflection:
>
> > Just as all buddhas know and see from root to branch and in terms of substance and signs which causes and conditions serve as the bases for the existence of this merit and these roots of goodness, so too, as I engage in this dedication [of merit], I also accord with what the buddhas know and see.
>
> This person [who carries out dedications in this manner] thereby acquires an immense amount of merit. By way of analogy, even if beings as numerous as those in the worlds of great trichiliocosms as numerous
47c as the Ganges' sands were all to achieve perfect adherence to the ten courses of good karmic action, still, the merit gained by that bodhisattva [mentioned above] would be, in its magnitude, the most superior, the most sublime, and the most excellent. It would be matchless, unequaled, and equal to the unequaled.
>
> But, Subhūti, set aside this example of all beings in the worlds of great trichiliocosms as numerous as the Ganges' sands achieving perfect adherence to the ten courses of good karmic action. Even if beings as numerous as those in the worlds of great trichiliocosms as numerous as

the Ganges' sands were all to acquire the four *dhyāna*s, when compared to the merit arising from all of this, his merit would still be the most superior, the most sublime, and the most excellent.

So too would this also be the case with regard to the merit that those beings would gain if they acquired the four immeasurable minds, if they acquired the four formless realm absorptions, if they acquired the five spiritual superknowledges, or if they realized the fruit of the path of the stream-enterer, the fruit of the path of the *sakṛdāgāmin,* the fruit of the path of the *anāgāmin,* the fruit of the path of the arhat, or if they achieved the realization of the *pratyekabuddha*'s path. In those cases as well, comparatively speaking, the merit derived from dedications of merit made in accordance with the Dharma would be the most superior, the most sublime, and the most excellent.

But, Subhūti, set aside this example of all the beings in the worlds of great trichiliocosms as numerous as the Ganges' sands achieving [all of these accomplishments up to and including] the realization of the *pratyekabuddha*'s path.

Suppose instead that, on the one hand, there were a number of beings in the worlds of great trichiliocosms as numerous as the Ganges' sands who all brought forth the resolve to attain *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi* while, on the other hand, there were a number of beings equivalent to those in the worlds of great trichiliocosms as numerous as the Ganges' sands. If one of those bodhisattvas [who had brought forth the resolve], relying on a mind that still seizes upon signs, were to make offerings to all those beings of clothing, food and drink, bedding, and medicines, doing so for *kalpa*s as numerous as the Ganges' sands, using every sort of happiness enhancing gift while making offerings to them, paying reverence to them, and also praising them. Supposing that each and every one of those bodhisattvas all acted in this very same manner, what do you think, Subhūti? Would all of these bodhisattvas gain a great deal of merit because of this, or not?

[Subhūti replied:]

O Bhagavat, they would gain an extremely great amount. Such an amount of merit as this would be beyond the reach of any calculation or analogy.

If such a quantity of merit were to be given physical form, it could not be contained even within worlds as numerous as the Ganges' sands.

The Buddha told Subhūti:

Good indeed, good indeed, Subhūti. [Even so], the merit of this bodhisattva guarded and protected by the *prajñā-pāramitā* who performs the dedication of roots of goodness in a manner conforming to the nature of dharmas—that merit is such that the merit gained by all of those aforementioned bodhisattvas whose giving involved seizing on signs could not equal even a hundredth of it, a thousandth of it, one ten-thousandth of it, or even one billionth of a *koṭi*'s part of it. This comparison would even be beyond the reach of calculation or analogy. And why is that? It is because the giving practiced by those aforementioned bodhisattvas involved mental discriminations seizing on signs. [Because of this], their merit remains confined entirely within the sphere of what is measurable and calculable.

Also, the "Dedication" of the [*Mahā*]*prajñāpāramitā*[-*sūtra*] records that, in speaking to the *deva*s of the Pure Abodes Heavens, the Buddha said the following:

Let us set aside this case of there being on the one hand beings as numerous as those in the worlds of great trichiliocosms as numerous as the Ganges' sands who had brought forth the resolve to attain *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi* while on the other hand there is another group of beings as numerous as those in the worlds of great trichiliocosms as numerous as the Ganges' sands and then each and every one of these bodhisattvas [in the former group] made offerings to all these beings [in the latter group], giving clothing, food and drink, bedding, medicines, and other means of sustenance, freely making such offerings for a number of *kalpa*s as numerous as the Ganges' sands, but doing all of this giving with minds attached to signs.

*Deva*s, [consider instead a case where, on the one hand, there are] all these beings in the worlds of great trichiliocosms as numerous as the Ganges' sands who had brought forth the resolve to attain *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi* while on the other hand there was yet another group of beings in the worlds of great trichiliocosms as numerous as Ganges' sands who had also brought forth the resolve to attain *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*.

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If one of that latter group of bodhisattvas made offerings to every one of that former group of bodhisattvas, making offerings of clothing, food and drink, bedding, medicines, and means of sustenance, doing so for *kalpa*s as numerous as the Ganges' sands, but doing so with mental discriminations seizing on signs even as, in addition, in this same manner, every one of all of the rest of those bodhisattvas [in this latter group] made offerings to all those bodhisattvas [in the former group], giving clothing, food and drink, bedding, medicines, and means of sustenance, freely making such offerings for *kalpa*s as numerous as the Ganges' sands while also paying reverence to them and uttering their praises, but with all of this giving also involving seizing on signs.

[Now consider yet another case, as follows:] If a bodhisattva guarded and protected by the *prajñā-pāramitā* were to consider the roots of goodness of all buddhas of the past, present, and future, including that associated with their qualities of moral precept observance, meditative absorption, wisdom, liberation, and knowledge and vision of liberation, [and the roots of goodness] associated with these same five qualities as acquired by the *śrāvaka* disciples, and also [the roots of goodness of] common people—if he were to consider all these roots of goodness planted in the past, present, and future, considering them all together, and assessing them all without excluding any—if with respect to all that merit he were to then perform the most supreme, the most sublime, the most excellent rejoicing, unequaled rejoicing, rejoicing that is equal to the unequaled and inconceivable—and if he were then to dedicate the merit arising from that rejoicing to *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*, reflecting, "May this merit of mine enable the realization of buddhahood"—if one were to compare the former merit involving seizing on signs with this latter stock of merit, it could not equal even a hundredth part, a thousandth part, a ten-thousandth part, or even the smallest fraction of a *koṭi*'s part. The comparison is such that it would be beyond the reach of calculation or analogy. Why is this so? This is because the giving done by that former group of bodhisattvas involved mental discriminations seizing on signs.

Furthermore, suppose that on the one hand there was a group of beings as numerous as those in all worlds in great trichiliocosms as numerous as the Ganges' sands who had brought forth the resolve to

attain *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi* and who practiced good physical karma, good verbal karma, and good mental karma, while [on the other hand] there was yet another group of beings as numerous as those in all the worlds in great trichiliocosms as numerous as the Ganges' sands who had also brought forth the resolve to attain *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi,* [doing so with such solidity of resolve that], even if they were scolded, reviled, and cursed for *kalpa*s as numerous as the Ganges' sands, they would still be able to endure this for *kalpa*s as numerous as the Ganges' sands even as they continued with physical and mental vigor to rid themselves of every form of indolence and focus their minds in *dhyāna* concentration free of scattered thoughts, but doing so while still seizing on signs. The merit of those [described in both these latter cases], would still not compare with that of the single bodhisattva who carried out his dedication of merit in a manner conforming to the nature of dharmas, for his merit would be superior.

Therefore, regarding your earlier question as to what benefit results from these practices [involving repentance, entreating, rejoicing, and dedication], one gains a mass of merit of such magnitude as this. Therefore, if someone wishes to gain such an immeasurable, boundless, and inconceivable mass of merit, he should practice this repentance, entreating, rejoicing, and dedication, not sparing even his own body and life and not caring about receiving offerings or enjoying fame, but rather always diligently devoting himself to these practices both by day and by night.

Question: You have still only described the merit derived from entreating, rejoicing, and dedication of merit. Why have you not discussed the merit involved in repentance?

48b **Response:** Among all of these sources of merit, the merit associated with repentance is the greatest. Because one is thereby able to get rid of the offenses constituting one's karmic obstacles, one therefore becomes able to skillfully practice the bodhisattva path and practice entreating, rejoicing, and dedication of merit, doing so in a manner that is conjoined with and no different from the realization of emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness.

Additionally, repentance is comparable to some wish-fulfilling jewel through which one is able to obtain whatever one wishes. As the Buddha said:

If someone wishes to be reborn within a great brahman caste family, within a great *kṣatriya* caste family, or within a great *vaiśya* caste clan, he should repent of his karmic offenses, concealing none of them, and vowing not to repeat them.

If someone wishes to be reborn in the Heaven of the Four Heavenly Kings, in Trāyastriṃśa Heaven, in Yāma Heaven, in Tuṣita Heaven, in Nirmāṇarati Heaven, or in Paranirmitavaśavartin Heaven, in those cases as well, he should carry out the repentance of karmic offenses, concealing none of them, and vowing not to repeat them.

If someone wishes to be reborn in the Brahma Heaven or anywhere on up to the station of neither perception nor nonperception, this person too should repent of karmic offenses in this very same way, concealing none of them, and vowing not to repeat them.

If someone wishes to gain the fruit of the stream-enterer, the fruit of the *sakṛdāgāmin,* the fruit of the *anāgāmin,* or the fruit of arhatship, he too should carry out this repentance of karmic offenses.

If someone wishes to gain the three clear knowledges,[177] the six types of psychic power, or the powers of sovereign mastery associated with the *śrāvaka* disciple path, or if he wishes to reach the far shore of perfection in the meritorious qualities associated with the *śrāvaka* disciple path, in these cases too, he should carry out repentance of karmic offenses in this manner.

If someone wishes to become a *pratyekabuddha,* in this case too, he should carry out repentance of karmic offenses in this manner.

If someone wishes to gain the wisdom of omniscience, inconceivable wisdom, unimpeded wisdom, or unsurpassable wisdom, in these cases too, he should carry out repentance of karmic offenses in this manner, concealing none of them, and vowing not to repeat them.

Therefore, one should realize that repentance has great karmic effects.

Question: You claim that repentance allows one to eliminate the karmic offenses that create karmic obstacles. However, another sutra states, "The Buddha told Ānanda, 'If one intentionally commits a karmic act, one is certainly bound to undergo its retribution.'"

Additionally, the Abhidharma states, "The causes and conditions involved in karmic acts are not empty. Their retributions are neither lost nor extinguished."

Furthermore, it states in the sutras that beings all belong to their karma, that they all exist on the basis of their karma, that they depend upon and abide within their karma, that beings follow their karma, and that everyone individually undergoes their own corresponding karmic retribution, whether that be present-life retribution, retribution undergone in the next life, or retribution undergone in subsequent lives.[178]

Also, in the *Karmic Retribution Sutra,* King Yāma says to beings:

> Tut! You beings! These karmic offenses of yours were not created by your parents, by *deva*s, by *śramaṇas*, or by brahmans. You created them yourselves and so you should undergo retribution for them yourselves.

Furthermore, the "Verse of the Worthies and *Āryas*" says:

> The true Dharma is like *vajra.*
> The general of karmic power remains unconquerable.
> Even though I have now already attained buddhahood,
> I would still be bound to undergo retribution for bad karma.

Additionally, the Buddha said:

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> The great seas and the famous mountains,
> The hills, the trees, the forests,
> The earth, the water, fire, wind, and such,
> As well as the sun, the moon, the stars and constellations—
>
> Once they reach the time of the *kalpa*'s burning,
> All without exception will come to an end.
> Karma, however, even for countless *kalpa*s,
> Always abides and never is lost.
>
> You have encountered the One Replete with all the Marks,
> The Omniscient One, the Teacher of Men.
> As for the karmic offenses committed in the past,
> His resulting retributions have already been repaid.

Now, although you have succeeded in meeting the Buddha,
In ending the defilements, and in attaining the fruits of the *ārya*s,
Because of residual causes and conditions,
Slivers of wood are still able to penetrate the body.

Therefore one should not claim that repentance gets rid of karmic offenses.

Response: I did not claim that if one repents, then offense karma is entirely extinguished so that there is no resulting karmic retribution. I said that if one repents of one's karmic offenses, then [their retribution] may be lightened and undergone in a short period of time. Therefore, a verse on repentance says:

If I should fall into the three wretched destinies,
I pray that I might instead undergo [the retribution] in a human body.

Additionally, in the *Sutra on the Wisdom Seal of the Tathāgata,* it states that the Buddha informed Maitreya, saying:

Bodhisattvas who, with deep-seated aspirations, delight in [the prospect of attaining] *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi* may still have karmic offenses whereby they should otherwise undergo retribution in the wretched destinies. When these karmic offenses have become lighter, they may then be bound in later lifetimes:

To receive an ugly physical form;

To be much afflicted by sickness;

To have no awe-inspiring personal presence;

To be born into a lower-class family, into a poor family, into a family in which wrong views are dominant, or into a family supporting itself with a deviant livelihood;

To be born into a place contrary to their wishes or a place beset with many worries;

To be born into a country that becomes destroyed, a village that becomes destroyed, a family compound that becomes destroyed, or a circumstance where whatever they love becomes destroyed;

To be unable to encounter a good spiritual guide;

To never be able to hear the Dharma;

To be unable to receive any means of support, or, if they acquire it, it is coarse, inferior, and always inadequate for self-sustenance;

To have the ability to inspire the faith and respect of those who are of inferior or base character, but to never be able to inspire the faith and respect of great men;

To have it happen that, whenever they cultivate the accumulation of merit, they encounter a multitude of hindrances and end up being unsuccessful in the attempt;

To have all of their faculties be dim and dull;

To have it be that, whenever they practice *dhyāna*, their mind is subject to confusion;

To be unable to gain the qualities of an awakened mind free of contaminants;

To be unable to understand the correct import of the Dharma of the sutras;

And so forth, including even experiencing nightmares, thereby undergoing [in these various ways] the retribution [that would otherwise entail descent into] the wretched destinies.[179]

Additionally, the Buddha stated:[180]

If a person has a minor karmic offense, he may be able to undergo the retribution in this present life, but if that karmic offense increases in its magnitude, he will be bound to fall into the hells.

What is meant by this statement that a small karmic offense in the present life might increase in magnitude to the point that one is then bound to fall into the hells? It could be that someone fails to cultivate [the actions of] the body, fails to cultivate observance of the moral precepts, fails to cultivate qualities of mind, fails to cultivate wisdom, and also remains bereft of great intentions. This is a person who, if he commits even a minor karmic offense, may become bound to fall into the hells.

What is meant by the statement that this person with a karmic offense entailing retribution in the present life may avoid falling into the hells provided that his karmic offenses do not increase in magnitude? This refers to someone of this sort who cultivates [the actions of] the body, cultivates observance of the moral precepts, cultivates qualities of mind, cultivates wisdom, and also possesses great intentions unconstrained by hindrances. If someone of this sort has karmic offenses, but they do not
49a increase in their magnitude, their retribution will occur in the present life.

Suppose for example that someone mixed a pint of salt into a small container of water. He would then find it to be undrinkable. But if another person casts a pint of salt into a large pond, he would not find its water the least bit salty, how much the less would he find it undrinkable. What is the reason for this? It is because the volume of water is great while that of the salt is but little. So too it is with karmic offenses.

Accordingly, we have the following verses:

When a pint of salt is thrown into an immense pond,
Its flavor remains no different,
However, if one instead mixes it into a small container of water,
The harshness of the salt makes the water undrinkable.

This is analogous to there being a person with a great stock of merit
Who has but few karmic offenses
And who is not bound to fall into the wretched destinies,
But rather undergoes mild retribution under other conditions

While there is another person with only a scant amount of merit
Who has committed but few karmic offenses that,
Because his mental resolve is but narrow and small,
Is caused by those karmic offenses to fall into the wretched destinies.

If someone's physical vitality (lit., "fire") is weak in its strength,
When he eats but a little of something difficult to digest,
Although this person doesn't die,
His body undergoes much suffering.

If someone's physical vitality is strong,
When he eats but a little of something difficult to digest,
Such a person never dies from it
And undergoes only a minor amount of suffering.

If the vitality (lit., "fire") of one's goodness, merit, and wisdom
is weak,
And he has committed but few bad karmic offenses,
There is nothing to save him from these karmic offenses,
And hence they are able to cause his descent into the hells.

In the case of someone possessed of great merit,
Even though he may have done bad things involving karmic offenses,
They may not compel him to fall into the hells,
For he may instead undergo only mild present life retribution.

Take for example the case of Aṅgulimāla.
Although he murdered many people
And also wished to harm his mother and the Buddha,
He still attained the path of arhatship.

The principle of undergoing only mild retribution in this present life is also illustrated by Ajātaśatru who killed his father, the king, a man who had already attained enlightenment. Through causes and conditions having to do with the Buddha and Mañjuśrī, this grave karmic offense resulted in only relatively mild retribution.

[This principle is also illustrated by] the case of the Poisonous Snake Man. When he was born, it rained blood. Afterward, as he grew up, if he wished to kill someone he only needed to glare at him, whereupon they would immediately fall dead. If he so much as blew his breath on someone, then they too would fall dead. Because of this, the people of the time called him "Breath Blower."

When this man's life was about to come to an end, Śāriputra went to his abode, whereupon he became angry and glared at Śāriputra. Even so, this did not cause Śāriputra to fall dead. He then blew his breath onto Śāriputra, but that did not cause him to fall dead, either. Rather, the radiance of Śāriputra's body simply shone ever brighter.

When this happened, this man's mind immediately became pure and he gazed at Śāriputra, scanning him up and down seven times. Based on these causes and conditions, after he died, he was born seven times up in the heavens and seven times back in the human realm and became bound to become a *pratyekabuddha* at that time when the human life span extends to forty thousand years. Then his body will become the color of gold, whereupon the people of that time will mistake him for a mass of gold and will attempt
49b to hack away chunks of it. His life will then immediately come to an end and he will enter nirvana.

This is also illustrated by the case of King Aśoka who, having used his troops to subdue the continent of Jambudvīpa, was responsible for killing eighteen thousand palace courtiers [in those conquered domains]. However, because, [as a child in a previous life] he had gifted the Buddha with a lump of clay, he was later moved to erect eighty thousand stupas, always listened to and accepted the Dharma taught to him by great arhats, and later attained the enlightenment of the stream-enterer. This is yet another instance of being able to undergo mild retribution while still abiding in a human body.

In instances where one undergoes [retribution for] karmic offenses in this way, it is when one has practiced many meritorious deeds while also being possessed of a vast and immense resolve. Then, because one has accumulated all manner of merit, he does not fall into the wretched destinies.

Therefore, as for the challenge that you presented earlier [with regard to the teaching that] if one repents of karmic offenses they will then be completely extinguished so that there is no resulting karmic retribution—[that challenge] is erroneous. Furthermore, if one claims that karmic offenses cannot be extinguished at all, then one would be unable to believe the Buddha's statement in the Vinaya that, if one repents, one may thereby get rid of one's offenses. This matter is not as you have claimed. Therefore, one should indeed repent of the karmic offenses that create karmic obstacles.

Chapter 12

Distinctions with Regard to Giving

As for the bodhisattva who is able in this manner to carry out repentance, entreating, rejoicing, and dedication:

> As the power of his merit increases,
> And his mind also becomes more pliant,
> He then develops faith in the buddhas' meritorious qualities
> And in the great conduct of the bodhisattvas.

Because of his repentance, entreating, rejoicing, and dedication, the power of this bodhisattva's merit increases and his mind becomes well-trained and possessed of pliancy. Thus he becomes able to have faith in and accept what the common person has no faith in, namely the buddhas' measureless and supremely pure meritorious qualities. He is also able to place faith in and accept the rare and difficult endeavors accomplished by the great bodhisattvas as they carry out their pure and great practices.

Now, again, a verse:

> Beings who are all afflicted with suffering
> Do not possess this profound and pure Dharma.
> He feels pity and sadness for them
> And so brings forth a mind of deep compassion for them.

Having developed faith in the measureless, extremely profound, and supremely pure meritorious qualities of the buddhas and bodhisattvas, the bodhisattva feels pity and sadness for all beings who have none of these meritorious qualities. Because they hold every sort of wrong view, they only experience the many different types of suffering. Consequently, he brings forth a mind of deep compassion for them.

> He is mindful of all these beings
> That are mired in the mud of suffering, and thinks,

"I should rescue them by extricating them from this,
Thereby causing them to abide in a state of peace and security."

Having brought forth the mind of compassion, this bodhisattva thinks, "All of these beings are always afflicted by greed, hatred, and delusion and because of that they undergo all manner of physical and mental suffering. I shall rescue them by extricating them from that, thereby causing them to leave behind the deep mud of physical and mental suffering. Then they will finally become free of the misfortunes of birth, aging, sickness, and death and become able to abide in the peace and security of nirvana's bliss."

He therefore brings forth a deeply compassionate mind for these suffering beings. If, because of this mind of compassion, he seeks for their sakes to bring about whatever they wish for, thereby causing them to find happiness,
49c this is what is known as the mind of loving-kindness.

When, in this manner, the bodhisattva
Deeply accords with the mind of kindness and compassion,
He cuts off all covetous cherishing
And devotes himself to giving with diligence and vigor.

It is in this manner that the bodhisattva seeks to realize buddhahood and to liberate beings afflicted by suffering. As for the "accordance" [engaged in by this individual] who is mindful in this way, this refers to his accordance with kindness and compassion and to his refraining from according with any other states of mind. "Deep kindness" refers to that which extends universally to all beings and involves a degree of mindfulness of them that penetrates to the very marrow of his bones.

"All" refers to every inward and outward thing, to all gold, silver, precious jewels, the state, its cities, his wife and children, and so forth. "Covetousness" refers to the insatiable desire to obtain something. "Cherishing" refers to affectionate attachment on account of which one does not wish to give up something to someone else. "Cut off" refers to abandoning these two bad influences.[181]

If one accords with this, then one thereby throws open the gates of *dāna-pāramitā* (the perfection of giving). Therefore, one should always engage in its singleminded and diligent practice, not allowing any room for negligence. And how does one go about accomplishing this? The bodhisattva thinks to

himself, "I will now strive to benefit beings however I am able." And so it is that he brings forth a solid resolve to practice giving.

> As for all of those things he possesses,
> Whether living or not living,
> Including even the throne of a wheel-turning or heavenly king,
> There are no instances of their being requested but not given.
>
> This is still the case even with sons and daughters
> As well as the clan's wives and consorts of which he is fond,
> These who in their youthfulness have extremely fine appearances
> And are skillful in their ability to render service to others,
>
> Whose respectful and acquiescent minds are pliant and congenial,
> Whom he lovingly bears in mind with utmost depth of feeling,
> Cherishing them even more than his own life—
> If someone seeks to have them, he is able to give them all.
>
> This is so even with the flesh and blood of his own body,
> His own marrow, his hands and feet,
> His head, eyes, ears, nose, and so forth.
> He is even able to sacrifice his entire body.

This bodhisattva fixes his mind on giving. As regards whatever outward things he owns, whether sentient or insentient, there is never any case where someone seeks to have them and yet he fails to make a gift of them.

"Not living things" refers to all such things as gold, silver, and precious jewels even up to and including the position of a wheel-turning king or the position of a king among the *deva*s.

"Living things" refers to sons or daughters or to the youthful wives and consorts of the nobility and the best of the clans. Though they are of fine appearance, gentle and agreeable, respectful, and thoroughly acquiescent and even though he feels the most extremely affectionate cherishing for them, greater even than what he feels for his own life, he is still able to give them away to others.

In doing so, he is like Comprehensive Giving Bodhisattva[182] who was able to give away all outward possessions including his wife and children.

This bodhisattva was able to give even the flesh and blood from his own body, his head, his eyes, his hands and feet, his ears, and his nose, and he was also able to cut into his own flesh, expose the bones, break the bones, and extract his own marrow.

In this, he is also like Sadāprarudita Bodhisattva who would even give his entire body. One cherishes nothing more than one's own body and yet he, too, was able to give like Sarvadāna.

In this, he is also like the Bodhisattva who, when he was a rabbit, gave his body as a gift to a *ṛṣi*.[183]

And, in doing so, he is also like King Śibi who gave up his body to substitute for [and save the life of] a pigeon.

50a **Question:** Is this bodhisattva able to perform such difficult acts of giving because of his discriminating knowledge of the value of different types of giving and their corresponding karmic rewards, or does he instead give simply because of the mind of kindness and compassion that he has brought forth?

Response:

If one practices giving of this sort,
Then one will gain karmic results of this very same sort.
Inwardly, one gives up his limbs and such
While also giving away even all of one's outward possessions.

"Inward possessions" refers to one's own head, eyes, hands, feet, and so forth. "Outward possessions" refers to one's wife, children, gold, silver, jeweled objects, and so forth. This bodhisattva understands giving in accordance with reality in a manner whereby, making distinctions with regard to each case, he realizes, "When this is achieved, then this will be the corresponding karmic result."

In addition, he has faith in what is taught in the sutras and may also be able to use the heavenly eye to know such matters.

Question: You just said that he knows the karmic results obtained by giving his body or limbs or by giving away his outward possessions. Could you now speak of the karmic results that may be obtained from this?

Response: In Chapter Thirty of the *Precious Summit Sutra*, "On the Meaning of *Dāna-pāramitā,*"[184] Akṣayamati Bodhisattva states that the bodhisattva makes the following aspirational vows:

> May giving food to the hungry result in my receiving five things as karmic results: First, long life; second, courage; third, happiness; fourth, strength; and fifth, physical beauty;
>
> May providing drinks to those needing something to drink first result in being able when abiding in the human realm to have fragrant and delicious beverages, and then, afterward, being able to dispel the thirst-like cravings associated with the afflictions;
>
> May giving vehicles to those needing vehicles result in gaining happiness through whatever one wishes, in perfecting the four bases of psychic power, and later on, in attaining success in the paths of the three vehicles;
>
> May providing clothing to those in need of clothes bring about the karmic result of then being able to wear the robes of a sense of shame and a dread of blame;
>
> May giving lamplight to those in need of lamplight result in gaining the light of the buddha eye;
>
> May giving music to those wishing for music result in complete acquisition of the heavenly ear;
>
> May giving powdered incenses and perfumes to those needing powdered incense and perfumes result in gaining a body free of unpleasant odors;
>
> May giving juices to those needing juices result in obtaining flavorful tastes;
>
> May providing homes to those in need of homes result in becoming a place of refuge and a source of rescue and protection for all beings;
>
> May providing life-sustaining things to beings result in acquiring the meritorious qualities assisting the attainment of *bodhi;*
>
> May the giving of medical treatment and medicines result in becoming free of aging, sickness, and death, and in always being able to abide in happiness and security;
>
> May the providing of servants result in perfect wisdom that is masterfully and freely implemented;
>
> May giving gold, silver, coral, mother-of-pearl, and carnelian result in complete acquisition of all thirty-two marks;

May giving all manner of adornments result in gaining the eighty secondary characteristics;

May giving elephants, horses, and carriages result in complete acquisition of the Great Vehicle;

May giving gardens and groves result in complete acquisition of the bliss of *dhyāna* meditation;

May providing male and female [servants] for others result in gaining the *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi* that one so cherishes;

May giving granaries and treasuries result in gaining the complete treasury of Dharma;

May bestowing royal dominion over a country, over a Jambudvīpa continent or over the four continents result in becoming a Dharma king exercising sovereign mastery in the *bodhimaṇḍa*;

50b May the giving all manner of happiness enhancing amusements result in acquiring Dharma bliss;

May giving away one's feet result in gaining the feet of Dharma with which one is able to arrive at the *bodhimaṇḍa;*

May giving away one's hands result in gaining the jewel-bestowing hands with which one is able to give everything;

May giving away one's ears and nose result in gaining the perfect physical body;

May giving away one's eyes result in gaining the unimpeded Dharma eye;

May giving up one's head result in gaining the omniscience of he who is especially revered throughout the three realms;

May giving one's flesh and blood result in influencing all beings to achieve solid practice;

May the giving of one's marrow result in gaining the indestructible *vajra* body.

It is in this manner that karmic rewards ensue from opening the gates to the practice of giving.

The karmic results derived from other sorts of giving should be readily deducible, as follows:

By giving bedding, one may gain the couch of liberation that comes with the peace and security of the three vehicles;

By providing a place for sitting [meditation], one may gain the indestructible abode in the *bodhimaṇḍa* beneath the *bodhi* tree;

By providing someone with a wife, one may gain the pleasures of Dharma joy;

By providing roads, one may be able to enter the right path for the sake of beings who are lost on the road of samsara;

By giving rafts, one becomes able to cross beyond the flood of desire, the flood of existence, the flood of views, and the flood of ignorance;

By giving one's bones, one gains solidity in moral precept observance, solidity in meditative concentration, solidity in wisdom,[185] solidity in liberation, solidity in the knowledge and vision of liberation, and solidity in [dedication to liberating] beings;

By providing others with a following, one becomes able to assemble a retinue consisting of a countless and boundless number of *asaṃkhyeya*s of *deva*s who are endowed with merit and who are all identically possessed of pure minds and inviolable loyalty;

By conferring admiring accolades on others, when one speaks on the Dharma, one elicits the delight and praises of *deva*s, dragons, *yakṣa*s, *gandharva*s, *śramaṇa*s, and brahmans;

By giving volumes of the sutras, one enables the nine categories of canonical texts to remain for an immeasurably long period of time;

By giving the Dharma, one becomes able to gain a penetrating understanding of all dharmas.

Because it enables the accumulation of all of the meritorious qualities, this bodhisattva delights in the practice of giving in this manner. He understands how it is that giving is made pure and understands as well the measure of the karmic results that ensue from the practice of giving. Therefore:

> As for giving wealth obtained contrary to Dharma and so forth,
> As well as all those sorts of giving that are censured by the wise,
> He remains free of any such forms of giving, and instead
> Gives only in ways that are conjoined with emptiness and such.[186]

Giving that is "contrary to Dharma" involves wealth obtained through bad actions. "Wealth" refers to life-supporting possessions. To sum it up, because the bodhisattva realizes that giving involving wealth obtained through bad

actions is not pure, he does not engage in any of these sorts of giving that are contrary to Dharma. He refrains from participating in any of them, including especially such forms of giving as might be censured by the wise. Hence, when the bodhisattva engages in the practice of giving, he only gives in ways that are conjoined with the wisdom that fathoms emptiness and with the other sorts of associated qualities.

Question: As for these two types of giving: that sort of giving which involves wealth obtained contrary to Dharma and that sort of giving which is conjoined with the wisdom that fathoms emptiness, one should present here a broad-ranging discussion elucidating the associated distinctions.

50c **Response:** These two types of giving are discussed in the treatment of *dāna-pāramitā* that is contained within the "Akṣayamati Bodhisattva Assembly" chapter, as below.[187]

First, let us consider the distinctions involved in giving-associated merit, specifically as follows:

> Bodhisattvas do not give wealth acquired in a manner that is contrary to Dharma. They do not engage in any giving that has the effect of aggravating other beings. No giving is done out of fearfulness. No giving is done due to some type of attachment. There are no instances where someone makes a request and yet they fail to give. There is no giving that fails to accord with what one has already pledged. There is no giving done wherein, because one is stingy with what is fine, one instead gives an inferior item;
>
> There is no giving not rooted in earnest intentions, no giving intended to curry favor, no giving of anything that is counterfeit, no giving that produces damaging effects, no giving done with perverse intent, no giving done with a deluded mind, no giving done with mixed motivations, no giving involving an absence of resolute conviction,[188] and no giving done out of weariness;
>
> There is no giving involving personal favoritism, no giving with the expectation of self-benefit, no giving seeking to focus [exclusively] on "fields of merit," and no giving that slights other beings as inadequate "fields of merit";[189]

There is no giving with a mind that distinguishes between those who uphold the moral precepts versus those who transgress against the moral precepts or that distinguishes between those who are seen as superior versus those who are seen as inferior;

There is no giving done out of a desire for fame, no giving done with the intent to elevate oneself, no giving done in a way that treats others as inferior, no giving because of intensely painful regret, and no giving that is done out of remorse;

There is no giving done [only as] a response to cries of urgency, no abusive giving, no giving promoting the dharma of spontaneous [acausal] occurrence,[190] no giving done simply to gain the resulting karmic rewards, no giving done out of hatred, and no giving that causes others to be left wanting;

There is no giving involving annoyance toward the supplicant, no giving involving slighting or dallying with the recipient, no deceptive giving, no giving just to save face, no giving done by tossing a donation, no giving not done with focused mind, and no giving of gifts not presented with one's own hands;

There is no failure to always give, no desisting from giving, no halting of giving, no giving as a means of struggling for superiority, no giving of merely insignificant and trivial things, and no giving involving an invitation to take whatever one wishes when one is offering only trivial things;

There is no giving not matching one's powers to give, no giving that considers some to not be fields of merit,[191] no giving of merely trivial things that is accompanied by inferior intentions, no giving accompanied by arrogance because of the abundance of one's gifts, and no giving that involves unprincipled actions;

There is no giving done with the intention of gaining rebirth in pleasurable places, no giving reliant upon the largesse of wealthy and noble clans, no giving done to gain rebirth in the heavens of the Four Heavenly Kings, Śakra, or Brahmā, no giving in pursuit of the *śrāvaka* vehicle or the *pratyekabuddha* vehicle, no giving in quest of becoming a king or a prince, and no giving with only a view to [favorable effects to be gained in] this present lifetime;

There is no self-satisfied [termination of one's] giving, no giving not dedicated to realization of all-knowledge, no impure giving, no giving at the wrong time, no giving of knives or poisons, no giving intended to aggravate or dally with beings, and no giving censured by the wise.

It is in this manner that one opens up and reveals what constitutes the gateway of giving. The other sorts of impure giving are such that one should be able to deduce what they are, as follows:

The bodhisattva does not give cast-off things. There is no giving demonstrating a hatred or abhorrence of nirvana, no giving of easily acquired and abundantly available things, no giving calculated to manipulate kindness, no giving done just to repay kindnesses, and no giving done to elicit some reward in return;

There is no giving to ensure protection, no giving in quest of auspicious occurrences, no giving motivated by pride, no giving only to accord with customs of the clan, no perfunctory giving simply as a response to having received something, no failing to give for one's entire life, and no giving occasioned by defiled thoughts;

51a There is no giving done for sport, no giving done simply at the behest of a good spiritual guide, no giving done but lightly, no giving done with an unbridled mind, no giving because one has experienced loss, no giving simply as a response to having been praised by someone, no giving done because one has been rebuked, no giving done as a prayer for auspicious developments, no giving in praise of performing miracles, and no giving done to make a show of one's faith;

There is no giving because one has become fearful, no giving done with the intent to deceive, no giving to gain a following, no giving that does not serve to lead others [toward goodness], no giving done to lead others along, no giving done in the absence of faith, no giving done to lead others along, no giving done in the absence of faith, no giving that asserts the nonexistence of causes and conditions, no merely frivolous giving, and no giving done to make a display of one's exceptional qualities;

There is no giving to elicit one's own praises, no giving that does not accord with what is sought, no giving done to reduce the significance of someone else's giving, no giving of what does not please, no giving

of something that will not be put to use, no giving out of disrespect, no inferior giving, no giving because of the occurrence of strange signs, no giving to restrain or suppress others, no giving of things obtained through intimidation, and no giving done with impure intentions;

There is no giving done with doubting thoughts, no giving intended to mentally crush a supplicant, no giving of forbidden things, no giving done out of discrimination, no giving of alcoholic beverages, no giving of tools of war, no giving of things seized from others, no giving that causes others to have doubts, and no giving done to induce intimacy;

There is no giving that serves to announce the faults of others, no giving in pursuit of something one cherishes, no giving influenced by hatred, no giving influenced by delusion, no giving rooted in fallacious conceptual proliferation,[192] and no giving not done for the sake of *bodhi.*

Question: [As for the types of giving just listed,] from giving of wealth sought in ways contrary to Dharma to giving not done for the sake of *bodhi,* does the bodhisattva engage in any of them or not? Were he to engage in none of them, then he would be at fault for not seeking out fields of merit, for not making distinctions among beings, for not acknowledging kindnesses, for not repaying kindnesses, for not presenting gifts in accordance with clan customs, or for not giving things in accordance with national customs. If he does in fact engage in such giving, why do you claim here that there are no instances of this?

Response: It is not necessarily the case that the bodhisattva is completely free of all of these sorts of giving from giving of wealth that is acquired in ways contrary to Dharma to giving not done for the sake of *bodhi.* There may be times when he engages in some of them. However, these sorts of giving are not included within *dāna-pāramitā*. It is because they cannot be instrumental in the perfection of *dāna-pāramitā* that they are characterized here as being absent.

Now, as for what is meant by [the above stanza's reference to] "giving conjoined with emptiness and other such meritorious qualities," this is as described in the *Akṣayamati Bodhisattva Sutra,* in the "*Dāna-pāramitā*" chapter, as follows:[193]

Because the giving done by the bodhisattva is conjoined with the mind that fathoms emptiness, it is endless;

Because this giving involves the cultivation of signlessness, it is endless;

Because this giving is preserved and protected by the practice of wishlessness, it is endless;

Because this giving is subsumed within roots of goodness, it is endless;

Because this giving accords with the characteristics associated with liberation, it is endless;

Because this giving is able to defeat all *māras*, it is endless;

Because this giving involves no admixture with the afflictions, it is endless;

Because this giving becomes ever more superior in its benefits, it is endless;

Because this giving is done with definite resolve, it is endless;

Because this giving facilitates accumulation of the dharmas constituting the limbs of *bodhi,* it is endless;

Because this giving is rightly dedicated, it is endless;

51b Because this giving brings about acquisition of the fruits of the liberation attained in the *bodhimaṇḍa,* it is endless;

Because this giving knows no bounds, it is endless;

Because this giving is inexhaustible, it is endless;

Because this giving is never cut off, it is endless;

Because this giving is vast, it is endless;

Because this giving is indestructible, it is endless;

Because this giving is invincible, it is endless;

Because this giving leads one to all-knowledge, it is endless;

Because this giving cuts off the defilement involved in giving wealth obtained in ways contrary to Dharma and other such forms of giving, and because it leads to the complete development of the realization of emptiness and the other associated meritorious qualities, it is therefore endless.

As for "the giving of wealth obtained in ways contrary to Dharma and other such forms of giving," these types of giving constitute "defiled giving." Whichever types of giving are conjoined with defilement are instances of impure giving whereas whichever types of giving are conjoined with

emptiness and the other [associated meritorious qualities]—those are instances of pure giving.

Additionally, this topic of purity versus impurity in the practice of giving is one that now merits further discussion.

The sutras state that there are four types of giving, as follows:[194]

There is giving that is purified by the giver and that is not purified by the receiver;

There is giving that is purified by the receiver and that is not purified by the giver;

There is giving that is purified by the giver and that is also purified by the receiver.

There is giving that is not purified by the giver and that is also not purified by the receiver.

Where the giver performs good actions of body, speech, and mind but the receiver has performed bad actions of body, speech, and mind, this is an instance of giving that is purified by the giver and that is not purified by the receiver.

Where the giver performs bad actions of body, speech, and mind and the receiver performs good actions of body, speech, and mind, this is an instance of giving that is purified by the receiver and that is not purified by the giver.

Where the giver performs good actions of body, speech, and mind and the receiver also performs good actions of body, speech, and mind, this is an instance of giving that is purified by the giver and that is also purified by the receiver.

Where the giver performs bad actions of body, speech, and mind and the receiver also performs bad actions of body, speech, and mind, this is an instance of giving that is not purified by the giver and that is also not purified by the receiver.

One should also make distinctions of this sort with regard to whether or not covetousness, hatred, and delusion have been cut off.

Additionally, in connection with these four types of giving, there are bases for distinguishing presence or absence of purification:

First, purification may be accomplished by the giver;

Second, purification may be accomplished by the receiver;

Third, purification is accomplished by both of them.

These classifications are determinants of purification.
Also:
First, purification is not accomplished by the giver;
Second, purification is not accomplished by the recipient;
Third, they do not both purify [of the act of giving].

These classifications are determinants of failure to accomplish purification [of the act of giving].

In these instances, when the giver possesses meritorious qualities, the act of giving derives its qualification as "pure" from the giver. When the receiver possesses meritorious qualities, the act of giving derives its qualification as "pure" from the receiver. When both the giver and the receiver possess meritorious qualities, the act of giving derives its qualification as "pure" from both the giver and the receiver.

