**The Avatamsaka Sutra**

**CHAPTER26**

Translated in the Tang Dynasty by the Tripitaka Master Srãmana Siksananda of Khotan

**Explanation by VM. Hua**

**The Ten Grounds**

**Commentary:**

The Flower Adornment Sutra has 81 rolls and 39 chapters, of which this is Chapter 26, the Ten Grounds. Why are these ten called “grounds?” All things that exist are born from the ground, grow because of the ground, come to maturity by means of the ground, and obtain liberation due the ground.

Within the ground are found a variety of treasuries like gold mines, diamond mines, silver mines, copper, iron, and various other kinds of mines which people excavate. The Ten Grounds contain the mines of Buddhas, the mines of Bodhisattavas, the mines of Hearers and those Enlightened to Conditions, the mines of gods and people, and the mines of animals, hungry ghosts, and hell beings. In all the Ten Dharma Realms there are mines. If we knew how to excavate them, then we could obtain a variety of treasures.

The Dharma doors of the Ten Grounds contain all Dharma doors; there is an interconnection between them. If we want to cultivate the Bodhisattva Path, it will come about through cultivation of the Grounds. If we want to develop the Bodhisattva Path, we will do it through development of the Dharma doors of the Ten Grounds. If we want to bring cultivation of the Bodhisattva path to maturity, we will do it through maturation of the Ten Grounds. If we want to obtain liberation by means of the Bodhisattva Path, we even more must rely on the Dharma doors of the Ten Grounds in our cultivation in order to gain that liberation.

The Dharma doors of the Ten Grounds make up the 26 chapter in the Flower Adornment Sutra, and this is part one of the chapter.

**Sutra:**

**At that time, the World-honored One was in the royal palace in the heaven of the comfort from others’ transformations, in the hall of treasuries of mani jewels, together with a gathering of great Bodhisattvas. All these Bodhisattvas, who were irreversible from anuttarasamyaksambohi, had assembled from the worlds of the other directions. They dwelt in the states of wisdom in which all Bodhisattvas dwell, had entered the place of wisdom which all Thus Come One enter, and diligently practiced without rest. They were well able to manifest all kinds of spiritual penetrations, and all that they did to teach, transform, tame, and subdue living beings was done at the right time. In order to accomplish all Bodhisattvas’ great vows, in all worlds, in all kalpas, in all lands, they diligently cultivated all practices, without slacking even momentarily They were replete with a Bodhisattva’s blessing and wisdom, the aids to the way, by which they universally benefited living beings without shirking. They had arrived at the ultimate shore of a Bodhisattva’s wisdom and expedients.**

**Commentary:**

After Vajra Banner Bodhisattva had finished speaking the Ten transferences Chapter, and before he’d begun to explain the Ten Grounds Chapter, **at that time, the World-honeored One,** Sahkyamuni Buddha, **was in the royal palace in the Heaven of the Comfort from Others’ Transformations.** In this heaven, others’ bliss is easily transformed into one’s own. The Buddha was **in the hall of treasuries of mini jewels, together with a gathering of great Bodhisattvas,** a limitless number of them, who were Bodhisattvas of long-standing, with the Way-Virtue, wisdom, and cultivation requisite for them to be **irreversible form anuttarasamyaksambodhi.** These Bodhisattvas did not retreat from the Unsurpassed, Right and Equal, Proper Enlightenment in either thought, conduct, or position. They had attained these Three Kinds of Irreversibility.

The Unsurpassed, Right and Equal, Proper Enlightenment is the culmination of Three Levels of Enlightenment. Those of the Two Vehicles—the Hearers and Those Enlightened to Conditions—obtain Proper Enlightenment. They are enlightened themselves, but they have not obtained Right an Equal Enlightenment, and so they cannot enlighten others. The Bodhisattvas’ enlightenment is described as Right and Equal because they enlighten themselves, enlighten others, and cultivate Dharma-doors equal to the Buddhas’ Dharma doors. “Surpassed Lords” is the title given to Bodhisattvas because the Buddhas are above them. Their enlightenment is not unsurpassed.

Each level of enlightenment is delineated. People cannot be something just because they claim to be. They must be recognized as such by others for it to count. The Buddhas can enlighten themselves and others and have perfected their enlightenment and practice. So they attain Unsurpassed, Right and Equal, Proper Enlightenment, that is, Anuttarasamyaksambodhi. The great Bodhisattvas spoken of here, although they are not yet totally unsurpassed, still are irreversible, and in the future they are certain to become Buddhas.

They **had all assembled from the worlds of the other directions.** Not all of those great Bodhisattvas come from the Saha world; they came from worlds as many as fine motes of dust. **They dwelt in the states of wisdom in which all Bodhisattvas dwell. They had entered in the place of wisdom which all Bodhisattvas dwell.** They **had entered the place of wisdom which all Thus Come Ones enter.** Not only did they have the wisdom of **Bodhisattvas**, they also had the wisdom of a Buddha, though not quite so profound. **And** they **diligently practiced without rest.** They were courageously vigorous and diligently cultivated the Bodhisattva Path without resting.

**They were well able to manifest all kinds of spiritual penetrations.** They all had various kinds of wisdom and manifested all kinds of spiritual penetrations, **and all that they did to teach, transform, tame, and subdue living beings was done at the right time.** The vocation of a Bodhisattva is to teach and transform living beings, tame and subdue living beings, and cause all living beings quickly to accomplish Buddhahood, all at the right time. Sometimes if one speaks inappropriately, and teaches living beings before their roots have ripened or the time is right by blasting Dharma at them, they cannot receive it. They get scared, have doubts, and they never want to listen to the Buddhadharma again. Bodhisattvas teach and transform living beings at the most appropriate moment. It is just like planting seeds: if planted at the wrong time, they will not come up, and the planting will have been done in vain. If one plants the seeds at the exact time they should be planted, they will grow. Right at the time the seeds of Bodhi should be planted, Bodhisattvas break open the mind-ground of living beings, teach them to bring forth the thought for Bodhi, and plant the seeds which gradually grow, ripen, and yield a harvest of liberation. That is the meaning of “at the right time.”

**In order to accomplish all Bodhisattvas’ great vows, in all worlds, in all kalpas, in all lands,** within the kshetra lands of all Buddhas, **they diligently cultivated all practices.** They were heroically vigorous and diligently cultivated all the doors of conduct that all Bodhisattvas cultivate, **without slacking even momentarily.** Not even for an instant were they lazy, but they were ever vigorous.

**They were replete with a Bodhisattva’s blessing and wisdom, the aids to the way, by which they universally benefitted living beings without shirking.** They not only cultivated for themselves, but for all living beings as well. They never stopped, never got tired, and were never lazy. They would never say, “I’ve had it! I’m going to guit cultivating the Bodhisattva Way and stop benefitting living beings.” They weren’t like that. They always wanted to benefit living beings. **They had arrived at the ultimate shore of a Bodhisattvas’s wisdom and expedients.** They had reached the ultimate shore of wisdom and skill-in-means of all Bodhisattvas—the highest position –and had obtained the purity of Nirvana that consists in permanence, bliss, true self, and purity.

**Sutra:**

**They manifested entry into birth and death as identical with Nirvana, yet they did not renounce the cultivation of Bodhisattva practices. They were skilled at entering all Bodhisattvas’ dhyanas, liberations, samadhis, samapattis, spiritual penetrations, and clear knowledges. In all they did they obtained comfort. They acquired all Bodhisattvas’ comfortable spiritual powers, and in an instant, without movement or exertion, they could go to the assemblies of all Thus Come Ones’ Bodhimandas, act as leaders of the assembly, and request the Buddha to speak Dharma.**

**They protected and upheld the Buddhas’ proper dharma wheel. They used a vast, great mind to make offerings to and serve all Buddhas. They always diligently practiced the deeds which all Bodhisattvas practice. Their Bodies universally appeared in all worlds. Their voices reached throughout the Dharma Realms of the ten directions. Their minds’ wisdom was unobstructed. They universally saw the merit and virtue of all Bodhisattvas of the three periods of time. They had already cultivated and obtained perfection. In ineffably many kalpas, they could not completely be described.**

**Commentary:**

**They manifested entry into birth and death as identical with Nirvana.** Bodhisattvas who cultivate the Bodhisattvas Way have freedom over birth and death and, for them, samsara is just Nirvana, and afflictions are just Bodhis. Everything about them is a manifestation. They manifest all sorts of births and manifest various kinds of deaths. They appear as various kinds of living beings from gods, humans, and asuras, to the animals, hungry ghosts, and hell-beings, within every destiny, Bodhisattvas appear to go through birth and death. They are born in various ways and influenced those around them to bring forth the thought for Bodhi. They die in various ways in order to cause living beings to understand the pain of samsara.

Therefore, they manifest entry into birth and death as identical with Nirvana: how one is born, how one dies, and how birth and death become Nirvana. **Yet they did not renounce the cultivation of Bodhisattva practices.** Although Bodhisattvas manifest all those births and deaths and sufferings in order to teach and transform living beings, and then cultivate ascetic practices and enter Nirvana, still they return to continue cultivating the Bodhisattva Way among living beings. Wherever they are, they do not renounce that cultivation. They cultivate the Bodhisattva Path to help living beings and cause them to resolve themselves upon Bodhi.

**They were skilled at entering all Bodhisattvas’ dhyanas, liberations, samadhis.** They were good at realizing the dhyana-samadhis, the liberations, and the proper concentration and proper receptiveness that Bodhisattvas cultivate, and **samapattis,**

**spiritual penetrations and clear knowledges.**“Samapatti” is a Sanskrit word which translates as “arrival at equanimity,” which refers to the state reached when one is free of torpor and agitation. They also had attained the wonderful functioning of various kinds of spiritual penetrations: the Three Clarities and the Six Penetrations. The Three Clarities are:

The clarity of the heavenly eye.
The clarity of the heavenly ear.
The clarity concerning former lives.

Another rendering of this list is:

The clarity of the heavenly eye.
The clarity concerning former lives.
The clarity of the extinction of outflows.

The Six Penetrations are:

The penetration of the heavenly eye.
The penetration of the heavenly ear.
The penetration of others’ thoughts.
The penetration of former lives.
The penetration of the extinction of outflows.
The penetration of spiritual fulfillments.

**In all they did they obtained comfort.** In all of their activities, they were independent and sovereign.

**They acquired all Bodhisattvas’ comfortable spiritual powers.** They could manifest birth and death, Nirvana, and the cultivation of the Bodhisattva Way in all places. At all times they were at ease with the power of wonderful functioning of their spiritual penetrations, just as all Bodhisattvas are; **and in an instant, without movement or exertion, they could go to the assemblies of all Thus Come Ones’ Bodhimandas.**

You see the Bodhisattva as just walking along, but he can go anywhere in the ten directions within the space of a single instant, with no need to move or act. You see him eating, but his spiritual powers have already taken him in the assemblies of the Bodhimandas of all Thus Come Ones. You see the Bodhissattva as asleep, but he has already transformed Bodies and gone to other Buddhalands. You see the Bodhisattva as doing something, or as doing nothing, but he can be transforming bodies and going to limitless and boundlessly many other worlds to teach and transform living beings. He has that kind of wonderful ability.

So the Bodhisattvas at all times and in all places go to see all Buddhas of the ten directions, draw near and pay their respects, and make offerings to them. Don’t think they’re just asleep. If it’s just an ordinary person who’s asleep, of course it’s not very interesting. They may be having nightmares about wanting to jump off the Golden Gate Bridge or the Empire State Building. In the dream they may even fall from the skyscraper and die, but when they wake up, they are still in their beds. They may dream of being the 555th person to jump from the Golden Gate Bridge only to find themselves on the couch upon awakening. That is an ordinary person’s dream-state.

The state of a Bodhisattva also resembles dreaming, but the Bodhisattva goes off to rescue living beings and to teach and transform them. Wherever he sees being experiencing disaster, he manifests a body and goes to save them. Bodhisattvas also **act as leaders of the assembly and request the Buddha to speak Dharma.** Someone must request the Dharma or the Buddha does not speak it. Someone circumambulates three times, bows, kneels, and requests that the Buddha speak the Dharma and turn the Dharma wheel.

**They protected and upheld the Buddhas’ Proper Dharma wheel.** Bodhisattvas go everywhere to protect and support the assemblies of the Bodhimandas of all Buddhas, just as here where we daily turn the Proper Dharma wheel, yet no one realizes it and this country’s disciples treat it as a very ordinary event then, in fact, it is an earth-shaking, heaven-startling matter. **They used a vast, great mind to make offerings to and serve all Buddhas. They always diligently practiced the deeds which all Bodhisattvas practice. Their bodies universally appeared in all worlds.** Bodies of theirs went everywhere in all worlds of the ten directions.

**Their voices reached throughout the Dharma Realms of the ten directions.** In all the deeds the Bodhisattvas cultivated, their bodies manifested in all worlds, and the sound of their voices also manifested in the Dharma Realms of the ten directions. **Their minds’ wisdom was unobstructed.** Their minds and their wisdom were perfectly fused without obstruction. **They universally saw the merit and virtue of all Bodhisattvas of the three periods of time.** They could see all the merit and virtue of all Bodhisattvas of the past, present, and future. **They had already cultivated and obtained perfection.** They had cultivated to perfection the merit and virtue of all Bodhisattvas. **In ineffably many kalpas they could not completely be described.** In kalpas so long, one still could not portray them.

**Sutra:**

**Their names were: Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, Jeweled Treasury Bodhisattva, Lotus Treasury Bodhisattva, Virtue Treasury Bodhisattva, Treasury of Lotus Virtues Bodhisattva, Sun Treasury Bodhisattva, Treasury of Surya Bodhisattva, Treasury of Undefiled Moons Bodhisattva, Treasury of Adornments Universally Manifesting in all Countries Bodhisattva. Treasury of Vairocana Wisdom Bodhisattva, Treasury of Wonderful Virtues Bodhisattva, Treasury of Chandana Virtues Bodhisattva, Treasury of Flower Virtues Bodhisattva, Treasury of Kusuma Virtues Bodhisattva, Treasury of Utpala Virtues Bodhisattva, Treasury of Heavenly Virtues Bodhisattva, Treasury of Blessings and Virtues Bodhisattva, Treasury of Unobstructed Pure Wisdom’s Virtue Bodhisattva, Treasury of Merit and Virtues Bodhisattva, Treasury of Narayana Virtues Bodhisattva, Treasury of Non-defilement Bodhisattva, Treasury of Freedom From Filth Bodhisattva, Treasury of Versatile Eloquence Adornments Bodhisattva, Treasury of Great Bright-Light Nets Bodhisattva, Treasury of Pure, Awesome Virtues’ Light King Bodhisattva, Treasury of Gold Adornments and The Light of Great Merit and Virtues King Bodhisattva, Treasury of Adornments of All Marks’ Pure Virtues Bodhisattva, Treasury of Vajra Blazing Virtues and Adorning Marks Bodhisattva, Treasury of Blazing Light Bodhisattva, Treasury of Light Illumination Constellation King Bodhisattva, Treasury of Empty Space and Unobstructed Wisdom Bodhisattva, Treasury of Unobstructed Wondrous Sounds Bodhisattva, Treasury of Dharani Merit and Virtues to Maintain the Vows of Living Beings Bodhisattva, Treasury of Sea Adornments Bodhisattva, Treasury of Sumeru Virtues Bodhisattva, Treasury of Purity of Merit and Virtues Bodhisattva, The Thus Come One’s Treasury Bodhisattva, Treasury of the Buddhas’ Virtues Bodhisattva, Moon of Liberation Bodhisattva and all the other numberless, limitless, boundless, incomparable, uncountable, indescribable, inconceivable, illimitable, and ineffable multitudes of Bodhisattvas, Mahasattvas, with Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva as their leader.**

**Commentary:**

**Their names were** as follows. There was one Bodhisattva called **Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva.** Another Bodhisattvawas called **Jeweled Treasury Bodhisattva.**

There was another Bodhisattva called **Lotus Treasury Bodhisattva.** There was another Bodhisattva called **Virtue Treasury Bodhisattva.** There was another Bodhisattva called **Treasury of Lotus Virtues Bodhisattva.** Another Bodhisattva was called **Sun Treasury Bodhisattva.** There was another Bodhisattva called **Treasury of Surya Bodhisattva,** that is to say, “Store of Suns” Bodhisattva. There was another Bodhisattva called **Treasury of Undefiled Moons Bodhisattva.** Another Bodhisattva was called **Treasury of Adornments Universally Manifesting in all Countries Bodhisattva.** That Bodhisattva, a store of adornments, manifested in all worlds. There was another Bodhisattva was called **Treasury of Vairocana Wisdom Bodhisattva.** Another Bodhisattva was called **Treasury of Wonderful Virtues Bodhisattva.** There were another Bodhisattvas called **Treasury of Chandana Virtues Bodhisattva,**

**Treasury of Flower Virtues Bodhisattva, Treasury of Kusuma Virtues Bodhisattva.**

“Kusuma” means “large flowers.” Another Bodhisattva was named **Treasury of Utpala Virtues Bodhisattva.** “Utpala” means “Azure Flowers.” Another Bodhisattva was called **Treasury of Heavenly Virtues Bodhisattva.** There was another Bodhisattva named **Treasury of Blessings and Virtues Bodhisattva.** Another Bodhisattva was named **Treasury of Unobstructed Pure Wisdom’s Virtue Bodhisattva.** Another Bodhisattva went by the name of **Treasury of Merit and Virtues Bodhisattva.** Yet Another Bodhisattva was called **Treasury of Narayana Virtues Bodhisattva.** One was named **Treasury of Non-defilement Bodhisattva.** Another Bodhisattva was called **Treasury of Freedom From Filth Bodhisattva.** There was yet another Bodhisattva who was known as **Treasury of Versatile Eloquence Adornments Bodhisattva. Treasury of Great Bright-Light Nets Bodhisattva** was one Bodhisattva’s name, while another one Bodhisattva’s name was **Treasury of Pure, Awesome Virtues’ Light King Bodhisattva.**

Furthermore, there was a Bodhisattva called **Treasury of Gold Adornments and the Light of Great Merit and Virtues King Bodhisattva.** Present was also **Treasury of Adornments of All Marks’ Pure Virtues Bodhisattva,** as well as a Bodhisattvas called **Treasury of Vajra Blazing Virtues and Adorning Marks Bodhisattva. Treasury of Blazing Light Bodhisattva** was there, along with **Treasury of Light Illumination Constellation King Bodhisattva, Treasury of Empty Space and Unobstructed Wisdom Bodhisattva,** and **Treasury of Unobstructed Wondrous Sounds Bodhisattva.** There was, further, a Bodhisattva who had the name **Treasury of Dharani Merit and Virtues to Maintain the Vows of Living Beings Bodhisattva. Treasury of Sea Adornments Bodhisattva** was in the assembly, and so, too, was a Bodhisattvas called **Treasury of Sumeru Virtues Bodhisattva.** There was another named **Treasury of Purity of Merit and Virtues Bodhisattva.** Another was called **The Thus Come One’s Treasury Bodhisattva.** Yet, another Bodhisattvas went by the appelation **Treasury of the Buddhas’ Virtues Bodhisattva.** Another Bodhisattva was named **Moon of Liberation Bodhisattva.** ThatBodhisattva **and all the other numberless, limitless, boundless, incomparable, uncountable, indescribable, inconceivable, illimitable, and ineffable multitudes of Bodhisattvas, Mahasattvas.**

There were so many that you could not measure them, ascertain their bounds, compare them to anything, count them up, define them, or conceptualize them if you tried. The Great Bodhisattvas were there **with Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva as their leader.**

**Sutra:**

**At that time Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva received the Buddhas’ spiritual power and entered “The Bodhisattvas’ Great Wisdom Light Samadhi.” After he entered that Samadhi, in each of the ten directions were worlds beyond the number of fine motes of dust in ten million Buddhalands, each of which contained Buddhas to the number of fine motes of dust in ten million Buddhalands, all bearing the same name, “Vajra Treasury.”**

**Commentary:**

**At that time Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva received the Buddhas’ spiritual power and entered “The Bodhisattvas’ Great Wisdom Light Samadhi.”** Because he was receiving the awesome spiritual power of Shakyamuni Buddha and of all the Buddhas of the ten directions, he entered the proper concentration and proper reception that great Bodhisattvas enter. **After he entered that Samadhi,** then something wonderful occurred. **In each of the ten directions were worlds beyond the number of fine motes of dust in ten million Buddhalands, each of which contained Buddhas to the number of fine motes of dust in ten million Buddhalands.** Each of the worlds to the number of fine motes of dust in ten million Buddhalands had in it Buddhas to the number of fine motes of dust in ten million Buddhalands, **all bearing the same name, “Vajra Treasury.”** They were all called Vajra Treasury Buddha, Vajra Treasury Thus Come One.

**Sutra:**

**All those Buddhas appeared before him and said, “good indeed, good indeed, Vajra Treasury, that you are able to enter this Bodhisattvas’ Great Wisdom Light Samadhi. Good man, this is due to the combined aid of Buddhas throughout the ten directions to the number of fine motes of dust in ten million Buddhalands. It is also due to the power of the basic vows and the awesome spiritual might of Vairocana, Thus Come One, Arhat, of right and equal enlightenment. And it is due to the power of your supreme wisdom. They wish to cause u to have the light to speak all inconceivable Buddhadharmas for all Bodhisattvas, that is, to bring about entry into the ground of wisdom; the gathering in of good roots; the skillful selection of Buddhadharmas.**

**Commentary:**

**All those Buddhas appeared before him,** they manifested before Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva in Samadhi, **and said, “good indeed, good indeed, Vajra Treasury, that you are able to enter this Bodhisattvas’ Great Wisdom Light Samadhi.”** They praised him, saying, “You are really good, you are really fine, Vajra Treasury, that you can gain access into this right concentration and right reception of the great Bodhisattvas’ light of wisdom.” **Good man, this is due to the combined aid of Buddhas throughout the ten directions to the number of fine motes of dust in ten millons in Buddhalands.** They are all helping you enter this Samadhi,” they explained. “**It is also due to the power u Arhat, of right and equal enlightenment.** It is due to the Unsurpased One of Right and u vows and his awesome spiritual might aid you to enter this proper concentration. **And it is due to the power of your supreme wisdom.** The power of supreme wisdom that you obtained from cultivating Bodhisattva practices enables you to enter this right Samadhi.”

**They wish to cause u to have the light to speak all inconceivable Buddhadharmas for all Bodhisattvas.** Another reason you are able to enter this Great Wisdom Light Samadhi is because the Buddhas of the ten directions want you to have the light of wisdom to speak all the inconceivable Dharmas expressed by all Buddhas for the sake of all Bodhisattvas. **That is, to bring about entry into the ground of wisdom.** Then you will be able to cause all beings to enter the ground of wisdom. It is to bring about **the gathering in of good roots.** It is so you can collect together all the good roots of living beings amassed in cultivation that you are enabled to enter this Samadhi. It is to effect **the skillful selection of Buddhadharmas.** In order to make use of the Selective Dharma Eye so as to understand all Dharmas spoken by all Buddhas, you are able to enter this Great Wisdom Light Samadhi.”

Sutra:

**Vast knowledge of all Dharmas; skillful ability to speak Dharma; purification of undiscriminating wisdom; non-defilement of all worldly Dharmas; purification o world-transcending good roots; obtaining inconceivable state of wisdom; obtaining all wisdom and entry to states of wisdom.**

**They also wish to bring about obtaining of Bodhisattvas’ ten grounds from beginning to end: an accurate speaking of the distinctive characteristics of the Bodhisattvas’ ten grounds.**

**Commentary:**

**Vast knowledge of all Dharmas** means being able to, deeply enter the Sutra Store, and have wisdom like the sea.

The Buddhadharma is like the great sea. It is necessary to have vast, great wisdom in order to know all dharmas. But, just knowing is not enough, one must also have **skillful ability to speak Dharma.** You must be good at employing clever expedient methods to speak all dharmas, and have the **purification of undiscriminating wisdom.** You require the Four Wisdom:

1. The wisdom that accomplishes what is done

2**.** The wisdom of wonderful contemplation

3. The wisdom of sameness

4. The great, perfect mirror wisdom

Then, right within non-discrimination you will be able to understand all pure, wonderful dharmas. **Non-defilement of all worldly Dharmas.** Defiled worldly dharmas need only be turned around to become undefiled, world-transcending dharmas. It is also to bring about the **purification o world-transcending good roots.** Obtaining all world-transcending dharmas, you can cultivate world-transcending good roots, and attain to purity, as well as **obtaining inconceivable state of wisdom** and **obtaining all wisdom and entry to states of wisdom.** Upon obtaining all-wisdom, one is able to enter the states of wisdom.

**They also wish to bring about obtaining of Bodhisattvas’ ten grounds from beginning to end.** This is to bring about understanding of and certification to the progressive states of the grounds of a Bodhisattva from the First to the Tenth. Those of the First Ground do not understand the state of those of the Second Ground, and those of the Tenth Ground do not understand the state of those of Equal Enlightenment. So in cultivation, each person has his or her own skill and his or her own states, which differ from those of others; and the Ten Grounds have a progression from beginning to end, from the First Ground to the Tenth Ground. **An accurate speaking of the distinctive characteristics of the Bodhisattvas’ ten grounds** means accurately explaining different characteristics of the Bodhisattvas’ Ten Grounds. People who cultivate the Way should recognize states. The Buddhas wish the Bodhisattvas to thoroughly understand the states of the Ten Grounds and to accurately explain the different characteristics of the Ten Grounds.

**Sutra:**

**Following and being mindful of all Buddhas’ dharmas; cultivating, studying, and discriminating non-outflowing dharmas; cleverly adorning through the light of great wisdom of skillful selection and contemplation; skillful entering the door of decisive wisdom; according to dwelling places manifesting in sequence and speaking without fear; obtaining the light of unobstructed eloquence; dwelling on the ground of great eloquence and having skillful decisiveness; being so mindful of the Bodhisattvas that one never forgets them; maturing all the realms of living beings; being able pervasively to go to all places and be sure to be enlightened.**

**Commentary:**

**Following and being mindful of all Buddhas’ dharmas.** Following means singlemindedly adapting to, according with, and being mindful of all the Dharmas spoken by the Buddhas. **Cultivating, studying, and discriminating non-outflowing dharmas,** one should clearly understand what has outflows and what has no outflows, as well as to what extent there are outflowing dharmas present within non-outflowing dharmas, and to extent there are non-outflowing dharmas present within outflowing dharmas. That means on the one hand cultivating and on the other hand studying and discriminating what are dharmas with outlfows and what are dharmas without outflows. **Cleverly adorning through the light of great wisdom of skillful selection and contemplation.** One who is good at employing the Selective Dharma Eye can contemplate all the dharmas of great wisdom. When one has great wisdom, then one can have great wisdom light, and then one is able cleverly and expediently to adorn all Buddhalands. **Skillful entering the door of decisive wisdom,** one is also able to be very exact and clear about discriminating, to enter the door of all-wisdom, and to have no doubts.

**According to dwelling places manifesting in sequence and speaking without fear,** in accord with where Bodhisattvas are dwelling, in a clear and orderly fashion they speak the precise meaning of the Dharmas and have no fear. **Obtaining the light of unobstructed eloquence,** the light of wisdom reveals itself in unimpeded eloquence. **Dwelling on the ground of great eloquence and having skillful decisiveness;** one has great eloquence and one applies it to all Dharmas. **Being so mindful of the Bodhisattvas that one never forgets them;** they always remember all Bodhisattvas. **Maturing all the realms of living beings;** one is also able to bring all living beings to maturity, that is:

1. To cause those who have not yet planted good roots to plant them;

2. To cause already planted good roots to grow;

3. To cause good roots that have already grown to come to maturity;

4. To cause those whose roots have already matured to obtain liberation.

**Being able pervasively to go to all places and be sure to be enlightened.** They visit all assemblies in the Bodhimandas of all Buddhas of the three periods of time and, upon arriving there, are certain to become enlightened and to obtain great wisdom, great eloquence, long life, and happiness. They are certified as being enlightened to the real mark of all dharmas.

**Sutra:**

**Good man, you should eloquently discuss these distinctions of dharma doors and good and clever methods, which is to say, receiving the Buddhas’ spiritual power, to be aided by the Thus Come Ones’ light of wisdom; to purify one’s own good roots; to universally purify the Dharma Realms; to completely gather in living beings; to deeply enter the dharma body and the wisdom body; to receive all Buddhas’ anointment of one’s crown; to obtain the tallest, largest body in all worlds; to transcend all worldly ways; to purify world-transcending good roots; to perfect the wisdom of all-wisdom.**

**Commentary:**

When Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva entered the Great Wisdom Light Samadhi, all the Buddhas of the ten directions praised him and said to him, **Good man, you should eloquently discuss these distinctions of dharma doors and good and clever methods.** They told him, “You should use your unobstructed eloquence to expla in the various aspects of the Great Wisdom Light Samadhi, and of expedient skillful methods, **which is to say, receiving the Buddhas’ spiritual power;** you are based in great spiritual power of all Buddhaw of the ten directions, as well as that of Vairocana Buddha and Shakyamuni Buddha. **To be aided by the Thus Come Ones’ light of wisdom;** the light of the Buddhas will come to your assistance. **To purify one’s own good roots** of Bodhi; **to universally purify the Dharma Realms** with your light of wisdom. **To completely gather in living beings; your** wisdom will gather in and receive all living beings, as well as **to deeply enter the dharma body and the wisdom body; to receive all Buddhas’ anointment of one’s crown;** all the Buddhas of the ten directions and the three periods of time will come and give you a prediction and rub your crown to aid you. **To obtain the tallest, largest body in all worlds;** you will gain the worlds’ greatest wisdom and the tallest Dharma Body. **To transcend all worldly ways;** you will be able to excel in all mundane Dharma doors and paths, **to purify world-transcending good roots** of Bodhi, and **to perfect the wisdom of all-wisdom.** You will perfect the ground of all-wisdom and then enable all living beings to obtain the wisdom among wisdoms.

**Sutra:**

**At that time the Buddhas of the ten directions bestowed upon Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva a peerless body; bestowed unobstructed eloquence of delight in speech; bestowed skillfully discriminating pure wisdom; bestowed the power of good memory and non-forgetfulness; bestowed skillfully decisive wisdom of understanding; bestowed the wisdom to reach all places and become enlightened; bestowed the power of ease in accomplishing the way; bestowed the Thus Come Ones’ fearlessnesses; bestowed those of all wisdoms’ wisdom of eloquence to contemplate and discriminate all dharma doors; bestowed all Thus Come Ones’ perfected, superior, wonderful adornments of body, speech, and mind. And why? Because, upon obtaining this Samadhi, the dharma is that way; because of the arisal from past vows; because of profound thought being well-purified; because of the wheel of wisdom being well-purified; because of aids of the way being well-accumulated; because of what one does being well-cultivated; because of mindfulness of one as a limitless dharma vessel; because of knowledge that one has pure faith and understanding; because of flawless maintaining and upholding being obtained; because of skillful application of the seal of wisdom of the Dharma Realm.**

**Commentary:**

**At that time the Buddhas of the ten directions bestowed upon Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva a peerless body.** They aided Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva in obtaining a body whose radiance could not be obscured, and **bestowed unobstructed eloquence of delight in speech,** out of great compassion giving him the perfectly fused and unobstructed eloquence. They **bestowed skillfully discriminating pure wisdom** and **bestowed the power of good memory and non-forgetfulness** upon Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva. They **bestowed skillfully decisive wisdom of understanding.** They **bestowed the wisdom to reach all places and become enlightened.** They also gave Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva their aid and **bestowed the power of ease in accomplishing the way,** the power of free and easy success on the path; and they **bestowed the Thus Come Ones’ fearlessnesses,** and **bestowed those of all wisdoms’ wisdom of eloquence to contemplate and discriminate all dharma doors;** and they **bestowed all Thus Come Ones’,** Buddhas’, **perfected, superior, wonderful adornments of body, speech, and mind,** the perfection of limitless adornments. **And why?** Why was that? **Because, upon obtaining this Samadhi,** when one attains to the Great Wisdom Light Samadhi, **the dharma is that way.**

A necessary corollary of this dharma is that it has to be that way. It is also **because of the arisal from past vows,** that is, this kind of dharma comes into being through the vows of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of the ten directions. It is also **because of profound thought being well-purified,** because Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva was good at purifying deep thought; and **because of the wheel of wisdom being well-purified,** and **because of aids of the way being well-accumulated.** Furthermore, it is **because of what one does being well-cultivated;** bring those Dharma doors tht one should to accomplishment. It is **because of mindfulness of one as a limitless dharma vessel.** The Buddhas of the ten directions are aware that Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva can act as a vessel for limitlessly many Dharmas. **Because of knowledge that one has pure faith and understanding.** They know that he is someone who has accomplished faith and understanding. It is also **because of flawless maintaining and upholding being obtained,** and **because of skillful application of the seal of wisdom of the Dharma Realm,** from being skilled at employing the Jeweled Seal of the Dharma Realm to seal and certify all Dharmas.

**Sutra:**

**At that time, all the Buddhas of the ten directions extended their right hands and rubbed Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva on the crown. After they had rubbed his crown, Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva arose from Samadhi and told all the assembly of Bodhisattvas, disciples of the Buddha, all Bodhisattvas’ vows are well-decided. They are unadulterated, imperceptible, vast and great like the Dharma Realm, ultimately like empty space, exhausting the boundaries of the future. These Bodhisattvas pervade all Buddhalands and rescue and protect all living beings. They are protected by Buddhas. They enter the grounds of wisdom of all Buddhas of the past, the future, and the present.**

**Disciples of the Buddha, what are the grounds of wisdom of the Bodhisattvas, Mahasattvas? Disciples of the Buddha, the grounds of wisdom of the Bodhisattvas, Mahasattvas, are of ten kinds, which all Buddhas of the past, the future, and the present have spoken, will speak and are speaking. I also speak them thus.**

**Commentary:**

**At that time,** after the Buddhas of the ten directions had praised Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, **all the Buddhas of the ten directions,** the Buddhas from above, belwo, east, west, south, and north - the six directions - with the addition of the four intermediate points, making ten directions, all **extended their right hands.** Each Buddha extended his right hand **and rubbed Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva on the crown. After they had rubbed his crown, Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva arose from Samadhi and told all the assembly of Bodhisattvas, disciples of the Buddha, all Bodhisattvas’ vows are well-decided.** He told them that all the great vows made by all Bodhisattvas are decisive. **They are unadulterated; they** have no admixture, and are **imperceptible.** The vows made by Bodhisattvas cannot be seen, and yet they are **vast and great like the Dharma Realm, ultimately like empty space.** At their ultimate point they are like emptiness: you cannot find their limits. **Exhausting the boundaries of the future** they **pervade all Buddhalands.** The Bodhisattvas go to the countries of all Buddhas **and rescue and protect all living beings.** They have the ability to save all beings. **They are protected by Buddhas** of the three periods of time. **They enter the grounds of wisdom of all Buddhas of the past, the future, and the present.** The Bodhisattvas are certified as having entered the grounds of wisdom of all Buddhas of the three periods of time.

**Disciples of the Buddha, what are the grounds of wisdom of the Bodhisattvas, Mahasattvas** who cultivate and accumulate various kinds of good roots, and the grounds of wisdom of all Bodhisattvas and Buddhas? What are they? **Disciples of the Buddha, the grounds of wisdom of the Bodhisattvas, Mahasattvas, are of ten kinds.** The great Bodhisattvas who cultivate the conduct of Bodhisattvas have ten grounds of wisdom. If spoken in even further detail, there are limitless and boundlessly many kinds, **which all Buddhas of the past, the future, and the present have spoken, will speak and are speaking.** The Buddhas of the past, the future, and the present have spoken, will in the future speak, and right now are speaking them, **I also speak them thus.** I, too, just like the Buddhas of the past, the future, and the present, will speak the ten kinds of grounds of wisdom of the Bodhisattvas.

**Sutra:**

**What are the ten? One, the Ground of Happiness; two, the Ground of Leaving Filth; three, the Ground of Emitting Light; four, the Ground of Blazing Wisdom; five, the Ground of Invincibility; six, the Ground of Manifestation; seven, the Ground of Traveling Far; eight, the Ground of Immovability; nine, the Ground of Good Wisdom; ten, the Ground of the Dharma Cloud.**

**Disciples of the Buddha, these ten grounds have been explained, will be explained, and are being explained by all Buddhas of the three periods of time. Disciples of the Buddha, I have not seen any Thus Come Ones in any Buddhalands who do not speak these Ten Grounds. And why? They are the Bodhisattvas’ Mahasattvas’ most superior path to Bodhi. They are also doors of pure dharma light, namely, the detailed explanation of all Bodhisattvas’ grounds. Disciples of the Buddha, this place is inconceivable, namely the wisdom accordingly certified to by Bodhisattvas.**

**At that time, after Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva had finished speaking the names of the Ten Grounds, he remained silent and did not further distinguish them. Thereupon, all the assembly of Bodhisattvas, upon hearing the names of the Bodhisattvas’ Ten Grounds, but not hearing their explanation, all looked up in thirst and had this thought, “What is the cause, and what is the reason, that Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva only speaks the names of the Bodhisattvas’ Ten Grounds yet does not explain them?” Moon of Liberation Bodhisattva, knowing what was being thought by all those in the great assembly, used verses to question Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, saying:**

**“Why is it that the pure enlightened one, replete with mindfulness, wisdom, and virtue, speaks of the superior, wondrous grounds, yet with power to do so still does not explain them?”**

**Commentary:**

**What are the ten?** What are the ten grounds called? Their names are as follows: **One, the Ground of Happiness.** Upon arriving at this ground one is very happy. **Two, the Ground of Leaving Filth.** At the Second Ground, all filth of false thinking is cut off; that is, all view delusions, thought delusions, and delusions like dust and sand. **Three, the Ground of Emitting Light.** At the Third Ground, one eliminates all the dust-fatigue of false thinking, and the light of one’s own original wisdom manifests. **Four, the Ground of Blazing Wisdom.** At the Fourth Ground, not only does one emit light, but one even blazes with the flaming light of wisdom. **Five, the Ground of Invincibility.** It is hard to cultivate to this position. It is not at all easy to attain to this ground. **Six, the Ground of Manifestation.** At this Ground, all wisdom manifests. **Seven, the Ground of Traveling Far.** At the Seventh Ground, one can fly and do transformations. **Eight, the Ground of Immovability.** At the Eighth Ground, without moving from the Bodhimanda, one travels pervasively throughout the ten directions. **Nine, the Ground of Good Wisdom.** Upon arriving at this Ground, one has the best of wisdoms. **Ten, the Ground of the Dharma Cloud.** The Dharma cloud universally shades all living beings.

**Disciples of the Buddha**--Vajra Treasury again calls out, “All of you disciples of the Buddha, **these ten grounds have been explained, will be explained, and are being explained by all Buddhas of the three periods of time.”** The names of the Bodhisattvas’ Ten Grounds had already been spoken by all future Buddhas, and are now being spoken by the Buddhas of the present. **Disciples of the Buddha, I have not seen any Thus Come Ones in any Buddhalands who do not speak these Ten Grounds.** He said, “I have never seen any Buddha in all the Buddhalands who fails to speak the doctrines of the Ten Grounds. “ **And why? They are the Bodhisattvas’ Mahasattvas’ most superior path to Bodhi.** The great Bodhisattvas among Bodhisattvas use these Dharma doors as the superior path for cultivating Bodhi. **They are also doors of pure dharma light.** The Ten Grounds are also entrances into the light of pure Dharma wisdom, **namely the wisdom accordingly certified to by Bodhisattvas.** All Bodhisattvas accordingly cultivate and certify to this wisdom.

**At that time, after Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva had finished speaking the names of the Ten Grounds, he remained silent and did not further distinguish them.** He did not open his mouth. He said nothing, withdrew to one side, and did not explain the meaning of the Ten Grounds any further. **Thereupon, all the assembly of Bodhisattvas,** all the great Bodhisattvas who had come there from the ten directions, **upon hearing the names of the Bodhisattvas’ Ten Grounds, but not hearing their explanation,** when they did not hear Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva give any deeper explanation of their principles, **all looked up in thirst.** Turning up their heads, they waited for Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva to explain, **and had this thought, “What is the cause, and what is the reason, that Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva only speaks the names of the Bodhisattvas’ Ten Grounds yet does not explain them?** Why did he only tell us the names of the Ten Grounds of a Bodhisattva, with no commentary or explanation? **Moon of Liberation Bodhisattva, knowing what was being thought by all those in the great assembly, used verses to question Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, saying: “why is it that the pure enlightened one,** you, Bodhisattva, **replete with mindfulness, wisdom, and virtue,** who have perfected pure mindfulness, the light of wisdom, and all meritorious qualities, **speaks of the superior, wondrous grounds,** you give the names of the Ten Grounds -- **yet with power to do so still does not explain them?”** Why is it that even though you have the power to explain them in detail, you do not do so for all of us?

**Sutra:**

**You have decisiveness and judgment, are courageous and are not weak-willed; why do you only name the grounds, without going on then to discuss them?**

**The wonderful doctrines of the grounds, all those assembled wish to hear; their minds show no trace of cowardice, they wish you to speak them in detail.**

**The multitudes assembled are all pure, devoid of laxness, stern they are and clear, able to be solid and unmoving, with merit, virtue, wisdom, all endowed.**

**Mutually they look to you in reverence, all of them intent with upward gaze, like bees that are mindful of their honey, like thirsty people thinking of sweet dew.**

**Commentary:**

Moon of Liberation Bodhisattva went on to say to Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, :**You have decisiveness and judgment,** you have the decisive wisdom to understand right and wrong, **are courageous and are not weak-willed;** you cultivate the Bodhisattva Way with courageous vigor, and are not afraid of anything, so **why do you only name the grounds?** Why did you just speak the names of the Ten Bodhisattva Ground **without going on then to discuss them?** You did not expound them for everyone.

**The wonderful doctrines of the grounds,** each of the Grounds is sure to have very inconceivable and subtle doctrines. **Those entire assembled wish to hear.** Right now all of the multitudes in the Dharma Assembly wish to hear those doctrines. **Their minds show no trace of cowardice,** the hearts of all the Bodhisattvas have no fear whatsoever. **They wish you to speak them in detail.** If you would just speak this Dharma, they would all like to hear it.

**The multitudes assembled are all pure, devoid of laxness, stern they are and clear.** The Bodhisattvas in this Bodhimanda are all courageously vigorous, stern, strict, and pure. With their great resolve for Bodhi, they are **able to be solid and unmoving,** and are **with merit, virtue, wisdom, all endowed.**

**Mutually they look to you in reverence.** Their eyes are all upon you as they wait with much respect for you, oh Bodhisattva, to speak to them. **All of them intent with upward gaze.** All the great Bodhisattvas are looking towards you single-minded, thirsty for the explanation, **like bees that are mindful of their honey, like thirsty people thinking of sweet dew.** They are waiting just that sincerely in single-minded, eager anticipation.

**Sutra:**

**At that time, the Greatly Wise and Fearless Bodhisattva, Vajra Treasury, having heard what was said, and wishing to make the assembled multitudes happy, for all disciples of the Buddha used verses and said:**

**Commentary:**

**At that time, the Greatly Wise,** if you have great wisdom, then, no matter what happens, you have no problems. People who lack wisdom, however, have problems no matter what happens. **And Fearless,** you should not be afraid of people, but you also must not go around bullying people. Fearing and bullying people amount to the same thing. To be fearless doest not mean to beat up on people or to argue with them. It is just that, as a result of your own great wisdom, there is nothing that you fear. **Bodhisattva Vajra Treasury,** who was it who was greatly wise and fearless? It was Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva who, having **heard what was said** by Moon of Liberation Bodhisattva in his verses, **and wishing to make the assembled multitudes happy, for all disciples of the Buddha,** for all the great Bodhisattvas, **used verses and said:**

**Sutra:**

**The deeds of Bodhisattvas’ grounds of practice, are sources most supreme of Buddhas all; clear discussion of them in detail is foremost, rare, and hard to come upon.**

**Their subtleties are difficult to see, apart from thought, they go beyond the mind; the states and realms of Buddhas that appear; cause those who hear to be confused and doubt.**

**Commentary:**

**The deeds of Bodhisattvas’ grounds of practice,** Bodhisattva Vajra Treasury said, “During a Bodhisattva’s cultivation on the causal ground, he experiences the events on the Ten Bodhisattva Grounds, which **are sources most supreme of Buddhas all.** There is nothing higher than they are, and they are the basic Dharma-doors for accomplishing Buddhahood. **Clear discussion of them in detail is foremost, rare, and hard to come upon.** They are rarely explained.

**Their subtleties are difficult to see;** practices of Bodhisattvas have fine points which are not easy to understand. **Apart from thought, they go beyond the mind.** These kinds of Dharma-doors are such that the path of language is cut off, and the place of the mind’s workings is extinguished. They go beyond all reflection and deliberation. The **states and realms of Buddhas that appear** -- all that manifest are the Buddhas’ states -- **cause those who hear to be confused and doubt.** It is very hard for those who hear of these Dharma-doors to understand them, and it is very easy for them to give rise to doubts and confusion.

**Sutra:**

**If one holds the mind like Vajra, with deep faith in the Buddhas’ foremost wisdom, knowing that the mind-ground lacks a self, one can hear these dharmas most supreme.**

**Like pictures that are painted in the air, like traces of the wind in empty space, the wisdom of the muni is that way, its distinctions very hard for one to see.**

**I am mindful that the wisdom of the Buddhas is superior beyond conception; there’s no one in the world who can receive it.**

**Silent, then, am I and do not speak.**

**Commentary:**

**If one holds the mind like Vajra,** living beings give rise to doubts and confusion, because they do not have the wisdom to understand these most superior Dharma-doors. If they can hold onto their minds with vajra-like solidity, **with deep faith in the Buddhas’ foremost wisdom, knowing that the mind-ground lacks a self, one can hear these dharmas most supreme.** Knowing that the entrances into the mind-ground are necessarily devoid of self, they will be able to hear these most supreme Dharmas.

**Like pictures that are painted in the air,** one should not become attached upon hearing of these magnificent Dharmas. They are all like paintings in space, with no shape or characteristics, and **like traces of the wind in empty space,** which also lack shape or characteristics. **The wisdom of the muni is that way,** Shakyamuni Buddha’s wisdom is also like that, **its distinctions very hard for one to see.** No matter how hard you try, they are not easily understood or seen.

**I am mindful that the wisdom of the Buddhas, is superior beyond conception.** It is excellent and not easy to conceive of. **There’s no one in the world who can receive it.** No one in the world can understand this Dharma or accept these principles. **Silent, then, am I and do not speak.** Therefore, I remain silent and do not explain them for anyone.

**Sutra:**

**At that time, when Moon of Liberation Bodhisattva heard this said, he addressed Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, saying, “Disciple of the Buddha, the multitudes are already gathered here. They all have well purified the depths of their minds and have well cleansed their thoughts. They have well cultivated many practices. They have well accumulated the aids to the path. They have been well able to draw near hundreds of thousands of millions of Buddhas. They have accomplished limitless good roots of merit and virtue. They have cast off all stupidity and doubt. They have no defilements. They have deep faith and understanding. Within the Buddhadharmas they do not follow other teachings. All is well, disciple of the Buddha; you should receive the Buddhas’ spiritual power and speak. All these Bodhisattvas will be able to certify as knowing all these profound places.**

**At that time, Moon of Liberation Bodhisattva, wishing to restate his meaning, spoke verses, saying:**

**Commentary:**

**At that time, when Moon of Liberation Bodhisattva** finished listening to Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, and having **heard this said, he addressed Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, saying, “Disciple of the Buddha, the multitudes are already gathered here. They all have well purified the depths of their minds** of faith, **and have well cleansed their thoughts. They have well cultivated many practices. They have well accumulated the aids to the path. They have been well able to draw near hundreds of thousands of millions of Buddhas. They have accomplished limitless good roots of merit and virtue. They have cast off all stupidity and doubt.** All of them have already done away with ignorance and confusion. **They have no defilements,** no filth. **They have deep faith and understanding.** They believe in and understand the Buddhadharmas, and **within the Buddhadharmas, they do not follow other teachings.** They always study and practice Buddhadharma and do not follow other teaching methods of side doors and outside ways.

**“All is well, disciple of the Buddha,”** he said. “You are really good, Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, great disciple of the Buddha, **you should receive the Buddhas’ spiritual power and speak.** You should receive the Buddhas’ great, awesome spiritual might and, for this great assembly, speak the Buddhadharma. **All these Bodhisattvas,** in this assembly, **will be able to certify as knowing all these profound places.** They will certify to the profound Dharma-doors of the Ten Grounds. They are all capable of realizing and understanding them.”

**At that time, Moon of Liberation Bodhisattva, wishing to restate his meaning, spoke verses, saying:** He used verses to reiterate what he had just said.

**Sutra:**

**We wish you to speak of the most tranquil, Bodhisattvas’ practices unsurpassed, discriminating each and every ground, wisdom pure, and accomplishment of proper enlightenment.**

**This assembly is free from all defilements; their determination and understanding are bright and pure. They have served limitless Buddhas. They can know the meaning of these grounds.**

**At that time, Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva said, “disciples of the Buddha, although the assembly gathered here all have well purified their thoughts, have cast off stupidity and doubt, and in the deeply profound dharma they do not follow others’ teachings, there are still other living beings with deficient wisdom, who, upon hearing these profound and difficult-to-conceive-of matters would give rise to more doubts, and, in the long night they would suffer much distress. I take pity upon them and, therefore, remain silent.”**

**At that time, Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, wishing to restate his meaning, spoke verses, saying:**

**Commentary:**

**We wish you to speak of the most tranquil,** Moon of Liberation Bodhisattva said, “I wish that you, great Bodhisattva, would speak these most peaceful Dharmas, **Bodhisattvas’ practices unsurpassed,** the most superior Dharma-doors of cultivation, **discriminating each and every ground,** and analyze and explain the principles of the Ten Grounds, **wisdom pure, and accomplishment of proper enlightenment,** causing all living beings to obtain pure wisdom, and in the future to become Buddhas. **This assembly is free from all defilements.** He said, “**Their determination and understanding are bright and pure.** Their resolution and their comprehension are both very, very pure. **They have served limitless Buddhas. They can know the meaning of these grounds.**

**At that time,** right after that, **Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva said, “disciples of the Buddha, although the assembly gathered here all have well purified their thoughts, have cast off stupidity and doubt, and in the deeply profound dharma they do not follow others’ teachings,** they are not turned by the externalist teachings of side doors and outside ways, **there are still other living beings with deficient wisdom.** Although this assembly may understand, there are other living beings besides them who do not understand. They, **who, upon hearing these profound and difficult-to-conceive-of matters,** unsurpassed, subtle and wonderful dharmas, are ones who **would give rise to more doubts.** They would easily produce doubts, **and, in the long night** of ignorance and stupidity, **they would suffer much distress.** They themselves would constantly be unable to see through it all, put it all down, and would not obtain comfort, but would undergo vexation. **I take pity upon them and, therefore, remain silent.** Since I pity those kinds of living beings, I am silent and do not speak.”

**Sutra:**

**Although these multitudes have pure, vast wisdom, and their profound and sharp understanding can make decisive choices, their minds unmoving like the king of mountains, and cannot be overturned, like the great sea.**

**There are those who have not practiced long nor yet understood, they practice with consciousness, not with wisdom. Hearing this they will doubt and fall into bad paths. I take pity on them and, therefore, do not speak.**

**Commentary:**

**Although these multitudes have pure, vast wisdom,** Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva says, “Although most of the multitudes in this Dharma Assembly are pure and undefiled and have great wisdom, **and their profound and sharp understanding can make decisive choices.** They also have the capacity which is durable, bright, and sharp due to their profound Prajna wisdom, **their minds unmoving like the king of mountains.** Each one of the great Bodhisattvas has a mind which does not move, like Mount Sumeru, **cannot be overturned, like the great sea.** They cannot be turned over in the same way that no one is able to overturn the ocean.

However, **there are those who have not practiced long nor yet understood.** Within the Great Assembly there are also those who first gave rise to the thought for Bodhi perhaps ten or twenty years ago, which is a very short time. They have not yet attained to the understanding which comes from wisdom. **They practice with consciousness, not with wisdom.** They go along with their discriminating consciousness in what they do and do not use wisdom.” To use wisdom is to recognize all states. If one employs consciousness, one merely discriminates states and does not recognize them. **Hearing this they will doubt and fall into bad paths.** As soon s they hear about the Dharma-doors of the Ten Grounds, they will have doubts and will either fall into the hells, the hungry ghosts, or the animals -- the three evil destinies. **I take pity on them and, therefore, do not speak.** Since I pity the living beings who are like that, therefore I don’t speak, for if I did speak, they would doubt and disbelieve, and that would be their downfall, because you cannot slander the Dharma-doors of the Ten Grounds without falling into the three evil destinies.

**Sutra:**

**At that time, Moon of Liberation Bodhisattva again addressed Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, saying, “Disciple of the Buddha, I hope you will receive the Buddhas’ spiritual power and explain in detail these inconceivable dharmas. These people should obtain the Thus Come Ones’ protection and mindfulness and give rise to faith and receptivity. And why? When one explains the Ten Grounds, the dharma of all Bodhisattvas is that way: that they obtain the Buddhas’ protection and mindfulness. Because they obtain the Buddhas’ protection and mindfulness, they can be courageous about these grounds of wisdom. And why? These are the Bodhisattvas’ most initial practices for accomplishing all Buddhas’ Dharmas.**

**Just as written words which say numerous things are based upon an alphabet in that alphabet is fundamental to them and none of them departs from it in the slightest, so too, disciple of the Buddha, all Buddhas’ Dharmas are based upon the Ten Grounds in that the Ten Grounds are fundamental to them. Through successful cultivation of them, one obtains all wisdom. Therefore, disciple of the Buddha, I wish you would explain them. These people will certainly be protected by the Thus Come Ones and caused to believe and receive these Dharmas.**

**At that time, Moon of Liberation Bodhisattva, wishing to restate his meaning, spoke verses, saying:**

**Commentary:**

**At that time, Moon of Liberation Bodhisattva again addressed Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, saying, “Disciple of the Buddha, I hope you will receive the Buddhas’ spiritual power.** Great Bodhisattva, I wish that you would receive the power of spiritual penetrations of the Buddhas of the ten directions and of Shakyamuni Buddha, **and explain in detail these inconceivable dharmas.** Analyze and describe these Dharma-doors for us. **These people should obtain the Thus Come Ones’ protection and mindfulness.** The people who are here in this Dharma Assembly should be protected and remembered by all Buddhas, **and give rise to faith and receptivity.** They will have faith. **And why? When one explains the Ten Grounds, the dharma of all Bodhisattvas is that way: that they obtain the Buddhas’ protection and mindfulness.** When all Bodhisattvas hear the Dharma, it should be that way for them. All Buddhas should protect and remember them. **Because they obtain the Buddhas’ protection and mindfulness, they can be courageous about these grounds of wisdom.** They can give rise to great courage. **And why? These are the Bodhisattvas’ most initial practices.** These are Dharma-doors which Bodhisattvas cultivate at the very beginning **for accomplishing all Buddhas’ Dharmas.** The Dharmas spoken by all Buddhas are produced within the Ten Grounds and accomplished through them.