When the giver commits karmic offenses, the act of giving derives its qualification as "impure" from the giver. When the receiver commits karmic offenses, the act of giving derives its qualification as "impure" from the receiver. When both the giver and the receiver commit karmic offenses, the act of giving derives its qualification as "impure" from both the giver and the receiver.

As for what constitutes the possession of meritorious qualities on the part of the giver, what constitutes possession of meritorious qualities on the part of the receiver, what constitutes commission of karmic offenses on the part of the giver, and what constitutes the commission of karmic offenses on the part of the receiver, these have already been discussed.

51c **Question:** Of the approaches to giving that you have described as contained within these four types of giving, which ones should the bodhisattva practice?

Response:

Among the four types of giving,
One practices the two types involving pure giving.
In doing so, one does not seek fame or self-benefit
And one also does not seek to obtain any karmic fruits from this.

These types of giving consist of four types of which three contain bases of purity and three contain bases of impurity.[195] He does not practice any type of impure giving and does practice two types of pure giving: First, giving that is purified by the giver but is not purified by the receiver, and, second, giving where the giving is purified by both [the giver and the receiver].

One should always be vigorously devoted to the practice of these two types of pure giving. Why? Because this bodhisattva does not hope for any associated karmic fruits from this. Were one to hope for some sort of karmic fruits [from performing this act], then one would be inclined to seek out a pure receiver.

"Purity" is defined here by the giver and the receiver both being graced by meritorious qualities whereby the minds of each of them are pure. "Impurity" is defined by the presence in the giver of a miserliness. This accords with the Buddha's declaration that, in the practice of giving, miserliness constitutes a defilement. Although the other afflictions also constitute bases of impurity, here it is miserliness that constitutes the most serious [form of defilement].

Question: If the bodhisattva should engage in diligent practice of these two types of giving, that wherein the giving is purified by the giver [but not by the receiver] and that wherein the giving is purified by both the giver and the receiver, since miserliness constitutes a defilement on the part of the giver and a major defilement of the act of giving, if the bodhisattva has not yet transcended desire and hence cannot yet cut off miserliness, how then could he succeed in practicing these two types of pure giving?

Response:

> If some possession is capable of causing the arising of miserliness,
> Then one should refrain from accumulating such things.

If a bodhisattva realizes that some possession, whether living or not, causes the arising of miserly thoughts, then he should not accumulate such things. As a consequence [of refraining from accumulating such things], whenever he gives something, he will always be free of miserliness.

Question: Outward possessions are such that one might refrain from accumulating them. But how does one accomplish this in relation to one's own body?

Response:

In order to always be of benefit to beings,
Understand the body as like a medicinal tree.

In order to provide benefit to beings, one should possess a firm belief that one's body is like a medicinal tree that beings may use as medicine, taking roots, trunk, branches, leaves, blossoms, fruit, and so forth, each to cure a particular disease. In such a case, they may take whatever they wish without [the tree] preventing them from doing so in order to protect itself.

The bodhisattva is just like this. In order to be of benefit to beings, he is able to relinquish his body, thinking in this way: "If beings take whatever they need of my head, eyes, hands, feet, limbs, spine, abdomen, arms, ears, nose, teeth, tongue, blood, flesh, bones, marrow, and so forth, I shall be able to give them up, perhaps even giving them my entire body."

It is in this manner that one subdues one's mind as one cultivates and accumulates roots of goodness and remains protected by the adoption of skillful means in one's practice of *dāna-pāramitā* (the perfection of giving).

In ways that are general in character and specific in character,
One is always able to dedicate all acts of giving that one performs.

This bodhisattva is able to understand and pursue two sorts of dedication in relation to the two types of pure giving. The first is that which is of a general character and the second is that which is of a specific character.

As for dedications that are of a general character, one dedicates the merit
52a from all of one's giving to *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*. As for dedication of a specific character, this is as described in the above treatment of the karmic fruits resulting from acts of giving.

Then again, in the case of dedication of a general character, it is done for the sake of bringing peace, happiness, and benefit to all beings. As for dedication of a specific character, it is done for the sake of influencing beings without faith to gain faith, for the sake of influencing those who have broken the precepts to succeed in upholding the precepts, for the sake of influencing those of but little learning to develop extensive learning, for the sake of influencing those who are indolent to become vigorous in their efforts, for the sake of influencing those whose minds are scattered to gain *dhyāna* concentration, for the sake of influencing deluded beings to gain wisdom,

and for the sake of influencing the miserly to develop minds inclined toward generosity.[196] And so it is that there are many different sorts of specifically directed dedications.

Additionally, with regard to dedication of a general character, one dedicates the merit associated with the six *pāramitā*s to *anuttarāsamyak-saṃbodhi,* whereas, with regard to dedication of a specific character, when one gives outward things, one prays that all beings will gain the most supreme happiness. When giving one's limbs, one prays that all beings will gain the perfect body of a buddha.

Question: In the practice of giving, how many kinds of dedication are there? And how many kinds of dedication does one not practice?

Response: The first category, those done for the sake of pure objectives, consist of four types of dedication. There are three types of dedication that one does not practice. The bodhisattva's giving may be dedicated to four types of pure objectives.

The three objectives toward which one does not dedicate merit are as follows:

One does not dedicate merit for the sake of becoming a king.

One does not dedicate merit for the sake of sensual pleasures.

And one does not dedicate merit for the sake of gaining any of the grounds of a *śrāvaka* disciple or a *pratyekabuddha*.

Now, as for "not dedicating merit for the sake of becoming a king," this restriction of the objective of becoming a king is also intended to restrict dedications done to acquire the power and sovereign freedom of the nobility.

As for "not dedicating merit for the sake of acquiring sensual pleasures," this refers, aside from the above-mentioned nobility, to all others who partake of wealth's enjoyments and indulge themselves in the pleasures of the five types of desire.

As for "not dedicating merit for the sake of gaining any of the grounds of a *śrāvaka* disciple or a *pratyekabuddha*," this restricts entry into the Small Vehicle's nirvana without residue but it does enable one to become securely established in the Great Vehicle in which, after a long time, one eventually enters the nirvana without residue.

Now, as for the four types of dedication done for the sake of pure objectives, the merit from a bodhisattva's giving:

Is dedicated for the sake of purifying buddha lands;
Is dedicated for the sake of purifying one's realization of *bodhi;*[197]
Is dedicated for the sake of purifying one's teaching of beings;
And is dedicated for the sake of purifying one's realization of all-knowledge.[198]

The bodhisattva should adopt skillful means such as these in making dedications so as to not diminish the effectiveness of his giving and so as to cause it to become powerful.

Question: Through which dharmas does one diminish the effectiveness of one's giving and through which dharmas does one cause the benefits of one's giving to increase?

Response:

If one gives but fails to dedicate the merit,
If one has no skillful means,
If one seeks rebirth in an inferior station of existence,
Or if one draws close to bad friends—
If one's giving takes place under such conditions,
Then its effectiveness will thereby be diminished.

[This means:]

If one gives but fails to dedicate the merit to *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*—
52b If, because one is pursuing worldly happiness, one seeks rebirth in an inferior station of existence—
If one has no skillful means by which one can freely bring forth the karmic fruits of giving and *dhyāna* concentration—
If one draws near to [bad] friends who obstruct one's cultivation of the Great Vehicle—

Then, because of [any of] these four dharmas, [the effectiveness of] one's giving will be diminished.

If one abandons these four, the power of one's giving will increase.
Also, one should adopt three types of thought as one gives.

In this, the bodhisattva accords with the words of the Buddha
While also not seeking to gain any karmic rewards [from giving].

If one abandons the above four dharmas, then the effectiveness of one's giving will be able to increase. [One does so as follows]:

First, one dedicates one's merit to *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*;

Second, one adopts appropriate skillful means in carrying out dedications of merit;

Third, one seeks to reach the station of a Dharma king;

Fourth, one draws near to good spiritual guides.

Also, in one's practice of giving, one should use three types of Dharma-based thought, as follows:

First, because one feels pity for all beings, one bases one's giving on the resolve to attain *bodhi;*

Second, in one's practice of giving, one does not depart from the Dharma of the Buddha;

Third, in one's practice of giving, one does not seek any karmic rewards.

Moreover:

It is for the sake of bringing about three dharmas
That one engages in the practice of giving
And it is also for the sake of seeking two dharmas
That one should engage in the practice giving.

It is for the sake of bringing about three dharmas that the bodhisattva engages in the practice of giving:

First, to acquire the Dharma of a buddha;

Second, to bring about the proclamation of the Dharma;

Third, to cause all beings to abide in unsurpassable happiness.

Additionally, it is because one wishes to seek two dharmas that one practices giving: First, to acquire great wealth, and second, to perfect the practice of *dāna-pāramitā*. Why? If the bodhisattva is endowed with great wealth, then:

He will leave behind the suffering of poverty;

He will not take others' wealth;

He will not seek to earn interest;
He will have nobody to whom he is indebted;
And he will have no worries about the repayment of debts.

When one possesses much wealth and one's assets are adequate, then:
One is able to see to one's own clothing and food while also being able to give out of kindness, thereby benefiting one's relatives, one's clan, and one's good spiritual guides;
One's retinue will be happy, one's household will prosper for their minds will always be as delighted as if they were always participating in a celebratory gathering;
One will be able to practice great giving, one's retinue will not slight him, and people will look up to him with respect;
Everyone will be inclined to believe and accept one's words;
One will be relied upon by the many;
When others come, one will be looked up to as a mentor;
On entering an assembly, one will have nothing to fear;
One will always delight in bathing, smoothing famous fragrances onto the body, wearing fine new clothes, and being adorned by a full array of ornaments;
One will become able to behold fine physical forms, to hear agreeable sounds, to smell marvelous fragrances, to always eat the most supremely exquisite flavors, and to experience subtle tactile sensations;
One will become indomitable by adversaries and will become well liked by good spiritual friends.

These are instances of karmic rewards for goodness as experienced in the human body. Moreover:
One will become respected and admired, one will always be praised as wonderfully good, and others will forget one's disgraceful lapses;
Although one may be been born into a lower-class household, one will have the marks of a great man;
Although one might have no skill in speech, one will become a skillful speaker;
Although one might not be learned, one will acquire extensive learning;

Although one might be deficient in wisdom, one will become a wise person;
If one is already a person of fine appearance, one will develop a doubly outstanding appearance;
If one was formerly from a great clan, one will rise to a doubly revered social station;
If one is already a skillful speaker, one will become a doubly skillful speaker; 52c
If one was already learned, one will become doubly learned;
If one was already wise, one will become doubly wise;
Wherever one sits or lies down, it will be on a precious bejeweled couch;
Whether asleep or awake, one will be peaceful and secure and surrounded by an abundance of attendants;
One's house will be made from the many sorts of jewels and one will be completely free to roam about at will;
One will be regarded as a personage worthy of the highest esteem;
If one has need of any scriptures or books, one will readily obtain whichever ones he seeks;
One's power and position will ensure that one has easy access to the king and one will be borne in mind by all of the nobility;
Physicians will voluntarily come and one will always have those who are close and trustworthy, attending as appropriate to the vicissitudes [of one's health];
If one catches some disease, it will be only minor and mild;
Whatever one's disease, it will be easily cured;
One will leave far behind any fears with respect to either present or later lives;
One will ultimately forever abandon any fear of one's life not continuing on and one will always be rescued and protected;
There will be many people close to one who will feel immensely blessed with good fortune;
One will be sincerely and joyously celebrated by those of like mind;
Whenever anyone extends even a small kindness to one, that person will be repaid magnanimously and whenever anyone afflicts one

with even a minor evil deed, that person will encounter a major personal disaster;

Young women from one's own clan who are possessed of fine appearance and complete adornments will voluntarily seek to serve as retainers;

Whoever is seeking to reach agreements will take refuge in one [as a source of resolution];

If one falls into some bad action, that action will usually be only minor;

If one expends even a small effort [in some endeavor], one will immediately receive great benefit as a result;

One will have an abundance of good spiritual friends whereas those who dislike one will grow ever fewer;

One will not be susceptible to accidental encounters with venomous snakes, poison, negligence, evil people, or other such occurrences;

All of one's kindly and respectful actions will tend to be returned in kind;

Whenever one experiences some kind of good fortune, everyone will join in sympathetic rejoicing;

If one experiences some sort of anguishing misfortune, everyone will join in sympathetic commiseration;

Everyone will join in assisting one's guidance, vying to provide one with whatever is good and auspicious while influencing one to avoid whatever is contrary to Dharma and to abide securely in good dharmas;

The works that one accomplishes will be grand and none who witness them will fail to be delighted by them;

If one is able to abide together with those of identical aims, one will find satisfaction in that and will not aspire for worldly wealth, noble birth, acclamation, or benefit;

If one comes to abide in a position of power, people will devote their thoughts to assisting one and doing away with anything that might cause anguishing misfortune;

On observing the wealth and high social stature of others, one entertains no aspirations to assume them for himself;

The people sing the praises of one's virtues but do not propagate reports of one's errors;

Although one might be from a family of inferior social stature, one will acquire the reputation of a great personage;

One never displays a disapproving expression and, whenever one observes someone else's appearance, one does not adopt a pretentious demeanor;

If one becomes a brahman,[199] one will garner great karmic rewards from his works within the temples of the deities. When studying the scriptures, one gains their genuine benefits and, having gained them, one is able to bestow them on others;

If one becomes a *kṣatriya,*[200] one succeeds in his endeavors, is renowned for his skill in archery, is consummate in one's abilities, and is well able to gain the results taught in the classics on ruling the world;

If one becomes a *vaiśya,*[201] one is well able to grow whichever crops one wishes;

If one becomes a merchant, one is well able to gain the profit one seeks;

If one becomes a *śūdra,*[202] whatever work one does becomes abundantly successful in a way that matches one's wishes.

Question: Earlier, you claimed that the bodhisattva does not have the motivation to seek karmic rewards from his practice of giving, and, beyond that, that he is not motivated by a desire for wealth and high social status. Now, however, you state that one gives in quest of great wealth. How are these statements not contradictory?

Response: They are not contradictory. It is with reference to cases where one seeks to acquire wealth and enjoyment of pleasures for oneself that it was said that one should not seek for wealth. Now, however, we speak of 53a
seeking wealth solely to benefit beings. It is for that reason that it was stated that one seeks wealth out of an aspiration to engage in great giving. This is not a case of seeking wealth and pleasures for oneself. Hence we discuss here the causal factors within such karmic results.

If a bodhisattva fails to come by great wealth, then, even though he has a resolute belief in giving, he still has no wealth that he can use in giving. Therefore you should not raise such a challenge.

Additionally, it is for the sake of cutting off two types of dharmas that one should practice giving. What are those two? The first is miserliness and the second is covetousness. These two dharmas are the most extreme sorts of defilement that may sully one's practice of giving.

Then again, it is for the sake of gaining two types of dharmas that one practices giving, namely the knowledge of cessation and also the knowledge of nonproduction.

Also, [giving is done] in order to increase three types of wisdom:

First, the wisdom that serves to achieve self-benefit;[203]

Second, fundamental wisdom;

Third, the wisdom arising from extensive learning.

There are yet others who say that one should give in order to bring about the increase of two dharmas: first, goodness; second, wisdom.

To present a general summation here, the bodhisattva should engage in four kinds of giving in order to subsume within his practice all of the different types of good dharmas, as follows:

First, giving that originates in a mind that perceives everyone as equal;

Second, giving that transcends opposites;

Third, giving that is dedicated to attaining *bodhi;*

Fourth, giving characterized by the presence of a thoroughly quiescent mind.

It is in order to completely perfect *dāna-pāramitā* in this manner that the bodhisattva diligently practices the giving of material wealth.

Chapter 13

Distinctions with Regard to the Giving of Dharma

The bodhisattva should cultivate the giving of material wealth in the above-discussed manner and should also cultivate the giving of Dharma, doing so in accordance with this statement:

> Of the many sorts of giving, the giving of Dharma is supreme.
> Thus the wise should cultivate its practice.

Of all of the kinds of giving, the foremost, the most superior, and the most sublime is the giving of Dharma. This is the type of giving that the wise should practice.

Question: Why do you say that [only] the wise should engage in the practice of giving Dharma?

Response: If those who are not wise pursue the giving of Dharma, they will set forth erroneous interpretations. By setting forth erroneous interpretations they will fail to benefit themselves and will also fail to benefit others.

Question: What is meant here by "erroneous[204] interpretations"?

Response: When the Buddha was on the verge of entering nirvana, he told Ānanda:

> From this day forward, one should rely upon the sutras. Do not rely on persons. Ānanda, what is meant by relying on the sutras and not relying 53b
> on persons?[205]
>
> If a *bhikṣu* comes and speaks thus, "In his presence, I have heard this from the Buddha, and in his presence, I have received this from the Buddha. It is Dharma, it is good, and it is as taught by the Buddha," neither accept nor reject the words of this *bhikṣu* but rather, having listened carefully, one should search for what has been said in the sutras and in the moral code.

If it is not included in the sutras, is not included in the Vinaya, and it also contradicts the true character of dharmas,[206] one should reply to this *bhikṣu*, saying, "Perhaps this dharma is one that was not spoken by the Buddha. Perhaps the Venerable One has mistakenly accepted it as such. Why? This dharma is not included in the sutras and is not included in the Vinaya, either. What's more, it contradicts the true character of dharmas. Therefore this is non-Dharma, not good, and not taught by the Buddha." Having realized this, one should then immediately reject this.

Now suppose some other *bhikṣu* comes and speaks thus: "There is a large sangha in which I reside wherein there is a senior monk, one who understands the sutras and who is skillful in explaining the moral code. In his presence, I have heard this from him, and in his presence, I have received this from him. It is Dharma, it is good, and it is as taught by the Buddha."

Again, neither accept nor reject the words of this *bhikṣu,* but rather, having listened carefully, one should search for what he has said in the sutras and in the moral code. If it is not included in the sutras, is not included in the Vinaya, and it also contradicts the true character of dharmas, one should reply to this *bhikṣu,* saying, "Venerable One, that sangha of *bhikṣu*s—regarding their understanding of the character of dharmas and the character of what constitutes goodness—perhaps they have spoken of these things in a manner that is contrary to Dharma and contrary to goodness. Perhaps the Venerable One has mistakenly accepted it. Why? This dharma is not included in the sutras and is not included in the Vinaya, either. What's more, it contradicts the true character of dharmas. Therefore this is non-Dharma, not good, and not spoken by the Buddha." Having realized this, one should then immediately reject this.

Suppose yet another *bhikṣu* comes and speaks thus: "There are many *bhikṣu*s where I abide who preserve the sutras, preserve the Vinaya, and preserve the *mātṛkā*s.[207] In their presence, I have heard this from them, and in their presence, I have accepted this from them. It is Dharma, it is good, and it is as taught by the Buddha."

Neither accept nor reject the words of this *bhikṣu,* but rather, having listened carefully, one should search in the sutras and in the moral code for what he has said. If it is not included in the sutras, is not included

in the Vinaya, and it also contradicts the true character of dharmas, one should reply to this *bhikṣu,* saying, "Venerable One, that sangha of *bhikṣu*s—regarding their understanding of the character of dharmas and the character of what constitutes goodness—perhaps they have spoken of these things in a manner that is contrary to Dharma and contrary to goodness. Perhaps the Venerable One has mistakenly accepted it. Why? This dharma is not included in the sutras and is not included in the Vinaya, either. What's more, it contradicts the true character of dharmas. Therefore this is non-Dharma, not good, and not taught by the Buddha." Having realized this, one should then immediately reject this.

Suppose yet another *bhikṣu* comes and speaks thus: "There is a senior *bhikṣu* where I abide, one who understands much, one who is aware of much, and one whom people revere. In his presence, I have heard this from him, and in his presence, I have received this from him. It is Dharma, it is good, and it is as taught by the Buddha."

Neither accept nor reject the words of this *bhikṣu,* but rather, having 53c
listened carefully, one should search for what he has said in the sutras and in the moral code. If it is not included in the sutras, is not included in the Vinaya, and it also contradicts the true character of dharmas, one should reply to this *bhikṣu,* saying, "Venerable One, that sangha of *bhikṣu*s—regarding their understanding of the character of dharmas and the character of what constitutes goodness—perhaps they have spoken of these things in a manner that is contrary to Dharma and contrary to goodness. Perhaps the Venerable One has mistakenly accepted it. Why? This dharma is not included in the sutras and is not included in the Vinaya, either. What's more, it contradicts the true character of dharmas. Therefore this is non-Dharma, not good, and not taught by the Buddha." Having realized this, one should then immediately reject this.

These four cases illustrate what is meant here by "erroneous interpretations." It is therefore said that the wise do not rely upon erroneous interpretations, but rather practice pristinely pure Dharma giving.

Question: How is it that one knows the giving of Dharma is the foremost among all forms of giving?

Response: The sutras state that there are two types of giving, the giving of material wealth and the giving of Dharma, and that, among those two types of giving, it is the giving of Dharma that is superior.

Furthermore:

> In the *Sutra of the Resolute King,*[208]
> There are praises of Dharma giving's merit
> And explanations of propriety in the speaking of Dharma.
> One should always cultivate and practice in accordance with these.

If the bodhisattva wishes to bestow Dharma on beings, he should follow and cultivate in accordance with the passages in the *Sutra of the Resolute King* that praise the meritorious qualities possessed by a teacher of Dharma and that set forth the correct ceremonial procedures involved in speaking Dharma. It stipulates the following:

> The speaker of Dharma should incorporate four dharmas in his practice. What are those four?
>
> First, he is to be one possessed of vast and extensive learning while also being well able to bear in mind [the meaning of] all the phrases and passages [of the scripture at hand];
>
> Second, he is to be resolutely and skillfully cognizant of the marks of production and extinction as they manifest in all worldly and world-transcending dharmas;
>
> Third, having acquired the wisdom arising from *dhyāna* concentration, he accords with the Dharma set forth in the sutras while also remaining free of any contentiousness;
>
> Fourth, neither adding anything to nor taking anything away [from the Dharma set forth in the sutras], he practices in accordance with what is proclaimed therein.
>
> There are four additional dharmas that are to be observed when the speaker of Dharma occupies the lion throne. What are those four?
>
> First, when about to ascend to the high seat, one should first respectfully pay reverence to the great assembly in attendance and then afterward ascend to that seat;
>
> Second, in audiences including women, one should contemplate impurity [of the body];

Third, in one's deportment and bearing, one maintains the appearance of a great man. As one spreads forth the sound of Dharma, one's countenance appears harmonious and pleased, inspiring all in attendance to accept [one's words] with faith. One does not teach non-Buddhist scriptures and one's mind remains fearless;

Fourth, in the face of harsh words and challenging questions, one should practice patience.

There are four additional dharmas pertaining to sitting in the high seat. What are those four?

First, one brings forth the motivation to be of abundant benefit to beings;

Second, one does not conceive of the idea of a self in connection with any being;

Third, one does not conceive of the words as synonymous with the dharmas [that they describe];

Fourth, one vows, "May any being who hears me speak on Dharma thereby gain irreversibility in the path to *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*."

There are another four dharmas pertaining to sitting in the high seat. What are these four?

First, one is well able to abide securely within the gateway of *dhāraṇī* practice[209] and in resolute faith in the Dharma; 54a

Second, one is skilled in realization of the *pratyutpanna samādhi*, diligent in the practice of vigor, and pure in observance of the moral precepts;

Third, one sees no happiness inhering in any place of rebirth, does not covet offerings, and does not seek to obtain any sort of karmic reward;

Fourth, one's mind is free of any doubt regarding the three gates to liberation.

Additionally:

One is well able to bring forth deep *samādhi*s;

One is completely adherent to the awesome deportment;

One has a strong memory;

One's thoughts are imbued with stable wisdom;

One refrains from joking and teasing;
One refrains from acting with a frivolous demeanor;
One refrains from shamelessness;
One refrains from falling into delusion and confusion;
One's discourse remains free of error;
One's sense faculties remain well-guarded;
One does not covet fine flavors;
One is careful to maintain proper deportment with one's arms and legs;
One does not forget what one has chosen to bear in mind;
One enjoys practicing the *dhūta* austerities;[210]
One is well able to make distinctions regarding worldly and world-transcending dharmas;
One's mind is free of doubts and regrets;
One's discourse is inexhaustible in its phrasing and in its command of scriptural passages;
And one seeks to promote the security and benefit of the audience and also refrains from finding fault with them.
If one is in possession of dharmas of this sort, then one should occupy the lion throne.
There are yet four more dharmas in this connection:
First, one does not slight oneself;
Second, one does not slight audience members;
Third, one does not slight the topic that is being discussed;
Fourth, one does not [teach Dharma] for the sake of obtaining offerings or support.

[Nāgārjuna introduces another passage from scripture:]

The Buddha spoke to Ānanda, saying, "On which dharmas should the speaker of Dharma speak? Ānanda, whichever dharma one may discuss—it cannot be demonstrated, it cannot be described, it is signless, and it is unconditioned."

"O Bhagavat, if this is the case, how can they be discussed?"

"Ānanda, this Dharma is extremely profound. When the Tathāgata expounds [on Dharma], he uses an expedient device that involves four factors:

First, the sound of his voice;
Second, names;
Third, verbal discourse;
Fourth, principles.

"Additionally, there are four causal circumstances associated with his speaking about the Dharma for others:

First, it is done for the sake of liberating beings who are amenable to being liberated;

Second, in doing so, he only deals in designations associated with forms, feelings, perceptions, formative factors, and consciousnesses;

Third, he uses all sorts of phrases and sentences to benefit beings;

Fourth, although, in speaking, he uses such names, [their referents] still cannot be apprehended.

"This is just as when there is a basin of clean, unsullied oil in which an observer can see an image of his own face. Ānanda, have you ever seen or heard of any wise man, virtuous woman, or disciple of an *ārya* who was able to claim, 'I have seen a real person right there in a basin of oil.'?"

[Ānanda replied,] "O Bhagavat, I have neither heard nor seen any wise man, virtuous woman, or disciple of an *ārya* who has claimed, 'I have seen a real person in a basin of oil.' Why is that so? One who is wise would know ahead of time that even the basin of oil was not [intrinsically] existent. How much the less might he claim the existence of a person there. It is solely by resort to artificial naming that one may claim the existence of a basin of oil in which one sees a person's image."

[The Buddha continued,] "Ānanda, the Tathāgata is just the same in this respect. It is only through reliance upon names that there is an artificial existence of anything of which he speaks.

"Ānanda, there are four causes and conditions involved in the Tathāgata's speaking about the Dharma for others:

When beings hear this, their minds experience peace and happiness and they plant the causes for attaining nirvana.

The sound of the Tathāgata's proclamation of Dharma pervades the worlds of the ten directions. When beings hear this, their minds are

delighted, they abandon the wretched destinies, and they gain rebirth in Tuṣita Heaven.

54b In the sounds of the Tathāgata's voice, there is nothing that is either masculine or feminine. Men do not seize on any feminine aspects and women do not seize on any masculine aspects.

The sound of the Tathāgata's voice does not cause distress to beings nor does it interfere with [the correct representation of] any dharma. It is resorted to solely in order to make manifest the nature of the sounds."

The speaker of Dharma should practice in accord with these ideas [discussed above] and should perform the giving of Dharma in compliance with these practices. As for the karmic results that accrue to the giver and the receiver, these should be extensively discussed later on.

Chapter 14

The Characteristics of the Refuges

The giving of material wealth and the giving of Dharma were already explained above. Now, we shall make further distinctions in this regard:

> The "white-robed ones," the householders,[211]
> Should extensively practice the giving of material wealth.
> The dharmas associated with the rest of the good practices
> Shall now be explained as well.

Of these two types of giving, the householder should practice the giving of material wealth. Those who have left the home life should practice the giving of Dharma. Why is this? It is because, in the giving of Dharma, the layperson is unable to match those who have left the home life. This is because those who listen to and accept the Dharma have only shallow and scant faith in a householder's [ability to teach Dharma].

Moreover, whereas the householders possess greater resources of material wealth, it is the monastics who have studied, recited, and deeply understood the dharmas of the sutras to the point that, in the midst of assemblies, they are fearless in explaining them for others. The householders are unable to match them in this. Additionally, they do not match the monastics' ability to inspire a reverential frame of mind in the listener. Also, in instances where one might wish, through expounding the Dharma, to overcome [doubts in] the minds of others, [the householders] are unable to match the monastics. This is as described [in this verse]:

> If one first cultivates the Dharma oneself
> And then later engages in the teaching of others.
> Then and only then can one utter these words:
> "You should accord with what I myself practice."

This is an endeavor that is fitting for those who have left the home life. It is not something that the householder carries out in practice. It is also said that:

> If one personally practices what is not good,
> How can one influence others to engage in goodness?
> If one personally fails to attain quiescence,
> How can one cause others to attain quiescence?
>
> Hence, if one personally practices goodness,
> One can influence others to practice goodness.
> If one personally attains quiescence,
> One can cause others to attain quiescence.

Good dharmas and quiescence are matters that should be practiced by those who have left the home life. Also, monastics have a superior ability to inspire reverence in those who listen to the Dharma.

Furthermore, if those who have left the home life practice the giving of material wealth, then this prevents their own development of the other forms of goodness. They are also thus prevented from practicing renunciation in a forest hermitage where they dwell off in a wilderness forest or marshland. If those who have left the home life take pleasure in the giving of material wealth, that will completely interfere with their pursuit of such cultivation.

It is the nature of these sorts of endeavors that, if one practices the giving of material wealth, one must certainly go into the villages and involve oneself in the endeavors of the layperson. In such instances, there will be much talk.[212]

If one does not take up such work, then there will be no means by which one can obtain such material wealth. If one is involved in coming and going from the villages, then one will be exposed to seeing and hearing the sights and sounds therein. Thus one's sense faculties will become difficult to restrain and one will become prone to give rise to the three poisons.[213]

54c Moreover, one's mind will become only shallowly engaged in the practice of moral virtue, patience, vigor, *dhyāna* absorption, and wisdom.[214]

Also, when one takes up the endeavors of the laity, defilements arise in relation to offerings and support that entail the production of afflictions such

as craving, anger, miserliness, and jealousy. It is solely by resort to the power of contemplative practice that one is able to restrain such mental inclinations. [Absent the power of such contemplative practice], those who are weak may fail to restrain themselves and may then go so far as to encounter death itself or a painful calamity comparable to death.

"Death" refers here to becoming so covetously attached to the objects of the five types of desire that one relinquishes the moral precepts and returns to the lay life. Or one may find one is even able to allow oneself to transgress the moral precepts and incur numerous grave offenses. This is what is meant by "encountering a painful calamity comparable to death."[215]

It is for these reasons that one praises the giving of Dharma as the province of those who have left the home life while praising the giving of material wealth as the province of the householder. This being so, there are extensive discussions of the householder bodhisattva's practice of giving material wealth.

The other sorts of good conduct should now be discussed. The bodhisattva who has brought forth the resolve [to attain buddhahood] should first take refuge in the Buddha, take refuge in the Dharma, and take refuge in the Sangha. The merit that is gained from taking the Three Refuges should then all be dedicated to the realization of *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*. Additionally:

> Taking refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha
> Is a matter that the bodhisattva should comprehend.

The bodhisattva should understand well and in accordance with reality this matter of taking refuge in the Buddha, taking refuge in the Dharma, and taking refuge in the Sangha.

Question: What is meant by taking refuge in the Buddha?

Response:

> Do not relinquish the resolve to attain *bodhi,*
> Do not damage the Dharma that one has received,
> Do not abandon the mind of great compassion,
> And do not covet other vehicles [to liberation].
> If one acts in this fashion, then this is what is meant by
> Taking refuge in the Buddha in accordance with reality.

"The resolve to attain *bodhi*" refers to bringing forth the determination to seek buddhahood without ever desisting from it, without ever letting it cease, and without ever relinquishing this determination.

As for "do not damage the Dharma that one has received," this refers to the fact that the bodhisattvas have each taken on the practice of the moral precepts as components of the dharmas of goodness that they delight in. Consequently, there are circumstances where one particular practice should be taken up whereas yet another practice should be avoided. Thus, if a particular practice corresponds to any of the *pāramitā*s, to any of the four bases of meritorious qualities,[216] or to any of the many other different sorts of good dharmas such as these, for the sake of benefiting beings, one accepts and upholds it, cultivates it, and does not allow it to deteriorate or to become deficient.

As for "the mind of great compassion," one wishes to liberate beings who are afflicted by suffering. In order to pursue the attainment of buddhahood, even in a dream, one never abandons the great compassion.

As for "do not covet other vehicles [to liberation]," because one possesses a deep resolute faith in the path to buddhahood, one does seek to take up the vehicles of *śrāvaka* disciples or *pratyekabuddha*s.

One should realize that it is through the possession of dharmas such as these that one "takes refuge in the Buddha in accordance with reality."

Question: What is meant by taking refuge in the Dharma?

Response:

Draw close to those who speak the Dharma.
Singlemindedly listen to and accept the Dharma.
Be mindful of it, uphold it, and then expound upon it.
This is what is meant by taking refuge in the Dharma.

"Those who speak the Dharma" refers to those who explain, set forth, and proclaim the profound Dharma of the Buddha, offering instruction as
55a to what is good and what is evil while also cutting away all one's doubts. One always repeatedly draws near to them, going forth to wherever they may dwell, making offerings and displaying reverential respect as one singlemindedly listens to and accepts [the Dharma]. One uses the power of memory to retain it and does not forget it. One reflects upon it, assesses it, and accords with its import.

Afterward, one expounds upon it for others, doing so in a manner that accords with the way one has been led to understand it. Then one dedicates the merit arising from this gift of Dharma to the attainment of buddhahood. This is what is meant by "taking refuge in the Dharma."

Question: What is meant by taking refuge in the Sangha?

Response:

In the case of *śrāvaka* disciple practitioners
Who have not yet entered the Dharma position,[217]
Induce them to bring forth the unsurpassable resolve
By which they are caused to acquire the ten powers of a buddha.

One first uses the giving of material resources to attract them
And afterward resorts to the giving of Dharma.
One maintains deep faith in the Sangha that attains four fruitions[218]
And does not discriminate among members of that noble community.

One may strive to gain the *śrāvaka* disciples' meritorious qualities
While still not opting for realization of their liberation.
This is the meaning of taking refuge in the Sangha.
Moreover, one should maintain mindfulness of three matters.[219]

"*Śrāvaka* disciple practitioners" refers to those who achieve success in the *śrāvaka* disciple vehicle. "Who have not yet entered the Dharma position" refers to those who have not yet reached the stage of absolute irreversibility on the *śrāvaka* disciple path. One may still influence such persons to bring forth the resolve to attain buddhahood so that they will then be able to acquire the ten powers.

In the case of those who have already entered the Dharma position, one can never influence them to bring forth the unsurpassable resolve. Even supposing that some of these were to be caused to bring forth such an aspiration, they would still not succeed [in bringing it to realization].

This is as stated by the venerable Subhūti in the [*Mahā*]*prajñāpāramitā*[*-sūtra*] where he said, "Those who have already entered the "right Dharma position" are unable to bring forth the unsurpassable resolve. Why is this the case? Such persons have already created an obstacle to further

transmigration in samsara."[220] Thus they will never again come and go within samsara.

[To induce those who have not yet entered the Dharma position] to bring forth the unsurpassable resolve, one first uses the giving of material resources. "To attract them" refers to giving them the requisites of robes, food and drink, bedding, and medicine in order to attract them.

In the case of those who have left the home life, one attracts them by giving them robes, food and drink, bedding, medicines, and various incenses including unguent incenses. As for householders, one uses means of attraction that cause them to feel a sense of close friendship through which they tend to trust and accept one's words. Afterward, one engages in Dharma giving that causes them to gain the fruits of bringing forth the unsurpassable resolve.

"Sangha" refers to those who have gained the four preliminary stages as well as those who have actually attained the four corresponding fruits [of the path].

"Community" refers to those who have taken on the characteristic features of the monastic in accordance with the Buddha's Dharma. They completely uphold the moral precepts, yet may not have attained the fruits [of the path] or the corresponding preliminary stages. One does not make discriminating distinctions among members of the sangha such as these.

It is because they have abandoned the bondage of sensual desire that they are known as "noble" members of the sangha. They maintain resolute belief in emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness while still not indulging in conceptual elaboration rooted in the making of discriminating distinctions. When one relies on members of the sangha of this sort, this is what is meant by "taking refuge in the Sangha."

As for "One may strive to gain the meritorious qualities of the *śrāvaka* disciples while still not opting for realization of their liberation," one knows that these members of the sangha are accomplished in the upholding of the moral precepts, that they are accomplished in the *dhyāna* absorptions, that they are accomplished in wisdom, that they are accomplished in liberation, that they are accomplished in the knowledge and vision of liberation, that they possess the three clear knowledges and six superknowledges, that their minds have gained sovereign mastery, that they possess great awe-inspiring

qualities, and that that they have forsaken the pleasures of the world and have escaped Māra's realms.[221]

One knows that they do not experience joy due to attaining profit, fine reputation, praise, or pleasure and that they do not experience distress due to 55b
loss, disrepute, derision, or pain.[222] One knows that they always practice six kinds of equanimity[223] and knows that they have gained the eight liberations in accordance with the Buddha's instructions.

One knows that there are those who practice the path, that there are those who have achieved liberation, that there are those who practice the singular path, that they have demolished the two kinds of afflictions,[224] that they well understand the three realms of existence, that they have a well-developed penetrating understanding of the four truths, that they have thoroughly done away with the five hindrances,[225] that they have come to peacefully abide in the six dharmas of harmony and respect, that they have become accomplished in seven dharmas of non-retreat,[226] that they possess the eight realizations of great men, that they have abandoned the nine types of fetters, and that they have gained the ten powers of the *śrāvaka* disciples.

It is those who have perfected meritorious qualities such as these who are referred to as the Buddha's *śrāvaka* disciple sangha. One may strive to acquire meritorious qualities such as these even as one still does not seek to attain their type of liberation. Why? This is because one maintains deep-seated aspirations and resolute belief[227] in the unimpeded liberation of the Buddha.

This [preceding discussion explains] what is meant by "taking refuge in the Sangha."

Then again, if on hearing the passages, sentences and words of the Dharma, one immediately brings to mind the dharma of the true character [of dharmas],[228] this is what is meant by "taking refuge in the Dharma."

If upon seeing a member of the *śrāvaka* disciple sangha, one immediately brings to mind the community of all bodhisattvas who have brought forth the resolve to attain *bodhi,* this is what is meant by "taking refuge in the Sangha."

If on viewing an image of the Buddha, one immediately becomes mindful of the true Buddha, this is what is meant by "taking refuge in the Buddha."[229]

Question: What is meant by "mindfulness of the true Buddha"?

Response: This corresponds to the discussion of the meaning of the mindfulness of the Buddha *samādhi* as found in the *Akṣayamati Bodhisattva Sutra,* wherein it states:[230]

> As for "mindfulness of the true Buddha," it is not based on physical form, is not based on characteristic signs, is not based on birth, is not based on caste,[231] is not based on clan, is not based on the past, future, or present, and is not based on the five aggregates, the twelve sense bases, or the eighteen sense realms.
>
> It is not based on seeing, hearing, sensing, or cognizing,[232] is not based on the mind or the mind consciousness, is not based in practice associated with conceptual elaboration, is not based on production, extinction, or abiding, is not based on either grasping or relinquishing, is not based on bearing in mind discriminating distinctions, is not based on dharma characteristics, is not based on individual characteristics, is not based on a unitary characteristic, and is not based on differentiating characteristics.
>
> It is not based on the mental factors associated with the mind's cognition of objective phenomena,[233] is not based on what is either inward or outward, is not based on any seizing on characteristics by either primary ideation (*vitarka*), or mental discursion (*vicāra*), is not based on either what is taken in or what is produced, is not based on physical appearances, is not based on any aspects of deportment that one might cultivate, is not based on moral precepts, *dhyāna* absorption, wisdom, liberation, or the knowledge and vision of liberation, and is not based on the ten powers, four fearlessnesses, or any other dharmas of the Buddha.
>
> As for "mindfulness of the Buddha that accords with reality," it is immeasurable, is inconceivable, has no practice, has no knowing, has no self or anything belonging to a self, has no recollection, and has nothing it bears in mind. It does not engage in discriminations regarding the five aggregates, the twelve sense bases, or the eighteen sense realms. It has no shape, is unobstructed, and has no initiation, no abiding, and no nonabiding. It does not abide in forms, and does not abide in feelings, perceptions, formative factors, or consciousness.
>
> It does not abide in the eye or visual forms and does not abide in eye consciousness. It does not abide in the ear or sounds and does not abide

in ear consciousness. It does not abide in the nose or fragrances and does not abide in olfactory consciousness. It does not abide in the tongue or flavors and does not abide in gustatory consciousness. It does not abide in the body or touchables and does not abide in tactile consciousness. It does not abide in the mind faculty or dharmas and does not abide in mind consciousness.