**Just as written words which say numerous things are based upon an alphabet,** they all need a basic alphabet, **in that alphabet is fundamental to them and none of them departs from it in the slightest.** In the final analysis, not even a minute portion of them is not of the alphabet. **So too, disciple of the Buddha, all Buddhas’ Dharmas are based upon the Ten Grounds in that the Ten Grounds are fundamental to them.** The Dharmas spoken by all Buddhas all take the Ten Grounds as their basis. **By successful cultivation of them, one obtains all wisdom.** If you cultivate the Ten Grounds to the ultimate point, and accomplish the wisdom of the Ten Grounds, you give rise to all wisdoms. **Therefore, disciple of the Buddha, I wish you would explain them.** Due to that, Great disciple of the Buddha, we all want you to explain them for us. **These people will certainly be protected by the Thus Come Ones.** The people who hear these Dharmas will definitely be protected and remembered by the Buddhas, **and caused to believe and receive these Dharmas,** they will offer up their conduct according to them.

**At that time, Moon of Liberation Bodhisattva, wishing to restate his meaning, spoke verses, saying:** He repeated in verse form what he had said before.

**Sutra:**

**Good indeed, disciple of the Buddha, I wish you would proclaim all the grounds of practice to approach and enter Bodhi; of all the comfortable Honored Ones throughout the ten directions, none is not proactive of and mindful of the basic roots of wisdom.**

**Secured in them, that wisdom is also fundamental; all the Buddhas’ Dharmas are produced from them; just as written words are comprised by alphabets, so, too, the Buddhas’ Dharmas are based upon these grounds.**

**Commentary:**

**Good indeed, disciple of the Buddha,** Moon of Liberation Bodhisattva said, “How good you are! You are the Buddhas’ great disciple. **I wish you would proclaim,** take pity on all living beings and speak the Dharma-doors of the Ten Grounds. **All the grounds of practice to approach and enter Bodhi.** Teach us how to tend toward, enter, go along, and cultivate the Bodhisattvas’ path of Enlightenment. **Of all the comfortable Honored Ones throughout the ten directions.”** Comfortable Honored Ones are the Buddhas. **None is not proactive of and mindful of the basic roots of wisdom.** They always wish to aid and uphold, protect and remember people who hear the Dharma doors of the Ten Grounds and who cultivate the Dharma-doors of the Ten Grounds, because the Ten Grounds are the basic root of wisdom.

**Secured in them, that wisdom is also fundamental.** The wisdom derived from cultivating the Ten Grounds is fundamental to them. **All the Buddhas’ Dharmas are produced from them.** Why are the Ten Grounds called ’Grounds?’ It is because they are the foundation for all Dharmas spoken by the Buddhas. **Just as written words are comprised by alphabets.** Just as when one writes words or characters, they are all based either upon an alphabet or syllabify, like “A, B, C”; or upon radicals, as, for example, for Chinese characters the three drops of water, the simple standing person radical, or the double standing person radical, etc. “Alphabet” stands for all of those, which are the basis of written words. **So, too, the Buddhas’ Dharmas are based upon these grounds,** because the Buddhas’ Dharmas are all produced from the Ten Grounds, in the same way as all written words are based upon the alphabet.

**Sutra:**

**At that time, all the assembly of great Bodhisattvas, simultaneously and with a single sound, spoke verses to Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, saying: “you of superior, wondrous wisdom undefiled, of boundless, discriminating eloquence, please proclaim profound and wonderful words, interactive with the foremost meaning.**

**Commentary:**

**At that time, all the assembly of great Bodhisattvas.** After Moon of Liberation Bodhisattva had finished speaking his verses, all the Great Bodhisattvas of the ten directions, limitless like fine motes of dust, **simultaneously and with a single sound,** said the same thing at the same time. They **spoke verses to Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, saying: “you of superior, wondrous wisdom undefiled.** They said, “Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, great disciple of the Buddhas that you are, you have already certified to the attainment of the most superior, subtle and wonderful wisdom that is pure and free from defilement. You **of boundless, discriminating eloquence,** which enables you to speak in great detail and with a great deal of principle, **please proclaim profound and wonderful words.** We hope you will explain the unsurpassed, deeply profound, subtle and wonderful principles of the Ten Grounds, **interactive with the foremost meaning.** The Dharma doors of the Ten Grounds are interactive with the Primary Truth.

**Sutra:**

**You who mindfully maintain pure practices, and are replete with virtues from Ten Powers, with eloquence to discriminate the meanings, please explain the most superior grounds.**

**With Samadhi and precepts joined to form upright thought, free from arrogance as well as deviant view, this assembly has no doubts in mind, and only wants to hear them well explained.**

**As one thirsty thinks of icy water, as one hungry dreams about good food, as one sick reflects on wholesome medicine, as a bee is greedy for good honey.**

**So, too, do we in just that way, wish to hear these Dharmas of sweet dew.**

**Good, indeed, one of wisdom vast and great, please tell us how to enter the Ten Grounds, accomplishing Ten Powers without obstruction, and the well-gone ones’ practices, one and all.**

**Commentary:**

**You who mindfully maintain pure practices.** All of these people are mindful of and cultivate all pure practices, **and are replete with virtues from Ten Powers.** They all cultivate the Buddhas ten kinds of powers and amass all kinds of merit and virtue. **With eloquence to discriminate the meanings, please explain the most superior grounds.** We request the great Bodhisattva to speak the supreme Dharma-doors of the Ten Grounds. **With Samadhi and precepts joined to form upright thought.** All of those listening cultivate Samadhi and hold precepts, and they all have proper knowledge and proper views. **Free from arrogance as well as deviant view.** They have no overbearing pride or arrogance, nor any considerations of deviant views. **This assembly has no doubts in mind.** Those in the Great Assembly now have no doubts about the Dharma-doors of the Ten Grounds, **and only wants to hear them well explained.** They all wish the Bodhisattva would speak the Dharma-doors of the Ten Grounds.

**As one thirsty thinks of icy water.** Like someone hot and thirsty wanting to eat some ice cream, or perhaps drink a milk-shape, or some other cold, refreshing drink. **As one hungry dreams about good food.** They are also like famished people dreaming of finding some bread to eat, or something to cure their hunger pangs. They think of good things to eat, the finest good. **As one sick reflects on wholesome medicine.** They are like sick people who think about the best medicines to cure their illnesses. **As a bee is greedy for good honey.** They are also like honey bees which are greedy for the pollen to become honey and be ready for them to eat. But, as it turns out, when the honey is ready, people come and steal it from them.

**So, too, do we in just that way.** All the Bodhisattvas **wish to hear these Dharmas of sweet dew.** We wish to hear those Dharmas which quench thirst, satisfy hunger, cure sickness, and satisfy all one might be greedy for.

**Good, indeed, one of wisdom vast and great.** They said, “Good, indeed, you of vast, great wisdom, Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, **please tell us how to enter the Ten Grounds.** We would like you to speak the Dharma-doors of the Ten Grounds, **accomplishing Ten Powers without obstruction.** You have already accomplished the position of the Ten Powers without obstruction, **and the well-gone ones’ practices, one and all,** along with pretty much all of the practices of the Well-Gone Ones, the Buddhas. Great Bodhisattva, please very compassionately speak the Dharmas of the Ten Grounds for all of us.

**Sutra:**

**At that time, the World-Honored One, from between his eyebrows, emitted a pure light, named “Blazing Light of Bodhisattvas’ Powers,” with hundreds of thousands of asamkhyeyas of lights as its retinue, which universally illumined all the worlds throughout the ten directions, pervading absolutely everywhere. The sufferings of the three veil paths all ceased to be. It also illuminated the assemblies of all Thus Come Ones, manifesting all Buddhas’ inconceivable powers. It also illuminated the persons of all Bodhisattvas speaking dharma with the aid of all Buddhas throughout all worlds in the ten directions. When finished doing that, it formed a great platform of nets of clouds of light high in empty space and remained there.**

**At that time, all the Buddhas of the ten directions also in that way, from between their eyebrows emitted pure lights. Those lights’ names, retinues, and actions were all the same as that one’s. Moreover, they illumined the Buddhas and great assemblies of this Saha World and the person of Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva upon his lion’s throne, and high in empty space, they formed a large platform of nets of clouds of lights. At that time, within the platform of light, through the Buddhas’ awesome spiritual might, were spoken verses, saying:**

**Commentary:**

**At that time,** right then, **the World-Honored One,** Shakyamuni Buddha, **from between his eyebrows, emitted a pure light, named “BLight of Bodhisattvas’ Powers,” with hundreds of thousands of asamkhyeyas of lights as its retinue,** “Asamkhyeyas” means “limitless numbers of” **which universally illumined all the worlds throughout the ten directions,** all the Buddhas worlds in the ten directions, **pervading absolutely everywhere.** Nowhere was there a place upon which they did not shine. **The sufferings of the three veil paths all ceased to be.** The sufferings of the hell - beings, hungry ghosts, and animals all stopped. **It also illuminated the assemblies of all Thus Come Ones,** lighting up the assemblies in the Bodhimandas of all Buddhas, **manifesting all Buddhas’ inconceivable powers.** They used the light to reveal the inconceivable powers of the Buddhas. **It also illuminated the persons of all Bodhisattvas speaking dharma with the aid of all Buddhas throughout all worlds in the ten directions.** It shone upon all Bodhisattvas speaking with the aid of all Buddhas of the ten directions. **When finished doing that,** when that ceremony had been completed, **it formed a great platform of nets of clouds of light high in empty space.** In the sky above it took form as a great platform of nets of light, **and remained there.** It settled there in mid-air.

**At that time, all the Buddhas of the ten directions also in that way, from between their eyebrows emitted pure lights** called “Blazing Lights of Bodhisattvas’ Powers.” **Those lights’ names, retinues, and actions were all the same as that one’s.** The names of those lights, their retinues, and what they did, were all the same as those of Shakyamuni Buddha’s.

**Moreover, they illumined the Buddhas and great assemblies of this Saha World.** In the countries of the other directions they emitted light, and they also illuminated Shakyamuni Buddha and the great multitudes of this Dharma Assembly in this Saha World, **and the person of Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva upon his lion’s throne,** along with the Lion’s seat upon which Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva was sitting; **and high in empty space,** in mid-air, **they formed a large platform of nets of clouds of lights. At that time, within the platform of light,** with the nets of cloud of light, **through the Buddhas’ awesome spiritual might,** due to the awesome spiritual power of the Buddhas of the ten directions, and to the awesome spiritual might of Shakyamuni Buddha, **were spoken verses, saying:**

**Sutra:**

**The Buddha, with no equal, just like empty space, of ten powers limitless, of merit and virtue supreme; among people most victorious, superior in the world: that Shakya Lion’s Dharmas are what gives them aid.**

**Disciple of the Buddha, receive all Buddhas’ strength, set forth this king of Dharmas’ treasury most supreme: all grounds’ extensive wisdom, practices wondrous and supreme, through Buddhas’ awesome spirit, discriminate and speak.**

**Those who have the aid of all the well-gone ones, should obtain these dharma jewels entering their minds; that all grounds undefiled, in order be completed, one must possess as well Thus Come Ones’ Ten-fold Power.**

**Though one may dwell in blazes of kalpas like the sea, if able to accept them, one doubtless hears these dharmas: but those who harbor doubts, and who have no faith, will never come to hear the meanings such as these.**

**Please do explain the Grounds, the way to supreme wisdom, enter, dwell within, unfold successive cultivation; from states of cultivation arises Dharma wisdom, to benefit and aid each and every living being.**

**At that time, Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva contemplated in the ten directions, and, in order to cause those in the great assembly to increase their pure faith, spoke verses, saying:**

**The ways of the Thus Come Ones, great immortals, are subtle, wonderful, and hear to comprehend; not thought, they are apart from every thought: those seeking them in seeing can’t attain them.**

**Commentary:**

**The Buddha, with no equal, just like empty space.** The Buddha is incomparable and like empty space, in that there is also nothing comparable to empty space. **Of ten powers limitless, of merit and virtue supreme.** The Buddha has ten kinds of powers, and limitless merit and virtue. **Among people most victorious, superior in the world.** Among people, the Buddha is foremost, and the highest in the world, too. **That Shakya Lion’s Dharmas are what gives them aid.** The Dharmas of the Lion of the Shakya Clan, the Buddha, are what aid those people who whish to speak the Dharma and explain it.

**Disciples of the Buddha, receive all Buddhas’ strength.** You, Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, should receive the power of Shakyamuni Buddha and the power of all the Buddhas of the ten directions, and **set forth this king of Dharmas’ treasury most supreme.** Come and explain for everyone these most supreme Dharma-doors, the endowment of the King of Jewels. **All grounds’ extensive wisdom, practices wondrous and supreme.** The Ten Grounds have vast, great wisdoms, and most superior, wonderful practices. **Through Buddhas’ awesome spirit, discriminate and speak.** The Buddhas will come to aid you enabling you to discriminate and explain.

**Those who have the aid of all the well-gone ones,** the Buddhas’ might, **should obtain these dharma jewels entering their minds** and be able to speak according to intent. **That all grounds undefiled, in order be completed.** The Ten Grounds are all free form defilement. To be able to speak them perfectly, and in order, **one must possess as well Thus Come Ones’ Ten-fold Power.** By relying on the ten kinds of powers of a Buddha, one can then speak them perfectly.

**Though one may dwell in blazes of kalpas like the sea.** Even though one dwells in kalpa-fires, periods of coming into beings, dwelling, going bad, and disappearing on the part of kalpas, great kalpas, as many in quantity as there is water in the sea, **if able to accept them, one doubtless hears these dharmas.** One can hear these kinds of Dharmas for that long a time; one definitely will be able to hear them. **But those who harbor doubts, and who have no faith.** Maybe there are doubters, disbelievers. They **will never come to hear the meanings such as these.** They will never have the opportunity to hear these kinds of Dharmas.

**Please do explain the Grounds, the way to supreme wisdom.** Great Bodhisattva, you should now speak for everyone the Bodhisattvas’ Ten Grounds, the path of most supreme wisdom. **Enter, dwell within, unfold successive cultivation.** Enter into these Dharmas, and then open them up and set them forth, investigating and explaining them in orderly sequence for living beings, enabling living beings to cultivate. **From states of cultivation arises Dharma wisdom.** It is from cultivating and experiencing these various kinds of Dharmas that wisdom is attained and Dharma arises **to benefit and aid each and every living being.** I hope that you, Bodhisattva, will speak for everyone’s benefit, for the sake of all the living beings in this Dharma Assembly.

**At that time,** thereupon, **Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva contemplated in the ten directions.** He contemplated the causes and conditions of living beings throughout the ten directions, **and, in order to cause those in the great assembly to increase their pure faith,** the faith and understanding of everyone present, **spoke verses, saying:**

**The ways of the Thus Come Ones, great immortals.** He said, “The Buddhas are like Great Immortals. Their ways **are subtle, wonderful, and hear to comprehend; not thought, they are apart from every thought.** When you have no-thought, you should still go on to become free of all thoughts. **Those seeking them in seeing can’t attain them.** If you want to see the Buddha and the Dharma by looking at forms and seeking in sounds, that is not possible. Those who do so cannot see the Buddha, nor can they understand the Dharma-doors of the Ten Grounds.”

**Sutra:**

**They are not produced, and they are not destroyed; pure of nature are they, and they are always still. Of people undefiled, intelligent, and wise, they are the place of practice, of their wisdom.**

**Their own nature basically is empty and it’s still; non-dual it is, but it is also unending; when liberated and set free from all the destinies, one dwells within the identity that is Nirvana.**

**Commentary:**

The Dharma-doors of the Ten Grounds are just our original Buddha-nature and they are our original wisdom, as well as being the treasury of light of everyone’s own original nature. As to these Dharma-doors, **they are not produced, and they are not destroyed.** They are not defiled or immaculate, not increased and not decreased. **Pure of nature are they, and they are always still.** These Dharma-doors of the Ten Grounds are always pure; thus, they are always still and unmoving. **Of people undefiled, intelligent, and wise.** All great of you great disciples of the Buddha, since you are free from filth, you have obtained true and actual intelligence and wisdom. For each bit of defilement that’s removed, a bit of purity appears. You decrease defilement by the same proportion as you increase purity, because defilements, that increases your stupidity. If you are pure, then day by day you fall, whereas with wisdom, day by day you rise upwards. As it is said:

The superior person ascends;
The inferior person descends.

That is the same principle. In cultivation one purifies the defiled mind. What is defilement? Among all worldly dharmas, the heaviest is sexual desire. That is what is most defiled and most impure, but most people can’t get out of this bind. They get caught up like a silkworm spinning a cocoon, which is binding itself up without even realizing it. Sages turn defilement into purity. Ordinary people turn purity into defilement. Whenever people abandon defiled dharmas and return to original purity, they are intelligent Sages with wisdom. **They are the place of practice, of their wisdom.** The Dharma-doors of the Ten Grounds are what is cultivated by Bodhisattvas, by intelligent persons who have wisdom.

**Their own nature basically is empty and it’s still.** The self-nature of us all is basically pure and without anything at all; but we ourselves day by day turn our backs on enlightenment and unite with dust and take suffering for bliss. Therefore, to the self-nature, which basically is pure and still, there are added a great many afflictions. **Non-dual it is, but it is also unending.** The self-nature hasn’t even one, to say nothing of two. It has no shape or characteristics, spans, “but it is also unending. “ Although it has no mark, it is not that it doesn’t exist. Empty space has no mark, but you cannot deny that there is empty space. **When liberated and set free from all the destinies.** Liberated through the wisdom of the Ten Grounds, one attains to freedom regarding the four evil destinies -- those of asuras, hell-beings, hungry ghosts, and animals -- and **one dwells within the identity that is Nirvana.** If you are able to understand the Dharma-doors of the Ten Grounds, then you can understand that birth and death are the same as Nirvana, that samsara is identical with Nirvana, and that afflictions are just Bodhi. If you do not understand the Dharma-doors of the Ten Grounds, then, for you, birth and death are still birth and death, and Nirvana is still Nirvana, without any connection whatsoever.

**Sutra:**

**They are not beginning, nor middle, nor end; they are not expressible in words; they transcend the three periods of time; their characteristics are like empty space.**

**The still extinction which the Buddhas practice cannot be described in words. The practice of the grounds is also thus: difficult to express, difficult to accept.**

**The Buddhas’ states that arise from wisdom are not thought and leave the path of the mind. They are not the doors of skandhas, realms, or places: the wise know intellect does not reach them.**

**Commentary:**

**They are not beginning, nor middle, nor end.** The wisdom of these grounds has no beginning, middle, or end. To say ’The Dharma the Buddha spoke was good in the beginning, good in the middle, and good in the end,’ does not apply here. Nor do the grounds belong to the View of Truth, the View of Emptiness, or the View of the Middle. **They are not expressible in words.** The Ten Grounds can only be known and cannot be described by words, which is why I do not wish to speak about them. **They transcend the three periods of time.** These Dharma-doors go beyond all dharmas of the past, the present, and the future, and **their characteristics are like empty space.**

**The still extinction which the Buddhas practice.** These Dharma-doors are characterized by still extinction. They:

Cannot be seen by looking,
Cannot be heard by listening,
Cannot be perceived by smell.

They are what the Buddhas cultivate, most subtle and wonderful, and **cannot be described in words.** If you wish me to explain the Ten Grounds, there is no way that I can use words to explain them. **The practice of the grounds is also thus.** The Dharma- doors of cultivation of the Ten Grounds are just the same as in the previous analogy, **difficult to express, difficult to accept.** It is not easy to describe them. As it is said:

The path of language is cut off,
The place of the mind’s workings is extinguished.

**The Buddhas’ states that arise from wisdom.** All the Buddhas’ states are produced from wisdom. They **are not thought and leave the path of the mind.** This again is:

The path of language is cut off,
The place of the mind’s workings is extinguished.
Right in thought, one is apart from thought:
One thinks, and yet one has no thoughts.

Hence, they are not thought and leave the path of the mind. They are apart from all thoughts of the mind. **They are not the doors of skandhas, realms, or places.** They are also not the Five Skandhas: form, feeling, thinking, activities, and consciousness. Nor are they are Eighteen Realms, not the Six Sense Faculties -- eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind; not the Six Objects of Perception-- forms, sounds, smells, tastes, objects of touch, and dharmas; and not the Six Consciousnesses -- eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, nose-consciousness, tongue-consciousness, body-consciousness, and mind-consciousness. They are not the Twelve Places -- eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, mind plus forms, sounds, smells, tastes, objects of tough, and dharmas. **The wise know intellect does not reach them.** If you use wisdom, then you can understand them. If you use your thinking mind, your intellect, there is no way to understand them.

**Sutra:**

**As the traces of a bird in empty space, are difficult to express, difficult to discern, so, too, are the Ten Grounds’ meanings incomprehensible to mind and thought.**

**They who from compassion, kindness, and the power of vows, appear and enter the practices of the grounds; gradually reach perfection of the mind: wisdom’s practices are not reflection’s realm.**

**Such states as these are difficult to perceive; they can be known but cannot be expressed; through the Buddhas’ power they are proclaimed. You should receive them with all reverence.**

**Wisdom such as this enters the practices; millions of aeon’s speaking does not exhaust them. I now merely speak them in a general way: the true and actual meanings are unending.**

**With a single mind, await in reverence, while I receive the Buddhas’ power and speak the supreme dharmas’ subtle, wondrous sounds, with analogies and words appropriate.**

**Every Buddha’s limitless spiritual powers all come to be embodied by me! These places are difficult to express; I shall now speak a small portion.**

**Commentary:**

**As the traces of a bird in empty space, are difficult to express, difficult to discern.** When a bird flies through the air, what trace is there to speak of? What traces can be shown to represent it? **So, too, are the Ten Grounds’ meanings.** Therefore, it I not easy to express them, not easy for me to instruct you in them, since they are **incomprehensible to mind and thought.** If you use your ordinary mind and thoughts, you will not be able to understand the meanings such as those contained in the Ten Grounds. **They who from compassion, kindness, and the power of vows.** When Bodhisattvas speak the Dharma-doors of the Ten Grounds, they all receive the compassion and vow power of the Buddhas, and they **appear and enter the practices of the grounds.** They appear in the world to cultivate the doors of practice of the Ten Grounds. **Gradually reach perfection of the mind.** Step by step, the mind of wisdom is caused to be perfected, and the Enlightenment of Bodhi is caused to be accomplished. **Wisdom’s practices are not reflection’s realm.** These Dharma-doors are cultivated by wisdom. They are not states, that can be understood by people’s thinking.

**Such states as these are difficult to perceive; they can be known but cannot be expressed.** Knowing of them is easy, but to explain them is not at all easy. **Through the Buddhas’ power they are proclaimed.** If they cannot be expressed, then how does one express them? It is because the Buddhas of the ten directions lend their strength, enabling one to explain the Dharma-doors of the Ten Grounds. **You should receive them with all reverence.** All of you Bodhisattvas should respectfully listen to these Dharmas. **Wisdom such as this enters the practices.** These doors of practice are entered through wisdom. **Millions of aeon’s speaking does not exhaust them.** In hundreds of thousands of then thousands of millions of kalpas, they cannot be expressed to the end. **I now merely speak them in a general way.** I, Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, will now speak of them in general, not completely. **The true and actual meanings are unending.** The true and actual meanings cannot be expressed entirely.

**With a single mind, await in reverence, while I receive the Buddhas’ power and speak.** I receive the great, awesome strength of the Buddhas of the ten directions in order to speak these Dharma-doors, **the supreme dharmas’ subtle, wondrous sounds, with analogies and words appropriate.** The supreme dharmas are so subtle; no comparison would b suitable to them. **Every Buddha’s limitless spiritual powers** aid me and enable me to speak these Dharmas of the Ten Grounds. They **all come to be embodied by me! These places are difficult to express.** The Dharma-doors of the Ten Grounds cannot be expressed to the end. **I shall now speak a small portion.** Therefore, I shall not be able to explain these places completely. I shall just explain them a little bit.

**Sutra:**

**Disciple of the Buddha, suppose there are living beings who have deeply planted good roots, well cultivated all practices, well accumulated the aids to the way, well made offerings to all Buddhas, well collected white, pure dharmas, been well gathered in by good and wise advisors, have well purified deep thought, have established great resolutions, have brought forth vast, great understanding, have manifested kindness and compassion, in order to seek the wisdom of the Buddhas, in order to obtain the ten powers, in order to obtain the great fearlessnesses, in order to obtain the Buddhas’ dharmas of equality, in order to rescue all those in the world, in order to purify great kindness and compassion, in order to obtain the wisdom without residue of the ten powers, in order to purify all Buddhalands without obstruction; in order to know all the three periods of time in a single thought, in order to turn the great dharma wheel without fear.**

**Commentary:**

**Disciple of the Buddha,** Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva again says, “All of you disciples of the Buddha, **suppose there are living beings who have deeply planted good roots** and **well cultivated all practices.** They are good at practicing the Dharma-doors of the Six Perfections and the ten thousand conducts. They have **well accumulated the aids to the way.** They have well assembled the Dharma-doors that aid in cultivation of the Way and have **well made offerings to all Buddhas.** They are skilled at making offerings to all Buddhas of the ten directions and the three periods of time, and **well collected white, pure dharmas.** They know very well how com accumulate pure, white Dharmas, and have **been well gathered in by good and wise advisors.** Great and wise teachers are well able to tame and subdue living beings. They **have well purified deep thought.** They themselves are well able to have pure, deep thoughts with no defiled or mixed-up thoughts, and they **have established great resolutions,** and **have brought forth vast, great understanding.** They have produced limitless and boundless powers of understanding and they **have manifested kindness and compassion.** We who cultivate the Way should always be compassionate, no matter towards whom it may be. Why is that? **In order to seek the wisdom of the Buddhas, in order to obtain the ten powers, in order to obtain the great fearlessnesses, in order to obtain the Buddhas’ dharmas of equality, in order to rescue all those in the world,** to save all living beings in the world. **In order to purify great kindness and compassion.** It is also **in order to obtain the wisdom without residue of the ten powers,** to obtain the Buddhas’ ten kinds of powers without residue, and **in order to purify all Buddhalands without obstruction,** to adorn and purify all Buddhas’ lands and cause them to be without obstruction. It is, furthermore, **in order to know all the three periods of time in a single thought,** to know the causes and effects of past, present, and future times, and **in order to turn the great dharma wheel without fear.** For those reasons they wish to listen to the Dharma-doors of the Ten Grounds.

**Sutra:**

**Disciples of the Buddha, when Bodhisattvas bring forth those kinds of thoughts, they put compassion foremost. Their wisdom increases. They are drawn in by good and clever expedients. They maintain most superior deep thoughts. They contemplate and distinguish the limitless powers of the Thus Come Ones. With the power of courage and the power of wisdom their unobstructed wisdom manifests. They have compliant and spontaneous wisdom. They can accept all Buddhas’ dharmas. They use wisdom to teach and transform. That is vast and great as the Dharma Realm, ultimately like empty space, to the exhaustion of the boundaries of the future.**

**Disciples of the Buddha, when Bodhisattvas first bring forth those kinds of thoughts, they immediately transcend the ground of ordinary people and enter the position of a Bodhisattva. They are born in the household of the Thus Come Ones. No one can pronounce any faults in their lineage. They abandon the worldly destinies and enter the way of world-transcendence. They obtain the dharmas of Bodhisattvas. They dwell in the places of Bodhisattvas. They enter into the sameness of the three periods of time. Within the Thus Come Ones’ family, they are certain to obtain unsurpassed Bodhi.**

**When Bodhisattvas dwell in dharmas such as those, it is called Dwelling on the Bodhisattvas’ Ground of Happiness, because of the connection with non-moving.**

**Commentary:**

**Disciples of the Buddha,** Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva again calls out “All you disciples of the Buddha, **when Bodhisattvas bring forth those kinds of thoughts,** then **they put compassion foremost.** Great compassion can relieve living beings so they separate from suffering and attain bliss. Bodhisattvas on the First Ground make the thought of great compassion their foremost work of primary importance. **Their wisdom increases.** If you cultivate the Dharmas of Bodhisattvas, then you will obtain the Bodhisattvas’ wisdom. The more you cultivate the practices of Bodhisattvas, the more your wisdom will increase. **They are drawn in by good and clever expedients.** You will also obtain the unimpeded eloquence of clever expedient methods in speaking Dharma. **They maintain most superior deep thoughts.** What they maintain are the most superior, subtle, and wonderful deep thoughts. **They contemplate and distinguish the limitless powers of the Thus Come Ones. With the power of courage and the power of wisdom.** The wisdom of their skill in contemplation discerns all states, and they have the power of very bravely and vigorously going forward in their cultivation. **Their unobstructed wisdom manifests.** It always manifests. No matter what state comes, it will not get in the way. **They have compliant and spontaneous wisdom,** natural wisdom and **they can accept all Buddhas’ dharmas.** They are able to receive all Dharm-doors spoken by all Buddhas. **They use wisdom to teach and transform** all living beings. **That is vast and great as the Dharma Realm.** Those states are as vast and as great as the Dharma Realm. **Ultimately like empty space, to the exhaustion of the boundaries of the future.** To the ends of the future time it is that way.

**Disciples of the Buddha, when Bodhisattvas,** great beings, **first bring forth those kinds of thoughts** of great compassion, **they immediately transcend the ground of ordinary people and enter the position of a Bodhisattva. They are born in the household of the Thus Come Ones. No one can pronounce any faults in their lineage.** There is no one who can find faults in the Bodhisattvas of the Buddha’s household. **They abandon the worldly destinies.** They leave behind the four evil destinies, those of asuras, hell-beings, hungry ghosts, and animals, **and enter the way of world-transcendence.** They certify to the attainment of the Way which transcends the three realms. **They obtain the dharmas of Bodhisattvas. They dwell in places of Bodhisattvas. They enter into the sameness of the three periods of time.** They obtain the wisdom to enter equally into the past, the present, and the future. **Within the Thus Come Ones’ family,** the lineage of the Buddha, **they are certain to obtain unsurpassed Bodhi,** the fruit of enlightenment, and there is nothing higher than that.

**When Bodhisattvas dwell in dharmas such as those, it is called Dwelling on the Bodhisattvas’ Ground of Happiness.** What is it called when Bodhisattvas dwell in such Dharmas as those? It is the First Ground. They attain the Bodhisattvas’ Ground of Happiness and become very happy. What is that? It is **because of the connection with non-moving.** Because they already have Samadhi-power, and this happiness is derived from Samadhi, they are joined with non-movement.

**Sutra:**

**Disciples of the Buddha, when Bodhisattvas dwell on the Ground of Happiness, they accomplish much happiness, much pure faith, much delight, much bliss, much elation, much enthusiasm, much courage, much freedom from contention, much absence of troubling, much absence of anger. Disciples of the Buddha, when Bodhisattvas dwell on the Ground of Happiness, they give rise to happiness because to they are mindful of all Buddhas. They give rise to happiness because they are mindful of all Buddhas’ dharmas. They give rise to happiness because they are mindful of all Bodhisattvas. They give rise to happiness because they are mindful of all Bodhisattvas’ practices. They give rise to happiness because they are mindful of the purity of all paramitas. They give rise to happiness because they are mindful of the supremacy of all Bodisattvas’ grounds. They give rise to happiness because they are mindful of all Bodhisattvas’ indestructibility. They give rise to happiness because they are mindful of the Thus Come Ones’ teaching and transforming of living beings. They give rise to happiness because they are mindful of the ability to benefit living beings.**

**Commentary:**

**Disciples of the Buddha,** calls out Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva again, saying, “All of you disciples of the Buddha, **when Bodhisattvas dwell on the Ground of Happiness they accomplish much happiness.** They have a great deal of happiness, and **much pure faith.** Their thoughts of pure faith also increase, and they have **much delight.** They produce more fondness for the Buddhadharma than you can possibly imagine. They have **much bliss.** At all times they fell very happy and serene. No matter where they are, they are blissful and there are no obstacles. It does not matter what situations may present themselves, they do not feel them to be obstacles; and no matter what causes for afflictions may arise, they never become afflicted. In all situations and circumstances, they are content at heart. They have **much elation.** They are always elated that they can hear the Buddhadharma and practice the Bodhisattva Way. They have **much enthusiasm.** They are always enthusiastic, always vigorous, and never lazy. They have **much courage.** They are always courageously vigorous. They have **much freedom from contention.** They never fight or argue with anyone. They have **much absence of troubling.** They never cause people to become afflicted, nor do they ever deliberately trouble to others or obstruct them in their cultivation. They have **much absence of anger.** The Bodhisattvas who have realized the First Ground, that of Happiness, never become angry no matter how you treat them.

**Disciples of the Buddha,** Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva calls out again saying, “All of you disciples of the Buddha, **when Bodhisattvas dwell on the Ground of Happiness, they give rise to happiness because to they are mindful of all Buddhas.** They constantly remember and think about all Buddhas, and for that reason they are happy. They are not like us common people who, day in and day out, are jealous and obstructive of one another singlemindedly concentrate on thinking of all Buddhas, they have no time to be jealous or obstructive. **They give rise to happiness because they are mindful of all Buddhas’ dharmas.** They also always remember all the Dharmas spoken by all Buddhas, and they practice in accord with those Dharmas; and so they are very happy. **They give rise to happiness because they are mindful of all Bodhisattvas.** Not only are they mindful of the Buddhas and their Dharmas, they are mindful of the Sangha, too. They always recollect all the sagely Sangha members, the great Bodhisattvas of the ten directions and the three periods of time, and so they are very happy. If we cultivators of the Way could at all times, be mindful of the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha, when could we have time to be jealous or obstructive? We would never have the time to spend looking at others’ faults. We would always be seeing out own faults, returning the light and illumining inwards.

**They give rise to happiness because they are mindful of all Bodhisattvas’ practices.** They are also always thinking of the practices cultivated by all Great Bodhisattvas. Of all the great Bodhisattvas, the Buddhas of the future, some cultivate the doors of the practice of giving, others of holding precepts, others that of patience, others that of vigor, others dhyana-Samadhi, and others wisdom. The Bodhisattvas cultivate those various kinds of practices, the Six Paramitas and the ten thousand practices. Therefore, when Bodhisttvas certify to the Ground of Happiness, they also have the opportunity to cultivate all of those Dharma-doors, and because of that they become very happy.

**They give rise to happiness because they are mindful of the supremacy of all Bodisattvas’ grounds.** They are always thinking of the supremacy of the positions of all Bodhisattvas, and so they become happy. **They give rise to happiness because they are mindful of all Bodhisattvas’ indestructibility.** They think of the Bodhisattvas’ realization of the Three Irreversibilities -- in thought, in position, and in conduct -- and how no heavenly demons or externalist ways can destroy them. Therefore, they become very happy. **They give rise to happiness because they are mindful of the Thus Come Ones’ teaching and transforming of living beings.** They always remember and are mindful of how the Buddhas always compassionately take care of all living beings, causing them to end suffering and attain bliss, and so they become very happy. **They give rise to happiness because they are mindful of the ability to benefit living beings.** They are mindful of being able to cause all living beings identically to obtain benefits of the greatest kind, causing all living beings to hear the Dharma and be saved and end birth and death -- these doors of practice which are most beneficial to living beings. Bodhisattvas, once they can cultivate those various kinds of activities, can obtain the highest kinds of causes and conditions, and for that reason they become very happy.

Sutra:

**They give rise to happiness; because they are mindful of entry into all Thus Come Ones’ wisdom and expedients.**

**They also have this thought, ‘I give rise to happiness, because I have turned away from and left all worldly states. I give rise to happiness, because I draw near to all Buddhas. I give rise to happiness, because I have left all grounds of ordinary people far behind. I give rise to happiness, because I draw the grounds of wisdom. I give rise to happiness, because I have eternally cut off all evil destinies. I give rise to happiness, because I am a place of reliance for all living beings. I give rise to happiness, because I see all Thus Come Ones. I give rise to happiness, because I give rise to the experiences of all Buddhas. I give rise to happiness, because I enter into sameness with all Bodhisattvas. I give rise to happiness, because I have left all alarming, hair-raising, and other such experiences far behind.**

**And why? Once these Bodhisattvas attain the Ground of Happiness, they leave all fears behind. That is to say: fear of not staying alive, fear of a bad reputation, fear of death, fear of the evil destinies, fear of the awesome virtue of the great assembly. All such fears are eternally left behind.**

**Commentary:**

**They give rise to happiness; because they are mindful of entry into all Thus Come Ones’ wisdom and expedients.** The Bodhisattvas who realize the Ground of Happiness have thoughts, but the thoughts are pure. We living beings also have thoughts, but they are defiled. Our every thought involves the five desires: wealth, sex, fame, food, and sleep. What Bodhisattvas think of are the pure states of the Buddhas, the Dharma, and the Sangha, along with the Six Paramitas and the ten thousand conducts. Because they know, they have already entered into the Thus Come Ones’ wisdom and obtained all kinds of expedients, they become very happy.

**They also have this thought.** The Bodhisattvas who have certified to the position of the s Ground of Happiness also think in this way, saying **‘I give rise to happiness, because I have turned away from and left all worldly states.**

Turning the common into the sagely,
Turning confusion into enlightenment,
Turning away from defilement,
All returning to purity.

Because I have turned all worldly states away, therefore, I have become very happy.

You are not aware of it, but those of you here in this Bodhimanda, even though you have false thinking, are far better off than those people outside. If you go outside, what your eyes see and what your ears hear are all unclean dharmas. But, inside the Bodhimanda, although you have false thoughts, nonetheless, your self-nature is still pure. That is what is known as turning away from and leaving behind all worldly states; and that is why they become very happy**.**

**I give rise to happiness, because I draw near to all Buddhas.** Bodhisattvas of the First Ground are always able to see the Buddhas and draw near them, and they are very happy. **I give rise to happiness, because I have left all grounds of ordinary people far behind.** The common person’s thoughts and what he or she pays attention to are not what Bodhisattvas think about or pay attention to. Conversely, what ordinary people do not think of and pay no attention to is precisely what Bodhisattvas whish to study and to think of. That is how they are able to leave the position of ordinary people far behind and turn the common into the sagely. **I give rise to happiness, because I draw the grounds of wisdom.** To leave the ordinary is to leave the grounds of ignorance and stupidity far behind. To draw near good, wise advisors is to draw near the grounds of wisdom. For that reason they become happy. **I give rise to happiness, because I have eternally cut off all evil destinies.** Bodhisattvas who certify to the First Ground, the Ground of Happiness, cut off all of the bad paths and never again fall into the four evil destinies. It may happen that they make a vow to go to the four evil destinies to teach and transform living beings, but that is another matter. **I give rise to happiness, because I am a place of reliance for all living beings.** All living beings depend upon the Bodhisattvas, which makes the Bodhisattvas very happy.

**I give rise to happiness, because I see all Thus Come Ones.** They can see the Buddhas all the time, and so they are happy. **I give rise to happiness, because I give rise to the experiences of all Buddhas. I give rise to happiness, because I enter into sameness with all Bodhisattvas.** They are in nature the same as all Bodhisattvas who cultivate the Bodhisattva Way, and so they become happy. **I give rise to happiness, because I have left all alarming, hair-raising, and other such experiences far behind.** They are able to leave far behind all fearsome and terrifying experiences of the sort which make the hair on one’s head stand on end or give one goose bumps. “And other such experiences” refers to the Five Fearsome Matters, which are explained below.

**And why?** What are the reasons? **Once these Bodhisattvas attain the Ground of Happiness, they leave all fears behind.** They are not afraid of anything, because they have seen through everything and put everything down. People, however, are afraid of this and afraid of that -- afraid of everything. That is due to not having cultivated and certified to the Ground of Happiness. Once you certified to the Ground of Happiness, with nothing to fear, what is there to be afraid of? If it comes to dying, just die and be done with it. What is there to fear? What are all the fears that they have left behind? **That is to say: fear of a bad reputation.** If someone gives me a bad name, what do I do? I get really scared and wonder how I can get my reputation back. That is the fear of people giving you a bad name. Are you afraid of someone saying that you are bad? If someone says that you are a thief, are you in terror? What if they say you rob, kill… don’t keep the precepts? Do you feat their saying that you lie and take intoxicants? Those are all examples of bad reputations. **Fear of death,** then there is the fear of dying. If you are about to die, you become panic stricken. **Fear of the evil destinies,** there is the further fear of falling into the three evil paths. However, when Bodhisttvas certify to the Ground of Happiness, they do not die and they are unable to fall into the three evil destinies. Therefore, they are unafraid.

They also have no **fear of the awesome virtue of the great assembly.** The awesome virtue of the Great Assembly refers to several hundred or several thousand -- at any rate, a lot of people -- who invite you to lecture. When you get there, you can’t say a word. That is fear of the awesome virtue of the Great Assemble, which makes you so scared you don’t dare speak. Furthermore, you may be wondering if what you are about to say will be right or not. You keep thinking, figuring to speak when you get it clearer; but the more you think, the worse it gets. **All such fears are eternally left behind.** There are no such fears as those just described. All of them are completely left behind, forever. Therefore, your being afraid of this and being afraid of that is due to not cultivating. If you cultivate, what are you afraid of? You do not fear a thing. From the time I was small, I have never been afraid of anything. I used to go climbing in the mountains where there were all kinds of wild beasts: wolves, bears, panthers, leopards. I made friends with them and played with them and had no fear. I have never been afraid from the time I was born.

**SUTRA:**

**And why? It is because these Bodhisattvas are free from the thought of self. They do not even cherish their own bodies, how much the less wealth and possessions. Therefore, they have no fear of not staying alive. They do not seek offerings from others, but only give to other living beings. Therefore, they have no fear of a bad reputation. They have left the view of self far behind, and have no thought of self. Therefore, they have no fear of death. They themselves know that after death they certainly will not be apart from the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Therefore, they have no fear of the evil destinies. Their intent and inclinations in all worlds are unequalled, how much the less surpassed. Therefore, they have no fear of the awesome virtue of the great assembly. Bodhisattvas in that way leave all alarming, hair-raising experiences far behind.**

**Disciples of the Buddha, these Bodhisattvas take great compassion as foremost. They have vast, great intent and inclinations which cannot be destroyed. They intensely and diligently cultivate all good-roots, which become accomplished.**

**Commentary:**

Why do Bodhisattvas have no fear of not staying alive, no fear of a bad reputation, no fear of death, no fear of the evil destinies, and no fear of the great assembly? It is because they have left all alarming, hair-raising experiences far behind. **And why?** Why is it like that? **It is because these Bodhisattvas** who bring forth the thought for Bodhi, practice the Bodhisattva Way, and certify to the Ground of Happiness, **are free from the thought of self.** They have no self. Not only that, they never think about whether they have a self or not. **They do not even cherish their own bodies.** Their attitude towards their bodies is that they have already given them away to living beings to serve and work for them. Therefore, they are not selfish about their bodies, nor do they seek benefits for them, **how much the less wealth and possessions.** Since they do not even cherish their own bodies, how much the less do they cherish things external to the body? They even less cherish gold, silver, jewels, countries, cities, wives, and children. They have attained real freedom. **Therefore, they have no fear of not staying alive.** They do not scheme for themselves. They are not afraid of their own lives being in jeopardy. They are not afraid of starving to death. Consequently they don’t have the fear that they will not stay alive.

**They do not seek offerings from others, but only give to other living beings.** Bodhisattvas don’t want to benefit themselves and aren’t selfish, and so they seek nothing. As it is said:

When you reach the point of seeking nothing,
Then you have no worries.

The reason you have worries is that you have greed and longing for something. Bodhisattvas don’t long for anything. They don’t seek fame or fortune, sex, sleep, or food. These Bodhisattvas have already seen these five objects of desire as flavorless, and so they are not greedy for good offerings. They don’t say, ‘who will be good to me and give me some fine food, some nice clothes, some things that are useful or pleasing to look at?’ They concentrate on giving to other living beings. They specialize in the practice of giving. Whatever they have, they give away to other living beings. **Therefore, they have no fear of a bad reputation.** They are not greedy for anything, nor do they fear taking a loss or not getting a bargain for themselves, and so it is not important to them if they have a good name or not. Bodhisattvas are incapable to being greedy for a false name or an empty title, nor do they constantly put up a false front so that people will praise them. Because Bodhisattvas have gone beyond good and bad, if you say they’re good, they aren’t pleased, and if you call them by a bad name, they don’t get upset. That is what it means to have no fear of a bad name.

They are not afraid of people slandering them. I regularly tell you that, although I am not a Bodhisattva, still I am not afraid of people slandering me. They are afraid they won’t have anything to eat, and so they talk about what’s wrong with other people. Their taking about others’ faults is designed to show what is right about themselves. That is why I’m always telling you that if people can get food to eat by slandering me, then I am, indirectly, giving it to them. If they can get people to give them food to eat, or if they gain some other advantage by slandering me a little, then I have indirectly given it to them. As long as it is to their benefit, let them slander me all they want. I’m not afraid of it.

**They have left the view of self far behind, and have no thought of self. Therefore, they have no fear of death.** Bodhisattvas have no self, no ego, and so they have no view of self. Without even a view, they also have no thought of self and are not looking out for themselves, thinking, ‘What’s in it for me?’ Therefore, they do not fear death. If they have no self, then who dies? That is why they do not fear death, because **they themselves know that after death they certainly will not be apart from the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.** They know they won’t fall into the hells or turn into hungry ghosts, or become animals. Because all they’ve done is practice the Bodhisattva Way, they certainly will not be separated from the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. **Therefore, they have no fear of the evil destinies.** Because they know they won’t fall into the three evil destinies, they have no fear of becoming hell-beings, hungry ghosts, or animals.

**Their intent and inclinations,** the vows and what the Bodhisattvas like, **in all worlds are unequalled.** Their wishes and their purpose are not equaled by anything in all worlds, **how much the less surpassed. Therefore, they have no fear of the awesome virtue of the great assembly.** They have no fear of and are not scared of the Great Assembly’s awesome virtue, because these Bodhisattvas know that they surpass the Great Assembly.

You may ask, “If they think that way, then aren’t Bodhisattvas very arrogant, thinking that no one in the world can compare with them?” The Bodhisattvas aren’t thinking this. It’s Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva speaking the Flower Adornment Sutra and explaining the kinds of states certified to by Bodhisattvas on the Ten Grounds. The Bodhisattvas don’t say it of themselves. Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva is describing the kind of resultant position held by Bodhisattvas one the Ground of Happiness. It is definitely not the case that the Bodhisattvas arrogantly consider that no one in the world can compare to them. It’s simply that when they speak Dharma and explain Sutras within the Great Assembly, they are very much at ease and unafraid.

**Bodhisattvas in that way leave all alarming, hair-raising experiences far behind.** That is how Bodhisattvas leave behind the five fearsome matters:

Fear of not staying alive,
Fear of a bad reputation,
Fear of death,
Fear of the four evil destinies,
Fear of the awesome virtue of the Great Assembly.

Those are all experiences which are frightening and make one’s hair stand on end. **Disciples of the Buddha,** Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva calls out again, “All of you disciples of the Buddha, **these Bodhisattvas take great compassion as foremost.** Compassion can pull one out of suffering. Being greatly compassionate is their most important duty. **They have vast, great intent and inclinations which cannot be destroyed.** No heavenly demons or those of externalist ways could destroy, obstruct, or ruin them. **They intensely and diligently cultivate,** working harder every day at developing **all good-roots, which become accomplished.** They are able to perfect and bring to accomplishment the roots of Bodhi. That is why these Bodhisattvas have none of the five types of fears.

All of you should use your own wisdom to contemplate the principles I have spoken. If they are reasonable, cultivate according to them. If they are not reasonable, you can forget them. That is:

Select the good and repeat it.

If it’s not right, then change it. Don’t follow blindly thinking that whatever I say has to be right. In that way you yourself will discover your own inherent wisdom, and the true principles that are yours to start with. Therefore, people who cultivate absolutely cannot follow blindly. If something is not right, it doesn’t matter who said it, you cannot believe it. If something is right, then no matter who said it, we should believe it.

**Sutra:**

**That is, through increasing faith; through augmenting pure faith; through pure understanding; through decisive faith; through becoming sympathetic; through accomplishing great kindness; through having no weariness or laziness of mind; through adornment with repentance and reform; through accomplishing forbearance; through respectfully heeding the Buddhas’ instructions; through cultivating and accumulating good roots day and night without becoming tired; through drawing near good knowing advisors; through constant delight in the Dharma; through seeking learning without satiation; through properly contemplating in accord with the Dharma one has heard; through having no reliance or attachment of mind; through not hankering after profit, fame, or respect; through not seeking the necessities of life; through bringing forth the jewel-like thought without satiation; through seeking the ground of all knowledge; through seeking the Thus Come Ones’ power, fearlessnesses, and the Dharmas special to a Buddha.**

**Commentary:**

When the Bodhisattva of the Ten Grounds has certified to the Ground of Happiness, he is happy all the time, and all of the good roots that he diligently cultivates very quickly are brought to maturity. **That is, through increasing faith;** he has faith which does not decrease but only increases. **Through augmenting pure faith;** at the beginning, although he had faith, it was still defiled, but as his faith increases it becomes purer day by day. Eventually he is pure, and has returned to the origin and gone back to the source. **Through pure understanding;** furthermore, he understands that the reason he has obtained that state of purity is because his faith has increased. **Through decisive faith;** he never doubts, but absolutely believes in the Buddhas of the ten directions, in the Dharma they have spoken, and that all of the sagely Sangha members of the ten directions are his friends.

**Through becoming sympathetic;** he himself is one of the Three Jewels, and so he wishes to become sympathetic towards living beings and save all of them. **Through accomplishing great kindness;** his thoughts are very kind and compassionate:

Kindness can bestow happiness;
Compassion can pull one out of suffering.

**Through having no weariness or laziness of mind;** his resolve to cultivate the Buddhadharma is more vigorous and more courageous every day. He is absolutely never lazy or tired.

**Through adornment with repentance and reform;**

Repenting of previous offenses,
Reforming future mistakes.

He uses all of his merit and virtue of repentance and reform to adorn the countries of the ten directions. **Through accomplishing forbearance;** he brings the Paramita of Patience to accomplishment. No matter what people say, he is able to endure it all. Whether things go against him or for him, he does not become intractable and fight for victory. He does not contend or argue with people. **Through respectfully heeding the Buddhas’ instructions; through cultivating and accumulating good roots day and night without becoming tired.**

**Through drawing near good knowing advisors;** he always likes to draw near great, good, and wise advisors, and is able to offer up his conduct in accord with their teachings. **Through constant delight in the Dharma; through seeking learning without satiation;** he always wants to increase his wisdom. He doesn’t say, ‘I’ve studied enough. I understand everything.’ Bodhisattvas don’t think that way. They at all times diligently cultivate precepts, samadhi, and wisdom, and put to rest greed, hatred, and stupidity. **Through properly contemplating in accord with the Dharma one has heard;** it is through properly contemplating the proper Dharma that he himself has heard in the presence of all Buddhas. He is constantly able to contemplate the true mark of all dharmas.

**Through having no reliance or attachment of mind;** within his mind there is nothing to which he is attached or upon which he relies. He is not attached to self or to dharmas. **Through not hankering after profit, fame, or respect;** he is unable to be greedy and say, ‘I have Dharma protectors. I have a lot of gains.’ Most people want to be believed in order to become wealthy and famous. Bodhisattvas don’t hanker after that, are not attached to that, and do not seek it; nor do they want people to be respectful to them. **Through not seeking the necessities of life;** he also does not seek out all the things that sustain life. **Through bringing forth the jewel-like thought without satiation;** he brings forth the jewel-like thought – similar to precious jewels and very valuable – without weariness. He could never grow tired or think he has had enough. That is, he himself cultivates and seeks jewel-like thought – the thought for Bodhi – which is as solid as vajra.

**Through seeking the ground of all knowledge;** he wants to attain all-knowledge and all-wisdom. **Through seeking the Thus Come Ones’ power, fearlessnesses, and the Dharmas special to a Buddha.** He seeks and obtains the benefits of the Ten Powers, the Four Fearlessnesses, and the Eighteen Dharmas Special to a Buddha, which are not shared by those of the Two Vehicles.

**Sutra:**

**Through seeking all Paramitas, Dharmas that aid the way; through freedom from all flattery and deceit; through being able to practice as is spoken; through always guarding true speech; through not defiling the Thus Come Ones’ household; through not renouncing the Bodhisattva precepts; through bringing forth the thought for all knowledge, unmoving like the king of mountains; through not abandoning all worldly matters, yet accomplishing the Way of world-transcendence; through accumulating assisting Bodhi-share Dharmas without weariness; through constantly seeking the superiorly superior, especially supreme way.**

**Commentary:**

**Through seeking all Paramitas,** the Bodhisattva who cultivates the practices of a Bodhisattva seeks all of the Paramitas, **Dharmas that aid the way;** those methods of assistance to the way. **Through freedom from all flattery and deceit;** he is also free of all flattery and deceptions and does not fawn upon the rich or tell lies. **Through being able to practice as is spoken;** he can really cultivate the Dharmas the Buddhas’ explain. **Through always guarding true speech;** he is watchful of his own speech to be sure it is true, not false, and he never tells any lies. **Through not defiling the Thus Come Ones’ household;** he himself has been born as a disciple of the Buddha. This Bodhisattva is the most pure and lofty kind of person, and so he is incapable of defiling the Bodhimanda. **Through not renouncing the Bodhisattva precepts;** he could not cast aside the precepts and regulations that a Bodhisattva should cultivate. **Through bringing forth the thought for all knowledge, unmoving like the king of mountains;** he brings forth the resolve for all-wisdom, which is like Mount Sumeru and never moves. **Through not abandoning all worldly matters, yet accomplishing the Way of world-transcendence;** one does not need to put down all worldly matters to be able to realize dharmas for transcending the world. **Through accumulating assisting Bodhi-share Dharmas without weariness;** he could not at times say, ‘I’ve already accumulated and perfected enough of these dharmas.’ He is incapable of thinking that way. **Through constantly seeking the superiorly superior, especially supreme way;** he always seeks and hopes to accomplish the most superior among the superior, most especially supreme Way – which is constantly to seek the Buddha Way.

**Sutra:**

**Disciples of the Buddha, when the Bodhisattva accomplishes such purification and regulation of the grounds that is called Securely Dwelling on the Bodhisattva’s Ground of Happiness. Disciples of the Buddha, the Bodhisattva who dwells upon this Ground of Happiness is able to accomplish such great vows, such great vigor, and such great efficacy. That is, he brings forth vast, great, pure, decisive understanding and uses all kinds’ of objects as offerings to worship and make offerings to all Buddhas, omitting none – vast and great as the Dharma Realm, ultimate as empty space, exhausting the boundaries of the future, throughout all numbers of kalpas, without cease.**

**He further makes great vows, vowing to receive all Buddhas’ Dharma wheel, vowing to gathering all Buddhas’ Bodhi, vowing to protect all Buddhas’ teachings, vowing to maintain all Buddhas’ Dharmas – vast and great as the Dharma Realm, ultimate as empty space, exhausting the boundaries of the future, throughout all numbers of kalpas, without cease.**

**He further makes great vows, vowing that in all worlds, when a Buddha appears in the world, descending from the Tushita Heaven, entering the womb, dwelling in the womb, being born, leaving home, accomplishing the Way, speaking Dharma, and manifesting Nirvana, he will go to all of them, draw near and make offerings, act as the head of the assembly, and receive and practice the Proper Dharma, in every place at one time turning – vast and great as the Dharma Realm, ultimate as empty space, exhausting the boundaries of the future, throughout all numbers of kalpas, without cease.**

**Commentary:**

**Disciples of the Buddha, when the Bodhisattva accomplishes such purification and regulation of the grounds,** when the Bodhisattva practices the Grounds as was previously described, he purifies and cultivates all the Dharma-doors of the Ten Grounds, and **that is called Securely Dwelling on the Bodhisattva’s Ground of Happiness.** That is what is meant by a Bodhisattva’s always certifying to the fruit position of the Gound of Happiness. **Disciples of the Buddha, the Bodhisattva who dwells upon this Ground of Happiness** when a Bodhisattva cultivates and certifies to this Ground of Happiness, he **is able to accomplish such great vows.** What sorts of great vows? That is to say, **such great vigor,** what most people are unable to do, he can do, which is called great vigor. **Such great efficacy,** what most people cannot accomplish, he can accomplish, which is called great efficacy. **That is, he brings forth vast, great, pure, decisive understanding and uses all kinds’ of objects as offerings to worship and make offerings to all Buddhas, omitting none.** He makes offerings to all Buddhas, no matter which Buddha it is -- **vast and great as the Dharma Realm.** How great is the dharma of making offerings? It is as vast and great as the Dharma Realm. How ultimate is it? **Ultimate as empty space, exhausting the boundaries of the future,** it is that way not just one time; to the exhaustion of the limits of future kalpas it is that way, **throughout all numbers of kalpas,** in all numbers of eons, **without cease.** He never stops and rests.

**He further makes great vows, vowing to receive all Buddhas’ Dharma wheel.** He vows to receive the wheel of Dharma turned by all Buddhas and to continue to turn it. **Vowing to gathering all Buddhas’ Bodhi,** he vows to constantly cultivate the Enlightenment of all Buddhas, and to gather in, maintain, and protect it. He makes a further vow, **vowing to protect all Buddhas’ teachings.** He further makes a vow, **vowing to maintain all Buddhas’ Dharmas.** He vows to constantly receive and uphold the Dharma spoken by all Buddhas **– vast and great as the Dharma Realm.** This great Dharma is as vast and treat as the Dharma Realm, and this Dharma is cultivated to the ultimate, which is as **ultimate as empty space, exhausting the boundaries of the future, throughout all numbers of kalpas, without cease.** In all the numbers of aeons, at no time does he rest.

**He further makes great vows, vowing that in all worlds, when a Buddha appears in the world,** if all the places where a Buddha is appearing in the world: **descending from the Tushita Heaven** to be born; and afterwards **entering the womb, dwelling in the womb, being born** into the world, and then **leaving home** are part of his vows. Then, **accomplishing the Way, speaking Dharma, and manifesting Nirvana –** he will manifest those Eight Marks. **He will go to all of them, draw near and make offerings,** and **act as the head of the assembly.** Although he is still in his mother’s womb, the Bodhisattva’s basic substance still goes to all Buddhas’ Way Places, draws near all Buddhas, makes offerings to all Buddhas, and universally acts as the head of the assemblies in all Buddhas’ Way Places. **And receive and practice the Proper Dharma,** there he constantly cultivates and practices the Proper Dharma Eye Treasury. **In every place at one time turning,** in all places at one and the same time he turns the great Dharma Wheel. The **vast and great** Dharma, again, is as great **as the Dharma Realm.** Again it is **ultimate as empty space,** and it also is **exhausting the boundaries of the future, throughout all numbers of kalpas, without cease.** There is no time of rest.

**Sutra:**

**He further makes great vows, vowing that the Bodhisattva practices: vast, great, limitless, unbreakable, and unmixed, including all Paramitas, purifying and regulating all Grounds, characterized by generality, characterized by particularity, characterized by identity, characterized by difference, characterized by production, and characterized by extinction – all the Bodhisattva practices – be spoken as they truly are, to teach and transform all, causing them to accept and practice, and their thought to increase and grow – vast and great as the Dharma Realm, ultimate as empty space, exhausting the boundaries of the future, throughout all numbers of kalpas, without cease.**

**He further makes great vows, vowing that all the realms of living beings: those with form, without form, with thought, without thought, neither with thought nor without thought, egg-born, womb-born, moisture-born, transformational born, bound in the three realms, who have entered the six destinies, in all such places of rebirth, comprised of name and form – all such categories – I shall teach and transform, causing them to enter the Buddhadharma, causing them once and for all to cut off all worldly destinies, and causing them to dwell in the way of all wisdom – vast and great as the Dharma Realm, ultimate as empty space, exhausting the boundaries of the future, throughout all numbers of kalpas, without cease.**

**Commentary:**

**He further makes great vows,** the Bodhisattva vows again, **vowing that the Bodhisattva practices: vast, great, limitless, unbreakable, and unmixed.** It is not known how many Bodhisattva practices there are, and no heavenly demons or those of externalist paths are able to destroy them; nor is there evil mixed in with the good. This is **including all Paramitas,** as well as **purifying and regulating all Grounds** – that is, the Dharma-doors of the Ten Grounds. All of these are **characterized by generality, characterized by particularity, characterized by identity, characterized by difference, characterized by production, and characterized by extinction,** the six characteristics. The Bodhisattva vows that **all the Bodhisattva practices be spoken as they truly are, to teach and transform all** living beings, **causing them to accept and practice** them. They accept these Dharma doors and cultivate in accord with them. **And their thought to increase and grow,** the Bodhisattva enables living beings’ thought for Bodhi to grow greater every day. These vows are **vast and great as the Dharma Realm, ultimate as empty space, exhausting the boundaries of the future, throughout all numbers of kalpas, without cease** at no time does he rest.

**He further makes great vows, vowing that all the realms of living beings,** whether those beings are **those with form, without form, with thought, without thought, neither with thought nor without thought,** and, he also vows on behalf of being, **egg-born, womb-born, moisture-born,** and those **transformational born.** All the different categories of living beings are **bound in the three realms:** the Desire Realm, the Form Realm, and the Formless Realm. He also vows on behalf of those **who have entered the six destinies.** They have gone off to rebirth among the six paths, going **in all such places of rebirth** and being **comprised of name and form.** The Bodhisattva vows that **all such categories – I shall teach and transform.** I shall teach and transform them, **causing them to enter the Buddhadharma, causing them once and for all to cut off all worldly destinies, and causing them to dwell in the way of all wisdom.** The Way of the wisdom of the One of All Wisdom – this, too, is **vast and great as the Dharma Realm, ultimate as empty space, exhausting the boundaries of the future, throughout all numbers of kalpas, without cease.**

**Sutra:**

**He further makes great vows, vowing that all worlds: vast, great, limitless; gross, subtle, disarrayed, upside-down, orderly; whether entering, moving, or going out; with distinctions like Shakra’s net; in the ten directions of limitless dissimilar varieties – his wisdom will understand them all, with direct knowledge and perception – vast and great as the Dharma Realm, ultimate as empty space, exhausting the boundaries of the future, throughout all numbers of kalpas, without cease.**

**Commentary:**

**He further makes great vows;** the Bodhisattva makes another great vow. He vows, **vowing that all worlds,** whether upwards or inverted worlds, rectangular or square worlds – all worlds -- are **vast, great, limitless.** One does not know how many there are. Among them are **gross** ones and **subtle** ones, and those that are **disarrayed** with no order to them, as well as ones that are **upside-down.** There are **orderly** ones, all well-arranged and according to the rules. **Whether entering,** perhaps they are entering. **Moving,** constantly in motion; **or going out** – they may be undergoing a kind of transformation -- **with distinctions like Shakra’s net.** Just like the net banner of Shakra, Lord of gods, some are horizontal, some perpendicular, with all kinds of differences. **In the ten directions of limitless dissimilar varieties** – each direction has its own shapes and appearances, all not the same. **His wisdom will understand them all.** The wisdom of the Bodhisattva will understand the shapes and appearances of those worlds, **with direct knowledge and perception.** His empirical wisdom of direct perception will understand all of those dissimilarities -- **vast and great as the Dharma Realm, ultimate as empty space, exhausting the boundaries of the future, throughout all numbers of kalpas, without cease.**

**Sutra:**

**He further makes great vows, vowing that all countries enter one country, and that one country enter all countries; that limitless Buddhalands universally be purified; that light and multitudes of ornaments adorn them; that they be free from all afflictions; that they accomplish the way of purity; that limitless wise living being fill them; that they universally enter all Buddhas’ vast, great states; that they appear in accordance with the minds of living beings, causing them all to be happy – vast and great as the Dharma Realm, ultimate as empty space, exhausting the boundaries of the future, throughout all numbers of kalpas, without cease.**

**He further makes great vows, vowing to be connected with all Bodhisattvas in resolution and practice, without resentment or jealousy; to accumulate all good roots; to be of one and the same condition will all Bodhisattvas; constantly to assemble together and never leave each other; to make appear at will various kinds of Buddha bodies; always to bear in his own mind the ability to know all Thus Come Ones’ states, their awesome powers, and their wisdom; to attain to irreversibility and spiritual penetrations according to intent; freely to roam to all worlds and appear in all assemblies; universally to enter all places of birth; to accomplish the inconceivable great vehicle; to cultivate the practices of Bodhisattvas – vast and great as the Dharma Realm, ultimate as empty space, exhausting the boundaries of the future, throughout all numbers of kalpas, without cease.**

**Commentary:**

**He further makes great vows,** the Bodhisattva makes yet another great vows, **vowing that all countries enter one country and that one country enter all countries.** This is mutual fusion without obstruction, mutual identity, and mutual entry. He vows **that limitless Buddhalands universally be purified** and **that light and multitudes of ornaments adorn them.** He vows **that they be free from all afflictions –** without the three poisons of greed, hatred, and stupidity. He vows **that they accomplish the way of purity,** that they all diligently cultivate precepts, samadhi, and wisdom. He vows **that limitless wise living being fill them.** All Bodhisattvas have limitless wisdom, and the living beings fill up the lands. He vows **that they universally enter all Buddhas’ vast, great states** – that they will all be able to realize the states which all Buddhas have. He further vows **that they appear in accordance with the minds of living beings** – that is, that they, constantly in accord with all the thoughts of living beings, will manifest all states, thereby **causing them all to be happy.** His vows to cause all living beings to become happy is **vast and great as the Dharma Realm, ultimate as empty space, exhausting the boundary of the future, throughout all numbers of kalpas, without cease.**

**He further makes great vows;** the Bodhisattva makes another great vow, **vowing to be connected with all Bodhisattvas in resolution and practice.** That is, that he will always cultivate together with all Bodhisattvas, **without resentment or jealousy.** While cultivating, they will have mutual regard and support for one another, not mutual dislike or resentment. Nor will they have any thoughts of jealousy. He vows **to accumulate all good roots** and **to be of one and the same condition will all Bodhisattvas** – that is, to be the same and identical with all Bodhisattvas. He vows that all Bodhisattvas will **constantly to assemble together and never leave each other.** They will never be separated from each other. He vows **to make appear at will** – according to his mind’s wishes – **various kinds of Buddha bodies; always to bear in his own mind the ability to know all Thus Come Ones’ states.** In his own mind, he himself knows all the states of all Buddhas, the Thus Come Ones, **their awesome powers, and their wisdom.** He vows **to attain to irreversibility** in spiritual penetrations and in wisdom, **and** to attain **spiritual penetrations according to intent.** He vows to have spiritual penetrations of inexhaustibly multiple transformations in accordance with his mind’s intent. He vows **freely to roam to all worlds and appear in all assemblies,** to go to all the multitudes of Dharma Assemblies. He vows **universally to enter all places of birth,** to go to all places where there are beings, and **to accomplish the inconceivable great vehicle.** He intends to accomplish all the inconceivable Great Vehicle Dharma-doors. He vows **to cultivate the practices of Bodhisattvas** – the ten thousand practices -- **vast and great as the Dharma Realm, ultimate as empty space, exhausting the boundaries of the future, throughout all numbers of kalpas, without cease.**

**Sutra:**

**He further makes great vows, vowing to mount the irreversible wheel; to cultivate the Bodhisattva practices; that the karmas of body, speech, and mind not be in vain; that anyone who briefly sees him will then certainly become fixed in the Buddhdharma; that anyone who briefly hears the sound of his voice will then obtain jewel-like wisdom; that anyone who has just brought forth pure faith will then forever cut off afflictions; to obtain a body like the great medicine king tree; to obtain a body like the as-you-will jewel; to cultivate all Bodhisattvas’ practices – vast and great as the Dharma Realm, ultimate as empty space, exhausting the boundaries of the future, throughout all numbers of kalpas, without cease.**

**He further makes great vows, vowing within all worlds to achieve annuttarasamyaksambodhi, without leaving the place of the tip of a single hair; in every place of a hair-tip, to make appear being born, leaving home, going to the Way Place, accomplishing proper enlightenment, turning the Dharma Wheel, and entering Nirvana; to obtain the Buddha’s state and the power of great wisdom; in thought after thought, in accord with the minds of living beings, to display the accomplishment of Buddhahood, and cause them to obtain still extinction; with every sambodhi to know all Dharma Realms are characterized by Nirvana; with a single sound to speak Dharma and cause living beings to be delighted at heart; to display entry into great Nirvana, yet not cut off the Bodhisattva conduct; to display the ground of great wisdom, and the establishment of all Dharmas; with the penetration of Dharma wisdom, the penetration of spiritual fulfillments, the penetration of illusions, and comfortable changes and transformations, completely to fill the Dharma Realm – vast and great as the Dharma Realm, ultimate as empty space, exhausting the boundaries of the future, throughout all numbers of kalpas, without cease.**

**Commentary:**

**He**, the Bodhisattva, **further makes great vows, vowing to mount the irreversible wheel** and **to cultivate the Bodhisattva practices** – the Dharma doors that Bodhisattvas practice. He vows **that the karmas of body, speech, and mind** all be pure, and that they **not be in vain.** None of them can create bad karma; they have not the slightest bit of offense. He vows **that anyone who briefly sees him will then certainly become fixed in the Buddhdharma.** If someone sees this Bodhisattva for a short interval of time, he or she will certainly plant good roots and understand the Buddhadharma. He vows **that anyone who briefly hears the sound of his voice will then obtain jewel-like wisdom.** He or she attains to wisdom that is like a jewel. Again, he vows **that anyone who has just brought forth pure faith will then forever cut off afflictions.** Afflictions will be gone. He vows **to obtain a body like the great medicine king tree** which can cure all living beings’ illnesses, and **to obtain a body like the as-you-will jewel.** He vows **to cultivate all Bodhisattvas’ practices** – the Dharma-doors that Bodhisattvas cultivate -- **vast and great as the Dharma Realm, ultimate as empty space, exhausting the boundaries of the future, throughout all numbers of kalpas, without cease.**

**He further makes great vows, vowing within all worlds to achieve annuttarasamyaksambodhi,** the unsurpassed, right and equal, proper enlightenment, **without leaving the place of the tip of a single hair.** Right on the tip of a hair he accomplishes right and equal, proper enlightenment. **In every place of a hair-tip,** in all the places of hair-tips, in every single hair-tip, he vows **to make appear being born,** descending from the Tushita Heaven, dwelling in the womb, and being born; **leaving home, going to the Way Place,** the Bodhimanda; **accomplishing proper enlightenment,** Right and Equal, Proper Enlightenment, that is, becoming a Buddha; **turning the Dharma Wheel, and entering Nirvana,** Parinirvana – the various events of the Eight Marks of Accomplishing the Way. He vows **to obtain the Buddha’s state and the power of great wisdom.** He vows **in thought after thought,** within each instant of thought, **in accord with the minds of living beings, to display the accomplishment of Buddhahood, and cause them to obtain still extinction.** He wants to enable all living beings also to attain to still extinction.

He vows **with every sambodhi,** that is, using one kind of proper enlightenment, **to know all Dharma Realms,** that is, to know the proper enlightenments of all Buddhas of the Dharma Realms **are characterized by Nirvana.** He vows **with a single sound to speak Dharma and cause living beings to be delighted at heart.** He vows **to display entry into great Nirvana, yet not cut off the Bodhisattva conduct.** He has manifested the entry into great Nirvana, but he still is in the world cultivating the Bodhisattva Way. He vows **to display the ground of great wisdom.** He displays it for living beings so they can know about the ground of great wisdom. And he vows to display **establishment of all Dharmas** of the Buddhas. He vows he will display them **with the penetration of Dharma wisdom, the penetration of spiritual fulfillments, the penetration of illusions,** that is, of changes and transformations, **and comfortable changes and transformations, completely to fill the Dharma Realm – vast and great as the Dharma Realm, ultimate as empty space, exhausting the boundaries of the future, throughout all numbers of kalpas, without cease.**

**Sutra:**

**Disciples of the Buddha, the Bodhisattva dwelling on the Ground of Happiness brings forth such great vows, such great vigor, such great efficacy. Using those ten kinds of vow-doors as foremost, he fulfills a million asamkhyeyas of great vows.**

**Disciples of the Buddha, these great vows through ten propositions of finality come to accomplishment. What are the ten? They are: the end of the realm of living beings; the end of the world-realms; the end of the realm of empty space; the end of the Dharma Realm; the end of the Realm of Nirvana; the end of the realm of Buddhas’ appearing; the end of the realm of wisdom of Thus Come Ones; the end of the realm of what is thought by mind; the end of the realm of states entered by the Buddha’s wisdom; the end of the realm of worldly turnings, dharma turnings, and knowledge turnings.**

**If the realm of living beings is ended, then my vows are ended. If world-realms, up to and including the realm of worldly turnings, dharma turnings, and knowledge turnings are ended, then my vows are ended. But, the realm of living beings up to and including the realm of worldly turnings, dharma turnings, and knowledge turnings, cannot be ended. Therefore, these great vows and good roots of mine have no end.**

**Commentary:**

Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, afraid the Bodhisattvas might become lax and not pay attention to him speaking the Dharma of the Avatamsaka Sutra, then said again, **Disciples of the Buddha,** all of you great Buddhist disciples, do you know? **The Bodhisattva dwelling on the Ground of Happiness** certified to this Ground of Happiness from having cultivated all kinds of good roots and accomplished the position of the Paramitas for crossing to the other shore. He at all times produces great happiness and **brings forth such great vows.** He makes the various kinds of great vows that were previously described. He brings forth **such great vigor** – courageous vigor. The Dharma-doors living beings do not dare to cultivate, he goes and cultivates. He dares to do what living beings do not dare to do. He brings forth **such great efficacy** – great activity and great functioning such as was previously described. **Using those ten kinds of vow-doors as foremost, he fulfills a million asamkhyeyas of great vows.** The other great vows all come out of those great vows, and, because those great vows are fulfilled, all the limitlessly many remaining great vows are fulfilled, too.

**Disciples of the Buddha,** Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva said again, **these great vows through ten propositions of finality come to accomplishment.** He said that great vows made by the Bodhisattva who certifies to the Ground of Happiness are brought to success by ten kinds of disappearances of realms.

**What are the ten?** What are the ten kinds of disappearances? **They are: the end of the realm of living beings,** all living beings disappear. **The end of the world-realms,** world-realms, as well, all disappear. **The end of the realm of empty space,** make the realm of empty space disappear, too. **The end of the Dharma Realm,** basically, the Dharma Realm is inexhaustible. Still, take it as non-existent: that is, no realm of living beings, no world-realm, no realm of empty space, no Dharma Realm. **The end of the Realm of Nirvana,** it’s also gone. **The end of the realm of Buddhas’ appearing,** in addition, no Buddhas appear in the world. **The end of the realm of wisdom of Thus Come Ones,** the Thus Come Ones’ wisdom also does not exist. **The end of the realm of what is thought by mind,** what is climbed upon and thought about in the mind also ceases to exist. **The end of the realm of states entered by the Buddha’s wisdom;** the states that the Buddha’s wisdom understands, realizes, and comprehends – all of those states – vanish, too. **The end of the realm of worldly turnings, dharma turnings, and knowledge turnings,** everything worldly can turn and move. Dharma can also turn, and knowledge can turn as well. Those kinds of realms all disappear. Basically, all of those realms cannot be non-existent, but suppose we say they cease to exist.

So the Bodhisattva says, **if the realm of living beings is ended, then my vows are ended.** Should it come to be possible for the realm of living beings to cease to exist, then and only then can these great vows that I have made cease to exist. If the realm of living beings cannot cease to exist, then my vows will always remain. **If world-realms, up to and including the realm of worldly turnings, dharma turnings, and knowledge turnings are ended, then my vows are ended.** All worlds turn, Dharma turns, and knowledge turns, as well. If all those realms become non-existent then the vows I have made will cease to exist. **But, the realm of living beings** cannot be ended, however, you should be aware that the realm of living beings cannot end; and, therefore, my vows cannot come to an end. World-realms can’t come to an end, so my vows can’t end. The Dharma Realm can’t end, so my vows can’t end. The realm of Nirvana can’t end, so my vows can’t end. The realm of the states of wisdom of Thus Come Ones also will not end, and so my vows will eternally remain. Were the realm of what is thought in the mind to cease to exist… however, it cannot cease to exist, and so, too, my vows will never cease to exist. Were the realm of the states entered by the Buddha’s wisdom to cease to exist… however, it can’t go out of existence. Therefore, my vows too, will exist forever. Should worldly turnings, Dharma turnings, and knowledge turnings all become non-existent…However, they cannot go out of existence. Therefore, my vows, too, will always remain. **Up to and including the realm of worldly turnings, dharma turnings, and knowledge turnings, cannot be ended. Therefore, these great vows and good roots of mine have no end.** Therefore, the great vows that I have made and the good roots that I have cultivated are also inexhaustible.

**Sutra:**

**Disciples of the Buddha, after the Bodhisattva has made such great vows, he then obtains a beneficent mind, a compliant mind, an accordant mind, a quiet mind, a subdued mind, a still and extinct mind, a humble mind, a moistened mind, an unmoving mind, a non-turbid mind.**

**He becomes one of pure faith and has the operative use of faith. He can believe in the Thus Come One’s original practices which are entered: believing in the accomplishment of all the Paramitas; believing in the entry to all the supreme grounds; believing in the accomplishment of the powers; believing in the perfection of the fearlessnesses; believing in the growth of the indestructible uncommon Buddha Dharmas; believing in the production of the Buddha’s states which are not to either side of middle; believing in the production of the Buddha’s states which are not either side of middle; believing in the entry to the limitless states of a Thus Come One; believing in the accomplishment of the fruit. To mention the essential, it is because he believes in all Bodhisattvas’ practices up to and including the description of all powers of the Thus Come One’s wisdom ground.**

**Commentary:**

**Disciples of the Buddha,** Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva again says, all of you disciples of the Buddha, do you know? **After the Bodhisattva has made such great vows, he then obtains a beneficent mind.** Before having made such great vows he’d wanted to benefit living beings but couldn’t manage to decide to do so. He wanted to be of some advantage to living beings, but could never find a way. But, since he has these vows to aid him, his beneficent mind comes forth, too. He also obtains **a compliant mind.** Before he made those vows, he was like most living beings: stubborn and not easy to tame and subdue – really obstinate. But, since he has made those vows, through those vows’ aid, his mind is compliant, and he has great patience and no afflictions.

He obtains **an accordant mind.** Before he had brought forth the thought for Bodhi or had the intention to cultivate the Bodhisattva Way, this person was always trying to people to go along with his, to follow him. He was unwilling to obey other people’s instructions. That is, he was:

Able neither to lead,
Nor to take orders.

On the one hand, he was incapable of issuing orders commanding people to do something, and yet on the other hand, he wouldn’t follow the instructions of other people. He wouldn’t take orders from anyone. When someone told him to do something, he wouldn’t do it. But, since having made the vows, he had resolved to forever accord with living beings. He has no ego: ‘Who is me? I am who? You ask me? I ask who?’ He accords with living beings and has no self. Therefore, because he has made those vows, he just accords, and he doesn’t tell people to accord with him.

He obtains **a quiet mind.** This quietness is constantly having no afflictions and being at peace. This quiet mind is being happy. Quietness does not mean, “I like it quiet. You should all go along with me and be quiet.” It’s not that way. It means that right in the middle of a place whose atmosphere is not quiet, if you can be quiet, as the saying goes:

The middle of a noisy market place is good for cultivation.

If you can be quiet in a noisy marketplace, then that’s real gung fu. If you go off someplace where there isn’t a should, saying that you want peace and quiet, once you’ve run off to some solitary mountain forest, what ends up happening? You quarrel with yourself. You exhale one breath of air and say, “Hey, you’re not being quiet!” You inhale the next breath of air and say, “Hey, you’re not being quiet!” And you get afflicted. This quietness means that if you are someone who can apply their skill, then any place will be quiet. If you are someone who is unable to apply his or her skill, then even if you try to find a quiet place, you won’t be able to. Why not? It’s because you haven’t made vows. If you had made vows, then what was not quiet would be quiet. That’s the quiet mind.

He obtains **a subdued mind.** In the Saha world, all the living beings are stubborn, difficult to tame, and difficult to subdue. Not to speak of taming and subduing other people, they can’t even tame and subdue themselves. You sit there and without rhyme or reason become afflicted, get angry.

The eyes and ears don’t hit it off.

The eyes say the nose is too high, and the nose says the eyes are too low. The eyes tell the mouth, “You can only eat, you can’t see,” and the tongue tells it, “You can only eat, but you can’t taste.” The ears say, “You eyes can see, but you can’t hear. I can hear.” The nose tells the ears, “You can only hear, but you can’t smell the way I can.” Is this trouble or not? The eyes and the nose don’t get alone, and the nose tells the mouth, “You can only eat candy, but you can’t smell its odor.” You can’t get tamed and subdued; you can’t tame and subdue you mind.

He obtains **a still and extinct mind.** This mind is still and extinct:

All dharmas in their origin of themselves,
Are characterized by still extinction.

If you can calm your mind down to still extinction then that is good. He obtains **a humble mind.** Before he made vows, he was very haughty and arrogant. After making the vows, he obtains a humble mind.

He obtains **a moistened mind.** In his mind it is never dry or parched. It is always as if moistened by water. He obtains **an unmoving mind.** His mind also does not move.

When thought moves,
The thousand matters exist;
When thought stops,
The myriad matters vanish.

If you do not move your mind, then your basic wisdom manifests. He obtains **a non-turbid mind.** In his mind there are no defiled thoughts.

**He becomes one of pure faith.** Once he has obtained those various kinds of minds, then he becomes one who can purely believe, **and has the operative use of faith. He can believe in the Thus Come One’s original practices.** He can believe in the doors of practice which the Buddhas originally cultivated, **which are entered.** What is entered? **Believing in the accomplishment of all the Paramitas,** he believes and so can accomplish ten kinds of paramitas. **Believing in the entry to all the supreme grounds,** being able to believe, he is then able to enter the Ten Grounds, these most supreme ground-positions. **Believing in the accomplishment of the powers,** believing, he can accomplish the powers of spiritual penetrations. **Believing in the perfection of the fearlessnesses,** with this attitude of faith, he then can perfect the fearlessnesses. As it is said:

Faith is the source of the Way,
The mother of merit and virtue,
That nurtures all good dharmas.

**Believing in the growth of the indestructible uncommon Buddha Dharmas,** believing, he can make grow the indestructible Dharmas Special to a Buddha. **Believing in the production of the Buddha’s states which are not to either side of middle; believing in the production of the Buddha’s states which are not either side of middle;** believing, he can produce the states of a Buddha, which are such that they have nothing to the side of middle. The Buddha’s states are all of the Middle Way, with no extremes. They do not fall to either side. What is the Middle? The Middle Way is:

Not falling into emptiness,
Not falling into existence.

**Believing in the entry to the limitless states of a Thus Come One;** believing, he can accord with and enter the limitless states of a Buddha. **Believing in the accomplishment of the fruit,** believing, he can accomplish all of the fruit-positions. **To mention the essential, it is because he believes in all Bodhisattvas’ practices up to and including the description of all powers of the Thus Come One’s wisdom ground.**

**Sutra:**

**Disciples of the Buddha, this Bodhisattva further makes the following reflections: ‘all Buddhas’ power proper Dharmas are so profound, so quiet, so still and extinct, so empty, so markless, so wishless, so undefiled, so limitless, so vast and great, while ordinary beings in their minds fall into deviant views. They are covered by the film of ignorance. They erect the banner of pride and arrogance. They enter into the net of thirsty love, and course in the dense forest of flattery and deceit, unable to extricate themselves. Their minds are conjoined with stinginess and jealousy which they never abandon. They constantly create the causal conditions for undergoing birth in the destinies. With greed, hatred, and stupidity, they accumulate all karma, which day and night increases and grows. With the wind of resentment they fan the fire of mind-consciousness, whose blaze never ceases. All of the karma they create is conjoined with inversion. In the flow of desire, the flow of existence, the flow of ignorance, and the flow of views, the seeds of mind-consciousness continually arise. Within the field of the three Realms the sprouts of suffering are repeatedly produced.**

**Commentary:**

**Disciples of the Buddha,** Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva again called out, all of you disciples of the Buddha, do you know or not that **this Bodhisattva** who certifies to the Ground of Happiness **further makes the following reflections.** He also has these thoughts: **‘all Buddhas’ power proper Dharmas** –all Buddhas’ Proper Dharma Eye Treasuries -- **are so profound.** He says they are:

So deep the bottom can’t be seen,
Just like the great sea.

They are **so quiet.** The basic substance of their Dharma is tranquil and quiet, without any movement. They are **so still and extinct,** without shape or characteristics, **so empty.** They are **so markless.** They also have no appearance. They are **so wishless.** Everything is empty. They are **so undefiled.** They are free of defiled attachments. The Proper Dharmas spoken by all Buddhas are **so limitless.** They also have no calculable measure, and they are **so vast and great.**

**While ordinary beings in their minds fall into deviant views,** all ordinary living beings are very lazy. They all have deviant knowledge and deviant views, and do not cultivate. **They are covered by the film of ignorance,** ignorance converse them over like clouds in the sky. **They erect the banner of pride and arrogance.** They always think of themselves as very great, and wear their pride, arrogance, and conceit like a banner. **They enter into the net of thirsty love.** They enter into the net of love – love which is like being very hungry and thirsty and from which they never get out. **And** they **course in the dense forest of flattery and deceit, unable to extricate themselves.** They are unable to get themselves out of the net of love and desire and the dense forest of flattery and deceit. **Their minds are conjoined with stinginess and jealousy which they never abandon.**

**They constantly create the causal conditions for undergoing birth in the destinies.** They keep being born and dying, dying and being reborn, in the four evil destinies – asuras, hell-beings, hungry ghosts, and animals – and keep creating the causal conditions for being reborn there again. **With greed, hatred, and stupidity, they accumulate all karma.** Ignorance, that is, stupidity, is produced, and then, because they are stupid, they create all sorts of karma; and, so it says, “They accumulate all karma.” **Which day and night increases and grows. With the wind of resentment they fan the fire of mind-consciousness.** They blow within mind consciousness, that kind of fire, **whose blaze never ceases.** They feel it’s blazing hot. **All of the karma they create is conjoined with inversion.** Everything they do is interactive with upside-downness. **In the flow of desire, the flow of existence, the flow of ignorance, and the flow of views, the seeds of mind-consciousness continually arise.** Their karma is interactive with the flow of love and desire. Within the Three Realms – the Desire Realm, the Form Realm, and the Formless Realm – they undergo the flow of existence. They flow along with ignorance or else they flow along with views. The seeds of mind-consciousness continually and uninterruptedly come forth. **Within the field of the three Realms the sprouts of suffering are repeatedly produced.**

**Sutra:**

**That is, name and form arise together and do not separate. Because name and form increase, the assemblage of the six places arises. Amidst their junctures, contact arises: because of contact, feeling arises. Because of feeling, love arises. Love increases, therefore grasping arises. Grasping increases, therefore existence arises. Because existence arises, birth, old age, anxiety, sorrow, suffering, and vexation come to exist. Such living beings as those produce and increase the mass of suffering. Within it, all is empty: free of self and what belongs to self, devoid of knowing and awareness, with no doer and no receive, like grass and wood, like rocks and walls, and also like reflections. Still, living beings are unaware and do not know. The Bodhisattva sees all living beings within this mass of suffering, unable to get out. Therefore, he immediately brings forth wisdom of great compassion and makes the following reflections: ‘all these living beings I should rescue and save and set in the place of ultimate peace and joy.’ Therefore, he immediately brings forth bright wisdom of great kindness.**

**Commentary:**

**That is, name and form arise together.** This discusses the Twelve Links of Causal Conditions, the first of which is ignorance. Because of the upside-downness of ignorance, there arise activities – the activities of love and desire. Once there are activities, the seeds of mind-consciousness are planted within the field of the Three Realms, and the sprouts of suffering are produced. These sprouts of suffering are the name and form under discussion. Once there is name and form, one says, “Perhaps this is a boy.” “Perhaps this is a girl.” Once there is a form, a name arises together with it and they **do not separate. Because name and form increase, the assemblage of the six places arises.** The assemblage of the six places is the arisal of the six faculties of eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind. They are also called the six entrances, as well as the six places, and their assemblage means their collectivity. **Amidst their junctures, contact arises.** In the midst of this, the junctures of the six entrances within the mother’s womb, the dust-objects of the sense of touch is produced. **Because of contact, feeling arises.** Since there are objects of touch, there then arises feeling, receptivity. **Because of feeling, love arises.** Due to the arisal of receptivity, from that feeling there arises love; love and desire arise. **Love increases, therefore grasping arises.** Because grasping increases and grows, existence comes about. **Because existence arises, birth, old age, anxiety, sorrow, suffering, and vexation come to exist.** Because existence increases, therefore there arises birth. Once there is birth, there is death; and all the rest come along with it.

**Such living beings as those produce and increase the mass of suffering. Within it, all is empty.** However, although these causal conditions are explained as suffering, nonetheless you should understand that it is all empty and all extinguished. **Free of self and what belongs to self, devoid of knowing and awareness,** within these twelve causal conditions, there basically is no knowing and no awareness. **With no doer and no receive, like grass and wood, like rocks and walls,** like insentient things such as grass and wood, rocks and walls, **and also like reflections.** That is the way things really are. If you understand, they are like reflections. **Still, living beings are unaware and do not know.** They have not become enlightened, and they do not know that basically all of this is empty.

**The Bodhisattva sees all living beings** bobbing up and down within the twelve causal conditions, **within this mass of suffering, unable to get out.** They never wake up; they are always bound up in the net of love, desire, and craving. **Therefore, he immediately brings forth wisdom of great compassion and makes the following reflections: ‘all these living beings I should rescue and save and set in the place of ultimate peace and joy.’** I should settle them in the place where they will obtain the utmost, ultimate peace and happiness. **Therefore, he immediately brings forth bright wisdom of great kindness.** For that reason he then gives rise to a mind of great kindness and brings forth bright wisdom.

**Sutra:**

**Disciples of the Buddha, the Bodhisattva Mahatsattva accords with such great compassion and great kindness. Using deep, profound thought, at the time of dwelling on the First Ground, he gives away all objects without grudging or stinginess. Seeking the Buddha’s great wisdom, he cultivates great renunciation. Whatever he possesses, he is able to give away completely. That is, such objects as wealth and granaries, gold, silver, mani, pearls, lapis lazuli, shells, jade, and coral; jeweled ornamental articles to decorate the body; elephants, horses, chariots and conveyances; servants and citizens; cities, towns, and villages; parks, groves, pavillions with vistas; wives, concubines, sons, daughters; the inner and outer retinues, and all remaining enjoyable possessions; his head, eyes, hands, and feet; his blood, flesh, marrow and all the parts of his body, begrudging none of them, in order to seek all Buddhas’ vast, great wisdom. That is called the Bodhisattva Who Dwells Upon the First Ground’s Accomplishment of Great Renunciation.**

**Commentary:**

Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, since he fears the Bodhisattvas are always in samadhi and not paying attention to the Dharma he is speaking, at that time decides to call out, “All of you disciples of the Buddha, do you know? **Disciples of the Buddha, the Bodhisattva Mahatsattva accords with such great compassion and great kindness.** The great Bodhisattva who cultivates the Bodhisattva Way and accumulates all kinds of good roots always accords with that kind of great compassion which can pluck out living beings’ sufferings, and great kindness which can bestow happiness upon living beings. **Using deep, profound thought, at the time of dwelling on the First Ground,** he uses thought so very deep and profound that it cannot be fathomed, at the time of dwelling on the First Ground, and **he gives away all objects without grudging or stinginess.** Upon certifying to the attainment of this First Ground, the Ground of Happiness, there are no objects which he is unable to renounce. There is no object, however valuable, with which he is unable to part, or which he begrudges giving away to others. He would never be that way. He has no greed or stinginess, no inability to part with things. **Seeking the Buddha’s great wisdom, he cultivates great renunciation.** The Buddha has ultimate, great wisdom, and the Bodhisattva seeks the ultimate wisdom of a Buddha. So, he cultivates this kind of giving.

**Whatever he possesses, he is able to give away completely.** He can give all the inner wealth and outer wealth he may posses away to living beings. **That is, such objects as wealth and granaries.** He can renounce all kinds of articles, such as all his wealth, his inner and outer wealth – along with all his granaries, all of his **gold,** and all his **silver,** his **mani** jewels, his precious **pearls,** his precious **lapis lazuli,** his precious **shells,** his precious **jade,** his precious **and coral,** and all the rest. He can give **jeweled ornamental articles to decorate the body.** He can give all his **elephants,** all his **horses,** all his **chariots and conveyances.** Nowadays he could give all his cars and boats, along with his airplanes. He can renounce **servants,** or those who work for him, **and citizens** of his country. He can give up **cities, towns, and villages** or his **parks** and his **groves, pavillions with vistas.** He can give his pavilions, towers – all those things which afford fine views. He can renounce his **wives, concubines, sons,** and **daughters.** He can give up his **inner and outer retinues,** that is, both close and distant relatives, **and all remaining enjoyable possessions.** He can also give **his head,** or else his **eyes,** or his **hands, and feet,** or **his blood, flesh, marrow and all the parts of his body,** including all the objects inside his body and all objects external to the body, **begrudging none of them.** There are none of these which he is unable to give up, **in order to seek all Buddhas’ vast, great wisdom.** He can do this because he wants to seek all the Buddhas’ vast, great wisdom. **That is called the Bodhisattva Who Dwells Upon the First Ground’s Accomplishment of Great Renunciation.** This is called the kind of great renunciation, the accomplishment of the merit and virtue of all good roots, of the Bodhisattva who dwells upon this Ground of Happiness.

**Sutra:**

**Disciple of Buddha, the Bodhisattva, using this kind of compassionate mind of great renunciation, wishing to rescue and protect all living beings, further enlarges the scope of his search for all worldly and world-transcending beneficial matters, never being tired or weary. Therefore, he immediately attains to the accomplishment of an untiring, unwearied mind. Once he has obtained an untiring, unwearied mind, concerning all sutras and shastras, his mind id not nervous or afraid. Because he is not nervous or afraid, he immediately attains to the accomplishment of the wisdom of all sutras and shastras. Once he has acquired that wisdom, he is skilled at estimating what should be done and what should not be done. Towards all superior, average, and inferior living beings, as is appropriate and according to his strength, in accord with what they like, he acts in that way.**

**Therefore, this Bodhisattva attains to the accomplishment of worldly wisdom. Once he has accomplished worldly wisdom, he knows the times and he knows the capacities, and using the adornments of repentance and reform, he diligently cultivates the path of benefiting self while benefiting others. Therefore, he accomplishes the adornments of repentance and reform. In the midst of these practices, he diligently cultivates escape, without retreating or deflecting, and accomplishes the power of solidity. Once he has acquired the power of solidity, he diligently makes offerings to all Buddhas. With regard to the Buddhas’ teaching Dharmas, he is able thus to speak and practice.**

**Commentary:**

**Disciple of Buddha, the Bodhisattva** on the Ground of Happiness, **using this kind of compassionate mind of great renunciation, wishing to rescue and protect all living beings, further enlarges the scope of his search.** Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva again calls out, “All of you Buddhist disciples, the Bodhisattva uses compassionate giving and loving protection towards all living beings. After practicing giving, he has the further intention of deepening his search **for all worldly and world-transcending beneficial matters.** He looks for each and every beneficial means to help living beings, as well as being concerned about how to benefit living beings on the world-transcending plane. **Never being tired or weary,** he constantly cultivates Bodhisattva conduct, and at no time does he retreat saying, ‘I’ve cultivated enough. I’m tired of it. I’m weary.’

**Therefore, he immediately attains to the accomplishment of an untiring, unwearied mind.** Right then he accomplishes an unflagging attitude, and at no time would he say he didn’t want to cultivate the Bodhisattva Way. **Once he has obtained an untiring, unwearied mind, concerning all sutras and shastras, his mind id not nervous or afraid.** After he has perfected this attitude of never being tired or weary, he studies all the Sutras, Vinaya, and shastras which the Buddhas have spoken. He would never say, ‘Oh, this Sutra is so long, so difficult to understand!’ or ‘There’s too much to this Shastra, and it’s not easy to investigate.’ **Because he is not nervous or afraid, he immediately attains to the accomplishment of the wisdom of all sutras and shastras.** Because he is not afraid that the Buddhardharma, being like the great sea, is not easy to cultivate, he gains wisdom from the Sutras and Shastras. As soon as they pass by his eyes, he understands all Buddhadharmas, illumines the real mark of all dharmas. He:

Deeply enters the Sutra store,
And has wisdom like the sea.

**Once he has acquired that wisdom, he is skilled at estimating.** He is good at evaluating, and figuring out **what should be done and what should not be done.** He can distinguish all things that should be done from all the things that should not be done. **Towards all superior, average, and inferior living beings, as is appropriate and according to his strength, in accord with what they like, he acts in that way.** Towards living beings with superior good roots, living beings with average faculties and average wisdom, and towards the most stupid kinds of living beings he appears as needed.

Whatever body is needed to cross them over,
He manifests that kind of body and speaks Dharma for them.

In accordance with what living beings like and with what they understand, he cultivates in that way to teach and transform them. **Therefore, this Bodhisattva attains to the accomplishment of worldly wisdom.**

**Once he has accomplished worldly wisdom, he knows the times and he knows the capacities.** He knows for any time whether a given living being’s opportunities have matured or not. He knows which living beings should be saved and which living beings are not due to be saved, which is to know their capacities. **And using the adornments of repentance and reform, he diligently cultivates.** He uses his cultivation of repentance and reform to adorn his own blessings and virtue. He is diligent in his cultivation of blessings and wisdom, as well. He diligently cultivates **the path of benefiting self while benefiting others.** The path he cultivates is that of benefiting himself and benefiting others, and he is able to benefit and aid living beings. **Therefore, he accomplishes the adornments of repentance and reform,** and the adornments of merit and virtue.

**In the midst of these practices,** within these doors of cultivation, **he diligently cultivates escape** from the Three Realms, **without retreating or deflecting.** He does not retreat from Anuttarasamyaksambodhi, **and accomplishes the power of solidity.** In cultivation, he has a mind of non-retreat. **Once he has acquired the power of solidity, he diligently makes offerings to all Buddhas. With regard to the Buddhas’ teaching Dharmas, he is able thus to speak and practice.** As to the teaching Dharmas pronounced by the Buddhas, he can speak them thus, and thus can he practice them.

**Sutra:**

**Disciples of the Buddha, the Bodhisattva in that way accomplishes ten kinds of Dharmas of purification of all grounds. That is: faith, compassion, kindness, renunciation, non-weariness, knowing all sutras and shastras, skill at understanding worldly dharmas, repentance and reform, the power of solidity, making offerings to all Buddhas, relying on the teachings to cultivate.**

**Disciples of the Buddha, when the Bodhisattva has come to dwell on this Ground of Happiness, by means of the power of great vows, he comes to see many Buddhas. that is: he sees many hundreds of Buddhas, many thousands of Buddhas, many hundreds of thousands of Buddhas, many millions of Buddhas, many hundreds of millions of Buddhas, many thousands of millions of Buddhas, many hundreds of thousands of millions of Buddhas, many millions of nayutas of Buddhas, many hundreds of millions of nayutas of Buddhas, many thousands of millions of nayutas of Buddhas, many hundreds of thousands of millions of nayutas of Buddhas, and completely, with a great and profound mind, he worships and reveres them, attends upon and makes offerings to them, using clothing, food and drink, bedding and medicines – all of the necessities of life – completely offering them up. He makes offerings as well to all members of the sangha, and taking those good roots, he transfers them all to unsurpassed Bodhi.**

**Commentary:**

**Disciples of the Buddha,** when Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva had spoken to this point, he again called out saying, “All of you Buddhist disciples, **the Bodhisattva in that way accomplishes ten kinds of Dharmas of purification of all grounds.** He accomplishes Dharma-doors for purifying and regulating the Grounds. **That is: faith, compassion, kindness, renunciation.** One must believe in all the Buddhadharmas, pluck out all the sufferings of living beings, bestow all happiness on living beings, and practice great giving. **Non-weariness,** he cultivates those various kinds of dharmas without becoming weary or tied. **Knowing all sutras and shastras,** he is able to deeply enter the Sutra Store and have wisdom like the sea. He has **skill at understanding worldly dharmas** and **repentance and reform.** He has **the power of solidity** of repentance and reform. The last two Dharmas of purification are **making offerings to all Buddhas, relying on the teachings to cultivate.**

**Disciples of the Buddha, when the Bodhisattva has come to dwell on this Ground of Happiness,** this First Ground, **by means of the power of great vows, he comes to see many Buddhas. That is** to say: **he sees many hundreds of Buddhas, many thousands of Buddhas,** as well as seeing **many hundreds of thousands of Buddhas.** He can also see **many millions of Buddhas,** and see **many hundreds of millions of Buddhas.** He can see **many thousands of millions of Buddhas,** too, in addition to seeing **many hundreds of thousands of millions of Buddhas.** He can also see **many millions of nayutas of Buddhas, many hundreds of millions of nayutas of Buddhas,** along with seeing **many thousands of millions of nayutas of Buddhas.**

He can also see **many hundreds of thousands of millions of nayutas of Buddhas, and completely, with a great and profound mind, he worships and reveres them, attends upon and makes offerings to them, using clothing, food and drink, bedding and medicines** – the Four Requisites – to make offerings of **all of the necessities of life – completely offering them up.** He offers them all up completely. **He makes offerings as well to all members of the sangha.** He makes offerings to all the Sagely Sangha members, **and taking those good roots, he transfers them all to unsurpassed Bodhi,** to the unsurpassed fruit position of Wonderful Enlightenment.

**Sutra:**

**Disciples of the Buddha, this Bodhisattva, because of making offerings to all Buddhas, obtains the Dharmas for accomplishing living beings using the former two attractions, he attracts and gathers in living beings, that is, giving and kind words. As to the latter two dharmas of attraction, because he only uses the power of faith and understanding, his practice has not yet well-penetrated these. That Bodhisattva, among the ten Paramitas, emphasizes the Paramita of giving. It is not that he fails to cultivate the remaining Paramitas, but he only does so according to his strength and proportionately.**

**What this Bodhisattva diligently cultivates – the making of offerings to all Buddhas, the teaching and transforming of living beings, and all of the good roots from cultivating the Dharmas of purification of the Grounds – he completely transfers to the Ground of all-wisdom, becoming progressively more bright and pure, subdued, compliant and accomplished, and capable of acting in accord with his intent.**

**Commentary:**

Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva again said to all the Bodhisattva, “All of you **Disciples of the Buddha, this Bodhisattva** who has certified to the Ground of Happiness, **because of making offerings to all Buddhas, obtains the Dharmas for accomplishing living beings.** Due to his vastly cultivating the giving of offerings to all Buddhas, he obtains the meritorious virtues of the Four Dharmas of Attraction. **Using the former two attractions, he attracts and gathers in living beings, that is** to say: **giving and kind words.** The Bodhisattva vastly cultivates the practice of giving – giving all of his own wealth and treasures to living beings – and kind words, always caring about and being protective of living beings in his words and saying what they like to hear. He uses kindness and compassion to care for and protect all living beings. Even if it is the very worst sort of living beings, he still brings forth the Bodhi resolve to save that being and teach it.

**As to the latter two dharmas of attraction,** that is, beneficial conduct and similarity in deeds -- **because he only uses the power of faith and understanding, his practice has not yet well-penetrated these.** He cultivates them, but has not yet perfected that kind of Bodhisattva conduct. **That Bodhisattva, among the ten Paramitas, emphasizes the Paramita of giving.** The Ten Paramitas are:

Giving

Holding precepts

Patience

Vigor

Dhyana-samadhi

Wisdom

Expedients

Vows

Powers

Knowledge

The perfection of giving is most stressed. **It is not that he fails to cultivate the remaining Paramitas.** It’s not that he does not use the other nine Paramitas to cultivate, **but he only does so according to his strength and proportionately.** He does as much with them as he can, according to what his strength permits and does as much as possible in proportion to the causes and conditions.

**What this Bodhisattva diligently cultivates – the making of offerings to all Buddhas** in accordance with what his strength permits him to do. **The teaching and transforming of living beings, and all of the good roots from cultivating the Dharmas of purification of the Grounds,** the Ten Grounds -- **he completely transfers to the Ground of all-wisdom,** that fruit position, **becoming progressively more bright and pure.** He makes more progress in his cultivation every day and becomes more and more **subdued, compliant and accomplished, and capable of acting in accord with his intent.** He causes his mind and nature constantly to be yielding, patient, and accomplished. In accordance with his own wishes, he is capable of putting all Budhadharmas into action and using them to teach and transform living beings.

**Sutra:**

**Disciples of the Buddha, for instance, when a goldsmith well-skilled at smelting gold repeatedly puts it through the fire, it becomes progressively more bright and pure, supple, pliant, and accomplished, and capable of being worked in accord with his intent. The Bodhisattva is also like this. He makes offerings to all Buddhas and teaches and transforms living beings, all of which is cultivation of the dharmas of purification of the Grounds. Then he takes all of those good roots and completely transfers them to the Ground of all-wisdom. Thus, he becomes progressively more bright and pure, subdued, compliant, and accomplished, and capable of acting in accord with his intent.**

**Disciples of Buddha, the Bodhisattva Mahasattva, when dwelling upon this, the First Ground, should from where all Buddhas, Bodhisattva, and good, wise advisors are, search out and request within these Grounds the marks and the fruit obtained, with no weariness or satiation, in order to accomplish the Dharmas of these Grounds. He should also from where all Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and good, wise advisors are, search out and request within the Second Ground the marks and the fruit obtained, with no weariness or satiation, in order to accomplish the dharmas of that Ground. He should also in that way search out and request within the Third, the Fourth, the Fifth, the Sixth, the Seventh, the Eighth, the Ninth, and the Tenth Grounds, the marks and the fruit obtained, with no weariness or satiation, in order to accomplish the Dharmas of those Grounds.**

**This Bodhisattva is good at knowing remedies for all obstructions to the Grounds, good at knowing the accomplishment and destruction of the Grounds, good at knowing the marks and fruits of the Grounds.**

**Commentary:**

Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva again said to all the Bodhisattva, “All of you **Disciples of the Buddha, for instance,** I’ll give you analogy for this principle. What is it like? It is just as **when a goldsmith well-skilled at smelting gold repeatedly puts it through the fire.** A goldsmith uses all kinds of clever and skillful methods to smelt gold and refine it. Time after time he uses fire on it and **it becomes progressively more bright and pure.** When it has been through the fire once, the gold is just that much more purified. After repeated smeltings, it becomes unalloyed gold, without the least admixture, and is **supple, pliant, and accomplished, and capable of being worked in accord with his intent.** When the gold has been fired to the point to being very soft and pliant, so there is no way it could break, it is pliant and accomplished. You can make whatever you want out of it, in accord with your intent. One can use the gold to make all kinds of ornaments to adorn one’s person.

**The Bodhisattva is also like this. He makes offerings to all Buddhas.** The Bodhisattva, in cultivating all of the dharmas of regulating the Grounds, is also like that. First of all, he vastly cultivates the giving of offerings. **And** he **teaches and transforms living beings.** He uses kindness, compassion, joy, renunciation, patience, vigor –those Paramitas – to teach and transform living beings. **All of which is cultivation of the dharmas of purification of the Grounds.** He enables all living beings to be able to cultivate the Dharma doors of purification of the Ten Grounds. **Then he takes all of those good roots and completely transfers them.** The good roots that have been amassed from cultivation he completely uses to make transference **to the Ground of all-wisdom,** the dharmas of the Ten Grounds. **Thus, he becomes progressively more bright and pure.** Every day he understands the Dharma-doors of the Ten Grounds better, and each day he is more pure, **subdued, compliant, and accomplished.** That he is subdued and compliant means this Bodhisattva hasn’t the least bit of temper, and not the slightest affliction. At all times he is very kind, compassionate, joyous, and renouncing, and accomplishes the door of practice of patience; **and** is **capable of acting in accord with his intent.** Whatever Dharma-door he wants to employ he is able to employ.

**Disciples of Buddha,** Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva again said to the Bodhisattva, “All of you disciples of the Buddha, **the Bodhisattva Mahasattva, when dwelling upon this, the First Ground, should from where all Buddhas, Bodhisattva, and good, wise advisors are, search out and request within these Grounds.** When the Great Bodhisattva who cultivates the Bodhisattva conduct and amasses all kinds of good roots certifies to the position of the Ground of Happiness, he should from where all Buddhas and Great Bodhisattvas and all Good-Knowing Advisors are, investigate the Dharma-doors of all the Grounds. If there are places one does not understand, one asks the Buddhas, the Bodhisattvas, the Good, Wise Advisors within these Ten Grounds about **the marks and the fruit obtained,** about the characteristics one experiences in cultivating them, along with what the fruit-positions to be obtained in the future are like. He does this **without weariness or satiation.** One does the seeking-out oneself, and the requesting is that of requesting all the Buddhas, the Bodhisattvas, and all Good-knowing Advisors. It’s that way every day; it’s all the time that way, with no weariness or satiation. There’s no saying, “I’ve cultivated enough,’ and then not investigating or being lazy. He is vigorous all the time. **In order to accomplish the Dharmas of these Grounds.** The reason is that he wants to bring the dharmas of the Ten Grounds to accomplishment.

**He should also from where all Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and good, wise advisors are, search out and request within the Second Ground the marks and the fruit obtained.** The First Ground is that way, and if one wishes to cultivate the dharmas of the second of the Ten Grounds, one should again request them from where the Buddhas, the Bodhisattvas, and the Good-knowing Advisors are. One should seek them out and investigate them. If there are places one does not understand, one requests the characteristics of what one experiences, along with the fruit-positions one obtains, **with no weariness or satiation, in order to accomplish the dharmas of that Ground. He should also in that way search out and request within the Third, the Fourth, the Fifth, the Sixth, the Seventh, the Eighth, the Ninth, and the Tenth Grounds, the marks and the fruit obtained.** When one intends to bring to accomplishment the dharmas of the Third Ground, the Fourth Ground, up to and including the dharmas of the Tenth Ground, one should investigate and ask all the Buddhas, all Bodhisattvas, and all Good-knowing Advisors the characteristics of what one goes through on each of these grounds and the fruit-positions one obtains. One should do this **with no weariness or satiation.** This, too, is without growing tired, **in order to accomplish the Dharmas of those Grounds.** This is also because of wanting to accomplish the dharmas of the Ten Grounds.

**This Bodhisattva is good at knowing remedies for all obstructions to the Grounds.** He is skilled in the knowledge of what obstacles arise on each Ground, and what methods to employ to counteract them. He is **good at knowing the accomplishment and destruction of the Grounds.** He is skilled in knowing how the Dharma-doors of the Ten Grounds are accomplished, and how they are not accomplished; and **good at knowing the marks and fruits of the Grounds.** He is also skilled in the knowledge of the characteristics of the Ten Grounds and how one attains to their fruit-positions.