It does not abide in any objective conditions. It does not give rise to any characteristic signs. It does not involve the production of any movement of mind, of any recollective thought, of any discriminations, or of any other such phenomena. Nor does it involve the production of any seeing, hearing, sensing, or cognition. 55c

It accords in its practice with all the characteristic features of right liberation. It does not involve any continuity of thought but does involve the cessation of all mental discriminations. It demolishes all forms of affection and anger.

It confutes (lit., "ruins") all normative characteristics of causality. It does away with [conceptions of what is temporally] past, future, or intermediate. It perceives with utter clarity the nonexistence of any [duality of] object and subject.

Because it is motionless, it is free of [any attraction to] joyfulness. Because it declines to indulge the delectable, it is free of [any attraction to] bliss.[234]

Because its fundamental character is that of quiescence, it remains free of the heat [of mental agitation].

Because the mind has no endeavors in which it is involved, it is liberated.

Because appearances are devoid of any existent form, there is no body. Because one does not indulge them, there are no feelings. Because there are no perceptions, there are no fetters. Because there are no actions, there is nothing that one does. Because there is no knowing, there is no consciousness.[235]

Because there is no grasping, there is no engagement in actions. Because there is no relinquishing, it is not the case that one does not act.

Because there is no dwelling [in any dharma], there is no abiding. Because it is empty [of inherent existence], there is no coming. Because there is no arising, there is no departing.

> Because one does not covet, does not become attached to, does not seize upon, does not indulge, does not "ignite," and does not extinguish any recollective thought, any mental dharmas or any other sort of dharmas, from the very beginning on forward to the present, there has never been any production [of dharmas] nor have there ever been any marks of their production. They are all entirely subsumed within the nature of dharmas that extends beyond the path [defined by the duality of] the eye, visual forms, and [their intervening] empty space.
>
> Characteristics such as these define what is meant by "true mindfulness of the Buddha."

Also, as for mindfulness of the Dharma, the Dharma of the Buddha is well spoken. One gains results from it in this very life. [Its benefits] are not limited to some fixed time. This is amenable to one's own contemplation and investigation. It is excellent in its ability to lead one to attainment of the path. It is such that the wise can inwardly realize. It is good in the beginning, good in the middle, and good in the end. Its words are good. Its meaning is good. It is completely pure in its goodness and free of any admixture [with anything not good]. It is perfect in its purity.

It is able to cut off covetousness, able to cut of hatred, able to cut off delusion, able to do away with prideful thoughts, able to do away with all [erroneous] views, able to do away with doubt and regret, able to do away with arrogance, and able to do away with all craving.

It breaks [one's attachment to] whatever one is inclined to take refuge in. It cuts short the path of continuance [in samsara]. It puts an end to craving, leads to the abandonment of sensual desires, and leads to quiescence and nirvana.

Characteristics such as these illustrate what is meant by "mindfulness of the Dharma." [It is characterized] by emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness. It is unproduced and undestroyed, ultimately quiescent, incomparable, and devoid of any [phenomenal] manifestation. These ideas are just as set forth in the discussion of the meaning of "mindfulness of the Buddha."[236]

Additionally, "mindfulness of the Dharma" is of three types. The descriptions from "the Dharma of the Buddha is well spoken" to "it is completely pure in its goodness" are all references to the path. From "it is able to cut off

covetousness" to "it leads to quiescence and nirvana" are all references to nirvana. From "emptiness" and so forth on up to "incomparable, and devoid of any [phenomenal] manifestation," is all a reference to the very essence of the Dharma.

Also, regarding "mindfulness of the Sangha," this is as explained earlier in the discussion of the meritorious qualities of the Sangha.

In one's mindfulness of these Three Jewels, one develops a definite resolve. When one uses such mindfulness as one strives to attain buddhahood and then takes up the practice of giving, this is what is meant by "taking refuge in the Buddha."

When one endeavors to preserve and protect the Dharma and thus takes up the practice of giving, this is what is meant by "taking refuge in the Dharma."

When, based on this practice of giving, one dedicates the merit, resolving that, once one has realized buddhahood, one will bring together a sangha community consisting of both bodhisattvas and *śrāvaka* disciples, this is what is meant by "taking refuge in the Sangha."

Chapter 15

The Five Moral Precepts

It is in this [above-discussed] manner that the lay bodhisattva becomes able to cultivate the karmic deeds of a good person while leaving far behind the karmic deeds of a bad person. In this connection, there is a verse: 56a

> One cultivates and brings forth the karmic deeds of a good person,
> Accumulating wealth for one's use in a way consistent with Dharma.
> Whatever one is capable of, one takes that on as a grave duty.
> That of which one is not capable—one refrains from taking it on.[237]

As for "the karmic deeds of a good person," to sum it up, the karmic deeds of a good person involve abiding in what is good and beneficial for oneself while also being able to facilitate the benefit of others.

As for the karmic deeds of a bad person, these bring about descent into decline and anguish for oneself while also bringing about decline and anguish in others.

"Accumulating wealth for one's own use in a way consistent with Dharma" refers to not killing, not stealing, and neither deceiving nor cheating others. One devotes one's energies to accumulating wealth and then puts it to use in a way that accords with the Dharma by making offerings to the Three Jewels, by rescuing those fallen into misfortune, by aiding the old and the sick, and by carrying out other such deeds.

Whatever one can take on and can adhere to in practice—one regards that as a grave responsibility. As for what one would be unable to adhere to in practice, one does not take that on.

As for the works of the bodhisattva, whether it be those of this life or those of future lives, whether it be those concerned with self-benefit or those concerned with benefiting others, these are as discussed earlier and they are endeavors that definitely must be brought to a state of successful completion. If there are endeavors that one realizes one cannot yet carry out in practice, then one does not take these on.

Furthermore:

One neither sorrows nor rejoices over worldly dharmas.
One is able to relinquish one's own benefit,
While always acting diligently for the benefit of others.
Being deeply grateful for others' kindnesses, one repays them doubly.

"Worldly dharmas" refers to profit and loss, ill repute and esteem, praise and blame, and pain and pleasure. One's mind remains free of any tendency to become either dejected or joyful in response to any of these dharmas.

In "relinquishing one's own benefit," and "acting diligently for the benefit of others," the bodhisattva sets aside self-benefit to devote the good works he does to facilitating what is good for others, doing so even for those he has not yet befriended and even for those with whom he has no causal affinities.

Question: As for [your recommending] "relinquishing self-benefit in order to work diligently for the benefit of others," this is wrong. As stated by the Buddha, "Although one might accomplish greatly beneficial works for others, one should not relinquish attention to one's own self-benefit."

This idea is reminiscent of the saying that: "One may have to sacrifice a person for the success of a clan, may have to sacrifice a single clan for the success of a village, may have to sacrifice a village for the success of a country, may have to sacrifice a country for the success of oneself, or may have to sacrifice oneself for the sake of right Dharma."

One first accomplishes self-benefit
And then, afterward, benefits others.
If one sacrifices self-benefit to benefit others,
Later on, one will experience sorrow and regret.

If one relinquishes self-benefit to benefit others
While thinking to oneself that this constitutes wisdom,
This is something that in the context of the world
Amounts to the foremost sort of stupidity.

Response: Even from the worldly standpoint, seeking to bring about good for the benefit of others is regarded as good and as the mark of solid resolve. How much the more so is this true of the bodhisattva whose practice transcends

worldly concerns. If one benefits others, that is just benefiting oneself. This is as described here:

> Regarding matters pertaining to others, the bodhisattva
> Is neither inferior nor weak in the quality of his determination.
> For whoever has brought forth the resolve to attain *bodhi,* 56b
> Benefit of others is just benefit of oneself.

The meaning of this has already been extensively discussed in the first chapter. Therefore, your statements on this matter are wrong.

As for "being deeply grateful for others' kindnesses, one repays them doubly," whenever others do good things for the bodhisattva, he should repay them liberally and also be deeply grateful for their kindnesses. This is the mark of a good person. Additionally:

> One gives wealth to the poor
> And bestows fearlessness on the fearful.
> One engages in meritorious deeds of these sorts
> Until they become solidly and durably established.

As for "giving wealth to the poor," there are those who, in previous lives, did not plant the causes of merit. Hence they now do not have the means to provide for their scarcity of life-sustaining necessities. As befits one's capacities, one gives aid to such people.

As for "bestowing fearlessness on the fearful," in all sorts of cases where beings are frightened, whether that be due to fear of enemies, fear of hunger, fear of floods, fire, cold, heat, or some other cause of fear—in the midst of these many fears, the bodhisattva instructs and guides these people, sees to their security and happiness, and thereby causes them to become free of fear.

Meritorious qualities such as these [are caused to become] the most solid and enduring. Finally:

> For those beset with sorrow, one strives to rid them of their sorrows.
> Regarding those lacking in strength, one practices patience and abandons arrogance, great arrogance, and so forth.[238]
> One acts with deep reverence toward those who are venerable.
> One always draws close to those who are learned and consults with the wise on matters of good and evil.

One always maintains right views with respect to one's own practice.
In one's relations with beings, one does not flatter them, deceive them, or make false declarations of affection.
One is insatiable in quest of goodness and one pursues the acquisition of immeasurably vast learning.
All of one's endeavors are accomplished with solid resolve.
One always carries on one's endeavors in the company of good people.
One maintains a mind of great compassion toward those who are evil.
Regarding both those who are good spiritual friends and those who are not good spiritual friends, one establishes a solid conception of them all as being one's good spiritual friends.
One maintains a mind of equal regard toward beings and refrains from stinginess in the dispensation of essential Dharma [teachings].
One expounds [the Dharma] for others in a manner consistent with what one has heard.
One realizes the import and flavor of all the Dharma teachings that one has heard.
Regarding the entertaining and pleasurable matters associated with the five types of desire, one contemplates them all as merely transitory.
One contemplates having a spouse (lit., "wife") and children as comparable to abiding in the hells.
One contemplates the things required to sustain one's life as a source of weariness and suffering.
One contemplates matters having to do with carrying on a business as freighted with worry and distress.
One contemplates whatever one might seek to obtain as tending to destroy one's roots of goodness.
One contemplates abiding in the life of a householder as comparable to living in a prison.
One contemplates relatives, clan, and friends as comparable to jailers.
One contemplates one's persistent day-and-night thinking by inquiring, "What benefit is gained by this?"
One contemplates this non-enduring body as the basis for acquiring the body that does endure.[239]

One contemplates wealth that is not durable as capable of bringing
forth the wealth that does endure.[240]

Additionally:

One's mind should steadfastly abide in observance of
The five moral precepts of the layperson's Dharma.

The lay bodhisattva who relies on the Three Refuges as he practices the above meritorious qualities should steadfastly abide in the five moral precepts. The five moral precepts constitute the comprehensively encompassing standard for the layperson's Dharma.

One should abandon all thoughts of killing and maintain compassionate pity for beings. 56c

One should know when enough is enough and not covet the possessions of others even to the point where one will not even take a blade of grass that has not been given.

One abandons sexual misconduct and become weary of and averse to the affairs of one's private chambers. One guards against and distances oneself from any outside sensual involvements and so does not gaze at others inappropriately. One is ever mindful of the body as something productive of repulsive outflows and thereby brings forth thoughts of renunciation while also fully realizing that the five types of desire all ultimately conduce to suffering.

If desire for one's spouse comes to mind, one should dispel and relinquish it. One should always contemplate the body's unloveliness[241] and nurture a fear of becoming someone driven along by the fetters. Hence one should abandon desire and not be attached to its objects. Always remaining aware of the world as suffering and nonself, one should bring forth this prayerful aspiration: "Oh when will I finally succeed in no longer giving rise to thoughts of desire?" How much the less would one actually engage in such physical actions.

One abandons false speech, takes pleasure in speaking truthfully, and refrains from deceiving others. One's speech reflects what is known by the mind and one's thoughts are a reflection of serene wisdom. What one says to others accords with what one sees, hears, senses, and knows. One naturally abides in a way so determined by the Dharma that, even at the cost of one's life, one would not speak in ways that mislead others.

Alcohol is the gateway to neglectfulness and a multitude of bad actions. One should always stay far from it and never let it pass one's lips. One will thereby refrain from acting crazy and deranged, will not become inebriated and confused, will not become agitated, will not become seized by fears, will not act shamelessly, and will not engage in inappropriate sorts of joking. Rather, one will always be able to singlemindedly distinguish between what is good and what is disgraceful.

Now, there may be times when this bodhisattva delights in giving everything and thus is moved to think, "To those who want food, I shall provide food, and for those who seek drink, I shall provide drink." If, as a consequence, one does provide alcohol, in doing so, one should reflect: "Now, this is an occasion in the practice of *dāna-pāramitā* when one gives whatever is sought. Later, I will use skillful expedients to teach and coax them into abandoning alcohol altogether and into developing the mindfulness and wisdom that shall cause them to refrain from any such negligence."

Now, how can this be? It is because the essence of *dāna-pāramitā* lies in fulfilling the wishes of others. Hence, in circumstances of this sort, the lay bodhisattva's provision of alcoholic beverages does not constitute a karmic offense.[242]

One dedicates the merit from upholding the five moral precepts to one's future realization of *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*. One guards and upholds the five precepts in the same manner that one would guard precious jewels and in the same manner that one protects one's own body and life.

Question: Does this bodhisattva only observe these five moral precepts while not upholding any of the other sorts of good actions?

Response:

The bodhisattva should steadfastly abide
In these five general moral precepts.
The other [wholesome] actions of body, speech, and mind
Should all also be practiced as well.

We have already discussed the meaning of the layperson's five precepts. Having taken on these five moral precepts, one should steadfastly abide in their observance and, in addition, should cultivate the rest of the three

types of good karmic deeds. Additionally, as for those dharmas that the lay bodhisattva should practice, [there are the following practices]:

As befits those beings whom one should benefit,
One explains the Dharma and thus teaches and transforms them.

This bodhisattva is able to give to all beings in ways appropriately addressing any deficiencies they may have. No matter what country one lives in and no matter whether one is in a city, in a village, in the forest, or beneath some tree, one explains Dharma and teaches the beings there in accordance with whatever might benefit them. As it is said, one explains dharmas conducive to faith for those bereft of faith, explains propriety in etiquette for those who are disrespectful, explains dharmas conducive to 57a
extensive learning for those deficient in learning, explains the dharma of giving for those who are miserly, explains the dharma of harmoniousness and patience for those who are full of hatred, explains the dharma of vigor for those who are indolent, explains the stations of right mindfulness for those of chaotic mind, and speaks in a way conducive to wisdom for those who are foolish or deluded. In addition:

In accordance with whatever one finds to be deficient,
One should supply all such things in sufficient measure.

All beings have that in which they are deficient. One should provide all such things in sufficient measure. There are those people who, although wealthy, still have ways in which they are deficient. This may even be true of kings, for they too should have those things in which they are deficient. Hence, even though it was previously explained that one bestows wealth on the poor, it is now further stated that one provides in sufficient measure whatever beings are deficient in. Additionally:

There are all manner of evil beings
Who, in various ways, bring about troublesome circumstances
Through flattery, deviousness, or unbridled arrogance,
Through cursing, slighting, cheating, or deceiving,
Or by turning their backs on kindnesses, leaving them unrequited.
Though the stupid and the base are difficult to instruct and transform,

Because the bodhisattva's mind feels pity and sadness for them,
He valiantly redoubles his vigor [in teaching them].

Evil beings use many different sorts of evil behavior to attack and disturb the bodhisattva. Even in the midst of this, the bodhisattva's resolve does not withdraw in disgust. He should not think in these ways:

Who would be able to train such evil people as these?
Who would be able to instruct them?
Who would be able to exhort them, causing them to be liberated from samsara so that they might reach nirvana?
Who would be able to go and come in samsara in the company of such beings?
Who would be able to work together harmoniously with them?
As for all these evil deeds and such unprincipled behavior, who would be able to endure it?
My resolve is exhausted. I cannot engage in joint endeavors with them anymore.
I am going to leave them all far behind and never again participate in joint endeavors with them.
What's more, I am unable to even remain together with them at all.
These people, the most evil among the evil—there is no way I can have any interactions with them.
What is the use of any further involvement with people such as these?

The bodhisattva knows and sees that it is difficult to rid beings of their evil karmic offenses. He should instead reflect in this manner:

These sorts of evil people are not few. It is through the application of vigor that they may be influenced to abide in dharmas such as they will delight in. For their sakes, I should intensify my resolve and exert myself to the utmost in diligent practice. I should redouble my practice in a millionfold application of vigor so that, later on, I will acquire great powers by which I will then be able to transform through teaching these most evil among evil beings who are so very difficult to awaken. I should be like the great king of physicians who, by resorting to some small circumstantial method, can cure beings' severe illnesses.

It is in this way that the bodhisattva does away with the disease of the afflictions and is then allowed to abide in whichever meritorious qualities he wishes. [He reflects:]

> I should feel doubly strong pity for these extremely evil beings who are burdened by grave karmic offenses and so I should bring forth profoundly great compassion for them, doing so like that especially fine physician who is abundantly endowed with kindheartedness as he cures the many sorts of illnesses. For those who are seriously ill, he brings forth deep pity and then diligently invents skillful means by which he can seek out an especially fine medicine for them.

It is in this manner that the bodhisattva should feel pity for all beings beset by the disease of the afflictions. Thus, even for the most evil among the evil and those beset with the most serious afflictions, he still feels profound pity. Hence he is diligent in creating means through which, by intensifying his resolve, he is able to cure them. And why? 57b

> No matter where the bodhisattva abides,
> If he fails to initiate the transformative teaching of beings,
> Thus allowing them to fall into the three wretched destinies,
> He is deeply deserving of the censure of the buddhas.

And so it is that the bodhisattva, no matter in what country he abides, and no matter whether he is in the city, a village, in the mountains, or beneath some tree—wherever he has the power through which to be able to benefit and teach beings—if he instead withdraws from them in disgust, resents their covetous attachment to the pleasures of the world, and thus becomes unable to initiate their transformative teaching, he thereby allows them to fall into the wretched destinies. This bodhisattva thereby becomes deeply deserving of the censure of all buddhas now abiding throughout the ten directions before whom he ought to feel deeply ashamed and embarrassed, [knowing that they would demand to know,] "Oh, how could you let such petty reasons cause you to abandon such a great endeavor?"

Therefore, if the bodhisattva does not wish to become someone deserving of the rebuke and censure of the buddhas, even when faced with all sorts of deceitful and extremely evil beings, he should not let his resolve sink away.

Rather he should benefit them in whatever way suits his power to help them. He should use all manner of expedient means and diligent resolve to begin their transformative teaching.

In this respect, he is like a brave military general. If the general's troops encounter catastrophic losses, he is the one who will then be severely reprimanded by the king. Since the soldiers themselves had no way of knowing [how to avoid this defeat], the king would not reprimand them.

Chapter 16

On Realizing the Faults of the Householder's Life

As the bodhisattva trains in this manner, he should know the serious faults of the householder's life. Why? If he knows those serious faults, he might then abandon the householder's life and enter the path. Moreover, he might then be able to instruct others, make them aware of the faults of the household life, and thereby inspire them to leave the home life and enter the path.

Question: What are the faults of the householder's life?

Response: As stated in a sutra where the Buddha informed Ugradatta:[243]

> The home life destroys all roots of goodness. The household is a deep forest of thorns from which it is difficult to escape. The household is a circumstance that destroys the dharmas of purity. The household is the dwelling place of all manner of bad ideation and discursion.[244] The household is the dwelling place of the foolish common person[245] unrestrained in corrupt and evil actions. The household is the place in which one dwells when carrying out every sort of unwholesome endeavor. The household is the gathering place of bad people. The household is the dwelling place of greed, hatred, and delusion. The household is the dwelling place of all forms of suffering. The household is the place where one entirely uses up all the roots of goodness established in previous lives.
>
> When the foolish common person abides in this household, he does what should not be done, says what should not be said, and practices what should not be practiced. When he dwells herein, he slights his parents as well as his teachers and elders. He does not respect the venerable fields of merit, the *śramaṇa*s, or the brahmans.
>
> The life of the householder involves causes and conditions conducing to craving, sorrow, grief, suffering, afflictions, and the many sorts of tribulations. The home life is the circumstance in which one encounters

the sufferings of harsh speech and scolding, wherein one becomes vulnerable to blades and cudgels, to being bound up and imprisoned, to being beaten, or to being subjected to [punitive] amputations.[246] One fails to plant whichever roots of goodness one has not yet planted and those roots of goodness one has already planted become vulnerable to destruction.

[The householder's life] is able to cause the common person involved in
57c these desire-related causal circumstances to fall into the wretched destinies. Causal circumstances related to hatred or delusion may also precipitate descent into the wretched destinies. [So, too], causal circumstances related to fearfulness may result in one's falling into the wretched destinies.[247]

The householder's life is a circumstance in which one does not maintain the aggregate (*skandha*) of the moral precepts, abandons the aggregate of meditative absorption, does not contemplate the aggregate of wisdom, does not acquire the aggregate of the liberations, and does not bring forth the aggregate of the knowledge and vision of liberation.

One is born into this householder's life, a circumstance in which parents lovingly dote on their sons, and in which one indulges affection for one's wife and children, for one's retinue, and even for one's carriages and horses. This situation encourages the proliferation of desires to the point where they become insatiable.

[The desires associated with] the householder's life are as difficult to fulfill as the ocean is as it swallows up every tributary that flows into it.

[The desires associated with] the household are as insatiable as a fire in its burning up of firewood.

The life of the householder involves ceaseless ideation and mental discursiveness that are just as continuous as the winds that blow through empty space.

The life of the householder conduces to misfortune in one's future existences just as surely as does delectable food laced with poison [surely leads to one's death].

The life of the householder, by its very nature, is linked to suffering and, in that, it is comparable to having enemies posing as close relations.

Being a householder is an obstruction, for it is able to block one's access to the path of the *ārya*s.

The householder's life is beset with discord arising from disputation and many different causes and conditions involving mutual opposition and conflict.

The householder's life involves much hatred associated with scolding and much censure over what is desirable versus what is detestable.

The household is impermanent. Even though it may have endured for a long time, it is bound for destruction.

The household is beset by many forms of suffering as one strives to acquire clothing, food, and so forth and then does whatever is necessary to preserve and protect them.

The householder's life is a circumstance involving much mutual doubting, just as when abiding in close proximity to thieves.

One's household is not intrinsically "mine." It is solely through inverted views and covetous attachment that, by resort to conventional designations, one claims "it exists."

The circumstance of the householder is like that of an actor who, although he may use all different sorts of makeup and costumes to present the appearance of a member of the aristocracy, before long, in but an instant, all of those adornments disappear and he resumes his role as someone who is poor and of inferior social status.[248]

The household is ever-changing. Once its components have come together, they are bound to fall apart and disperse.

A household is like a magical conjuration. It depends upon the mere aggregation of components and thus is devoid of any reality.

The household is like a dream. After a while, all of one's wealth and high social status are bound to be lost.

The household is like the morning dew. After a short while, it disappears entirely.

[The happiness derived from] the householder's life is like a mere drop of honey. Its flavor is extremely weak.

The household is like a thicket of thorns. As a person enjoys the taste of the objects of the five types of desire, poisonous piercings inflict injuries.

The household is analogous to a needle-beaked insect. Unwholesome ideation and discursive thought always gnaw at and consume the people within it.

Life as a householder sullies the purity of one's life. One becomes predisposed by it to engage in much cheating and deception.

The life of a householder is plagued by anxiety and worries. Thus one's mind is often muddled and confused.

The house becomes the common property of many others and it is vulnerable to destruction by [agents of] the king, thieves, floods, fires, and evil relatives.

The householder's life is freighted with many defects. It involves the commission of numerous erroneous actions. This being the case, an elder who is a lay bodhisattvas should well realize the faults of the householder's life.

Next we have:

The bodhisattva should know
The serious faults of the householder's life.
He should draw close to the practice of giving
And skillfulness in observing moral precepts, delighting in these.
Whenever one sees any almsman,
He should bring forth five threefold contemplations.

The lay bodhisattva should know in this way the tribulations of the householder's life. He should adopt in practice the excellence of giving and observance of moral precepts. "Giving" refers here to relinquishing the covetous mind. "Observing moral precepts" refers to purity of physical and verbal actions. "Skillfulness" refers to skillful restraint of the sense faculties. "Delighting in these" refers to like-mindedness and exultant happiness [in the adoption of these practices].

"Five threefold contemplations" refers to five different threefold contemplations one should take up whenever encountering an almsman.

The first of the threefold contemplations is as follows:

Contemplating [the almsman] as a good spiritual guide.[249]

58a Contemplating [the acquisition of] great wealth in future lives.[250]

Contemplating [one's giving] as assisting the realization of *bodhi*.[251]

There is yet another threefold contemplation, as follows:

Contemplating the conquering of miserliness.

Contemplating the relinquishing of everything.
Contemplating striving for the acquisition of all-knowledge.[252]

There is yet another threefold contemplation, as follows:
Contemplating in accordance with the teachings of the Tathāgata.
Contemplating refraining from seeking any karmic result.[253]
Contemplating the defeat of Māra.[254]

There is yet another threefold contemplation, as follows:
Contemplating those who come for alms as one's own retinue.[255]
Contemplating the importance of not abandoning the dharmas comprising "the means of attraction."[256]
Contemplating the relinquishing of what has been wrongfully acquired.

There is yet another threefold contemplation, as follows:
Contemplating dispassion.[257]
Contemplating the cultivation of kindness.
Contemplating nondelusion.

We should now explain this fifth of these five threefold contemplations:

Because an almsman has come, a bodhisattva may be able to diminish the three poisons. Through relinquishing some possession as a gift one may thereby bringing forth the contemplation of dispassion.[258]

Through providing causes and conditions for the happiness of the supplicant, one's thoughts of hatred become but scant. This is cultivation of the contemplation of kindness.

If the [merit from] this act of giving is dedicated to success in the unsurpassable path, this diminishes one's deluded mind states. This is the contemplation of nondelusion.

One should understand the meaning of the other contemplations in accordance with the above explanations.

Furthermore:

It is because of the almsman
That the bodhisattva perfects the six *pāramitā*s.
For this reason, one should feel great joy
On seeing someone who has come to seek alms.

The six *pāramitā*s consist of giving, moral virtue, patience, vigor, *dhyāna* concentration, and wisdom. It is because of the almsman that one becomes able to bring them to a state of completion. It is because he gains such benefit that, whenever a bodhisattva sees from afar that a supplicant is coming, his mind is filled with great delight and he thinks, "A walking field of merit has arrived here of his own accord. It is because of just such people as these that I shall be able to perfect the six *pāramitā*s." Now, how might this be so? [Consider the following:]

When one's mind feels no miserly cherishing for the object one gives, this is *dāna-pāramitā,* [the perfection of giving].

When one gives for the sake of attaining *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi,* [utmost, right, and perfect enlightenment], this is an instance of practicing *śīla-pāramitā,* [the perfection of moral virtue].[259]

When one is able to refrain from feeling hatred toward the mendicant, this is an instance of practicing *kṣānti-pāramitā,* [the perfection of patience].

When, as one is carrying out the act of giving, one refrains from reflecting on one's own resulting material scarcity while also not retreating from one's resolve, this is an instance of practicing *vīrya-pāramitā,* [the perfection of vigor].[260]

If, in giving to an almsman, at that very time when one is presenting the gift, one's mind remains fixed [in its resolve] and does not entertain any regretfulness, this is an instance of practicing *dhyāna-pāramitā,* [the perfection of meditative concentration].

By not apprehending [any inherent existence in] any dharma as one carries out an act of giving, by not seeking any karmic reward from it, and by remaining free of any attachment in this, thereby doing so after the manner of a worthy or an *ārya,*[261] when one then dedicates that act of giving to *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi,* one's giving then becomes an instance of practicing *prajñā-pāramitā,* [the perfection of wisdom].

Furthermore:

> As for the karmic results ensuing from giving the gift,
> He is able to know all of its various forms.
> He also knows the various faults associated with
> Keeping it at home due to miserliness.

As for the merit acquired from the giving of the gift that has been given as well as all the serious faults associated with keeping the gift due to miserliness, the bodhisattva completely comprehends all of these matters.

Question: If one gives it, what sort of merit is gained by that? And if one instead keeps it at home, what fault or blame is there in that?

Response: The bodhisattva uses true wisdom to understand this matter in the following manner, [reflecting:] 58b

After this gift has been given away, it is still mine [in terms of its ongoing karmic rewards]. However, if it is instead kept at home, it is not [rightfully] mine.

Once the gift has been given, it endures.[262] However, if it is instead kept at home, it will not endure.[263]

After the gift has been given, future-life happiness will follow from that. However, if it is instead kept at home, it will provide happiness only for a brief period of time.

Once the gift has been given away, there is no longer any need to be anxious about preserving and guarding it. However, if it is instead kept at home, one will continue to feel protective concern for it.

If one has already given away the gift, one's thoughts of affection for it become scant. However, if it is instead kept at home, one increases one's affection for it.

Once the gift has been given, one becomes free of [any thought of it as] "mine." However, if it is instead kept at home, it is [still thought of as] "mine."

Once the gift has been given, there is no [conception of] anyone to whom it belongs. However, if it is instead kept at home, there is [the conception of] someone to whom it belongs.

Once the gift has been given, one is free of concerns about it. However, if it is instead kept at home, one entertains many fears about it.

Once the gift has been given, it assists progress on the path to *bodhi.* However, if it is instead kept at home, it assists progress on the path of Māra.

Once the gift has been given, [the benefit from having given it] is endless. However, if it is instead kept at home, it remains finite [in its capacity to provide benefit].

Once the gift has been given, one continues to experience happiness from it. However, if it is instead kept at home, one continues to experience suffering [from one's concerns about it].

Having given the gift, one relinquishes afflictions. However, if it is instead kept at home, it increases one's afflictions.

Having given the gift, one gains great wealth and happiness. However, if it is instead kept at home, one does not gain great wealth and happiness.

Having given the gift, one has done the deed of a great man. However, if it is instead kept at home, one has done the deed of a petty man.

Having given the gift, one is praised by the buddhas. However, if it is instead kept at home, one is praised only by fools.

Furthermore:

Regarding one's wife, sons, and retinue
As well as one's good spiritual friends,
One's giving of wealth, and one's animals, too—
One should contemplate them all as mere illusory conjurations.
It is one's karma consisting of all of one's actions
That serves as their conjuring magician.

Regarding his wife, children, and so forth, the householder bodhisattva should contemplate them as mere illusory conjurations. They are just like phenomena manifesting as illusory conjurations that merely deceive a person's eyes. It is the karma of one's actions that serves as their conjurer.

As for phenomena such as one's wife, children, and so forth, they will all disappear before long. This is as explained in the sutras where the Buddha told the *bhikṣu*s, "All of one's actions are like an illusory conjuration that deceives and deludes foolish people for there are no genuinely-existent phenomena present there at all."

One should realize that it is because of karma that these phenomena exist. Once that karma has finally become exhausted, then they all disappear. Hence they are all like illusory conjurations. Thus one should reflect on them as follows:

I am not a possession of theirs,
Nor are they possessions of mine.
Those things and myself all belong to karma
And exist in accordance with karmic causes and conditions.
If one carries on right contemplation in this manner,
One should not create any bad karma.

[The bodhisattva reflects in the following manner:]

My father, mother, wife, children, relatives, fellow villagers, friends, slaves, maidservants, servant boys, guests, and such—none of them are able to save me, to be a refuge for me, or to serve as my ultimate resort. They are neither my self nor a possession of my self.

Not even the five aggregates, twelve sense bases, or eighteen sense fields constitute either a self or anything that is owned by a self. How much the less could this be so in the case of my parents, my wife, my children, or those other individuals?

Neither am I capable of serving as a savior for them, of serving as a refuge for them, or of serving as an ultimate resort for them. I too belong to my own karma and am thereby bound to accord with my karma in what I experience. They too belong to their own karma and are thereby bound to accord with their karma in what they experience.

[In this connection, regarding this matter of experiencing] good and bad karmic retributions, there are three bases for evaluating and assessing [this idea]:

First, it has meaningful significance.
Second, we see this in the sutras' explanations.
Third, we see this in presently manifest circumstances. 58c

[This being the case], one should not perform even the slightest bad physical, verbal, or mental karmic deed [even when it is done] for the sake of one's parents, wife, or children.

Furthermore:

Regarding a spouse,[264] the bodhisattva
Should bring forth three threefold contemplations

In addition to which there are another three that are threefold,
After which there are yet more sets of three that are threefold
as well.[265]

The lay bodhisattva should take up the threefold contemplations, as below.[266]

The first three are as follows: One's spouse is impermanent, bound to be lost, and bound for destruction.

There are three more contemplations: One's spouse is a companion for enjoyment and laughter now, but not a companion in future lives, a companion with whom to share meals, but not a companion in the undergoing of karmic retributions, and is a companion in times of happiness, but not a companion in [future] times of suffering.

There are three more contemplations: One's spouse is an object for the contemplation of the body as unlovely,[267] as malodorous and filled with filth, and as loathsome.

There are three more contemplations: One's spouse is to be contemplated as an adversary, as a source of injurious anguish, and as one who stands in mutual opposition [to one's aims].

There are three more contemplations: One's spouse is to be contemplated as a *rākṣasa,* a *piśācī,* and as physically ugly.

There are three more contemplations: One's spouse is to be contemplated as a cause for falling into the hells, as a cause for falling into the animal realm, and as a cause for falling into the realm of hungry ghosts.

There are three more contemplations: One's spouse is to be contemplated as a heavy burden, as a cause of decline, and as fearsome.

There are three more contemplations: One's spouse is to be contemplated as not-self, as of no certain loyalty, and as merely borrowed.

There are three more contemplations: One's spouse is to be contemplated as the cause for generating bad physical karma, as the cause for generating bad verbal karma, and as the cause for generating bad mental karma.

There are three more contemplations: One's spouse is to be contemplated as the basis for thoughts of lust, as the basis for thoughts of hatred, and as the basis for thoughts of annoyance.

There are three more contemplations:[268] One's spouse is to be contemplated as manacles, as chains, and as a cangue.

There are three more contemplations: One's spouse is to be contemplated as an obstacle to maintaining the moral precepts, as an obstacle to *dhyāna* concentration, and as an obstacle to wisdom.

There are three more contemplations: One's spouse is to be contemplated as a deep pit, as a net trap, and as a corral trap.

There are three more contemplations: One's spouse is to be contemplated as a natural disaster, as a plague, and as causing the anguish of decline.

There are three more contemplations: One's spouse is to be contemplated as associated with karmic offenses, as a black-eared kite,[269] and as a disastrous hailstorm.

There are three more contemplations: One's spouse is to be contemplated as symbolic of illness, as symbolic of aging, and as symbolic of death.

There are three more contemplations: One's spouse is to be contemplated as Māra, as the abode of Māra, and as fearsome.

There are three more contemplations: One's spouse is to be contemplated as emblematic of worry, as emblematic of anguish, and as emblematic of weeping.

There are three more contemplations: One's spouse is to be contemplated as a large jackal or wolf, as a *makara* sea monster, and as a huge leopard.

There are three more contemplations: One's spouse is to be contemplated as a black venomous serpent, as the Sakhalin sturgeon,[270] and as the force of violent pillaging.

There are three more contemplations: One's spouse is to be contemplated as not a savior, as not a refuge, and as not a shelter.

There are three more contemplations: One's spouse is to be contemplated as associated with failure, as associated with retreat, and as associated with physical exhaustion.

There are three more contemplations: One's spouse is to be contemplated as a thief, as a jailer, and as one of the minions in hell.

There are three more contemplations: One's spouse is to be contemplated as detention, as bondage, and as a fetter.

There are three more contemplations: One's spouse is to be contemplated as like mire, as like a flood, and as like being adrift.

There are three more contemplations: One's spouse is to be contemplated as fetters, as a lock, and as glue.

There are three more contemplations: One's spouse is to be contem-
59a plated as a fierce conflagration, as a spinning wheel of knives, and as a flaming torch.

There are three more contemplations: One's spouse is to be contemplated as of no benefit, as a thicket of thorns, and as noxious poison.

There are three more contemplations: One's spouse is to be contemplated as on a burial mound, as obscuring radiance, and as symbolic of desirous attachment.

There are three more contemplations: One's spouse is to be contemplated as symbolic of resentment, as symbolic of whips and cudgels, and as symbolic of swords and lances.

There are three more contemplations: One's spouse is to be contemplated as symbolic of rage, as symbolic of disputatiousness, and as symbolic of being beaten with a cudgel.

There are three more contemplations: One's spouse is to be contemplated as symbolic of proximity to what one detests, as symbolic of separation from what one loves, and as symbolic of quarrelsomeness.

To sum up what is essential: One's spouse is to be contemplated as symbolic of every sort of malodorousness, repulsiveness, and impurity, as symbolic of every sort of ruin and corruption, and as symbolic of all sorts of bad karmic roots.

Therefore, having visualized such contemplations of one's spouse and children, the lay bodhisattva should bring forth feelings of renunciation, leave behind the householder's life, cultivate goodness, and do good deeds. If one is unable to leave behind the householder's life,[271] one should at least refrain from creating any sort of bad karma in one's relationship with one's spouse.

Additionally:

> If one cherishes a preferential affection for one's children,
> One should then use the power of wisdom to relinquish it, and,
> Based on [such feeling for] one's children, practice equal regard for all
> By which one then extends universal kindness to all beings.

If the lay bodhisattva realizes that he cherishes an especially great partiality toward his own children, he should then use the power of wisdom

to reflect upon it and relinquish it. One who is possessed of the power of wisdom should reflect in this manner:

> It is only once the bodhisattva develops a mind of equal regard for all that he then attains *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*. If one's mind discriminates between those who are regarded as superior and those who are regarded as inferior, then he will have no attainment of *bodhi.* This *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi* is acquired through [realization of] the singular characteristic of signlessness. It is not attained through discriminating on the basis of different characteristics.
>
> Now, I am seeking the realization of *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*. If the mind of affection that I maintain toward my own children is preferentially greater than for others, then this is an instance of retaining discriminations as to who is regarded as superior and who is regarded as inferior. This does not qualify as "equal regard for all." It is just a case of making discriminations based on different characteristics and it is not a case of perceiving a singular unitary character.
>
> If I allow this to happen, then I will remain very far from *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*. Therefore I should not bring forth a mind of preferentially greater affection for my own children.

One should then take up a threefold contemplation regarding one's own children.

> First: They are for me like thieves, for, although the Buddha has taught that one is to feel equal kindness for all, because of my preferentially greater affection for them, this has been destroyed, resulting in my failure to maintain equal regard for everyone.
>
> Second: They bring about the harm inflicted by thieves, for it is because of these children that roots of goodness have been destroyed and a life of great wisdom has been obstructed.
>
> Third: It is because of these children that I have gone against the middle way practice of the path and do not practice in accordance with the path.

Then, due to [having contemplated] one's children, one immediately takes up the practice of being equally kind toward all beings. One should then reflect in this manner:

My children have come from some other place and I too have come from some other place. My children will go off to some different location and I too shall depart to some different location. I do not know where they shall go and they do not know where I shall go. They do not know where I have come from and I do not know where they have come from. These children are not my possessions. Why then do I just suddenly and for no reason develop these bonds of affection? This is as described here:

59b They and I do not know of each other
Where we have come from or where we shall go.
In what respect then are they and I such "close relatives"
That we conceive of each other as "mine"?

Additionally, [one should reflect:]

Throughout the course of samsara's beginningless cycle of births and deaths, all beings have previously been my children. I too have been their child. In this sphere of conditioned dharmas, there is no fixed relationship whereby this one is my child or that one is someone else's child. Why? While traveling through the six destinies of rebirth, beings take turns in serving as either the father or the son of the other. This is as described here:

Ignorance covers over the eye of wisdom.
Time and time again, during the course of our births and deaths,
We have gone and come, each having much that we have done,
As each has taken turns in serving for the other as father or son.

One becomes attached through desire for the pleasures of the world,
Remaining oblivious to the existence of the supreme endeavor.
Time and time again, adversaries become each other's friends,
And, time and time again, friends become each other's adversaries.

[One continues to reflect, as follows:]

Therefore I should adopt expedient means that compel me to refrain from feeling thoughts of either hatred or love. Why? If one has those one considers to be "good friends," then one will always seek in many different ways to benefit them, whereas, if one has those one considers

to be "adversaries," one will always bring forth many different sorts of thoughts that cause one to refrain from benefiting them. Hence, if one retains these thoughts of hatred or love, then one will remain unable to gain a penetrating understanding of the uniform equality of all dharmas.