**Sutra:**

**Good at knowing the attainment and cultivation of the Grounds, good at knowing the purification of the Dharmas of the Ground, good at knowing the practices in turn for each Ground, good at knowing what holds and does not hold for each Ground, good at knowing the most supreme wisdom for each Ground, good at knowing the irreversibilities of each Good, good at knowing how to purify and regulate all the bodhisattvas’ Grounds, up to and including in turn entering the Ground of the Thus Come One.**

**Disciples of the Buddha, the Bodhisattva, in that way, is good at knowing the marks of the Grounds. Starting with the First Ground, he gives rise to practice which is uninterrupted. He continues in that way until he enters the Tenth Ground, without interruption. Due to the light of wisdom of all those Grounds, he accomplishes the Thus Come One’s light of wisdom.**

**Disciples of the Buddha, he is like a merchant leader who is skilled in expedient methods. When he is about to lead a group of merchants to visit a great city, before they have set out, he first inquires about the merits and drawbacks of the route, the halting places along it, and whether it is safe or not. Afterwards, equipped with provisions for the road, he does what needs to be done. Disciples of the Buddha, that great merchant leader, although he has not yet taken a step, is able to know all matters concerning safety on the road. He skillfully uses wisdom to plan, estimate, and consider, and prepares what is required so that they will not run short. He then leads the group of merchants until they safely reach that great city. He and the group of people completely avoid all disasters.**

**Disciples of the Buddha, the Bodhisattva, that merchant leader, is also that way. While dwelling on the First Ground, he is good at knowing remedies for obstructions to all Grounds, up to and including being good at knowing how to purify all the Bodhisattva Grounds, and in turn enter the Ground of the Thus Come One. Afterwards, equipped with the provisions of blessings and wisdom, he leads all living beings through the wilderness of birth and death with its places of dander until they sagely arrive at the city of Sarvajna. He and all the living beings do not experience disasters.**

**Therefore, the Bodhisattva should never be lax, and should cultivate the most supreme, pure karma of all Grounds, up to and including tending towards and entering the Ground of the Thus Come Ones’ wisdom.**

**Disciples of the Buddha, this is called a summary discussion of the Bodhisattva Mahasattva’s entry to the door of the First Bodhisattva Ground. If discussed at-length, there are limitless and boundless hundreds of thousands of Asamkhyeyas of particulars.**

**Commentary:**

The Bodhisattva is **good at knowing the attainment and cultivation of the Grounds.** A Bodhisattva who has certified to the First Ground, the Ground of Happiness, is good at knowing how to cultivate each Ground. He is **good at knowing the purification of the Dharmas of the Ground, good at knowing the practices in turn for each Ground.** He is also good at knowing for all the Ten Grounds how one goes in turn from the First Ground to the Second Ground, from the Second Ground to the Third Ground, up to and including how to cultivate the Tenth Ground. He is **good at knowing what holds and does not hold for each Ground.** He is skilled as well at knowing what is right and what is wrong for each Ground. He is **good at knowing the most supreme wisdom for each Ground.** Each Ground has its own particular wisdom, its own particular doors of practice. He is **good at knowing the irreversibilities of each good, good at knowing how to purify and regulate all the bodhisattvas’ Grounds, up to and including in turn entering the Ground of the Thus Come One.** He knows it all, up to and including what one goes through in order to obtain entry to certification to the fruit of the Ground of the Thus Come One.

**Disciples of the Buddha,** Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva again calls out, “All of you disciples of the Buddha, **the Bodhisattva, in that way, is good at knowing the marks of the Grounds.** He is good at knowing the characteristics of each Ground. **Starting with the First Ground, he gives rise to practice which is uninterrupted. He continues in that way until he enters the Tenth Ground, without interruption. Due to the light of wisdom of all those Grounds, he accomplishes the Thus Come One’s light of wisdom.** He is able to obtain the light of wisdom of a Buddha.

Vajra Treasury bodhisattva again calls out, “All of you **disciples of the Buddha, he is like a merchant leader.”** He said, “Now I’ll give you an analogy. He is like a merchant leader **who is skilled in expedient methods.** He is skilled in knowing all expedient Dharma-doors. **When he is about to lead a group of merchants to visit a great city, before they have set out, he first inquires about the merits and drawbacks of the route.** When he is going to head up a party of merchants to visit a metropolis on business, in advance of their trip he finds out in which places the road is easy to traverse and in which places passage is not easy. He determines which places are dangerous and which places are safe. He learns it all. He also ascertains **the halting places along it,** that is, what places there are where one cans top for the night, **and whether it is safe or not.** He finds out which situations are safe and which are not. **Afterwards, equipped with provisions for the road, he does what needs to be done.** Afterwards they all prepare the provisions, that is, the money to be used, and he goes about doing his job.

**Disciples of the Buddha,** Vajra Treasury again says, **that great merchant leader, although he has not yet taken a step, is able to know all matters concerning safety on the road.** That great entrepreneur who does business on a large scale, even though he has not yet set out on the road, already knows all the safety factors and dangers along the route. **He skillfully uses wisdom to plan, estimate, and consider, and prepares what is required.** He prepares a sufficient quantity of things that they will need to use **so that they will not run short. He then leads the group of merchants until they safely reach that great city.** They arrive at the great metropolis to which they want to go. **He and the group of people completely avoid all disasters.** They safely reach the place to which they want to go.

**Disciples of the Buddha,** Vajra Treasury bodhisattva gain says, “All of you disciples of the Buddha, **the Bodhisattva, that merchant leader, is also that way.** The bodhisattva is like a merchant leader. **While dwelling on the First Ground,** the Ground of Happiness, **he is good at knowing remedies for obstructions to all Grounds.** He is good at knowing what methods to use to counteract any obstacles to cultivation that may arise on any one of the Grounds, **up to and including being good at knowing how to purify all the Bodhisattva Grounds.** He knows how all of the Bodhisattvas of the Ten Grounds can attain to purity, **and in turn enter the Ground of the Thus Come One. Afterwards, equipped with the provisions of blessings and wisdom, he leads all living beings through the wilderness of birth and death.** He guides all living beings through the wilderness of the revolving wheel of birth and death **with its places of dander until they sagely arrive at the city of Sarvajna.** They arrive at the City of All Wisdom. **He and all the living beings do not experience disasters.** The bodhisattva himself, and all the living beings with him, have no disasters.

**Therefore, the Bodhisattva should never be lax.** As a consequence of this, the Bodhisattva should at all times never be lax, **and should cultivate the most supreme, pure karma of all Grounds.** He should diligently cultivate the Dharma-doors of the Ten Grounds, that pure and most supreme Way karma, **up to and including tending towards and entering the Ground of the Thus Come Ones’ wisdom.** He should do so until he reaches the fruit-position of Buddhahood.

**Disciples of the Buddha,** Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva gain says, “All of you disciples of the Buddha, **this is called a summary discussion of the Bodhisattva Mahasattva’s entry to the door of the First Bodhisattva Ground.** This is the Bodhisattva Mahasattva’s entry to the Dharma-door of the First Ground. **If discussed at-length, there are limitless and boundless hundreds of thousands of Asamkhyeyas of particulars.** If expanded upon, it has a great many different aspects.

**Sutra:**

**Disciples of the Buddha, the Bodhisattva who dwells upon this, the First Ground, for the most part acts as king of Jambudvipa. He is powerful, honored, and sovereign, and constantly protects the Proper Dharma. He is able to use great giving to gather in living beings. He is skilled at ridding living beings of the defilement of stinginess. He constantly practices great giving without exhaustion or end. Giving, pleasing words, beneficial practices, and identity in actions – all such karma that is created is not separate from mindfulness of the Buddha, not separate from mindfulness of the Dharma, not separate from mindfulness of the Sangha, not separate form mindfulness of the Bodhisattva, not separate from mindfulness of the Bodhisattvas of identical practice, not separate form mindfulness of the Bodhisattva practices, not separate from mindfulness of the Paramitas, not separate from mindfulness of all Grounds, not separate form mindfulness of the powers, not separate form mindfulness of the fearlessnesses, not separate from mindfulness of the uncommon Buddha Dharmas, up to and including not separate from mindfulness of endowment with the wisdom of all wisdom of all modes.**

**Commentary:**

Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva again called out and said, “All you **disciples of the Buddha, the Bodhisattva who dwells upon this, the First Ground, for the most part acts as king of Jambudvipa.** The Great Bodhisattva who cultivates the Bodhisattva conduct and amasses all kinds of good roots regularly becomes the kind of Jambudvipa when he accomplishes the First Ground, that of Happiness. **He is powerful, honored, and sovereign.** He either is someone with a great deal of money, or extremely sovereign and at ease, **and constantly protects the Proper Dharma. He is able to use great giving to gather in living beings** and cause them to bring forth the great thought of Bodhi. **He is skilled at ridding living beings of the defilement of stinginess.** He is able to get rid of living beings’ bad habit, the fault of stinginess. **He constantly practices great giving without exhaustion or end.** He is always practicing giving on a large scale, and his giving never ends.

**Giving, pleasing words, beneficial practices, and identity in actions – all such karma that is created is not separate from mindfulness of the Buddha, not separate from mindfulness of the Dharma, not separate from mindfulness of the Sangha.** No matter what good karma is created, it is never separate from mindfulness of the Triple Jewel: the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha. It is **not separate form mindfulness of the Bodhisattva, not separate from mindfulness of the Bodhisattvas of identical practice.** Not to separate from mindfulness of the Bodhisattvas of identical practice is also mindfulness of the Sangha. It is **not separate form mindfulness of the Bodhisattva practices** which are cultivated. It is **not separate from mindfulness of the Paramitas,** the dharmas of Arrival at the Other Shore. It is **not separate from mindfulness** of the wisdom **of all Grounds.** It is **not separate form mindfulness of the powers** – the Buddha’s Ten Powers. It is **not separate form mindfulness of the fearlessnesses** – the Four Fearlessnesses. It is **not separate from mindfulness of the uncommon Buddha Dharmas** – the Eighteen Dharmas Special to a Buddha, **up to and including** it is **not separate from mindfulness of endowment with the wisdom of all wisdom of all modes** – all the wisdoms of a Buddha.

**Sutra:**

**He further makes the following reflection: I should, among all living beings, be a leader, be supreme, be especially supreme, be wonderful, be subtle, and wonderful, be superior, be unsurpassed, be a guide, be a general, be a chief, up to and including being one with the wisdom of all wisdoms upon whom one may rely.**

**This Bodhisattva, if he wants to renounce the home life, within the Buddhadharma diligently cultivates with vigor and then can leave the home, his wife and children, and the five desires. He relies upon the Thus Come Ones’ teaching, leaves the home life, and studies the Way.**

**Commentary:**

**He further makes the following reflection:** the Bodhisattva of the First Ground, the Ground of Happiness, also makes the following contemplation, saying, ‘**I should, among all living beings, be a leader,** ‘I’ is the Bodhisattva referring to himself. I should **be supreme, be especially supreme.** I should be an especially outstanding and superior person. I should **be wonderful.** Among living beings, I should be an inconceivable person. I should **be subtle, and wonderful.** Among living beings, I should be an unsurpassed, deep, profound, subtle, and wonderfully inconceivable person. I should **be superior.** I should be a lofty and superior person. I should **be unsurpassed.** Among living beings, I should be an unsurpassed person. I should **be a guide.** I should, in the midst of all living beings, act as their guide. I should **be a general.** Among living beings, I should be a great general. I should **be a chief.** I should be a principal among living beings. **Up to and including being one with the wisdom of all wisdoms upon whom one may rely,** I should be someone who has the wisdom of a Buddha upon whom living beings can rely.

**This Bodhisattva, if he wants to renounce the home life** – if he wants to leave home -- **within the Buddhadharma diligently cultivates with vigor and then** he **can leave the home.** He can give up his family, **his wife and children, and the five desires** – wealth, sex, fame, food, and sleep. **He relies upon the Thus Come Ones’ teaching.** He relies upon the teaching dharmas spoken by the Buddhas, **leaves the home life, and studies the Way.** He:

Leaves the home of afflictions
Leaves the worldly home, and
Leaves the home of the Three Realms

**Sutra:**

**Thereupon, after leaving home, he diligently cultivates with vigor. Within the space of a thought, he attains a hundred Samadhis. He comes to see a hundred Buddhas. He is able to know a hundred Buddhas’ spiritual powers. He is able to quake a hundred Buddha lands. He is able to go beyond a hundred Buddha lands. He is able to illumine a hundred Buddha lands. He is able to teach and transform the living beings of a hundred worlds. He is able to live for a hundred kalpas. He is able to know the boundaries of before and afterwards, the events of a hundred kalpas for each. He is able to enter a hundred dharma doors. He is able to manifest a hundred bodies. With every body he is able to manifest a hundred Bodhisattvas as his retinue.**

**If he employs especially supreme power of Bodhisattva vows to manifest at ease, he surpasses that number. In a hundred kalpas, a thousand kalpas, a hundred thousand kalpas, up to and including a hundred thousand million nayutas of kalpas, the number could not be counted or know.**

**At that time, Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, wishing to restate his meaning, spoken verses, saying:**

**Commentary:**

**Thereupon, after leaving home, he diligently cultivates with vigor.** After the Bodhisattva has brought forth the thought for Bodhi, renounced the world, and left the home life in order to seek the unsurpassed Way, he very diligently and earnestly cultivates with courageous vigor. **Within the space of a thought, he attains a hundred Samadhis.** Within the interval of a single thought, he obtains more than a hundred kinds of proper receptions, proper concentrations, that kind of wisdom. **He comes to see a hundred Buddhas.** When in a single interval of thought he is able to attain a hundred kinds of samadhis, then he is able to see a hundred Buddhas of a hundred worlds. **He is able to know a hundred Buddhas’ spiritual powers.** He is able to know all of the powers of spiritual penetrations of a hundred Buddhas of a hundred worlds. **He is able to quake a hundred Buddha lands.** The Bodhisattva is able to use spiritual penetrations and cause a hundred Buddha lands to tremble and quake in six ways. **He is able to go beyond a hundred Buddha lands.** The power of his spiritual penetrations is able to transcend a hundred Buddha lands. **He is able to illumine a hundred Buddha lands.** His light, too, is able to light up as many as a hundred Buddha lands.

**He is able to teach and transform the living beings of a hundred worlds.** Within a single interval of thought, he can teach and transform as many as a hundred Buddha lands’ living beings. **He is able to live for a hundred kalpas.** He is able to maintain his life for a hundred great kalpas. **He is able to know the boundaries of before and afterwards** and **the events of a hundred kalpas for each.** He knows a hundred kalpas before, and he knows a hundred kalpas afterwards, knowing all of the events within them. **He is able to enter a hundred dharma doors. He is able to manifest a hundred bodies.** Within this very world he can make appear a hundred bodies and go to other worlds to teach and transform living beings. **With every body he is able to manifest a hundred Bodhisattvas.** He can use spiritual penetrations to make appear by transformation a hundred Bodhisattvas **as his retinue.** They act as his retainers.

**If he employs especially supreme power of Bodhisattva vows to manifest at ease, he surpasses that number. In a hundred kalpas, a thousand kalpas, a hundred thousand kalpas, up to and including a hundred thousand million nayutas of kalpas.** Should it be the case that the Bodhisattva has extraordinary and especially supreme vow-power and manifests at ease, he goes beyond that number, up to and including going beyond as many as a hundred thousand million nayutas of kalpas. **The number could not be counted or know.** From this it can be seen that if a Bodhisattva has extraordinary vow-power, his merit and virtue exceed those of the previously described Bodhisattva to the point that they cannot be counted or know.

**At that time, Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, wishing to restate his meaning, spoken verses, saying:** wanting to repeat those principles, he used verses to speak for everyone.

**Sutra:**

**Should someone assemble multitudes of good,
He becomes endowed with white, pure dharmas,
He makes offerings to the honored one of gods and humans,
And follows the path of kindness and compassion.**

**His faith and understanding are most vast and great
His resolutions and inclinations, too, are pure
Intent upon the search for a Buddha’s wisdom
He brings forth this thought unsurpassed**

**Having purified all the powers of knowledge
Along with the fearlessnesses as well
And having accomplished all the Buddha Dharmas
He saves and gathers in the flocks of beings**

**In order to obtain great kindness and compassion
And to turn the supreme Dahrma wheel
To adorn and purify the Buddha-countries
He brings forth this thought most supreme**

**Commentary:**

**Should someone assemble multitudes of good,**

**He becomes endowed with white, pure dharmas.** This says, “If a Bodhisattva cultivates the doors of practice cultivated by Bodhisattvas and accumulates various kinds of good roots, because of having a great deal of merit and virtue from good roots, he eliminates all defiled dharmas, so that all that remain are pure dharmas. **He makes offerings to the honored one of gods and humans.** He is able to make offerings to all Buddhas, **and follows the path of kindness and compassion.** He constantly teaches and transforms living beings, using kindness, compassion, joy, and renunciation, those Four Limitless Minds, to teach and transform living beings.

**His faith and understanding are most vast and great.** His faith along with the principles that he understands are both extremely vast and great. **His resolutions and inclinations, too, are pure.** All of his resolutions, as well as what he likes, are pure. **Intent upon the search for a Buddha’s wisdom,he brings forth this thought unsurpassed.** His determination is to seek wisdom which is the same as that of a Buddha, so he brings forth the thought for unsurpassed Bodhi.

**Having purified all the powers of knowledge, along with the fearlessnesses as well; and having accomplished all the Buddha Dharmas, he saves and gathers in the flocks of beings.** He has purified all the powers of all wisdom, in addition to the freedoms from fear. He has brought to accomplishment all of the Dharma doors spoken by the Buddha. He saves and protects all living beings.

**In order to obtain great kindness and compassion, and to turn the supreme Dahrma wheel; to adorn and purify the Buddha-countries, he brings forth this thought most supreme.** In order to acquire a mind of greatkindness and compassion, and also in order to turn the wheel of all the most supreme Dharmas, and so that he may adorn and purify all Buddhas’ lands, he brings forth this thought for most supreme Bodhi.

**Sutra:**

**He in one thought knows the three periods of time,
Yet he has no discriminations;
Their various times which are not the same,
He employs to appear within the world.**

**To speak in summary, he seeks all Buddhas’
Supreme merit and virtue, each and all;
He brings forth the thought vast and great,
Whose measure equals realms of empty space.**

**With compassion foremost, and wisdom principle,
And expedients along with interactives,
His mind of faith and understanding pure,
He has the Thus Come One’s limitless powers.**

**Unobstructed wisdom then appears,
Enlightened of himself, not due to others.
Identically endowed as the Thus Come Ones,
He brings forth this thought most supreme.**

**The disciple of the Buddha who first brings forth,
The wonderfully precious thought such as this,
Then transcends the commoner’s position,
Entering the Buddhas’ place of practice.**

**Commentary:**

**He in one thought knows the three periods of time,** the past, the present, and the future. **Yet he has no discriminations.** He uses wisdom to know them, not the discriminations of consciousness. He knows **their various times which are not the same.** All of the times within the three periods of time are not identical. **He employs** them **to appear within the world.**

**To speak in summary, he seeks all Buddhas’** unsurpassed Way, their **supreme merit and virtue, each and all.He brings forth the thought vast and great, whose measure equals realms of empty space.** He brings forth the thought for Bodhi, which is as vast as empty space.

**With compassion foremost, and wisdom principle, and expedients along with interactives; his mind of faith and understanding** is **pure.** He makes great compassion of foremost importance and relies on wisdom as his principal necessity. He practices all clever and expedient dharmas, along with all mutually interactive dharmas. He is able to have a pure mind of faith and understanding. **He has the Thus Come One’s limitless powers.** He obtains the limitless powers of spiritual penetrations of a Buddha.

**Unobstructed wisdom then appears,** he has obtained unobstructed wisdom.

**Enlightened of himself, not due to others.** He himself obtains the hundreds of thousands of millions of samadhis, and they are not bestowed upon him by anyone else. **Identically endowed as the Thus Come Ones,** those powers of spiritual penetrations – that unobstructed wisdom – are the same as those of the Buddha. **He brings forth this thought most supreme,** this thought for Bodhi.

**The disciple of the Buddha who first brings forth the wonderfully precious thought such as this, then transcends the commoner’s position, entering the Buddhas’ place of practice.** The disciple’s initial thought for Bodhi is as solid as vajra. He is no longer the same as an ordinary person. He enters upon the Way traveled by the Buddhas.

**Sutra:**

**He is born within the Thus Come One’s household,
And his lineage has no flaws;
He is the same as the Buddha,
And is certain to accomplish unsurpassed Bodhi.**

**Upon producing thoughts such as those,
He immediately comes to enter the First Ground;
His resolve and inclinations are immovable,
Being like the great kind of mountains.**

**He has much happiness, much liking,
And much pure faith, as well;
He has courageous vigor to the utmost,
Along with much elation and rejoicing.**

**He is quite free from contention,
From troubling and harming, and from hatred;
He knows shame, respect, and rectitude,
And well protects and guards his faculties.**

**He seeks all the multitudes of wisdom,
Of the one incomparable in the world:
‘This place is one I should achieve,
Mindful, giving rise to happiness.’**

**Commentary:**

**He is born within the Thus Come One’s household.** The Bodhisattva who has certified to the First Ground, the Ground of Happiness, has already been born in the household of the Thus Come One, **and his lineage has no flaws.** His lineage, his descent, is entirely honorable and lofty. It is not despicable and has nothing reprehensible about it. It is not at all lowly or poverty stricken. **He is the same as the Buddha.** He is just like the Buddha, **and is certain to accomplish unsurpassed Bodhi.** It is for sure that he will become a Budha in the future. **Upon producing thoughts such as those, he immediately comes to enter the First Ground.** As soon as he has brought forth the thoughts of great kindness and compassion, and the thoughts of great joy and renunciation, he then can enter the Ground of Happiness. **His resolve and inclinations are immovable.** His resolutions and what he likes cannot be moved by anyone at all. That is, if you want to cultivate the Bodhisattva Way, no one will be able to break up your cultivation, **being like the great kind of mountains.** He is just like Mount Sumeru.

**He has much happiness, much liking.** When he certifies to the First Ground, the Ground of Happiness, he has much happiness and much liking for all living beings, **and much pure faith, as well.** He also cultivates the dharma of pure faith and understanding. **He has courageous vigor to the utmost.** He also has ultimately great, courageous vigor, **along with much elation and rejoicing.** His happiness is full of enthusiastic delight and rejoicing. **He is quite free from contention.** The Bodhisattva who has certified to this position has no contention. He doesn’t strive or fight with anyone. He is also free **from troubling and harming, and from hatred.** He has not the slightest wish to trouble or harm others, and not the least bit of hate for other people.

**He knows shame, respect, and rectitude.** He knows how to repent and reform, has reverence and respect, and rectitude of mind. Incapable of being evasive, shifty, or devious, his mind is straight and upright, **and well protects and guards his faculties.** He is good at guarding and protecting all his faculties. His eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind all follow them. **He seeks all the multitudes of wisdom of the one incomparable in the world.** He seeks all the wisdoms of the Buddha, to whom no one can compare. **‘This place is one I should achieve,mindful, giving rise to happiness.’** I should certify to all the wisdoms of the Buddha. I am mindful of the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha – the Triple Jewel – and mindful of all living beings, and give rise to great joy.

**Sutra:**

**Upon initially entering the First Ground,
He immediately transcends the five-fold fears:
Not staying alive, dying, bad reputation,
Evil destinies and the assembly’s awesome virtue.**

**He attaches neither to self,
Nor to what pertains to a self;
All of these disciples of the Buddha,
Leave all fearfulness far behind.**

**Always practicing great kindness and pity,
He constantly has faith as well as reverence;
He is replete with merit and virtue of repentance,
Night and day increasing wholesome Dharmas.**

**He delights in Dharma’s true and actual benefits,
And does not love the reception of desires;
He reflects upon the Dharmas he as heard,
Far free form the practice of grasping.**

**He has no greed for benefits or offerings,
And he only delights in Buddha’s Bodhi;
With one mind he seeks the Buddha’s wisdom,
Concentration undivided with no other thought.**

**Commentary:**

**Upon initially entering the First Ground, he immediately transcends the five-fold fears.** When the Bodhisattva certifies to the Ground of Happiness, he then leave the Five Kinds of Fears far behind: **not staying alive, dying, bad reputation, evil destinies and the assembly’s awesome virtue.** In full, the list reads:

* fear of not staying alive,
* fear of a bad reputation,
* fear of death,
* fear of the evil destinies,
* Fear of the awesome virtue of the Great Assembly.

Why does he leave these five kinds of fears far behind? It is because **he attaches neither to self,nor to what pertains to a self.** He has no attachment to a self, and with no self what is there to fear? What belongs to a self is gone, too. You who are studying the Buddhadharm are afraid of this and afraid of that. Why are you afraid? It is because you are unable to be without a self. You are greedily attached to “me” and greedily attached to “mine.” But, if you had no self, and if what belonged to self were empty, then what could there be to fear? **All of these disciples of the Buddhaleave all fearfulness far behind.**

He is **always practicing great kindness and pity.** He always practices great kindness and great compassion and pities and remembers all living beings. **He constantly has faith as well as reverence.** He always has genuine, pure faith in and reverence and respect for the Triple Jewel. **He is replete with merit and virtue of repentance.** He is endowed with all the merit and virtue of repentance and reform, **night and day increasing wholesome Dharmas. He delights in Dharma’s true and actual benefits and does not love the reception of desires.** He does not love the five objects of desire. **He reflects upon the Dharmas he as heard.** He is always pondering and contemplating the Buddhadharmas he has heard, **far free form the practice of grasping.** He leaves grasping and attaching behavior far behind. **He has no greed for benefits or offerings.** He is not greedy for fame or profit, **and he only delights in Buddha’s Bodhi.** The only thing he delights in is the Buddha’s wonderful Dharma of Bodhi. **With one mind he seeks the Buddha’s wisdom;** he is single-minded in his quest for the wisdom of a Buddha alone, **concentration undivided with no other thought.** Intent and concentrated, he does not have two kinds of thoughts; he only has the thought of seeking the Buddha’s wisdom.

**Sutra:**

**He cultivates all of the Paramitas,
Far separates from flattery and deceit;
As is spoken, so, too, does he practice,
And is secured in true and actual speech.**

**He does not defile the Buddha’s household,
Nor abandon Bodhisattva precepts;
Taking no delight in worldly matters,
Constantly he benefits the world.**

**He cultivates the good without fatigue,
His quest intensifying for the way supreme;
Such, then, is his liking for the Dharma,
That merit and virtue interact with meanings.**

**He constantly gives rise to a great vow-mind,
Vowing that all Buddhas he will see,
Protect and hold all Buddhas’ Dharmas,
And gather in the great immortal’s way.**

**Always bringing forth such vows as these,
He cultivates the practices supreme,
Matures and ripens all the flocks of beings,
Adorns and purifies all Buddhas’ lands.**

**Commentary:**

**He cultivates all of the Paramitas.** The Bodhisattva concentrates his mind and seeks the wisdom of a Buddha. If one wishes to obtain the wisdom of the Buddha, one must cultivate the Six Crossings-over, or the Ten Crossings-over – the Paramitas. One must also be **far separates from flattery and deceit.** One must leave flattery and obsequiousness far behind, along with all falsity and deceit. **As is spoken, so, too, does he practice.** One must rely upon the Dharma spoken by the Buddha to cultivate. **And** he **is secured in true and actual speech.** And at all times you should cultivate the dharmas of true speech, actual speech, never engaging in false speech.

**He does not defile the Buddha’s household.** It is essential to cultivate the Dharma-doors spoken by the Buddha very, very well, and protect the Dharma jewels spoken by the Buddha, never defiling the household of all Buddhas. That is, one must not make a bad impression for Buddhism by influencing people to have doubts. To start with, people may want to believe in the Buddha, but if you do not cultivate well, as soon as they see you they lose their faith. You can’t let that happen, **nor abandon Bodhisattva precepts.** He at all times protects the ten heavy and forty-eight light precepts cultivated by Bodhisattva, **taking no delight in worldly matters.** He has no greedy attachment for worldly dharmas. That means he ahs no liking for the world’s wealth, sex, fame, food, and sleep – matters concerned with the five objects of desire. **Constantly he benefits the world.** It is his constant wish to benefit the living beings of the world.

**He cultivates the good without fatigue.** In practicing giving and doing wholesome deeds, there never comes a time when he feels he’s had enough, **his quest intensifying for the way supreme.** He is more vigorous each day, daily becoming more courageous in his search for the unsurpassed, most supreme fruit of the Way. **Such, then, is his liking for the Dharma,that merit and virtue interact with meanings.**

**He constantly gives rise to a great vow-mind.** He is constantly bringing forth a great mind of vows and resolutions, **vowing that all Buddhas he will see.** He constantly makes the vow that he will see all the Buddhas of the ten directions and the three periods of time, and **protect and hold all Buddhas’ Dharmas.** He vows to protect and maintain all dharmas spoken by the Buddhas, **and gather in the great immortal’s way,** that is, the Buddha Way.

**Always bringing forth such vows as these, he cultivates the practices supreme, matures and ripens all the flocks of beings.** He brings all the flocks of beings to maturity, causing all living beings to become ripened and in the future to become Buddha. He **adorns and purifies all Buddhas’ lands.** He adorns and purifies the countries of all of the Buddhas of the ten directions and the three periods of time.

In studying the Buddhadharma and listening to Sutras, it is not the case that after one has listened to the Sutra that is all there is to it. It is necessary to base oneself upon the teachings and cultivate. If you listen and then fail to put what you have heard into actual practice, then that is equivalent to talking about food and counting other people’s money. You can talk all you want about how good this or that food is to eat, and about what a fine flavor it has, however, if you never get around to eating it, you still will not actually know what it tastes like. Day after day, in the bank you may count out money to others, counting out as much as a thousand, ten thousand, a hundred thousand, a million, or even ten million. Yet, when the bank closes, you yourself haven’t a penny – noen of it is yours. Therefore, when we hear the Buddhadharma, we must put the Dharma into practice. If the Bodhisattva cultivates the Six Paramitas and the ten thousand practices, should we be unable to cultivate so many, we should at least cultivate three Paramitas, two Paramitas, or one Paramita. We should cultivate either giving, or holding precepts, or patience, or vigor, or dhyana-samadhi, or Prajna, or expedients, or making vows, or using one’s own strength to do all kinds of good deeds, or using one’s own wisdom to perform various kinds of fine acts. For it to count, one must at all times and very actually practice. If you do not put it into practice, no mater how much you hear, it will be useless.

**Sutra:**

**All of the Buddhas’ kshetra lands,
Disciples of the Buddha fully fill,
Impartial, of one single, even mind,
Nothing that they do is done in vain.**

**They, on the tip of every single hair,
At one time, accomplish right enlightenment.
Vows like those of theirs, which are so great,
Are limitless, and they have no bounds:**

**‘Empty space, along with living beings,
The Dharma Realm, together with Nirvana.
Appearances of Buddhas in the world,
Buddha’s wisdom and his states of mind,**

**What the wisdom of Thus Come Ones enters,
And the exhaustion of the turnings three
If all of those should have an end
Then all of my vows would have an end.**

**But, as all of those can have no end
So, too, are my vows just that way.’
Having thus made vows as great as those,
Their minds become compliant and subdued.**

**Commentary:**

**All of the Buddhas’ kshetra lands, disciples of the Buddha fully fill.** There is not just one world; there are limitless and boundlessly many worlds. All the Buddhalands are also limitless and boundless. Disciples of the Buddha fill up all of the worlds, all of the Buddha kshetras. **Impartial, of one single, even mind,**

**Nothing that they do is done in vain.** These disciples of the Buddha are all the Bodhisattvas. Everything those Bodhisattvas cultivate is impartial and equal, and they all with one even mind benefit living beings. All of what they do and cultivate is not done in vain. It is impossible for them to do something that does not result in the slightest bit of merit and virtue. In whatever they do, there is certain to be some merit and virtue present. **They, on the tip of every single hair,at one time, accomplish right enlightenment.** Those Bodhisattvas make the vow that on the tip of every single hair they will cultivate and will become Buddhas at one and the same time. On a single hairtip, all Buddhas become Budhas, and on all hairtips, too, all Buddhas simultaneously become Buddhas.

**Vows like those of theirs, which are so great, are limitless, and they have no bounds.** The vows such as those that they make are inconceivably great vows. There is no way you could measure the extent of those kinds of vows, nor do they have any bounds. **‘Empty space, along with living beings,** empty space and living beings are both infinite. **The Dharma Realm, together with Nirvana.** The Dharma realm and Nirvana are infinite, as well – but, suppose they *could* come to and end. **Appearances of Buddhas in the world, Buddha’s wisdom and his states of mind,what the wisdom of Thus Come Ones enters.** The kinds of states into which the wisdom of a Buddha is able to enter, **and the exhaustion of the turnings three’** – should the realm of living beings come to an end, the realm of empty space come to an end, and the realm of the Dharma Realm come to an end, then the vows made by the Bodhisattva would come to an end. If the Dharma Realm, the realm of empty space, along with the Buddha’s realm – all of those --- have no time when they come to an end, then the vows of the Bodhisattva will have no exhaustion or end. That means that if all that was listed above should come to an end, then the vows made by the Bodhisattva would be over and done with. Should they have no end, then the Bodhisattva’s vows will also never end.

**If all of those should have an end, then all of my vows would have an end.** All the previously described – empty space, living beings, afflictions, the realm of Buddhas, and the Dharma Realm – if all of those have a time when they come to an end, then my vows will disappear. If it turns out not to be that way, **but, as all of those can have no end,so, too, are my vows just that way.’** My vows too, can never come to an end. **Having thus made vows as great as those,**

**Their minds become compliant and subdued.** Having in that way made such inconceivable, vast, great, limitless, boundless, inexhaustible, and infinite kinds of vows, their minds are at all times supple and compliant, constantly tamed and subdued. Become the minds of Bodhisattvas have no greed, hatred, or stupidity within them; as a result they are always compliant and subdued.

**Sutra:**

**They can believe the Buddha’s merit and virtue,
And contemplate regarding living beings.
Knowing they arise from causes and conditions,
They then give rise to kindly mindfulness;**

**Such suffering living beings such as these,
I now should liberate and save.
For the sake of those living beings,
I should cultivate the various kinds of giving**

**Positions as a king, all gems and jewels,
Up to elephants, horses, and conveyances.
Head, eyes, hands, as welll as feet,
Up to even body, blood, and flesh –**

**Each and every thing I can renounce,
Their minds have no worries or regrets.
Seeking all the various sutra books,
Their minds are never weary or fatigued.**

**Well can they understand their drift and meaning,
Adapting them to practices of worlds.
Repentance and reform their own adornment,
Their cultivation is progressively more solid.**

**Commentary:**

**They can believe the Buddha’s merit and virtue.** We who study the Buddhadharma should first clearly recognize our tenets and convictions. We should first ask ourselves, “Do I truly believe in the Buddha? Do I believe that the Buddha has limitless merit and virtue?” Why is it that the Buddha has limitless merit and virtue? It is because the Buddha in the past practiced giving on a large scale, and he was able to give away all of his wealth. He was able to take all of his inner wealth – his head, eyes, brains, and marrow – and his outer wealth – countries, cities, wives, and children – and give it away without any attachment. They **contemplate regarding living beings.** Since we believe that the Buddha has limitless merit and virtue, we should constantly follow the Buddha in study and should also practice all kinds of giving. Therefore, we should contemplate all living biengs’ causes and conditions.

**Knowing they arise from causes and conditions.** All living beings are produced from the coming together of causes and conditions, and all have very deep relationships with us. They may have been our parents from beginningless kalpas to the present, or they may have been our elder or younger brothers, sisters, wives, or friends from beginningless kalpas to the present, so that they have relationship of an intricate network of karmas and turnings on the revolving wheel with us. Because they are aware of that relationship. **They then give rise to kindly mindfulness.** I should bring forth a mind of kindness and compassion and save and rescue all of htose living beings who have relationships with me, so that they leave suffeirng and attain bliss. I should cuase them toall be happy. **Such suffering living beings such as these,I now should liberate and save.** If I do not save and rescue them, then there is no way to know when their suffeirng can come to an end. And so, those beings are turning on the wheel of the six destinies, being born and then dying, being reborn and hten dying again; now that I know, I should save them and cause them to be liberated.

**For the sake of those living beings, I should cultivate the various kinds of giving, positions as a king, all gems and jewels, up to elephants, horses, and conveyances.** I can give away all of my roayl positions to other people, and all of my gems and jewels: my gold, silver, lapis lazuli, crystal, mother of pearl, red pearls, and carnelian – all of those seven precious things. I can give away, as well, my most cherished great elephant, or my most beautiful horses, or my finest conveyances, whether it be my car, my train, my bus, or even the airplane I own – all of that I can give away to other living beings. Those are posessions external to the body. In addition, if somenone required my **head,** then I will give it to him. If someone requres my **eyes**, I’ll give it to him. If someone needs my **hands**, they are his. **As well as** if someone needs my **feet,** he may have them. **Up to even body, blood, and flesh,** even to the point that if someone needs my body, it, too, will be given him. Even one’s own blood, the bolld from one’s own body, is bestowed as a gift upon all living beings. Even the flesh on one’s onw body can also be given to all living beings. Right now we should all look into ourselves and ask ourselves if we can do this. If we can, then we are Bodhisattvas who have brought forth the resolve of Bodhisattvas. If we are unable to do this, should we or should we not imitate the Bodhisattva? If we want to imitate the Bodhisattva, then we should, bit by bit, go forward and act in this way.

**Each and every thing I can renounce,** I can give them all away. The external wealth of countries, cities, wives, and children, along with the internal wealth of head, eyes, brains, and marrow, I am completely able to give away. **Their minds have no worries or regrets.** After they have performed such acts of giving, they are incapable of having regrets in their minds, saying, ‘I shouldnot have given them away! such cheirshed possessions of mine – my countries, cities, wives, and children, my head, eyes, brains, and marrow – how could I have given them away to people? I should not have done that. It was too idiotic, too stupid!’ What the Bodhisattva wants to do is just what people are unable to do, the “stupid” things. He’s not just always trying to get a bargain and come out on the long end of the stick when he gives. Therefore, when a Bodhisattva gives away all external and internal wealth, he is unable to regret it.

**Seeking all the various sutra books,** furthermore, they find ways to study all of the books of Sutras spoken by the Buddha, and **their minds are never weary or fatigued.** In their minds there never comes a time when they would say, ‘I’ve looked at enough Sutras spoken by the Buddha, and I’ve recited this mantra enough; I would like to recite a new and different one.’ They could never be that way. Bodhisattvas, in reading the Sutras, never weary of a hundred recitations. Even if they have recited one hundred times, they are never tired or weary of it. In reciting mantras, too, they never weary of a hundred recitations. They never become tired of them.

We people should realize why it is we need to recite Sutras and hold mantras. It’s not just because if you recite a certain Sutra you will have a certain amount of merit and virtue. It is to cure your false thinking. If you didn’t have any false thinking, then you could get away with not reciting Sutras and holding mantras. But, if you do have false thinking, then you have to recite Sutras and hold mantras, which counteracts your false thinking and helps your mind to become pure. When we constantly strike up false thoughts in ourminds, always having unclean, defiled false thinking, so that as soon as you think, if you’re not thinking about how nice yoru girlfriend is, then you’re thinking aobut how handsome your boyfriend is – all of that is false thinking. If all you are doing is thinking, it’s still not serious.

However, if you keep on thinking like that, you’ll start to cry and will feel it’s very painful. Dur to that, when we recite Sutras and hold mantras, it’s so we can expel the false and retain the true. The mind is like a monkey. The monkey is always looking for something to do. If you haven’t any work to give it, it runs off east and west. If you do give the mind some work to do, such as reciting Sutras and holding mantras, then ti will strike up less false thinking, and the money won’t run off. “Their minds are never weary or fatigue.” In reicting Sutras and holding mantras – cultivating --- they never could become tired or weary.

**Well can they understand their drift and meaning,** in their recitaiton of the Sutras and their holding of mantras, they understand the doctrines and purport of the Sutras and the principles of the mantras, **adapting them to practices of worlds.** Once you have understood the principles, then you can apply them in the world to benefit all living beings. **Repentance and reform their own adornment,** one should be very repentant and reform the places where one made mistakes in past behavior, and one should, oneself, use the merit and virtue of repentance and reform to adorn one’s own resolve for Bodhi. **Their cultivation is progressively more solid.** If you yourself are able greatly to repent and reform, bring forth the thought for Bodhi, and cultivate the unsurpassed Way of Bodhi, then day by day you will increase in firmness and solidity.

**Sutra:**

**They make offerings to Buddhas limitless,
Revere, do reverence, honor, and respect them.**
**In that way always do they practice;
Day and night, not lazy or fatigued.**

**Good roots brighten and become more pure,
Like gold which has been smelted in the fire.**
**The Bodhsiattva dwelling in this place,
Purely cultivates all of the Ten Grounds.**

**In what he does there is no obstruction,
His endowments cannot be cut off.
Just as when a great business leader,
To beneift the hosts of business people,
Asks and knows routes’ dangers and their ease,
Then arrives in safety at the town,
The Bodhisattva who dwells on the First Ground,
You should know just also in that way,
With courageous vigor unobstructed,
Reaches and arrives at the Tenth Ground,
While he dwells on this, the initial Ground,
He acts as king of merit and great virtue.**

**Commentary:**

The mind of the Bodhisattva daily increases in solidity as he vastly cultivates him giving of offerings. **They make offerings to Buddhas limitless, revere, do reverence, honor, and respect them.** Inasmuch as he makes limitless offerings to limitless Buddhas, naturally he reveres and reverences, honors and respects them. **In that way always do they practice;** in practicing, one should have an enduring mind. One cannot achieve success after a single day of practice. Life after life and time after time one must practice in this way, cultivating the Bodhisattva Path, **day and night, not lazy or fatigued.** Whether it’s daytime or nighttime, they are constantly practicing the Bodhisattva Way, never weary or fatigued. Their **good roots brighten and become more pure.** As the Bodhisattvas cultivate, they day by day accumulate more good roots, their intelligence is daily greater, and they attain to their original purity, **like gold which has been smelted in the fire.** It is just the same as when a goldsmith uses fire to smelt true gold. Having put it through the fire once, he again puts it through the fire. When it has been through the fire a great many times, the gold becomes pure gold, without the least admixture.

**The Bodhsiattva dwelling in this place, purely cultivates all of the Ten Grounds.** The Bodhsiattva cultivaing the Dharma-doors of the Ten Grounds is also that way, being smelted in the same manner as gold. He purely cultivates the states of the Ten Grounds. **In what he does there is no obstruction,** when the Bodhisattva is cultivating the Bodhisattva Way, he cultivates all good and eradicates all evil, and so he has no onstructions. **His endowments cannot be cut off.** He is endowed with the light of all wisdoms, which cannot be cut off.

**Just as when a great business leader, to beneift the hosts of business people, asks and knows routes’ dangers and their ease, then arrives in safety at the town.** It is also like, in this day and age, a great entrepreneur, perhaps a prominent corporate executive, in those days, a caravan leader, who, in order to do business and make large profits, joins together a large number of business people. He finds out clearly in advance if the route to be traversed is dangerous or easy. Then they arrive with no incident at the place to which they wanted to go. In the same way, the Bodhisattva who is cultivating on the First Ground, should ask about the states of every single Ground, along with the fruit positions to be obtained, all the way to Buddhahood. **The Bodhisattva who dwells on the First Ground,you should know just also in that way,with courageous vigor unobstructed,reaches and arrives at the Tenth Ground.** He is just the same as the great business leader. He is courageously vigorous, has not obstructions whatsoever, and from the First Ground, the Ground of Happiness, he arrives at the Tenth Ground, the Ground of the Dharma Cloud.

**While he dwells on this, the initial Ground, he acts as king of merit and great virtue.** While dwelling on the Ground of Happiness, he is a king of great merit and virtue and influences all the Bodhisattvas to go forward and cultivate.

**Sutra:**

**He uses Dharma to transform all beings,
Compassion-hearted, with no trace of harming.
Ruling and directing Jambuvipa,
In transforming customs, none does he not reach,
Making all established in great giving,
Accomplished by the wisdom of a Buddha.**

**In his wish to seek the Way supreme,
Renouncing then his own royal position,
He can, within the midst of the Buddha’s teaching,
Courageous and with diligence, cultivate.**

**He then attains to one hundred Samadhis,
And he comes to see all hundred Buddhas:
He makes one hundred worlds tremble and quake:
His illumination’s reach is also thus,**

**He transforms and saves a hundred beings,
To enter in one hundred Dharma-doors;
He can know one hundred kalpas’ matters,
And appear within one hundred bodies.**
**There then appear one hundred Bodhisattvas,
Acting as a retinue for him.**

**Commentary:**

When the Bodhisattva acts as a king of great merit and virtue, in Southern Jambudvipa he constantly becomes a wheel-turning king, in order to teacha nd transform living beings. **He uses Dharma to transform all beings.** He uses all the Buddhadharmas to save all living biengs, by being **compassion-hearted, with no trace of harming.** In transforming living beings, he constantly has a mind of kindness and compassion, with no thought of harming living beings. He firmly maintains the practice of giving, **ruling and directing Jambuvipa.** He acts as king of the region known as Southern Jambudvipa and transforms and beautifies its customs, causing the customs of each nation to become wholesome ones. All countries hold the Five Precepts:

* no killing,
* no stealing,
* no sexaul misconduct,
* no false speech,
* No intoxicants.

The citizens of all countries hold the five precepts and practice the ten goods, and so **in transforming customs, none does he not reach,making all established in great giving.** He causes all living beings also to practice the Dharma-door of great renunciation, to cultivate the Dharma-door of giving, and

**Accomplished by the wisdom of a Buddha.** All living beings attain the true and actual wisdom of a Buddha.

**In his wish to seek the Way supreme,** he himself seeks the most supreme Way, and he causes all living beings to seek it, too. **Renouncing then his own royal position.** To start with, he is king of a country, but he also gives away that kingly position to other people. **He can, within the midst of the Buddha’s teaching,courageous and with diligence, cultivate.** What does he do after he has renouced his royal position? He cultivates. He leaves home and cultivates the Way, with courageous vigor. In diligently cultivating precepts, samadhi, and wisdom and putting to rest, greed, hatred, and stupidity, at no time is he lazy.

**He then attains to one hundred Samadhis.** At that time, the Bodhisattva in the interval of a single instant of thought, attains to a hundred kinds of samadhis,

**And he comes to see all hundred Buddhas.** Again, within the space of a single thought, he can see all the Buddhas of a hundred lands. **He makes one hundred worlds tremble and quake.** The countries of one hundred worlds all experience the six types of quakes. **His illumination’s reach is also thus.** The pervasive illumination of his light also shines upon the living beings of a hundred worlds. **He transforms and saves a hundred beings.** As he shines upon the living beings of a hundred worlds, he transforms and saves all those hundred worlds’ beings. **To enter in one hundred Dharma-doors;** the living beings of the hundred worlds all attain a hundred Dharma-doors. **He can know one hundred kalpas’ matters.** He is able to know all of the events of a hundred previous kalpas, of a hundred kalpas afterwards, and of a hundred present kalpas, knowing the entirety of the past, the present, and the future.

**And appear within one hundred bodies,** he is also able to appear and trnasform, haivng as many as a hundred Bodhisattva bodies. **There then appear one hundred Bodhisattvas.** Every single body further manifests as many as a hundred Bodhisattvas, **acting as a retinue for him.** They act as that Bodhisatva’s retinue, helping him propagate the Buddhadharma and teach and transform living beings.

**Sutra:**

**If he uses comfort from his power of vows,
Their number, limitless, surpasses these.
I, among the meanings of this Ground,
Have in general spoken a small portion.**

**If one wants to analyze most broadly,
One cannot finish in a million kalpas.
The Bodhisattva’s path, the most supreme,
Of benefitting all the flocks of beings –
Dharmas such as those, of the First Ground,
I have now already finished speaking.**

**Commentary:**

**If he uses comfort from his power of vows, their number, limitless, surpasses these.** Should it be that the Bodhisattva has made vows of sovereign, as-you-please comfort, the merit, virtue, and wisdom far surpassthat by an unkonwn amount, surpassing it by ahundred kalpas, a thousand kalpas, a hundred thousand kalpas, kalpas so many that words cannot express these principles. **I, among the meanings of this Ground,** Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva says, “I, within the meanings and principles of this First Ground,”

**Have in general spoken a small portion,** I have not completely discussed them. Were I to speak them competely **if one wants to analyze most broadly.** If they were discussed extensively and in full detail, **one cannot finish in a million kalpas.** These principles could not be discussed completely in a quadrillion aeons.

**The Bodhisattva’s path, the most supreme,** which is cultivated by Bodhisattvas, **of benefitting all the flocks of beings.** What matters most to them, their creed, is to benefit all living beings, benefitting themselves by benefitting others, crossing themselves over by crossing over others, enlightening themselves by enlightening others. **Dharmas such as those, of the First Ground,** the kinds of dharmas I previously discussed, those dharma-doors of the First Ground, **I have now already finished speaking.** Now I have already finished my very general explanation of them. All of you should thoroughly investigate them, and then you will be able to understand them.

**The Second Ground**

**Sutra:**

**The Bodhisattvas, upon hearing this most supremely subtle, wonderful ground, in their minds thoroughly were pure, and were happy, each and every one. They all, arising from their seats, soared up and dwelt in empty space, everywhere scattered wondrous, flowers, and simultaneously spoke these words of praise. “Good, indeed, O Treasury of Vajra, greatly wise and who has no fear, well have you spoken of this ground’s Dharmas practiced by the Bodhisattvas!” Moon of Liberation Bodhisattva, knowing the assembly’s minds were pure, and that they wished to hear the Second Ground, all the characteristics of its conducts, right then requested Vajra Treasury, “Greatly Wise One, we wish that you would speak, disciples of the Buddha all would like to hear, about the dwelling on the Second Ground.**

**Commentary:**

When the Bodhisattvas had heard Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva discuss the Dharma of the First Ground, the Ground of Happiness, upon hearing this most supremely subtle, wonderful ground, in their minds they thoroughly were pure. The minds of all the Bodhisattvas were pure, free of any false thoughts, and they were happy, each and every one. Their minds were totally happy. They all, arising from their seats soared up and dwelt in empty space. They all physically ascended into empty space and everywhere scattered wondrous flowers. All of them in empty space scattered flowers as offerings to Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, saying simultaneously, “Good, indeed, O Treasury of Vajra.” They said, “Good, indeed, Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, greatly wise and who has no fear. You truly are a Bodhisattva of great wisdom, courageously heroic and without the least bit of fear! Well have you spoken of this ground’s Dharmas practiced by the Bodhisattvas. You have well spoken about the Dharmas on the Ground of Happiness!”

Moon of Liberation Bodhisattva, knowing the assembly’s minds were pure, and that they wished to hear the Second Ground, made a request. The discussion of the First Ground was over, and everyone still wished to hear the Dharmas of the Second Ground with all the characteristics of its conducts. They wanted to know all about the Second Ground’s Dharma doors--how to cultivate them, what kinds of states one has, and what fruits one obtains; and so Moon of Liberation Bodhisattva right then requested Vajra Treasury. He immediately asked of Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, “Greatly Wise One, we wish that you would speak.” He said, “Oh one of great wisdom, you, Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, all of us would still like you to continue your discussion of the Dharmas of the Ten Grounds. Disciples of the Buddha all would like to hear. All the great Bodhisattvas wish to hear about the marks, characteristics, and states of the Second Ground- about the dwelling on the Second Ground. They would all like to continue and cultivate Dharma doors of the Second Ground.”

I want to say something here about the problem of holding precepts versus not holding precepts. To cultivate the Way is not easy. No matter how much someone tells you to cultivate well, you still refuse to go forward and make progress. Yet, when it comes to doing bad, you do not require a teacher- you yourself know how to do it. When you hear about the Way, it sounds so fine. There are so many subtle and wonderful states. However, one must practice over a long period of time, and it may happen that one encounters brambles and thorns, tigers and wolves. If one lacks a great spirit of fearlessness and patience, it is very difficult to reach the goal.

As to holding precepts, while there are many people who take the precepts, there are very few who do not break or violate the precepts. To keep the precepts very purely also is not easy. Then should one simply not keep them? If you were not going to keep them, then why did you take them in the first place? Scrupulous holding of the precepts is extremely important, especially for those who have left the home life. The Buddha at the time of his Nirvana said, “Take the precepts as your master.” There is also the phrase, “The precepts are the basis of unsurpassed Bodhi: you should with one mind purely hold the precepts.”

How does one hold precepts? First, you should not be selfish and not calculate for yourself in any way. You should not kill, not steal, not commit sexual misconduct, not engage in false speech, and not take intoxicants. You should scrupulously observe the rules which disciples of the Buddha should observe. Do what you should do, regardless of the difficulty or the suffering involved. Do not do what you should not do. Do not be greedy for fame or profit and offerings. Hold and maintain the conduct of pure precepts in your cultivation. If you fail to do what you should do, that too, is a violation of the precepts.

We who cultivate the Way should at all times return the light and reverse the illumination. We should take a good look at ourselves and alert and alarm ourselves. If we make mistakes, we should correct them and resume our solid holding of the precepts. It is like crossing the sea in a life-raft. If the life-raft springs a small hole, it must be repaired quickly. If neglected and not repaired, the small hole will become large. With a large hole, the raft will start to leak and eventually will sink- and your life will go down along with it. This is greatly to be feared. Therefore, I hope that everyone will be especially attentive to the matter of holding precepts purely, and then the precept-protecting spirits will at all times accompany you and insure that you peacefully and safely traverse the road of cultivation.

**Sutra:**

**At that time, Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva addressed Moon of Liberation Bodhisattva, saying: Disciples of the Buddha, the Bodhisattva Mahasattva who has already cultivated the First Ground and who wishes to enter the Second Ground should give rise to ten kinds of profound minds, what are they? They are: a proper and upright mind, a compliant and yielding mind, a mind able to endure, a tamed and subdued mind, a still and quiet mind, a completely good mind, an unmixed and unscattered mind, a mind with no hankering or yearning, a vast mind, a great mind. The Bodhisattva, using those ten minds, attains entry to the Second Ground of Leaving Filth.**

**Disciples of the Buddha, when the Bodhisattva dwells upon the Ground of Leaving filth, his nature of itself leaves all killing far behind. He does not collect knives or staves. He does not cherish resentment or hatred. He has shame and he has remorse. He is endowed with humaneness and reciprocity. Towards all living beings who have a life, he always brings forth thoughts of benefit and kindly mindfulness. This Bodhisattva would not with evil mind even trouble living beings, how much the less give rise to heavy intent and actually kill or harm any whom he realizes are living beings.**

**Commentary:**

At that time- when the great assembly of Bodhisattvas and Moon of Liberation Bodhisattva had finished speaking the previous verses- Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva addressed Moon of Liberation Bodhisattva. Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva spoke to Moon of Liberation Bodhisattva, saying: Disciples of the Buddha, the Bodhisattva, Mahasattva, the great Bodhisattva, cultivates the Bodhisattva Way and accumulates all kinds of good roots and is one who has already cultivated the First Ground- he is one who has already cultivated and certified to the position of the First Ground, the Ground of Happiness- and who wishes to enter the Second Ground. He further wishes to cultivate the Dharmas of the Second Ground. He should give rise to ten kinds of profound minds. He should bring forth ten profound minds and have true and actual recognition of Buddhadharmas.

What are the ten? What are the ten kinds of profound minds? They are: a proper and upright mind; one’s mind should be straight, not devious and crooked. As it is said:

The straight mind is the Way Place.

“Proper” means not having any deviant knowledge or deviant views. “Upright” means not having any deceitful thoughts.

A compliant and yielding mind- the mind of the Bodhisattva should be compliant and yielding; it should not be obstinate or stubborn. A mind able to endure- one is able to undergo and bear what is unendurable. The straight and upright mind represents the mind of Giving, while the compliant and yielding mind is Holding Precepts, and the mind able to endure is Patience. Being “able to endure” means the ability to be patient with the unbearable. The precepts one cannot hold on still must hold. No matter what, one cannot break the precepts.

There was a Bhikshu like that in the past. The Bhikshu, wearing red clothing, went to the home of a goldsmith. The goldsmith at the time was making a pearl necklace for the king of the country. Each pearl of the strand was extremely costly. While the Bhikshu was in the goldsmith’s home, the goldsmith lost of the pearls, and accused the Bhikshu of having stolen it. Actually, the Bhikshu did know where the pearl was, but he certainly had not stolen it. Where was the pearl? Because the Bhikshu had been wearing red-colored clothing, the pearl had reflected the red color. Right at that time a goose had come in, and when it saw the pearl reflecting the red color, it looked to the goose like a piece of meat, and so the goose seized it in its beak and gulped it down. Thereupon, the Bhikshu had reflected, “If I say the pearl has been eaten by the goose, the goldsmith will certainly kill the goose to get back the pearl. If that happens, it will be as if I indirectly had killed the goose.” Therefore, he hadn’t said where the pearl was. The goldsmith said, “Now, there are only two of us here, and since my pearl is missing, you must have stolen it. If you hadn’t stolen it, how could it be missing?” The Bhikshu said he hadn’t stolen it.

The goldsmith grabbed a cane and started beating the Bhikshu, yelling, “So you didn’t steal it? You’re just not admitting it!” He kept beating him until the Bhikshu’s body was entirely covered with welts, his skin broken and bleeding. When the Bhikshu had been beaten to the point that he bled, the goose, seeing the blood, ran up and started drinking the blood that was flowing from the Bhikshu’s body. The goldsmith hadn’t expected the goose to run and rink the blood and was still using his cane to beat the Bhikshu. One blow of his cane smashed the goose’s head, and the goose died of the blow. Once it was dead, the Bhikshu said, “You shouldn’t beat me. Now you can find your pearl.”

The goldsmith said, “I can find it, can I? You stole it, and now you’d better come up with it fast! If not, I’ll beat you to death!”

The Bhikshu said, “The pearl was eaten by the goose. Now that you have beaten the goose to death I’m telling you. The pearl is in the goose’s belly. If you don’t believe me, you can slit open the goose’s stomach, and you will find the pearl.” As it turned out, when the goldsmith cut open the goose’s belly, the pearl actually was inside the goose’s stomach.

When the goldsmith saw that, he realized, “This Bhikshu is someone who really holds the precepts! In order to protect the goose’s life, no matter how much I beat him, he wouldn’t say anything, but in fact, the goose had eaten the pearl!” He informed the king of the country of what had happened, and the king was very respectful of the Bhikshu. That is what is meant by a mind which is able to bear and endure.

There is another story, this time about a group of Bhikshus, quite a few of them, who while travelling through a stretch of wilderness, were held up by bandits. The bandits robbed the Bhikshus of their valuables and also robbed them of all their clothing, so that they had no clothes to wear. Some of the bandits suggested, “We should kill these left-home people. If they aren’t killed, they’ll probably report us to the king, and it won’t go well for us. It would be better to kill them.” Other bandits said, “Don’t kill them. The law of Bhikshus is that not only do they not harm the lives of living beings, they are not even permitted to harm the lives of plants and trees. Let’s tie these Bhikshus up in the rushes. That way they won’t be able to report us to the king, and no one will find us.” The other bandits thought it over and said, “That’s a good plan. It would be best to tie them up in the rushes and have them die on their own.” So, the bandits bound the Bhikshus in the rushes and then went on their way.

When they had gone, an elder amongst the Bhikshus said, “We should now recognize that in the past we robbed people of their valuables and took people’s live, and so this life we have met with this retribution. So, all of you bear up under this!” He talked to them like that. Then, at dusk, the ants and beetles and mosquitoes and all the rest came to bite them. They bit the Bhikshus to the point that their entire bodies were one huge blister which was both painful and itchy. The elder Bhikshu said, “Everyone bear with it. Don’t become hateful. See how the dragons, because of giving rise to hatred while cultivating the Way, fell to the bodies of dragons. Although we have now encountered this difficulty, we should have no hate, to avoid ending up like the dragons. When the dragons lose their hatred, then they will be able to abandon the bodies of dragons and resume cultivating. So, everyone be patient!” The more he spoke that way, the more trouble there was. Bees came to sting them- everything imaginable came to bite them, and their bites were extremely difficult to endure.

During the night, the howls of the wolves, bears, panthers, and leopards terrified the Bhikshus incredibly. Then, at daybreak, who should appear but the king of the country conducting a hunting expedition right through the area where the Bhikshus were! When he saw them from afar, the king thought that they were wild beasts, since the Bhikshus were not wearing clothes. As he approached and saw them better, the king thought they must be goblins. As he got even closer and was within speaking distance, upon questioning them he found out that they were Bhikshus who had been robbed of all their possessions by bandits, and in consideration of holding the precepts were enduing hunger and thirst, rather than consenting to harm the grass and bushes. When the King saw those Bhikshus were that way, he felt great respect for them and said, “In my country there are still Bhikshus who cultivate the Way like that! This is truly rare!” The king immediately released them from the rushes in which they had been tied and invited them to return with him to the palace to accept offerings from him.

All of you think it over: all people had to do was tie the Bhikshus up with rushes, yet they would not consent to break the precepts and harm the rushes. They were prepared to endure starvation and being stung to death by insects rather than break the precepts. See what kind of ability they had to bear what is difficult to bear and practice what is difficult to practice. Precepts which it was impossible to keep, they were able to keep. That is to be genuine Dharma and Sangha jewels within Buddhism, and that is the mind which is able to endure.

A tamed and subdued mind not to speak of taming and subduing the minds of others, it is not easy to tame and subdue one’s own mind. You tell it to cultivate the Way, yet all it does is strike up false thinking. As soon as you want to cultivate the Way, there are even more false thoughts. You want to become purer, and your defiled thoughts multiply. It is not easy to tame and subdue one’s mind. If you are able to tame and subdue that mind which is so stubborn and disobedient then you have some skill. That have a still and quiet mind does not mean that the external environment is still and quiet, but rather that one is still and quiet within one’s own mind. Within one’s own mind there is no sound whatsoever. A completely good mind is a mind without the slightest evil. An unmixed and unscattered mind is when one’s mind is unconfused and undispersed, with no admixtures. The opposite of a mind with no hankering or yearning would be, for instance, if you gave something away and then afterwards regretted it. A vast mind is expansive and broad. A great mind means the very greatest mind there is. Nothing is greater. The Bodhisattva, using those ten minds, attains entry to the second ground of leaving filth. The Bodhisattva, by employing those ten kinds of profound minds in cultivation, can attain to the Second Ground and leave all defiling filth far behind.

Disciples of the Buddha, Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva again calls out: All of you disciples of the Buddha, when the Bodhisattva dwells upon the ground of leaving filth, his nature of itself leaves all killing far behind. He does not collect knives or staves. He, himself, does not collect- that is does not retain or prepare-knives, staves, or any instruments of killing. He does not cherish resentment or hatred. The Bodhisattva has no resentment or hatred in his mind for anyone. He has shame, and he has remorse. He is endowed with humaneness and reciprocity. This means that one does not subject others to what one would not want to be subjected to oneself. For instance, if you would not want others to oppress you, then you yourself do not oppress other people. If you yourself would not like to be scolded by people, then you do not scold others. Those are all minds of humaneness and reciprocity. Humaneness means being kind and compassionate towards people, and reciprocity also means a sense of forgiveness. No matter who does what wrong, you forgive them. He is endowed with this mind of humane love, this mind of reciprocity and forgiveness.

Towards all living beings who have a life- with regard to all living beings with sentience, that is, all living beings who have blood and breath and so have lives- he always brings forth thoughts of benefit and kindly mindfulness. He always wants to benefit all those living beings and be kind and compassionate towards all people. This Bodhisattva would not with evil mind even trouble living beings, he would not maliciously cause living beings to become afflicted- how much the less give rise to heavy intent and actually kill or harm any whom he realizes are living beings. Being aware that they are living beings, he would not employ a heavily evil mind and then carry out that “heavy intent” to kill or harm living beings. Because they are living beings, one should have an attitude of humaneness and reciprocity towards them; one should not kill and harm them.

**Sutra:**

**His nature does not steal. The Bodhisattva is always content with his own possessions. He is always kind and forgiving towards others and does not wish to encroach upon them. If an item belongs to someone else, he gives rise to the thought that it is someone else’s item and would never consider stealing it, down to a blade of grass or a leaf- if not given, he does not take it- how much the less any other of the necessities of life.**

**Commentary:**

His nature does not steal. The Second Ground, the Ground of Leaving Filth, is also the Ground of the Purity of the Self-nature; and it is one’s basic, undefiled self-nature. Within that kind of state, one’s own nature is free from all defiled dharmas, to the point that every state of mind and every movement of thought is pure with no defilement. If you have one single defiled thought, that is impurity.

The principles expounded in the Flower Adornment Sutra are all Dharma doors which are not separate from our daily activities and concerns. Not only are the principles of the Flower Adornment Sutra not separate form the daily round of our ordinary activities, but the other Sutras also are not apart from the principles which we require in our daily behavior. If the principles discussed by the Sutras had no relevance to the daily lives of each and every one of us, the Buddha would not have spoken those Sutras. The Buddha spoke the Sutras to enable each of us to live good lives, proper and regular lives, livers very much in accordance with the rules. That is why he spoke all of the Dharma doors and lectured all the Sutras. Each Sutra is presenting us with a proper road along which to travel. However, we must go along it for the Sutras to be of use. If we only know the Sutras and do not rely upon the Sutras to cultivate, then we can listen to the Sutras for eighty thousand great kalpas, but it will be equivalent to not having heard them at all. And so:

They had eyes but did not see Nishyanda Buddha,
Had ears but did not hear the perfect, Sudden Teaching.

It could be explained in this way: all who were listening to the Sutras listened for awhile and then fell asleep, and so they had eyes but did not see and had ears but did not hear. Therefore, the first requirement for all of you now listening to the Flower Adornment Sutra is not to fall asleep. If you fall asleep, then you, too, have eyes but do not see Nishyanda, have ears but do not hear the perfect, Sudden Teaching. That’s the first requirement.

The second requirement is not to dream. If you fall asleep, that is not so important, but the dreaming is. A man has a dream, and in his dream he sees his girlfriend come. A girl has a dream, and in her dream she sees her boyfriend arrive. Wouldn’t you say that was to kick the Flower Adornment Sutra right out beyond the ninth heaven? Then, when he wakes up, he keeps looking for his girlfriend. “She just came, where can she have gone? Oh? I saw her come.” He has the dream, and then after waking from the dream he still wants to look for his girlfriend. Men look for girlfriends, and women for boyfriends saying, “I saw my boyfriend; now where has he gone to?” looking all over the place. If it’s that way, then it doesn’t matter whether I lecture the Flower Adornment Sutra well or not, you won’t understand it. But, if you are not asleep and not dreaming, then even if I don’t lecture well, you can still completely savor its flavor, feel you are in your element, and understand more principle.

To return to the Sutra text, his nature does not steal. Of the nature it is said:

People at first
Are basically good in nature.
They are close to the nature,
Yet learn to be distant.
If they are not taught,
Their nature then shifts.
The teaching of principles
Merits concentration.

This is a quote form the Three Character Class. At one time in China ever child could recite it, but it is not well known at all in America, so I shall explain it for you.

“People at first” means people when they have just been born, “Are basically good in nature.” Their natures are good. Some claim that our natures are evil, but the nature being evil won’t stand up, it says that in nature they are good. Basically, they are good, “They are close to the nature.” Their natures basically are close to the good. Their natures are just about the same as our original nature and are not far distant from it, “Yet learn to be distant.” They learn to be distant from the basic nature. “If they are not taught,” if you do not instruct them, “Their nature then shifts.” Those who were good in nature become evil-natured, which is the meaning of their natures then shifting. “The teaching of principles merits concentration.” When you teach them principles, how should you do it? It merits concentration. You should concentrate on the teaching.

Now, in America, the children are supposed to develop spontaneously and naturally, and so they do whatever they please. The way this turns out is that they are like trees with branches forking off to the north, south, east, and west and points in between. That greatly decreases the uses to which the basic trunk of the tree can be put, so that it cannot become good-quality building material. As a result, a great many American children have become hippies, and this is the fault of improper instruction.

“His nature does not steal.” When the Bodhisattva holds the precept against stealing, not only does he not break the precept in a tangible way, but he also does not violate it in intangible ways. This means he does not violate the precept in ways that can be seen or known, and even when it could not be seen or found out, he still does not violate the precept in his nature. That is, there is no “yeast” of stealing in it. The analogy is that of making bread or biscuits. If you’re making bread and you don’t add any yeast, it won’t be easy to get the dough to rise, and basically it won’t rise. But, if you do add yeast, the dough will rise and you can make bread or biscuits. The yeast is like stealing. If there is none of that yeast in one’s nature, then there will be no stealing.

The Bodhisattva is always content with his own possessions. The Bodhisattva himself constantly knows how to be satisfied with his own possessions, his internal valuables of:

Head, eyes, brains, and marrow;
and, his outer valuables of:
countries, cities, wives, and children.

As it is said:

If one knows how to be content, one is always happy.

Why do we steal? It’s because we are not satisfied and are greedy without stop. If you know how to be content, then you are always content.

If you know how to be content,
Then you will not be humiliated.
If you know when to stop,
Then you will not get into trouble.

If you can always be content, then you will not break the law, nor will people look down on you. “You will not be humiliated” means no one will come along and humiliate you. “If you know when to stop, then you will not get into trouble.” If you ordinarily have no greed, then there will be no dangers at all. “Trouble” means danger. As it is also said:

If you know how to be content,
Then you are always happy.
If you know how to be patient,
Then you are peaceful of yourself.

What is mean by “Bodhisattva?” Bodhisattvas are the same as we people, except that their way of thinking and their behavior differs from ours. At all times and under all circumstances they wish to benefit living beings; at all times and under all circumstances they are teaching and transforming living beings. They are not selfish and self-seeking. They do not scheme for themselves. They are not concerned about themselves, saying “What about me? What’s in it for me? How am I going to stay alive day after day? In the future, how am I going to die? I certainly won’t ‘swallow poison and die!’” They’re not that way. The Bodhisattva lives without living and dies without dying. He simply takes being of service to all of humanity as his own responsibility and does whatever he can to help mankind. He never does anything which would harm humankind.

This is certainly not to say that the Bodhisattva has this or that spiritual penetration. Having spiritual penetrations is a natural kind of response. The Bodhisattva certainly would not employ his spiritual penetrations to back up tyrannical and ruthless behavior, doing whatever he pleased. He would not be that way. Why is it that we have no spiritual penetrations? It’s because if we did have them, we would use them as weapons, shouting, “I have spiritual penetrations! If you don’t obey me, I’ll make your head ache!” Those are not spiritual penetrations but ghostly penetrations. Why? Don’t you think you’re going to have to undergo retribution in the future? Whether or not they obey the Bodhisattva’s instructions, the Bodhisattva looks upon living beings with eyes of compassion and would never punish them or cause them any other kind of pain or suffering.

He is always kind and forgiving towards others. The Bodhisattva is kind and compassionate towards all living beings.

Kindness can bestow happiness.

To be forgiving means to be merciful. No matter what they do wrong, the Bodhisattva think this way, “The offense is not yours, because it is due to my not having taught you any better. Therefore, although it is you who have committed the offense, basically the offense is mind.” No matter what it is, the Bodhisattva always looks for the fault in himself, returns the light and reverses the illumination. Living beings are always illumining outside, always saying, “You’re wrong.” The Bodhisattva says he himself is wrong.

…And does not wish to encroach upon them. He does not want to encroach upon others to benefit himself. If an item belongs to someone else, should there be valuables or objects which belong to other people, he gives rise to the thought that it is someone else’s item. He thinks, “Oh, that thing is his. I can’t steal it. I can’t encroach upon his benefits,” and would never consider stealing it. No matter how expensive, valuable, or rare, even if they are Capitol City- priced rare and precious gems, the bodhisattva does not become greedy for them. He would never consider stealing them. If you have no greed, then you will not steal. Stealing is just greed. Because of insatiable greed, one thinks of stealing.

Down to a blade of grass or a leaf: if not given, he does not take it. Even if it’s a blade of grass or a twig, if no one gives it to you, you may not take, it, how much the less any other of the necessities of life. If this is true even of a single blade of grass or a twig, how much the more so is it true of other, more valuable items?

So, don’t imitate American children who in school specialize in being mice. Those of you who’ve been to school have probably experienced this and will understand without my telling you. In the school, there is a refrigerator. Whoever has things to eat places them in the refrigerator. As soon as one person puts something in, another person comes along and “liberates” it, acts the mouse and steals it to eat. It may be milk, bread, butter, or gasoline- no one would eat that- or ice cream. Isn’t that correct? If you put a gallon of gasoline in there, no one would steal it- maybe one would, after all, steal it to put it in one’s care. That is a possibility. So, lots of Americans, when they are students, become mice. Why is that? It’s because they don’t know about the precept against stealing. They don’t understand that:

A mustard seed not given to a person,
Is a mustard seed that may not be taken by that person.

There must be that kind of care and concern. When you’re a kid in school, your attitude is, “What’s yours is mind, and what’s mine is mine, too.” You don’t make distinctions of self and others; however, “What’s yours is mind.” That’s not in accord with precepts.

“Down to a blade of grass or a leaf…” Do you all hear that? A single blade of grass or a twig, or one leaf- if not given he does not take it. If no one has given it to me, I don’t want it. For example, if this glass of juice had not been offered to me, I wouldn’t drink it. Although it’s a small matter, if you can’t be clear about the small matters, then what can be said about the great matters? So, in cultivating the Way, we should pay attention to the areas which are subtle as motes of dust. When there are a great many fine motes of dust, they become a mountain. You should not say, “Oh, it’s just a dust-mote’s worth. It doesn’t’ matter. I can just sluff it over.” It’s precisely because you lack dust motes that you are unable to make a high and lofty mountain.

In holding precepts, you should have a spirit of holding them without holding them, and a practice of cultivating without cultivating. It may look as if you are not holding precepts, but actually you are truly holding precepts. It may look as if you are not cultivating, but actually you are truly cultivating. So, maybe those of you in Gold Mountain Temple and the International Institute for the Translation of Buddhist Texts say, “Oh, I can’t cultivate. All I do is strike up false thinking!” No matter how much false thinking you strike up, it’s far better than what worldly people do. In everything they do, worldly people are planting the seeds for stealing, and in the future they will reap the fruit of stealing. Although in what we are doing here there are still faults and habits which we are not able to change immediately, still we have all drawn near the Buddha’s Way Place, and every day are able to understand more than before.

“How much the less any other of the necessities of life.” If one would not casually take or steal, even a blade of grass, a leaf, or a mustard seed, how much the less would one steal any other things, any other of the necessities of life?

(In reply to a question concerning the use of the arisal of thought in cultivation.)

If you have thought, then that’s not it. If you have thoughts, then that’s like waves arising on the sea:

The ocean’s water has no waves.
When the wind arises, there are myriad limitations.

At the time of no thought, that is your inherent good. Once you have thought, you have already fallen into second place and have limitations. That’s why I said if you have thought then that’s not it. At the time when you have no thoughts- no thoughts of good or bad, good or evil- then that’s it. Human consciousness is just like waves. Whether you believe it or not, I’m telling you it’s this way. If you don’t believe, just act like I never said it, and keep on investigating. Use your own wisdom to recognize all principles.

**Sutra:**

**His nature does not engage in sexual misconduct. The Bodhisattva is content with his own wife and does not seek the wives of others. Towards the wives and concubines of others, the women protected by others, by relatives or those betrothed, and those protected by the law, he does not even give rise to a thought of greedy defilement, much the less follow it into action, and much the less give himself over to what is not the Way.**

**Commentary:**

We have talked about the precepts against killing and stealing, and how the Bodhisattva in the most subtle aspects holds and protects the precepts, without violating them a hair’s breadth. He looks upon the precept against sexual misconduct as even more important. His nature does not engage in sexual misconduct. Within his self nature, although he has the karma of sexual desire, it still is not sexual misconduct. Sexual misconduct is sexual conduct not sanctioned by Dharma, or law, behavior not in accord with the Way. How does sexual desire arise? It comes from greed. Greed for wealth is one kind of greed, and greed for sex is another. If you weren’t greedy, you wouldn’t have sexual desire.

Therefore, thoughts of sexual desire come from greed. As soon as you are greedy, you don’t distinguish between right and wrong, and you don’t know black form white. You don’t know what are black dharmas and what are white dharmas. This is what is known as ignorance in the Twelve Links of Conditioned Co-production. I’m always telling you that the love men and women have for one another is basic ignorance. For example, when a boy and girl are in love with each other, you can ask the boy, “How come you’re so much in love with that girl? How come you can’t see through it all and put it all down?” His answer will be, “I don’t know.” Why did he fall in love? He doesn’t know. Not knowing is ignorance. If you ask the girl, “How come you can’t give that boy up? Why are you so attached to him?” she’ll say that it’s because she loves him. “Ultimately, why do you love him?” When asked to search for the basis of it, she doesn’t know. She hasn’t any idea why. That’s just ignorance.

It’s due to ignorance that there is activity, sexual behavior; and so it say that ignorance conditions activity, specifically sexual activity. Why do people engage in it? They don’t know. It comes about from ignorance. They don’t know the reason for it. I’ll tell you: it’s just wanting to go along the road to death, because people:

Are born from sexual desire, and die from sexual desire.

They run out of that filthy cave, and then afterwards they still want to run back into that filthy cave, and so it says they are born from sexual desire and die from sexual desire is just defiled dharmas. They are born from defiled dharmas, and they still want to die from those defiled dharmas. So there is sexual activity, sexual intercourse, and after that there is consciousness. Discriminating consciousness is produced. After there is consciousness, there is name and form- name and form and outline. Once there is name and form, the six entrances are produced. Once the shapes and characteristics of the six entrances--eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind- are produced, after that there is contact, the sensation of contact. Once there is contact, there comes to be reception, the reception of feelings. One feels very comfortable from these feelings and gives rise to love. Having love and desire, one then wants to seek, seek to have for oneself. Once there is having (being), there is rebirth, and with birth comes old age and death. The Twelve Conditioned Links follow upon one another, and one turns in the six paths of rebirth, unable to break them. But, if you can destroy ignorance, the rest are all extinguished. Therefore, the most fundamental is ignorance.

Ignorance is just the lack of wisdom, the lack of light. If you had the light of wisdom, then you wouldn’t be turned by defiled dharmas. You would turn the defiled dharmas so they became pure dharmas. If you can right in the midst of defiled dharmas turn them around, then that is purity. If you don’t turn them, then that is defilement. This is just as easy as turning over your palm. You can turn your hand over as you please. Bodhi and afflictions follow the same principle. Sexual misconduct includes all kinds of afflictions within it. Why is it we people have afflictions? It’s just because we are greedy and are selfish and out for self-benefit. So, if something has no benefit for “me” in it, “I” become afflicted, and if it is harmful to “me,” “I” get afflicted, too. This is all due to one’s view of self being too deep, from having deviant views, and especially from thoughts of desire. If you cut off desire, with no desire you won’t have any afflictions. It’s because you have desire that you have afflictions. That’s sexual misconduct.

“His nature does not engage in sexual misconduct.” He doesn’t even have those kinds of thoughts. There are not thoughts of sexual desire within his own nature. The Bodhisattva is content with his own wife. The Bodhisattva does not engage in sexual activity with his own wife. He is content, because he knows how to cultivate, and so he’s constantly able to get rid of desire and cast out love. Although he is within that kind of state, he isn’t turned by that defiled state. He is content, and does not seek the wives of others. He doesn’t even have sexual relations with his own wives and concubines, much the less with the wives and concubines of other people. So, towards the wives and concubines of others, other people’s wives and consorts, the women protected by others, the women protected by other people, who might be handmaidens or else mistresses or concubines, by relatives, or those betrothed, perhaps women relatives or women of the same family, or women for whom a matchmaker has already arranged a marriage- and those protected by the law- or women under the protection of the laws of the family- he does not even give rise to a thought of greedy defilement.

The Bodhisattva, towards all women relatives and all female friends, as well as all categories of women, does not have thoughts of greedy defilement. He doesn’t even have defiled thinking about them at all, much the less follow it into action- much the less go and practice sexual misconduct; he would even less do that that- and much the less give himself over to what is not the Way. Moreover, if it is behavior that is not in accord with virtue in the Way, the Bodhisattva would even less do something like that.

**Sutra:**

**His nature does not lie. The Bodhisattva always utters true speech, actual speech, and timely speech, to the point that even in a dream, he would not consent to utter covering, hiding speech. He would never think of wanting to do so, much the less deliberately commit violations.**

**His nature does not engage in double tongued speech. The Bodhisattva, towards all living beings, has no thought of dividing them against each other. He has no thought of troubling or harming. He does not report the speech of one person, to break him off from a second person, to that second person, nor does he report the speech of the second person, to break him off from the first person, to the first person. If people have no already broken with each other, he does no increase the break. He does not enjoy dividing people against each other, nor is he happy when people are divided against each other. He does not utter speech that would divide people against each other, nor does he report speech that would divide people against each other-regardless of whether it is true or false.**

**Commentary:**

How does the Bodhisattva manage not to engage in sexual misconduct? It’s because the Bodhisattva has true and actual Samadhi power. He can be such that:

The eyes see forms and shapes, but inside there is nothing.
The ears hear defiling matters, but the mind does not know.

He is:

Thus, thus unmoving, in a state of unmoving suchness;
Understanding and constantly clear.

Therefore, he is endowed with the power of Samadhi so that no kind of beautiful form could shake his Samadhi power.

His nature does not lie. As it is said:
When one thing is good, everything is good.
When one thing is true, everything is true.

Since he does no kill, steal, or engage in sexual misconduct, he also is not going to lie. Why do people tell lies? The only time one lies is to gain some advantage for oneself, to cheat people; or, if something is going to harm oneself or destroy one’s own advantages one lies. People clearly know it’s not right to tell lies, yet still go ahead and tell them. But, the Bodhisattva doesn’t have that kind of selfish attitude and is not out for self-benefit, not out for himself. The bodhisattva gives all good things to other people and takes all the bad things for himself, and so he basically has no need to lie. In his own nature he has no causes for lying or any conditions of lying, and he doesn’t have any karma of lying, either. He doesn’t create that kind of karma.

Therefore, it says: the Bodhisattva always utters true speech. When other people see the Bodhisattva not telling lies, they look on him as being a great fool. “How can he be so stupid, so straight?” they wonder. It’s not just the average person who considers the bodhisattva an idiot, but even people who cultivate the Way consider all the Bodhisattva says and does really stupid, that he’s not smart as most people, because he always talks straight and doesn’t lie. Other people feel he’s being an idiot, but this idiot is someone with great wisdom. Common people see the bodhisattva as very doltish and stupid, but from the Buddha’s point of view, the Bodhisattva is an extremely fine Buddhist disciple. That’s why the Buddha is always calling him, “Good man,” and considers him to have great wisdom.

So, stupidity and wisdom just depend on who’s doing the looking. If the Buddha sees you as having wisdom, naturally you are someone intelligent. If common people feel you have wisdom, then you are just the same as they are. So, when common people see the Bodhisattva, they take him to be very doltish, a fool. Maitreya Bodhisattva, who only knows about others and not about himself, called himself an old fool, a really stupid person getting on in years. He admitted it of himself and didn’t call himself an old hand, or someone old and smart. He called himself an old fool-the more foolish the older he got.

There’s also what Confucius had to say:

I can talk to Hui all day,
And he does not object, like a fool.
But, I have observed that when he is by himself,
He really puts into practice what I have said,
He is no fool.

He said, “I can talk to Hui all day long, and he never has any objections. No matter what I say, he just says, ‘Yes, yes. No problem.’ From morning to night, he never opposes me, like a fool, a dolt, or a dummy. But, when he goes back to his room, he really understands what I have said to him. He completely grasps all the principles I have spoken for him, without exception. He is unusually receptive to the principles underlying what I say. Hui is no fool! It’s just that on the outside he looks like a fool. He doesn’t talk too much or look too much. That’s not his style. That’s why he looks like a stupid person.” Any of you who talk or look too much are not like Yen Hui. What was Yen Hui like all the time? His eyes always contemplated his nose, his nose contemplated his mouth, and his mouth questioned his heart and didn’t look at things or talk, so Confucius said he was like a fool.

The Bodhisattva always utters true speech. Actual speech, that is, he doesn’t lie, and timely speech, that is, when it’s time to speak, he speaks. But, he would never speak when it was not the right time to speak. If you go outside and answer questions that you shouldn’t answer, that is not timely speech. When you speak about what you shouldn’t, and when you don’t talk about what you should, that’s not timely, appropriate speech-to the point that even in a dream he would not consent to utter covering, hiding speech. Even while asleep, in dreaming he would not say things to cover up his own mistakes. He never covers up his faults, even while asleep. He is every frank in admitting them, but even then does not talk too much. He would never think of wanting to do so. It would never even occur to him to lie, much the less deliberately commit violations. He would even less lie on purpose.

His nature does not engage in double-tongued speech. In his own nature, he does not act the two-headed snake. (In Chinese, the words for tongue and snake sound alike.) Have you ever seen a two-headed snake? If you see one, don’t act like one, or you’ll end up being one. If you don’t act like a two-headed snake, you will cross over the two-headed snake. The Bodhisattva, towards all living beings, has no thought of dividing them against each other. He doesn’t break people up. He has no thought of troubling or harming. He doesn’t like to hurt living beings or make trouble for them. He benefits living beings. He does not report the speech of one person, to break him off from a second person, to that second person.

Some of my disciples should pay close attention to this sentence in the Sutra. It would help them very much. He does not report the speech of one person. He doesn’t talk about what person A said to break him off from a second person, to make trouble between person A and person B. An example of this is: telling one person, “Do you know what so-and-so said about you? It was really rotten. That person is really out to get you. He is always talking about what’s wrong with you, saying this and that. I can’t remember it all there was so much of it. I’m just telling you a little bit.” The, if you ask him, “What else did he say?” the person tells you, “Oh, I just can’t tell you. If I told you everything, you would just get upset.” Then, hearing that, the person really blows up and says, “What did they say?!!!” This is just making someone get upset, to break him off from a second person.

Nor does he report the speech of the second person, to break him off from the first person, to the first person. He also doesn’t tell the first person what the second person said about him. He doesn’t tell B what A said about him, in order to alienate person A from person B, for example, saying to him, “I’ll tell you something you ought to know, but it’s really secret. So-and-so says you have got one doesn’t know how many boyfriends. They also say you do this and that-really rotten stuff! Nothing could be worse! And, when I heard it, I felt just horrible.” They start that kind of rumor, stirring up gossip to the first person.

If people have not already broken with each other, he doest not break them up. If people are not at odds with each other, don’t set them against each other. If people have already broken off with each other, he doest not increase the break. If you have already practiced setting people against each other, you’d better change, hadn’t you? You shouldn’t keep on increasing those kinds of offenses, should you? He doest no enjoy dividing people against each other. The Bodhisattva does not like to turn people against each other-breaking up friendships. Nor is he happy when people are divided against each other. He doesn’t think this is a lot of fun. He would never say, “I’ll get them so they can’t stand each other, that would be a better state of affairs.”

If you have already done this kind of thing, you should change fast. If you change, then there won’t be any trouble. You don’t have to say, “Oh no, I’m really done for! I am going to fall into the hells; and, what will I ever do when I fall into the hell of pulling tongues!” All you have to do is change. Bodhisattvas won’t hold it against you:

People are not Sages,
Who has not made mistakes?

It’s said:

If you have made mistakes but can change, then the mistakes will disappear.
But if you cover up your mistakes, then you increase the offense.

If you try to cover up what you’ve done wrong, then you have added an offense to the offense you already had. So, at Gold Mountain Monastery, anybody who has done something wrong should repent of it fast and reform. Once you have repented and reformed, you return to purity.

He does no utter speech that would divide people against each other. So, don’t keep on saying things that set people against each other. Nor does he report speech that would divide people against each other-regardless f whether it is true or false. Whether it is true or not, don’t say it. He doesn’t spread that kind of gossip or rumor.

**Sutra:**

**His nature does not engage in harsh speech, that is, cruel, malicious speech, coarse, wild speech, speech that brings suffering to others, speech that provokes anger and hatred in others, blunt speech, furtive speech, vile and evil speech, cheap and vulgar speech, speech unpleasant to hear, speech that does not delight the listener, angry, hateful speech, speech that burns the heart like fire, speech bound up in resentment, heated irritating speech, disagreeable speech, displeasing speech, speech that can destroy oneself and others-all such types of speech as those he completely abandons. He always utters kind, encouraging speech, soft and gentle speech, speech that delights the mind, speech pleasant to the listener, speech that makes the listener happy, speech that well enters into people’s hearts, elegant and refined speech, speech agreeable to most people, speech that gladdens most people, and speech that brings joy to body and mind.**

**Commentary:**

His nature does not engage in harsh speech. The Bodhisattva doesn’t’ have any harsh speech in his own nature at all. That is, he does not utter cruel, malicious speech. He would never speak words as hurtful to people as poison, which make people die from rage as if they had been poisoned. He doesn’t use coarse, wild speech, being very rough and unreasonable. He doesn’t use speech that brings suffering to others, with one sentence making people feel very troubled and pained. He does not use speech that provokes anger and hatred in others. He does not use blunt speech-this is telling people off to their face-or indirect, furtive speech-this is, gossiping behind their backs-vile and evil speech-that is, low and wicked talk, or cheap and vulgar speech-speech so despicable that what one says is utterly worthless. He doest not use speech unpleasant to hear, so that when one talks, no one wishes to listen, or speech that doest not delight the listener. Sometimes when one talks with people they don’t like it. Do you hear that?

Speech that people don’t like is a kind of harsh speech. He doest no use angry, hateful speech. When some people talk, they make people get angry and stir up their hatred. He doest not use speech that burns the heart like fire. There is another way of talking that is just as hard for people to endure as having fire burn their hearts. The Bodhisattva doest not use speech bound up in resentment. When one talks this way one leaves a permanent resentment burning in people. He does not use heated, irritating speech, so that as soon as one starts talking like this it makes people upset and afflicted; or disagreeable speech, talking a way that makes people really not want to listen. He doest not use displeasing speech.

Now the Sutra is telling you about all these various ways of talking, so now you can put all your effort into studying how to talk this way and go out to harm people, hurt them, and upset them with a single phrase. Before you heard the Sutra you never suspected there were so many ways to upset people with your words, but now you you’ve heard the Sutra you have mastered them all. The Bodhisattva doest not use speech that can destroy oneself and others. This kind of talk, when uttered, is wounding to oneself, and it also wounds others. All such types of speech as those, the different ways of talking just listed which are all examples of harsh speech, ways of creating evil karma from uttering evil words, he completely abandons. The Bodhisattva gives up all those ways of talking that create evil karma.

He always utters kind, encouraging speech. He always talks in a way as kind and beneficial to living beings as moistening water. He uses soft and gentle speech. He always talks in a very gentle and harmonious manner and uses speech that delights the mind. He puts people’s minds at ease and makes them very happy. His speech is pleasant to the listener. Before it was speech that was unpleasant to hear, and not it’s speech that is pleasant to hear, the exact opposite. He uses speech that makes the listener happy. People became unhappy when they listened before, and now when they hear they are particularly happy, again the complete reverse.

He uses speech that well enters into people’s hearts. When one talks, people find it very sweet and delightful. His is elegant and refined speech. One talks in a very lofty manner, in a very refined and cultured way, so when people listen they want to talk like that too, and one becomes a model for speech. He uses speech agreeable to most people and speech that gladdens most people, that makes lots of people glad in body and mind. And he uses speech that brings joy to body and mind. In body one is so happy one jumps for joy, and one becomes very happy at heart as well.

**Sutra:**

**His nature does not engage in loose speech. The Bodhisattva always delights in thoughtful, examined speech, in appropriate speech, in true speech, meaningful speech, lawful speech, speech that accords with Way-principle, skillfully taming and regulating speech, speech reckoned and measured according to the time and which is decisive. This Bodhisattva even when making jokes, always weighs his words, so how much less would he deliberately pour out scattered and abandoned talk.**

**His nature does not engage in greed. The Bodhisattva, concerning others’ wealth and property, as well as things owned and used by others, does not give rise to greed. He does not wish for them or seek them.**

**Commentary:**

His nature does not engage in loose speech, the Bodhisattva always delights in thoughtful, examined speech. What is loose speech? It means ridiculing people or intimidating people, or making people who hear it have defiled thoughts. When the Bodhisattva talks, he doesn’t just say whatever he pleases. Before he talks, he thinks over what he’s going to say and examines it well, and then he says it in only appropriate speech. When he talks it has to be at just the time he is supposed to talk. If it isn’t time to talk, he won’t talk. He’d never say, “I’m going to go ahead and answer questions I shouldn’t answer.” That would be to speak inappropriately, not knowing when it was the right time to talk. What he says is in true speech, very accurate and genuine, without the least bit of falseness. When he talks it is meaningful speech. What he says has principle and is reasonable.

At all times when the Bodhisattva speak it is lawful speech, speech in accord with Dharma. If it were talk not in accord with Dharma, he wouldn’t speak it. His is speech that accords with way-principle. What the Bodhisattva says has to be in accord with Way-principle and not opposed to it. He uses skillfully taming and regulating speech. The Bodhisattva, in teaching and transforming living beings uses very skillful and clever expedient methods to tame and subdue them. His is speech reckoned and measured according to the time and which is decisive. According to the occasion, he estimates and measures his words, and they have certainty to them. This Bodhisattva, even when making jokes, always weighs his words. Even when he cracks a joke, he thinks it over and asks himself it if is a joke he can make, whether it is appropriate or not, so how much the less would he deliberately pour out scattered and abandoned talk. He would be even less likely to come out with confused and scattered talk.

His nature does not engage in greed. The Bodhisattva’s nature is not greedy, he’s not greedy for sexual misconduct. The Bodhisattva, concerning others’ wealth and property, as well as things owned and used by others-others possessions and the things they use daily, does not give rise to greed. He would never become greedy or grasping. He does not wish for them or seek them. He’d never say, “I really like that. I’d really like to get that,” seeing people and telling them to give him gifts. One shouldn’t be so greedy. No matter what anyone gives you, if you can do without it, do without it. Don’t be greedy and seek for things, and then no matter where you go, everything will go well, and nothing will go badly.

**Sutra:**

**His nature is free from anger and hatred. The Bodhisattva, towards all living beings, constantly brings forth a mind of kindness; a benefitting mind; a mind of pity and sympathy; a happy mind; a compatible mind; a mind of accepting and gathering them in. He once and for all abandons anger, hatred, resentment, malevolence, rage, and irritation. He is always considerate and cooperative in his conduct, humane, kind, and helpful.**

**He is, further, free from deviant views. The Bodhisattva dwells in the proper paths, he does not practice astrology or divination. He does not grasp at evil precepts. His mind’s views are proper and upright. He does not deceive, he does not flatter. Towards the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha he brings forth decisive faith.**

**Commentary:**

His nature is free from anger and hatred. When the Bodhisattva cultivates, he very naturally, in his own nature, becomes free from anger and from hatred. The Bodhisattva, towards all living beings-the Bodhisattva who cultivates the Bodhisattva Way and accumulates all kinds of good roots towards the living beings of the nine Dharma realms-constantly brings forth a mind of kindness. He at all times has thoughts of kindness and compassion, wishing to give living beings happiness. He has a benefitting mind. He is always benefitting all living beings; that’s the kind of mind he should have. He has a mind of pity and sympathy. He always thinks of living beings as pitiful, and he has much sympathy for them all; and so he always helps them. He has a happy mind.

The Bodhisattva, in his mind, is always very, very happy, and he never worries. The Bodhisattva has a compatible mind. He always gets along with living beings and is kind to them, so living beings all like him. He has a mind of accepting and gathering them in. He can also gather in and accept all living beings. He once and for all abandons anger-he gets rid of his temper, his anger, once and for all-as well as, hatred, resentment, malevolence, rage, and irritation. He stops hating. He also gives up resentment and dislike.

He is always considerate and cooperative in his conduct, humane, kind… He always considers how he can cooperate with others. He is humane and kind towards all living beings, and he sympathizes with them all. And he is helpful to all living beings.

He is, further, free from deviant views. Bodhisattvas at all times maintain proper knowledge and proper views and stay far away from deviant knowledge and deviant views. The Bodhisattva dwells in the proper paths. The Bodhisattva always dwells in the eight proper paths. He does not practice astrology or divination. The Bodhisattva does not consult the Book of Changes to find out if something is going to be lucky or unlucky. He doesn’t use it. People can know about the principles of the Book of Changes, but if you are practicing the Bodhisattva Way, you don’t need to do divination. Why not?

The superior person asks about calamities,
And does not ask about blessings.

The superior person asks whether there are going to be disasters or not. He doesn’t ask, for example, “If I gamble, can I make a million dollars?” He doesn’t ask about his rewards of blessings, wondering, “What good things am I going to get? What advantages will I have?” Because he is that way, the Bodhisattva who practices the Bodhisattva Path does not need to ask about whether events are going to be lucky or not. Since he doesn’t have to find out whether something is auspicious or inauspicious, he doesn’t need to practice divination or astrology. The Bodhisattva is not afraid of disasters, so he doesn’t have to ask about them. Whether things go for him or against him, he accepts them all. He takes whatever he has coming to him. For this reason, he doesn’t practice fortune-telling, and the like.

He does not grasp at evil precepts. The Bodhisattva also does not maintain the precepts of cattle or dogs. For example, in India there are people who adhere to the behavior of dogs and cows, hoping to be reborn in heaven. But, the Bodhisattva doesn’t discipline himself in that way. His mind’s views are proper and upright. His mind is proper and upright, and his views are proper and upright, too. The straight mind is the Way place. He is not crooked. He does not deceive. He would not be able to lie, under any circumstances, to cheat people. He does not flatter. Also, he would never flatter people or play up to them. Towards the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha he brings forth decisive faith. He brings forth a mind of decisive faith towards the Buddha jewel, the Dharma jewel, and the Sangha jewel. He would never be able to have any doubts.

**Sutra:**

**Disciples of the Buddha, the Bodhisattva, Mahasattva, in this way protects and maintains the Ten Wholesome Karmic Paths constantly without interruption. He further makes the following reflection: “All living beings who fall into the evil destinies, without exception, do so because of the Ten Unwholesome Karmic Acts. Therefore, I should myself practice proper conduct. Why is that? If I, myself, am not able to cultivate proper conduct, it would be impossible to make others cultivate it.”**

**Disciples of the Buddha, this Bodhisattva, Mahasattva, further makes the following reflection: “The Ten Unwholesome Karmic Paths are causes for undergoing rebirth in the hells, as an animal, or as a hungry ghost. The Ten Wholesome Karmic Paths are causes for receiving birth as a person or as a god, up to the station of the summit of existence.**

**“Furthermore, when the supreme grade of these Ten Wholesome Karmic Paths is cultivated by means of wisdom, and when one’s mind is low and inferior, and when one fears the three realms, and because one is deficient in great compassion, and when one’s understanding comes from hearing the sounds of others, one accomplishes the vehicle of a sound-hearer.**

**“Furthermore, when the supreme grade of these Ten Wholesome Karmic Paths is cultivated to purity, and when one has not been taught by others but becomes enlightened on one’s own, when one is not fully endowed with great compassion or expedient means, when one is enlightened through understanding of profound dharmas of causes and conditions, one accomplishes the vehicle of those solitarily enlightened.**

**“Furthermore, when the supreme grade of these Ten Wholesome Karmic Paths is cultivated to purity, and when one’s mind is vast and limitless, when one is endowed with compassion and sympathy, when one uses expedient means to gather in beings, when one brings forth great vows, when one does not abandon living beings, when one seeks the great wisdom of all Buddhas, when one purifies and regulates all the Bodhisattva Grounds, when one purely cultivates all the paramitas, one accomplishes the vast, great conduct of a Bodhisattva.**

**“Furthermore, as to the most supreme grade of these Ten Wholesome Karmic Paths, when one has purified all modes, up to and including certifying to the ten powers and the four fearlessnesses, then one accomplishes all Buddhadharmas. Therefore, I now equally cultivate the Ten Wholesome Paths, and I should bring them all to perfect purity.”**

**The Bodhisattva should study such expedient means as those.**

**Commentary:**

Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva calls out and says: disciples of the Buddha, do you know or not? The Bodhisattva, Mahasattva, the great Bodhisattva who cultivates the Bodhisattva Way and accumulates all kinds of good roots, in this way protects and maintains the Ten Wholesome Karmic Paths constantly without interruption. He in that way protects and maintains the ten kinds of good ways and never stops doing so.

He further makes the following reflection: he again thinks, “All living beings who fall into the evil destinities, who fall to be hell beings, hungry ghosts, or animals-all, without exception, do so because of the Ten Unwholesome Karmic Acts. It’s because of committing the Ten Unwholesome Deeds that they fall. Therefore, I should myself practice proper conduct. I, myself, should cultivate the proper conduct of the Ten Wholesome Karmic Acts, and also encourage others to practice proper conduct. I should bring other living beings to cultivate proper conduct, to practice the Ten Wholesome paths of karma. Why is that? If I, myself, am not able to cultivate proper conduct-should I be unable to do it myself, it would be impossible to make others cultivate it. It would not be correct to tell others to cultivate.”

Disciples of the Buddha, this Bodhisattva, Mahasattva-the Bodhisattva who is great among Bodhisattvas, further makes the following reflection: he also thinks, “The Ten Unwholesome Karmic Paths-the ten kinds of bad deeds-are causes for undergoing rebirth in the hells, as an animal, or as a hungry ghost.” If you commit the Ten Unwholesome Acts, then you will fall into the three evil destinies. “The Ten Wholesome Karmic Paths are causes for receiving birth as a person or as a god, up to the station of the summit of existence.” If you practice the Ten Good Deeds, then you may be born a person or be born in the heaven of the summit of existence, which is the highest heaven. It forms that kind of cause.

“Furthermore, when the supreme grade of these Ten Wholesome Karmic Paths, the highest category of the Ten Wholesome Deeds-is cultivated by means of wisdom, and when one’s mind is low and inferior and when one fears the Three Realms-when one has a very small mind or else is afraid of the suffering in the Three Realms-and because one is deficient in great compassion-one should open up one’s mind to become a great compassion mind and when one’s understanding comes from hearing the sounds of others-upon hearing someone else lecture Sutras and speak the Dharma, one understands-one accomplishes the Vehicle of a Sound Hearer.” In that way one can accomplish the Vehicle of a Sound Hearer and become an Arhat.

“Furthermore, when the supreme grade of these Ten Wholesome Karmic Paths-the highest category of the Ten Good Deeds-is cultivated to purity-when well cultivated-and when one has not been taught by others but becomes enlightened on one’s own-when one does not hear others speak, but one becomes enlightened on one’s own refers to the Solitarily Enlightened Ones. When one is not fully endowed with great compassion or expedient means-when on has not yet perfected great compassion or skill in means and so needs to cultivate the Ten Wholesome Acts; when on is enlightened through understanding of profound Dharmas of causes and conditions-one understands the interactions of causes and conditions, those profound Dharmas, one accomplishes the Vehicle of those Solitarily Enlightened.” Then one becomes solitarily enlightened.

“Furthermore, when the supreme grade of these Ten Wholesome Karmic Paths is cultivated to purity-if you can cultivate it to total purity-and when one’s mind is vast and limitless, when on is endowed with compassion and sympathy, when one uses expedient means to gather in beings, when one brings forth great vows, when one does not abandon living beings, but forever teaches and transforms them, when one seeks the great wisdom of all Buddhas; when one purifies and regulates all the Bodhisattva Grounds- to seek the great wisdom of a Buddha, one should cultivate the Dharma doors of the Ten Grounds; when one purely cultivates all the Paramitas-cultivating all the Six Paramitas and the Ten Thousand Practices of a Bodhisattva, one accomplishes the vast, great conduct of a Bodhisattva.

“Furthermore, as to the most supreme grade of these Ten Wholesome Karmic Paths, when one has purified all modes-when one has purified the wisdom of all modes-up to and including certifying to the Ten Powers and the Four Fearlessnesses, then one accomplishes all Buddhadharmas-then one can bring all Buddhadharmas to successful conclusion. Therefore, I now equally cultivate the Ten Wholesome Paths, and I should bring them all to perfect purity. I should equally cultivate all the Ten Wholesome Paths of karma to purity.”

The Bodhisattva should study such expedient means as those. Bodhisattvas should study and practice those kinds of expedient Dharma doors.

**Sutra:**

**Disciples of the Buddha, this Bodhisattva, Mahasattva, further makes the following reflection, “Of the Ten Unwholesome Karmic Paths, the most severe are causes for the hells, the average degrees are causes for the animals, and the least severe are causes for the hungry ghosts.**

**“Among them, the offense of killing can cause living beings to fall to the hells, animals, and hungry ghosts. If they are born among people, they have two kinds of retribution: one, a short life; two, many illnesses. The offense of stealing also causes living beings to fall into the three evil paths. If they are born among people, they have to kinds of retribution: one, they are poor; two, their wealth is held in common, and they do not have free use of it.**

**Commentary:**

Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva again says: disciples of the Buddha, this Bodhisattva, Mahasattva-this great Bodhisattva who cultivates the Bodhisattva Way and accumulates all kinds of good roots, when he attains the position of the Second Ground, that of Leaving Filth, he further makes the following reflection, he makes another contemplation, saying: “Of the Ten Unwholesome Karmic Paths, the ten kinds of paths of karmic retribution which are not good, the most severe are causes for the hells. The most terrible and serious is that one has to fall into the hells. The average degrees are causes for the animals. The middle degree is that one has to become and animal, and the least severe are causes for the hungry ghosts. The least serious is having to become a hungry ghost.

“Among them, the offense of killing can cause living beings to fall to the hells, animals, and hungry ghosts.” The first among the Ten Unwholesome Karmic Paths is the offense of killing, which makes living beings fall into the destiny of the hells. There are millions upon millions of hells, not just one single hell. Their varieties are limitless. Hells are one of the three evil destinities and so are the animals. There are also millions upon millions of different kinds of animals. There are also countless varieties of hungry ghosts of different species and types. “If they are born among people, they have two kinds of retribution: “If you commit the Ten Unwholesome Karmic Acts, afterwards you fall into the three evil destinies.

When that is over and you are born as a person among people, you have two kinds of retribution coming to you. What are they? “One, a short life.” You like to kill? When you have finished undergoing your retribution in the three evil paths and become a person, you still have a short life. Maybe you will be born for a few days and then die. Or, you may die after a few months, or even a few years. You undergo the retribution of having a short life. “Two, many illnesses.” Perhaps you life won’t be short, but when you are a person you will always be sick. If you don’t have one illness, you will have another. That’s from killing.

“The second is the offense of stealing which also causes living beings to fall into the three evil paths.” It, too, makes all living beings who violate, by committing the offense of stealing, fall into the hells, the animals, and the hungry ghosts, those three evil paths. “If they are born among people, they have two kinds of retribution. One, they are poor.” Now you know why you are so poor. It’s because you committed the offense of stealing too heavily in your previous lives, so now you are destitute. “Two, their wealth is held in common, and they do not have free use of it.” The first was being poor. In the second, you do have a little bit of money, but it is jointly owned with someone else. It’s not entirely your own. Other people can tell you what to do with it. They control it, and so you can’t use it freely as you wish.

**Sutra:**

**“The offense of sexual misconduct also causes living beings to fall into the three evil paths. If they are born among people, they have two kinds of retribution: one, their wives will not be good or faithful; two, they will not have a retinue that accords with their intent. The offense of lying also causes living beings to fall into the three evil paths. If they are born among people, they have two kinds of retribution: one, they will be slandered a lot; two, they will be deceived by others. The offense of double tongue also causes living beings to fall into the three evil paths. If they are born among people, they have two kinds of retribution: one, their retinue will be separated; two, their caste will be base. The offense of harsh speech also causes living beings to fall into the three evil paths. If they are born among people, they have two kinds of retribution: one, they will always hear disagreeable sounds; two, they will be involved in many lawsuits.**

**Commentary:**

“The offense of sexual misconduct also causes living beings to fall into the three evil paths.” Sexual misconduct means sexual relations which are not sanctioned by law. It means engaging in sexual relations with someone who is not your legal spouse. As it is said:

Of the myriad evils, lust is foremost.
You should not walk down this road to death.

Lust is the most evil of evils, and it includes all other evils in it. If you indulge in improper sexual relations, then that is the worst kind of offense. You are just heading for death; and it also makes living beings fall into the hells, the animals, and the hungry ghosts, those three evil paths. “If they are born among people-should they obtain a human body-they have two kinds of retribution: one, their wives will not be good or faithful.” The first is that their wife or husband will not be true to them, will not be a good person. The spouse will flagrantly violate the rules and will casually indulge in sexual relationship with anybody at all. “Two, they will not have a retinue that accords with their intent.” The second is that their household or circle of friends will not be in accord with them. They will always be fighting with other members of their retinue and never get along with them.

“The offense of lying also causes living beings to fall into the three evil paths. The offense of constantly telling lies also causes living beings to fall into the hells, the animals, and the hungry ghosts. If they are born among people, they have two kinds of retribution-this, too, entails two kinds of retribution, which are: one, they will be slandered a lot.“ People will always slander you and say you are wrong. “Two, they will be deceived by others.”

The second is that, because you used to life to other people, now people lie to you and cheat you. “The offense of double tongue also causes living beings to fall into the three evil paths, the hells, the animals, and the hungry ghosts. If they are born among people, they have two kinds of retribution: one, their retinue will be separated. Their household, or circle of friends, will not be united. They will always be separated from each other. Two, their caste will be base. Their relatives and those of the same race or caste as they are will be very ugly people, very unpleasant to look at. The offense of harsh speech-if you constantly commit the offense of harsh speech, this-also causes living beings to fall into the three evil paths, the hells, the animals, the hungry ghosts. If they are born among people, they have two kinds of retribution: one, they will always hear disagreeable sounds-unpleasant sounds. Two, they will be involved in many law-suits.” At the drop of a hat they will be involve din arguments and disputes with people, or perhaps be sued in court, or themselves file law-suits.

**Sutra:**

**“The offense of loose speech also causes living beings to fall into the three evil paths. If they are born among people, they have two kinds of retribution: one people will not accept what they say; two, their speech will not be clearly understood. The offense of greed and desire also causes living beings to fall into the three evil paths. If they are born among people, they have two kinds of retribution: one, their minds will never know contentment; two, they will have much desire which will never be satisfied. The offense of anger and hatred also causes living beings to fall into the three evil paths. If they are born among people, they have two kinds of retribution: one, other people will always find fault with them; two, they will constantly be troubled and harmed by others.**

**Commentary:**

“The offense of loose speech,” means always talking in ways that are not in accord with the rules, talking wildly and saying whatever one pleases. It is saying all kind of defiled and disordered things, making fun of other people. This offense “also causes living beings to fall into the three evil paths, the hells, the hungry ghosts, and the animals. If they are born among people, when they have paid off their offenses in the three evil realms and become people again, they have two kinds of retribution, again the retribution is of two types, of which one is that people will not accept what they say. Nobody will listen to them when they talk. No one will pay attention. Two, their speech will not be clearly understood. The second is that when they speak their words will not be clear, so no one will know what they are talking about. When they talk, people won’t clearly hear what they have said.