After death, those whose minds discriminate between those who are superior and those who are inferior are bound to be reborn in a place where wrong [practice] is prevalent, whereas, those who adhere to right practice are bound to be reborn in a place where right practice is prevalent.

Therefore, I should refrain from cultivating wrong practices. If one practices uniformly equal regard toward other beings, then one will be bound in the future to attain all-knowledge[272] where the uniform equality [of all things is realized].

Chapter 17

On Entering the Temple

In this way, the lay bodhisattva should refrain from generating thoughts of attachment, thoughts imputing the existence of a self, or thoughts imputing the existence of anything belonging to a self. Why is this so? As for whatever has become such an object of affectionate attachment that one finds it difficult to relinquish, to accord with the Dharma, one should relinquish it. If one can give it away, then this is the means for getting rid of this fault. Bodhisattvas who are able by this means to remain free of thoughts of attachment or miserliness are capable of abiding as householders.

Question: It might happen that the lay bodhisattva has things for which he feels a miserly cherishing and to which he is affectionately attached. When someone comes wishing to receive them as a gift, what should he do?

Response: 59c

Regarding those things to which one is attached,
Whenever someone comes seeking to obtain them,
One should exhort and persuade his mind
To simply relinquish them, for he must not indulge miserliness.

As for possessions toward which a bodhisattva feels a covetous cherishing, if a beggar were to come urgently seeking to obtain it from him, saying, "If you give this thing to me, you will quickly attain buddhahood," the bodhisattva should immediately exhort and persuade himself to go ahead and give it to him, reflecting as follows:

> If I fail to relinquish this possession just now, this thing is certainly bound in due course to depart far from me anyway. Once I am at the point of death, this thing will not accompany me when I go. If this is so, then this possession is characterized by the inevitability of its departure.
>
> Now, for the sake of *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi* and for the sake of perfecting *dāna-pāramitā* (the perfection of giving), I shall give it away.

Later, when I am on the verge of death, my mind will be free of regrets. The sutras state that if one dies with a mind free of regrets, one will be reborn in a good place. This amounts to a great benefit. How then could I fail to relinquish this?

If, even after having exhorted oneself in this manner, one still retains a miserly cherishing for the possession, then, politely declining, he should speak to the beggar, saying:

I am now still only new in my training.
Hence my roots of goodness are not yet well established.
Thus my mind has not yet achieved sovereign mastery in this.
I hope that, later on, I will be able to give to you.

One should politely decline the beggar's entreaty, saying:

Do not become angry with me. I have only recently brought forth the resolve and my roots of goodness are not yet fully developed. Thus I have not yet gained adequate strength in the methods of the bodhisattva's practice. As a consequence I am not yet able to relinquish this possession. Later, once I have gained strength in this and my roots of goodness have become completely developed, my resolve will then be solid enough that I will be able to give it to you.

Additionally:

If it happens that the community, failing to abide in harmony,
Is about to suspend the Dharma activities prescribed in the sutras,
The bodhisattva should do whatever lies within his powers
To implement skillful means that will prevent their termination.

It could happen that, due to the circumstances associated with some matter, the monastic community becomes involved in disputes so severe that it splits into factions, thus causing its Dharma activities to be abandoned. In such a case, the lay bodhisattva should apply diligent thought to implementing some skillful method to restore the relationship between the factions, doing so with a mind free of partisan favoritism. One may use gifts of valuables, [mediating] discussion, or reverential entreaty to somehow cause the factions to become reunited.

The situation could have been caused by deficiencies in clothing or food, by someone with wrong views obstinately creating obstacles, by the speaker of Dharma seeking donations or support, or by the audience failing to be respectful. In such circumstances, the lay bodhisattva should use whichever skillful means are appropriate, perhaps doing so by contributing valuables, or perhaps doing so by speaking to those involved with a humbled mind and sincere entreaties, thus somehow preventing their abandonment of Dharma activities.

If the abandoning of Dharma activities is prevented, this amounts to lighting the lamp of the Buddha's Dharma and making an offering to all buddhas of the ten directions and the three periods of time.

Additionally:

> On the abstinence days, take the eight moral precepts
> And draw near to those pure in the moral precepts.
> Because of the good causes and conditions created by the precepts, 60a
> Be deeply sincere in observing them with fond regard and reverence.

As for the abstinence days, they are the eighth, the fourteenth, the fifteenth, the twenty-third, the twenty-ninth, and the thirtieth days of the lunar month. One additionally observes the three days of personal restraint. To determine these three days of personal restraint, one counts forward fifteen days for each day of restriction, starting with the winter solstice, [doing this three times] until one comes to the forty-fifth day thereafter.

On each of these inauspicious days, there are many more ghosts and spirits going about inflicting wanton violence. Because common people of the world observed these as days to be on their guard [against improper behavior], they made a practice of not eating after midday on such occasions. The Buddha took this circumstance as a basis for teaching them the practice of "the single-day precept observance," since they could thereby create merit and make the *deva*s happy when they descended [from the heavens] to monitor the quality of people's behavior in the world. As a consequence, the *deva*s would be inspired to be protectively mindful of those who observe this practice.

The lay bodhisattva would take even the most minor matters as bases for increasing beneficial actions. How much the more so then would he be sure to avoid failing to accord with these previously ordained days of abstinence? Therefore one should take up the practice of the single-day

abstinence dharma. One not only garners self-benefit by doing this but also thereby becomes able to benefit others.

Question: How is it that this abstinence dharma is to be observed?

Response: One should utter the following words:[273]

> Just as all the *ārya*s have forever abandoned killing, have cast aside the knife and cudgel, are always free of hatred, are possessed of a sense of shame and dread of blame, and treat beings with kindness and compassion, I, So-and-so, for one day and one night, shall also abandon killing, shall cast aside the knife and cudgel, shall remain free of hatred, shall be possessed of a sense of shame and dread of blame, and shall also treat beings with kindness and compassion, adopting this dharma in emulation of the *ārya*s.
>
> Just as the *ārya*s have forever abandoned taking anything not given, are pure in their physical actions, and are content with whatever they receive, I now, for one day and one night, shall also abandon theft and taking what is not given, and shall pursue pure livelihood, adopting this dharma in emulation of the *ārya*s.
>
> Just as the *ārya*s have forever cut off sexual indulgence and have abandoned such worldly pleasures, I now, for one day and one night, shall also cut off sexual indulgence, shall abandon such worldly pleasures, and shall purely cultivate celibate *brahmacarya,* adopting this dharma in emulation of the *ārya*s.
>
> Just as the *ārya*s have forever abandoned false speech and always practice true speech and speech that is right and direct, I now, for one day and one night, shall also abandon false speech and shall also practice true speech and speech that is right and direct, adopting this dharma in emulation of the *ārya*s.
>
> Just as the *ārya*s have forever abandoned the consumption of intoxicants,[274] this because intoxicants are the basis for falling into neglectfulness, I now, for one day and one night, shall also abandon intoxicants, adopting this dharma in emulation of the *ārya*s.
>
> Just as the *ārya*s have forever abandoned singing, dancing, making music, wearing flowers, perfumes, necklaces, and other bodily adornments, I now, for one day and one night, shall also abandon singing,

dancing, making music, wearing flowers, perfumes, necklaces, and other bodily adornments, adopting this dharma in emulation of the *ārya*s.

Just as the *ārya*s have forever abandoned the use of large highand wide beds, preferring instead small beds and sitting cushions made of straw, I now, for one day and one night, shall also abandon large high and wide beds, preferring a small bed and sitting cushions made of straw, adopting this dharma in emulation of the *ārya*s. 60b

And just as the *ārya*s have forever abandoned meals after midday and have abandoned actions and eating done at the wrong times, I now, for one day and one night, shall also abstain from eating after midday, abandoning actions and eating done at the wrong time, adopting this dharma in emulation of the *ārya*s.

This is as described in the following lines:

Killing, stealing, sexual indulgence, and lying,
Consuming intoxicants and also wearing flowers and perfumes,
Wearing necklaces, singing, dancing, and so forth,
Also high beds and eating after midday—

These are behaviors that the *ārya*s have abandoned.
Hence I too now act accordingly,
Dedicating these causes and conditions for the creation of merit
To everyone's joint success in the attainment of buddhahood.

As for "drawing close to *bhikṣu*s pure in observing the moral precepts," the lay bodhisattva should draw close to those *bhikṣu*s who are completely able to guard and uphold the precepts of moral purity, who have thoroughly developed the meritorious qualities, and who defend against and distance themselves from the many sorts of evil.

As for "because of the good causes and conditions created by the precepts," in addition, one should draw near to *bhikṣu*s who observe the moral precepts, whose physical and verbal actions are pure, and whose mental actions are direct, good, and free of the many sorts of evil.

As for being "deeply sincere in treating them with fond regard and reverence," with respect to the above-referenced *bhikṣu*s whose minds are direct, whose actions are imbued with goodness, who uphold the moral precepts,

and who have thoroughly developed the meritorious qualities, one should extend supreme reverence toward them that is accompanied by deeply sincere thoughts of fond regard.

Question: If the lay bodhisattva is to bring forth a fond and reverential attitude toward the *bhikṣu*s who uphold the moral precepts and who have thoroughly developed the meritorious qualities, should he then adopt a disdainful or angry attitude toward *bhikṣu*s who break the moral precepts?

Response:

If one encounters someone who breaks the moral precepts,
One should not adopt a disdainful or angry attitude toward them.

Supposing that a lay bodhisattva were to encounter a *bhikṣu* who breaks the precepts and engages in corrupt practices, whose deportment is defective, whose cultivation is defiled, who conceals his own faults, and who, while failing to observe celibate *brahmacarya,* nonetheless claims to observe celibate *brahmacarya,* even then, one should not behave toward this *bhikṣu* with slighting disdainfulness or angry thoughts.

Question: If one is to refrain from feeling hatred toward him, then just what sort of attitude should one adopt?

Response:

One should bring forth thoughts of pity toward him,
Making it the afflictions themselves that one condemns.

If a lay bodhisattva encounters a precept-breaking *bhikṣu,* he should not feel hatred or adopt a slighting and disdainful attitude toward him. Rather he should feel pity for him and think of ways to benefit him, reflecting:

> How terrible! This man has been able to encounter the sublime Dharma of the Buddha. He has succeeded in leaving behind the destinies of hell-dwellers, animals, hungry ghosts, form and formless realm *deva*s, and those reborn in borderlands [distant from Dharma]. Being complete in his faculties and hence neither deaf, dumb, or dimwitted, he has encountered the sublime Dharma of the Buddha through which one may distinguish what is good from what is disgraceful and through which one's mind may still retain right views and understand what is meaningfully principled.

This human body is so difficult to come by. It is just as in the case of the one-eyed tortoise out on the great sea who, emerging from the depths, happens by chance to poke his head up through a knothole in a floating plank. Even when compared to the rarity of this, the opportunity to gain a human rebirth is doubly difficult to acquire.

Having heard the Dharma of the Buddha through which one can extinguish all forms of evil, become liberated from all suffering and afflictions, and succeed in reaching right wisdom, one relinquishes all of one's life-supporting possessions however extensive they may be and then severs forever one's relations with one's relatives and clan, having no one for whom one retains any further sentimental attachment. Regardless of whether one is from the common classes or from an elevated caste, because one has faith in the Buddha's words, one is able to leave behind the home life. 60c

One constantly hears of the moral transgressions associated with breaking the moral precepts, of the associated self-loathing, of becoming someone rebuked and censured by the wise, of coming to have a bad reputation that circulates widely, and of being constantly beset by doubts and regrets. Then, at death, one is bound to plummet into the wretched destinies. Even having heard of these circumstances, one nonetheless still persists in breaking the moral precepts.

It is through practice of the ten courses of good karmic action that one then gains a human rebirth. Even so, one remains unable to put them to skillful use in accordance with Dharma so as to secure one's own self-benefit.

What a shame! The power of the three poisons is so extremely terrible that they constantly assail beings and remain difficult to successfully abandon.

In all sorts of ways, the buddhas rebuke the evil actions caused by the evil bandits of the afflictions.

If, in accordance with reality and in a principled fashion, one contemplates the matter in this way, [one realizes] one should not slight and disdain those people who have broken the moral precepts. One also reflects as follows:

If I am not completely able to abandon thoughts of anger and condescending disdain, I should consider that, given that the Dharma of the Buddha is

as vast as a great sea, it could be that there are exceptional circumstances of which I am unaware.

This accords with the passage in the Mahayana *Sutra of the Resolute King,*[275] wherein it is recorded that the Buddha told Ānanda:

It could be that there are *bhikṣu*s of dull faculties who are obstructed by their mental dimness, whose minds are not completely clear, and who do not possess a penetrating comprehension of the true character of dharmas. They may forever be bearing in mind dharmas associated with the perception of existence or with the perception of nonexistence whereupon they then seize on perceptions of existence whereby they produce perceptions of male versus female, produce perceptions of obstacles associated with transgressions, produce perceptions of defilement, or produce perceptions of purity.

The production of these sorts of perceptions is a function of dull faculties. If someone's mind is not completely clear, then he is bound to commit transgressions. Ānanda, if, within the sphere of all dharmas, someone remains unable to well understand their character, then this is a case of failing to completely comprehend them.

From the very beginning on forward to the present, there has never been any fundamental substance, nature, or characteristic of any dharma that could be apprehended. This sort of person fails to realize such things. When one produces perceptions such as these, then he becomes indistinguishable from the followers of non-Buddhist traditions.

Ānanda, within all the dharmas I have explained, there are exceptional circumstances that are consistent with complete clarity and purity. In these circumstances, there is no such thing as a "transgression" or a "transgressor."

Ānanda, the commission of transgressions is characterized by the existence of doubts and regrets, by stupidity, and by benightedness. The commission of transgressions involves the production of perceptions of the existence of a being, perceptions of the existence of a self, perceptions of the existence of a living entity, or perceptions of the existence of a person. In all cases, it is because of the fallacious view that a "self" exists in association with the body that one speaks of some "transgressor." But, within my Dharma, no such "person" exists at all.

If it were the case that, within my Dharma, there was some fixed and genuinely existent self, being, living entity, person, body-associated self, or other such thing, I would not declare that, within my Dharma, there are exceptional circumstances and it is not the case that there are no such exceptional circumstances. From the beginning on through to the present, my Dharma has always been pure and completely clear.

Furthermore, Ānanda, if it were definitely the case that transgressions existed and that there was some being who takes on those transgressions, then it would be the case that the body is identical with some "soul." But [positing any such view] would amount to falling into the eternalist fallacy by the dictates of which no path to buddhahood could even exist.

Then again, if the body were distinct from some "soul," then [positing any such view] would amount to falling into an annihilationist view. In that case too, no path to buddhahood could exist. In much the same manner, all of the sixty-two false views might be posited as consistent with *bodhi,* but these cases are all wrong.

Therefore, Ānanda, in the midst of the great assembly, I roar the lion's 61a
roar and, possessed of the fearlessnesses, declare that within my Dharma, there are exceptional circumstances and it is not the case that there are no such exceptional circumstances. From its very origin on through to the present, it has always been pure and completely clear.

Ānanda, if moral transgressions had any sort of definite existence, then there could never be any nirvana. If that were so, then I would not state that, within of my Dharma, there may be exceptional circumstances.

Ānanda, in truth, my Dharma has been pure and completely radiant from its very inception on forward to the present. Consequently my disciples are able to subdue their minds so that they are stable and free of doubts and regrets. They become free of the evil of moral transgressions and become pure in their practice of the path.

Having reflected in this manner, the bodhisattva should refrain from maintaining a hostile attitude toward those who break the moral precepts. He should also reason in this manner:

Those who have taken on these precepts will definitely succeed in coming to abide in *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*. How is this so? I have heard

that even bodhisattvas who have reached the right and definite position (*samyaktva niyāma*) still have had occasions on which they have committed moral transgressions. Take for instance that case from one hundred thousand *kalpa*s ago when a bodhisattva slandered an arhat who had already extinguished all contaminants, saying of him that he was an arhat in name only.

I have also heard of that bodhisattva thirty-one *kalpa*s prior to the present one who, although he had already reached the right and definite position, nonetheless stabbed a steam-enterer with a spear. Additionally, I have heard of that case during this current auspicious *kalpa* where a bodhisattva slandered Krakucchanda Buddha,[276] saying to him, "How could one of you bald pates ever succeed in attaining buddhahood?"

It would be hard to understand [the actual circumstances of] beings such as these. Hence, what would be the use in my knowing in this situation what constitutes gain versus loss or right versus wrong? They will each individually undergo the consequences of what they have each individually done. How is that any of my business? If I wish to pursue actual knowledge of their circumstances, it could result in injury to myself through my making judgments regarding other beings. This is the sort of thing that the Buddha himself would not permit.

This accords with the testimony of the sutras, which state:

The Buddha told Ānanda, "If a person makes judgmental assessments regarding others, he will thereby bring injury on himself. It is I alone who can make such assessments. [Only] beings who are my equal may also make such assessments."[277]

This is as described in the following lines:[278]

A covered pitcher may still be empty
While an uncovered pitcher may be empty as well.
Other covered pitchers may themselves be full
As, so too, may uncovered pitchers be full.

One should realize that, throughout the world,
There are these four different types of people.

Matters of awesome deportment and possession of merit,
Whether existent or not, are very much the same as this.

If one is not possessed of all-knowledge,
How could one make judgments about others?
How could one merely observe another's deportment
And yet then know the level of their virtue?

It is right wisdom and the possession of a wholesome mind
That define the characteristic qualities of a worthy person.
By merely observing someone's outward deportment,
How could one know what lies within?

There are those who, inwardly, possess merit and wisdom,
Even as, outwardly, they reveal no awesome deportment.
As they wander about, there is no one who recognizes them.
In this, they are like hot coals hidden by ashes.

If one assesses inward qualities on the basis of externals
And hence develops an attitude of slighting condescension,
One brings ruin on oneself as well as on one's own roots of goodness 61b
So that, at the end of one's life, one falls into the wretched destinies.

Those displaying outward pretenses of awesome deportment
And parading about as if they were worthies or *āryas*
Even as they only possess impressive rhetoric
Are like the sounds of thunder that fail to bring rain.

As for the places to which someone else's mind proceeds,
One may be mistaken about them, for they are hard to know.
Therefore one must not make false assessments
With regard to any being.

It is only someone possessed of all-knowledge
Who can fully know their minds' mind states
And the subtle and secret places to which they may proceed.
Hence, with regard to judging other beings,

The Buddha said, "It is only those who are my equals
Who can pass judgment on other beings."
If the Buddha himself spoke in this manner,
Who then could have the ability to pass judgment on others?

If one merely observes someone's outward deportment
And thereby presumes to assess his inner virtue,
One will ruin one's own roots of goodness
Just as a flooding river may collapse its own banks.

If one is mistaken about such things,
One creates immense karmic obstacles.
Therefore, with regard to these people,
One should not bring forth an attitude of slighting disdain.

Therefore the lay bodhisattva should refrain from adopting an attitude of slighting arrogance or anger toward those who may have broken the moral precepts. What's more, regarding this matter of upholding the moral precepts or breaking the moral precepts, a layperson does not dwell together with these people. What basis then might he have for acquiring knowledge of such matters?

[One should reflect:]

If I strive to make such clear distinctions with regard to these matters, then I am bound to create the obstacle of transgressions and, because of such karmic obstacles, I shall be bound to undergo every sort of suffering for thousands of myriads of *kalpa*s.

This is as stated in *Sutra on the Inaction of Dharmas*.[279] Additionally, in a Mahayana sutra[280] the Buddha told Ugra the Elder:

Thus the lay bodhisattva should feel pity for any *bhikṣu* who has broken the precepts, [reflecting as follows,] "This man's defilement is such that he engages in what is evil and engages in what is unwholesome. Why? This man has donned the Dharma robes of the Tathāgata, the well-extinguished lord of the *ārya*s, yet he has not made his mind pliant and has not been able to subdue his sense faculties. Hence he engages in such self-destructive conduct."

Moreover, one of the Buddha's sutras states:

> One does not slight those who have not yet become accomplished in learning. These are not a person's moral transgressions so much as they are transgressions committed at the behest of the afflictions themselves. It is because of these afflictions that this person has engaged in such unwholesome behavior.

Also, within the Buddha's Dharma, there are exceptional circumstances. This person may actually be able to rid himself of these moral transgressions. Then, with right mindfulness as the cause and condition, he may be able to enter the Dharma position. If he does indeed gain entry to the right and definite position, then he will eventually abide in *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*.

Then again, as stated by the Buddha himself, "It is only through the possession of wisdom that one can then defeat the afflictions." He additionally stated:

> One should not make false assessments of others. If one makes such assessments, he thereby wreaks injury on himself. It is only one in possession of the wisdom of a buddha who is able to completely understand these matters.

[Hence one should reflect], "Matters of this sort are not such as I can know." One should then refrain from adopting an angry and condescending attitude toward those who may have broken the precepts.

Moreover:

> When a bodhisattva enters a temple, 61c
> He should observe all the protocols of deportment,
> Should act respectfully and bow down in reverence,
> And should make an offering to the *bhikṣu*s.

When this lay bodhisattva is about to enter a Buddhist temple, right before entering, he should bow down outside the temple door in a five-point prostration and should then reflect:

> This is the dwelling place of good people. It is the dwelling place of those who practice emptiness, the dwelling place of those who practice

signlessness,[281] the dwelling place of those who practice wishlessness, the dwelling place of those who practice kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity,[282] and it is the dwelling place of those who practice in right conduct and right mindfulness.

If one encounters *bhikṣu*s perfect in deportment, serene in gaze, and restrained in wearing the robe and holding the bowl, *bhikṣu*s who bear observation in the way they sit, lie down, walk, stand, awaken, retire, drink, eat, speak, and remain silent, *bhikṣu*s who also bear observation in the appearance of their countenance and in their going forth and coming to a halt—if one encounters *bhikṣu*s who cultivate the four stations of mindfulness practiced by the *ārya*s, who uphold the moral precepts purely, who recite and study the Dharma of the sutras, and who are refined in their contemplations and devoted to sitting in *dhyāna* meditation—having observed them, with respectful solemnity and reverential mind, one should bow down in reverence to them. Then, drawing closer, one should greet them and reflect thus:

> Even were I for *kalpa*s in number as a Ganges' sands
> To always perform great acts of giving at the shrines of the *deva*s
> And never cease or neglect this practice,
> That would still not compare to becoming a monk but a single time.

This bodhisattva should then reflect:

If, in pursuing wealth in accordance with the Dharma, I were to always perform great acts of giving for a number of *kalpa*s equal to the sands in the Ganges, all the merit derived from that giving would still not even equal that from merely generating the resolve to leave behind the householder's life, how much the less could it equal the merit of actually doing so?

How could this be so? [This is so because:]

The householder's life is possessed of countless serious faults, whereas a monastic can perfect countless meritorious qualities.

The householder's life is overrun with confusion and disturbance, whereas the monastic's life is carefree and serene.

The householder's life belongs to the sphere of defilement, whereas the monastic's life has nothing to which it belongs.

The household is the place for committing bad actions, whereas the monastic life is the place for good actions.
If one pursues the householder's life then one becomes stained by all manner of defilement, whereas the monastic abandons every sort of defilement.
The householder becomes mired in the mud of the five types of desire, whereas the monastic abandons the five types of desire.
For the householder it is difficult to pursue a pure livelihood, whereas it is easy for a monastic to pursue right livelihood.
The householder is subject to the incursions of many adversaries, whereas the monastic is free of incursions by adversaries.
The householder is encumbered by many troublesome obstructions, whereas the monastic remains free of troublesome obstructions.
The household is the place beset by sorrows, whereas the monastic life is the place of joyfulness.
The household is the gateway to the wretched destinies, whereas the monastic life is the gateway to benefit.
The household life is one of bondage, whereas the monastic's life is one of liberation.
The householder is subject to various forms of fear, whereas the monastic is free of fear.
The householder possesses whips and cudgels, whereas the monastic has no whips or cudgels.
The householder owns a sword and spear, whereas the monastic has no swords or spears.
The householder is subject to the heat of regretfulness, whereas the monastic is free of the heat of regretfulness.
Because the householder seeks many things he is subject to suffering, whereas the monastic is happy because he seeks nothing.
The householder tends toward frivolous agitation, whereas the monastic is bound for tranquility.
The householder is worthy of pity, whereas the monastic has nothing for which he could be pitied.
The householder is subject to worry and sorrow, whereas the monastic is free of worry and sorrow. 62a

The householder is of lowly social station, whereas the monastic is one who is lofty and prominent.

The householder is burning up with a raging fire, whereas the monastic extinguishes it.

The householder's life is lived for others, whereas the monastic is able to act in his own self-interest.

The householder has but little power, whereas the monastic has abundant power.

The householder enters the gateway of defilement, whereas the monastic enters the gateway to purity.

The householder grows an ever larger thicket of thorns, whereas the monastic crushes the thicket of thorns.

The householder achieves success in lesser dharmas, whereas the monastic achieves success in the great Dharma.

The householder engages in what is unwholesome, whereas the monastic cultivates what is good.

The householder is bound to have regrets, whereas the monastic is bound to become free of regrets.

The householder fills up an ocean of tears, milk, and blood, whereas the monastic dries up the ocean of tears, milk, and blood.[283]

The household life is censured and considered base by buddhas, *pratyekabuddha*s, and *śrāvaka* disciples, whereas the monastic life is praised by buddhas, *pratyekabuddha*s, and *śrāvaka* disciples.

The householder tends to be discontented, whereas the monastic tends to be easily contented.

The householder causes Māra to be delighted, whereas the monastic causes Māra to feel sorrowful.

The householder is bound for later ruination, whereas the monastic is bound to become free of ruination.

The householder is one who is easy to defeat, whereas the monastic is one who is difficult to defeat.

The householder is like a slave, whereas the monastic is like a lord.

The householder is bound to remain forever in samsara, whereas the monastic will ultimately reach nirvana.

The householder has fallen into a pit, whereas the monastic has escaped from a pit.

The householder abides in darkness, whereas the monastic emerges into bright light.

The householder remains unable to subdue his own sense faculties, whereas the monastic is able to subdue his sense faculties.

The householder tends toward haughtiness and grandiosity, whereas the monastic abides in humility and modesty.

The householder's life tends toward what is coarse and inferior, whereas the monastic's life is one of venerable nobility.

The householder has origins from which he comes, whereas the monastic has no origins from which he comes.[284]

The householder has many duties, whereas the monastic has but few duties.

The householder attains only minor karmic fruits, whereas the monastic is bound to attain great karmic fruits.

The householder tends to fall into flattery and deviousness, whereas the monastic cultivates a straightforward character.

The householder has an abundance of sorrows, whereas the monastic has an abundance of joy.

The householder's life is like being shot with an arrow whereas the monastic's life is like [being able to] extricate that arrow.

The household life is like being afflicted with a sickness, whereas monastic life is like becoming cured of that sickness.

Because the householder practices dharmas associated with evil he ages swiftly, whereas because the monastic practices good dharmas, he tends to be youthful and strong.

The householder courses in neglectfulness synonymous with death, whereas the monastic possesses the life of wisdom.

The householder tends to indulge in deception, whereas the monastic behaves in a manner that is genuine.

The householder has many things for which he seeks, whereas the monastic seeks but few things.

The householder sips a broth mixed with poisons, whereas the monastic drinks the elixir of immortality.[285]

The householder suffers harm from numerous external encroachments, whereas the monastic is free of any such harms brought about by external encroachments.[286]

The householder is bound for a ruinous decline, whereas the monastic has no such ruinous decline.

The householder's life is like fruit from a poisonous tree, whereas the monastic's life is like fruits suffused with sweet dew nectar.

The householder is bound to remain associated with whatever he detests, whereas the monastic abandons the suffering of association with whatever he detests.

The householder is beset with the suffering of separation from what he loves, whereas the monastic remains in close proximity to what he loves.

The householder is burdened with heavy delusions, whereas the delusions of the monastic are only slight.

62b The householder fails to carry on with a life of pure conduct, whereas the monastic lives a life of pure conduct.

The householder's life destroys one's resolute intentions, whereas the monastic succeeds in his resolute intentions.

The householder is beyond rescue whereas the monastic has acquired the means to be rescued.

The householder is bound for solitude and poverty, whereas the monastic does not fall into solitude and poverty.

The householder has no shelter, whereas the monastic does indeed have shelter.

The householder has no place of refuge, whereas the monastic does indeed have a place of refuge.

The householder abides in the midst of much hatred, whereas the monastic is possessed of an abundance of kindness.

The householder carries a heavy burden, whereas the monastic has relinquished that burden.

The householder is beset with endless responsibilities, whereas the monastic has none of those responsibilities.

The householder's life is characterized by encounters with karmic transgressions, whereas the monastic's life is characterized by encounters with fortuitous karma.

The householder is subject to distressing afflictions, whereas the monastic becomes free of distressing afflictions.

The householder's life is one beset by heat, whereas the monastic life has no such heat.[287]

The householder's life involves disputation, whereas the monastic is free from disputation.

The householder is involved in defiling attachments, whereas the monastic is free of defiling attachments.

The householder tends toward arrogance, whereas the monastic becomes free of arrogance.

The householder esteems wealth, whereas the monastic esteems meritorious qualities.

The householder is subject to disastrous harm, whereas the monastic puts an end to disastrous harm.

The householder is subject to decrease and loss, whereas the monastic enjoys increasing advantage.

The householder's life is easily come by, whereas the monastic's life is one which is so rarely encountered that one may take it on but once in thousands of myriads of *kalpa*s.

The householder's life is easy to practice in, whereas the monastic's life involves difficult practices.

The household simply goes along with the current, whereas the monastic moves against the current.

The householder's life is one of drifting in a flood, whereas the monastic's is one of riding on a raft.

The householder floats along on a torrent of afflictions, whereas the monastic has a bridge by which he passes beyond them.

The householder's life takes place on the near shore, whereas the monastic's life is concerned with reaching the far shore.

The householder's life is one of being tied up in bondage, whereas the monastic's life is one of separation from bondage.

The householder harbors enmity, whereas the monastic relinquishes enmity.

The householder is bound to follow the laws of officialdom, whereas the monastic follows the law of the Buddha.

The householder's life is characterized by mishaps, whereas the monastic's life is one that has become free of mishaps.
The household life has suffering as its karmic fruits, whereas the monastic life has happiness as its karmic fruits.
The householder tends to develop an agitated demeanor, whereas the monastic possesses awe-inspiring dignity.
Householder companions are easily come by, whereas monastic companions are only rarely found.
The householder takes a wife as his companion, whereas the monastic takes a solid resolve as his companion.
The householder is entrapped in a corral, whereas the monastic escapes from the corral.
The householder tends to esteem inflicting troubles on others, whereas the monastic esteems benefiting others.
The householder tends to esteem the giving of wealth, whereas the monastic esteems the giving of Dharma.
The householder holds up the banner of Māra, whereas the monastic holds up the banner of the Buddha.
The householder has some place he goes back to, whereas the monastic demolishes all places of refuge.
The householder is concerned with the growth of his body, whereas the monastic is one who abandons the body.
The householder plunges into the deep undergrowth, whereas the monastic escapes the deep undergrowth.

Additionally:

Moreover, in regard to becoming a monastic,
One's mind should feel a deep yearning admiration.

As this lay bodhisattva thus ponders the meritorious aspects of becoming
62c a monastic, he should feel a yearning admiration for it, wondering:

Oh, when will I myself finally be able to leave behind the home life and acquire such meritorious qualities?

Oh, when will I myself be able to leave behind the home life and carry out in correct sequence the dharmas of the *śramaṇa* wherein one

participates in the *poṣada* recitation of the moral precepts, joins in the rains retreat, and freely sits in the order of seniority?

Oh, when will I be able to don the Dharma robes of the *ārya*s who are imbued with their cultivation of the moral precepts, meditative concentration, wisdom, liberation, and the knowledge and vision of liberation?

Oh, when will I be able to maintain the deportment of the *ārya*s?

Oh, when will I be able to abide peacefully, meditating in a quiet forest?

Oh, when will I be able to carry the almsbowl and go out on the almsround, either being given something or not being given anything, either being given much or only a little, either being given delectable food or bad food, either being given cold food or hot food, thus proceeding in sequential order along the almsround, thereby coming by what is needed merely to sustain the body, accepting alms merely as one might apply ointment on an ulceration or as one might apply grease to the axle of a cart?

Oh, when will I become free of distress and joyfulness over the eight worldly dharmas?

Oh, when will I be able to restrain the six sense faculties in the same manner as one might confine some dog, deer, fish, snake, monkey, or bird? Just as a dog enjoys a village, a deer enjoys mountains and marshes, a fish enjoys ponds, a snake is fond of his den, a monkey enjoys a jungle, and a bird enjoys flying in the air, the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind always enjoy forms, sounds, smells, tastes, touchables, and dharmas as objects of mind.[288] The sense faculties are not things that common people of shallow wisdom and weak resolve are able to subdue. It is only one possessed of wisdom, solid resolve, and right mindfulness who is able to control the rebels of the six senses so that they are prevented from doing harm to one's sovereign mastery and fearlessness.

Oh, when will I be able to delight in *dhyāna* meditation, delight in recitation and study of the sutras' dharmas, delight in cutting off afflictions, delight in cultivating good dharmas, and delight in donning rag robes, going forth with the body well covered, recalling then that, formerly, when I was a layperson, I was for the most part neglectful, but, now, in order to bring about self-benefit and the benefit of others, I should be diligently vigorous?

Oh, when will I be able to follow the dharmas of the path practiced by bodhisattvas?

Oh, when will I too become one who can serve as an unsurpassable field of merit for those in the world?

Oh, when will I be able to quit being a slave of familial affection?

And when will I be able to be freed from this prison of the household?

This is as stated here:

Whenever one bows down in reverence at any stupa or temple,
Inspired by the Buddha, one should bring forth three thoughts.

Having already been inspired to feel a yearning to go forth into homelessness, whenever this lay bodhisattva enters the grounds of a stupa or temple and bows down in reverence, he should bring forth three thoughts. And what are these three? They are as follows:

Oh, when will I become one worthy to receive the offerings of *deva*s, dragons, *yakṣa*s, *gandharva*s, *asura*s, *kiṃnara*s, *mahoraga*s, humans, and nonhumans?

Oh, when will I be able to produce the *śarīra* relics imbued with spiritual powers that, distributed throughout the world, bestow benefit on beings?

I now bring forth the deep resolve to practice the great vigor by which I shall attain *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*. Then, after serving as one of the buddhas, I shall enter the nirvana without residue.

Additionally:

Whenever meeting any of the *bhikṣu*s,
Offer to serve in a manner appropriate to whatever he is doing,
63a Quietly obey all instructions he might offer,
And be unstinting in providing any requisites he needs.

After this lay bodhisattva bows down in reverence at any stupa site, he seeks to visit the *bhikṣu*s, including those who teach Dharma, those who uphold the moral precept codes, those who study sutras, those who study *mātṛkā*s, those who study the bodhisattva canon, those who dwell in a forest hermitage, those who wear robes made of cast-off rags, those who obtain their sustenance from almsrounds, those who eat but once each day, those who only sit and never lie down, those who do not drink broths after midday, those who possess only the three-part robe,[289] those who wear only robes

sewn from coarse cloth, those who take their rest wherever they stop to sit, those who dwell only at the base of a tree, those who dwell in charnel fields, those who dwell only out on open grounds, those who have but little that they wish for, those who are easily satisfied, those who dwell in seclusion, those who sit in *dhyāna* meditation, and those who exhort and instruct others.

One should offer up one's service to each *bhikṣu* in a manner appropriate to whichever practice he focuses upon. For instance:

If one goes to the dwelling place of a *bhikṣu* who studies Abhidharma, then, in accordance with those dharmas and their nature and characteristics, whether they be dharmas associated with the mind or whether they be unassociated compositional factor dharmas, one should inquire into any related points about which one has doubts. Having inquired, one should then proceed to study them.

If one meets an expert on the moral precept codes, one should inquire about the causes and conditions involved in the commission of moral transgressions, about the relative severity of moral transgressions, about the means for extinguishing moral transgressions, and about the *avadāna* stories.[290] Having inquired about these matters, one should then study and practice accordingly.

If one meets someone specializing in study of sutras, one should inquire into the meanings contained within the Āgama sutra collections, practice accordingly, and become learned oneself.

If one encounters someone specializing in study of *mātṛkā*s associated with the *Sutra on Benefiting the Many,* the *Udāna*s, the *Assalāyano,* and the *Dharmapada,* one should then study such sutras.

If one meets someone specializing in the bodhisattva canon, one should inquire about the six *pāramitā*s and also the matter of using expedients and then, having thus inquired, one should study and practice accordingly.

If one meets someone abiding in a forest hermitage, one should study those dharmas related to practice in seclusion.

If one meets someone practicing *dhyāna* meditation, one should study his *dhyāna* meditation methods.

As for the other types of *bhikṣu*s, on meeting them, one should inquire into whatever they have chosen to practice and then study and practice accordingly, doing so without disobeying any instructions they provide.

As for the matter of guarding one's speech, when meeting *bhikṣu*s, one should thoroughly restrain oneself from talking, remaining serenely silent. Giving due regard to issues of time and place and considering the circumstance at hand, one should ensure that one's mind does not stray into confusion and that one speaks but few words.

Additionally, as regards the place in which the speaker of Dharma resides, in accordance with whatever those *bhikṣu*s and others there have grown short of, according to one's own capacity to do so, one should supply them with such things, whether they be robes, bowls, sitting cloths,[291] or other life-supporting requisites, not being stinting in one's generosity in providing any of them.[292]

Why should one do this? A bodhisattva should provide even for people who are bad, how much the more so should one provide for *bhikṣu*s, those who are possessed of meritorious qualities. In assisting them, one should not even be sparing of one's own flesh, how much the more readily then should one provide them with the outward possessions that serve as causes and conditions supporting their progress on the path.

Additionally:

> When one engages in giving,
> Do not instigate afflictions in others.

When one carries out an act of giving, if one gives to but a single person, it might well be that another person, not having received anything, becomes angry. This is a matter that one should skillfully assess in one's practice of
63b giving. Do not influence others to become afflicted with anger. Why must one take care in this?

> The careful consideration one accords those with common minds
> Should surpass even that which one reserves for arhats.

When this lay bodhisattva provides clothing, drink and food, medicines, and bedding for *bhikṣu*s, making offerings to them, welcoming them and escorting them off, bowing in reverence, and drawing personally close to them, he should be even more solicitous about the needs of those still possessed of a common person's mind than he would be in his deferential treatment of an arhat.

And why should this be so? Arhats do not differ in their mental response to gain and loss, ill repute and esteem, praise and blame, or pain and pleasure. But because a common person is subject to feelings of craving, hatred, miserliness, and jealousy, he is able in these circumstances to commit transgressions because of which he may fall into the hell realms, the animal realms, or the hungry ghost realms.

Consequently one should be extremely careful to be protective of those with a common person's mentality. Thus, when a bodhisattva offers his services, he does so in a manner intended to benefit all beings. His giving is not done merely for the sake of his own happiness, is not done for the sake of acquiring karmic rewards for himself in future lives, and is not done merely as if it were some business transaction.

Additionally:

> Due to having given some sort of material wealth,
> One may then be able to draw forth others through Dharma giving.
> In accordance with whatsoever is desired, one bestows benefit,
> And then instructs others in bringing forth the unsurpassable resolve.

Even as one pursues one's own benefit, whether it be through the giving of robes, through the giving of bowls, or through the many other various sorts of giving of material wealth, if *bhikṣu*s such as these have not yet entered the [right and definite] Dharma position and have not yet attained the fruits of that path, this lay bodhisattva should encourage the *bhikṣu*s he benefits to bring forth the vow to attain *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*. Why? Having drawn them forth through the giving of wealth, he may then be able to draw them forth through the giving of Dharma. It may well be that, due to their fondness and respect for the benefactor who has made gifts to them, they will be inclined to believe and accept what he says to them.

Additionally:

> For the sake of protecting and preserving the Dharma,
> One should remain unstinting even if it means sacrificing one's life.
> One should strive to cure *bhikṣu*s who have fallen ill
> Even to the point where one makes a gift of one's own body.

Even to the point of sacrificing his own life in order to preserve and protect the Dharma, this lay bodhisattva should be diligently vigorous in overcoming those who detest the Dharma of the Buddha, whether they be from among the sixty-two types of non-Buddhist traditions or whether they be from among the retinues of Māra.