“The offense of greed and desire also causes living beings to fall into the three evil paths, the hells, the hungry ghosts, and animals. When they have undergone their retribution in the three evil paths, and if they are born among people, they have two kinds of retribution: one, their minds will never know contentment. They will never be satisfied; they will always feel that nothing is right. Two, they will have much desire which will never be satisfied. They will always be greedy for this and greedy for that without satiation. That is because of having committed the offense of greed and desire.

The offense of anger and hatred also causes living beings to fall into the three evil paths. When they have paid off their debts in the three evil destinies, if they are born among people, they have two kinds of retribution: one, other people will always find faults with them.” People will always be saying of the person, “He’s got this wrong with him and that wrong with him, and there is nothing right about him at all.” Two, they will constantly be troubled and harmed by others.” People will always give you a bad time, always give you trouble. No matter how good you are to people, they will try to do you in. So, when people are not good to us, we should return the light and look within, and think about how in our previous lives we certainly committed the offense of harsh speech, lying, loose speech, and double tongue, greed, hatred, and stupidity, killing, stealing, and sexual misconduct and think “So, that’s why people are so bad to me this life.” And we should quickly repent and reform.

**Sutra:**

**“The offense of deviant views also causes living beings to fall into the three evil paths. If they are born among people, they have two kinds of retribution: one, they will be born in a family holding deviant views; two, their minds will be flattering and crooked.**

**Commentary:**

Before, it talked about stealing and sexual misconduct and loose speech, lying harsh speech, double-tongued speech, and so forth. “The offense of deviant views…” What are deviant views? It means always having incorrect knowledge and views which are not in accord with Dharma. There is proper knowledge and proper views, and there is improper knowledge and improper views. If you don’t have proper knowledge and proper views, you will believe in improper knowledge and improper views, and in that case you will commit a great many offenses. The offense from that “also causes living beings to fall into the three evil paths, the hells, the hungry ghosts, and the animals.”

When we people commit the offense of greed, hatred, and stupidity, we can fall into the three evil destinies. We may be in those evil paths for a short time, or the time may be long-it’s not fixed. When we have paid off our offense karma in the hells and are born again among people, “if they are born among people, they have two kinds of retribution: on, they will be born in a family holding deviant views.” The family they are born into will be totally one of deviant knowledge and deviant views. And so, what they see and what they hear and what they are around will all be deviant knowledge and deviant views. “Two, their minds will be flattering and crooked.”

The second retribution that one has to undergo for deviant views is that one’s mind will enjoy flattering people. If you put this inelegantly, it’s called playing up to people, and it’s called being a sycophant. That means when you see people who have money, you smile and are extremely pleasant; but when you see poor people, you are haughty and won’t have anything to do with them. You won’t even speak to them-but, when you meet people who have money, you have all kinds of things to say. That’s flattery. When you see people who have money you flatter them, and when you meet poor people you despise them. This is the fault that most people have.

To be cooked means to be devious. One’s mind is not straight, and so everything one does is very devious and crooked. That’s the retribution that people with deviant views have to undergo. It is from holding deviant views that people kill and steal and commit sexual misconduct, that they are greedy, hateful, and stupid, that they tell lies, use double-tongued speech, harsh speech, and loose speech. If you don’t have deviant views, then you won’t be able to commit those faults. Deviant views lead one to kill, and once one kills, one falls into the three evil paths.

**Sutra:**

**Disciples of the Buddha, the ten unwholesome karmic paths can bring forth the multitude of great masses of suffering as limitless and boundless as these.**

**Therefore, the Bodhisattva makes the following reflection: “I should leave the Ten Unwholesome Karmic Paths far behind. I should consider the Ten Wholesome Paths as a garden of Dharma, and delight in dwelling within them.**

**“I, myself, should dwell within them, and I should encourage other people to dwell within them, too.”**

**Commentary:**

After Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva had described the Ten Unwholesome Paths of Karma, he again called out: disciples of the Buddha, you should realize that the Ten Unwholesome Karmic Paths can bring forth the multitude of great masses of suffering as limitless and boundless as these. You all know that through the Ten Unwholesome Karmic Paths you commit offenses, and that when you commit offenses you fall into the three evil destinies of hell beings, animals, and hungry ghosts. Afterwards, when you have undergone you punishment for your offenses and come back to be a person, lots and lots of limitless and boundless sufferings will arise that group together.

Therefore, the Bodhisattva makes the following reflection: “I should leave the Ten Unwholesome Karmic Paths far behind.” He says, “I am cultivating the Bodhisattva Way, and I shouldn’t keep on violating by committing those offenses. I should not longer go along the Ten Unwholesome Karmic Paths.” “I should consider the Ten Wholesome Paths as a garden of Dharma. I should take the Ten Wholesome Karmic Paths-that is, not killing, not stealing, not committing sexual misconduct, not being greedy, not being hateful, not being stupid, not lying, not engaging in double-tongued speech, not uttering harsh speech, and not indulging in loose talk, those Ten Wholesome Paths as my moral. They should be a guideline for me, and I should delight in dwelling within them. For me, the Ten Wholesome Karmic Paths should be like a pleasure grove that I enjoy very much, and I should dwell in them in comfort and ease.

“I, myself, should dwell within them, and I should encourage other people to dwell within them, too.” At that time he encourages other people, his friends and relatives, all to dwell within those Ten Wholesome Paths and not commit the Ten Unwholesome kinds of karma, but instead always practice the Ten Wholesome Karmic Acts.

**Sutra:**

**Disciples of the Buddha, this Bodhisattva, Mahasattva, further, towards all living beings, brings forth the thought to benefit them, the thought of making them happy, the thought of kindness, the thought of compassion, the thought of sympathy, the thought of gathering them in, the thought of protecting them, the thought of them being oneself, the thought of being their teacher, the thought of being their great teacher.**

**He makes the following reflection, saying, “Living beings are pitiful. They fall into deviant views, evil wisdom, evil desires, and the thick forest of the evil destinies. I should cause them to dwell in proper views, and cultivate the true and actual Way.”**

**Commentary:**

Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva was afraid that people were not paying attention, and so he called out again: All of you disciples of the Buddha, this Bodhisattva, Mahasattva, the Bodhisattva who has certified to the Ground of Leaving Filth, cultivates the Bodhisattva Way and amasses all kinds of good roots:

Does no evil,
And offers up all good conduct.

That is why he is called a great Bodhisattva among Bodhisattvas. He, further, towards all living beings, brings forth the thought to benefit them. He decides he wants to benefit all living beings. He has the thought of making them happy, of how to help living beings attain happiness; the thought of kindness, of how he can help living being attain eternal bliss; the thought of compassion, of how he can causes all living beings to escape from suffering and difficulties; the thought of sympathy for all living beings; the thought of gathering them in, gathering, accepting, and receiving all living beings; the thought of protecting them, protecting all living beings; the thought of them being oneself. He sees all living beings as being the same as himself. He has the thought of being their teacher, in order to teach and transform all living beings, and the thought of being their great teacher. No matter what kind of living being it is, he teaches and transforms that being.

He makes the following reflection, saying to himself, “Living beings are pitiful, very deserving of pity. They fall into deviant views-deviant knowledge and deviant views and evil wisdom. They have an evil kind of wisdom-evil desires, and evil thoughts of desire, and so they fall into the thick forest of the evil destinies. The three evil paths are like a dense forest from which it is difficult to escape. I should cause them to dwell in proper views, the Dharmas of proper knowledge and proper views, and cultivate the true and actual way, true and actual Dharma doors which have no falseness to them.”

There are two kinds of people in the world. One kind is the person who wants to trick himself and the other is the person who does not want to trick himself. They are the opposite of each other. What kind of person likes to trick himself? It’s the person who mistakes suffering for bliss, and who willingly does so. What kid of person does not want to trick himself? It’s the person who wants to separate from suffering and attain bliss, and is unwilling to deceive himself.

You say, “Oh, I understand. The people who don’t want to trick themselves are people who have left home.” Not bad, but can you leave home, or not? Those who do not want to trick themselves don’t even have to be talked about.

There is someone who is saying, “Dharma Master, the way you are speaking Dharma is completely illogical.” I haven’t finished what I was saying. When I’m finished, you’ll see the logic in it. Left-home people do not want to trick themselves, but, in fact, they do trick themselves. And, we are saying that at-home people do want to trick themselves, but actually they don’t feel they are tricking themselves.

How do left-home people trick themselves? They say to themselves, “Just cultivate well, and pretty soon you’ll become a Buddha. Don’t be nervous; all you have to do is persevere.”

At first it’s like tricking yourself. It’s kind of like baby-sitting a child. You say, “Oh, don’t cry, and I’ll give you a piece of candy. I don’t have any candy right now, but in a little while I’ll get you some.” To become a Buddha works that way, too. You trick yourself, but in the future will you become a Buddha, or not? You’ll find out when you become a Buddha, but for the time being it’s just the same as tricking yourself. The difference is in the methods employed, because this is tricking yourself into doing good things.

What do we mean by people at home not tricking themselves? Basically, they do trick themselves. They say, “Oh, worldly blessings, honor, and glory are all so fine! Gold, silver, and precious gems are really wonderful! Getting fame and profit-that’s all good stuff!” and they trick themselves, because those things are really not bad. You live it up eating steak, drinking wine, going to the cocktail bar. And when you drink yourself into a stupor, then you soar up to the heavens.

**Sutra:**

**He further makes the following reflection: “All living beings make distinctions between self and others and mutually destroy each other. Their fighting and enmity rage without cease. I should cause them to dwell in unsurpassed great kindness.”**

**He further makes the following reflection: “All living beings greedily grasp without satiation. They only seek wealth and profit. They sustain themselves through deviant livelihoods. I should cause them to dwell in the dharmas of proper livelihood, in purity of the karmas of body, speech, and mind!”**

**He further makes the following reflections: “All living beings constantly pursue the three poisons, and the various afflictions accordingly rage. They don not understand how to seek with determination the expedients essential for escape. I should cause them to extinguish the great blaze of afflictions and settle in the place of pure coolness of Nirvana.”**

**He furthermore makes the following reflection: “All living beings are covered with the heavy darkness of stupidity and the thick membrane of false views, and so they enter the dense shade of the thick forest and lose the light of wisdom. They travel on dangerous roads in the wilderness and give rise to evil views. I should cause them to obtain the unobstructed, pure wisdom eye, so they know the real mark of all dharmas, and do not follow others’ teachings.”**

**Commentary:**

He further makes the following reflection: The bodhisattva who is on the Second Ground, the Ground of Leaving Filth, accumulates all good roots and makes transference of them to all living beings to benefit them all. And so he makes the following contemplation. He says, “All living beings, without exception, have a view of self and a mark of self. They make distinctions between self and others and mutually destroy each other. Because they have a view of self and a mark of self and make distinctions between themselves and others, they destroy each other. They fight over profit. Their fighting and enmity, their battles with each other, rage without cease.” When the Buddha appeared in the world, it was known as the time when the Proper Dharma was solid. After the Buddha entered Nirvana, it was known as the Dharma Image, or the Dharma Semblance Age, when the emphasis was on building temples and making Buddha images. Now we have been born in the Dharma Ending Age, when the emphasis is on fighting.

Take a look at the world. Countries fight with countries, families fight with families, people fight with people. They fight over power and profit and give rise to enmity, anger, and hatred, which rages without cease. Their anger and their hatred is like a fire. The more it blazes, the more widely it ranges, and the bigger it gets, the less it can be stopped. The blaze is so huge that it would not be easy to put it out even with a fire truck. “I should cause them to dwell in unsurpassed great kindness. I should teach these living beings who are fighting with each other how to practice the conduct of great kindness and compassion, how not to fight with living beings and not to hate them.”

He further makes the following reflection: “All living beings greedily grasp without satiation.” All living beings greedily seek and are insatiable. There is never a time when they are content. For example, take someone who is in business. In the beginning he says, “Wait ‘till I’ve made a hundred thousand dollars, then I’ll be satisfied and retire.” But, when he’s earned that much, he still waits. “Oh, wait ‘till I’ve made a million dollars. Then I won’t seek anything more.” But, when he has made that million dollars, he thinks he would like to have ten million. And when he has made ten million, he wants a hundred million. So, that’s what’s known as greedily grasping without satiation. There’s never any time when he feels content, when he says he has enough.

“They only seek wealth and profit, it’s just because they are seeking wealth and seeking benefit-they sustain themselves through deviant livelihoods.” They don’t pay any attention to whether it’s proper or not. They may make their living by gazing upward, or by gazing downward. Making a living by gazing upward is looking up and contemplating the way of heaven; for example, one gazes up at the stars and makes predictions on that basis, saying such-and-such a star is going to appear, and the world is going to have this and that happen. You do this to make people believe in you, and that’s what’s known as getting your livelihood by gazing up. Making a living gazing downwards is doing divination, casting fortunes.

So, a bodhisattva who is cultivating the Bodhisattva Way doesn’t ask about good luck or bad luck, doesn’t do divination. To do divination is to make your living bay gazing down. Both of those are sustaining oneself through deviant livelihoods. “I should cause them to dwell in the dharmas of proper livelihood, in purity of the karmas of body, speech, and mind.” The Bodhisattva goes on to say, “I should save all those living beings who make their living through improper livelihoods, getting them to dwell in purity of body, speech, and mind-those three karmas-and not live in the dharmas of improper, deviant livelihoods anymore. They ought to dwell in proper livelihood and have proper knowledge and proper views in everything they do.”

“He further makes the following reflection-the Bodhisattva on the Ground of Leaving Filth makes another contemplation, which is this: “All living beings constantly pursue the three poisons, and the various afflictions accordingly rage.” The three poisons of greed, hatred, and stupidity, confuse people and make them upside-down. Why is it that from the limitless kalpas to the present we have not become Buddhas? It’s just because we have greed, hatred, and stupidity. Our greed is insatiable. We figure, “the more the better.” Because we have this greed, we don’t have any wisdom. Lacking wisdom, then we get angry, and people who get angry are just stupid. So greed, hatred, and stupidity are known as the three poisons. People who are greedy are very difficult to teach and transform. Because you have the three poisons inside you, all kinds of afflictions are produced inside, too. These afflictions are like a huge, blazing fire.

“They do not understand how to seek with determination the expedients essential for escape.” They are not able to seek ways to get out, unable to make up their minds to transcend the three realms, to leave suffering and attain bliss. They are unable to use various expedient Dharma doors to escape from the Three Realms. The Bodhisattva says, “I should cause them to extinguish the great blaze of afflictions.” We have eighty-four thousand kinds of afflictions, and the Bodhisattva wants us to escape from the bonfire of afflictions, “and settle in the place of pure coolness of Nirvana”-to settle down in the state of non-production and non-extinction, which is that of Nirvana; to certify to the four virtues of Nirvana:

Permanence.
Bliss.
True Self
Purity

He further makes the following reflection: “All living beings are covered with the heavy darkness of stupidity and the thick membrane of false views.” They are covered up by the blackness of stupidity and false views which are like a thick growth. There are, as it were, cataracts on their eyes. “And so they enter the dense shade of the thick forest.” Entering into a thick forest with a dense shade means their afflictions are just too many, like a crowded wood, “and so they lose the light of wisdom, which they had to begin with. They travel on dangerous roads in the wilderness.”

They wander through wilds where there are wolves, tigers, panthers, bears, and lions-all kinds of wild beasts-which is extremely dangerous, “and give rise to evil views. They start having all kinds of evil outlooks. I should cause them to obtain the unobstructed--I should save those kinds of living beings so that they obtain an unobstructed state of perfect inner penetration-the pure wisdom-eye, so they know the real mark of all dharmas-so that they have the pure eye of wisdom and are able to illumine and understand the true and actual mark of all dharmas, the mark of true actuality and suchness-and do not follow others’ teachings”-so that they do not have to wait for people to teach them in order to understand. They themselves can, on their own, enlighten to that kind of state.

**Question: (from audience)**

“Dharma Master, you were saying there were eighty-four thousand illnesses and eighty-four thousand cures in Buddhism and that a teacher helps you find the right one. But, how does one know if one has found the right teacher?

**Answer:**

“Establish merit, establish virtue, and establish written works. If you establish enough merit, then you very naturally will meet a true and actual Good Knowing Advisor. But, if you do not have enough merit and virtue, even if you meet a Good Knowing Advisor, you will not recognize the person. And, so the first requirement for people who study Buddhism is not to do any evil; but to offer up all good conduct. If you have virtuous conduct, then you will spontaneously meet a Good Knowing Advisor. If you don’t have enough and you meet one, you won’t recognize that Advisor. To talk of eighty-four thousand Dharma doors being used to cure eighty-four thousand illnesses is a comprehensive way of speaking. To speak in general terms, it means you need to get ride of greed, hatred, and stupidity:

Put to rest greed, hatred, and studipidity. Diligently cultivate precepts samadhi, and wisdom.

That’s what you have to do.”

**Question:**

“Is there any relationship between déjà-vu experiences and schizophrenia and enlightenment in higher states of mysticism?”

**Answer:**

“If you take drugs and go insane, then that’s an illness. It’s not becoming enlightened.”

**Question:**

“Psychologists are experimenting and finding that crazy people sometimes have spiritual penetrations and know things through the use of their wisdom, not through the senses.”

**Answer:**

“You can’t call that insanity. It’s just that they were stiff and cold, and now they are starting to thaw. In most cases where they recognize situations, they have had some connection with those kinds of states in the past which enables them to recognize them now. For example, if you have a friend you recognized yesterday, if you meet that friend today, you will probably remember that person’s first and last name. It’s the same principle.”

**Question:**

“I would like to ask the Abbot to comment on the little self, the greater self, and the involvement of the ego.”

**Answer:**

“The involvement of the ego, the view of a self, is also the mark of a self. If you have a view of a self, you have a mark of a self. If you have a mark of the self, you will have the mark of others. With the mark of others, you will have the mark of living beings. With the mark of living beings, there is the mark of having life-spans. Those are known as the four marks. The view of a self is because there is first a self. However, that self is something absolutely not true. Most people say they have a self. Well, search throughout the your body. The hair is called hair, the head is called head, the ears are called ears, the eyebrows are called eyebrows. The eyes are called eyes. The nose is called the nose, the lips are called lips. The trousers, even, are called trousers. The arms of the body are called arms. The hands are called hands. The fingers are called fingers, and the finger nails are called finger nails.

Each part has its own name. If you count from the top of the head to the soles of the feet, each part has a name of its own. But, what part would you say is called self? Take a look, see if you can find it. You won’t be able to; and, since there is not self, how can you have a view of self? It’s because of the attachment of living beings. We are attached and say, ‘This is mine; that belongs to me…’ But, this body, basically, is not your own. It’s simply that you mistake a thief for your son. You mistake the false for the true and say, ‘This is mine.’ And, because you have a self, you are selfish. You say, ‘This house is mine; this land is mine; this gold is mine; this silver is mine-all of that is mine.’ All of this ‘mine’ is from a single attached thought. You always think that they belong to you. If you don’t hang on to them, you will lose them; if you do hang on to them, sooner or later you yourself are going to die. And, when you do die, you will have to put them all down. They will all be gone. Then where did your self run off to?

“It’s because we people have a self that we think of what will benefit ourselves, and we don’t pay attention to other people. That’s why the world is getting worse every day, and why people’s minds are worse every day. It’s just from having that attachment, that attachment which arms people to the point of death. All of you think it over. Since there is not even a self, how can there be a view of self or a mark of self? The great self is an attachment. You could say that the small self is having no attachment, except a little bit. If you get rid of that attachment to self, then you mark of self will be emptied. At that time, all of empty space and the Dharma realm unites with one’s own self-nature. That’s what’s called:

Without self and without others,
one contemplates at ease.
With no emptiness and no form,
one see the Thus Come One.

I don’t know if what I said was right or not. If you felt what you heard was not right, then forget it. If you felt it was right…

If it’s the Way, then walk it.
If it’s not the Way, then go back.

I, myself, don’t understand very much, either. So don’t take what I say as:

Golden proclamations and jade records.”

**Question:**

“Could you please relate this to the ego and healing and to the energies from the universe.”

**Answer:**

“In healing, you should not have the thought of a self. Don’t have the idea, ‘I am healing people.’ You should think, ‘In wanting to heal people, I should see other people as being of the same substance as myself. People are just me, and I am just people. If people are sick, then I am sick. When I cure people, I am curing myself.’ That way you will have less of an attachment. When Bodhisattvas benefit all living beings, they do not think of themselves as benefitting living beings. When the Bodhisattva has rescued all living beings, he himself does not think that he has saved a single living being. This is what is known as:

Acting as if not acting.
Sweeping away all dharmas.
Leaving behind all marks.

When you heal people, if you say, ‘I healed that person,’ or ‘I used some kind of energy to cure him,’ you’re just having a false thought. That, too, is false thinking. If you don’t have false thoughts:

Basically, there is not one thing,
So, where can dust alight?

**Sutra:**

**He further makes the following reflection: “All living beings are within the dangerous roads of birth and death and are about to fall into the hells, animals, and hungry ghosts. They enter the net of evil views. They are confused by the thick forest of stupidity. They follow deviant paths and practice inverted conduct. They are like blind people who do not have guides. Roads which do not lead to escape they think lead to escape. They enter into the states of demons and are seized by evil bandits. They accord with the demons’ mind and become far removed from the Buddhas’ intentions. I should pull them out of such danger and difficulty and cause them to dwell in the City of the Fearlessness of All Wisdom.**

**Commentary:**

The Bodhisattva on the Second Ground, the Ground of Leaving Filth, leaves all afflictions far behind. He also leaves all of his bad habits and faults, and all defilement. To have no defilement of mind means to have no thoughts of desire. It means that he has:

Severed desire and cast out love;
Returned to the origin and gone back to the source.

We people are not that way. Ordinary, common people, if told to get rid of their desire and cast out love say, “I want to have even more desire. I want to have even more love.” If you tell them to have fewer afflictions, then they get angry even more often. They take afflictions and ignorance for food to eat and for clothes to wear, which they cannot do without. At every meal they eat their fill of afflictions, to the point that their stomachs are about to burst. But, they still don’t know how to stop those afflictions. People are just that kind of strange entity.

Human beings are especially weird entities among the weird. If you tell people to do things one way, they insist on doing them another way. Not following the rules is their talent. When the Bodhisattva sees those kinds of living beings, he pities them, and so, he further makes the following reflection: “All living beings, without exception…” What’s mean by “living beings?” It means those who are alive because a multitude of conditions have come together. It’s not one factor alone that makes a person. There are a number of factors involved. “They are within the dangerous roads of birth and death.” On that dangerous road of birth and death it is very easy to do wrong; and as soon as one does something wrong, one falls into the three evil destinies. If you perform good merit and virtue, you can be born in the heavens or be an asura or a person, but if you commit offenses, then you fall into the hells, become hungry ghosts, or turn into an animal. And so, in a single thought it’s the halls of heaven, and in a single thought it’s the hells. In a single thought it’s the fruit of Buddhahood. And in a single thought one is an animal. It’s all in that single thought.

“And they are about to fall into the hells, animals, and hungry ghosts.” The danger on that road is that you never know when you are going to fall into the hells. Hells are not like human jails. We build the hells ourselves. The hells are self-imposed. We prepare our hell, and when our offenses are ripe and our life comes to an end, we go to that hell to undergo suffering. There is the uninterrupted hell: a single person fills that hell, and if everyone went there, each one would fill it. It’s full if there is one person; it’s full if there are many, and so it’s called the “unspaced,” or uninterrupted” hell. Time there is also extremely long. Once you fall into the hell, you never get out. Why not? It’s due to deviant views. One falls into the hells because of deviant views. Or, one becomes an animal. There are also millions of types of animals, not just a single kind. There are horses, cows, chickens, pigs, and dogs each with its own peculiarities. Each species has its own sub-categories, which number in the millions. There are millions upon millions of hells, just as there are millions upon millions of kinds of animals.

Hungry ghosts, too, have millions of varieties. Some are rich ghosts who have money. But money to them is not several million dollars, for example, as it is with people. “Money” to them is great power and spiritual penetrations. Actually, “spiritual” penetrations is not exactly the right word for it; they are “ghost” penetrations. Ghosts have five of the Six Spiritual Penetrations, but not the penetration of the extinction of outflows.

Those are the rich ghosts. The poor ghosts are the ghosts who have no “money.” That doesn’t mean they lack our pretty, printed bills. It means they don’t have any power. They have no spiritual penetrations to speak of. They know very little about what’s going on. It’s not as in China where people burn paper money for the ghosts to use that makes the ghosts rich. It doesn’t work that way. No one has ever proved whether it’s of any use to burn paper money for ghosts to use. The way I see it is, if there were some use in burning paper money for ghosts, then when ghosts got that paper money, it would be as when we people strike it rich. That is, if you burn more for them they receive more, and if you burn less they get less. If it did work that way, then all Westerners when they died would become poor ghosts, for in the West paper money is very seldom burned, and if money is not burned, then the ghosts won’t have any money to use, right? And so they would be poor ghosts. It isn’t that way. If people believe that, I think they are wrong. Burning paper money is simply symbolic. As it is said:

Thoroughly go through the funeral rites for parents and the worship of ancestors.

It’s a way of showing one’s concern and one’s respect for their memory. But it’s very difficult to say whether those things really have any use or not.

Hungry ghosts, for several hundred great kalpas, never have one drop of water to drink. If any of the good things we have to eat enter the mouth of a hungry ghosts, they turn into fire and burn its mouth. So, all of you think it over: how can perfectly good things to eat turn into fire in the mouths of those ghosts? This happens because of their karmic obstacles. I remember in the 33rd year of the Chinese Republic, which was 1044, in the Hunan province, on the Mainland of China, there was a famine. There was no harvest that year, so there was no grain, and people had nothing to eat. Then, there also were many locusts that appeared in the sky. Locusts blackened out the sun. They were so thick in the air that people could catch a whole netful with a single random swipe, and they cooked them to eat because they had nothing else. The locusts had eaten all of the crops they had planted, so they were going to eat the locusts in return. But once the locusts had been cooked, no one could bear to eat them, because they turned into excrement. That was due to the karmic obstacles of those living beings. So, everything depends upon living beings’ karma.

Hungry ghosts never find anything to eat because their karmic obstacles are too heavy. Good things to eat turn to fire in their mouths because their karmic obstacles obstruct them. If you talk in detail about hungry ghosts, you’ll find there are millions of categories of them, and you could never describe them all.

“They enter the net of evil views.” Evil views means deviant views, those that are not proper-deviant knowledge and deviant views. “They are confused by the thick forest of stupidity.” The dense woods of stupidity confuses them. “They follow deviant paths,”- outside ways that are not proper and correct-“and practice inverted conduct.” Everything they do is upside-down. “They are like blind people who do not have guides.” They are like people who have no eyes who have no one to lead them, no one to point out the way. “Roads which do not lead to escape”-roads which do not lead out of the Three Realms-“they think lead to escape.” They think they are the roads to ending birth and death. “They enter into the states of demons.” They are turned by demonic states and become part of the demon king’s retinue, “and are seized by evil bandits.” They are trapped by the demons and do what the demons tell them to do. “They accord with the demons’ mind, and become far removed from the Buddhas’ intentions.” They no longer follow what the Buddhas intend. “I should pull them out of such danger and difficulty. Now I should save them so they escape from suffering and attain to bliss. I should get them off that dangerous road, out of all those difficult circumstances, and cause them to dwell in the City of the Fearlessnesses of All Wisdom, so that they dwell in the Four Fearlessness, in the City of All Wisdom.” If they dwell in the City of All Wisdom, they won’t be able to fall into the three evil paths. Because they will have wisdom, they will know enough not to follow deviant views. And because they won’t run after deviant views, they will have proper knowledge and proper views. To dwell in proper knowledge and proper views is, itself, the City of All Wisdom, the city of having proper and correct wisdom.

There is an announcement, which is that Gold Mountain Temple has produced a freak. It’s Heng Sure. How is he a freak? It’s because next month he wants to start on the first Monday, and bow once every three steps from Gold Wheel Temple in Los Angeles to the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas in Northern California. Why does he want to do something so stupid as that? It’s because he knows that his offense karma from the past is very heavy and he is afraid of falling into the three evil destinies. Now he wants to use his merit and virtue from bowing every three steps to repent of his previous offense karma. Also, he hopes that the merit and virtue from this will prevent disasters in the world, and that all of humankind will be at peace. So I say that he is a modern-day freak.

Now I think that anybody who has a question can ask it. Whether it’s a big question or a little question, and old question or a young questions-all may be asked. We have a lot of people here, and we’ll divide them up according to ability. The old will answer the old questions; the young will answer the young questions. The good will answer the good questions, and the bad will answer the bad questions. We’ll divide them up according to categories.

**Question:**

“I’m a little confused about the road to enlightenment, which I presume is the basis for our being here-to become enlightened. And I presume also that it takes more than one lifetime to become enlightened, because we don’t learn very fast. And I hear that Abbot say that we lose the knowledge that we gained during each lifetime. So I wonder what it is that we carry over, on that road to enlightenment.”

**Answer:**

“Karma. Not necessarily karmic obstacles, just karma. If you do good, you have good karma; if you do evil, you have bad karma.”

**Question:**

“I still don’t understand… I want to know what carries over lifetime after lifetime that leads one to become enlightened. Can you carry over work in one lifetime to the next lifetime to achieve it eventually?”

**Answer:**

“You can carry it over. However, unfortunately not just what you do, but what all we people do is not completely good. It’s a mixture of good and evil. Just take people here who are cultivating the Way for example-just talk about the people at Gold Mountain Temple. They cultivate and take two steps ahead, but at the very least retreat one step backwards. I have a disciple who knelt before me and said, ‘Shr Fu, every time I advance one step I retreat three steps. There is nothing I can do about it.’ So you see, the problem is there.”

**Question:**

“Is the bad carried over too?”

**Answer:**

“Yes, you take the bad with you as well. Whatever color you stain your white cloth is the color you take along with you. The white cloth represents the self-nature, and dyeing it a color stands for your creating good and bad karma.”

**Question:**

“Yesterday you talked about how people who have killed in their last life sometimes live a day, and sometimes live a month or a few months, and I find it very difficult. We tend to grieve so much more when someone is younger. My cousin just lost a seven-month old baby boy, and it’s so hard to understand the reason for that. Did you say that when someone dies at such a young age it’s because they killed in their past life?”

**Answer:**

“You should realize that when, in the person’s past life, he killed some kind of creature or other, the friends and relatives of that creature also were very grieved. Not to talk about anything else, just say he killed a chicken. When a chicken is killed, all the other chickens start cackling sadly, crying over the chicken that was killed. Or take crows. If you catch a small crow, the crow’s mother will do her best to get the baby crow back, even if it means losing her own life. This happens among most animals and birds.

“For example, if you catch a mother hen’s baby chicks… Of course this is the scientific age, and most chickens are hatched in incubators. Science has dispensed with mother hens no one protects the chicks, and so you can easily take and kill them and eat their flesh. But when the old mother hen is out walking with ten or so small chicks, if anybody grabs one of them, the old mother hen will go to war with that person. That actually happens. We feel it is painful when someone in our family or circle of friends dies. When we kill someone in the family or circle of another kind of creature, the relatives and friends of that creature also mourn. It works the same way.”

**Sutra:**

**He further makes the following reflection, “All living beings are swallowed up in the great torrent’s waves. They enter the flow of desire, the flow of existence, the flow of ignorance, and the flow of views. They revolve in the whirlpool of birth and death. They toss and turn in the river of love. They are carried away by the galloping flood, and have no leisure to contemplate. They follow after awakenings to desire, awakenings to hatred, awakenings to harming, and do not give them up. In the midst of that they are seized by the rakshasas of the view of a body. They are on the point of eternal entry to the dense forest of love and desire. They bring forth deep defiled attachment towards what they greedily love. They dwell in the fertile plain of pride. They settle in the town of the six places. They have no one good to save them. They have no one to rescue them.**

**“I should bring forth the thought of great compassion towards them, and use all my good roots to rescue and save them, so they have no calamities or disasters, leave defilement, are at peace, and dwell on the jeweled island of All Wisdom.**

**Commentary:**

He further makes the following reflection. The Bodhisattva who has certified to the Second Ground, the Ground of Leaving Filth, thinks as follows. Before he wanted to cause living beings to dwell in the City of the Unconditioned of All Wisdom. This time his contemplation is, “All living beings are swallowed up in the great torrent’s waves.” The great torrents are just as when a great flood pours into the sea. It causes great waves to rise up, and if anybody stands where this great tide occurs, they will be pulled under by the current, and drowned by the water.

“They enter the flow of desire,” that fast flood, and “the flow of existence.” They enter into the flood of the Three Realms and the Twenty-Five Existences, or the Three Existences, and “the flow of ignorance, and the flow of views.” They enter into the flowing river of ignorance, of not understanding anything, of lack of comprehension. “They revolve in the whirlpool of birth and death.” In the sea of birth and death they are caught up in the whirlpools formed by the waves. “They toss and turn in the river of love.” They are spun around by love and emotion, which are like a rampaging river. “They are carried away by the galloping flood.” The waves stir up the current very fiercely, and it is like a galloping horse. At any moment the person could be carried into the sea, “and have no leisure to contemplate.” While this is happening, there is no time to observe what’s going on.

“They follow after awakenings to desire, awakenings to hatred.” They awaken to views of desire and of hatred, to the knowledge of how to have thoughts of desire and how to lose their tempers; “awakenings to harming.” They learn how to do harm. They flow along with them “and do not give them up.” They flow along with the currents of desire, hatred, and harming, which they never relinquish. “In the midst of that, they are seized by the rakshasas of the view of a body.” One’s view of a body is like a rakshasa ghost. They are ensnared by their attachments. “They are on the point of eternal entry to the dense forest of love and desire.” The rakshasa ghosts seize them and drag them into the very thick forest of love and desire.

“They bring forth deep defiled attachment towards what they greedily love.” These people develop deep defiled attachments to whatever they feel greed and love for. “They dwell in the fertile plain of pride.” They inhabit the expanse of haughtiness and arrogance. “They settle in the town of the six places.” They listen to the order of the Six Faculties: eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind. “They have no one good to save them.” They fall into a situation in which there is no one able to use clever, expedient devices to save them. “They have no one to rescue them.” No one can rescue those kinds of people.

“I should bring forth the thoughts of great compassion towards them.” The Bodhisattva himself says, “I should have great kindness and compassion towards those kinds of living beings, cause them to leave suffering and attain bliss, and use all my good roots to rescue and save them. I should employ all the good roots I have accumulated from cultivating to save those living beings, so they have no calamities or disasters; so living beings who are like that don’t have disasters befall them; so they leave defilement, are at peace-so that they separate from defiled dharmas and attain to purity-and dwell on the jeweled island of All Wisdom, the precious island of All Wisdom.”

**Sutra:**

**He also makes the following reflection: “All living beings live in the prison of the world. They have many sufferings and troubles. They constantly cherish love and hate. For themselves they become worried and afraid. They are bound by the heavy fetters of greed and desire. They are blocked and obstructed by the thick forest of ignorance. Form within the three realms, not one can by himself escape. I should cause them to leave behind the Three Existences forever, and dwell within the non-obstruction of great Nirvana.**

**Commentary:**

He, the Bodhisattva on the Second Ground, the Ground of Leaving Filth, also makes the following reflection. He says, “All living beings live in the prison of the world.” Their being in the world is like being in jail. They are unable to escape from the Three Realms, and so it is said:

The Three Realms are like a jail.
Birth and death are like shackles.

Those of the Two Vehicles look upon the Three realms as a prison. We people are within birth and death like birds in a cage. “They have many sufferings and troubles.” When we are born into this world, we have lots of suffering and lots of afflictions which we can’t escape.

“They constantly cherish love and hate.” They are always loving and hating, having the suffering of being separated from what they love, and being together with what they hate, and this is constantly going on. “For themselves they become worried and afraid.” They always worry and are scared, being afraid of not having food to eat, fearing they will have no clothes to wear, and worrying that they will not have any place to live. There are so many things they are afraid of. They also fear not having money to use, or not having sons or daughters. If they do have sons and daughters, they fear having no grandsons or granddaughters. They are always worried and afraid.

“they are bound by the heavy fetters of greed and desire.” They are never able to stop their greed. When they have been greedy their whole life long and the time comes to die, they can’t take anything with them. Greed and desire are like fetters, like a ball and chain that tie you up. Greed and desire fetter you so you cannot obtain liberation. “They are blocked and obstructed by the thick forest of ignorance.” The dense woods of not understanding anything, of lacking wisdom, hinders and obstructs one’s own wisdom. “From within the three realms, not one can by himself escape.” No one can, on his own, escape from the Desire Realm, the Form Realm, and the Formless Realm-those Three Realms. So the Bodhisattva says, “I should cause them to leave behind the Three Existences forever.” “I should cause living beings to throw off thee Three Existences once and for all:

Existence in the Desire Realm.
Existence in the Form Realm.
Existence in the Formless Realm.

And dwell within the non-obstruction of great Nirvana, dwell in the state of the Four Virtues of Nirvana:

Permanence.
Bliss.
True Self.
Purity.”

**Sutra:**

**He further makes the following reflection: “All living beings are attached to a self. They are in the cave-dwelling of all the Skandhas, and do not seek to escape. They rely upon the empty mass of the six places. They give rise to the four kinds of upside-down conduct. They are invaded by the poisonous snakes of the Four Elements. They are harmed and killed by the vengeful thieves of the Five Skandhas. They undergo limitless suffering. I should cause them to dwell in the most supreme place of non-attachment, that is, in unsurpassed Nirvana where all obstructions are destroyed.”**

**He further makes the following reflection: “All living beings have minds that are base and narrow. They do not walk the most supreme path of all knowledge. Although they may wish to escape, they merely like the vehicle of Sound Hearers and Pratyekabuddhas. I should cause them to dwell in vast, great Buddhadharma’s vast, great wisdom.”**

**Commentary:**

He also makes the following reflection: The Bodhisattva on the Second Ground says, “All living beings are attached.” What are they attached to? “To a self. They are in the cave-dwelling of the Five Skandhas.” The Five Skandhas are Form, Feeling, Thinking, Activities, and Consciousness, which are like a very dark cave-dwelling. “And do not seek to escape.” It never occurs to them to get out of that cave. “They rely upon the empty mass of the six places.” Basically the six places-eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind-are an empty conglomeration, but they base themselves upon them. “They give rise to the Four Kinds of Upside-down Conduct.” The Four Ways of Being Upside-down are:

Mistaking the impermanent for the permanent.
Mistaking what is not bliss for bliss.
Mistaking what is not self for self.
Mistaking what is not pure for pure.

Those four way of being upside-down confuse one’s self-nature.

“They are invaded by the poisonous snakes of the four elements.” See how fierce the poisonous snakes of the Four Elements are! The Four Elements are:

Earth
Water.
Fire.
Wind.

“They are harmed and killed by the vengeful thieves of the Five Skandhas.” The vengeful thieves of the Five Skandhas-form, feeling, thinking activities, and consciousness-harm and kill them. “They undergo limitless suffering.” The suffering they undergo is infinite. “I should cause them to dwell in the most supreme place of non-attachment.” I should teach living beings who are suffering like that to dwell where there is not attachment, the highest location, “That is, in unsurpassed Nirvana where all obstructions are destroyed.” I should cause all living beings to obtain the happiness of having all obstacles eradicated, and dwelling in the state of Nirvana, which is the very highest.”

He further makes the following reflection. He thinks, “All living beings have minds that are base and narrow.” Living beings have petty minds which are very inferior. “They do not walk the most supreme path of all knowledge.” They don’t cultivate the very highest path of all wisdom. “Although they may wish to escape, they merely like the vehicle of Sound Hearers and Pratyekabuddhas.” Even though they might want to get out of the Three Realms-the Desire Realm, the Form Realm, and the Formless Realm-nonetheless the measure of their minds is very small. They only like the Sound Hearer Vehicle, the Pratyekabuddha Vehicle, the low and inferior way of thinking of the Two Vehicles. “I should cause them to dwell in vast, great Buddhadharma’s vast, great wisdom. Now that I realize the Sound Hearers and Pratyekabuddhas are of the Small Vehicle, I should teach all living beings to dwell in Great Vehicle Buddhadharma, that vast, great wisdom, so they obtain limitless and boundless great wisdom.”

**Sutra:**

**Disciples of the Buddha, the Bodhisattva in that way protects and maintains the precepts, and is well able to increase his thought of kindness and compassion.**

**Disciples of the Buddha, the Bodhisattva who dwells on this, the Ground of Leaving filth, because of the power of his vows, comes to see many Buddhas. That is, he sees many hundreds of Buddhas, many thousands of Buddhas, many hundreds of thousands of Buddhas, many millions of Buddhas, many hundred of millions of Buddhas, many thousands of millions of Buddhas, many hundreds of thousands of millions of Buddhas, and so forth up to and including seeing many hundreds of thousands of millions of nayutas of Buddhas. In the presence of all Buddhas he, with a vast, great mind, a deep mind, a reverent and respectful mind, serves and makes offerings to them by respectfully giving them clothing, food and drink, bedding, and medicines, and all the necessities of life. He also makes offerings to all the assembled Sangha, and he transfers those good roots to Anuttarasamyaksambodhi. In the presence of all Buddhas, with a reverent mind, he further receives and practices the Dharmas of the Ten Wholesome Paths. He follows what he has received even up to Bodhi, and never forgets or loses it.**

**Commentary:**

Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva alls out again: All of you disciples of the Buddha, the Bodhisattva in that way protects and maintains the precepts. He holds the precepts like that, and is well able to increase his thought of kindness and compassion. He becomes more and more kind and compassionate. All of you disciples of the Buddha, the Bodhisattva who dwells on this, the Ground of Leaving Filth, because of the power of his vows, the vows that he has made, comes to see many Buddhas. That is, he sees many hundreds of Buddhas, many thousands of Buddhas. He can see many hundreds of thousands of Buddhas, many millions of Buddhas, many hundreds of millions of Buddhas, many hundreds of thousands of millions of Buddhas, and so forth, continually increasing the number, up to and including seeing many hundreds of thousands of millions of nayutas of Buddhas. In the presence of all Buddhas, where all Buddhas are, he, with a vast, great mind, a deep mind, a reverent and respectful mind, serves and makes offerings to them by respectfully giving them clothing, food and rink, bedding, and medicines, and all the necessities of life. He offers up the four types of offerings and other items which people use to maintain their lives. He also makes offerings to all the assembled Sangha, all left-home people, and he transfers those good roots to Anuttarasamyaksambodhi-the Unsurpassed, Proper, Equal Right Enlightenment. In the presence of all Buddhas, with a reverent mind, he further receives and practices the Dharmas of the Ten Wholesome Paths, the Ten Good Acts. He follows what he has received even up to Bodhi, until he becomes a Buddha, and never forgets or loses it. He never loses track of or forgets those Dharma doors.

**Sutra:**

**Because this Bodhisattva, throughout limitless hundreds of thousands of millions of nayutas of kalpas leaves far behind the filth of stinginess, jealousy, and breaking precepts, he purifies giving and holding precepts to perfection. He is like true gold, which, when in metallic compounds can be smelted in accordance with a method until it is free of all impurities and becomes bright and pure. The Bodhisattva who dwells upon this Ground of Leaving Filth also in that way, throughout limitless hundreds of thousands of millions of nayutas of kalpas leaves far behind the filth of stinginess, jealousy and breaking precepts, and purifies giving and holding precepts to perfection.**

**Disciples of the Buddha, among the Four Dharmas of Attraction, this Bodhisattva stresses kind words. Among the Ten Paramitas, he stresses holding precepts. It is not that he fails to practice the others, but he only does so according to his power and proportionately. Disciples of the Buddha, this is called a general discussion of the Bodhisattva Mahasattva’s Second Ground of Leaving Filth.**

**The Bodhisattva who dwells upon this Ground of Leaving Filth for the most part becomes a Wheel-Turning Sage King, a great host of the Dharma endowed with the seven jewels who has sovereign power. He is able to eradicate all living beings’ filth of stinginess, greed, and breaking precepts. Using wholesome expedients, he causes them to dwell secure within the Ten Wholesome Karmic Paths. He is a great donor, and everywhere he gives without end. In giving, kind words, beneficial conduct, and identical actions-in all such deeds that are done-none is separate from mindfulness of the Buddha, none is separate from mindfulness of the Dharma, none is separate from mindfulness of the Sangha, up to and including not being separate from mindfulness of endowment with the wisdom of the knowledge of all modes.**

**He also makes the following reflection, “I should among all living beings be a leader, be supreme, be most supreme, be wonderful, be subtly wonderful, be superior, be unsurpassed, up to and including being one with the wisdom of all wisdom upon whom others can rely.” If this Bodhisattva wishes to renounce the home life, and within the Buddhadharma diligently cultivates with vigor, then he will be able to renounce his household, his wife and children, and the five desires.**

**Commentary:**

Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva says: Because this Bodhisattva, who dwells upon the Second Ground of Leaving Filth, throughout limitless hundreds of thousands of millions of nayutas of kalpas leaves far behind the filth of stinginess, jealousy, and break precepts, never fails to hold the precepts but at all times holds them perfectly, like the moon when it is full without the least bit of defilement, he purifies giving and holding precepts to perfection. His cultivation of giving is also brought to perfection in the same way as his cultivation of maintaining the precepts. He also becomes perfect in his cultivation of pure, stainless conduct. He is like true gold which, when in metallic compounds, when it is put in something intended to smelt gold, can be smelted in accordance with a method. The right procedure is used to smelt the gold, until it is free of all impurities. All of the dust, dirt, and other admixtures become smelted out, and it becomes bright and pure. The gold is far better than prior to being smelted. The Bodhisattva who dwells upon this Ground of Leaving Filth also in that way, throughout limitless hundreds of thousands of millions of nayutas of kalpas, leaves far behind the filth of stinginess, jealousy, and breaking precepts. Just like gold which has been smelted, he stops having the defilement of being stingy, being jealous, and breaking precepts, and purifies giving and holding precepts to perfection.

Disciples of the Buddha, Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva says, among the Four Dharmas of attraction, this Bodhisattva stresses kind words. The Four Dharmas of Attraction are giving, kind words, beneficial conduct, and identity in actions. Of them all, he uses kind words most to teach and transform living beings. Among the Ten Paramitas, the Ten Crossings to the Other Shore, he stresses holding precepts. He emphasizes holding precepts, and so when we people cultivate stressing holding precepts, at no time can we violate them. We can’t be sloppy about the precepts and fail to be responsible in our cultivation. It is not that he fails to practice the others. It’s not the case that he doesn’t use the other three Dharmas of Attraction; nor does he merely hold the precepts and not practice the other nine Paramitas. But how is it then? He only does so according to his power and proportionately. He does what he is able to do, and practices the rest of the dharmas in proportion to his strength.

Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva again said: all of you disciples of the Buddha, this is called a general discussion of the Bodhisattva Mahasattva’s Second Ground of Leaving Filth. This has been a very brief, simple, and summary discussion of how the Great Bodhisattva who cultivates Bodhisattva practices and amasses all kinds of good roots certifies to the position of the Second Ground, the Ground of Leaving Filth. The Bodhisattva who dwells upon this ground for the most part becomes a wheel-turning Sage King. He will regularly go among people and be a Wheel-Turning Sage King. Why does he want to do that? It’s because Wheel-Turning Sage Kings have great power. They have the seven kinds of jewels:

The elephant jewel.
The horse jewel.
The woman jewel.
The army jewel.
The minister jewel.
The chariot jewel.
The treasury jewel.

Or he may become a great host of the Dharma endowed with the seven jewels, a great Dharma-speaking host who possesses these seven precious jewels:

Gold.
Silver.
Lapis lazuli.
Crystal.
Mother-of-pearl.
Red pearls.
Carnelian.

And who has sovereign power, great free-and-easy spiritual power.

He is able to eradicate all living beings’ filth of stinginess, greed, and breaking precepts. Using wholesome expedients, the expedient Dharma doors of the Ten Wholesome Karmic Paths, he causes them to dwell secure within the Ten Wholesome Karmic Paths. He is a great donor. He acts as a sponsor of wide-scale giving, and everywhere he gives without end. He bestows things upon all living beings on an infinite scale. In giving, kind words, beneficial conduct, and identical actions, those Four Dharmas of Attraction-in all such deeds that are done, all of such actions as those-none is separate from mindfulness of the Buddha, none is separate from mindfulness of the Dharma, none is separate from mindfulness of the Sangha, up to and including not being separate from mindfulness of endowment with the wisdom of the knowledge of all modes.

He also makes the following reflection, “I should among all living beings be a leader, lead them; be supreme, be very special; be most supreme, be special among the special; be wonderful, be subtly wonderful, be superior, be unsurpassed, up to and including being one with the wisdom of all wisdom, the wisdom of all modes, upon whom others can rely.” If this Bodhisattva wishes to renounces the home life, leave home, and within the Buddhadharma diligently cultivates with vigor, then he will be able to renounce his household. Then he can give up his home, his wife and children, and the five desires: wealth, sex, fame, food, and sleep. He can give them all up.

**Sutra:**

**After he leaves home, he diligently cultivates with vigor. In a single instant of thought he obtains a thousand samadhis. He comes to see a thousand Buddhas. He knows a thousand Buddhas’ spiritual powers. He can quake a thousand worlds; up to and including being bale to make appear a thousand bodies, and with each an every body being able to make appear a thousand Bodhisattvas acting as his retinue.**

**If he uses the most supreme vow-power of a Bodhisattva, then his manifestations of self-mastery surpass that number, so that in a hundred kalpas, a thousand kalpas, up to and including a thousand, million nayutas of kalpas they could not be counted or known.**

**At that time, Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, wishing to restate his meaning spoke verses saying:**

**Upright, compliant, along with capable,
Subdue, quiet, and completely good,
Quickly leaving birth and death, of vast, great intent
He uses those ten minds to enter the Second Ground.**

**Commentary:**

This Bodhisattva is able to renounce his possessions, his countries, cities, wives and children, his head, eyes, brains and marrow. He abandons the five desires-wealth, sex, fame, food, and sleep; or, sights, sounds, smells, tastes, objects of touch and dharmas-and afterwards he leaves home. After he leaves home, he diligently cultivates with vigor. At all times he:

Diligently cultivates precepts, samadhi, and wisdom,
And puts to rest greed, hatred, and stupidity.

In a single instant of thought, the interval of one thought, he opens enlightenment and certifies to the fruit. He obtains a thousand samadhis, a thousand kinds of proper concentrations and proper receptions. He comes to see a thousand Buddhas. In the space of a single instant, he can see a thousand honored Buddhas. He knows a thousand Buddhas’ spiritual powers. He is able to know the powers of spiritual penetrations of a thousand Buddhas. He can quake a thousand worlds. At that time he is able to make the great earth tremble in six ways. He doesn’t just quake one world, but a thousand worlds, up to and including being able to make appear a thousand bodies. Although this Bodhisattva is one person with one body, nonetheless he can manifest a thousand bodies, “and with each and every body being able to make appear a thousand Bodhisattvas acting as his retinue. He makes a thousand Bodhisattvas manifest acting as the retinue for each one of his bodies.

If he uses the most supreme vow-power of a Bodhisattva, should he make use of the most supreme merit and virtue of a Bodhisattva, and the power of vows, then his manifestations of self-mastery surpass that number. In a very free and easy way his manifestations surpass the thousands mentioned above, so that in a hundred kalpas, a thousand kalpas, up to and including a hundred, thousand, million nayutas of kalpas they could not be counted or known. One could never say how many there were.

At that time, Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, wishing to restate his meaning, spoke verses saying: The proper and upright mind, and the compliant and yielding mind, along with the mind capable, able to endure, the tamed and subdued mind, the still and quiet mind, and the completely good mind, also quickly leaving birth and death, which is the unmixed and unscattered mind and the mind with no hankering or yearning, of vast, great intent-the vast mind and the great mind-he uses those ten minds to enter the second ground. With those ten kinds of minds, he can certify to the fruit positions of the Ground of Leaving Filth.

**Sutra:**

**Dwelling in these, he accomplishes the
Merit and virtue of precepts.
He leaves far behind all taking life,
And does not vex or harm.**

**He is also free from stealing,
And from deviant sex,
From lying, harsh, perverse, divisive
Kinds of meaningless talk.**

**Commentary:**

Dwelling in these means in the ten kinds of profound minds:

* The Proper and Upright Mind.
* The Compliant and Yielding Mind.
* The Mind Able to Endure.
* The Tamed and Subdued Mind.
* The Still and Quiet Mind.
* The Completely Good Mind.
* The Unmixed and Unscattered Mind.
* The Mind With No Hankering or Yearning.
* The Vast Mind.
* The Great Mind.

That is the same thing as dwelling on the Second Ground, the Ground of Leaving Filth. The important thing is that it is essential to have those ten kinds of minds to enter the Second Ground, and so you can interpret it either way.

He accomplishes the merit and virtue of precepts. You have to hold the precepts in order to enter the Ground of Leaving Filth. If you don’t hold the precepts, you won’t be able to enter the Second Ground of Leaving Filth, because you will not be able to leave your filth. You won’t be able to get out of the dirt because you don’t hold the precepts. Didn’t it say before that among the Four Dharmas of Attraction he stresses kind words, and that among the Ten Paramitas he stresses the Paramita of holding precepts? That’s why he accomplishes the merit and virtue of precepts within the ten minds.

He leaves far behind all taking life. How does he leave it far behind? It’s by not killing at all. Not killing is to leave it far behind. Because he doesn’t take life, he doesn’t undergo the two kinds of retribution, the first of which is having a short life: dying a few days after being born, or after a few months or years. Nor does he have the second kind of retribution of having many illnesses, always being sick, having one disease after another. Any of you who are always getting sick should return the light, look within yourselves, and say, “It’s because in the past I took too many lives, so now I’m always sick.” If you don’t kill, you won’t get ill, because you protect life. If you cherish the lives of other living beings, you will have the rewards of a long life and freedom from illnesses. You won’t get sick. So no matter who you are, take a good look at yourself. He leaves killing far behind, and does not vex or harm. You shouldn’t kill, and you shouldn’t trouble or hut other living beings. Don’t deliberately make trouble for beings. Don’t make them become afflicted or unhappy.

He is also free from stealing. He doesn’t steal either. If you steal, there are two retributions as well. The first is being poor, and the other is having your wealth held in common with someone else. You are poor, have no money, because you always took away other people’s, and so now you yourself have none. That is your punishment, your retribution. The second retribution is having your wealth in common with others. Although the money is your own, other people tell you what to do with it. They control it; you don’t. It belongs to other people as well as you. Or it may be that you have money and then it is taken over for communal use.

…And from deviant sex. “Deviant sex” means illegal sexual relations between men and women, sexual relations not sanctioned by law. If someone is not your legal wife or husband, you may not have sexual relations with that person. If you do so, then you violate the precept against deviant sex. What happens then? You yourself will have a husband or wife who will not follow the rules, will not act the way a wife or husband should. That is, your wife or husband will seek out lots of other people and have sexual relations with them. Why will that happen? It’s because you yourself in the past violated the precept against sexual misconduct. That’s the first retribution for it. The second retribution is that your family or circle of friends will not be harmonious. You won’t get along with each other.

Form lying, harsh, perverse, divisive kinds of meaningless talk. This means false speech: telling lies, harsh speech, loose speech-speech that is not in accord with Dharma-and divisive speech. Meaningless talk is speech that is not in accord with principle. These are included in the ten evils. If you violate these ten kinds of evil karma, ten you will not have the ten kinds of wholesome karma, and you will fall into the three evil destinies. You may fall among the hungry ghosts, into the hells, or be an animal, and it is not known how long you will have to stay in those three evil destinies before you can escape from them.

**Sutra:**

**He has no greed for wealth and things,
Always kind and sympathetic.
Of proper ways and upright mind,
He has no flattery or deceit.**

**He’s free from cruelty, pride’s renounced.
He’s ultimately subdued.
He practices as he’s been taught.
And is never lax.**

**“Hell-beings and animals
Undergo amassed suffering.
Hungry ghosts are on fire,
And give off a raging blaze.**

**All of this occurs
Because of their offenses.
I should take them out
To dwell in actual Dharmas.”**

**Among people as he pleases,
He undergoes birth.
Up to Heaven’s Summit.
The bliss of dhyana samadhi.**

**“Paths of Lone-Enlightened,
Sound-Hearers and Buddha Vehicles,
Are all brought about
Because of the Ten Goods.”**

**In that way he reflects,
And is never lax.
He himself holds pure precepts,
And teaches others to protect them.**

**He further sees the flocks of beings
Receiving many sufferings,
And he even more increases his
Great compassionate mind to aid them.**

**Commentary:**

He has no greed for wealth and things, always kind and sympathetic. People who cultivate the Way should not be greedy for wealth and possessions and should always have a kind of sympathetic attitude towards living beings. Of proper ways and upright mind, they should cultivate the Eight Proper Paths:

* Proper Views.
* Proper Thought.
* Proper Speech.
* Proper Action.
* Proper Livelihood.
* Proper Vigor.
* Proper Mindfulness.
* Proper Samadhi.

One should always cultivate the Eight Proper Ways, and have an upright mind:

The straight mind is the Way Place.

You should use an upright mind to cultivate the Way. He has no flattery or deceit. He doesn’t play up to the rich or look down on the poor. That is something that should not be done. Nor is there anything phony or dishonest in what he does.

He’s free from cruelty, pride’s renounced, he’s ultimately subdued. He’s not evil, not cruel at heart, and he’s given up his conceit. His mind is very compassionate, very compliant and agreeable. He practices as he’s been taught, and is never lax. One should cultivate according to the teachings spoken by the Buddhas, and one must never be lax and fail to follow the rules. To be lax means not to follow the rules, and not to be lax means to follow the rules.

“Hell-beings and animals undergo amassed suffering.” The retribution undergone by beings in the hells and by brute beasts entails all kinds of sufferings. “Hungry ghosts are on fire, and give off a raging blaze.” The hungry ghosts are always being scorched by fire, by raging flames, and it’s very difficult to bear. “All of this occurs because of their offenses.” It’s because of having created offenses that one undergoes all of the evil retributions in the three evil destinies. “I should take them out to dwell in actual dharmas. I should help all of those living beings in the three evil destinies to escape from them and reside in true and genuine Dharmas.”

Among people as he pleases, he undergoes birth. Wherever he wants to be born among people, he can be born, up to Heaven’s Summit, the bliss of dhyana samadhi. He can be born in the very highest heave, the Summit of Existence, having the happiness of the Four Dhyanas and the Four Stations of Emptiness. “Paths of Lone-Enlightened, Sound Hearers, and Buddha Vehicles to successful conclusion-“are all brought about because of the Ten Goods.” Those accomplishments are all because of having cultivated the ten good kinds of karma.

In that way he reflects, and is never lax. When he things that way, he is not remiss. He himself holds pure precepts, and teaches others to protect them. He himself receives and maintains pure precepts, and he also teaches other people to protect and hold the pure precepts. He further sees the flocks of beings receiving many sufferings. He also see living beings undergoing all kinds of bitterness, and he even more increases his great compassionate mind to aid them. This makes him even more kind and more greatly compassionate in his thought to teach and transform living beings.

**Sutra:**

**“Those common, stupid, with deviant wisdom,
Who do not properly understand,
Constantly cling to their hatred,
And do much arguing and fighting.**

**In their state of greedy seeking,
They know no satiation:
I should cause them to eradicate
All of the Three Poisons.**

**“Fettered and covered by the great
Darkness of stupidity,
They enter paths of great danger,
And nets of deviant views.**

**In the care of birth and death,
By hatred they’re detained:
I should cause them to disperse
The demonic thieves.”**

**Commentary:**

Compared to the way people think, the thinking of hungry ghosts is not proper or correct. The thinking of animals is also stupid, and the way the ordinary people think is stupid too. We imagine that we’re thinking very correctly, but from the vantage point of Sages, we are completely upside-down and unable to have proper knowledge and proper views. And so it say, “Those common, stupid, with deviant wisdom, who do not properly understand.” Common, ordinary people are stupid, and due to their stupidity they have deviant knowledge and deviant views. Since they lack proper knowledge and proper views, their understanding is inaccurate. They “constantly cling to their hatred, and do much arguing and fighting.” They are always thinking thoughts of hatred and dislike. They hate this person, they can’t stand that person, and it never ends. It’s always as if they were suing someone in court, debating a lawsuit with people, arguing their case.

“In their state of greed seeking, they know no satiation.” Ordinary people are also greedy without satiation. They never know how to be content. The sole reason for fighting and enmity in the world is that people are unable to be content with what they have. If people could be content, they wouldn’t fight or argue with other people. As it is said:

If you know how to be content,
Then you will always be happy.
If you can be patient,
You will naturally be at peace.

If you know how to be content, then you will always be content. And if you don’t know how to be content, then you’ll never be content. There is greed for states or greed for wealth and jewels-all kinds of things that have value-the states of wealth and possessions. They never have enough of them. There is no time when they are satisfied. “I should cause them to eradicate all of the three poisons.” The Bodhisattva on the Ground of Leaving Filth says, “I should make a vow to cause living beings who are like that to become free from greed, from hatred, and from stupidity. I should cause them to expel those three poisons.”

“Fettered and covered by the great darkness of stupidity…” Why is it people do improper and incorrect things? It is due to the great darkness of stupidity, to ignorance which fetters, entangles and blocks them. “They enter paths of great danger, and nets of deviant views.” They go along highly dangerous roads, and enter into the nets of deviant views. “In the cage of birth and death, by hatred they’re detained.” We keep being born and dying over and over again, and we never get our freedom. We can’t say that we were very clear about what was going on when we were born, nor that we understand very much when we die-that we know how we come and how we’re going to go, which is just to know how we were born and how we are going to die. We don’t know, nor do we look into this. Birth and death are like a cage and a jail that limit our freedom. It is hatred and enmity which keep us from being free. “I should cause them to disperse the demonic thieves.” The Bodhisattva on the Ground of Leaving Filth says, “I should now on the Ground of Leaving Filth says, “I should now help those living beings to quell the demonic bandits, to overcome the six hateful thieves which are the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind.”

**Sutra:**

**“Tossed about in the Four Floods,
Their minds sink and drown.
With the Three Realms scorching them,
Such sufferings are limitless.**

**They take the skandhas as their home,
Their egos dwell within it.
Because I want to save them,
I diligently cultivate the Way.**

**“Should they be seeking to escape,
Their minds inferior and low,
And renounce the most superior
Wisdom of the Buddha,**

**I wish to cause them all
To dwell in the Great Vehicle,
To bring forth diligent vigor,
And not feel tired or weary.”**

**The Bodhisattva dwelling here
Amasses merit and virtue.
He sees limitless Buddhas,
And makes offerings to them all.**

**In millions of kalpas’ cultivation,
His good is ever bright,
In the way metallic compounds
Are used to smelt true gold.**

**Commentary:**

“Tossed about in the four floods, their minds sink and drown.” The Four Floods are the Four Kinds of Upside-down Thinking that cause one to revolve in birth and death. The Four Upside-down Ways of Thinking are:

* Greed.
* Hatred.
* Stupidity.
* Pride.

They are also:

* Mistaking the impermanent for permanent.
* Mistaking what is not bliss for bliss.
* Mistaking what is not self for self.
* Mistaking what is impure for pure.

Those are the four kinds of upside-down thought. Actually there are not just four kinds, but hundreds upon thousands of millions of kinds. The essential ones, however, are thinking tat what is not permanent is permanent, thinking that what is not happiness is happiness, thinking what is not self is self, and thinking what is not pure is pure. Something is not going to last, but one figures it will last. Something is not happiness, but one takes it for happiness. What is not self one mistakes for self. What is not pure one decides is pure. That kind of upside-downness is mistaking a thief for one’s son, mistaking suffering for bliss, mistaking the false for the true. So it is said, they are tossed about in the Four Floods the way one might be tossed about in the sea. Their minds sink and drown in those four ways of being upside-down. For one’s mind to sink and drown is to lack wisdom.

“With the Three Realms scorching them, such sufferings are limitless.” The Three Realms have no peace, just like a burning house. They are:

* The Desire Realm.
* The Form Realm.
* The Formless Realm.

The living beings in the Desire Realm depend on desire for their very lives. They only live to have desire, and if they have no desire then they feel like they are dead. That’s why it is called the Desire Realm. In the Desire Realm no one is ever satisfied, but always full of desire and longing: being greedy for wealth, greedy for sex, greedy for fame, and greedy for food and sleep. Or they desire forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and objects of touch. They are greedy for fine food, greedy for fine sounds, greedy for fine smells, greedy for fine tastes, greedy for experiences of touch. All that is desire, the Desire Realm. To get out of it, you have to cut off desire and cast out love.

If you have no desire, then you transcend the heavens of the Desire Realm. But if you can’t break through the attachment to form, then you’ll be confused by the heavens of the Form Realm, and never go beyond it to the Heavens of the Formless Realm, in which there are no sounds, no forms and shapes, and no thinking. Those are all within the Three Realms, however. It says, “With the Three Realms, scorching them, such sufferings are limitless.” The Three Realms are, as it were, burning them, and their sufferings and troubles are just too many. All of us now are living in the heavens of the Desire Realm.

“They take the skandhas as their home, their egos dwell within it.” They take the dharmas of the Five Skandhas-form, feeling, thinking, activities, and consciousness-to be their house and home figuring, “This house is mine, and I am in the house.” But that’s all erroneous thinking. “Because I want to save them, I diligently cultivate the Way.” Because the Bodhisattva on the Ground of Leaving Filth wants to cross over such upside-down living beings, he very diligently cultivates the Way. “Should they be seeking to escape, their minds inferior and low…” Some people want to cultivate, but they don’t develop minds of great compassion. They don’t develop Great Vehicle attitudes which are free from self. They simply want to become self-ending Arhats and cultivate the dharmas of Sound Hearers and Those Enlightened to Conditions. Since they only want to take care of themselves, it is said that their minds are inferior and low. They *do* cultivate and want to escape from the Three Realms, but the measure of their minds is not great. It’s very petty: “And they renounce the most superior wisdom of a Buddha.” They only cultivate to reach the fruit position of an Arhat. They don’t seek to reach the wisdom of the Buddha. They don’t seek out Great Vehicle Dharmas. They don’t know how to go about seeking the most lofty and supreme, unsurpassed wisdom of a Buddha.

“I wish to cause them all to dwell in the Great Vehicle.” The Bodhisattva on the Ground of Leaving Filth says, “Right now I would like to save those kinds of living beings, so they bring forth the Great Vehicle resolve for Bodhi, and dwell within Great Vehicle Buddhadharmas: “To bring forth diligent vigor, and not feel tired or weary.” He says he wishes to cause them to bring forth a great resolve for Bodhi and courageous vigor to:

Diligently cultivate precepts, samadhi, and wisdom,
without ever becoming tired of it.

The Bodhisattva dwelling here amasses merit and virtue. The Bodhisattva who has brought forth the resolve for Bodhi, who practices the Bodhisattva Way, and who has brought forth this vast, great attitude, when he dwells in that place, assembles all kinds of merit and virtue. He sees limitless Buddhas, and makes offerings to them all. He sees limitless and boundlessly many hundreds of thousands of millions of Ganges= sands worth of nayutas of Buddhas, and he makes offerings to every one of them. In millions of kalpas’ cultivation, his good is ever brighter. During limitless millions of kalpas of cultivating pure wisdom, his wisdom becomes ever more bright, clear, and understanding, in the way metallic compounds are used to smelt true gold. It is the same as when one uses some kind of metal or stone to refine true gold, so that the more it is refined, the more pure and bright it becomes. This means that if you have wisdom you should go on to have more wisdom. Don’t stop halfway along the road. When you are only halfway there, don’t say, “Oh, I think I have made it. I have certified to the fruit of Arhatship, and that’s all I want. I don’t want to keep on cultivating to Buddhahood.” Instead, you should keep on going ahead and cultivate the Buddha Way with diligence.

**Sutra:**

**The Buddha’s disciple dwelling here
Acts as a Wheel-Turning King,
Universally teaching living beings
To practice the Ten Goods.**

**All of the good dharmas
Which he cultivates in practice
Are to seek the ten-fold powers,
And then save the world.**

**He willingly forsakes
Kingship, wealth, and jewels,
Abandons household life,
And relies on the Buddha’s teaching.**

**With courageous vigor,
Inside a single thought,
He obtains a thousand samadhis,
And sees a thousand Buddhas.**

**All of the various powers
Of spiritual penetrations
The Bodhisattva on this Ground
Is able to manifest.**

**If he acts through power of vows
It surpasses even these,
And with limitless sovereign ease
He saves the flocks of beings.**

**Of the ones who help and aid
Each and every world-
The most supreme Bodhisattva practices
Which they cultivate.**

**Such merit and virtue as that
Upon the Second Ground
For all disciples of the Buddha
I have now proclaimed.**

**Commentary:**

The Buddha’s disciple dwelling here acts as a Wheel-Turning King. A Bodhisattva who certifies to the Second Ground regularly makes the vow to appear as a Wheel-Turning Sage King, because such kings have great power and great spiritual penetrations, universally teaching living beings to practice the Ten Goods. They can teach and transform living beings to they hold the Five Precepts, practice the Ten Wholesome Acts, and cultivate all rewards of blessings. All of the good dharmas which he cultivates in practice, the good dharmas which he, as a Wheel-Turning Sage King, teaches all living beings to cultivate, are to seek the ten-fold powers, and then save the world, to accomplish the ten kinds of powers of spiritual penetrations that a Buddhas has, and then save the living beings of the world.

The Ten Powers of a Buddha

* The power of knowing from awakening to what is and what is not the case.
* The power of knowing karmic retributions throughout the Three Periods of Time.
* The power of knowing all Dhyanas, Liberations, and Samadhis.
* The power of knowing all faculties, whether superior or inferior.
* The power of knowing the various realms.
* The power of knowing the various understandings.
* The power of knowing where all paths lead.
* The power of knowing through the heavenly eye without obstruction.
* The power of knowing previous lives without outflows.
* The power of knowing from having cut off all habits forever.

When one certifies to the position of Buddhahood, one obtains ten kinds of powers of knowing through wisdom. The first is the power of knowing through awakening to what is and what is not the case. “Awakening to” means understanding. In any situation, the Buddha can tell if it is according to principle or not, whether something holds good or not, and whether it is reasonable or not. The second is the power of knowing karmic retributions throughout the Three Periods of Time. The Buddhas knows what kinds of causes every living being in the Three Realms throughout the past, the present, and the future has planted, and what retributions each beings is receiving as a result-and he knows this simultaneously about all living beings. The third is the power of knowing all Dhyanas, Eight Liberations, and Nine Successive Stages of Samadhi, as well as a limitless number of particular Samadhis. The Buddhas has experienced them all, and by the power of this wisdom recognizes them all very clearly.

The fourth is the power of knowing all faculties, whether superior or inferior. With this power of wisdom, the Buddha knows what the basic disposition of every living being is like. If superior, it is good and wholesome; if inferior, it is low and base. The fifth is the power of knowing the various realms. “Realms” means states, whether good or bad. The Buddhas has already reached the very highest of states, has transcended the Three Realms, and so he is very clear about all the states and less realms within them. The sixth is the power of knowing the various understandings. Some living beings are intelligent with keen understanding, while others are dense and don’t understand. The Buddhas recognizes very distinctly the level of understanding of each living being. The seventh is the power of knowing where all paths lead. “Where all paths lead” means the fruit obtained through each way of cultivation. For example, If you hold the Five Precepts and practice the Ten Good Acts, you can be reborn in the heavens, and so that is a path. If you cultivate the dharmas of the Four Noble Truths, you can certify to the Four Fruits of Arhatship. If you cultivate the Twelve Links of Conditioned Co-production, you become One Enlightened to Conditions. If you cultivate the Six Paramitas and the ten thousand practices, you can become a Bodhisattva. The Buddha immediately knows what the outcome will be of travelling down any given road, of employing any given method.

The eights is the power of knowing through the heavenly eye is one of the Five Eyes. With his heavenly eye, the Buddha can see absolutely everything, even up to the highest heavens-for nothing obstructs the Buddha’s heavenly eye which is perfect. The ninth is the power of knowing previous lives without outflows. The Buddha knows very clearly what every living being was in its past lives, whether it was an animal or a hungry ghost, or whether it is a returning Bodhisattva. The tenth is the power of knowing from having cut off all habits forever. “Habits” refers to all the bad habits and faults we ordinary people possess. The Buddhas has already seen through them all and put them all down, and will never have any of those problems again. When one become a Buddha, one cuts off those habits from limitless kalpas past, so they don’t exist anymore. Those are the ten kinds of power of a Buddha.

He willingly forsakes kingship, wealth, and jewels. The Wheel-Turning Sage King is able to give away his kingly position to someone else. He can renounce all his wealth and gems. He abandons household life, and relies on the Buddha’s teaching. He can bestow his countries, cities, wives and children, his head, eyes, brains, and marrow upon living beings, and rely upon the Buddhadharma to cultivate. With courageous vigor, inside and single though-in the interval of one instant of though-he obtains a thousand samadhis, and sees a thousand Buddhas. He acquires, through courageous vigor, a thousand samadhis, sees a thousand Buddhas, sees a thousand worlds, and can make a thousand worlds quake in six ways.

All of the various powers of spiritual penetrations of all Buddhas, the Bodhisattva on this ground is able to manifest. The Bodhisattva on the Ground of Leaving Filth is able to manifest them all. If he acts through power of vows, it surpasses even these. What he can do through the power of his vows far exceeds that number, and with limitless sovereign ease, he saves the flocks of beings. He has limitless powers of spiritual penetrations, and with freedom and comfort teaches and transforms all living beings.

Of the ones who help and aid each and every world, so that all living beings of all worlds obtain benefit-the most supreme Bodhisattva practices which they cultivate-the supreme doors of Bodhisattva conduct that they practice, such merit and virtue as that upon the Second Ground, for all disciples of the Buddha I have no proclaimed. I have now told all of you disciples of the Buddha about those most supreme Dharma doors.

**End of the Second Ground**

The Third Ground

**Sutra:**

**Buddha’s disciples who heard the conducts of that Ground,
The Bodhisattva states difficult to conceive,
All were most respectful and in heart rejoiced,
And scattered flowers in empty space by way of offerings.**

**Commentary:**

Buddha’s disciples who heard the conducts of that Ground, all the Buddhist disciples who came to hear the doors of practice in cultivation upon the Second Ground, the Ground of Leaving Filth, the Bodhisattva states difficult to conceive, inconceivable, all were most respectful and in heart rejoiced. None of the living beings failed to be most reverent or to become very happy at heart. They scattered flowers in empty space by way of offerings. They strewed wonderful, precious lotus blossoms in the air as offerings to the multitudes in the Dharma Assembly.

**Sutra:**

**They praised him saying: “Good indeed, Great Mountain King!
With kindly mind and pity you remember living beings,
And well speak about the wise one’s precepts and comportments,
The marks of practice that exist upon the Second Ground.**

**Those are all Bodhisattvas’ subtle and wonderful conducts,
True and actual, with no other, without discrimination.
From the wish to benefit all the flocks of beings.
You have thus proclaimed their utmost purity.**

**You to whom both gods and humans all make offerings,
We hope that you for us will proclaim the Third Ground.
All the deeds of wisdom, interactive with the Dharma,
What their states are like in detail, please totally explain.**

**All the dharmas of giving and precepts of the Great Immortal,
Hi patience and his vigor, his dhyana and his wisdom,
Along with his expedients, the way of kindness and compassion-
The Buddha’s purified conduct we wish you would proclaim.”**

**At that time Liberation Moon again requires saying:**

**“Great Knight of Fearlessness, oh Treasury of Vajra,
Won’t you tell us of tending towards and entering the Third Ground,
You whose heart is so compliant, who have all merit and virtue.”**

**Commentary:**

All of the states of the Bodhisattva were inconceivable, and so every single living beings without exception was very reverent and delighted, and they all scattered flowers in empty space as offerings to the Bodhisattva. They praised him, saying “Good indeed, Great Mountain King! The Bodhisattva is like a great mountain king. With kindly mind and pity, you remember living beings. You use a mind of kindness and compassion that bestows happiness, and you are kindly mindful of all living beings. And you well speak about the wise one’s precepts and comportments. The Bodhisattva speaks very well about the One With Wisdom’s Three Collections of Pure Precepts:

* The Pure Precepts which include all rules and observances.
* The Pure Precepts which include all wholesome dharmas.
* The Pure Precepts which include all Living Beings.

You speak well of the marks of practice that exist upon the Second Ground, all about how to cultivate and practice the states that occur on the Bodhisattva Way on the Second Ground.

“Those are all Bodhisattvas’ subtle and wonderful conducts. That is to say, all Bodhisattvas should cultivate these subtle and wonderful doors of practice which are true and actual, with no other, without discrimination. These are dharmas that are true, actual and not false. There are no two ways about them. There is only true and actual dharma of real mark, with nothing different, and without any other discrimination. From the wish to benefit all the flocks of beings, you have thus proclaimed their utmost purity. For that reason you have now spoken the very purest dharmas.

“You to whom both gods and humans all make offerings, we hope that you for us will proclaim the Third Ground.” This is requesting Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva to speak the dharmas of the Third Ground for the sake of all living beings. “All the deeds of wisdom, interactive with the Dharma, the deeds of all wisdom and their interaction with the Dharma, what their states are like in detail, please totally explain. We hope that you will completely tell us what the states that one certifies to are like so everyone can hear.

“Please explain all the dharmas of giving and precepts of the Great Immortal; that is, all of the Buddha’s Giving and Holding Precepts, his patience and his vigor, his dhyana Samadhi and his wisdom-those various kinds of dharmas-along with his expedient means, the Way cultivated through kindness and compassion. The Buddha’s purified conduct we with you would proclaim. We wish you would talk about all the various pure Dharma doors which were practiced by the Buddha.”

At that time Liberation Moon again requested Dharma from Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva saying: “Great Knight of Fearlessness, oh Treasury of Vajra.” He said, “Great Bodhisattva, Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, who has no fear, wont you tell us of tending towards and entering the Third Ground? I hope that you will tell us about how to cultivate ad what Dharma doors to use to certify to the Third Ground. You whose heart is so compliant, who have all merit and virtue. You are so compliant at heart and you have all the meritorious qualities, Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva. I wish that you would talk about the principles of the Third Ground for the sake of all living beings.”

**Sutra:**

**At that time, Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva addressed Moon of Liberation Bodhisattva saying: Disciples of the Buddha, the Bodhisattva Mahasattva who has already purified the Second Ground, and who wishes to enter the Third Ground, should bring forth ten kinds of profound minds. What are the ten? They are: a purified mind, a peacefully dwelling mind, a mind of disgust and renunciation, a mind free of greed, an unretreating mind, a solid mind, a mind of flourishing brightness, a courageous mind, a vast mind, a great mind. The Bodhisattva using those Ten Kinds of Minds attains entry to the Third Ground.**

**Disciples of the Buddha, the Bodhisattva, Mahasattva, once he dwells upon the Third Ground, contemplates the marks of conditioned dharmas as they really are. That is, as impermanent, as suffering, as impure, as having no peace, as subject to destruction, as not lasting long, as produced and extinguished in a kshana, as not produced from the boundary of before, as not tending towards the boundary of afterwards, and as not dwelling in the present.**

**He also contemplates those dharmas as not being able to rescue and as having no reliance, as bestowing worries and bestowing grief, as being conjoined with suffering and troubles, as being bound up by love and hate, as multiplying anxiety and sorrows, their accumulation never stopping, as ceaselessly blazing with the fire of greed, hatred and stupidity, as enmeshed in the multitudes of calamities, which day and night increase and grow, like illusions without actuality.**

**Having seen them in that way, he doubly increases his disgust for and freedom from all that is conditioned and tends towards the wisdom of a Buddha. He sees that the Buddha’s wisdom is inconceivable, incomparable, limitless, difficult to obtain, without admixtures; that it has no troubles, no worries, and has arrived at the city of fearlessness; that is not longer retreats; that it is able to rescue living beings from limitless sufferings and difficulties.**

**The Bodhisattva in that way sees how there are such limitless benefits to the Thus Come One’s wisdom. He sees that there are limitless disasters to all that is conditioned. Then towards all living beings he brings forth ten kinds of minds of sympathy and pity. What are the ten? They are: He sees that all living beings are alone and forlorn with nothing to rely on, and brings forth a mind of sympathy and pity. He sees that all living beings are poor and destitute, and brings forth a mind of sympathy and pity.**

**Commentary:**

When Moon of Liberation Bodhisattva requested the Dharma, Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva was going to speak the Dharma, and so at that time, Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva addressed Moon of Liberation bodhisattva saying: Disciples of the Buddha, the great Bodhisattva Mahasattva who cultivates the Bodhisattva Way and amasses all kinds of good roots, who has already purified the Second Ground, the Ground of Leaving Filth, and who wishes to enlighten the Third Ground, should bring forth ten kinds of profound minds. Again, it is ten kinds of deep minds that we should bring forth. What are the ten? They are: a purified mind, one which has no defilements, a peacefully dwelling mind which does not move; a mind of disgust and renunciation which has no greed; a mind free of greed and which has become pure; an unretreating mind which only goes forward with courageous vigor; a solid mind with no doubts; a mind of flourishing brightness which is intelligent and wise, not stupid; a courageous mind courageously vigorous and not lazy; a vast mind, one of great capacity! A great mind. The Bodhisattva, using those ten kinds of minds, attains entry to the Third Ground. It’s through those ten kinds of minds that one can enter the Third Ground.

Disciples of the Buddha, all of you, the Bodhisattva Mahasattva, once he dwells upon the Third Ground, contemplates the marks of conditioned dharmas as they really are. He contemplates how all conditioned dharmas contradict true suchness. That is, as impermanent, as suffering, as impure, as having no peace. They are transitory, and do not last forever. They always entail suffering. They aren’t pure, and are not peaceful. He sees them as subject to destruction, as not lasting long, as produced and extinguished in a kshana, as not produced from the boundary of what was before, they didn’t arise from what was prior-as not tending towards the boundary of afterwards. They are not going towards what comes after… and as not dwelling in the present. They don’t dwell in the here and now either.

He also contemplates those dharmas as not being able to rescue. These dharmas cannot save one from suffering, and as having no reliance. They have nothing on which one can rely; as bestowing worries and bestowing grief-they bring both worries and grief; as being conjoined with suffering and troubles. They dwell together with suffering and trouble; as being bound up by love and hate-they are tied up with hate and love; as multiplying anxiety and sorrows, their accumulation never stopping. There is not way to stop them; as ceaselessly blazing with the fire of greed, hatred, and stupidity. The fire of greed and stupidity blazes and cannot be stopped; as enmeshed in the multitudes of calamities, disasters of all sorts, which day and night increase and grow, like illusions without actuality. They are unreal, just like illusions and transformations.

Having seen them in that way, after the Bodhisattva has seen those kinds of states, he doubly increases his disgust for and freedom from all that is conditioned. He wants to get out of conditioned dharmas, and tends towards the wisdom of a Buddha. He wants to obtain the Buddha’s wisdom. He sees the Buddha’s wisdom. He can see that the Buddha’s wisdom is inconceivable, incomparable, limitless, difficult to obtain, without admixtures, nothing mixed in with it, and that it has no troubles, no worries, and has arrived at the great city of fearlessness; that it no longer retreats-it doesn’t turn back any more; that it is able to rescue living beings from limitless sufferings and difficulties.

The Bodhisattva in that way sees, upon making that contemplation, how there are such limitless benefits to the Thus Come One’s wisdom. The benefits from the Buddha’s wisdom are infinite. He sees that there are limitless disasters to all that is conditioned, all conditioned dharmas being non-ultimate. Then towards all living beings he brings forth ten kinds of minds of sympathy and pity. He has ten kinds of attitudes of sympathy and pity for living beings. What are the ten? They are: He sees that all living beings are alone and forlorn with nothing to rely on. He sees living beings as being all by themselves, with nothing they can depend on, and brings forth a mind of sympathy and pity. He produces an attitude of sympathy and concern for all living beings. He sees that all livings beings are poor and destitute, and brings forth a mind of sympathy and pity. He again has to feel very sorry for those living beings, and sympathizes with and pities them.

**Sutra:**

**He sees that all living beings are being scorched by the fire of the three poisons, and brings forth a mind of sympathy and pity. He sees that all living beings are shut up in the prison of the existences and brings forth a mind of sympathy and pity. He sees that all living beings are constantly covered and hemmed in by the dense forest of afflictions, and brings forth a mind of sympathy and pity. He sees that all living beings are not good at contemplating, and brings forth a mind of sympathy and pity. He sees that all living beings do not desire wholesome dharmas, and brings forth a mind of sympathy and pity. He sees that all living beings lose all Buddhadharmas, and brings forth a mind of sympathy and pity. He sees that all living beings follow along with the flow of birth and death, and brings forth a mind of sympathy and pity. He sees that all living beings lose liberation and expedients, and brings forth a mind of sympathy and pity. Those are the ten.**

**The Bodhisattva in that way sees that the realm of living beings has limitless sufferings and troubles. He rouses up great vigor and makes the following reflection: “I should rescue all these living beings. I should liberate them. I should purify them. I should cross them over. I should establish them in a wholesome place.”**

**Commentary:**

He, the Bodhisattva, further sees that all living beings are undergoing as much pain as if they were being scorched by the fire of the three poisons, greed, hatred, and stupidity being like fire burning them, and he brings forth a mind of sympathy and pity towards them. He also sees that all living beings are shut up in the prison of the existences. He sees that the Three Realms and all the existences-existence in the Desire Realm, the Form realm, the Formless realm-imprison all living beings as if they were shut up in a jail, and brings forth a mind of sympathy and pity. This too makes him feel very sorry for them. He also sees that all living beings are constantly covered and hemmed in by the dense forest of afflictions. He sees that living beings have so many afflictions they are like the trees of a thick forest, that their afflictions-agreed, hatred, stupidity, and the rest, block and over them like a dense woods, and brings forth a mind of sympathy and pity. He for that reason also pities them. He also sees that all living beings are not good at contemplating. They are not skilled at carefully examining and contemplating all states. They don’t pay any attention to whether states are good or evil, wholesome or unwholesome, and so towards those kinds of living beings, the Buddha and Bodhisattva also brings forth a mind of sympathy and pity.

He again takes a look and sees that all living beings do not desire wholesome dharmas. Their thoughts are not those of desiring and liking to cultivate wholesome dharmas, and because of that the Bodhisattva again brings forth a mind of sympathy and pity for those kinds of living beings. He also sees that all living beings follow along with the flow of birth and death, that they run back and forth after birth and death, and he brings forth a mind of sympathy and pity once again, wanting to save them. He furthermore sees that all living beings lose liberation, and expedients. They lose liberation and expedient Dharma doors, and towards those living beings he brings forth a mind of sympathy and pity, seeing them as very pitiful. Those are the ten, the ten kinds of minds of sympathy and pity.

The Bodhisattva in that way sees that the realm of living beings has limitless sufferings and troubles, lots and lots of things that go wrong. At that time, he rouses up great vigor. He puts on the armor of great vigor, and makes the following reflection, saying to himself, “I should rescue all these living beings, the living being who are like that. I should liberate them, free and save them. I should purify them. I should cause living beings who are like that to purify and regulate all Bodhisattva practices. I should cross them over, rescuing all such beings. I should establish them in a wholesome place. I should help them dwell in a good location.”

**Sutra:**

**“I should cause them to be secured. I should cause them to be happy. I should cause them to know and see. I should cause them to be tamed and subdued. I should cause them to attain Nirvana.”**

**Commentary:**

The Bodhisattva says, “I should cause them, all of those living beings, to be secured in the position of Buddhahood. I also should cause them, all those living beings ,to be happy, to obtain limitless happiness. I should also cause them to know and see, so that all those living beings have proper knowledge and proper views. I should also cause them, all living beings, to be tamed and subdued. I should also cause them, all living beings, to attain the bliss of Nirvana.”

**Sutra:**

**The Bodhisattva in that way becomes disgusted with and leaves behind all that is conditioned. He in that way is sympathetically mindful of all living beings. He knows the supreme benefits of the wisdom of all wisdom. He wishes to use the Thus Come One’s wisdom to rescue and cross over living beings. He makes the following reflection: “All these living beings have fallen into the midst of the great sufferings of afflictions. What expedients can be used to pull them out and save them, so they attain the bliss of ultimate Nirvana?”**

**Then he makes the following reflection: “One wishing to cross over living beings so they dwell within Nirvana does not separate from unobstructed wisdom of liberation. Unobstructed wisdom of liberation is not separate from awakening to the reality of all dharmas. Awakening to the reality of all dharmas is not separate from the light of wisdom of non-doing and non-production. The light of wisdom of non-doing and non-production is not separate from investigation though the wisdom of clever, decisive contemplation. Investigation through the wisdom of clever, decisive contemplation is not separate from skilled learning.”**

**Commentary:**

The Bodhisattva in that way becomes disgusted with and leaves behind all that is conditioned. That’s how the Bodhisattva comes really to despise all conditioned dharmas, and so he wants to leave all conditioned dharmas behind. He in that way is sympathetically mindful of all living beings. That’s how he feels sorry for living beings, and remembers them with pity. He knows the supreme benefits of the wisdom of all wisdom, that the wisdom of all wisdoms has supremely beneficial advantages. He wishes to use the Thus Come One’s wisdom, the wisdom of a Tathagata, to rescue and cross over living beings, all living beings within the six paths. He makes the following reflection, thinking yet again: “All these living beings have fallen into the midst of the great suffering of afflictions, that cause trouble and difficulty. What expedients can be used to pull them out and save them? What kind of expedient Dharma doors can I se to pluck out and rescue all those living beings, so they attain the bliss of ultimate Nirvana, so that they obtain non-production and non-extinction, neither defilement nor purity, permanence, bliss, true self, and purity which is the happiness of ultimate Nirvana?”

Then he makes the following reflection, contemplating in this way, “one wishing to cross over living beings, one who wants to cross over all living beings, so they dwell within Nirvana, so they reside in the principle and substance of Nirvana, does not separate from unobstructed wisdom of liberation. One should not leave wisdom of liberation which is unobstructed. If one has unobstructed wisdom of liberation, one can cause all living beings to be free from suffering and attain bliss. It is not separate from awakening to the reality of all dharmas. One should not separate from the awakening to the true thusness of all dharmas. If one can manage not to separate from awakening to the reality of all dharmas, then one can cause all living beings to turn back from confusion and return to enlightenment, for it is not separate from the light of wisdom of non-doing and non-production. It is not separate from the light of wisdom of doors of practice such that there is nothing that is cultivated and one certifies to patience with the non-production of dharmas. The light of wisdom of non-doing and non-production has nothing that is practiced and nothing that is produced-it’s the wisdom light of that kind of behavior and it is not separate from investigation through the wisdom of clever, decisive contemplation. It is not separate from wisdom which skillfully investigates through decisive contemplation. With investigation through the wisdom of clever, decisive contemplation, then one can truly and actually end birth and death. It is not separate from skilled learning.

**Sutra:**

**After the Bodhisattva in that way contemplates and thoroughly understands, he doubles his diligent search for and practice of proper dharmas. Day and night he only wishes to hear the Dharma, delights in the Dharma, relies upon the Dharma, follows the Dharma, reaches the Dharma, dwells in the Dharma, and cultivates the Dharma. The Bodhisattva in that way diligently seeks the Buddhadharma. He does not begrudge any of his gems or wealth. He does not see that there is any object difficult to obtain or estimable, but has the thought that only someone who is able to speak the Buddhadharma is difficult to meet. Therefore, the Bodhisattva in his search for the Buddhadharma is completely able to give up all inner and out wealth. There is no reverence he is unable to practice. There is no pride he is unable to renounce. There is no service he is unable to perform. There is no suffering he is unable to undergo, if he hears a single phrase of Dharma that he has not heard before, he becomes more delighted than if he obtained precious jewels that fill a three thousand great thousand world-system.**

**Commentary:**

After the Bodhisattva in that way contemplates and thoroughly understands, when the Bodhisattva has made those kinds of contemplations and gains clear understanding, then after that he doubles his diligent search for and practice of proper dharmas. He doubly intensifies his diligence in seeking and practicing Proper Dharma. Day and night he only wishes to hear the Dharma. In the daytime and at night as well, all he wants to do is listen to the Buddhadharma. He delights in the Buddhadharma. He likes the Buddhadharma. He relies upon the Buddhadharma to cultivate. He follows and accords with the Buddhadharma to rescue and cross over all living beings. He clearly understands the Buddhadharma, and teaches and transforms all living beings. He accords with the Dharma, following and according with the real mark of all dharmas and he reaches the Dharma, the other shore of all dharmas. He dwell sin the Nirvana of Dharma, and cultivates the unconditioned aspect of all Dharma.

The Bodhisattva in that way diligently seeks the Buddhadharma. He does not begrudge any of his gems or wealth. He would never think of being unable to give them up. He does not see that there is any object, any possession, that is difficult to obtain or estimable. He doesn’t’ see any articles as very hard to possess or valuable. But has the thought that only someone who is able to speak the Buddhadharma is difficult to meet. Only toward a person who can speak the Buddhadharma does he bring forth the thought that such a person is difficult to encounter and difficult to meet. Therefore, the Bodhisattva in his search for the Buddhadharma is completely able to give up all inner and out wealth. He can give both inner and outer wealth away in order to seek the Buddhadharma. There is no reverence he is unable to practice. There is no act of respect or veneration he would not be able to bring himself to do. There is no pride he is unable to renounce. There is no kind of arrogance he would not be able to let go of. There is no service he is unable to perform. He would never say, “I can’t possibly attend upon and serve all Buddhas.” There is no suffering he is unable to undergo. There isn’t any toil of which he would say, “I can’t stand it.” If he hears a single phrase of Dharma that he has not heard before, upon hearing that one sentence of Dharma he had never before heard, he becomes more delighted than if he obtained precious jewels that fill a three thousand great thousand world-system. His joy is greater than if he came into possession of all the precious jewels in an entire Trichiliocosm.

**Sutra:**

**If he hears one verse of Proper Dharma he has never heard before, he becomes more delighted than if he obtained the position of Wheel-Turning Sage King. If her obtains one verse of Dharma he has never heard before which can purify the Bodhisattva conduct, it surpasses obtaining the royal positions of Shakra and Brahma and remaining in them for limitless hundreds of thousands of kalpas. If a person were to say to him, “I have a phrase of Dharma spoken by the Buddha that can purify the Bodhisattva conduct. If you can now enter a great pit of fire and undergo ultimately great suffering, I shall bestow it upon you,” the Bodhisattva at that time makes the following reflection: “Since with a single phrase of Dharma spoken by the Buddha I can purify the Bodhisattva conduct, if the three thousand great thousand world-system were filled with massive fire, I would even be willing to hurl my body down from the top of the Brahma Heaven and endure it, so how much less is there question of whether I can enter a small pit of fire. For now, to seek the Buddhadharma, I should undergo all the sufferings of the hells, much less the small vexations in the realm of humans.**

**Commentary:**

The Bodhisattva, if he hears as little as one sentence of Buddhadharma that he hasn’t ever heard before, becomes very happy and feels more content than if he obtained an entire Great Trichiliocosm filled with precious jewels. If he hears one verse, most verses being four-line gathas-of Proper Dharma that he has never heard before, orthodox Dharma he has never listened to, he also becomes very happy, more delighted than if he obtained the position of Wheel-Turning Sage King. When you listen to Sutras and heard the Dharma, you need to know how to apply that Dharma. You listen to the Sutras and hear the Dharma every day, and you sort of get tired of it. So there is true and actual Dharma, but you don’t recognize it, and you don’t feel the Dharma’s value and importance. But the Bodhisattva isn’t that way. The Bodhisattva, if he hears just one phrase of Buddhadharma that he hasn’t heard before, or else a single gatha whose principles he never understood before and now gets to hear, he likes it better than if he got to be a Wheel-Turning Sage King.

If he obtains one verse of Dharma he has never heard before, which can purify the Bodhisattva conduct-“purify” means “perfect” the conduct of a Bodhisattva-it surpasses obtaining the royal positions of Shakra and Brahma. It’s great happiness for him than if he received the kingly positions of the God Shakra or the Great Brahma Heaven God. First it was the jewels in a Great Trichiliocosm, next the position of Wheel-Turning Sage King, and now it surpasses obtaining the positions of kingship held by the God Shakra and the Great Brahma Heaven God and remaining in them for limitless hundreds of thousands of kalpas. It is better than enjoying the reward of blessings of the God Shakra and the Great Brahma Heaven God throughout unlimited hundreds of thousands of kalpas.

If a person were to say to him “I have a phrase of Dharma spoken by the Buddha, I now have just one sentence of Dharma spoken by the Buddha in the past, that can purify the Bodhisattva conduct. It can purify and regulate the doors of practice cultivated by Bodhisattvas. If you can now enter a great pit of fire, if right now, in your search for the Dharma, you can cast yourself into a huge fiery pit, and undergo ultimately great suffering, the most intense bitterness, suffering within suffering, I shall bestow it upon you. If you can do that, it proves you have real sincerity, and I will transmit the single phrase of Buddhadharma to you.” The Bodhisattva at that time, the Bodhisattva who is cultivating the Bodhisattva Way when that happens makes the following reflection: “Since with a single phrase of Dharma spoken by the Buddha, because of that one sentence of Buddhadharma, I can purify the Bodhisattva conduct, I can purify and regulate the doors of practice cultivated by a Bodhisattva, if the three thousand great thousand world-system were filled with massive fire, should the Great Trichiliocosm turn into a huge pit of fire, I would even be willing to hurl my body down from the top of the Brahma Heaven.

In order to seek that one phrase of Buddhadharma, I would be willing to jump from the top of the Great Brahma Heaven down into the great pit of fire, and endure it, myself undergo being physically burned by the fire in the pit in exchange for the Buddhadharma, so how much less is there question of whether I can enter a small pit of fire. There is even less question about my being able to jump into a tiny little pit of fire in search of the Dharma. For now, to seek the Buddhadharma, I should undergo all the sufferings of the hells, much less the small vexations in the realm of humans. I would willingly renounce my body in that way in order to seek the Buddhadharma. Even if I had to endure all the sufferings in the hells in order to do so, I would still seek the Dharma spoken by the Buddha, and so the minor torments and vexations such as a little fiery pit in the human realm are even less of a problem. Even if I have to give up my body and life, I absolutely wish to seek the Buddhadharma!”

**Sutra:**

**The Bodhisattva in that way rouses up diligence and vigor in his search for the Buddhadharma, in accord with what he hears, he contemplates and cultivates. Once this Bodhisattva comes to hear the Dharma, he collects his mind and dwells secured. In a quiet and tranquil place he makes the following reflection: “It is by practicing as is spoken that one obtains the Buddhadharma. Merely talking cannot make one pure.”**

**Disciples of the Buddha, when that Bodhisattva dwells upon this Ground of Emitting Light, he dwells in the First Dhyana, having become free from desires and from evil and unwholesome dharmas, possessing reflection and possessing consideration, in the Joy of Separation from Production.**

**He dwells in the Second Dhyana, having extinguished reflection and consideration, with inner purity and singleness of mind, devoid of reflection and consideration, in the Joy of Production of Samadhi.**

**He dwells in the Third Dhyana, having separated from joy, dwelling in renunciation while still possessing thought and proper knowledge, so that his experience of personal bliss is as described by all sages: the Bliss of Renunciation while still Possessing Thought.**

**He dwells in the Fourth Dhyana, having severed bliss, by first expelling suffering, and then extinguishing joy and sorrow, Feeling Neither Suffering nor Bliss in the Purity of Renunciation of Thought.**

**Commentary:**

The Bodhisattva forgets about himself for the sake of the Dharma. He is able to renounce his body and life to seek the Buddhadharma, and he in that way rouses up diligence and vigor in his search for the Buddhadharma, in order to seek the Buddhadharma. In accord with what he hears, he wants to put what he has heard into practice. He contemplates and cultivates, investigating and, bit by bit, actually doing the work of cultivation. Once this Bodhisattva comes to hear the Dharma, after the Bodhisattva in question has heard the Buddhadharma, he collects his mind and dwells secured. He gathers in and collects his body and mind and dwells secured within that Buddhadharma. In a quiet and tranquil place, a very still and quiet location, empty and retired and where there are no people, he makes the following reflection. He thinks this way in the course of his cultivation, saying, “It is by practicing the Buddhadharma as it is spoken that one obtains the Buddhadharma.” One needs to cultivate according to the Dharma spoken by the Buddha, and it is in that way that one can certify to the attainment of the states of the Buddhadharma. “Merely talking cannot make on pure.” It’s not by chanting “Buddhadharma, Buddhadharma” from morning to night with one’s mouth and not cultivating-just mouthing Buddhadharma but not practicing-that one obtains purity.

Disciples of the Buddha, all of you, when that Bodhisattva dwells upon this Ground of Emitting Light-the Third Ground-he dwells in the First Dhyana, having become free from desires and from evil and unwholesome dharmas. One leaves behind thoughts of desire, and all of one’s evil reflections and considerations of evil wisdom, and the deviant knowledge and deviant views of unwholesome dharmas, possessing reflection and possessing consideration. He has that kind of reflective process and consideration, yet he wants to leave behind all evil reflection and consideration. That means evil advisors, not good advisors. This is the First Dhyana that he certifies to, the Stage of the Joy of Separation from Production, also called Dwelling in the Joy of Separation from Production.

He dwells in the Second Dhyana, having extinguished reflection and consideration. He eradicates all evil reflections and considerations, with inner purity and singleness of mind. Inside he is pure and of one mind, devoid of reflection and consideration. He doesn’t have any of those evil reflections and considerations. At that time Samadhi arises. It is the Stage of the Joy of the Production of Samadhi, also called Dwelling in the Joy of Production of Samadhi, the Second Dhyana, in which Samadhi is produced.

He dwells in the Third Dhyana, having separated from joy. He leaves joy behind, dwelling in renunciation while still possessing thought and proper knowledge. He has a kind of thought, has proper knowledge, so that his experience of personal bliss, a kind of ecstasy, is as is described by all sages: the Bliss of Renunciation while still Possessing Thought. The First Dhyana is the Stage of Joy of Separation from Production. The Second Dhyana is the Stage of Joy of Production of Samadhi. The Third Dhyana is the Stage of Wonderful Bliss of Separation from Moy. The Fourth Dhyana is the Stage of Purity of Renunciation of Thought. He has certified to the Third Dhyana.

He dwells in the Fourth Dhyana, having severed bliss, by first expelling suffering, and then extinguishing joy and sorrow. He cuts off all bliss, the Stage of Wonderful Bliss from Separation from Joy. If he can go on to destroy all suffering, joy and sorrow, feeling neither suffering nor bliss, at that time he reaches the Stage of Dwelling in the Purity of Renunciation of Thought, the Fourth Dhyana.

**Question:**

“What is the karma involved in wearing clothing stuffed with down feathers from geese?”

**Answer:**

“If you have merit and virtue, if you wear such clothing you can cross the birds over. If you cultivate and make transference to them, you can increase their reward of blessings and lesson their offense karma. That’s what happens when someone who cultivates wears such clothing. If it’s someone who continually commits offenses however, as he keeps on wearing such clothing, he will become the same as the geese. From having formed too close an association with them, he’ll end up incorporating with them, forming a Corporation Ltd. So, although it’s just a small matter, there are a great many principles involved, and it can’t be completely discussed according to a single rationale.”

**Sutra:**

**He transcends all thought and form, destroys all relative thoughts, and does not have various thoughts. He enters boundless emptiness, and dwells in the Station of Boundless Empty Space.**

**He transcends thee Station of All Boundless Empty Space, enters boundless consciousness, and dwells in the Station of Boundless Consciousness.**

**He transcends the Station of All Boundless Consciousness.**

**Commentary:**

He transcends all thought and form. The Fourth Dhyana is the Ground of Purity of Renouncing Thought. It is said:

When a single thought is not produced, the entire substance manifests.
When the six organs suddenly move, there is a covering of clouds.

At this time, he transcends all thought and all form, and destroys all relative thoughts. For him, there are no relative dharmas, only the absolute, and so he does no thinking, and thoughts do not exist. And he doest not have various thoughts. He doesn’t think all kind of thoughts.

When thinking stops and thoughts are gone, that is true blessing and honor.
When selfish desire is brought to an end, that is the true field of blessings.

He enters boundless emptiness. At that time, he unites with the void. Space is just him, and he is empty space. He doesn’t have a self, or an emptiness. Both self and empty space are gone, and he dwells in the Station of Boundless Empty Space. He dwells in the Station of Boundless Emptiness, yet is free from the Station of Boundless Emptiness. That is to dwell without dwelling, and to be stationed without a station. Although he is said to dwell in the Station of Boundless Empty Space, he basically has transcended emptiness. What is it like to be beyond emptiness? You haven’t reached that state, and so you don’t know; and I haven’t reached it either, and so I don’t know. It’s just that it says in the Sutra, he transcends the Station of All Boundless Empty Space. At that time:

Inside there is no mind or body;
Outside there is no world.

One sweeps away all dharmas, and is free from all marks. He enters boundless consciousness. At this point he is going through the Four Boundless Stations:

The Station of Boundless Empty Space.
The Station of Boundless Consciousness.
The Station of Nothing Whatsoever.
The Station of Neither Thought nor Non-thought.

He here enters boundless consciousness-consciousness is boundless this time. For him there is not emptiness, but he still has not emptied consciousness. “He enters boundless consciousness, and then he dwells in the Station of Boundless Consciousness. He dwells in it, and then he transcends that Station of All Boundless Consciousness. He also transcends that Station of Boundless Consciousness and so arrives at the Station of Nothing Whatsoever. After that will be the Station of Neither Thought nor Non-thought. In short, all of those thoughts are emptied. He has passed through the Four Dhyanas and now is in the states of the Four Stations of Emptiness.

Right now, there are people thinking, “I keep hearing about the Four Dhyanas, but I don’t understand what they are, and I’m even less clear about the Four Stations of Emptiness. Couldn’t you discuss them in detail?”

The Four Dhyanas are states experienced through meditation. There are the heavens of the First Dhyana, which is also called the Ground of the First Dhyana. When the aspect of heavens is stressed, the meaning is that of naturalness; when approached from the aspect of “grounds” the meaning is that a production and growth. The person sitting in dhyana sits in such a way that inside there is not body or mind. The mind is emptied, and so is the body, and the self-nature manifests, emitting a kind of light. That is called the Ground of Joy of Separation from Production. “Separation” here means to leave behind all defiled thoughts, all false thoughts and afflictions. What is produced is the resolve for Bodhi and wisdom, along with understanding of the mind-Prajna.

That is the Ground of Joy of Separation from Production. It’s not a state you can claim to have attained when you haven’t. There is something that proves you are in the First Dhyana with its heavens. When it happens, as you are sitting in meditation, your pulse stops. Yet this is not something you say is happening to you: you yourself are unaware of it. You need certification from a Good Knowing Advisor that you have reached the state. Why don’t you yourself know? When your pulse stops, you have entered Samadhi, and you don’t have any idea your pulse has stopped. So if you yourself say, “My pulse has stopped,” that to tell a lie as big as all creation. Why? Well, you could you know? If you know your pulse has stopped, then your pulse hasn’t stopped. The reason is that you are in Samadhi when it happens and so are unable to know. You may say,

“I find out when I come out of Samadhi.” But as soon as you come out of Samadhi, your pulse starts up again, so how could you yourself know about it.

“Then,” you ask, “How does the Good Knowing Advisor know about it?” There are records of your having experienced any state you’ve been though-as if notes were taken. When you have had such a state, all the Good Knowing Advisor has to do is take one look at you, and he see your coloring has changed and so has your light, and the energy when you breathe is different. You’re the same person and are breathing in the usual way, yet that *prana (ch’i)* is not the way it was before. You can’t pretend,

“I’ve been to the First Dhyana. My pulse came to a stop.” That’s utterly shameless! You have to go through a Good Knowing Advisor-a bright eyed one. Someone without eyes can’t be a Good Knowing Advisor. A Good Advisor who has opened the Wisdom Eye has to certify you, saying

“Now you’ve reached the First Dhyana.” It’s not something you say yourself, like saying,

“I’ve already become a Buddha, did you know? I’ve already become enlightened.” How can you certify your own enlightenment? A Good Knowing Advisor has to certify that you actually have become enlightened and say,

“Now you’ll do. You haven’t taken the wrong road. That was right.” You can’t certify yourself.

It’s as when a person breaks the law and the police say,

“You have broken the law and you are under arrest.” There has to be some proof, some evidence that you did break the law. You are innocent until proven guilty. In the same way, someone has to testify that you are enlightened, and that witness is the Good Knowing Advisor. He’s been along that road before you. You can’t say,

“I’ve opened enlightenment on my own,” unless it’s at a time when no Buddha is in the world and in distant mountains and remote valleys you cultivate the Twelve Links of conditioned Co-production and become enlightened. But, then you are One Solitarily Enlightened-you’ve become an Arhat.

All we’re talking about here are the First and Second Dhyanas. When you certify to the fruit of Arhatship, then you know the past, the present and the future, and know what level you yourself have reached. It’s not that you sit in meditation for twenty minutes or so and get enlightened. If it were that easy, then everyone would be enlightened. Your pulse stops, but it’s not that you say,

“My pulse has stopped.” If you do that, you are just trying to put something over on people. Who would have expected that when you took your counterfeit bills to the bank, people would immediately recognize them for what they were.

In the First Dhyana, the pulse stops, and in the Second Dhyana it’s the breath that stops. There isn’t even any breathing. But if you think,

“I feel like my breath has stopped,”-if you feel it has, that doesn’t count. If you aren’t aware of it, if you are really dead, then that counts. If you haven’t really died, your breath hasn’t stopped. When it stops, basically you have no self, no self to know you have breath.

If you wish never to die,
You must first become a living dead person.

A “living dead person” doesn’t know he’s eating, sleeping, or wearing clothes. If you ask him,

“Have you slept?” he doesn’t know. This is really a case of not knowing. If you haven’t reached that level, then you are unable to know your breathing has stopped. And it’s not that you feel like you’re not breathing. Any such feeling is a false one, an erroneous impression. There has to be a Good Knowing Advisor who takes one look and see you have reached that level, that your skill has reached that point. But even when it has, that doesn’t count as anything fantastic. It’s not occasion for saying,

“In heaven above and on earth below, only I am honored.” That’s not so: it’s just a state, and reaching that state doesn’t mean very much. Don’t say,

“Do you see me? See how terrific I am. This is truly meaningful.” What meaning does it have? If you don’t eat, you’ll starve to death just the same. That’s simply knowing no shame.

In the Second Dhyana, the breath stops, and in the Third Dhyana, thoughts stop. You don’t even have awareness. You don’t have anything at all. This is truly not to know.