Among the disciples of the Buddha, there may be those who deviate in their practice through spurious distortion of the Buddha's Dharma. [The influence of] such people should be overcome in a manner consistent with Dharma. This constitutes the protecting and preservation of the Dharma. Furthermore, with increased thoughts of faith and respect, one should make offerings of the four requisites to those who are learned speakers of the Dharma. This too constitutes the protection and preservation of the Dharma.

If one studies, recites, explains, or transcribes sutras, Vinaya texts, Abhidharma texts, *mātṛkā*s, or canonical bodhisattva texts while also instructing others in their study, recitation, explanation, and transcription, due to these causes and conditions, the Dharma will remain for a long time, providing benefit to everyone.

To laypeople and monastics alike, one should extol and speak in praise of the benefits of the Dharma's enduring for a long time while also describing the extreme evil bound to ensue in the event of the Dharma's rapid demise.
63c One should also bear in mind that the Tathāgata, from the distant past on forward to the present, practiced the bodhisattva path, carried out all kinds of difficult practices, and only then succeeded in acquiring this Dharma.

For these reasons, with diligent resolve, one should be vigorous in using it to show, instruct, benefit, and delight both laypeople and monastics, thereby perhaps instigating them to become enlightened or perhaps instigating them to reach the station of the *avaivartika*.[293]

To summarize the causes and conditions subsumed in the protection of the Dharma, they amount to enabling others' acquisition of the means for universal peace and happiness while also enabling one's own cultivation of [the Dharma] in accordance with the manner in which it was proclaimed. All of these ideas define what is meant by protecting and preserving the Dharma.

Additionally, it is the Dharma of the lay bodhisattva to see to it that any sick *bhikṣu* gets medical treatment. This bodhisattva should be willing even to sacrifice his own life to cure that illness, not being the least bit stinting in

his efforts. This is a matter of the greatest importance. The monastics should seek this essential service from the laity, instigating them to personally look after whoever is sick, supplying them with medical care and medicines.

Additionally:

> One gives with a resolute mind
> And, having given the gift, one remains free of any regrets.

Whether this bodhisattva is doing some deed for the sake of protecting and preserving right Dharma, or whether he is personally looking after someone fallen ill, responding in a manner appropriate to the circumstance, he bestows offerings with a mind free of any regrets. It is this that qualifies as pure giving.

If one gives without seeking for any resulting karmic rewards, if one gives without distinguishing, "This one should be able to be a recipient whereas that one should not be a recipient," and if one gives only with thoughts of pity and the motivation to be beneficial in one's actions, these are the factors that define pure giving. This is as described below:

> If one gives with a compassionate mind,
> This is what qualifies as giving that is pure.
> He does not say of this one, "He is a field of merit,"
> And does not say of that one, "He is not a field of merit."
>
> If someone is to take up the practice of giving,
> He remains free of any selfish motivation as a basis for giving.
> If one does this for the sake of acquiring some karmic reward,
> Then this just amounts to seeking to earn interest.
>
> Therefore, having pledged to give,
> One proceeds with a mind free of regret or resentment.
> Even the most minor amount of merit thus derived
> Is all dedicated to realization of the unsurpassable path.

All of the merit produced by the causes and conditions of giving should be entirely dedicated to *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*. One should not seek to derive from it any benefit or bliss in present or future lifetimes and should

not seek to thereby gain the fruits of the Small Vehicle. It is solely for the sake of beings that one seeks the realization of *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*.

As for my earlier statement that discussion of the additional lay bodhisattva practices would follow—that explanation has now been concluded. These practices were all selected from their various locations throughout the Great Vehicle sutras. In order to accord with the Dharma taught in the sutras, the bodhisattva abides in these very practices and thereby swiftly attains *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi*. The treatment of the second bodhisattva ground shall be mostly devoted to the practices of the monastic bodhisattva. Now, however, we shall proceed to a discussion of the jointly shared practices taken up by both lay and monastic bodhisattvas.

Chapter 18

The Jointly Shared Practices

Question: You stated earlier that you would discuss the practices jointly shared by both lay and monastic bodhisattvas. You could now begin that discussion. 64a

Response: They are:

Patience;
Dharma giving;
Dharmas patience;[294]
Contemplation;
Not distorting the Dharma;
Maintaining reverential esteem for the Dharma;
Refraining from presenting any obstacle to Dharma;
Making offerings in support of the Dharma;
Resolute faith;[295]
Cultivation of emptiness;
Not being covetous or envious;
Acting in accordance with one's own words;
Giving lamp light;
Giving musical performances;
Giving means of transport;
Right vows;
Thought imbued with the means of attraction;
Benefiting and comforting beings;
Maintaining a mind of equal regard toward everyone.

These are the essential dharmas jointly practiced by both laypeople and monastics. Hence a verse says:

> Practicing patience results in a well-formed, handsome body.
> The giving of Dharma results in knowledge of previous lifetimes.

By dharmas patience, one acquires the *dhāraṇī*s.[296]
Contemplation results in the procuring of wisdom.
By never distorting any dharma
One always acquires right recollective mindfulness.

As for "practicing patience results in a well-formed, handsome body," this means that, if one is able to endure harsh speech, curses, hateful oaths, being bound and tied, being assailed with knives and staves, being tortured, and being beaten and whipped, being able to endure all of this without any quavering or variation in one's state of mind—the karmic result procured through such patience is that, whether one is reborn among humans or *deva*s, one always obtains a well-formed body. Then, later on, when one becomes a buddha, one's major marks and minor characteristics are incomparable in their perfection.

As for "the giving of Dharma results in knowledge of previous lifetimes," this means that those who practice the giving of Dharma become able to know the events that have occurred throughout the course of countless past *kalpa*s. The giving of Dharma refers to explaining all of the many different distinctions present in the teachings of the *śrāvaka* disciple vehicle, the *pratyekabuddha* vehicle, and the buddha vehicle, providing explanations of the associated meanings and principles. Although there are thirty-five different karmic rewards resulting from the giving of Dharma, the most essential among them is the gaining of the knowledge of past lifetimes. The causes and conditions associated with the speaking of Dharma bring about the severance of doubts held by others. Consequently the corresponding karmic result is that one comes to know previous lifetimes.

As for "by dharmas patience, one acquires the *dhāraṇī*s," "dharmas" refers here to those dharmas that are associated with emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness, with the six *pāramitā*s, with the grounds through which the bodhisattva progresses, and with the dharmas practiced by all bodhisattvas. One so thoroughly comprehends and clearly understands them that one's mind becomes able to acquiesce in them and uphold them in practice. This is what is meant by "dharmas patience."

If one practices this patience, then one gains the means for "comprehensive retention" (*dhāraṇī*) as a result. "Comprehensive retention" refers to

the ability to never forget the significance of any of the scriptures one has ever heard or recited even after hundreds of thousands of myriads of *kalpa*s.

In "contemplation results in the procuring of wisdom," "contemplation" refers to the judicious assessment of good dharmas and the making of right distinctions regarding their significance. As a consequence, one becomes able to attain their benefits in both present and future lifetimes.

As for the idea that by "not distorting [the Dharma]," one's mind acquires "right mindfulness," "refraining from distortion" refers to being straightforward and free of flattery. If one cultivates this dharma, then one gains the ability to maintain solid mindfulness in the midst of all dharmas.

Additionally:

> If one esteems the Dharma, the Dharma will be solidly enduring.
> If one does not create obstacles, one will be protected.
> Through offerings in support of the Dharma, one meets the buddhas.
> Through resolute faith, one sheds all difficulties.

"If one esteems the Dharma, the Dharma will be solidly enduring" means that if one maintains veneration, esteem, and reverence for the Dharma, then the Dharma will be solidly enduring. "Solidity in the Dharma" refers to the fact that, whatever dharma one accepts and upholds in practice, that will all naturally become so solid and enduring that one can never be shaken or 64b
turned back in its practice. Later on, when one becomes a buddha, one will have many bodhisattvas and *śrāvakas* as disciples. Having come to abide in these solidly maintained dharmas, no one will ever be able to obstruct one in the practice of the dharmas one has received. Additionally, "solidity" refers here to the ability of the Dharma to abide for a long time.

"If one does not create obstacles, one will be protected," means that, no matter whether it is with regard to someone's speaking Dharma or someone's being able to hear the Dharma, one refrains from perversely creating obstacles to their being able to do so. As a consequence, later on, when one attains buddhahood, both the *deva*s and the people of the world will jointly serve as protectors of one's Dharma.

If while one has still not yet attained buddhahood one is ever able to protect and preserve the right Dharma of the buddhas, and if, after the Buddha's

passing into nirvana, one strives to protect his Dharma legacy, one will then be able to encounter the next buddha when he appears in the world.

For these reasons, bodhisattva and *śrāvaka* disciple practitioners alike should all exert themselves to the utmost in thoroughly preserving and protecting the Dharma.

In "through offerings in support of the Dharma, one meets the buddhas," "offerings" refers to demonstrations of reverential respect in all endeavors related to the Dharma. For instance, in a Dharma congregation where there will be the giving of Dharma, with a reverential mind, one makes offerings to those who speak on the Dharma, sets up a Dharma seat for them, establishes places for *dhyāna* meditation, and provides decorative adornments for the place where the lectures on Dharma will take place. Because of such earnest intentions and fondness in making offerings for the sake of Dharma, one will be able to encounter the buddhas.

In "through resolute faith, one sheds all difficulties," "faith" refers to the arising of profound zeal and aspiration with respect to all good dharmas. It is because of this dharma that one becomes able to abandon the eight difficulties.

It is through the "resoluteness" [of one's faith] that one becomes able to extinguish all karmic offenses. Thus, through the power of one's resolve, one freely comprehends the import of all good dharmas. This is comparable to when, in cultivating the ten universal bases (*kṛtsnāyatana*), one becomes freely able to comprehend them in accordance with one's wishes.[297]

If one has abundant power of resolute faith, one can then extinguish the measureless karmic evil one has created due to karmic transgressions throughout beginningless time in samsara. This accords with the earlier discussion in the chapter on repentance of karmic transgressions.

Additionally:

> Through cultivating emptiness one avoids neglectfulness.
> By avoiding covetousness, one succeeds in whatever is beneficial.
> Through actions faithful to one's words, one extinguishes afflictions.
> Through the giving of lamp light, one acquires the heavenly eye.

In "through cultivating emptiness, one avoids neglectfulness," "cultivation" is of two types, namely cultivation involving realization and cultivation consisting of practice. Due to the power associated with cultivating

emptiness, one believes that all conditioned dharmas are false and deceptive, yet still does not abide in emptiness. One realizes then that all dharmas are not fixed entities. Consequently, one always naturally focuses and restrains one's mind so that one does not fall into neglectfulness.

In "by avoiding covetousness, one succeeds in whatever is beneficial," "covetousness" refers to bringing forth thoughts desirous of appropriating others' possessions. If one rids oneself of this condition, then whatever one seeks to accomplish will meet with success and whatever one wishes for, those wishes will all be fulfilled.

As for "through actions faithful to one's words, one extinguishes afflictions," if one immediately carries out what one has said one will do, then one will succeed in severing afflictions. If, in all that one does, one always acts in a manner consistent with one's pronouncements, then the karmic propensities associated with the afflictions[298] that have always imbued one's mind in life after life up to the present—these will all be entirely extinguished. One will thereby transform the nature of one's evil habitual karmic propensities associated with the afflictions.

As for "through the giving of lamp light, one acquires the heavenly eye," if one lights lamps as offerings to buddhas, *śrāvaka* disciples, and *pratyekabuddha*s and also makes such offerings wherever there are their stupas, images, or *śarīra* relics, because of these actions, one will acquire the heavenly eye as a karmic result.

Additionally:

> Through offerings of music, one gains the heavenly ear as a result.
> By giving means of transport, one gains the bases of psychic power. 64c
> Through right vows, one reaches a pure land.[299]
> Through the means of attraction, one's sangha will be complete.

As for "through offerings of music, one gains the heavenly ear as a result," it is by making offerings of musical performances to the Buddha on the occasion of great Dharma assemblies[300] that one gains the heavenly ear as a karmic result.

In "by giving means of transport, one obtains the bases of psychic power," "means of transport" refers to carriages, sedan chairs, elephants, horses,

and the like. There are others who state that one may also gain the bases for psychic power through the giving of shoes, slippers, and such.

As for "through right vows, one reaches a pure land," one may take rebirth in a pure land in a manner corresponding to one's vows, thereby becoming able to go to a pure land where everything is made of gold, silver, crystal, coral, amber, mother-of-pearl, carnelian, and countless other precious things.

"Through the means of attraction, one's sangha will be complete," means that, if a bodhisattva perfects the practice of the four means of attraction, he will acquire a perfectly complete sangha. Thus, by attracting beings through giving, pleasing words, beneficial actions, and joint endeavors, later, when one becomes a buddha, one will have a perfectly pure sangha consisting of countless bodhisattvas and *śrāvaka* disciples just as is the case with Amitābha Buddha who has just such a twofold sangha perfect in its purity. As for [those bodhisattvas'] "perfection in vows," this is as discussed earlier in the treatment of the ten vows.

Additionally, there are these lines:

> Through benefiting beings,
> One becomes loved and respected by all.
> By preserving a nondual mind holding all in equal regard,
> One is able to become one who is supremely victorious.

Whatever the bodhisattva does in all physical, verbal, and mental actions is for the sake of benefiting beings and causing them to acquire peace and happiness. As a consequence, beings all revere and respect him. If the bodhisattva maintains equal regard for all beings whether they be adversaries, close friends, or those who are neutral in their relationship with him, and if he refuses to forsake any being, the karmic result of this will be that he will become supremely victorious. "Victorious" here refers to the ability to triumph over greed, hatred, delusion, and all of the other afflictions and bad dharmas. One who is able to succeed in this is known as a "buddha."

Question: People all have eyes, ears, nose, tongue, mouth, and so forth. There are no differences between them in this regard. That being the case, how then might one be able to know which among them is a buddha?

Response: A buddha possesses the thirty-two major physical marks of a great man. One should realize that those possessed of these marks are buddhas. Both laypeople and monastics should be able to distinguish and completely recognize the thirty-two marks, coming to know with respect to this particular physical mark which particular dharma brought about its acquisition and coming to know with respect to this particular dharma which particular sort of action brought about its acquisition. One should also understand these corresponding actions. And why? If one wishes to develop a particular meritorious quality, one should know its corresponding physical mark and if one wishes to acquire a particular physical mark, one should know the corresponding actions by which it is acquired.

Question: By what means would one be able to understand matters such as these?

Response:

In the chapter on the marks of dharmas,
Each one of the marks has three distinctions.

In the Abhidharma's chapter on the thirty-two marks, each and every one of the physical marks has three types of distinctions. One should know all of these.[301]

Question: What is meant by "each and every one of the marks has three different distinctions"?

Response:

The first explains the substance of each mark.
The second explains the karmic effects associated with each mark.
And the third explains the karmic actions producing each mark.

The physical mark consisting of a "wheel" emblem on the hands and on 65a
the feet is a matter that has already been discussed. Wheel-turning kings also have these marks. Bodhisattvas also have these marks. Other people may have this physical mark as well. However, these cases are not the same, that's all.

As for this wheel mark on the hands and the feet, the palms of the hands and the soles of the feet have a mark consisting of a thousand-spoked

wheel that is so perfect and utterly clear in its detail that it looks like an inscribed pattern.

[As for that mark whereby the Buddha's] feet are so stable in their stance when standing up that he does not move at all, this is "the mark of securely planted feet."

The mark consisting of proximal [finger and toe] webbing as soft and thin as that of a royal goose marked by lines so utterly clear as to be made from real gold thread—this is "the mark of having webbed fingers and toes."

Softness and tenderness [of hands and feet] like the down of the tala palm[302] or the skin of a baby wherein they are more rosy in hue than the rest of the body—this is "the mark of soft hands and feet."

Fullness in seven places: the palms of both hands; the soles of both feet; the surface of the neck; and the two subaxillary regions—this is what is meant by "the mark of fullness in seven places."

Long fingers that are slender and straight—this is "the mark of long fingers."

Long and broad heels are "the mark of broad heels."

The body being seven cubits in height and in no way crooked—this is "the mark of a large and erect body."

Prominent elevation of the top of the feet—this is "the mark of high arches."

Body hair grown upwards in a clockwise spiral—this is "the mark of upwardly spiraling body hair."

Legs gradually increasing in thickness after the manner of an *aiṇeya* antelope—this is "the mark of antelope-like legs."

The two hands being able to touch the knees even when standing erect—this is "the mark of long arms."

Having the male organ retracted after the manner of the thoroughbred horse or elephant—this is "the mark of genital ensheathment."

Having the most pure sort of golden radiance—this is "the mark of the golden hue."

Having skin that is soft, that appears as if it was made from refined gold, and that cannot be smudged by dirt—this is "the mark of fine skin."

Each and every bodily pore has but a single hair grown from it—this is "the mark of having but a single hair in each pore."

Having a white hair mark between the brows that is the color of white agate—this is "the mark of the white hair tuft."[303]

Having an upper body broad and massive like that of a lion—this is "the mark of the lion-like torso."

Having large rounded shoulders—this is "the mark of large round shoulders."

Having the area below the axilla flat and full—this is "the mark of sub-axillary fullness."

Because the tongue is invulnerable to injury by wind, cold, or heat, it is able to skillfully distinguish all flavors in a manner unmatched by any other person. This is "the mark of being aware of each and every flavor."

Having a body as thick and wide as the trunk of the *nyagrodha* tree[304]—this is "the mark of a round body."

Having the round *uṣṇīṣa* bulge atop the crown upon which the hair grows in a clockwise spiral—this is "the mark of the fleshy prominence atop the crown."

Having a tongue as red as a red lotus that is broad, long, and thin—this is "the mark of broad and long tongue."

Having a voice like the king of the Brahma Heavens and the *kalaviṅka* bird—this is "the mark of a Brahmā-like voice."

Having a jaw that is round and as broad as a mirror—this is "the mark of the lionlike jaw."

Having teeth that are as white as white agate or the *kuṇḍa* jasmine blossom—this is "the mark of white teeth."

Having teeth that are not uneven or skewed—this is "the mark of straight teeth."

Having teeth that are close-set and free of gaps—this is "the mark of perfect teeth."

Having teeth well matched above and below—this is "the mark of forty teeth."

Having bright and clear eyes in which black and white areas are distinctly delineated and there are no reddening surface veins—this is "the mark of blue eyes."

Having eyelashes that are not mismatched above and below, that blink
65b in unison, and that are neither too long nor too short—this is "the mark of eyelashes like the king of bulls."

Through respectfully welcoming and escorting away those who are venerated and through making sustaining offerings to those who are at stupas and temples, doing so in places where there are Dharma assemblies, and where Dharma is spoken—it is because of doing these things that one acquires hands and feet that have the wheel mark.

Due to having [planted the karmic causes that result in] this mark, one who is a layperson is destined to become a wheel-turning king who acquires a large population of subjects. If one who has this mark instead leaves the home life and studies the path, he will acquire a retinue consisting of many disciples.

Through continuing to solidly uphold all dharmas one has received without ever forsaking them, one acquires the mark of solidly planted feet. Due to having [planted the karmic causes that result in] this mark, one becomes one who cannot be the least bit moved by anyone at all.

Through always cultivating the four means of attraction, namely giving, pleasing words, beneficial actions, and joint endeavors, one acquires the mark of proximal webbing of fingers and toes. Due to having [planted the karmic causes that result in] this mark, one quickly attracts a community of other people.

Through giving fragrant, sweet, delectable, and soft foods and beverages to others, including giving them to those that are venerated, providing them with everything they need, one comes to possess the mark of soft and tender hands and feet while also obtaining the mark of fullness in seven places. Due to having [planted the karmic causes that result in] these marks, one mostly receives fragrant, sweet, delectable, and soft foods and beverages, is rescued from life-threatening circumstances, and acquires a life span of increased duration.

Also, through taking on the moral precept of abstaining from killing beings, one acquires the mark of slender and long fingers and toes, the mark of fullness of the heels, and the mark of the large and erect body. Due to having [planted the karmic causes that result in] these marks, one's life span is bound to be long-lasting.

Through increased and unfailing development of the good dharmas one has taken on, one acquires the mark of high arches and the mark of having

bodily hairs that grow upwardly in a clockwise spiraling fashion. Due to having [planted the karmic causes that result in] these marks, none of the meritorious qualities that one has developed recede or disappear.

Through being able to offer unstinting instruction in special skills and classic texts and through making gifts of shoes, slippers, and such, one acquires the mark of legs that gradually increase in the thickness of their shape in a manner similar to those of the *aiṇeya* (antelope).[305] Due to having [planted the karmic causes that result in] this mark, one rapidly learns whatever one cultivates or studies, doing so in a manner that accords with one's wishes.

Through unstintingly and completely granting the requests of those who come seeking something, one acquires the mark of long arms. Due to having [planted the karmic causes that result in] this mark, one is able to gain personal power, is able to engage in immensely generous giving, and is able to skillfully establish harmony among others.

Through not allowing estrangement to occur among other beings or among one's relatives, and through being able to cause those who have become estranged to be reunited, one acquires the mark of male genital ensheathment. Due to having [planted the karmic causes that result in] this mark, one acquires many disciples.

Through giving fine and perfectly clean clothing, bedding, halls, and dwellings, one acquires the mark of the golden hue as well as the mark of thin and fine skin. Due to having [planted the karmic causes that result in] these marks, one acquires fine and perfectly clean clothing, bedding, halls, and dwellings.

Through being well able to look after and protect those worthy of one's offerings whether they be monastic preceptors, monastic Dharma teachers,[306] one's parents, one's elder and younger siblings,[307] or those worthy of veneration and esteem, one acquires the mark of a single clockwise spiraling bodily hair in each hair pore and the mark of the mid-brow white hair tuft adorning one's countenance. Due to having [planted the karmic causes that result in] these marks, one becomes someone who has no peer.

Through using speech imbued with a sense of shame and dread of blame, speech that is compliant with the circumstances, and speech that is pleasing, one acquires the mark of having a lion-like torso and the mark of having

large and round shoulders. Due to having [planted the karmic causes that result in] these marks, whoever sees one never tires of looking at one.

Through providing medical care, medicines, food, and drink to those who are sick while also personally seeing to their care, one acquires the mark of fullness in the subaxillary region as well as the mark of being able to clearly distinguish each and every flavor. Due to having [planted the karmic causes that result in] these marks, one's body is only seldom assailed by sickness.

65c Through the giving of parks, groves, sweet fruit, bridges, luxuriantly thriving trees, ponds, wells, food and drink, flowers, incenses, necklaces, and buildings, by building stupas, merit halls,[308] and such, and also through bringing forth many things as gifts at such times as offerings are made to the assembly—through doing these things, one acquires the mark of a body resembling the trunk of the *nyagrodha* tree as well as the mark of having the fleshy *uṣṇīṣa* prominence atop one's crown. Due to having [planted the karmic causes that result in] these marks, one is readily honored and regarded with the highest esteem.

Through cultivating the practice of truthful speech and gentle speech during the long night [of previous lifetimes], one acquires the mark of the broad and long tongue as well as the mark of having the Brahmā-like voice. Due to having [planted the karmic causes that result in] these marks, one has the voice replete with five excellent qualities. Those five excellent voice qualities are:

One's voice is easily understood;
A listener can never get enough of listening to this voice;
Its sound is deep and far-reaching;
Its sound is pleasing to the ear of the listener;
And its sound does not easily fade away.

Through practicing truthful speech and nonfrivolous speech during the long night [of previous lifetimes], one acquires the mark of the lionlike jaw. Due to having [planted the karmic causes that result in] this mark, one's words are definitely trusted and accepted.

Through never slighting someone after making an offering to them and through being freely generous in making offerings, one acquires the mark of white teeth and the mark of straight teeth. Due to having [planted the

karmic causes that result in] this mark, one acquires a pure, harmonious, and like-minded retinue.

Through truthful speech during the long night [of previous lifetimes] and through abstaining from slander, one acquires the mark of forty teeth and the mark of closely set teeth. Due to having [planted the karmic causes that result in] these marks, one acquires a unified retinue that is invulnerable to being impeded or destroyed.

Through having sincere intentions, through thinking fondly of others, through looking upon beings with a harmonious expression free of desire, hatred, or delusion, one acquires the mark of blue eyes as well as the mark of eyelashes like the king of bulls. Due to having [planted the karmic causes that result in] these marks, everyone who sees one is moved to feelings of fondness and respect.

Notes

[1] Although it is common to see the Sanskrit title of this work reconstructed in English academic articles as *Daśabhūmika-vibhāṣā-śāstra,* this based on its Chinese title, *Shizhu piposha lun* (十住毘婆沙論), "Ten Grounds *Vibhāṣā* Treatise." Akira Hirakawa, in *Buddhist Chinese-Sanskrit Dictionary* (Tokyo: Reiyūkai Hatsubaimoto Innātorippusha, 1997) reconstructs this title as simply *Daśabhūmika-vibhāṣā,* probably because he recognized that the *lun* (論) or "treatise" in the Chinese title was only ever intended by Kumārajīva and other translators to notify the Chinese reader that a *vibhāṣā* is a kind of treatise. That is to say, he most likely did *not* intend it as a translation of the Sanskrit word *śāstra*.

[2] Joseph Walser writes in his article "Nāgārjuna," in John Powers, ed., *The Buddhist World* (London; New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2016), p. 498: "Of two things we can be fairly certain. First, according to two sixth-century catalogues of Buddhist texts translated into Chinese, Dharmarakṣa translated a work called the *Treatise Commentary on the Sutra of Ten Stages* (*Daśabhūmika-vibhāṣa-śāstra*) in 265 C.E. that he ascribes to Nāgārjuna."

[3] Although the Taishō edition of this text restarts the chapter numbering after Chapter 27 by designating Chapter 28 as "Chapter 1," I instead follow the chapter numbering of the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Gong editions of the Chinese Buddhist canon, all of which number this treatise as consisting of a series of thirty-five continuously numbered chapters. The apparent rationale for the Taishō edition's restarting the numbering at Chapter 28 is to call the reader's attention to the fact that the first twenty-seven chapters are at least nominally devoted to explaining the first ground whereas the final eight chapters constitute a new section consisting of Nāgārjuna's explanation of the second ground. In any case, the reader should be aware that headings of these sorts for the most part originate with the Chinese translation team, not with the Indian text.

[4] This condensed description of each chapter borrows from and expands upon a very similar Chinese-language narration found in "A Simplified Introduction to the Daśabhūmika *Vibhāṣā*" (十住毘婆沙論簡介) by the Chinese Buddhist monk Hou Guan of the Fuyan Buddhist Studies Institute (福嚴佛學院, 釋厚觀, 09/18/2001), http://www.fuyan.org.tw/main_edu/1521-00c.doc, accessed July 2018.

[5] These "four bases of meritorious qualities" are truth, relinquishing, quiescence, and wisdom.

[6] This is a reference to *wojiao shan* (沃焦山), "the boiling and burning mountain" also known as the *wojiao shi* (沃焦石), the "boiling and burning rock," a huge and intensely hot mountain of stone at the bottom of the ocean which, in traditional

Indian geography, is responsible for keeping the oceans from overflowing by boiling away the excess water flowing into them from all the great rivers, large and small. This mountain is sometimes held to reside at the bottom of the *wojiao hai* (沃焦海), "boiling and burning ocean."

7 The four inverted views (*viparyāsa-catuṣka*) consist of imputing permanence to the impermanent, pleasure to what cannot deliver it, self to what is devoid of any inherently existent self, and purity to what does not actually possess that quality. The standard objects of such upside-down perception are thought, the six categories of "feeling" manifested in association with the six sense faculties, dharmas (as components of the falsely imputed "self"), and the body. Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi, preferring to render this term "inversions," rightly points out that, per *Aṅguttara Nikāya* (AN) 4:49, these four *viparyāsa* involve not only views, but rather they infect perceptions and mind as well as view. That said, I still feel comfortable with the now rather common and standard rendering as "four inverted views," not least because, as a practical matter, perception (*saṃjñā*) and mind/thought (*citta*) are nearly always intimately intertwined with and inseparable from views (*dṛṣṭī*), all of which are "inverted" due to delusion.

8 Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi recognized these statements about four types of people as similar to statements in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya;* see *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha*, *A Translation of the Aṅguttara Nikāya (Teachings of the Buddha)* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2012), pp. 476–477.

9 I emend the reading of the text here to correct an apparent graphic-similarity scribal error, preferring on sensibility grounds *zheng* (拯), "rescue," in the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Gong editions to the Taishō edition's *ji* (極), "extremely."

10 The bracketed verse is repeated here to facilitate immediate reference by the reader.

11 Although this could be a reference to the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra* in which such statements do exist, Nāgārjuna might well intend here to cite the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra* (the mother sutra in which this entire ten grounds text is incorporated as the "Ten Grounds Chapter"). There are a number of such statements in the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra,* including the famous passage (quoted some three hundred and fifty times in Sino-Buddhist canonical works): "It is with the very moment of bringing forth the initial resolve that one thereby achieves the right enlightenment" (初發心時便成正覺), this from Buddhabhadra's ca. 400 C.E. translation (T.278:449c).

12 "*Vajra* path" is an indirect reference to the acquisition of the *vajra*-like *samādhi* (*vajropama-samādhi*). It is a feature of both Southern and Northern School Buddhist path schemas that refers to the point at which the practitioner destroys the last vestiges of the residual fetters and reaches, for a *śrāvaka* disciple practitioner, "the stage beyond the need for further training" or, for the bodhisattva path practitioner, the next to last stage of the Mahayana path known as "equal enlightenment" (*samasaṃbodhi*). This latter is the stage immediately prior to "sublime enlightenment" wherein the bodhisattva's level of awakening has reached the point that it is virtually the same as that of a fully enlightened buddha. As a Mahayana technical term, "*vajra* path" is in

no way any sort of reference to the so-called Vajrayana, a very late Hindu-influenced transformation of Buddhism characterized by the tenets and practices of Hindu tantras (Vajrayana texts are all post sixth-century in origin, i.e., more than one thousand years after Śākyamuni).

[13] For the most part, I rely here and throughout on Étienne LaMotte's three-volume *Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse de Nāgārjuna (Mahāprajñāpāramitāśāstra)* (Louvain-la-Neuve: Institut Orientaliste de Louvin, 1944–1980) for the parenthetically included Sanskrit equivalents for the Chinese names of the various hells.

[14] For Nāgārjuna's very graphic and nearly encyclopedic discussion of each of the hell realms and hungry ghost realms, in which he explains the causality at the root of each type of suffering therein, see my translation, *Mahāprajñāpāramitā Upadeśa*: *Nagarjuna on the Six Perfections: An Ārya Bodhisattva Explains the Heart of the Bodhisattva Path. A Translation of Chapters 17–30 of Ārya Nāgārjuna's Exegesis on the Great Perfection of Wisdom Sutra* (Seattle: Kalavinka Press, 2009), in particular, in his discussion of the perfection of vigor, Chapter 27: "Specific Aspects of the Perfection of Vigor," pp. 513–537 in the original bilingual edition.

[15] The inscrutably ambiguous nature of the Taishō version of the text's rendering of a number of the instruments of punishment here (鐵鏘[金疾]鍥鐵[矛贊]刀鐵臼) is such that I prefer the alternative reading employed in the Song, Yuan, and Ming editions (槍蒺[艹/梨]刀劍鐵網): "javelins, spikes, short swords, iron nets."

[16] "*Bhūta* ghost" is here a conjectural Sanskrit reconstruction of 浮陀鬼. According to Sir Monier-Monier Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary* (Delhi: Sri Satguru, n.d.), one of the many meanings of *bhūta* is "a spirit (good or evil), the ghost of a deceased person, a demon, imp, goblin."

[17] Again, the bracketed verse from the beginning of the chapter is repeated here to facilitate immediate reference by the reader.

[18] Nāgārjuna is not implying here that the practitioners of the *śrāvaka* disciple vehicle actually possess all of these eight dharmas of the bodhisattva. (After all, although they are certainly well accomplished in the other six, they are not particularly well known for either compassion or skillful means.) Rather, he is primarily pointing out that they are secondary beneficiaries of the bodhisattvas' implementation of these eight dharmas that result in the bodhisattvas' eventual buddhahood and the resulting eternal renewal of Dharma in the world again and again throughout the course of time.

[19] This would seem to contradict Nāgārjuna's earlier statement that "all *śrāvaka* disciples and *pratyekabuddha*s come forth in direct reliance upon a buddha." Not so. Even though the *pratyekabuddha* may finally gain his realization when there is no buddha and no Dharma in the world, his ability to gain that realization is entirely rooted in his previous lives' exposure to a buddha's Dharma at such time as there *was* a buddha or his right Dharma still existing in the world. It is at least in part the fruition of the karmic seeds from such earlier learning and practice that finally allows

the *pratyekabuddha* at a later time to gain realizations in the absence of a buddha or of any residual Dharma after the end of a buddha's Dharma-ending age.

[20] A *vibhāṣā* is an extensively detailed explanatory treatise.

[21] Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi points out that there is a canonical source for the "four bases" in *Majjhima Nikāya* 140, MN III 245–6, for which the Sanskrit correlates of the Pāli *saccādhitthāna, cāgādhitthāna, upasamādhitthāna* (= base of peace), and *paññādhitthāna* would be *satyādhiṣṭhāna*, *tyāgādhiṣṭhāna*, *upaśamādhiṣṭhāna*, and *prajñādhiṣṭhāna*. He also notes that there is a Chinese canonical parallel at *Madhyama Āgama* (MĀ) 162; T.26:692a11.

[22] I emend the reading of the Taishō text here to correct an apparent scribal error, preferring the reading in the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Gong editions (說十地義) to that of the Taishō (義說十地).

[23] The logic of this statement may seem opaque to some. The point here is that, so long as one creates bad karma and does not purify it, one's mind can never be at peace even in conventional terms. As for entering deep states of meditative quiescence such as the *dhyāna*s, this would be completely impossible. This is one of the reasons why moral purity is taught as one of the primary prerequisites for meditative accomplishment.

[24] Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi notes the existence of a slightly variant parallel source in the Pāli canon: AN 3:80 (*The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha,* p. 314). That citation makes it clear that if Ānanda had somehow died before achieving the arhatship the Buddha predicted of him, his merit would have been so abundant that he would have been reborn in those blissful heavens for such an immensely long time.

[25] The first four and a half of these five verses correspond to the Kumārajīva and Buddhayaśas translation of the *Ten Grounds Sutra* (T.286:498b27–c4).

[26] The first two of these five verses echo Vajragarbha's preliminary statements in the *Ten Grounds Sutra,* just before embarking on the explanation of the first ground.

[27] In this sort of context, *biding* (必定),"stage of certainty," is usually a translation of the Sanskrit *niyata* or one of its synonyms that refer to the stage of irreversibility from which one can never again fall back in one's progress on the path.

[28] I emend the reading of the Taishō text to agree with the Song, Yuan, and Ming editions by adding the qualifier *shan* (善), "thorough," to *xing* (行), "practice." Also, regarding householder practice, Nāgārjuna's implication here is that even though it is extremely difficult to carry on the life of a householder while also accessing the *dhyāna*s, householder-level practice should not be disqualified from being referred to as "thorough practice" just because householders are usually unable to develop those meditation states.

[29] "Resolute intentions," *shenxin* (深心), here and in most occurrences throughout the text, corresponds to the Sanskrit *āśaya,* which has a range of meanings not so easily captured in a single English translation. Hence, in its various occurrences in

scriptures and commentaries related to the ten grounds, it may connote "resolute," "deep-seated," or "earnest" "intentions," "aspirations," "dispositions" or "inclinations." In the Kumārajīva and Buddhayaśas translation (T. 286) and Śikṣānanda's translation (T. 279), *āśaya* is often translated into Chinese as just *xin* (心) where it would very easily be confused with *citta*. In those instances, depending on the context and especially depending on whether it is referring to bodhisattvas or simply to unenlightened worldly beings, it is probably best rendered in English as "intentions," "aspirations," "dispositions" or "inclinations."

[30] I emend the reading of the text here in accordance with the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Gong editions by preferring on sensibility grounds *wei* (未), "not yet," to the Taishō edition's *wei* (味), "flavor," the presence of which seems to have been the result of a graphic-similarity scribal error.

[31] Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi points out that this passage resembles a passage in the "Akṣayamati" chapter of the *Mahāvaipulya-mahāsaṃnipāta-sūtra* (*Great Compilation Sutra*), T.13:187b1.

[32] "Forest hermitage" here translates what Kumārajīva retained in transliteration as the antecedent term *araṇya,* a hermitage usually intended for the cultivation of deep meditation and/or various austere (*dhūta*) practices. Since the Sanskrit term does not carry any untranslatable nuances, from here on I for the most part translate it as "forest hermitage."

[33] I emend the reading of the text here in accordance with the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Gong editions by preferring on sensibility grounds to eliminate the *gu* (故), "therefore," the inclusion of which seems to have been the result of scribal error.

[34] I emend the reading of the text here to correct an apparent scribal error in recording this statement by preferring the *zhu fo fa* (諸佛法), "all buddhas' Dharma," in the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Gong editions to the Taishō's *zhu fa* (諸法), "all dharmas."

[35] Although the Chinese is slightly ambiguous (hence my translation's use of the euphemistic "quiescent cessation"), citing an analogue passage Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi points out that the final couplet is referring to nirvana, noting the following:

> The verse is perhaps alluding to MN I 45: *So vata, cunda, attanā palipapalipanno paraṃ palipapalipannaṃ uddharissatīti netaṃ ṭhānaṃ vijjati. So vata, cunda, attanā apalipapalipanno paraṃ palipapalipannaṃ uddharissatīti ṭhānametaṃ vijjati. So vata, cunda, attanā adanto avinīto aparinibbuto paraṃ damessati vinessati parinibbāpessatīti netaṃ ṭhānaṃ vijjati. So vata, cunda, attanā danto vinīto parinibbuto paraṃ damessati vinessati parinibbāpessatīti ṭhānametaṃ vijjati*.

See Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi, *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya (Teachings of the Buddha)* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995), 8, part 16. Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi's translation there of the most closely relevant part of that passage is:

> That one who is himself untamed, undisciplined, [with defilements] unextinguished, should tame another, discipline him, and help extinguish [his defilements] is impossible; that one who is himself tamed, disciplined, [with defilements] extinguished, should tame another, discipline him, and help extinguish [his defilements] is possible.

[36] Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi points out that this is a reference to *Dhammapada* 158, for which Acharya Buddharakkhita, in his translation *The Dhammapada: The Buddha's Path of Wisdom* (Onalaska, WA: BPS Pariyatti Editions, 2019 reprint)), gives: "One should first establish oneself in what is proper; then only should one instruct others. Thus the wise man will not be reproached."

[37] Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi suggests comparing the version of the ten powers found in *Majjhima Nikāya* (MN) no. 12 ("The Greater Discourse on the Lion's Roar"); see Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi, trans., *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya (Teachings of the Buddha)* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995), pp. 165–166.

[38] Although Kumārajīva here uses *xing* (性), usually translated as "nature," the source texts indicate that he is once again translating the Sanskrit *dhātu,* which here refers to "realms."

[39] This aspect along with the next five emphasize the importance of the six perfections.

[40] This aspect along with the next three emphasize the importance of the four immeasurable minds.

[41] As suggested by Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi, this very likely refers to the twelfth chapter of the *Mahāsaṃnipāta-sūtra,* the "Akṣayamati" chapter (T.397:184a16–212c26). In particular, this resembles a passage that begins at 187a26.

[42] Nāgārjuna refers here to a line from the fourth of his five earlier stanzas on cultivating the first ground:

> For the sake of gaining the ten powers,
> One enters the congregation of those at the stage of certainty.
> Then one is born into the family of the tathāgatas
> Wherein one is free of any transgressions or faults.

[43] Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi notes that the Pāli version of this passage is found in *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha* 140.26, MN III 245: "For this, *bhikkhu,* is the supreme noble truth, namely, *nibbāna*, which has an undeceptive nature."

[44] The *pratyutpanna samādhi* is a *samādhi* wherein one becomes able to see the buddhas of the present and listen to them teach the Dharma. The sutra that describes this *samādhi* and teaches how to acquire it is preserved in the Taishō canon as the *Banzhou sanmei jing* 般舟三昧經 (T.418:902c23–919c5), of which Paul Harrison has produced a translation for the BDK English Tripiṭaka Series, *The Pratyutpanna Samādhi Sutra* (Moraga, CA: BDK America, Inc., 1998). Other Chinese editions and translations of the same text are preserved as Taishō nos. 416, 417, and 419.

[45] Nāgārjuna alludes here to verse number thirty-four from his *Bodhisaṃbhāra-śāstra* 菩提資糧論 (T.1660:528c13–14). See my translation of this treatise, *Nāgārjuna's Guide to the Bodhisattva Path: Treatise on the Provisions for Enlightenment. A Translation of the Bodhisaṃbhāra Śāstra by Ārya Nāgārjuna* (Seattle: Kalavinka Press, 2009), p. 33:

> The solid *samādhi*s
> on the ground of all buddhas' "direct presence"
> serve for the bodhisattva as his father,
> whereas the great compassion and patiences serve as his mother.
>
> (諸佛現前住
> 牢固三摩提
> 此為菩薩父
> 大悲忍為母.)

Nāgārjuna's equating of the *pratyutpanna samādhi* (wherein one sees the buddhas of the present) with a *samādhi* experienced on the sixth bodhisattva ground associates rather well with the following passage from the discussion of the sixth ground in the translation of the *Ten Grounds Sutra* by Kumārajīva and Buddhayaśas (T.286:515c17–21):

> The bodhisattva dwelling on this Ground of Direct Presence succeeds in being able to see many hundreds of buddhas, many thousands of buddhas, and so forth on up to many hundreds of thousands of myriads of *koṭis* of buddhas, making offerings to them, paying reverence to them, venerating them, praising them, and presenting them with robes, food and drink, bedding, and medicines. He draws close to the buddhas and listens to the teaching of the Dharma in the presence of the buddhas. Having heard their teachings on Dharma, he employs the light of reality-concordant wisdom to implement those teachings in practice in a manner accordant with the way they were taught, doing so in a manner that delights all buddhas.

[46] Nāgārjuna refers again to this earlier verse on cultivating the first ground:

> For the sake of gaining the ten powers,
> One enters the congregation of those at the stage of certainty.
> Then one is born into the family of the tathāgatas
> Wherein one is free of any transgressions or faults.

[47] These four bases of meritorious qualities (四功德處: 諦, 捨, 滅, 慧, truth, relinquishment, cessation, and wisdom) are brought up repeatedly in this treatise and are found as well in Nāgārjuna's *Bodhisaṃbhāra-sāstra* and *Ratnāvalī*.

[48] I emend the reading of the text here by adopting the variant reading found in the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Gong editions to correct the absence of a single character (出) obviously missing from the Taishō text.

[49] Throughout this text, I translate *srota-āpanna* as "stream-enterer."

[50] "Three wretched destinies" is a reference to rebirth in the realms of hungry ghosts (*preta*s), animals, and hells.

[51] The point here is that since a stream-enterer is then bound to enter nirvana within seven lifetimes, whereupon he will not be reborn into any of the twenty-eight realms of rebirth (and there are *only* twenty-eight realms of rebirth), he need have no fear that he might somehow stray into some supposed "twenty-ninth" realm of rebirth (because no such place even exists).

[52] I emend the reading of the text here in accordance with the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Gong editions by preferring on sensibility grounds *duo* (多), "for the most part," to the Taishō edition's *mingwei* (名為), "is known as."

[53] "Contaminants" here translates the slightly ambiguous pre-Buddhist Jain term *asrava,* translated into Chinese as "flows" (漏). The allusion is to the defiling influence (read "influents") of either three or four factors, as follows: (1) sensual desire (*kāma*); (2) [craving for] becoming (*bhāva*), i.e., the craving for continued existence; (3) ignorance (*avidyā*), i.e., delusion; (4) views (*dṛṣṭi*) This fourth type is not included in some listings. Often encountered alternate translations of this term include "taints," "outflows," "influxes," and "fluxes."

[54] These forty dharmas (discussed at great length in Chapters 21–23, Vol. II) are as follows:

(1) Sovereign mastery of the ability to fly.
(2) [The ability to manifest] countless transformations.
(3) Boundless psychic powers of the sort possessed by *ārya*s.
(4) Sovereign mastery of the ability to hear sounds.
(5) Immeasurable power of knowledge to know others' thoughts.
(6) Sovereign mastery in [training and subduing] the mind.
(7) Constant abiding in stable wisdom.
(8) Never forgetting.
(9) Realization of the powers of the *vajra samādhi*.
(10) Thorough knowing of matters that are unfixed
(11) Thorough knowing of matters pertaining to the formless realm's meditative absorptions.
(12) The completely penetrating knowledge of all matters associated with eternal cessation.
(13) Thorough knowing of the nonform dharmas unassociated with the mind.
(14) The great powers *pāramitā*.
(15) The [four] unimpeded [knowledges] *pāramitā*.
(16) The *pāramitā* of perfectly complete replies and predictions in response to questions.
(17) Invulnerability to harm by anyone.
(18) Their words are never spoken without a purpose.
(19) Their speech is free of errors and mistakes.
(20) Complete implementation of the three turnings [of the Dharma wheel] in speaking Dharma.

(21) They are the great generals among all *ārya*s.
(22–25) They are able to remain unguarded in four ways.
(26–29) They possess the four types of fearlessness.
(30–39) They possess the ten powers.
(40) They have achieved unimpeded liberation.

[55] I emend the reading of the Taishō text here by preferring on sensibility grounds the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Gong editions' *yi* (已), "already," to the Taishō edition's *yi* (以), "by means of," "due to," etc."

[56] Musth refers to a state of increased testosterone in a bull elephant that is characterized by increased willfulness and aggression in doing whatever he wants to do.

[57] The first five of these types of fear are brought up at this point in the *Ten Grounds Sutra* itself. In previewing my translation of that sutra, Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi pointed out that this same fivefold list appears in the Pāli (albeit in slightly different order and with mild differences in the interpretation of two of the five points); see *The Numerical Discourses*, 9:5, p. 1255.

[58] In most cases, "mind-moment" (一念 or 一念頃) translates the Sanskrit *kṣaṇa* or *eka-kṣaṇika*. As for *kṣaṇa*, according to Robert E. Buswell, Jr. and Donald S. Lopez, Jr., eds., *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014): "In Sanskrit, 'instant' or 'moment'; the shortest possible span of time, variously measured as either the ninth part of a thought moment or the 4,500th part of a minute."

[59] An *asaṃkhyeya* is a Sanskrit term for an incalculably large number.

[60] This is a reference to the seven "treasures" (*sapta ratna*) of a *cakravartin* ("wheel-turning") king. Different from the more common list of "the seven precious things," they consist of the wheel treasure, the elephant treasure, the horse treasure, the precious pearl treasure, the female treasure, the *kulapati* (wealth accumulation) treasure, and the army and ministers lordship treasure.

[61] This reconstruction of *she-ti-luo* (蛇提羅) as *kṣatriya* is conjectural. It is likely that Nāgārjuna is referring to the lesser wheel-turning kings who, unlike the wheel-turning king who is a universal monarch, do not rule over all four continents but rather over only one, two, or three continents.

[62] I cannot find any Sanskrit equivalent for this word *jiaojumo* (憍瞿摩).

[63] The implication in the first foot of the *śloka* is that if one refrains from erroneously imputing the existence of an inherently existent self, then the concept of some event called "death" is discovered to be baseless. Similarly, the second foot of the *śloka* indicates that if one simply refrains from erroneously imputing the existence of some independently existing concept that one thinks of as "death," then the concept of "some entity that dies" is discovered to be baseless as well.

[64] Kumārajīva retained the Sanskrit *sarvajña,* which I have chosen here to translate.

[65] The Taishō text inserts *ming* (名) here to create the clearly accidentally erroneous *duo mingwen* (多名聞), which means "abundant fame" instead of the "abundant learning" (多聞) referenced in the verse on which this sentence comments. For obvious reasons, I have aligned my translation here with the clearly intended meaning.

[66] Nāgārjuna uses the Sanskrit *dānapati,* which I prefer to translate as "benefactor" throughout the following discussion.

[67] Nāgārjuna uses the Sanskrit *niṣadana;* I prefer to translate this as "sitting mat."

[68] Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi gives the Pāli canon correlate to this as *Itivuttaka* section 100: *Tassa me tumhe puttā orasā mukhato jātā dhammajā dhammanimmitā dhammadāyādā, no āmisadāyādā*.

[69] I have been unable to associate this "Dharma of Greatly Supreme Buddha" with any extant texts in the Taishō canon.

[70] In my translation of the Kumārajīva and Buddhayaśas version of the *Ten Grounds Sutra,* published as *The Ten Grounds Sutra: The Daśabhūmika Sūtra. The Ten Highest Levels of Practice on the Bodhisattva's Path to Buddhahood* (Seattle: Kalavinka Press, 2020), the complete text of the first vow is as follows:

> I vow that I shall make gifts of every sort of offering to all buddhas without exception, freely making such offerings with pure resolute faith." In making such a great vow as this, his implementation of it is as vast as the Dharma realm and as extensive as empty space as he continues on until the end of future time, exhaustively making offerings of every sort of great gift to all buddhas.

[71] In my translation of the Kumārajīva and Buddhayaśas version, *The Ten Grounds Sutra,* the complete text of the second vow is as follows:

> He also vows that he will uphold and preserve the scriptural Dharma proclaimed by all buddhas, that he will take on the realization of the *anuttarā-samyak-saṃbodhi* of all buddhas, that he will always accord with the Dharma taught by all buddhas, and that he will always be able to protect and preserve the Dharma of all buddhas. In making such a great vow as this, his implementation of it is as vast as the Dharma realm and as extensive as empty space as he continues on incessantly until the end of future time, exhaustively protecting and preserving the Dharma of all buddhas in every *kalpa*.

[72] In my translation of the Kumārajīva and Buddhayaśas version, *The Ten Grounds Sutra,* the complete text of the third vow is as follows:

> He also vows that, in all worlds, with the arrival of all buddhas, when they come down from the Tuṣita Heaven, enter the womb, abide in the womb, are first born, leave behind the home life, and then gain buddhahood, in every case he will entreat them to turn the great wheel of the Dharma, vowing too that, when they manifest entry into the great nirvana, "I will in every case go there, make offerings, and serve as a leader in the compilation of their Dharma," vowing to

do these things in order to facilitate [the Dharma wheel's] turning throughout the three periods of time. In making such a great vow as this, his implementation of it is as vast as the Dharma realm and as extensive as empty space as he continues on until the end of future time and throughout all *kalpa*s, incessantly raising up offerings to all buddhas.

[73] In my translation of the Kumārajīva and Buddhayaśas version, *The Ten Grounds Sutra,* the complete text of the fourth vow is as follows:

> He also vows that he will teach all of the practices coursed in by the bodhisattvas, so vast, lofty, and far-reaching, so immeasurable, indestructible, and free of discriminations, those practices that are subsumed within the *pāramitās*, that are purified on the grounds, that generate the dharmas assisting realization of the path, that constitute the path of signs and the path of signlessness, teaching how they may conduce to success and how they may lead to ruination, teaching the path of the grounds coursed in by all bodhisattvas, teaching too the *pāramitās*' foundational practices, teaching these things to others in a manner whereby they are caused to take up their practice and bring forth increased resolve. In making such a great vow as this, his implementation of it is as vast as the Dharma realm and as extensive as empty space as he continues on until the end of future time and throughout all *kalpa*s, incessantly employing the practices coursed in by all bodhisattvas to provide teaching in accord with Dharma for the ripening of beings.

[74] In my translation of the Kumārajīva and Buddhayaśas version, *The Ten Grounds Sutra,* the complete text of the fifth vow is as follows:

> He also vows that he will teach all beings, whether possessed of form or formless, whether possessed of perception, free of perception, or abiding in a state of neither perception nor non-perception, whether egg-born, womb-born, moisture-born, or transformationally born, teaching them all, no matter to which of the stations in the triple world they have become connected, no matter in which of the six destinies of rebirth they have taken birth, no matter in which place they have taken rebirth, thus teaching all who are subsumed in the sphere of name-and-form, proceeding thus for the sake of teaching and ripening all beings, for the sake of influencing them to cut off their coursing through all the destinies of worldly existence, for the sake of influencing them to abide in the Dharma of the Buddha, for the sake of influencing them to accumulate all-knowledge, teaching all of them without exception. In making such a great vow as this, his implementation of it is as vast as the Dharma realm and as extensive as empty space as he continues on until the end of future time and throughout all *kalpa*s, incessantly teaching all beings.

[75] *Fawei* (法位), "Dharma position," usually corresponds to "the right and fixed Dharma position" (*samyaktva niyāma*) that in turn involves irreversibility in one's progress on the path to the fruits of the individual liberation paths of either the *pratyekabuddha* or the arhat. This is usually understood (except in sutras such as the *Lotus Sutra*) to involve the subsequent impossibility of ever entering the universal liberation path of the bodhisattvas and buddhas.

[76] "Reveal, instruct, benefit, and delight" (示教利喜) is a theme often encountered in Northern school texts that refers to standard teaching stratagies used to influence beings to enter the universal liberation path of bodhisattvas and buddhas.

[77] In my translation of the Kumārajīva and Buddhayaśas version, *The Ten Grounds Sutra*, the complete text of the sixth vow is as follows:

> He also vows to directly know all of the differentiating aspects of all worlds throughout the ten directions, including all aspects of those worlds that are wide, narrow, extremely towering, of so countlessly many varieties one could never distinguish them all, including those that are immovable, and those that are indescribably coarse, subtle, upright, inverted, formed with their crowns and bases opposing each other, flat, spherical, or cubical, thus being able in this knowing to freely enter the knowledge of all such worlds, knowing them as existing in a manner comparable to appearances in the net-like canopy of Indra wherein things manifest like the phenomena in a conjuration. In making such a great vow as this, his implementation of it is as vast as the Dharma realm and as extensive as empty space as he continues on until the end of future time and throughout all *kalpa*s, incessantly carrying on the direct and complete knowing of all such worlds.

[78] This refers to a list of six recommended reflections conducing to clarity of understanding: impermanence, suffering, non-self, impurity of food, unenjoyability of all stations of worldly existence, death (T.1528:637b).

[79] In my translation of the Kumārajīva and Buddhayaśas version, *The Ten Grounds Sutra,* the complete text of the seventh vow is as follows:

> He also vows to bring about the purification of all buddha lands wherein all buddha lands enter a single buddha land, a single buddha land enters all buddha lands, and each and every buddha land is adorned with measurelessly many radiant phenomena, wherein they all become filled with measurelessly many wise beings who have abandoned all defilements and perfected the path of purification, and wherein he always possesses the power of all buddhas' great superknowledges, accords with the mental dispositions of beings, and thus appears for their sakes. In making such a great vow as this, his implementation of it is as vast as the Dharma realm and as extensive as empty space as he continues on until the end of future time and throughout all *kalpa*s, incessantly purifying lands such as these.

[80] The five categories of evil ending with this one are the same ones that were described and thoroughly explained by Nāgārjuna earlier in this text as "five types of wrong livelihood for monastics."

[81] These last five categories of evils clearly refer directly to the five hindrances (*nīvaraṇa* or *āvaraṇa*) preventing entry into meditative absorption.

[82] I have not been able to find the Sanskrit antecedents for these three Chinese transliterations or the two transliterations that appear later in this list.

[83] Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi points out that this is most likely a reference to the Digambara Jains.

[84] Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi points out that this is most likely a reference to the Śvetāmbara Jains.

[85] Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi points out that Maskarī Gośālīputra was the "founder of the Ājīvikas. See DN 2.20. He held that everything was determined by fate."

[86] Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi suggests that Piluochizhi is Sañjaya Vairaṭīputra, a.k.a. Saṃjayin Vairaṭīputra (Pāli Sañjaya Belaṭṭhiputta), a skeptical ascetic teacher, a contemporary of the Buddha. See *Dīgha Nikāya* (DN) 2.32

[87] Per Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi, Jiazhanyannizi is "Probably Pakudha Kaccāyana. See DN 2.26. He taught a kind of atomism."

[88] Per Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi, Saqizhezi is "Perhaps Ajita Kesakambali, who taught a moral nihilism. See DN 2.23."

[89] Per Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi: "On the above [various theorists on nirvana], see the five types of "final nirvana in this very life" mentioned in the *Brahmajāla Sutta,* DN 1.3.19."

[90] One should understand that this does not refer to the *dhūta* austerities so extensively discussed and praised by Nāgārjuna in Chapter 32 (Vol. II) of this treatise, but rather only to the nonbeneficial ascetic practices (lying on a bed of nails, etc.) adopted by non-Buddhist traditions.

[91] This is probably a reference to the ten "entangling thickets" (*gahana*), of which the first is indeed "afflictions." They are routinely translated as "difficulties" in the Kumārajīva and Kumārajīva and Buddhayaśas translations. They are listed in the translation of the *Ten Grounds Sutra* (T.286:524c10–12) in the discussion of the ninth *bhūmi* as follows:

> The entangling difficulties associated with the afflictions;
> The entangling difficulties associated with karmic actions;
> The entangling difficulties associated with the faculties;
> The entangling difficulties associated with resolute dispositions;
> The entangling difficulties associated with sense realms;
> The entangling difficulties associated with the mind's deep-seated intentions;
> The entangling difficulties associated with latent tendencies;
> The entangling difficulties associated with births;
> The entangling difficulties associated with residual karmic propensities;
> And the entangling difficulties associated with the differences in the three categories of beings.

[92] Probably *adbhuta* (Pāli *abbhuta*), "wondrous, supernatural, etc.," for which the standard Chinese rendering is "rarely encountered" (希有).

[93] Per Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi:

> We have here five terms that are characteristic of the Buddha's teaching which we encounter again and again in the *Nikāyas* (particularly the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*), where they are applied to all the doctrinal items: the five aggregates (in Ch. 22), the six or twelve sense bases (Ch. 35), feelings (Ch. 36), the elements (Ch. 14), etc. The five are: *samudaya*, *atthaṅgama*, *assāda*, *ādīnava*, *nissaraṇa*, "arising, passing away, enjoyment, danger, and escape."
>
> See, e.g., SN 22: 73–74, 107–109, 129–34, and many other suttas.
>
> For example SN 22:74 says, "The unlearned worldling does not correctly understand the arising (through 'escape') regarding form…consciousness. The learned noble disciple correctly understands the arising (through 'escape') regarding form…consciousness."
>
> On the five-term template, see SN 14:38; 17:26; 22:108; 23:6; 36:28. The threefold "enjoyment" template is also common; see 14:37; 17:25; 22:107; 23:5; 36:27; 48:6, 29, 34.

[94] With reference to the Pāli tradition, Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi notes: "Here we have *vimokṣa* as eight stages of *samādhi*."

[95] The Pāli meditation tradition refers to these as *kasiṇa*s.

[96] The earlier line (33a22) on which this comments referred instead to *ligen* (利根), "sharp faculties."

[97] I emend the Taishō reading here by accepting the variant "moths" (蛾) found in four other editions. Without this emendation, "ants" (蟻) would be duplicated in this list.

[98] Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi suggests that this most likely corresponds to *saṃhita*.

[99] In my translation of the Kumārajīva and Buddhayaśas version, *The Ten Grounds Sutra,* the complete text of the eighth vow is as follows:

> He also vows that he will be of like mind with and pursue the same studies as all other bodhisattvas, joining together with them in the accumulation of every sort of goodness, remaining free of enmity or jealousy toward them, developing identical states of mental awareness as theirs, holding thoughts of equal regard toward them, maintaining harmonious relations with them, never becoming mutually estranged from them, being able as well to manifest buddha bodies according to what suits the needs of others, being able in one's own mind to completely understand and know the domains, spiritual powers, and powers of cognition of all buddhas, always being able to freely employ spiritual superknowledges to roam at will to all lands, manifesting the appearance of one's body in the assemblies of all buddhas, being able as well to everywhere take up births into all stations of rebirth, being possessed of all such inconceivably great wisdom, and perfecting the practices of the bodhisattvas. In making such a great vow as this, his implementation of it is as vast as the Dharma realm and as extensive as empty space as he continues on

until the end of future time and throughout all *kalpa*s, incessantly carrying forth the practice of just such a great path of wisdom.

[100] In my translation of the Kumārajīva and Buddhayaśas version, *The Ten Grounds Sutra,* the complete text of the ninth vow is as follows:

> He also vows that he will take up the irreversible turning of the wheel of Dharma, that he will course in the bodhisattva path, that, of all of his physical, verbal, and mental actions, none will be such as are done in vain, that any being who merely sees him will thereby immediately become bound for definite success in the Buddha's Dharma, that, "Any being who so much as hears my voice will thereby immediately become bound for success in the path of genuine wisdom," that, "Any being who merely lays eyes on me will immediately be filled with joyous delight and abandon afflictions," that, in this, he will become like the great king of medicine trees, and that, in order to develop such resolve as this, he will course in the bodhisattva path. In making such a great vow as this, his implementation of it is as vast as the Dharma realm and as extensive as empty space as he continues on until the end of future time and throughout all *kalpa*s, incessantly coursing along in the path of irreversibility, ensuring that none of his actions will have been done in vain.

[101] In my translation of the Kumārajīva and Buddhayaśas version, *The Ten Grounds Sutra,* the complete text of the tenth vow is as follows:

> He also vows that he will gain the realization of *anuttarā-samyak-saṃbodhi* in all worlds, that even in those places manifesting within the tip of a single hair, he will manifest entry into the womb, leaving behind the home life, sitting in the *bodhimaṇḍa,* gaining buddhahood, turning the wheel of Dharma, bringing about the liberation of beings, and manifesting the appearance of entering the great nirvana, that he will manifest the great spiritual and cognitive powers of the tathāgatas, that he will adapt to the circumstances of all individual beings and that, according to what is appropriate for their liberation, he will, even in every successive mind-moment, manifest realization of the buddha path, facilitate the liberation of beings, and bring about the extinguishing of their suffering and afflictions, that he will gain the cognition that realizes all dharmas are characterized by identity with nirvana, that, employing a single voice, he will be able to cause all beings to become established in joyfulness, that, even though he manifests entry into the great nirvana, he will nonetheless never cut off his coursing in the bodhisattva practices, that he will reveal to beings the grounds of great knowledge, that he will cause them to realize all dharmas are in every case false and deceptive, accomplishing these endeavors by resort to great wisdom, great superknowledges, and freely manifested spiritual transformations. In making such a great vow as this, his implementation of it is as vast as the Dharma realm and as extensive as empty space as he continues on until the end of future time and throughout all *kalpa*s, incessantly persisting in accomplishing the works associated with the

path to buddhahood, in seeking great wisdom, and in acquiring the great spiritual powers and other such realizations.

[102] We know from comparisons with Sanskrit editions that, in some of the translations attributed to Kumārajīva (such as the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra*), *xing* (性), usually translated into English as "nature" from the Sanskrit antecedent *bhāva,* instead often translates the Sanskrit antecedent *dhātu,* which most often corresponds to the English word "realm." This section of text appears to be one of those passages. Hence my repeated translation here of *xing* (性) as "realm" and not as "nature."

[103] "Range of actions" here translates *xingchu* (行處), a standard translation for the Sanskrit *gocara,* which, per Monier Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, means "pasture ground for cattle, range, field for action, abode, dwelling place, district, etc."

[104] To correct an obvious scribal error involving the dropping of a crucial character from this phrase already occurring twice in this section, I emend the reading of the Taishō text by accepting the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Gong editions' retention of *fo* (佛), "buddhas."

[105] Since it only requires one of these seven reasons for generating the resolve to actually do so, one might wonder why Nāgārjuna mentions that "it may find its origin in [one of] three reasons or else in [one of] four reasons." I suspect he is referring to two different lists of reasons prevalent in different teaching traditions.

[106] Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi notes: "I think this is alluding to the seven good dharmas. See *Majjhima Nikāya* 53 (also *Aṅguttara Nikāya* 7:67): *śraddhā*, *hrī*, *avatapta* [*apatrāpya*], *bāhuśrutya*, *vīrya*, *smṛti*, and *prajñā*" (faith, sense of shame, dread of blame, abundant learning, vigor, mindfulness, wisdom).

[107] Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi proposes that this may refer to "eleven benefits of loving-kindness" enumerated in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*'s treatment of "The Elevens," this based on his observation that Chinese translators sometimes use *gongde* (功德), usually "meritorious qualities," to translate *ānusaṃsā*, "benefits."

[108] "Seventeen physical dharmas" is a provisional translation for *shen shi qi* (身十七). The text is opaque and a digital search of the entire Taishō canon failed to turn up any plausible analogues for this list.

[109] Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi notes that there are five faculties here that are distributed among these four listed types.

[110] Comparison with the Sanskrit of the occurrences of the *xinle* (信樂) compound in the Kumārajīva and Buddhayaśas translation of the *Ten Grounds Sutra* confirm that this is an alternate Kumārajīva translation for *adhimukti,* which is more commonly rendered in his translations as *xinjie* (信解), lit., "faithful comprehension." This refers to a strong mental inclination toward a (usually) wholesome mental object, hence the need to translate it in some contexts as "resolute belief," "resolute comprehension," etc.

[111] To correct an apparent graphic-similarity scribal error I emend the reading of the Taishō text here, preferring the *chang* (常), "always," in the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Gong editions to the Taishō's *dang* (當), "should."

[112] As Nāgārjuna makes clear elsewhere (*Bodhisaṃbhāra-śāstra;* 菩提資糧論, T. 1660), for one who aspires to continue all the way along the bodhisattva path to ultimate realization of buddhahood, it is essential that they first genuinely and solidly generate the resolve to gain utmost, right, and perfect enlightenment, doing so *prior* to entering this "stage of certainty" or the "right and fixed position" (*samyaktva niyāma*), lest they otherwise fall irreversibly into the path to arhatship.

Nāgārjuna's rationale for warning bodhisattva path practitioners about this possibility is that, absent prior genuine generation of highest *bodhi* resolve, the diligent cultivator of good dharmas who gains such a realization will become irreversible on the path to arhatship, this effective with his realization of the unproduced-dharmas patience. As a consequence, he entirely eliminates the possibility of his own future buddhahood.

In that treatise, Nāgārjuna even goes so far as to equate this prospect with a tragedy far worse than falling into the hells, because the hells, unlike arhatship, do not eliminate the possibility of future buddhahood. For my complete English translation of Nāgārjuna's *Bodhisaṃbhāra-śāstra* and its early Indian commentary, see *Nāgārjuna's Guide to the Bodhisattva Path: Treatise on the Provisions for Enlightenment. The Bodhisaṃbhāra Śāstra by Ārya Nāgārjuna* (Seattle: Kalavinka Press, 2009) and *The Bodhisaṃbhāra Treatise Commentary: The Early Indian Exegesis on Ārya Nāgārjuna's Treatise on the Provisions for Enlightenment (The Bodhisaṃbhāra Śāstra)* (Seattle: Kalavinka Press, 2009).

[113] The "stage of certainty" or "right and fixed position" referenced here is that of the bodhisattva who has by this point become invulnerable to being turned away from the path to buddhahood.

[114] Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi notes: "Velāma is the subject of AN 9.20."

[115] Weishouduoluo (韋首多羅), the Chinese transliteration of this bodhisattva's name, is found only in this instance in the entire Taishō canon. Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi suggests that the Pāli reconstruction might be Vessantara, the name of the marvelously generous bodhisattva celebrated in a *jātaka* tale of one of the Buddha's previous lives. He also suggests that a Sanskrit equivalent might be Viśvantara, as I have chosen to use here.

[116] These five Sanskrit terms refer to increasingly serious levels of transgression against the monastic moral code ranging from relatively minor offenses (*duṣkṛta*) to offenses involving a meeting of the sangha with a probationary period (*saṃghāvaśeṣa*) or permanent expulsion from the monastic community (*pārājika*).

[117] Because the Chinese of this statement is terse and vague, my translation here is somewhat tentative.

[118] This appears to be subcommentary on this earlier statement regarding the abandonment of dharmas conducing to loss of the *bodhi* resolve: "By 'abandonment,' it is meant that one entirely extinguishes those dharmas that are bad and thus prevents them from entering one's mind."

[119] A *pārājika* offense entails expulsion from the monastic sangha. A *saṃghavaśeṣa* offense entails a meeting of the local monastic sangha to determine the penalty and how to achieve purification of the transgression.

[120] An instance of "at the time of certification" would be, for instance, during the semimonthly recitation of monastic precepts, when one is asked with respect to precepts just recited, "Are you pure in this?"

[121] "Two vehicles" refers to the two non-Mahayana individual liberation paths, those of arhats and *pratyekabuddha*s.

[122] The Taishō annotations state that the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Gong editions all format these twenty characters as a quatrain. As it is obvious that the immediately following text comments on them as if they did indeed constitute a verse, I have emended the English formatting accordingly.

[123] In accordance with the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Gong editions, I emend the Taishō text here by substituting *sui* (雖), "although," for *shui* (誰), "who," to correct an obvious graphic-similarity scribal error.

[124] Again, those four originally mentioned in the above verse are unawareness of the work of *māra*s, weakness of the resolve to attain *bodhi,* karmic obstacles, and Dharma obstacles.

[125] I translate as "monastic preceptor" and "monastic Dharma teacher" what the Kumārajīva text retains in transliteration as *upādhyāya* and *ācārya*, respectively.

[126] When Kumārajīva refers to "the true character of dharmas" (諸法實相), he is typically translating the Sanskrit term *dharmatā*.

[127] This is clearly a reference to the eight worldly dharmas. In this connection Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi offers the following citation: "See AN 8:5–6; IV 156 foll."

[128] This seems to be a situation where a monk or nun wants to divert to themselves the material support of families that currently support other monastics. Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi suggests, "This is what is called in Pāli *kulamacchariya*, 'miserliness regarding families,'" and offers the following citation: AN 5:254–255.

[129] "Five objects of desire" refers not only to the five types of "sensual" desire (forms, sounds, smells, tastes, touchables), but also to wealth, sex, fame, food, and leisure.

[130] Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi notes that the following verses reflect ideas found in Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamaka-kārikā,* in particular chapters 6, 10, and 18.

[131] These four lines comprise the Buddhist tetralemma used to point to the futility of capturing the nature of ultimate reality in logical formulations.

[132] In other words, ash has been traditionally used in making bleaching agents. So too with words, which may be used to remove the stain of wrong views from the mind but cannot ever entirely embody the truth reached through right views. Thus they are always bound to be freighted to a degree with the "stains" of dual concepts that are then bound to sully the direct perception of the truth of the emptiness of all phenomena.

[133] This same verse is repeated later in the treatise in Chapter 33 (Vol. II), T.1521:118b5–26. There are eight variant characters as noted below.

[134] The Chapter 33 (Vol. II) version of this verse has "and is identical with whatever is an existent dharma" (即為是有法) instead of "and is identical with whatever is possessed of signs" (即為是有相).

[135] The Chapter 33 (Vol. II) version of this verse has "Were one to relinquish all strategizing and attachments" (若捨諸計著) instead of "Were one to relinquish all covetousness" (若捨諸貪著).

[136] The Chapter 33 (Vol. II) version of this verse has "such seizing on this sign of having relinquished attachments" (取是捨著相) instead of "such seizing on this sign of having relinquished covetousness" (取是捨貪相).

[137] The Chapter 33 (Vol. II) version of this verse has "It is the abandonment of grasping and whatever thing is grasped" (離取取何事) instead of "There is someone who grasps and something that is grasped" (誰取取何事).

[138] The Chapter 33 (Vol. II) version of this verse has "whether as conjoined or separate, they are all entirely nonexistent" (共離俱無有) instead of "whether as conjoined or separate, they all do not exist" (共離俱不有).

[139] The Chapter 33 (Vol. II) version of this verse has "It is precisely because it is synonymous with signlessness" (即名為無相) instead of "It is precisely because it is signless" (即為是無相).

[140] These first two verse lines are referring to the four alternative propositions of the tetralemma: (1) it exists, (2) it does not exist, (3) it both exists and does not exist, and (4) it neither exists nor does not exist.

[141] The Chapter 33 (Vol. II) version of this verse has a fairly inconsequential variant for one of the characters in this line, 先來非寂滅 instead of 先亦非寂滅.

[142] Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi notes the following here: "This is the first alternative among the four ways of construing a self. See SN 22:47."

[143] The usual Sanskrit antecedent for this "traceless *vajra*-wielding Dharma protectors" is *guhyapāda vajra*.

[144] These *śloka*s correspond to *śloka*s 24–28 of Nāgārjuna's *Bodhisaṃbhāra-śāstra*. In my English translation of that entire text with its Indian commentary, *The Bodhisaṃbhāra Treatise Commentary,* they read as follows:

So long as he has not generated great compassion or the patiences,
even though he may have gained an irreversibility,
the bodhisattva is still subject to a form of "dying"
which occurs through allowing negligence to arise.
The grounds of the *śrāvaka* disciples or the *pratyekabuddha*s,
if entered, become for him the same as dying
because he would thereby sever the bodhisattva's
roots of understanding and awareness.
Even at the prospect of falling into the hell realms,
the bodhisattva would not be struck with fright.
The grounds of the *śrāvaka* disciples and the *pratyekabuddha*s, however,
do provoke a great terror in him.
It is not the case that falling into the hell realms
would bring about an ultimate obstacle to his *bodhi.*
The grounds of the *śrāvaka* disciples and the *pratyekabuddha*s, however,
do create just such an ultimate obstacle.
Just as is said of he who loves long life,
that he becomes fearful at the prospect of his own beheading,
so too, the grounds of the *śrāvaka* disciples and *pratyekabuddha*s
should bring about a fearfulness of just this sort.

[145] The first two quatrains correspond to the *Bodhisaṃbhāra-śāstra, śloka*s 22–23, which read as follows:

In the bodhisattva's striving for *bodhi,*
so long as he has not yet gained irreversibility,
he acts as urgently as the person whose turban has caught fire.
Thus one should take up just such intensely diligent practice.
Thus it is that those bodhisattvas,
when striving for the realization of *bodhi,*
should not rest in their practice of vigor,
for they have shouldered such a heavy burden.

[146] These last two quatrains correspond to the *Bodhisaṃbhāra-śāstra, śloka*s 91–92, which read as follows:

Even if one were to take up the vehicle of the *śrāvaka* disciples
or the vehicle of the *pratyekabuddha*s,
and hence practiced solely for one's own self-benefit,
still, one would not relinquish the enduring practice of vigor.
How much the less could it be that a great man,
one committed to liberate himself and liberate others,
might somehow not generate
a measure of vigor a thousand *koṭis* times greater?

[147] I emend here the abbreviated "Three Practices Buddha" to "Three *Vehicles'* Practices Buddha" to accord with the explanatory text that follows at 42a2–6.

[148] See the *Sutra on the Youth Precious Moon's Questions on Dharma* (大乘寶月童子問法經), T.437:8c1–110a7. The names vary, but the ideas are the same, i.e., sincere mindfulness of ten buddhas in the ten directions can bring irreversibility with respect to one's future attainment of buddhahood.

[149] *Candana* usually refers to sandalwood but, as noted in Monier Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, it may also be used as a term to refer to anything that is the most excellent of its kind: "mn. sandal (*Sirium myrtifolium*), either the tree, wood, or the unctuous preparation of the wood held in high estimation as perfumes; hence; a term for anything which is the most excellent of its kind."

[150] The Chinese translation for this eightieth buddha's name, Guangming fo (光明佛), "Light Buddha," is duplicated in the name of the ninety-sixth buddha (see following paragraph). Since we do not know the Sanskrit antecedents for these two buddhas' names, I have distinguished them here with slightly variant English translations, "Light Buddha" and "Radiance Buddha."

[151] The Chinese translation for this ninety-sixth buddha's name, Guangming fo (光明佛), "Radiance Buddha," is duplicated in the name of the eightieth buddha (see previous paragraph). Since we do not know the Sanskrit antecedents for these two buddhas' names, I have distinguished them here with slightly variant English translations, "Light Buddha" and "Radiance Buddha."

[152] On sensibility grounds, I adopt here the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Gong editions' variant, Huayuan fo (華園佛), "Floral Garden Buddha," to correct what seems to be a graphic-similarity scribal error in the Taishō edition, Huachi fo (華齒佛), "Floral Teeth Buddha."

[153] I reconstruct *aśoka,* lit., "sorrowless," as the name of this *bodhi* tree as it is a tree that grows throughout India (*Saraca asoca*) and is in fact said to also be the same kind of tree under which the historical Buddha's mother gave birth to him.

[154] Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi provides the following citation: "See DN II 4: *Sikhī, bhikkhave, bhagavā arahaṃ sammāsambuddho puṇḍarīkassa mūle abhisambuddho*."

[155] The *śirīṣa* tree is identified by Monier Williams, *A Sanskrit English Dictionary,* as *Acacia sirissa*.

[156] An *aśvattha* tree is an ancient name for what is more commonly known in Buddhist texts as the *bodhi* tree (*Ficus religiosa*).

[157] In the verses below (at 44b7), this buddha's name is enhanced with an additional character to "Marks of the Sovereign's Canopy" (王幢相).

[158] I suspect that there should only be ten buddhas in this list and that this buddha's name, King of the Marks, may appear here only as a result of an accidental scribal redundancy, for two reasons: (1) the Chinese name is identical to that of the previously listed buddha except that the characters are in reverse order, Wangxiang 王相 versus Xiangwang 相王; and (2) although the other ten buddhas' names are mentioned in the following praise verses, this buddha's name is not mentioned there at all.

[159] This buddha's name is only slightly different in the verses that follow, occurring there (at 44b15) as "Peacefully Established" (安立).

[160] To correct an apparent graphic-similarity scribal error, I emend the reading here by preferring *zi* (自), "personally," in the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Gong editions to *mu* (目), "eyes," in the Taishō text.

[161] "Three times three, nine kinds in all" appears to refer to the nine varieties of bad karma produced through physical, verbal, and mental actions under the influence of the three kinds of afflictions or "poisons," greed, hatred, and delusion.

[162] One of two types of "morally indeterminate" or "neutral dharmas," *yin mo wu ji* (隱沒無記) or *you fu wu ji* (有覆無記), "obscured morally indeterminate [dharmas]" (*nivṛta-avyākṛta-dharma*), are those that are karmically neutral but involve a mind accompanied by subtle hindrances that impede liberation. "Subtle hindrances" refers, for example, to having the view that assumes the existence of a "self," to having a the tendency to think, "I am," to engaging in self-cherishing thoughts, words, and deeds, and to being forever under the influence of ignorance.

[163] I translate here as "monastic preceptor" and "monastic Dharma teacher" what the Kumārajīva text retains in transliteration as *upādhyāya* and *ācārya*, respectively.

[164] Rebirth as an *asura* is one of the six rebirth destinies within cyclic existence. *Asura*s are typically described as "titans" or "demigods" whose most emblematic characteristic aside from a deficiency of merit is a fondness for fighting, especially with the *deva*s of the desire realm, in particular with the *deva*s of Trāyastriṃśa Heaven ("Heaven of the Thirty-three"). The term is also used more loosely to describe beings within other realms of cyclic existence whose dominant character traits are marked by an analogous fondness for hatred, disputation, and combativeness.

[165] The "three objects of reverence" are variously interpreted. In descending order of intended likelihood here, they are: the Three Jewels (Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha); those who have attained the three fruitions of valid Buddhist paths (buddhas, *pratyekabuddha*s, and arhats); in Pure Land contexts, Amitābha Buddha, Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva, and Mahāsthāmaprāpta Bodhisattva; and, especially in *Avataṃsaka-sūtra* contexts, Śākyamuni Buddha, Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva, and Samantabhadra Bodhisattva.

[166] By "the difficulties" (諸難), Nāgārjuna most likely means specifically "the eight difficulties," which refer to rebirth in the hell realm, the hungry ghost realm, or the animal realm; in the long life heavens (where there is no motivation to cultivate the path); on the northern continent of Uttarakuru (where, again, there is no context for cultivating the path); in a body with impaired faculties (as when deaf, dumb, or blind); in a circumstance where one's mentality is exclusively focused on worldly knowledge and eloquence in debating secular issues irrelevant to the path of liberation; or in a place where the Buddha Dharma is no longer extant in that world.

Referring to the above, Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi offers further perspectives here:

> The eight in the Pāli Canon are at AN 8:29: (1–4) are the same; (5) rebirth in the outlying provinces among the uncouth foreigners (maybe Uttarakuru is one

example, but there must be many other 'outlying provinces,' including most of Eurasia, Africa and the Americas); (6) one holds wrong view and has a distorted perspective: 'There is nothing given, nothing sacrificed, nothing offered.…' in other words, a view that denies karma and results; (7) 'one is unwise, stupid, obtuse, unable to understand the meaning of what has been well stated and badly stated' (probably = 'rebirth with impaired faculties'); (8) 'a Tathāgata has not arisen in the world…and the Dhamma leading to peace, *nibbāna*, and enlightenment is not taught.'"

[167] The Sanskrit for these is *cakṣu, jñāna, vidyā,* and *āloka*.

[168] Nāgārjuna is referring here specifically to the life span of a buddha who, certainly more readily than an unenlightened person, is able to either extend or shorten his life span at will. Another example of this phenomenon is described in Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya,* in which it is noted that an arhat may either extend or shorten his life span through a corresponding diminishment or enhancement of his stock of karmic merit.

[169] In most traditional Dharma community contexts, this would refer to welcoming and seeing off eminent Dharma teachers, preceptors, visiting monks or nuns, etc.

[170] Although "*dhyāna* concentration states" usually refers primarily to the four *dhyāna*s associated with the form realm, it also refers to the four *dhyāna* concentration states associated with the formless realm, namely: infinite space, infinite consciousness, nothing whatsoever, and neither perception nor nonperception.

[171] By "kindness, compassion, and so forth," Nāgārjuna is very likely referring to the four immeasurable minds (*apramāṇa-citta*): kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity.

[172] "Unobscured morally indeterminate (*anivṛta-avyākṛta*)" actions are those that are karmically neutral and involve a mind free of subtle hindrances that impede liberation. As mentioned in an earlier note, "subtle hindrances" refers, for example, to having the view that assumes the existence of a self; having a the tendency to think "I am"; engaging in self-cherishing thoughts, words, and deeds; and being forever under the influence of ignorance. In this case, none of these hindrances might impede liberation.

[173] "Those in training and those beyond training" (*śaikṣa-aśaikṣa*) is a reference to the eight stages of realization culminating in arhatship, the eighth and final stage in the *śrāvaka* vehicle's individual liberation path.

[174] For similar passages in the Kumārajīva translation of the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra* (*Great Perfection of Wisdom Sutra in 25,000 Lines,* 摩訶般若波羅蜜經), see the "Rejoicing" chapter (fascicle 11, chapter 39) beginning at T.223:297b18.

[175] I could not locate the *Three Branches Sutra* in the Taishō edition.

[176] A very long and very similar corresponding passage, beginning with precisely this statement of praise, can be found in Kumārajīva's translation of this chapter of the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra,* beginning at T.223:300b26.

[177] The three clear knowledges (*trividyā*) are the heavenly eye, the cognition of past lives of oneself and others, and the extinguishing of the contaminants.

[178] For a complete explanation of these three types of retribution, see Harivarman's *Satyasiddhi-śāstra,* chapter 104, "The Three Types of Karmic Retribution," T.1646:297b–c.

[179] The *Sutra on the Wisdom Seal of the Tathāgata* is extant in the Taishō canon and the cited passage is easily identifiable; see T.633:472c6–14.

[180] Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi recognized this passage as a quote from "A Lump of Salt*"* in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, 3:100 (*Numerical Discourses of the Buddha,* pp. 331 foll.); the Taishō canon parallel is found in the *Madhyama Āgama,* beginning at T.26:433a12.

[181] To correct an apparent graphic-similarity scribal error, I emend the reading of the Taishō text here by preferring the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Gong editions' *er* (二), "two," to the Taishō edition's *san* (三), "three."

[182] The Sanskrit name for Comprehensive Giving Bodhisattva (一切施菩薩) is Sarvadāna. The Chinese transliteration (薩和檀) is used directly below in the paragraph related to Sadāprarudita.

[183] This is a reference to *Jātaka* tale number 316 as recorded in the Pāli tradition. It describes a previous life of the Buddha when he was a rabbit who sacrificed his life as a meal for a hungry *ṛṣi.*

[184] Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi traced this passage to the "Akṣayamati" chapter in Dharmakṣema's 413 C.E. Chinese translation of the *Mahāsaṃnipāta-sūtra* in the Taishō canon (大方等大集經卷第二十七 – 無盡意菩薩品第十二之一, T.397:189a18ff), noting that this text's version of the passage seems somewhat more elaborate than the passage found in T. 397.

[185] I emend the reading of the text by following two alternate editions (Yuan and Ming) in including *huijian* (慧堅), "solidity in wisdom," which completes this traditional fivefold list of five categories of mastery.

[186] As will become clear in due course, "emptiness and such" refers primarily to emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness (the three gates to liberation) and secondarily to a whole host of other qualities associated with the bodhisattva path.

[187] Per Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi, see the *Mahāsaṃnipāta-sūtra,* T.397:189b20ff.

[188] I emend the reading of the text here to correct a fairly obvious scribal error by preferring on sensibility grounds the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Gong editions' *xinjie* (信解), "resolute conviction, firm belief, etc.," to the Taishō's *xinjietuo* (信解脫), "liberation of faith."

[189] "Field of merit" is a characterization typically but not exclusively reserved for more advanced or spiritually pure practitioners of the path, such as senior monastics. In fact, anyone truly in need is often also regarded as "a field of merit." The idea behind the metaphoric designation is that if one gives to such a person, the karmic reward to the benefactor in terms of the merit thereby accrued will be abundant in a way that

is analogous to the results one might expect from planting good seeds in especially fertile soil.

[190] Per Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi, this is probably a reference to non-Buddhist teachings such as those promoted by Maskarī Gośālīputra and Ajita Keśakambala, who denied the existence of karmic cause and effect in human affairs.

[191] Lit., "no giving where the recipient is not a field of merit." This is a reference to instances of discriminating against some potential recipients because they are considered to be insufficiently virtuous or to be of only inferior monastic rank ("mere novices," etc.).

[192] "Fallacious conceptual proliferation" translates *xilun* (戲論), lit., "frivolous discourse," a Chinese translation of the Sanskrit *prapañca*, a term with numerous connotations that usually refers primarily to conceptual proliferation that imputes a self where none exists and spins out all sorts of other egotistical ideation with no basis in ultimate reality.

[193] For the corresponding Chinese translation, Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi notes that the passage begins at T.397:189c12.

[194] Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi notes: "On the following, see *Majjhima Nikāya* 142 (at the end)." The *Madhyama Āgama* parallel is found at T.26:722b28; see also T.84:904a23.

[195] Lest this statement seem somewhat confusing, these four types each contain two entities, namely a giver and a receiver. Three of them have at least one entity that serves as a basis for purity and three of them have at least one entity that serves as a basis for impurity.

[196] As Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi points out, in these contexts, *she* (捨), which otherwise most directly connotes "relinquishing," usually translates the Sanskrit *tyāga,* which is also often used in Indian Buddhist texts to connote "generosity," hence my use of that translation here. In support of this translation, Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi points to a Pāli texts classical definition at AN 4:61: *Katamā ca, gahapati, cāgasampadā? Idha, gahapati, ariyasāvako vigatamala-maccherena cetasā agāraetasā agārasāvako vigatamalaion*.

[197] I emend the reading of the text here to correct an apparent scribal error by preferring on sensibility grounds the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Gong editions' *puti* (菩提), "*bodhi*," to the Taishō edition's *pusa* (菩薩), "bodhisattva."

[198] Kumārajīva retains the transliteration *sarvajña,* which I prefer to translate as "all-knowledge."

[199] The brahman caste corresponds to the priestly class.

[200] The *kṣatriya* caste corresponds to the military class.

[201] The *vaiśya* caste corresponds to the agricultural and merchant classes.

[202] In traditional Indian culture, the *śūdra* caste is considered a low class. Of course, the Buddha emphatically repudiated the caste system, stating that all classes of people flow with equality into the Dharma of the Buddha, just as all waters, when they flow into the ocean, immediately become of but a single flavor.

[203] "Self-benefit" here is one of the two types of benefit to which the bodhisattva is dedicated, namely the self-benefit that brings about one's own complete awakening and the other-benefit that facilitates the complete awakening of all other beings.

[204] The "erroneous" of "erroneous interpretations" here translates the Chinese *yi* (異), lit., "aberrant," "divergent," or "deviating."

[205] Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi offers this note: "The following is in the *Dīgha Nikāya* 16.4.7 foll. (*Long Discourses of the Buddha,* pp. 255–256). Also in *Aṅguttara Nikāya* 4:180." A Chinese parallel is at T.1:17c1.

[206] Here and hereafter, I translate *zhu fa xiang yi* (諸法相義) as "the true character of dharmas." Although it might more literally translate as "the meaning of the character of dharmas" or as "the character and meaning of dharmas," this would seem to more probably correspond to the Sanskrit *dharmatā,* which, in other Kumārajīva texts is rendered into Chinese as *zhu fa shi xiang* (諸法實相). This seems especially likely when one notes that Hirakawa, *Buddhist Chinese-Sanskrit Dictionary,* p. 190, gives *dharmatā* as the Sanskrit antecedent for 諸法實相義.

[207] *Mātṛkā*s were systematic "matrices" (same etymological root) and/or lists of the technical terms, topics, and other doctrinal details contained in the sutras. They served as memorization aids in the preservation of the sutras, and the teachings contained within them, during the time after the Buddha's nirvana and before the sutras and the Abhidharma literature based on them were first systematically committed to written form, usually on palm leaves or other transcription media.

[208] Although the title of such a scripture (*Sutra of the Resolute King*) is indeed referenced in numerous places in the Chinese Buddhist canon, I could not find this textual passage anywhere in the canon as an extant scriptural translation. Of course this does not rule out the possible presence of a slightly variant Chinese translation of these ideas in either in this so-named scripture or somewhere else in the canon.

[209] *Dhāraṇī*s usually take the form of mantras serving to retain Dharma as dominant in one's karmic continuum from lifetime to lifetime, and to also retain very precise memories of all teachings one has learned from lifetime to lifetime. They are also commonly used to protect the practitioner of the path from negative influences arising both from without and from within his own mind. They are also regularly used to bestow benefit on other beings and to enhance one's capabilities on the bodhisattva path in numerous additional ways. Nāgārjuna writes at great length on this topic in his exegesis on the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra*.

[210] Although *dhūta*s *are* austerities, here they refer not to austerities in general but rather specifically to the twelve *dhūtaguṇa* austerities.

[211] *Baiyi* (白衣), "white-robed ones," is a Sino-Buddhist translation of the Sanskrit *avadāta-vasana*, a term specifically referring to members of the Buddhist laity.

[212] The apparent implication here is not only that a monastic will find his mind distracted by conversation with villagers, but also that his unconventional activities will become the subject of disapproving rumors that degrade the laity's respect for all members of the monastic sangha.

[213] "Three poisons" is an alternate designation for the three primary psychospiritual afflictions of greed, hatred, and delusion.

[214] Nāgārjuna refers here to the rest of the six perfections aside from the practice of giving.

[215] Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi notes:

> Nāgārjuna probably has in mind a passage that occurs in Pāli *Saṃyutta Nikāya* 20:10, and elsewhere: "Here some bhikkhu dresses in the morning and, taking bowl and robe, enters a village or town for alms with body, speech, and mind unguarded, without setting up mindfulness, unrestrained in his sense faculties. He sees women there lightly clad or lightly attired and lust invades his mind. With his mind invaded by lust, he meets death or deadly suffering. For this, bhikkhus, is death in the Noble One's Discipline: that one gives up the training and returns to the lower life. This is deadly suffering: that one commits a certain defiled offence of a kind that allows for rehabilitation…." Giving up the training is "death in the Noble One's discipline, the equivalent of dying." Breaking a grave precept approaches death but does not cross the line.

[216] The four bases of meritorious qualities (truth, relinquishment, quiescence, and wisdom) were introduced by Nāgārjuna in Chapter 1 (22b28–9). Their importance as defining qualities of both buddhas and bodhisattvas was emphasized repeatedly in Chapter 2.

[217] Nāgārjuna's use of "Dharma position" or "right Dharma position" (*samyaktva niyāma*) refers in this context to a stage on the *śrāvaka* disciple's path that is synonymous with attainment of the path of seeing, a stage from which one cannot readily switch over to cultivation of the bodhisattva path to buddhahood. See Leo Pruden's translation, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam of Vasubandhu* (Fremont, CA: Asian Humanities Press, Jain Publishing Co., 1990), pp. 321, 944, 1055–1056n, 1243.

In the Mahayana context, this "right Dharma position" connotes a stage of progress on the bodhisattva path wherein one directly perceives the emptiness of dharmas, yet nonetheless continues on with kindness and compassion in the universal-liberation path to buddhahood and remains invulnerable to retreating to the *śrāvaka* disciple's path to the attainment of individual liberation.

[218] "Four fruitions" here is a reference to the four fruits of the *śrāvaka* disciples' path beginning with stream-entry and ending with arhatship.

[219] "Three matters" refers to mindfulness of the Buddha, mindfulness of the Dharma, and mindfulness of the Sangha in a manner accordant with the ensuing discussion at the conclusion of the chapter.

[220] This statement is found in Nāgārjuna's *Exegesis on the Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra* (T.1509:442c5–7), as well as in the sutra itself (T.223:273b29–c2).

[221] Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi Notes: "This must be *māraviṣaya* or *māradheyya,* the realm/domain of Māra, a metaphor for samsara."

[222] This is a reference to the "eight winds" or "eight worldly dharmas" (*aṣṭalokadharma*) that consist of four pairs of affective mind states strongly influencing the life priorities of beings trapped in cyclic existence: gain (*lābha*) and loss (*alābha*), fame (*yaśas*) and disgrace (*ayaśas*), praise (*praśaṃsā*) and blame (*nindā*), and pleasure (*sukha*) and pain (*duḥkha*).

[223] Per the *Mahāsaṃgīti-sūtra* (佛說大集法門經) translated into Chinese by Dānapāla in 1005, these "six kinds of equanimity" (六捨) refer to equanimity or indifference at each of the six sense gates of the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind with regard to the objects of those six sense faculties, visual forms, sounds, smells, tastes, touchables, and dharmas as objects of mind (T.12:231c15–18).

[224] "Two kinds of afflictions" commonly refers to latent afflictions and manifest afflictions.

[225] "The five hindrances" is a reference to desire, ill will, lethargy and sleepiness, excitedness and regretfulness, and afflicted doubtfulness. These five hindrances must be overcome in order to successfully enter deep states of meditation.

[226] These are explained by the Buddha in the *Ekottara Āgama Sutra* (T.125:738b18–c17). In summary, these refer to avoidance of being taken advantage of by *māra*s, i.e., "demons" (this is reiterated in all seven) by not retreating from these seven practices:

(1) Dwelling together in a single place with mutual respect involving mutual assistance between juniors and seniors while persisting in the cultivation of good dharmas;

(2) Accordance with the teachings within a harmonious and united sangha;

(3) Nonattachment to worldly responsibilities or reputation;

(4) Avoidance of the recitation of miscellaneous (non-Buddhist) texts while forever goading on one's resolve;

(5) Nonindulgence in drowsiness and persistence in wakefulness;

(6) Avoidance of the study or propagation of "calculations" (probably referring to astronomically based predictions and various sorts of divination, etc.);

(7) Bringing forth the reflection that there is nothing in the entire world that is worthy of delight, practicing *dhyāna* meditation, and persevering in accordance with the teachings.

[227] Assuming that Kumārajīva is using the same Sanskrit-to-Chinese correspondences that we find in the Kumārajīva and Buddhayaśas translation of the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra,* what I translate here as "deep-seated aspirations and resolute belief" (*shenxin xinle* 深心信樂) would correspond to *āśaya* and *adhimukti*.

[228] "True character of dharmas" (usually *zhu fa shi xiang* 諸法實相) is Kumārajīva's usual rendering for what Hirakawa, *Buddhist Chinese-Sanskrit Dictionary*, p. 1090, notes may be *tattvasya-lakṣaṇam, dharmatā, dharma-svabhāva,* etc. As such it is a reference to the true nature of dharmas as they really are, and thus a synonym for true suchness (*tathatā*).

[229] I emend the reading of the Taishō text here by preferring on sensibility grounds the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Gong editions' *ming* (名), "is what is meant by," to the Taishō edition's *gu* (故), "therefore."

[230] This extended sutra passage has direct correspondences to a section of a four-fascicle scripture that is included in the *Mahāvaipulya-mahāsaṃnipāta-sūtra* (大方等大集經), otherwise known as the *Akṣayamati-nirdeśa* (無盡意菩薩品). The passage is in the Taishō canon at T.397:186b–c.

[231] On sensibility grounds, I emend the reading of the Taishō text's *xing* (性), "nature," here by preferring the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Gong editions' graphically similar *xing* (姓), "caste."

[232] *Jian wen jue zhi* (見聞覺知), which I translate here as "seeing, hearing, sensing, or cognizing," corresponds to the Sanskrit *dṛṣṭaṃ, śrutaṃ, mataṃ, vijñānam,* which collectively refers to the knowing of their respective objects by the six sense faculties of eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind. In this tetrad, the cognitive functions of three of the senses (olfactory, gustatory, and tactile sensation accomplished by the nose, tongue, and body) are collapsed under the single term "sensing," whereas the other three senses' functions are individually specified as "seeing" (the eye sense faculty), "hearing" (the ear sense faculty), and "cognizing" (the mind faculty).

[233] The Taishō analogue text has *jing jie gong de* (境界功德), "qualities of the state of mind" (T.397:186b20).

[234] "Joy" and "bliss" are two factors on a continuum of subtlety (joy being more coarse, bliss being more sublime) that arise and fall away in progressing through the four *dhyāna*s. "Declining to indulge the delectable" refers to remaining unattached to delectably pleasurable meditation states (*āsvādana-samādhi*) encountered in one's meditation practice that would otherwise pose a danger to progress in meditation.

[235] Lest the reader find this passage somewhat opaque, this paragraph is primarily referring to transcendence of the five aggregates.

[236] Nāgārjuna may be referring here either to the immediately preceding "mindfulness of the true Buddha" discussion, or else to his later discussion in six chapters (Chapters 20–25 in Vol. II) of "mindfulness of the Buddha" and its associated *pratyutpanna samādhi*.

[237] As inferred by the following discussion, this may be a reference to the layperson's option of starting out in the cultivation of moral purity by only formally obligating himself to observe whichever moral precepts he can confidently uphold. Hence it is

not uncommon for a layperson to start by taking just the three precepts proscribing killing, stealing, and lying, and then only later on formally taking the other two of the five precepts, which prohibit sexual misconduct and the consumption of intoxicants.

238 This is probably a reference to the seven (or eight) kinds of arrogance variously listed in the canon.

239 "The body that does endure" is probably intended to refer to the Dharma body shared by all buddhas.

240 This refers to the recognition that, wisely used, the wealth of this life may bring about a circumstance of being wealthy in the Dharma. This is accomplished through using one's material wealth to do good deeds, support the Dharma, and otherwise generate merit that brings forth success in encountering the right Dharma, a good spiritual guide, and conditions for cultivating the path to buddhahood in life after life.

241 The Chinese is more literally "impurity of the body," however, the Indian Buddhist tradition refers to it more specifically as "contemplation of the unloveliness of the body (*aśubha-bhāvanā* or *aśubhā-saṃjñā*)." This practice involves such contemplations as the contemplation of the thiry-two (or thirty-six) parts of the body, the contemplation of the nine stages of decomposition of a corpse, and the contemplation of the white-boned skeleton.

242 This statement is probably intended to apply to a socially obligatory serving of alcoholic beverages in circumstances such as when hosting a large wedding reception where many of the people in attendance will surely be drinking anyway. In this connection, however, it is perhaps useful to recall the major bodhisattva precept forbidding any purveyance of intoxicants. It is stated therein that something so apparently minor as passing a glass of wine to someone may result in being born for five hundred lifetimes with no hands. Also, if it is not already obvious, Nāgārjuna would not condone a precepted layperson's personal consumption of alcohol, even when attending the sorts of events alluded to here.

243 Many of the statements contained in this scriptural passage correlate quite closely with those recorded in the very short fourth chapter of the one-fascicle *Sutra on the Questions of Ugradatta* (郁迦羅越問菩薩行經, T.323:23a–30b). This edition of the *Ugraparipṛcchā-sūtra,* one of three translations made into Chinese, was translated by Dharmarakṣa sometime in the late third or early fourth centuries.

244 "Ideation and discursion" translates the standard Chinese rendering of *vitarka* and *vicāra* (覺觀).

245 "Foolish common person" translates the standard Chinese rendering of *pṛthagjana* (凡夫). Although obviously not very flattering, this English translation by Edward Conze, in *Materials for a Dictionary of the Prajñāpāramitā Literature* (Tokyo: Suzuki Research Foundation, 1967), is unfortunately very accurate. It basically refers to anyone who has not yet attained one of the fruits of the path by which one would become

an *ārya*. The rest of us are always running mental and spiritual software deeply encoded with ignorance that produces delusion, which in turn generates every permutation of greed, hatred, and stupidity. Hence the "foolishness" to which the term alludes.

246 The text reflects conditions in ancient India dominated by tribal customs. Occurrences such as those listed here might have easily followed from offending tribal authorities, the rich, the powerful, organized crime, ad hoc groups of bandits, local Taliban-like zealots, or invading armies.

247 Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi points out that these four causal influences of desire, hatred, delusion, and fear (*chanda*, *doṣa*, *moha*, and *bhaya*) are called "the four wrong courses" (*agati*) and cites AN 4:17–19 as a specific Pāli canon reference.

248 Unlike today, in ancient times actors and entertainers did not necessarily enjoy a particularly high social status.

249 The almsman provides the opportunity to practice giving and by his presence influences one to engage in giving, a necessary practice for advancement on the path because it generates merit while also diminishing miserliness.

250 Giving to an almsman generates karmic merit, which in turn brings about material abundance in the future lives of the benefactor.

251 This act of giving assists realization of *bodhi* for both benefactor and recipient. For the former, it contributes to an essential stock of merit without which one cannot make meaningful progress on the path. For the latter, it provides the physical sustenance without which the almsman could not continue cultivating the path.

252 All-knowledge is a quality exclusive to the buddhas. When giving to an almsman cultivating the path that culminates in attaining this utmost, right, and perfect enlightenment, one's contemplation of this goal could then serve as an inspiration to their own pursuit of this very same state of ultimately supreme liberation.

253 Although giving to an almsman is certainly productive of a rewarding karmic result, to give for the sake of a rewarding karmic result is just another form of covetousness, which does not accord with the path and also massively diminishes the quality of the positive karmic result that the act of giving might otherwise bring about.

254 Māra, the *devaputra*s of the sixth heaven in the realm of desire, demonic ghosts, and, figuratively speaking, the demon of one's own miserliness—all of these types of "demons" may manipulate the mind state of the bodhisattva cultivator, thereby discouraging him from generating merit through the practice of giving. By resisting these, one overcomes the forces of Māra.

255 It is said to be karmically quite usual for the beneficiaries of such generosity to eventually become disciples or members of one's own familial or spiritual clan in this and/or future lives. Additionally, the almsman may indeed have been a clan member or a Dharma family relation in a previous life.

[256] The bodhisattva employs the four means of attraction (giving, pleasing words, beneficial actions, and joint endeavors) as essential skillful means to be used in drawing forth beings into pursuing the path to liberation.

[257] "Dispassion" translates a standard Chinese rendering of *virāga* (離欲).

[258] "Dispassion" (*virāga*) is most likely intended here in the sense of "indifference" or "detachment" with regard to one's own possessions.

[259] Dedicating the merit arising from giving to the eventual attainment *anuttarāsamyaksaṃbodhi* greatly elevates one's dedication to moral purity, because focusing one's resolve exclusively on attaining buddhahood necessarily entails strict adherence forever to the highest level of moral virtue. If one fails to dedicate one's merit to the attainment of buddhahood, that merit will otherwise naturally just go merely to greater personal abundance in subsequent rebirths.

[260] This manner of giving is consistent with the perfection of vigor because the benefactor has moved right along with the act, maintaining zeal, resolve, and a degree of determination that remains invulnerable to any tendency to retreat from this virtuous act.

[261] "Worthy" (*bhadra*) and *ārya* are technical terms with specific meanings in Mahayana doctrine. Basically, a "worthy" is one who has advanced well beyond the spiritually untutored mind of the foolish common person, but is still vulnerable to being impeded in his progress to spiritual liberation. An *ārya,* on the other hand, has already reached one of the stages of realization through which progression to spiritual liberation is guaranteed.

[262] "It endures" reflects the realization that the gift, once given, will continue to generate merit for the benefactor even after it is no longer in his possession.

[263] "It will not endure" reflects the realization that a possession, like all other phenomena, is impermanent.

[264] The text actually specifies "wife" here, but I deliberately instead translate with the more neutral term "spouse." Nāgārjuna certainly would have used such a word if he had thought a woman might ever read this text which was, after all, written for a readership consisting entirely of men. This work was written at a time when only men were able to read. Thus it was never envisioned that women or prospective nuns might actually read the text, as opposed to having it orally taught in a lecture format more precisely tailored to the contemplations best suited to a woman reflecting on the suboptimal aspects and potential spiritual liabilities inherent in marriage. Obviously, in order to derive the intended salutary effect of reading this (and other similar) commentaries, a woman reading this text should simply reframe any references specifying "women" or "wives" as objects of critical contemplation to "men" or "husbands."

[265] There is a total of ninety-nine negative spousal contemplations here, consisting of thirty-three sets of three, all of them intended to provoke the lay practitioner already weary of the tedium of married life to consider abandoning the householder's life in

favor of monastic life, a path that is described step-by-step in the ensuing chapters of this treatise.

266 Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi points out that the triple contemplations that follow are taken from the *Ugraparipṛcchā-sūtra.* See Jan Nattier's translation of this scripture, *A Few Good Men: The Bodhisattva Path According to the Inquiry of Ugra (Ugraparipṛcchā)* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003), pp. 247–255.

267 "Contemplation of the body as unlovely" generally translates the Sanskrit *aśubha-bhāvanā* or *aśubhā-saṃjñā*.

268 Starting here and continuing for the rest of these spousal contemplations, the Taishō text has *xiang* (相) as a more or less standard short-form abbreviation for *xiang* (想), while the other four editions (Song, Yuan, Ming, and Gong) all have *xiang* (想) throughout.

269 The black-eared kite (*Milvus lineatus*) is a medium-sized Asian raptor.

270 Sakhalin sturgeon (*Acipenser mikadoi*).

271 Responsible spiritual teachers will generally forbid married disciples from precipitously abandoning a marriage when the family is financially dependent on their ongoing presence. They will usually instead counsel joint lay bodhisattva practice that includes the cultivation of patience, the planting of merit, the development of wisdom, and continued kindness and compassion in the context of the ongoing marriage until, by mutual agreement, husband and wife together decide that more efficient progress along the bodhisattva path is best pursued in a monastic context.

Serious married lay practitioners may explore the option of celibacy by mutual agreement, beginning by formally taking on the eight precepts that include celibacy, and observing those precepts for one day and night on six days of each lunar month, usually, the eighth, fourteenth, fifteenth, twenty-third, twenty-ninth, and thirtieth days.

272 Again, as in many other places in this text, rather than retain the Sanskrit term, I translate Kumārajīva's *sarvajña* as "all-knowledge."

273 Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi notes the parallels from Āgama and Nikāya sources: Śikṣānanda**,** T.279:861–863; EA 24.6; T. 88; T. 89; T. 87, MA 202; AN 3.37–38, 3:70, and 8.43, and points out that the full text of the eight precepts is found in AN 3:70 and 8:43.

274 "Consumption of intoxicants" here is literally "alcoholic beverages," but it also refers to any substance that, once consumed, skews normal clear consciousness. Hence the various forms and methods of ingesting mind-altering cannabis products (marijuana, hash, etc.), opiates, amphetamines, psychedelics, and other such substances would be included as well. Coffee and tea, although they can interfere with meditation, are not proscribed.

275 This scripture, the *Sutra of the Resolute King,* has apparently been lost, as a search of the canon does not turn up any remotely similar texts with this name.

276 Krakucchanda Buddha was the fourth of the seven buddhas of antiquity mentioned in the Nikāyas and Āgamas.

[277] Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi notes that this statement's corresponding Pāli canon passage is found at AN 6:44. Hence, *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha,* p. 913, has: "Therefore, Ānanda, do not be judgmental regarding people. Do not pass judgment on people. Those who pass judgment on people harm themselves. I alone, or one like me, may pass judgment on people."

[278] Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi notes that the following passage's corresponding Pāli canon passage is found at AN 4:103 and *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha,* pp. 484–485.

[279] *Sutra on the Inaction of Dharmas* (諸法無行經), Skt. *Sarvadharma-apravṛtti-nirdeśa-sūtra* (T.650:750–761). See also other translations (T. 651, T. 652).

[280] Perhaps the *Inquiry of Ugra* (*Ugraparipṛcchā*).

[281] To correct an obvious graphic-similarity scribal error, I emend the reading of the Taishō text here by preferring the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Gong editions' *xiang* (相), "sign," to the Taishō edition's *xiang* (想), "thought." These three successive phrases are clearly intended to refer specifically to practitioners of the three gates to liberation (emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness), of which this phrase refers to the second of the three gates.

[282] "Kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity" is a direct reference to the four immeasurable minds (*apramāṇa-citta*).

[283] Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi notes corresponding Pāli text passages: SN 15:3, 4, and 13.

[284] This statement is slightly ambiguous but most likely refers to the Indian layperson's caste origins and associated social stature, which are entirely transcended and dispensed with once one becomes a monastic in the Buddha's sangha.

[285] "Elixir of immortality," lit., "sweet dew" (*ganlu* 甘露) corresponds to the Sanskrit *amṛta,* which, as with the Western analogue term, "ambrosia," means "the undying" and refers to the nectar or food of the gods that confers immortality. "Poisons" likely refers to the three poisons, greed, hatred, and delusion, along with their numerous subsidiary afflictions.

[286] Although this statement is somewhat ambiguous, it likely refers to the layperson's relatively greater vulnerability to having his interests encroached upon and harmed by the power of the king, the power of thieves, the power of *māra*s, or the power of the afflictions.

[287] This is probably intended to refer to the "heat" of anger and lust.

[288] Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi notes the corresponding Pāli text passage: SN 35:247; see *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Saṃyutta Nikāya translated from the Pāli* (Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications, 2000), pp. 1255–1257.

[289] The "three-part robe" consists of a sarong, an upper robe, and a *sanghāti* robe.

290 "*Avadāna* stories" are stories of the previous lives of a buddha.

291 The Chinese text preserves a transliteration of the Sanskrit word for "sitting cloth" (*niṣīdana*). I have preferred to translate it.

292 To correct an apparent graphic-similarity scribal error, I emend the reading of the Taishō text here by preferring the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Gong editions' *yi* (遺), "omitted, left out, held back, or neglected," to the Taishō edition's *gui* (匱).

293 "The station of the *avaivartika*" corresponds to irreversibility on the bodhisattva path to buddhahood.

294 "Patience" here is to be construed in the sense of "acquiescence."

295 The Chinese term that I translate here as "resolute faith" (信解) is perhaps the most standard Sino-Buddhist translation of the Sanskrit *adhimukti*.

296 I insert the Sanskrit term *dhāraṇī* here in place of its sometimes slightly opaque Chinese translation as "comprehensive retention [formulae]." Both the Chinese translation (總持) as well as the Sanskrit term itself refer to one of the most important types of *dhāraṇī*s, those which aid the remembrance of particular Dharma teachings even for many lifetimes. There are other types of *dhāraṇī*s, such as those that consist of untranslated Sanskrit syllables that serve as powerful mantra-like "mystic formulae." Nāgārjuna discusses this topic at length in his *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-upadeśa*.

297 These "universal bases" (*kṛtsnāyatana*) are ten visualization devices traditionally used as one of a number of basic techniques in early Buddhist meditation practice aimed at developing and strengthening deep meditative concentration. These are synonymous with the ten types of *kasiṇa*s familiar to students of Southern Tradition Buddhism's meditation practice aimed at acquisition of the four *dhyāna* (*jhāna*) concentration states associated with the form realm.

The *kasiṇa*s may be discs representing earth, water, fire, air; blue, yellow, red, white; space, consciousness (or as an alternative to consciousness, "bright light"), or empty space. Through correctly developed meditation on any one of these discs, one is able to produce a precise image of the given *kasiṇa* that then abides in the mind's eye or may be called forth to the mind's eye at will and independently of the original meditation object. Then one becomes able in response to one's own volition to freely develop any representational image that one wishes that incorporates the original elements, colors, etc., on which the meditation was originally focused.

These representational images are then no longer limited to an exact replica of that original meditation object. For example, one is then able to transform one element into another and produce certain supernormal effects as a result. Hence the analogy here to developing the practice through "resolve" "in accordance with one's wishes."

298 "Karmic propensities" (here *qi* 氣 and *qixing* 氣性, more usually *xiqi* 習氣, lit., "habit energies") would usually correspond to the Sanskrit *vāsanā,* which refers to the habitual tendencies created in the mind through repetition of similar volitions and

actions that produce the likelihood one will quite readily stumble into repeating the same affliction-associated karmic errors.

[299] Emendation: to correct an apparent scribal error I reversed the order of the second and third lines of this four-line *śloka,* to accord with the obviously correct order revealed in Nāgārjuna's subsequent discussion and in the Ming edition of the text.

[300] I emend the reading of the Taishō text here by preferring on sensibility grounds the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Gong editions' *dafahui* (大法會), "great Dharma assemblies," to the Taishō edition's *dahui* (大會), "great assemblies."

[301] It is not clear to which Abhidharma text Nāgārjuna is referring here.

[302] The *tala* palm (*Borassus flabellifer*) is native to the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia.

[303] "White hair tuft": *ūrṇākeśa*.

[304] The *nyagrodha* tree (*Ficus benghalensis*) is the Indian banyan tree.

[305] According to Monier Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary, aiṇeya* refers to the Indian black antelope. I suspect the intended species may be the Indian blackbuck (*Antilope cervicapra*).

[306] I translate here as "monastic preceptor" and "monastic Dharma teacher" what the Kumārajīva text retains in transliteration as *upādhyāya* and *ācārya*, respectively.

[307] Although in later period literature *xiongdi* (兄弟) refers exclusively to elder and younger brothers, in ancient texts it refers to elder and younger sisters as well.

[308] In India, merit halls (*puṇya-śālā*) were a type of hostel for the lodging, sustenance, and medical care of travelers and the poor. These were usually donated by kings and the wealthy.

Glossary

Abhidharma: A category of Buddhist texts devoted to detailed scholastic analyses of the teachings contained in the sutras.

afflictions: Otherwise known as "the three poisons" (*triviṣa*), these are (1) greed, including lust and desire in general; (2) hatred, including all of the permutations of aversion such as irritation, anger, and rage; and (3) delusion or ignorance. There are many subcategories of afflictions (*kleśa*s) listed in the various dharma schemas. For example, in the Sarvāstivāda school, there are six root afflictions and ten subsidiary afflictions.

aggregates: *See* five aggregates.

anāgāmin: A "nonreturner," one who has gained the third of the four fruits of the individual liberation path of the *śrāvaka* disciple.

anuttarasamyaksaṃbodhi: The "utmost, right, and perfect enlightenment" of a buddha.

arhat: One who, having put an end to all of the afflictions, fetters, and contaminants; and, having put an end to rebirth, has gained the fourth and final fruit on the individual liberation path of the *śrāvaka* disciple.

ārya: One who has realized one of the fruits of the path from which they can never fall away. This includes any of the eight fruits of the arhat path, or any of the irreversible stations on the bodhisattva path to buddhahood.

asaṃkhya/asaṃkhyeya: In Sanskrit, an incalculably and infinitely large number.

asura: As one of the paths of rebirth, this refers to a demigod or titan. More generally, beings characterized by much anger, hatred, jealousy, and contentiousness who may also appear as humans, animals, hungry ghosts (*preta*s), or hell-dwellers.

avadāna stories: Stories of the previous lives of a buddha.

avaivartika: One who has become irreversible on either the individual liberation path of the arhats or on the universal liberation path of the bodhisattvas and buddhas. Throughout this text, "stage of certainty" (必定, 必定地) is most likely a translation of *avaivartika.*

bases of psychic powers: The four bases of psychic power (*catvāra ṛddhi-pāda*) are zeal (*chanda*), vigor (*vīrya*), [concentration of] mind/thought (*citta*), and reflective or investigative consideration, examination, or imagination (*mīmāṃsā*).

Bhagavat: One of the titles of a buddha, variously translated as "Blessed One," "Lord," or in Chinese Buddhist texts, "World-honored One" (*shizun* 世尊).

bhikṣu: A fully ordained celibate Buddhist monk within one of the traditional schools of Buddhism.

bhikṣuṇī: A fully ordained celibate Buddhist nun within one of the traditional schools of Buddhism.

bhūta ghost: According to Monier Williams' *A Sanksrit-English Dictionary,* one of the many meanings of *bhūta* is "a spirit (good or evil), the ghost of a deceased person, a demon, imp, goblin." The *Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism* has "A class of harm-inflicting and formless obstructing spirits (i.e., 'elemental spirits')"; "sometimes equivalent to preta (hungry ghosts)"; "Because they obstruct rainfall, the bhūta are propitiated by rituals to cause precipitation."

bodhi: "Enlightenment" or "awakening." In its most exalted form this refers exclusively to the utmost, right, and perfect enlightenment (*anuttarasamyaksaṃbodhi*) of a buddha.

bodhimaṇḍa: The "site of enlightenment" where enlightenment is cultivated and fully realized. It may be used as a general reference to Buddhist temples, though it often refers specifically to the site beneath the *bodhi* tree where a buddha gains complete realization of utmost, right, and perfect enlightenment.

bodhisattva: Beings who, in their pursuit of the utmost, right, and perfect enlightenment of buddhahood, is equally dedicated to achieving buddhahood for themselves while also facilitating all other beings' achievement of buddhahood. Their primary practice is classically described as focusing on the six (or ten) "perfections" (*pāramitā*s): giving, moral virtue, patience, vigor, meditative skill (*dhyāna*), and world-transcending wisdom (*prajñā*). *See also pāramitā*s.

bodhi tree: The tree in Bodhgaya in the Indian state of Bihar under which the Buddha reached enlightenment approximately two thousand six hundred years ago.

Brahmā: Per *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism:* "An Indian divinity who was adopted into the Buddhist pantheon as a protector of the teachings . . . and king of the Brahmaloka ["Brahma world"] (in the narrow sense of that term)." "*Brahmaloka*" here refers to the first three heavens of the form realm.

brahmacārin: Per Monier Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary:* "A young brahman who is a student of the Vedas (under a preceptor) or who practices chastity, a young brahman before marriage (in the first period of his life)."

brahmacarya: Celibacy.

brahman: Someone who belongs to the highest caste in Hinduism; a member of the Hindu priestly caste.

buddha: Anyone who has achieved utmost, right, and perfect enlightenment (*anuttarasamyaksaṃbodhi*), whether referring to the Buddha of the present era in this world, Śākyamuni Buddha, any of the seven buddhas of antiquity, or, in Mahayana cosmology, any of the countless buddhas of the ten directions and three periods of time.

clear knowledges: Refers to the "three knowledges" (*trividyā*): (1) remembrance of previous lives (*pūrvanivāsānusmṛti*), (2) knowledge of beings' rebirth destinies (*cyutyupapādajñāna*), and (3) knowledge of the destruction of the defiling contaminants or "taints" (*āsravakṣaya*).

contaminants (Skt. *āsrava*): These are usually defined as either threefold or fourfold: (1) sensual desire (*kāma*); 2) [craving for] becoming (*bhāva*), i.e., the craving for continued existence; (3) ignorance (*avidyā*), i.e., delusion; (4) views (*dṛṣṭi*). This fourth type is not included in some listings. Common alternate translations include "taints" and "outflows" and, less commonly, "influxes" and "fluxes."

dāna-pāramitā: The perfection of giving.

desire, form, and formless realms. *See* three realms of existence.

*deva*s: Divinities residing in the heavens that collectively constitute the highest of the six rebirth destinies within the realm of samsara. There are twenty-seven categories of *deva*s and their heavens in the desire realm, form realm, and formless realm. Although the lifespans of the *deva*s in these various heavens may be immensely long, when their karmic merit runs out they are all still destined to eventually fall back into the other five paths of rebirth, where they are reborn in accordance with their residual karma from previous lifetimes.

dhāraṇī: There are many types, but the two main types are (1) mantra-like spells that serve the purpose of protection from negative spiritual forces such as ghosts and demons, and (2) formulae that aid the retention even for countless lifetimes of the Dharma teachings one has acquired in this and previous lives.

Dharma: The teachings of the Buddha.

dharmas: (1) Fundamental constituent aspects, elements, or factors of mental and physical existence, as for instance, "the one hundred dharmas" in which Vasubandhu analytically catalogued all that exists. In this sense, dharmas are somewhat analogous to the elements of the periodic table in chemistry. (2) Any individual teaching, as for instance in "the dharma of conditioned origination."

Dharma realm: As a Buddhist technical term, "Dharma realm" or "dharma realm" (Skt. *dharmadhātu*) has at least several levels of meaning. (1) At the most granular level, "dharma realm" refers to one of the eighteen sense realms, dharmas as "objects of mind" (*dharma-āyatana*). (2) In the most cosmically and metaphysically vast sense, "Dharma realm" refers in aggregate to all conventionally existent phenomena and the universally pervasive noumenal "true suchness" (*tathatā*) that underlies

and characterizes all of those phenomena. In this sense, it is identical with the "Dharma body" (Skt. *dharmakāya*). (3) As a classifying term, "dharma realm" is used to distinguish realms of existence, as in the ten dharma realms consisting of the realms of buddhas, bodhisattvas, *śrāvaka* disciples, *pratyekabuddha*s, devas, *asura*s, humans, animals, hungry ghosts, and hell-dwellers; or metaphysical modes of existence, as in the "four dharma realms" of the Huayan hermeneutic tradition that speaks of the dharma realm of the "noumenal" (synonymous with emptiness or *śūnyatā*); the dharma realm of the "phenomenal"; the dharma realm of the unimpeded interpenetration of the phenomenal and the noumenal; and the dharma realm of the unimpeded interpenetration of all phenomena with all other phenomena (in a manner that resonates somewhat with quantum entanglement and nonlocality).

Dharma wheel (Skt. *dharmacakra*): Refers to the eight-spoked wheel emblematic of the Buddha's teaching of the eightfold path of the *ārya*s or "noble ones," consisting of right views, right volition or intentional thought, right speech, right physical action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right meditative concentration. This term is also synonymous with the three turnings of the four truths as initially taught by the Buddha to his original five disciples.

dhūta, dhūtaṅga, or *dhūtaguṇa* austerities: In contrast to the nonbeneficial ascetic practices of non-Buddhists (lying on a bed of nails, etc.), these are practices that are beneficial to progress on the path, such as wearing only patchwork robes sewn from discarded cloth, eating only food obtained on almsrounds, eating only a single meal each day, always sitting and never lying down, dwelling at the base of a tree, and residing in a charnel field where one observes the stages of the body's decomposition.

dhyāna: A general term broadly corresponding to all forms of Buddhist meditative skill. The Chinese *chan* (禪) and the Japanese term *zen* are transliterations of the same Sanskrit word *dhyāna.* All forms of Buddhist "calming" and "insight" meditation are subcategories of *dhyāna.*

dhyāna-pāramitā: The perfection of meditative skill.

eight difficulties: Birth in the realms of hells, as a hungry ghost, as an animal, as a long-lived *deva;* birth in a border region (where there is no Buddha Dharma); birth as someone who is blind, deaf, mute, or otherwise has impaired physical or mental faculties; birth as someone who possesses merely worldly knowledge and intelligence (and hence who uses their cleverness to deny the truth of the Dharma); and birth at a time before or long after a buddha appears in the world.

eight precepts: Eight vows involving abstaining from (1) killing; (2) taking what is not given; (3) sexual misconduct; (4) false speech; (5) ingesting intoxicants; (6) using perfumes, wearing jewelry or other personal adornments, and dancing, singing, or watching such performances; (7) sleeping on a high or wide bed; and (8) eating after midday.

eighteen sense realms: The six sense faculties of the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind; their corresponding six sense objects (visual forms, sounds, smells, tastes, touchables, and ideas, etc. as objects of mind); and the six sense consciousnesses (visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, tactile, and mental).

fetters: (Skt. *saṃyojana*): Ten mental characteristics of unenlightened existence that bind beings to uncontrolled rebirths in the six destinies of rebirth: (1) "truly existent self view," the wrong view that believes in the existence of an eternally existent self in association with the five aggregates; (2) "skeptical doubt" about the truth of the Dharma and the path to enlightenment; (3) "clinging to [the observance of] rules and rituals" in and of themselves as constituting the path to spiritual liberation; (4) sensual desire; (5) ill will; (6) desire for rebirth in the heavens of the form realm; (7) desire for rebirth in the heavens of the formless realm; (8) "conceit," i.e., the belief that "I" exist; (9) "agitation" or "restlessness" that prevents deep concentration; and (10) "ignorance."

five aggregates: (1) form; (2) feelings (i.e., sensations as received through the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, or mind); (3) perceptions; (4) karmic formative factors (such as volitions); and (5) consciousness (visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, tactile, and mental).

five desires: Desire for wealth, sex, fame, flavors, and leisure; or, alternatively, the objects of the five basic sense faculties (i.e., visual forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and touchables).

five faculties: Faith, vigor, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom.

five powers: When the five faculties of faith, vigor, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom are fully developed, they bceome the five powers.

five precepts: Five vows involving abstaining from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, false speech, and ingesting intoxicants.

four bases of meritorious qualities: Truth, relinquishment, quiescence, and wisdom. Per Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi, the Sanskrit correlates of the Pāli terms *saccādhitthāna, cāgādhitthāna, upasamādhitthāna* (= base of peace), and *paññādhitthāna* are *satyādhiṣṭhāna, tyāgādhiṣṭhāna, upaśamādhiṣṭhāna,* and *prajñādhiṣṭhāna.*

four bases of supernatural power: Zeal, vigor, mind, and investigation.

four great elements: Earth, water, fire, and wind.

four requisites: Food obtained on almsrounds, robes, residences, and medicines, which are necessary for monastic life.

four right efforts: Causing already arisen evil to cease; causing not yet arisen evil to not arise; causing already arisen goodness to increase; causing not yet arisen goodness to arise.

four stations of mindfulness: Mindfulness of the body; mindfulness of feelings or sensations (experienced via the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind consciousnesses); mindfulness of thoughts or mind states; mindfulness of dharmas.

four truths/four truths of the *ārya*s: The fundamental Buddhist teaching of suffering, the origination of suffering, the possibility of the cessation of suffering; and the path to its cessation.

gandharva: A type of celestial music spirit that is said to rely on fragrances as its means of survival.

garuḍa: A type of spirit that manifests as an immense golden-winged bird that feeds on young dragons.

ground/grounds: Levels or planes of spiritual development through which a practitioner proceeds on the way to complete enlightenment.

hindrances: Usually refers to "the five hindrances" of desire, ill will, lethargy and sleepiness, excitedness and regretfulness, and afflicted doubtfulness. These five hindrances must be overcome in order to successfully enter deep states of meditation.

individual enlightenment path: This refers to the paths to transcendence of samsara and realization of nirvana taken by those who choose to cultivate either the path to arhatship or the path to pratyekabuddhahood. An alternate designation for these two types of individuals is the two vehicles. *See also* two vehicles.

inverted views: The four inverted views (Skt. *viparyāsa-catuṣka*) consist of imputing permanence to the impermanent, pleasure to what cannot deliver it, self to what is devoid of any inherently existent self, and purity to what does not actually possess that quality. Standard objects of such upside-down perceptions are thought or mind states, the six categories of "feeling" manifesting in association with the six sense faculties, dharmas (as components of the falsely imputed "self"), and the body.

kalaviṅka bird: The Himalayan cuckoo bird that sings with an incomparably beautiful sound even before it breaks out of its shell.

kalpa: A Sanskrit term that roughly corresponds to the English term "eon," with the primary distinction that in Buddhist and Hindu cosmology *kalpa*s occur in various relatively precisely designated immensely long durations.

kāṣāya robe: The robes of a fully ordained *bhikṣu* or *bhikṣuṇī.*

kiṃnara (Pāli *kinnara*):A type of celestial music spirit with the body of a human and the head of a horse.

kumbhāṇḍa: According to Monier Williams' *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary:* "Having testicles shaped like a kumbha [a winter melon]," a class of demons (at whose head stands Rudra). *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism* has: "In Sanskrit, a type of evil spirit, and typically listed along with especially *rākṣasa,* but also *piśāca, yakṣa,* and *bhūta* spirits. Virūḍhaka, one of the four world-guardians, who protects

the southern cardinal direction, is usually said to be their overlord, although some texts give Rudra this role instead. The *kumbhāṇḍa* are also sometimes listed among the minions of Māra, evil personified."

koṭī: A number defined in chapter 30 of the *Flower Adornment Sutra* as the product of multiplying a *lakṣa* (100,000) by a *lakṣa*, equaling 10,000,000, i.e., ten million.

kṣaṇa: A micro-moment, variously defined; one traditional definition is "a ninetieth of a finger-snap." Elsewhere in the text, it may appear as "a single thought," "mind-moment," or "thought-moment" as approximate translations of the term.

kṣānti-pāramitā: The perfection of patience.

kṣatriya: The second of the four castes of traditional Indian society consisting primarily of the warrior and royalty class.

kṣetra: Refers to a land or realm or field; in Buddhist texts it may refer specifically to a "buddha land."

mahāsattva: A great bodhisattva, one who has cultivated the bodhisattva path for countless *kalpa*s.

mahoraga: A type of serpent spirit often portrayed as having the upper body of a human and the lower body of a snake.

Māra/*māra*(s): In Buddhism, Māra is generally regarded as the personification of evil and death, a particular deity dwelling in one of the heavens of the desire realm who delights in interfering with spiritual liberation from perpetual rebirths in samsara. More specifically, there are said to be four kinds of *māra*s: (1) the *māra* of the five mental and physical aggregates in association with which all beings wander endlessly in samsara; (2) the *māra* of the afflictions consisting of the three poisons of greed, hatred, and delusion and all of their subcategories; (3) the *māra* of death; and, as mentioned above, (4) the deity known as Māra as well as all of his *devaputra* minions. Additionally, there are also "ghost and spirit" *māra*s who may manifest in countless ways to interfere with a practitioner's cultivation of the path.

mātṛkā: "Matrices" consisting of lists of dharmas, technical terms, and concepts discussed in the sutras. They served as the basis for the Abhidharma.

mind-moment: *See kṣaṇa.*

nayuta: A very large number, usually defined as one hundred billion.

nirvana: The ultimate goal of the path of Buddhist spiritual cultivation that corresponds to the elimination of the three poisons (greed, hatred, and delusion) and the end of compulsory and random rebirth in samsara, the cycle of existences in the six realms of rebirth, those of *devas*, *asura*s (demigods), humans, animals, hungry ghosts, and the hells. In the case of the individual liberation path practitioner exemplified by arhats and *pratyekabuddha*s, all future existence ends for them with the acquisition of nirvana. In the case of the universal liberation practitioners exemplified by

bodhisattvas and buddhas, they achieve the direct cognition of the emptiness of all beings and phenomena and realize an ongoing realization of a nirvana-like state even though they have vowed to take on intentional rebirths within samsara in order to facilitate the spiritual liberation of all beings.

nirvana without residue: The final nirvana realized at death by fully awakened beings whether they are arhats, *pratyekabuddha*s, or buddhas.

nivāsana robe: The monastic's skirt-like inner robe.

once-returner. *See sākṛdāgāmin.*

*pāramitā*s: The six (or ten) "perfections" cultivated and perfected by the bodhisattva on the path to buddhahood.

Paranirmitavaśavartin Heaven: The Paranirmitavaśavartin Heaven is the sixth of the six desire realm heavens. *The Princeton Dictonary of Buddhism* has: "The heaven of the gods who have power over the creations of others, or the gods who partake of the pleasures created in other heavens."

piśāca: As per *The Princeton Dictonary of Buddhism:* "In Sanskrit, 'flesh-eater,' a class of ogres or goblins, similar to *rākṣasa* and *yakṣa,* who eat human flesh." The female is called *piśācī.*

prajñā: World-transcending wisdom that cognizes and understands all phenomena associated with "self," others, and the world as they truly are and in accordance with ultimate reality.

prajñā-pāramitā: The perfection of wisdom.

pratyekabuddha: One who, on his own and in the absence of a buddha or the teaching of Dharma, achieves a level of enlightenment comparable to that of an arhat through the contemplation of the cycle of dependent origination (*pratītyasamutpāda*). Mahayana literature attributes this ability to awaken in the absence of a buddha or the Dharma to direct exposure to the Dharma in previous lives, the seeds of which enable enlightenment in the present life. *See also* two vehicles.

pratyutpanna samādhi: A *samādhi* in which one becomes able to see the buddhas of the present and listen to them teach the Dharma.

provisions (for enlightenment) (Skt. *bodhisaṃbhāra*): The spiritual prerequisites for enlightenment that must be accumulated in order to fully realize the path to buddhahood, usually considered to be merit (*puṇya*) and knowledge (*jñāna*).

pūtana: As per *The Princeton Dictonary of Buddhism:* "Stinking hungry demons."

rākṣasa: A swift-flying malignant flesh-eating demon that changes its form to seduce humans and eat them.

sakṛdāgāmin: "Once-returner," one who has gained the third of the four fruits of the individual liberation path of the *śrāvaka* disciple.

samādhi: This refers both to any single instance of one-pointed concentration and also, more usually, to enduring states of persistently maintained one-pointed concentration.

saṃghāṭī robe: The monastic's outer robe.

saṃkakṣikā robe: The monastic's robe that is worn over the left shoulder and under the right arm.

samsara: Usually rendered in Sino-Buddhist translation as "birth and death" (*shengsi* 生死), this refers to the endless cycle of rebirths in the six realms of rebirth,. those of *deva*s (gods), *asura*s (demigods or titans), humans, animals, hungry ghosts (*preta*s), and hell-dwellers.

sangha/Sangha: A community of at least ten fully ordained *bhikṣu*s in Buddhist countries or at least five fully ordained *bhikṣu*s in countries where Buddhism is being established for the first time. As the third object of refuge in the Three Refuges or the Three Jewels, it refers exclusively to those who have already acquired one of the fruits of the path from which they can never fall away, whether on the individual liberation paths of arhats or *pratyekabuddha*s or the bodhisattva path.

śarīra: The remains or "relics" of eminent monks, bodhisattvas, or buddhas that are contained in their cremation ashes.

seven enlightenment factors: Assessment or skillful selection of dharmas, vigor, joy, mental pliancy, mindfulness (the Pāli tradition often places "mindfulness" first in this list of seven), concentration, and equanimity with respect to the *saṃskāra* (karmic formative factors) aggregate.

śīla-pāramitā: The perfection of moral virtue.

six rebirth destinies: The realms of rebirth as gods (*deva*s), *asuras* (demigods or titans), humans, hungry ghosts (*preta*s), animals, and hell-dwellers.

skandha. See five aggregates.

skillful means (Skt. *upāya*): Individually tailored skillful techniques adopted by the bodhisattva in teaching various kinds of beings. A variety of techniques are adopted precisely because all beings possess different capacities, karmic obstacles, and predilections, due to which they respond best to teachings that are directed specifically to them.

spiritual superknowledges: The usual Sanskrit antecedent for "spiritual superknowledges" is *abhijñā* ("superknowledges") or *ṛddhi* ("supernatural powers"). This includes such abilities as the six superknowledges of spiritual powers, the heavenly eye, the heavenly ear, cognition of others' thoughts, past life recall for both self and others, and complete elimination of all "defiling contaminants" or "taints" (*āsrava*s).

śramaṇa: Generally, a mendicant, one who has left the home life and relies on alms for sustenance. In the Buddhist context, this refers specifically to a *bhikṣu,* i.e., a Buddhist monk.

śrāvaka/śrāvaka disciple: A follower of the individual liberation path to arhatship. *See also* two vehicles.

stream-enterer (Skt. *srota-āpanna*) One who has gained the first of the four fruits of the path to arhatship.

śūdra: A member of the fourth and lowest caste of traditional Indian Hindu society, consisting primarily of servants and menials. The Buddha and Buddhism do not recognize any of the castes as valid distinctions among human beings.

sutra: A scripture attributed to the Buddha.

Tathāgata ("Thus Come One"): One of the ten primary titles by which all buddhas are known.

tathatā: "Suchness," i.e., the true nature of the ultimate reality of any and all things as they really are.

ten directions: North, south, east, west, the four midpoints, zenith, and nadir.

thirty-seven wings of enlightenment/thirty-seven enlightenment factors: These consist of the four stations of mindfulness, the four right efforts, the four bases of supernatural powers, the five faculties, the five powers, the seven enlightenment factors, and the eightfold path of *ārya*s.

Three Jewels: Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. *See also* Three Refuges.

three periods of time: Past, present, and future.

three realms of existence: The desire realm ((*kāma-loka*), the (subtle) form realm (*rūpa-loka*), and the formless realm (*ārūpya-loka*) constitute the three spheres of existence in which all of the many different classes of beings endlessly take rebirth unless and until they transcend samsara and realize nirvana.

Three Refuges: Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, the Three Jewels in which one "takes refuge" to become a Buddhist disciple and upon which one must rely to advance on the Buddhist path.

three vehicles: The *śrāvaka* disciple vehicle, the *pratyekabuddha* vehicle, and the great vehicle (Mahayana), which culminate in arhatship, pratyekabuddhahood, and buddhahood, respectively.

three wretched destinies: The three lowest realms of rebirth as either an animal, hungry ghost (*preta*), or hell-dweller.

trichiliocosm: A world system consisting of countless worlds.

Tripiṭaka: The three divisions of the threefold Buddhist canon: sutras (scriptures attributed to the Buddha or disciples authorized by the Buddha), commentarial treatises (*śāstra*s), and moral codes (Vinaya).

Tripiṭaka master: One who has completely mastered the three divisions of the threefold Buddhist canon.

twelve sense bases: The six sense faculties of the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind and their respective sense objects (visual forms, sounds, smells, tastes, touchables, and ideas, etc. as objects of mind).

two vehicles: The two individual liberation paths taught by the Buddha, those of the *śrāvaka* disciple that leads to arhatship and of the *pratyekabuddha* that leads to pratyekabuddhahood.

vaiśya: A member of the third caste in traditional Indian society, comprised primarily of the merchant and agricultural classes.

vajra: An indestructible substance equated with the substance of diamond; a symbol of indestructibility. Also, a pestle-shaped scepter or "thunderbolt" weapon held by Dharma protectors and deities.

vibhāṣā: An extensively detailed explanatory treatise.

vinaya(s)/Vinaya: The Buddhist moral codes. Capitalized, the third part of the Tripiṭaka.

vīryapāramitā: The perfection of vigor.

wheel-turning king (Skt. *cakravartin*): In Buddhism, a universal monarch.

worthy (Skt. *bhadra*): In Mahayana literature, a "worthy" is a bodhisattva practitioner who has brought forth the bodhisattva vow but who is still cultivating the preparatory stages and thus has not yet reached the ten bodhisattva grounds and has not yet become an *ārya.*

yakṣa: A kind of either good or evil spirit that possesses supernatural powers and may either serve as a guardian or a demon.

yojana: A measure of distance in ancient India usually defined as being the distance an ox cart could travel in one day without unharnessing (somewhat less than ten miles).

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BDK English Tripiṭaka (First Series)

Abbreviations
Ch.: Chinese
Skt.: Sanskrit
Jp.: Japanese
Eng.: Published title

Title		Taishō No.
Ch.	Chang ahan jing (長阿含經)	1
Skt.	Dīrghāgama	
Eng.	*The Canonical Book of the Buddha's Lengthy Discourses, Volume I* (2015) *The Canonical Book of the Buddha's Lengthy Discourses, Volume II* (2017) *The Canonical Book of the Buddha's Lengthy Discourses, Volume III* (2018)	
Ch.	Zhong ahan jing (中阿含經)	26
Skt.	Madhyamāgama	
Eng.	*The Madhyama Āgama (Middle-length Discourses), Volume I* (2013) *The Madhyama Āgama (Middle-length Discourses), Volume II* (2020) *The Madhyama Āgama (Middle-length Discourses), Volume III* (2022) *The Madhyama Āgama (Middle-length Discourses), Volume IV* (2023)	
Ch.	Dasheng bensheng xindi guan jing (大乘本生心地觀經)	159
Eng.	*The Mahayana Sutra of Previous Lives and Contemplation of the Mind-ground* (2021)	

Title		Taishō No.
Ch.	Fo suoxing zan (佛所行讚)	192
Skt.	Buddhacarita	
Eng.	*Buddhacarita: In Praise of Buddha's Acts* (2009)	
Ch.	Zabao zang jing (雜寶藏經)	203
Eng.	*The Storehouse of Sundry Valuables* (1994)	
Ch.	Faju piyu jing (法句譬喻經)	211
Eng.	*The Scriptural Text: Verses of the Doctrine, with Parables* (1999)	
Ch.	Xiaopin banruo boluomi jing (小品般若波羅蜜經)	227
Skt.	Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra	
Ch.	Jingang banruo boluomi jing (金剛般若波羅蜜經)	235
Skt.	Vajracchedikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra	
Ch.	Daluo jingang bukong zhenshi sanmoye jing (大樂金剛不空眞實三麼耶經)	243
Skt.	Adhyardhaśatikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra	
Eng.	*The Sutra of the Vow of Fulfilling the Great Perpetual Enjoyment and Benefiting All Sentient Beings Without Exception* (in *Esoteric Texts,* 2015)	
Ch.	Renwang banruo boluomi jing (仁王般若波羅蜜經)	245
Skt.	*Kāruṇikārājā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra	
Ch.	Banruo boluomiduo xin jing (般若波羅蜜多心經)	251
Skt.	Prajñāpāramitāhṛdaya-sūtra	
Ch.	Miaofa lianhua jing (妙法蓮華經)	262
Skt.	Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra	
Eng.	*The Lotus Sutra* (Revised Second Edition, 2007)	
Ch.	Wuliangyi jing (無量義經)	276
Eng.	*The Infinite Meanings Sutra* (in *Tiantai Lotus Texts,* 2013)	
Ch.	Guan Puxian pusa xingfa jing (觀普賢菩薩行法經)	277
Eng.	*The Sutra Expounded by the Buddha on Practice of the Way through Contemplation of the Bodhisattva All-embracing Goodness* (in *Tiantai Lotus Texts,* 2013)	
Ch.	Dafangguang fo huayan jing (大方廣佛華嚴經)	279
Skt.	Avataṃsaka-sūtra	

Title		Taishō No.
Ch.	Shengman shizihou yisheng defang bianfang guang jing (勝鬘師子吼一乘大方便方廣經)	353
Skt.	Śrīmālādevīsiṃhanāda-sūtra	
Eng.	*The Sutra of Queen Śrīmālā of the Lion's Roar* (2004)	
Ch.	Wuliangshou jing (無量壽經)	360
Skt.	Sukhāvatīvyūha	
Eng.	*The Larger Sutra on Amitāyus* (in *The Three Pure Land Sutras,* Revised Second Edition, 2003)	
Ch.	Guan wuliangshou fo jing (觀無量壽佛經)	365
Skt.	*Amitāyurdhyāna-sūtra	
Eng.	*The Sutra on Contemplation of Amitāyus* (in *The Three Pure Land Sutras,* Revised Second Edition, 2003)	
Ch.	Amituo jing (阿彌陀經)	366
Skt.	Sukhāvatīvyūha	
Eng.	*The Smaller Sutra on Amitāyus* (in *The Three Pure Land Sutras,* Revised Second Edition, 2003)	
Ch.	Da banniepan jing (大般涅槃經)	374
Skt.	Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra	
Eng.	*The Nirvana Sutra* (Volume I, 2013)	
Ch.	Fochuibo niepan lüeshuo jiaojie jing (佛垂般涅槃略說教誡經)	389
Eng.	*The Bequeathed Teaching Sutra* (in *Apocryphal Scriptures,* 2005)	
Ch.	Dizang pusa benyuan jing (地藏菩薩本願經)	412
Skt.	*Kṣitigarbhapraṇidhāna-sūtra	
Ch.	Banzhou sanmei jing (般舟三昧經)	418
Skt.	Pratyutpanna-buddhasammukhāvasthita-samādhi-sūtra	
Eng.	*The Pratyutpanna Samādhi Sutra* (1998)	
Ch.	Yaoshi liuli guang rulai benyuan gongde jing (藥師琉璃光如來本願功德經)	450
Skt.	Bhaiṣajyaguru-vaiḍūrya-prabhāsa-pūrvapraṇidhāna-viśeṣavistara	
Eng.	*The Scripture of Master of Medicine, Beryl Radiance Tathāgata* (2018)	
Ch.	Mile xiasheng chengfo jing (彌勒下生成佛經)	454
Skt.	*Maitreyavyākaraṇa	
Eng.	*The Sutra That Expounds the Descent of Maitreya Buddha and His Enlightenment* (2016)	

Title		Taishō No.
Ch.	Wenshushili wen jing (文殊師利問經)	468
Skt.	*Mañjuśrīparipṛcchā	
Eng.	*The Sutra of Mañjuśrī's Questions* (2016)	
Ch.	Weimojie suoshuo jing (維摩詰所說經)	475
Skt.	Vimalakīrtinirdeśa-sūtra	
Eng.	*The Vimalakīrti Sutra* (2004)	
Ch.	Yueshangnü jing (月上女經)	480
Skt.	Candrottarādārikā-paripṛcchā	
Eng.	*The Sutra of the Girl Candrottarā* (2018)	
Ch.	Zuochan sanmei jing (坐禪三昧經)	614
Eng.	*The Sutra on the Concentration of Sitting Meditation* (2009)	
Ch.	Damoduoluo chan jing (達磨多羅禪經)	618
Ch.	Yuedeng sanmei jing (月燈三昧經)	639
Skt.	Samādhirāja-candrapradīpa-sūtra	
Ch.	Shoulengyan sanmei jing (首楞嚴三昧經)	642
Skt.	Śūraṅgamasamādhi-sūtra	
Eng.	*The Śūraṅgama Samādhi Sutra* (1998)	
Ch.	Jinguang ming zuishengwang jing (金光明最勝王經)	665
Skt.	Suvarṇaprabhāsa-sūtra	
Ch.	Dasheng rulengqie jing (大乘入楞伽經)	672
Skt.	Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra	
Ch.	Jie shenmi jing (解深密經)	676
Skt.	Saṃdhinirmocana-sūtra	
Eng.	*The Scripture on the Explication of Underlying Meaning* (2000)	
Ch.	Yulanpen jing (盂蘭盆經)	685
Skt.	*Ullambana-sūtra	
Eng.	*The Ullambana Sutra* (in *Apocryphal Scriptures,* 2005)	
Ch.	Sishierzhang jing (四十二章經)	784
Eng.	*The Sutra of Forty-two Sections* (in *Apocryphal Scriptures,* 2005)	
Ch.	Dafangguang yuanjue xiuduoluo liaoyi jing (大方廣圓覺修多羅了義經)	842
Eng.	*The Sutra of Perfect Enlightenment* (in *Apocryphal Scriptures,* 2005)	

Title	Taishō No.
Ch. Da Biluzhena chengfo shenbian jiachi jing (大毘盧遮那成佛神變加持經)	848
Skt. Mahāvairocanābhisambodhi-vikurvitādhiṣṭhāna-vaipulyasūtrendra-rājanāma-dharmaparyāya	
Eng. *The Vairocanābhisaṃbodhi Sutra* (2005)	
Ch. Jinggangding yiqie rulai zhenshi she dasheng xianzheng dajiao wang jing (金剛頂一切如來眞實攝大乘現證大教王經)	865
Skt. Sarvatathāgata-tattvasaṃgraha-mahāyānābhisamaya-mahākalparāja	
Eng. *The Adamantine Pinnacle Sutra* (in *Two Esoteric Sutras,* 2001)	
Ch. Suxidi jieluo jing (蘇悉地羯囉經)	893
Skt. Susiddhikara-mahātantra-sādhanopāyika-paṭala	
Eng. *The Susiddhikara Sutra* (in *Two Esoteric Sutras,* 2001)	
Ch. Modengqie jing (摩登伽經)	1300
Skt. *Mātaṅgī-sūtra	
Eng. *The Mātaṅga Sutra* (in Esoteric Texts, 2015)	
Ch. Mohe sengqi lü (摩訶僧祇律)	1425
Skt. *Mahāsāṃghika-vinaya	
Ch. Sifen lü (四分律)	1428
Skt. *Dharmaguptaka-vinaya	
Ch. Shanjianlü piposha (善見律毘婆沙)	1462
Pāli Samantapāsādikā	
Ch. Fanwang jing (梵網經)	1484
Skt. *Brahmajāla-sūtra	
The Brahmā's Net Sutra (2017)	
Ch. Youposaijie jing (優婆塞戒經)	1488
Skt. Upāsakaśīla-sūtra	
Eng. *The Sutra on Upāsaka Precepts* (1994)	
Ch. Miaofa lianhua jing youbotishe (妙法蓮華經憂波提舍)	1519
Skt. Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-upadeśa	
Eng. *The Commentary on the Lotus Sutra* (in *Tiantai Lotus Texts,* 2013)	
Ch. Shizhu piposha lun (十住毘婆沙論)	1521
Skt. *Daśabhūmika-vibhāṣā	
Eng. *Nāgārjuna's Treatise on the Ten Grounds, Volume I* (2024)	

Title		Taishō No.
Ch.	Fodijing lun (佛地經論)	1530
Skt.	*Buddhabhūmisūtra-śāstra	
Eng.	*The Interpretation of the Buddha Land* (2002)	
Ch.	Apidamojushe lun (阿毘達磨俱舍論)	1558
Skt.	Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya	
Ch.	Zhonglun (中論)	1564
Skt.	Madhyamaka-śāstra	
Ch.	Yüqie shidilun (瑜伽師地論)	1579
Skt.	Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra	
Ch.	Cheng weishi lun (成唯識論)	1585
Eng.	*Demonstration of Consciousness Only* (in *Three Texts on Consciousness Only,* 1999)	
Ch.	Weishi sanshilun song (唯識三十論頌)	1586
Skt.	Triṃśikā	
Eng.	*The Thirty Verses on Consciousness Only* (in *Three Texts on Consciousness Only,* 1999)	
Ch.	Weishi ershi lun (唯識二十論)	1590
Skt.	Viṃśatikā	
Eng.	*The Treatise in Twenty Verses on Consciousness Only* (in *Three Texts on Consciousness Only,* 1999)	
Ch.	She dasheng lun (攝大乘論)	1593
Skt.	Mahāyānasaṃgraha	
Eng.	*The Summary of the Great Vehicle* (Revised Second Edition, 2003)	
Ch.	Bian zhongbian lun (辯中邊論)	1600
Skt.	Madhyāntavibhāga	
Eng.	*Analysis of the Middle and Extremes* (2021)	
Ch.	Dasheng zhuangyanjing lun (大乘莊嚴經論)	1604
Skt.	Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra	
Ch.	Dasheng chengye lun (大乘成業論)	1609
Skt.	Karmasiddhiprakaraṇa	
Eng.	*A Mahayana Demonstration on the Theme of Action* (in *Three Short Treatises by Vasubandhu, Sengzhao, and Zongmi*, 2017)	
Ch.	Jiujing yisheng baoxing lun (究竟一乘寶性論)	1611
Skt.	Ratnagotravibhāga-mahāyānottaratantra-śāstra	

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Ch.	Yinming ruzheng li lun (因明入正理論)	1630
Skt.	Nyāyapraveśa	
Ch.	Dasheng ji pusa xue lun (大乘集菩薩學論)	1636
Skt.	Śikṣāsamuccaya	
Ch.	Jingangzhen lun (金剛針論)	1642
Skt.	Vajrasūcī	
Eng.	*The Diamond Needle* (2023)	
Ch.	Zhang suozhi lun (彰所知論)	1645
Eng.	*The Treatise on the Elucidation of the Knowable* (2004)	
Ch.	Putixing jing (菩提行經)	1662
Skt.	Bodhicaryāvatāra	
Ch.	Jingangding yuqie zhongfa anouduoluo sanmiao sanputi xin lun (金剛頂瑜伽中發阿耨多羅三藐三菩提心論)	1665
Eng.	*The Bodhicitta Śāstra* (in *Esoteric Texts,* 2015)	
Ch.	Dasheng qixin lun (大乘起信論)	1666
Skt.	*Mahāyānaśraddhotpāda-śāstra	
Eng.	*The Awakening of Faith* (2005)	
Ch.	Shimoheyan lun (釋摩訶衍論)	1668
Ch.	Naxian biqiu jing (那先比丘經)	1670B
Pāli	Milindapañhā	
Eng.	*The Scripture on the Monk Nāgasena* (2021)	
Ch.	Banruo boluomiduo xin jing yuzan (般若波羅蜜多心經幽贊)	1710
Eng.	*A Comprehensive Commentary on the Heart Sutra (Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra)* (2001)	
Ch.	Miaofalianhua jing xuanyi (妙法蓮華經玄義)	1716
Ch.	Guan wuliangshou fo jing shu (觀無量壽佛經疏)	1753
Ch.	Sanlun xuanyi (三論玄義)	1852
Ch.	Dasheng xuan lun (大乘玄論)	1853
Ch.	Zhao lun (肇論)	1858
Eng.	*Essays of Sengzhao* (in *Three Short Treatises by Vasubandhu, Sengzhao, and Zongmi,* 2017)	

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Ch. Yuanren lun (原人論) Eng. *Treatise on the Origin of Humanity* (in *Three Short Treatises by Vasubandhu, Sengzhao, and Zongmi,* 2017)	1886
Ch. Mohe zhiguan (摩訶止觀)	1911
Ch. Xiuxi zhiguan zuochan fayao (修習止觀坐禪法要)	1915
Ch. Tiantai sijiao yi (天台四教儀) Eng. *A Guide to the Tiantai Fourfold Teachings* (in *Tiantai Lotus Texts,* 2013)	1931
Ch. Guoqing bai lu (國清百録) Eng. *The Hundred Records of the Temple of National Purity* (2022)	1934
Ch. Zhenzhou Linji Huizhao chanshi wulu (鎮州臨濟慧照禪師語録) Eng. *The Recorded Sayings of Linji* (in *Three Chan Classics,* 1999)	1985
Ch. Foguo Yuanwu chanshi biyan lu (佛果圜悟禪師碧巖録) Eng. *The Blue Cliff Record* (1998)	2003
Ch. Wumen guan (無門關) Eng. *Wumen's Gate* (in *Three Chan Classics,* 1999)	2005
Ch. Liuzu dashi fabao tan jing (六祖大師法寶壇經) Eng. *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch* (2000)	2008
Ch. Xinxin ming (信心銘) Eng. *The Faith-Mind Maxim* (in *Three Chan Classics,* 1999)	2010
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Ch. Yongjia Zhengdao ge (永嘉證道歌) Eng. *Yongjia's Song of Actualizing the Way* (2021)	2014
Ch. Chixiu Baizhang qinggui (勅修百丈清規) Eng. *The Baizhang Zen Monastic Regulations* (2007)	2025
Ch. Yibuzonglun lun (異部宗輪論) Skt. Samayabhedoparacanacakra Eng. *The Cycle of the Formation of the Schismatic Doctrines* (2004)	2031

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Ch. Ayuwang jing (阿育王經) Skt. Aśokāvadāna Eng. *The Biographical Scripture of King Aśoka* (1993)	2043
Ch. Maming pusa zhuan (馬鳴菩薩傳) Eng. *The Life of Aśvaghoṣa Bodhisattva* (in *Lives of Great Monks and Nuns,* 2002)	2046
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Ch. Datang Daciensi Zanzang fashi zhuan (大唐大慈恩寺三藏法師傳) Eng. *A Biography of the Tripiṭaka Master of the Great Ci'en Monastery of the Great Tang Dynasty* (1995)	2053
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Ch. Datang xiyu ji (大唐西域記) Eng. *The Great Tang Dynasty Record of the Western Regions* (1996)	2087
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Ch. Hongming ji (弘明集) Eng. *The Collection for the Propagation and Clarification of Buddhism, Volume I* (2015) *The Collection for the Propagation and Clarification of Buddhism, Volume II* (2017)	2102

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Ch.	Fayuan zhulin (法苑珠林)	2122
Eng.	*A Forest of Pearls from the Dharma Garden, Volume I* (2019) *A Forest of Pearls from the Dharma Garden, Volume II* (2019) *A Forest of Pearls from the Dharma Garden, Volume III* (2020) *A Forest of Pearls from the Dharma Garden, Volume IV* (2020) *A Forest of Pearls from the Dharma Garden, Volume V* (2022) *A Forest of Pearls from the Dharma Garden, Volume VI* (2023)	
Ch.	Nanhai jigui neifa zhuan (南海寄歸内法傳)	2125
Eng.	*Buddhist Monastic Traditions of Southern Asia* (2000)	
Ch.	Fanyu zaming (梵語雜名)	2135
Jp.	Shōmangyō gisho (勝鬘經義疏)	2185
Eng.	*Prince Shōtoku's Commentary on the Śrīmālā Sutra* (2011)	
Jp.	Yuimakyō gisho (維摩經義疏)	2186
Eng.	*The Expository Commentary on the Vimalakīrti Sutra* (2012)	
Jp.	Hokke gisho (法華義疏)	2187
Jp.	Hannya shingyō hiken (般若心經秘鍵)	2203A
Eng.	*The Key to the Secret of the Heart Sutra* (2023)	
Jp.	Daijō hossō kenjin shō (大乘法相研神章)	2309
Jp.	Kanjin kakumu shō (觀心覺夢鈔)	2312
Eng.	*Oberving the Mind, Awakening from a Dream* (2021)	
Jp.	Risshū kōyō (律宗綱要)	2348
Eng.	*The Essentials of the Vinaya Tradition* (1995)	
Jp.	Tendai hokke shūgi shū (天台法華宗義集)	2366
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Jp.	Kenkairon (顯戒論)	2376
Jp.	Sange gakushō shiki (山家學生式)	2377
Jp.	Hizōhōyaku (秘藏寶鑰)	2426
Eng.	*The Precious Key to the Secret Treasury* (in *Shingon Texts,* 2004)	
Jp.	Benkenmitsu nikyō ron (辨顯密二教論)	2427
Eng.	*On the Differences between the Exoteric and Esoteric Teachings* (in *Shingon Texts,* 2004)	

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Jp. Sokushin jōbutsu gi (即身成佛義) Eng. *The Meaning of Becoming a Buddha in This Very Body* (in *Shingon Texts,* 2004)	2428
Jp. Shōji jissōgi (聲字實相義) Eng. *The Meanings of Sound, Sign, and Reality* (in *Shingon Texts,* 2004)	2429
Jp. Unjigi (吽字義) Eng. *The Meanings of the Word Hūṃ* (in *Shingon Texts,* 2004)	2430
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Jp. Mitsugonin hotsuro sange mon (密嚴院發露懺悔文) Eng. *The Mitsugonin Confession* (in *Shingon Texts,* 2004)	2527
Jp. Kōzen gokoku ron (興禪護國論) Eng. *A Treatise on Letting Zen Flourish to Protect the State* (in *Zen Texts,* 2005)	2543
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Jp. Shōbōgenzō (正法眼藏) Eng. *Shōbōgenzō: The True Dharma-eye Treasury, Volume I* (2007) *Shōbōgenzō: The True Dharma-eye Treasury, Volume II* (2008) *Shōbōgenzō: The True Dharma-eye Treasury, Volume III* (2008) *Shōbōgenzō: The True Dharma-eye Treasury, Volume IV* (2008)	2582
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Jp.	Rennyo shōnin ofumi (蓮如上人御文)	2668
Eng.	*Rennyo Shōnin Ofumi: The Letters of Rennyo* (1996)	
Jp.	Ōjōyōshū (往生要集)	2682
Jp.	Risshō ankoku ron (立正安國論)	2688
Eng.	*Risshōankokuron or The Treatise on the Establishment of the Orthodox Teaching and the Peace of the Nation* (in *Two Nichiren Texts,* 2003)	
Jp.	Kaimokushō (開目抄)	2689
Eng.	*Kaimokushō or Liberation from Blindness* (2000)	
Jp.	Kanjin honzon shō (觀心本尊抄)	2692
Eng.	*Kanjinhonzonshō or The Most Venerable One Revealed by Introspecting Our Minds for the First Time at the Beginning of the Fifth of the Five Five Hundred-year Ages* (in *Two Nichiren Texts,* 2003)	
Ch.	Fumu enzhong jing (父母恩重經)	2887
Eng.	*The Sutra on the Profundity of Filial Love* (in *Apocryphal Scriptures,* 2005)	
Jp.	Hasshūkōyō (八宗綱要)	extracanonical
Eng.	*The Essentials of the Eight Traditions* (1994)	
Jp.	Sangō shīki (三教指帰)	extracanonical
Jp.	Mappō tōmyō ki (末法燈明記)	extracanonical
Eng.	*The Candle of the Latter Dharma* (1994)	
Jp.	Jūshichijō kenpō (十七條憲法)	extracanonical