“What’s the point of that?” you ask.

Well, what’s the point in your being alive? This is just *kung fu*. When you arrive at this state, you aren’t greedy. You have no greed for wealth, and you don’t seek for fame, and you immediately put down sex, food, and sleep. If you haven’t put them down, then you haven’t reached that level, for when it happens, you aren’t greedy for anything, and you don’t have any impediments or obstructions. Thoughts stop. You don’t think. Have any of you reached this level. If you have a wife, you can’t put her down. The same holds true if you have a husband or children. If you have sons, you can’t give up the wish for daughters, or if you have daughters you can’t put down the wish for sons. If you have the one, you want the other, too. Look at the kinds of false thoughts you are striking up. And you claim to have attained that level? You haven’t. It’s not at all easy. Yet, when you do reach that level, there is no great use in it. You can’t be smug, like the self-made Patriarch who came here a few years ago claiming to have opened enlightenment. I don’t know what kind of enlightenment he had opened.

Thoughts stop in the Third Dhyana, and in the Fourth Dhyana, they are emptied. So the progression is:

The First Dhyana = The Ground of Joy and Separation from Production.
The Second Dhyana = The Ground of Joy of Production of Samadhi.
The Third Dhyana = The Ground of Wonderful Bliss of Cessation of Thought.
The Fourth Dhyana = The Ground of Purity of Renunciation of Thought.

When you reach the Fourth Dhyana there fundamentally is not thought, and you are just about to merge with empty space-you haven’t quite united with it yet. That is the Ground of Purity of Renunciation of Thought.

Someone once tried to claim that Buddhism was “true Communism.” That kind of thinking is mistaken. Buddhism has no party or factions to it. It is world-transcending Dharma, not worldly dharma. Ordinary and average people have parties and factions, but there are no parties in transcendental Dharma, and no sects. Any time there are such things, it’s because stupid people have dreamed up those problems. When one studies the Buddhadharma, it is with the intention of transcending the world and to have great wisdom, which basically cannot be compared at all with holding parties and factions. Therefore, although worldly dharmas are within the Buddhadharma, the Buddhadharma transcends worldly dharmas, and they can’t be treated as if they were alike, or even discussed in the same terms. You can’t claim fish eyes are pearls. If you do, you’re simply cheating yourself. We who study the Buddhadharma should sweep away any notion of factions and far transcend the way the average person things. The Dharma-doors of Buddhism are inconceivable, while if any faction or party could be compared to Buddhism, then Buddhism fundamentally would not be world-transcending Dharma. Whether you study the Buddhadharma or not, you really should clearly recognize this point. Buddhism is talking about ending birth and death. Anything that has parties and factions is not Buddhism.

In the very substance of Buddhism there are the Five Great Schools:

Ch’an.
Teaching.
Vinaya.
Secret.
Pure Land.

This is from Buddhist disciples themselves, when nothing was going on, looking for something to do, and so dividing up doors and discriminating kinds to make trouble for themselves. This is like going to the sea to count the sand: there’s no way you can count how many grains of sand it contains. Do you think a computer, an electric brain, could do it? Not even a “spiritual brain” could calculate exactly how many there are. It might always be off by one-too many or too few-and it would never be certain, ultimately, how many there are. The Buddhadharma is inconceivable, and it shouldn’t have parties or factions, or schools.

From the time I arrived in this country, people have been asking me to which school of Buddhism I belong. I tell them I don’t have any school. If I did, that would be an attachment. I also have no sect: I’m of the same sect and school with all people. I am people and people are me, and there’s no difference. So there shouldn’t be any setting up of schools and sects, let alone parties and factions. People who study the Buddhadharma must certainly recognize what Buddhism is really like, and not figure whatever they think up is right. When you certify to the Fourth Fruit of Arhatship, then what you think can stand; before you reach the Fourth Fruit, what you think and want to set forth is all wrong.

Parties and factions, sects and schools, are small problems. The big problem, now, as everybody knows, is that science is considered so fantastic. I’ll tell you something totally reliable: all the people who investigate science are the most stupid of people. They are all like people going to the sea to count the grains of sand-they’ll never be able to come up with the total number. People who don’t want to hear this are just cheating themselves. If you want to hear it, I’ll say it, and I’m still going to say it if you don’t want to listen.

**Sutra:**

**…Enters there being not the slightest things whatsoever, and dwells in the Station of Nothing Whatsoever.**

**He transcends the Station of All Being Nothing Whatsoever, and dwells in the Station of There Being Neither Thought nor Non-thought.**

**He only cultivates by according with the Dharma, and has not liking or attachment.**

**Disciples of the Buddha, this Bodhisattva’s mind accords with kindness. It is vast, great, and limitless. It is non-dual. It has no resentment, no antagonism, no obstruction, and no affliction. It pervasively reaches all locations, to the exhaustion of empty space and the Dharma Realm. It pervades all worlds. His dwelling in compassion, joy, and giving are the same way, too.**

**Commentary:**

The Sutra has spoken of the Station of Boundless Emptiness and the Station of Boundless Consciousness, now it says the Bodhisattva…enters there being not the slightest thing whatsoever. There is not the least bit of existence, and he dwells in the Station of Nothing Whatsoever. Within his state there is thought without thought, consciousness without consciousness, and emptiness without emptiness. One doesn’t have the slightest bit of attachment. Think it over. When this happens, one’s own body, mind, and thought are all gone, so how could one have any afflictions? He transcends the Station of All Being Nothing Whatsoever. He goes beyond this station of all not being in existence, and dwells in the Station of There Being Neither Thought nor Non-thought. He resides in the Heaven of Neither Thought nor Non-thought, where thought neither exists nor non-exists, existence and non-existence having both been transcended.

He only cultivates by according with the Dharma, the substance of al dharmas, and has no liking or attachment. In all he does, there is no attachment at all, no faults or habit patterns. Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva calls out again, saying: All of you disciples of the Buddha, this Bodhisattva’s mind accords with kindness. There is just kindness in his heart, and he dwells in the beings. It, his mind, is vast, great, and limitless. It is non-dual. Furthermore, it has no resentment, no antagonism, no obstruction either, and no affliction. How large is it? It pervasively reaches all locations to the exhaustion of empty space and the Dharma Realm. It uses up all of empty space and the Dharma Realm. It pervades all worlds. His dwelling in kindness of mind is like that, and the way he dwells in the mind of compassion, the mind of joy, and the mind of giving, renunciation, are the same way, too. That he only cultivates by according with the Dharma means that his mind accords with the great minds of kindness, compassion, joy, and giving, all of which are in the same way vast, great, limitless, non-dual, without resentment, antagonism, obstruction, or affliction, and pervasively reach all places exhausting empty space and the Dharma Realm, pervading every world. All four minds are in that way the same.

**Sutra:**

**Disciples of the Buddha, this Bodhisattva obtains limitless powers of spiritual penetrations. He can move the great earth. He can make one body into many bodies, and many bodies into one body. He can either disappear or appear. He goes through stone walls and obstructive mountains as if they were space. In the midst of empty space he travels in full lotus, just like a bird in flight. He enters earth as if into water, and treads upon water as if it were earth. His body puts forth smoke and flames like an immense heap of fire. He further sends down rain just like a mighty cloud. The sun and moon in space have tremendous, awesome might, yet he can touch and rub them with his hand. His body is free and at ease, even up to the World of Brahma.**

**This Bodhisattva’s Heavenly Ear is purified, surpassing human hearing. He can hear all the sounds of humans and gods, whether near or far away. Even sounds of mosquitoes, gnats, and so forth are completely audible to him.**

**Commentary:**

Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva calls out once more all of you disciples of the Buddha, this Bodhisattva of the Third Ground obtains limitless powers of six types of spiritual penetrations, that is:

The Penetration of the Heavenly Ear.
The Penetration of the Heavenly Eye.
The Penetration of Others’ Minds/Thoughts.
The Penetration of Past Lives.
The Penetration of the Extinction of Outflows.
The Penetration of Spiritual Fulfillments.

He can move the great earth so that it quakes in six ways, that is:

* Cracking.
* Roaring.
* Striking.
* Quaking.
* Buckling.
* Heaving.

He can make one body into many bodies. To start with, his is a single Bodhisattva body, yet he can turn into numerous bodies, and he can also make many bodies into one body. The many are the one, and the one is the many, one not obstructing many, nor many obstructing one, in mutual non-obstruction of one and many, existence and non-existence, disappearance and appearance. That’s why it says, he can either disappear or appear. He’ll vanish, or else be visible. He goes through stone walls and obstructive mountains as if they were space. If he wants to enter a rock he can, or plunge into a mountain. Nothing blocks him from going wherever he wants, for his very body is the same as empty space.

In the midst of empty space, up in the air, he travels in full lotus without having to walk or take a place, just like a bird in flight. He enters the earth as if into water. He can go into the earth just as if he were entering some water, and he treads upon water as if it were earth he was walking on. His body puts forth lots of smoke and flames, like an immense heap of fire, a bon-fire. He further sends down rain just like a mighty cloud. He can pour water from the top of his body while sending out fire from the bottom portion; or else emit fire from the top of his body while pouring out water below. His power of transformation is just that great. The sun and moon in space heave tremendous, awesome might, yet he can tough and rub them with his hand. This Bodhisattva can stroke the sun and moon in the sky with his hands. His body is free and at ease in all respects, even up to the world of the Great Brahma Heaven.

This Bodhisattva’s Heavenly Ear is purified, so that he hears every single sound extremely clearly, surpassing human hearing. It’s not like ears of average people. He can hear all the sounds of humans in the realm of people, and of gods in the heavens. Whatever they do or say, he can hear whether near or far away. He hears every kind of sound. Even sounds of mosquitoes, gnats, and so forth, sounds such as those of ants and flies and worms, are completely audible to him. He can hear them all distinctly.

**Question:**

“I have a question about whether a particular method of helping to rescue animals would be workable. Specifically, animals can be trained to choose one of two pictures, to go to one of two pictures or one of two symbols, by being given food for going to one, so after awhile they’ll go to that particular one. Or, they can be trained to go to one type of image. Now, if an animal were trained to choose to go to a picture or an image of a Bodhisattva or a Buddha over a period of time, would this help to plant a seed which would eventually lead to the animal’s enlightenment?”

**Answer:**

“If you feel it will be to their advantage, you can ‘trick’ them. If it’s harmful to them, you can’t, but if it’s beneficial to them, you can do it so they’ll gradually understand. As it’s said:

If you wish to make them enter the Buddha’s wisdom,
First you have to bait the hook with something they like.

You can do it only if you have good intent. To say it’s tricking them is just joking. Everything most people do is harming others to benefit themselves. People who cultivate the Bodhisattva Way and practice the Buddhadharma must be willing to be harmed themselves for the sake of aiding others. If something is of no benefit to one personally, but of benefit to all other living beings, one should exhaust one’s efforts to do it. If it’s something that has no benefit for other beings, but only benefits oneself, no matter what, one shouldn’t do it.”

**Question:**

“In the *Dharani Sutra* I read that it is beneficial for plants if one mantras water twenty-one times and put it around the outside of the garden to chose away pests. Would the Abbot please tell us the proper way to put the water around?”

**Answer:**

“You just have to use pure water and recite the Great Compassion Mantra over it. You don’t need some special method, and anyone can do it. As you recite the mantra, contemplate Kuan Yin bodhisattva making the water efficacious and the use you want to make of it. You just need to do it with true-hearted sincerity. Have you forgotten how one of the people here at Gold Mountain Temple recited the Great Compassion Mantra 108 times a day for his father who had cancer, and the cancer was cured? He didn’t take medicine or have any kind of operation or shots, yet he got well. That was a response. If anyone had an incurable illness, and you recite the Great Compassion Mantra with a true mind, it will be cured.

**Sutra:**

**This Bodhisattva, using the knowledge of others’ minds, knows the minds of other living beings as they actually are. That is, if they have minds of greed, he knows their minds of greed as they actually are. If they are free from minds of greed, he knows their freedom from minds of greed as it actually is. Whether they have minds of anger or are free from minds of anger, have minds of stupidity or are free from minds of stupidity, have afflicted minds or unafflicted minds, have meticulous minds or negligent minds, great minds or limitless minds, uncomplicated minds or complicated minds, scattered minds or unscattered minds, concentrated minds or unconcentrated minds, liberated minds or unliberated minds, surpassed minds or unsurpassed minds, defiled minds or undefiled minds, expansive minds or non-expansive minds, all of these he knows as they actually are. The Bodhisattva in that way, with the knowledge of other’s minds, knows the minds of living beings.**

**Commentary:**

This Bodhisattva, who has been certified to the Third Ground, is capable of using the knowledge of others’ minds. Right now, every single person has the knowledge of others’ minds. It simply has not revealed itself, so most people don’t know what other people are thinking. However, if you cultivate and rid yourself of defilement, the knowledge of others minds will appear as a matter of course. We ordinary beings each have that knowledge, but it’s not especially clear. For example, you can often wonder what someone else is thinking or is about to say and guess correctly. If you guess right, you’ve known their mind. But if, for instance, you think a person intends to go north when actually they’re headed south, then you’ve guessed wrong. It’s like dialing a wrong number, reaching the wrong person on the phone. In that case, it’s not the knowledge of others’ minds, but having the wrong false thought about what others are thinking. You could even say it’s like taking the wrong bus, plane, or train, perhaps wanting to go to New York but ending up in Seattle instead. In that case, your knowledge is unclear; but, if it were accurate, it would be the knowledge of others’ minds.

The reason we don’t have that accurate kind of knowledge is that we don’t use all our wisdom, but only a slight amount of it. An analogy will make this clear. Say, knowledge of others’ minds is the actual person: if you don’t see the person himself but just see his shadow and think the shadow is this or that, that’s not the knowledge of others’ minds. The “knowing” we employ right now is like the shadow, and also as when something seems to be the person but is not. The Bodhisattva here knows the minds of other living beings as they actually are, like knowing the actual person, not the shadow. He knows what other people’s thoughts are like. That is, if they have minds of greed he knows those beings are greedy.

Greed comes in various forms. Some beings are greedy for wealth from the time they’re born till the day they die. Others are tremendously greedy for sex their entire lives. Some are not especially greedy for wealth and can take or leave sex, but can’t give up their greed for fame. They are intent upon making a good name for themselves, up until the day comes and they die due to fame. You die from what you’re greedy for: if it’s wealth, you die from that, and sex is what kills you if that’s the object of your greed. Fame’s the same. There are some people who don’t especially care about wealth or sex or fame, but who are excessively greedy for delicious food. Anywhere they go they want to have good food and forget everything else if they get it. This includes things like chocolate, coffee, wine, cigarettes, and candy. Even when they age and die, their greed continues.

A case in point is Su Man Shu, the Chinese Monk who wrote such brilliant essays. Intelligent as he was and as uninterested, no doubt, in wealth, sex, and fame, his greed for food was considerable. As it turned out, he died of gluttony. Then you have another kind of person who can take or leave wealth, sex, fame, and food but is greedy for sleep. If they sit down to meditate, they immediately start to snore, and even fall asleep standing up! See what greed for sleep can be like? They never feel they’ve had enough rest. The more they sleep, the more they love to sleep, and as their love for sleep increases, so does the amount they sleep. They sleep and sleep from the time they’re born until the time they die, yet still haven’t slept enough. He, the Bodhisattva, knows their minds of greed as they actually are. He has an accurate perception of them. If they are free from minds of greed, he knows their freedom from minds of greed as it actually is. There are living beings who once did have greedy minds, but who were able to apply their efforts to cultivation and leave those minds of greed behind. The Bodhisattva also has accurate knowledge of them.

Sometimes it happens that as they rid themselves of greed, anger arises. They feel displeased with everyone, and each hairpore of their bodies is a launching pad for an atomic bomb. Bump into any of their hairpores and that sets off the bomb: they get angry. Whether they have minds of anger, which, of course, is a fault, or have been able to leave behind their bad tempers and are free from minds of anger, the Bodhisattva knows them as they actually are. If they have minds of stupidity or are now able to be free from minds of stupidity, the bodhisattva knows that, too. They may have afflicted minds or have freed themselves from afflictions to have unafflicted minds. They may have meticulous, careful minds or negligent sloppy minds. Theirs may be great minds or limitless minds, or uncomplicated, non-complex minds or complicated, intricate minds. They may have scattered, chaotic minds, or unscattered minds with Samadhi, concentrated minds, which are unscattered, or unconcentrated, scattered minds. Maybe they have liberated, free and easy minds, or unliberated, unfree, uneasy minds. They may have surpassed minds, such as those brought forth by Bodhisattvas, or unsurpassed minds, which are those of the Buddhas, defiled minds of ordinary beings, or undefiled minds of Sages. Whether they have broad expansive minds or narrow non-expansive minds, all of these he, the Bodhisattva, knows as they actually are.

All the various thoughts which occur to living beings are completely known by the Bodhisattva.

The Bodhisattva in that way, with the knowledge of others’ minds, knows the minds of living beings.”

**Sutra:**

**This Bodhisattva remembers and knows the particulars of limitless past lives. That is, he remembers and knows for one life, remembers and knows for two lives, three lives, four lives, up to ten lives, twenty, thirty, and so on, including a hundred lives, limitless hundreds of lives, limitless thousands of lives, limitless hundreds of thousands of lives, for the coming into being of a kalpa, the decaying of a kalpa, for limitless coming into being and decayings of kalpas how, “I was born in such and such a clan, and such and such a race, with such and such food and drink, having such and such a life span, dwelling such and such a length of time, with such and such suffering and happiness. Having died there, I was reborn in such and such a place. Having died in such and such a place, I was reborn in this place, with such and such a form, with such and such characteristics and appearance, and such and such a mode of speech.” In that way he can remember and call to mind the limitless particulars of the past.**

**Commentary:**

This Bodhisattva remembers and knows the particulars of limitless past lives, possessing the wisdom to perceive one-does-not-know-how-many previous lives of living beings with their differences. That is, he remembers and knows for one life, the events of one lifetime, remembers and knows the events for two lives, three lives’ events, those of four lives, up to ten lives, twenty, thirty, and so on, including the events of a hundred lives, all of which he knows, along with limitless hundreds of lives’ events, those of limitless thousands of lives, and limitless hundreds of thousands of lives.

The Bodhisattva even knows what happened for the coming into being of a kalpa and the decaying of a kalpa, and the events during both taken together. He knows everything that went on for limitless comings into being and decayings of kalpas, such as how “I was born in such and such a place with such and such a name. I was called so-and-so when I lived in that particular place, and was of such and such a clan. My family name was that one when I was in that particular place, and was of such and such a clan. My family name was that one when I was in that particular location, and I was someone of such and such a race while there, with such and such food and drink. Those were the kinds of things I used to consume, having such and such a life span. My life was that long, dwelling such and such a length of time in the world, with such and such sufferings and happiness.” He knows all the bitterness he underwent, along with the enjoyment. “Having died there, I was reborn in such and such a place. Having died in such and such a place, I was reborn in this place, with such and such a form, with such and such characteristics and appearance. I looked like that, and had such and such a mode of speech. That’s what my voice sounded like in each case.” In that way he can remember and call to mind, understand r know, all the limitless particulars of the states of his lives of the past.

How is one able to have the penetration of past lives? Here’s an analogy to illustrate it somewhat. If you consider it life that is past, the penetration of past life on the part of average, ordinary people is whatever they can remember of their present life that’s already past-they can’t remember previous lives at all the way Sages can. The reason one person can know of another’s past lives is that there is interconnected karma among us all. The person we see are those we have affinities or other conditions with, another way of saying karmic links.

Yesterday most of us, for instance, were at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas holding the Kuan Yin Recitation Session, and there were a lot more people there, too. Today there are fewer of us back at Gold Mountain Temple, but we can think of and remember who was there yesterday and what was done, how there were flies and mosquitoes, too, reciting Kuan Yin’s name with us. The flies were buzzing and the mosquitoes were humming, each with its own work and sound. Last night the text talked about the Bodhisattva knowing what mosquitoes were saying-each mosquito yesterday was telling us, “Give me a little blood. Give me a little blood. It won’t kill you, and that way I won’t go hungry.” That’s the song they sang as they begged from you, saying, “Be compassionate, donate some blood to sustain my life. It won’t hurt you much and will help me a lot.”

Today as we think of what happened yesterday, that’s the penetration of past life. It works the same for previous lives, so that’s why I say everyone has penetration of past life if you can remember yesterday, and greater penetration if you recall past lives. It just depends upon the amplitude of your memory power how much of the past you can know-but, actually, it’s better not to remember. What’s the point of knowing all that anyway? It will just give you that many more afflictions. See how Mahamaudgalyayana cried when he saw his parents of past lives suffering in the hells? That’s the advantage of that penetration: crying. If you don’t know, you won’t have to cry. So, even though Bodhisattvas have the penetration of past lives, or other spiritual penetrations they don’t necessarily use them. It’s like people with money-they don’t necessarily spend it, but just use it when they have to, for example, to practice giving. That’s how I feel it is. If you don’t agree, bring up your objections for discussion.

**Objection:**

“Although we might have more afflictions if we knew the events of past lives, which is undesirable, we might want to know the vows we made in previous existences in order to fulfill them now.”

**Answer:**

“That’s right. What I was saying before was cautioning you not to have afflictions or be turned by states if you do possess the penetration of past lives. It wasn’t to say that to have that penetration is not good. The points is that whatever state comes, you yourself shouldn’t move but should retain your Samadhi.”

**Sutra:**

**This Bodhisattva’s heavenly eye is purified, surpassing human sight. He sees all living beings when they’re born and when they die, with good forms or bad forms, in accordance with their karma going to good or evil destinies. He sees how, if those living beings have performed evil actions of the body, performed evil actions of speech, or performed evil actions of mind, how if they slandered worthies and sages, held deviant views, and had the causes and conditions for karma of deviant view, when their bodies decline and their lives come to an end, they certainly fall into the evil destinies and are reborn in the hells. He sees how if those living beings have performed wholesome actions with the body, wholesome actions of speech, and wholesome actions of mind, and have not slandered worthies and sages, but have held proper views and had the causes and conditions for karma of wholesome views, when their bodies decline and their lives come to an end, they certainly are reborn in the good destinies within the heavens. The Bodhisattva knows that all accurately with his heavenly eye.**

**Commentary:**

This, the Third Ground Bodhisattva’s heavenly eye is purified. Our human eyes aren’t pure, and so we can’t see what the gods and the heavens are like. If our heavenly eye was pure, it would be surpassing human sight, transcending the average eyes of people. He sees all living beings and how they’re born, when they’re born, and he also see how they die when they die, and whether they are beings with good forms or bad forms. All of that is clear to him, along with how in accordance with their karma they are going to good or evil destinies. If the karma they created was good, they go to wholesome destinies, but if they created evil karma, they go to evil destinies. He sees how, if those living beings have performed evil actions of the body, violations of killing, stealing, and sexual misconduct; of if with their mouths they have performed evil actions of speech-loose speech, lying, harsh speech, or double-tongued speech; or if they have performed evil actions of mind by being greedy, angry, or stupid; and how if they slandered people who were worthies and people who were sages; and how if they held deviant views-which was why they did that slandering-and had the causes and conditions for karma of deviant views-those karmic obstacles-when their bodies decline and their lives come to an end, they certainly fall into the three or the four evil destinies and are reborn in the hells due to their deviant views.

He sees how if those living beings have refrained from killing, stealing, and sexual misconduct, wholesome actions of speech, their bodies not engaging in loose, false, harsh, or double-tongued speech, and wholesome actions of mind, not being greedy, angry, or stupid, and have not slandered worthies and sages, but have held proper knowledge and proper views and had the causes and conditions for karma of wholesome views, when their bodies decline and their lives come to an end, they certainly are reborn in the good destinies, either as wealthy and honored people in the human realm, or else within the heaves as gods. The Bodhisattva knows that all accurately with his heavenly eye, seeing it all with utmost precision.

**Sutra:**

**This Bodhisattva is able to enter and come out of all dhyanas, samadhis, and samapattis, and yet does not undergo birth through their power. It is just according to his ability to fulfill the stations of three Bodhi shares, through the power of his intent and his vows, that he is born within them.**

**Commentary:**

This Bodhisattva is able to enter and come out of all dhyanas, samadhis, and samapattis-the various stoppings and contemplatings. He can go into all samadhis and leave them as he wishes, and yet does not undergo birth through their power. Even though he goes to all those locations, he isn’t forced to by some power of evil. It is just according to this ability to fulfill the stations of the Bodhi shares wherever he is born, in every single birth, through the power of his intent and his vows, that he is born within them. It’s only from having decided to do so and made those vows in the past that he goes to be reborn in the various destinies, whether the three evil or three wholesome ones.

**Sutra:**

**Disciples of the Buddha, when this Bodhisattva dwells upon this Ground of Emitting Light, because of the power of his vows he comes to see many Buddhas. That is, he sees many hundreds of Buddhas, sees many thousands of Buddhas, sees many hundreds of thousands of Buddhas, sees many hundreds of thousands of Buddhas, up to and including seeing many hundreds of thousands of millions of nayutas of Buddhas. He reveres and honors them completely with a vast and great mind and a profound mind, attends upon and makes offerings to them. He offers up all the necessities of life-clothing, food and drink, bedding and medicines. He also makes offerings to all the multitudes of the Sangha, and he transfers those good roots to Anuttarasamyaksambodhi.**

**Commentary:**

Disciples of the Buddha, Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva calls out again, when this Bodhisattva dwells upon this ground of emitting light, because of the power of his vows he comes to see many Buddhas. That is, he sees many hundreds of Buddhas, sees many thousands of Buddhas, sees many hundreds of thousands of Buddhas, sees many hundreds of thousands of Buddhas, up to and including seeing many hundreds of thousands of millions of nayutas of Buddhas. He reveres and honors them completely with a vast and great mind and a profound mind, attends upon and makes offerings to them, all those Buddhas. He offers up all the necessities of life-clothing, food and drink, bedding and medicines. He also makes offerings of all those things to all left-home people, the multitudes of the Sangha, and he transfers those good roots to Anuttarasamyaksambodhi, Unsurpassed Proper and Equal Right Enlightenment, so that all living beings will become Buddhas soon.

**Sutra:**

**In the presence of those Buddhas, he reverently listens to the Dharma. Having heard it, he accepts and holds it and cultivates it according to his power. This Bodhisattva contemplates all dharmas as not produced and not destroyed, as existing due to causes and conditions. He first eradicates the bonds of views, then all the bonds of desire, the bonds of form, the bonds of existence, and the bonds of ignorance, which decrease to threads. Throughout limitless hundreds of thousands of millions of nayutas of kalpas, because of non-accumulation, his deviant greed, deviant hatred, and deviant stupidity all become extinguished, and all of his good roots become brighter and more pure.**

**Disciples of the Buddha, it is just like real gold, which, when expertly refined, does not decrease in weight, and becomes brighter and more pure. For the Bodhisattva it is also that way, while dwelling upon this Ground of Emitting Light, because of non-accumulation, his deviant greed, deviant hatred, and deviant stupidity all become extinguished, and all of his good roots become brighter and more pure.**

**Commentary:**

The Bodhisattva on the Ground of Emitting Light makes offerings to limitless hundreds of thousands of millions of Buddhas, cultivating and amassing all good roots. He also makes offerings to the Dharma spoken by limitless hundreds of thousands of millions of Buddhas, along with as many members of the Sangha. Then he transfers those good roots to Anuttarasamyaksambodhi. In the presence of those Buddhas, in the Way Place of every single one of those Buddhas, he reverently listens to the Dharma. With great reverence and respect he listens to all Buddhas’ Dharma. Having heard it, he accepts and holds it. After hearing the Dharma, you should cultivate according to the Dharma you have heard.

If you merely listen to the Dharma, but don’t cultivate, it is of no benefit. Therefore, all of us who are here investigating the Buddhadharma together, should go on to cultivate according to the teachings we have investigated and put the principles discussed in the Buddhist Sutras into practice. That is having the Dharma to accept and hold it. Acceptance is with the mind, being able to remember the Dharma. Holding is done with the body, actually putting the Dharma into practice and really doing what has to be done. Then it is of use. And he, therefore, cultivates it according to his power. In cultivating, you do not need to force things. You should cultivate according to what you are able to do, and do as much as you can. If you can manage one percent of cultivation, then cultivate one percent. Cultivate 100% if that is your capacity. The point is to actually cultivate.

This Bodhisattva, on the Ground of Emitting Light, contemplates all dharmas as not produced and not destroyed, as existing due to causes and conditions. His contemplation is that:

All dharmas from conditions are produced;
All dharmas from conditions are destroyed;

Since they are produced from conditions and perish due to conditions as well, they have no substance of their own. Having no substance of their own, they are neither produced nor destroyed. He first eradicates the bond of views. We people are bound up by view delusions. “Views” here means deviant knowledge and deviant views, not proper knowledge and proper views. He first gets rid of the bonds of deviant knowledge and deviant views, then all the bonds of desire. After that he extinguishes the bonds of desire. Sexual desire is like a cord or rope that ties you up. If you can get rid of views, then you won’t have desire, and those bonds of desire will be extinguished. Without desire, the bonds of form will be gone, too. You won’t have any attachment to form. When the bonds of form are gone, then the bonds of existence are extinguished as well, as so are the bonds of ignorance. Once rid of existence’s bonds, you also rid yourself of the bonds of ignorance, which decrease to threads. They become thinner and light, so that they are not so heavy and severe.

Throughout limitless hundreds of thousands of millions of nayutas of kalpas, during that many great kalpas, because of non-accumulation of those kinds of bonds of views, of desire, of form, of existence, or of ignorance, his deviants greed, deviant hatred, and deviant stupidity, all become extinguished. He will never again have unprincipled greed, unprincipled hatred, and unprincipled stupidity. Deviant knowledge, deviant views, and deviant greed, hatred, and stupidity are gone for good, and all of his good roots become brighter and more pure. His good roots will keep increasing day by day.

Disciples of the Buddha, all of you, it is just like real gold. It is as when a goldsmith refines gold, which, when expertly refined, does not decrease in weight. When he employs a variety of scientific and other methods to refine and smelt the gold, it does not weigh the least bit less, and becomes brighter and more pure. The gold is daily refined better. For the Bodhisattva it is also that way. The same holds true of the Bodhisattva, while dwelling upon this Ground of Emitting Light, because of non-accumulation. Because he does not accumulate, his deviant greed, deviant hatred, and deviant stupidity, those three poisons, all become extinguished, and all of his good roots become brighter and more pure. His good roots are increasingly brighter, purer, and more numerous.

**Sutra:**

**This Bodhisattva’s patient mind, compliant mind, harmonious mind, cheerful mind, non-hating mind, unmoving mind, non-turbid mind, mind of no high or low, mind not seeking reward, mind of repaying kindness, non-flattering mind, non-deceitful mind, and non-treacherous mind all increase in purity.**

**This Bodhisattva, among the four dharmas of attraction, emphasizes beneficial conduct. Among the Ten Paramitas, he emphasizes the Paramita of Patience. He does not fail to cultivate the others, but only does so according to his power and proportionately.**

**Disciples of the Buddha, this is called the Bodhisattva’s Third Ground, that of Emitting Light. The Bodhisattva who dwells upon this ground for the most part becomes ruler of the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, able to employ expedients to cause living beings to abandon greed and desire, using giving, kind words, beneficial conduct, and similar work. All such karmic actions which he performs are not separate from mindfulness of the Buddha, mindfulness of the Dharma, and mindfulness of the Sangha, up to and including not being separate from mindfulness of endowment with the wisdom of the wisdom of all-modes.**

**Commentary:**

This Bodhisattva cultivates the giving of offerings and accumulates all kinds of good roots, which daily increase and become more perfect. Therefore it says this Bodhisattva’s mind is especially patient. He can bear what others cannot bear. His mind is also a compliant mind. He is not obstinate, stubborn, difficult to tame and subdue the way we living beings are with our huge view of self. The Bodhisattva has none of that. Instead he has a harmonious mind. The Bodhisattva gets along with everyone and has no malicious thoughts. He is happy and cheerful in mind about everything, and has a non-hating mind, and an unmoving mind. No matter what sates he encounters, he is unmoved, and since he is free from greed, his mind does not move. He has a non-turbid mind. As this Bodhisattva cultivates and accumulates all sorts of good roots, his mind is extremely clear and pure, with no turbid thoughts. His attitude of mind toward all living beings is at all times impartial and fair, with no thought of high or low.

When the Bodhisattva practices giving, he has a mind not seeking any reward. He benefits living beings and is kind to them and does not hope they will repay his kindness towards them. When it is the Bodhisattva who gives to other beings, he does not seek repayment of that kindness from those beings. However, the Bodhisattva has a mind of repaying kindness. He does want to repay all kindness that living beings show towards him, and keeps that in mind.

The Bodhisattva’s is a non-flattering mind. He would never play up to anybody. He also has a non-deceitful mind, and would never dream of cheating people or lying to them. He would never take anyone for a ride or deceive them with a fine spiel, so those previous minds and his non-treacherous mind all increase in purity. All improper attitudes diminish, and his wisdom is daily brighter and more pure.

This Bodhisattva, among the four Dharmas of Attraction-Giving, Kind Words, Beneficial conduct, and Similar Work-emphasizes beneficial conduct. He stresses the door of practice of benefitting others. Among the Ten Paramitas, he emphasizes the Paramita of Patience. He particularly works on perfecting patience. He does not fail to cultivate the others. It’s that he doesn’t cultivate the other three Dharmas of Attraction or the other nine Paramita, but only does so according to this power and proportionately. He does so in proportion to his strength and as suits the circumstances in which he finds himself.

Disciples of the Buddha, this is called the Bodhisattva’s Third Ground, that of Emitting Light. Do you disciples of the Buddha know? This is the Third Bodhisattva Ground, the Ground of Emitting Light. The Bodhisattva who dwells upon this ground for the most part becomes ruler of the Heaven of the Thirty-Three. Generally, he will be Lord God of the Trayastrimsha Heaven and be able to employ expedients to cause living beings to abandon greed and desire. He will be able to use all kinds of clever and expedient methods to teach and transform living beings, getting them to give up their craving and desire, using giving, kind words, beneficial conduct, and similar work. He is able to use those Four Dharmas of Attraction. All such karmic actions which he performs are not separate from mindfulness of the Buddha, mindfulness of the Dharma, and mindfulness of the Sangha, up to and including not being separate from mindfulness of endowment with the wisdom of the wisdom of all modes. He practices to the point of not failing to be mindful of endowment with All Wisdom, the wisdom of the wisdom of all modes.

**Sutra:**

**He further makes the following reflection: “I should, among all living beings, be a leader, be supreme, be especially supreme, be wonderful, be subtle and wonderful, be superior, be unsurpassed, up to and including being one of wisdom of All Wisdom on whom one can rely.”**

**If he diligently cultivates with vigor, in a single instant of thought he obtains a hundred thousand samadhis. He comes to see a hundred thousand Buddhas, knows the spiritual powers of a hundred thousand Buddhas, can move a hundred thousand Buddhas’ worlds, up to and including making to appear a hundred thousand bodies, each and every body having a hundred thousand Bodhisattvas as its retinue. If he employs the most supreme power of vows of a Bodhisattva to appear at will, the number is far greater. In a hundred kalpas, at thousand kalpas, up to and including a hundred thousand million nayutas of kalpas, it could not be reckoned or known.**

**At that time, Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, wishing to repeat his meaning, used verses, saying:**

**Commentary:**

He, the Bodhisattva, further makes the following reflection: “I should, among all living beings, be a leader. As a leader of living beings, I should be supreme-a victor. I should be especially supreme among beings, as well as be wonderful, and in their midst be a most subtle and wonderful person. I should be superior among those beings, and be unsurpassed as a person amid living beings, up to and including being of a wisdom of All Wisdom on whom one can rely-be someone who has the wisdom of All Wisdom for them to rely upon.”

If he diligently cultivates with vigor, in a single instant of thoughts, in one moment of thought, he obtains a hundred thousand samadhis. With vigor he can acquire a hundred thousands kinds of powers of concentration. He comes to see a hundred thousand Buddhas, knows the spiritual powers of a hundred thousand Buddhas, can move a hundred thousand Buddhas’ worlds, up to and including making to appear a hundred thousand bodies, each and every body having a hundred thousand Bodhisattvas as its retinue. If he employs the most supreme power of vows of a Bodhisattva to appear at will, the number is far greater. In a hundred kalpas, a thousand kalpas, up to and including a hundred thousand million nayutas of kalpas, it could not be reckoned or known. Should he be using the especially supreme vow-power of a Bodhisattva to appear freely and at ease, no one could calculate by how much that number is greater.

At that time, Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, wishing to repeat his meaning, wanting to reiterate, used verses. He will be saying it over again in verse.

**Sutra:**

**Minds which are pure, secured, and flourishing in brightness,
Of disgust, non-greed, and non-harming minds,
Solid, valiant minds, minds which are both vast and great-
The wise one uses such to enter the Third Ground.**

**Commentary:**

Bodhisattvas who are cultivating the practices of the Third Ground first of all must have minds which are pure. A pure mind is free of all defilement and therefore able to attain to purity. The second is a mind which is secured. One is irreversibly secured within the Enlightenment which is Bodhi, and has an intelligent mind with wisdom flourishing in brightness, the third. A mind of disgust with the mundane, a mind of non-greed, and a non-harming mind are the fourth, fifth, and sixth minds. A solid mind and a valiant mind are the seventh and eight minds. The ninth and tenth are minds which are both vast and great-the wise one uses such kinds of minds to give rise to All Wisdom, and then is able to enter the Third Ground, the Ground of Emitting Light.

**Sutra:**

**The Bodhisattva dwelling on this Ground of Emitting Light,
Contemplates all activity dharmas as suffering and impermanent,
Impure, defeated, quickly headed for extinction,
Non-solid and non-dwelling, not coming and not going.**

**He contemplates the conditioned all as serious illness,
Fettered by anxiety, depression, suffering and delusion,
Always blazing with ferocious flames of the poisons three,
From beginningless time to now, never finding rest.**

**Disgusted with the three existences, not greedy or attached,
He intently seeks the Buddha’s wisdom, with no other thought,
Hard to fathom, hard to think of, and incomparable,
Limitless and boundless, by troubles unoppressed.**

**Commentary:**

The Bodhisattva dwelling on this Ground of Emitting Light, contemplates all activity dharmas as suffering and impermanent. The Bodhisattva who cultivates the practices of a Bodhisattva who wishes to certify to the position of the Third Ground, cultivates the practices of a Bodhisattva who wishes to certify to the position of the Third Ground, cultivates the Dharma-doors of the Ground of Emitting Light. He contemplates all activities as impermanent, as suffering, empty, lacking self, impure, defeated, quickly headed for extinction. All of them are defiled, impure, ultimately defeated and headed for destruction, non-solid and non-dwelling, not coming and not going. They have no solidity to them, and they do not remain for long, nor do they come or go. He contemplates the conditioned all as serious illness.

The Bodhisattva cultivating the Dharma-doors of the Third Ground contemplates all conditioned dharmas as being like grave illnesses, which he wishes to get far away from fast, as they are fettered by anxiety, depression, suffering, and delusion. They are all bound up in worry, sadness, difficulty, and confusion, always blazing with ferocious flames of the poisons three. The three poisons of greed, hatred, and stupidity are like a raging fire always burning with intensity, from beginningless tie to now never finding rest. From limitless kalpas up to the present, the fire of the three poisons has never stopped.

Disgusted with the Three Existences, not greedy or attached… The Bodhisattva becomes really disgusted with the Three Existences-Existence in the Desire Realm, Existence in the Form Realm, and Existence in the Formless Realm-and is not greedy for or attached to them. He intently seeks the Buddha’s wisdom, with no other thoughts. He concentrates his mind on the search for the wisdom of a Buddha, not thinking of anything else. All of you studying the Buddhadharma should not be confused by greed, hatred, or stupidity. You should diligently cultivate precepts, samadhi, and wisdom; that is itself the concentrated search for the wisdom of the Buddha. That wisdom of a Buddha is hard to fathom, hard to think of, and incomparable. Nothing can match it: limitless and boundless, by troubles unoppressed. That wisdom is limitless and boundless, and no afflictions or suffering can oppress it.

**Sutra:**

**Having seen the Buddha’s wisdom, he pities living beings
As forlorn, without support, and not being saved,
With three poisons’ blazes always vexing them,
Dwelling in existences’ jails, ever suffering.**

**By afflictions bound, obscured, blind and lacking eyes,
Their inclinations low and vile, they lose the Dharma jewel.
They follow after birth and death, frightened of Nirvana.
“I should for their rescue be diligent with vigor.”**

**He sets out seeking wisdom to benefit all beings,
Considers what expedients will bring them liberation,
Not apart from the Thus Come One’s unobstructed knowledge,
Which in turn arises from non-production wisdom.**

**He is mindful that that wisdom is obtained from hearing.
Making such reflections, he urges himself on,
Day and night to hear and practice with no interruption,
Only taking proper Dharma as worthy and important.**

**Countries, cities, wealth, as well as every precious jewel,
Wives and children, retinues, and royal positions,
The Bodhisattva, for the Dharma bringing forth respect,
All such things as those and more is able to renounce.**

**Commentary:**

Having seen the Buddha’s wisdom, he pities living beings. He brings forth a great heart of compassion for living beings as forlorn without support, and not being saved. He pities them since they are all alone with nothing to rely on and with no one to rescue them, and with three poisons’ blazes always vexing them. He sees that the three poisons of greed, hatred, and stupidity are always blazing like a huge fire which constantly torments those beings who are dwelling in existences’ jails, ever suffering. They live in the jails of all the existences: existence in the Desire Realm, existence in the Form Realm, and existence in the Formless Realm, constantly undergoing suffering, by afflictions bound, obscured, blind and lacking eyes. They are all tired up by afflictions which obscure them so they are like blind persons who have no eyes. Their inclinations low and vile, they lose the Dharma jewel. The inclinations, the things they enjoy, are of a despicable nature, not high and lofty, and they lose the precious jewel of Dharma. They follow after birth and death, frightened of Nirvana. They are carried along by the current of birth and death, and fear the Dharma doors for ending birth and death-Nirvana. “I should for their rescue be diligent with vigor. I should hurry up and cultivate the Way, so that when I have accomplished the Way, I will be able to rescue those living beings. That’s why I should work hard and be vigorous.”

He sets out seeking wisdom to benefit all beings. “I’m dedicated to the search for the wisdom of a Buddha so that I can bring benefit to each and every living being,” and considers what expedients will bring them liberation. “I wonder what expedient methods will enable all of those living beings to obtain liberation,” not apart from the Thus Come One’s unobstructed knowledge. One has to attain the unobstructed knowledge (jnana) of a Buddha to before one can rescue living beings, which in turn arises from non-production wisdom. That unobstructed knowledge arises from wisdom (Prajna) which is neither produced nor destroyed. It is based upon wisdom. He is mindful that that wisdom is obtained from hearing. “I keep in mind that the wisdom of a Buddha is acquired from Hearing, Considering, and Cultivation: the Wisdom of Hearing, the Wisdom of Considering, and the Wisdom of Cultivating.”

Making such reflection, he urges himself on. Upon thinking that way, he himself is vigorous and exhorts himself not to be lazy, day and night to hear and practice with no interruption. Day and night he wants to listen to the Buddhadharma, investigate the Buddhadharma, and cultivate the Buddhadharma without ever letting up, only taking Proper Dharma as worthy and important. Nevertheless, he only seeks the Proper Dharma, respects and reveres the Proper Dharma. Countries, cities, wealth, as well as every precious jewel-all tangible objects such as countries, cities, riches, and precious gems, wives and children, retinues, and royal positions-the Bodhisattva, for the Dharma bringing forth respect will renounce. The Bodhisattva brings forth and attitude of respect, reverence, and worship for the search of the Dharma, and so all such things as those and more is able to renounce. Such things as described above-the countries, children, all precious gems-along with his head, eyes, brain, and marrow, the Bodhisattva is completely able to give away to living beings.

**Sutra:**

**Head, eyes, ears, and nose, tongue, as well as teeth,
Hands and feet, his marrow, his heart and blood and flesh-
All such things as those renouncing he does not find hard.
Only a chance to hear the Dharma he counts as most hard.**

**Commentary:**

A person cultivating the Bodhisattva Way, is able to give away his own head, his own eyes, along with his own ears, and nose, tongue, as well as teeth for other people to use, up to and including his own hands and feet, his marrow, his heart and blood and flesh. He can give them all to others. All such things as those renouncing he does not find hard. Giving away those kinds of things doesn’t amount to a really difficult matter. It’s something easy to do. Only a chance to hear the Dharma he counts as most hard. However, to be able to hear the Buddhadharma is a most difficult thing to do. The Bodhisattva considers hearing the Dharma as the hardest thing to be able to do, everything else being easy. Yet, however hard it is, he still wants to hear the Dharma. He wants to do the most difficult thing to do. In the same way, for laypeople to be able to leave the home life is a most difficult thing to do. It’s really hard. But, although it’s hard, if on really wants to do it, then one actually leaves home.

**Sutra:**

**Should a person come and tell the Bodhisattva,
“If you can hurl your body into a huge mass of fire,
I shall bestow upon you the jewel of Buddhadharma,”
Having heard this, he throws himself, without trepidation.**

**Should fire even fill the three thousand realms,
He would cast his body from the Brahma World and enter it.
In order to seek Dharma, he would not find it hard,
Much the less all minor sufferings in the human realm.**

**From his first resolution, up to Buddhahood,
All Avichi sufferings in that interval,
In order to hear Dharma, he can undergo,
Much the less all sufferings in the human realm.**

**He reflects upon the principles after he has heard,
Acquires the four dhyanas and formless samapattis,
Four others, five penetrations, in sequence then arise.
Not following their power does he undergo rebirths.**

**The Bodhisattva dwelling here can see many Buddhas,
Make offerings to and hears them with certitude of mind.
He severs deviant delusions and becomes more pure,
Just as true gold when smelted does not decrease in weight.**

**Dwelling here, most become Trayastrimsha rulers,
Acting as guiding teachers to limitless hosts of gods,
Causing them to forsake greed and dwell in wholesome ways,
Singly intent upon the search for Buddha’s virtues,**

**Buddhist disciples, dwelling here on is diligent in vigor,
And with hundreds of thousands of samadhis on then becomes endowed.
He sees hundreds of thousands of Buddhas’ bodies adorned with marks.
If he uses power of vows, it surpasses even that.**

**Universally benefitting every living being,
That Bodhisattva’s conducts which are most supreme,
All of which like that exist upon the Third Ground,
Based upon those doctrines I have already explained.**

**Commentary:**

Should a person come and tell the Bodhisattva-hypothetically, if someone were to say to the Bodhisattva who is cultivating the dharmas of the Third Ground, “If you can hurl your body into a huge mass of fire, if anyone can manage to throw his or her own body into a huge mass of fire, I shall bestow upon you the jewel of Buddhadharma-if you are that sincere, I shall transmit to you the Buddha’s Dharma,” having heard this, he throw himself, without trepidation.

Upon hearing “Buddhadharma,” he immediately hurls himself into the mass of fire, without the slightest fear. Should fire even fill the three thousand realms-not to mention a bonfire, if fire were to fill up the entire Three Thousand Great Thousand World System, he would cast his body from the Brahma World and enter it. He would hurl his body down from the Great Brahma Heaven and fall into the fire that filled the Three Thousand Great Thousand World System. In order to seek Dharma, he would not find it hard. He would do that-hurl himself from the Great Brahma Heaven into the huge fire raging in the Three Thousand Great Thousand world System in order to seek the Buddhadharma-without considering it hard. “I could endure it for the sake of the Buddhadharma,” much the less all minor sufferings in the human realm. How much the less would any of the minor torments and pains of human beings matter to him. They would be even less of a problem.

From his first resolution, up to Buddhahood, from his first production of the resolve for Bodhi, up until the time he becomes a Buddha, all avichi sufferings in that interval would cover a very long stretch of time. Shakyamuni Buddha cultivated three great asamkhyeya kalpas. Each asamkhyeya kalpa is a limitless amount of time, and he cultivated for as long as three limitless periods of time. “Avichi sufferings” refers to the sufferings in the Uninterrupted Hell. That hell is full, whether it contains one person or many persons. Time, too, is of really long duration, and everything there is suffering. In order to hear Dharma, he can undergo this. Because he seeks the Buddhadharma, he is even willing to undergo the sufferings in the Avichi Hell, much the less all sufferings in the human realm. The far less intense suffering among people is even less a problem for him.

He reflects upon the principles after he has heard. After he has heard the Buddhadharma, he bases himself upon true principle to consider and cultivate, and acquires the Four Dhyanas and Formless Samapattis. .In that way, he is able to attain the Four Dhyanas-the First Dhyana, the Second Dhyana, the Third Dhyana, and the Fourth Dhyana-and the Formless Samadhis, in which even form disappears, four others, five penetrations, in sequence then arise. “Four others” refers to the Four Stations of Emptiness, etc. The Penetrations are five in number, for he has not yet attained the Penetration of the Extinction of Outflows, but has the others:

The Penetration of the Heavenly Eye.
The Penetration of the Heavenly Ear.
The Penetration of Others’ Minds.
The Penetration of Past Lives.
The Penetration of Spiritual Accomplishments.

He is lacking:

The Penetration of the Extinction of Outflows.

But he will attain them all in order. Not following their power does he undergo rebirths. Although within the world he is born here and dies there, or else is born there and dies here, being born and dying over and over, nonetheless, he does so through the power of his vows, not because of being confused and upside-down, which he is not. He does not undergo birth due to the power of karma.

The Bodhisattva dwelling here can see many Buddhas. The Bodhisattva who dwells in the state of the Third Ground can see many hundreds, many thousands, many millions of Buddhas, makes offerings to and hears them with certitude of mind. He makes offerings to the Buddhas and hears those Buddhas speak the Dharma, and has absolutely no doubts in his mind. He severs deviant delusions and becomes more pure. He cuts off all deviant delusions: deviant greed, deviant hatred, and deviant stupidity, and becomes purer and purer day by day, just as true gold when smelted does not decrease in weight. It is the same as when all sorts of methods are employed to refine pure gold-the amount of gold content does not decrease in the slightest. Dwelling her, most become Trayastrimsha rulers. Most every Bodhisattva when dwelling on the Third Ground, the Ground of Emitting Light, becomes Lord God, ruler of the Heaven of the Thirty-three, acting as guiding teachers to limitless hosts of gods. He teaches and transforms limitless and boundlessly many throngs of gods, causing them to forsake greed and dwell in wholesome ways. He teaches all living beings to abandon greed and dwell in good ways, singly intent upon the search for Buddha’s virtues. He concentrates on seeking the merit and virtue of a Buddha.

Buddhist disciples, dwelling here on is diligent with vigor. All of you disciples of the Buddha, when one is dwelling on the Third Ground, one has to be diligent and vigorous, and with hundreds of thousands of samadhis one then becomes endowed. One attains to a hundred thousand kinds of prop concentrations and proper receptions: a hundred thousand samadhis, all of which are perfected. He sees hundreds of thousands of Buddhas’ bodies adorned with marks. He becomes able to see a hundred thousand Buddhas and can make a hundred thousand Buddhalands tremble and quake. If he uses power of vows, it surpasses even that. If he uses the power of Bodhisattva vows, the number will be far greater, universally benefitting every living being. Living beings universally are benefitted. That Bodhisattva’s conducts which are most supreme, the most supreme doors of practice cultivated by the Bodhisattva while on the Third Ground, the Ground of Emitting Light, all of which like that exist upon the Third Ground-when one is that way, one can attain to the states of the Third Ground-I, based upon those doctrines, have already explained. Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva refers to himself saying, “I now have based myself upon the doctrines of the Third Ground and explained this all to you.”

**End of the Third Ground**

The Fourth Ground

**Sutra:**

**Buddha’s disciples having heard this vast, great conduct,
The agreeable, deep, wondrous, supreme ground,
In their hearts rejoiced and were greatly delighted,
And universally scattered flowers as offerings to the Buddhas.**

**Commentary:**

Buddha’s disciples having heard this vast, great conduct, after Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva had finished speaking the previous Ground of Emitting Light, all the Buddhist disciples, when they had heard about those kinds of vast, great Dharma-doors which are cultivated by Bodhisattvas, the agreeable, deep, wondrous, supreme ground, those kinds of profound and could-be wished-for, most wonderful, supreme Dharma-doors, which are just the Dharma-doors cultivated by Bodhisattvas on the Third Ground, in their hearts rejoiced and were greatly delighted. All of those Bodhisattvas in their minds were heroically vigorous and brought forth great joy, and universally scattered flowers as offerings to the Buddhas. All of them together scattered flowers everywhere to make offerings to Shakyamuni Buddha and all the other Buddhas of the ten directions.

**Sutra:**

**At the tie of proclamation of such wondrous Dharma,
The great earth and the seas- waters all trembled and quaked,
All the heavenly goddesses rejoiced in delight,
And together sang out wondrous sounds in praise.**

**The Heavenly King of Comfort was greatly happy,
And rained down mani jewels as offerings to the Buddhas,
Saying in praise: “Buddha has for our sakes appeared,
And proclaims the foremost conduct and merit and virtue.**

**All the wise ones’ Grounds’ meanings such as these,
In a hundred thousand kalpas are very hard to obtain.
Now we suddenly have a chance to hear
The wondrous dharma sound of Bodhisattvas’ conduct supreme.**

**We hope the brightly wise one will go on to proclaim
The next Ground’s Way decisive, with nothing left out,
For the benefit of every single god and human,
These disciples of the Buddha all would like to hear.”**

**Heroically Great-Hearted Moon of Liberation
Requested Vajra Treasury saying: “Disciple of the Buddha,
From here, in turn, to enter into the Fourth Ground,
All the marks of practice we wish you would proclaim.”**

**Commentary:**

At the time of proclamation of such wondrous Dharma…This is talking about how when Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva proclaimed the subtle and wonderful, inconceivable Dharma-doors of the Third Ground, the great earth and the seas’ waters all trembled and quaked. All the mountains, the rivers, and the great earth, and all the waters in the four great seas trembled and shook with the six kinds of quakes. All the heavenly goddesses rejoiced in delight. When this Dharma was spoken, all the goddesses in the heavens were ecstatic, and together sang out wondrous sounds in praise.

All the heavenly goddesses poured forth subtle and wonderful sounds praising the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha. The Heavenly King of Comfort was greatly happy. The God Maheshvara, King of the Heaven of Great Comfort and Self-Mastery, had happiness that knew no bounds, and he rained down mani jewels as offerings to the Buddhas. He rained down great precious mani gems to make offerings to all Buddhas, saying in praise: “Buddha has for our sakes appeared.” He spoke in praise, saying, “The Buddhas has appeared in the world for the sake of all of us gods, and proclaims the foremost conduct and merit and virtue. He can talk about the foremost doors of conduct of merit and virtue.

“All the wise ones’ Grounds’ meanings such as these, such principles of all the Grounds of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas who have great wisdom, in a hundred thousand kalpas are very hard to obtain. You could go through hundreds of thousands of ten thousands of aeons, and it would still not be easy to encounter this kind of wonderful Dharma. Now we suddenly have a chance to hear these most supreme kinds of Dharma-doors, the wondrous Dharma sound of Bodhisattvas’ conduct supreme, the supreme doors of practice cultivated by Bodhisattvas, the wondrous sound of that Dharma. We hope the brightly wise one will go on to proclaim. We now hope even more that the one of great wisdom will go on and proclaim for us the principles of the Fourth Ground, the next Ground’s Way decisive, with nothing left out-the Dharma-doors for decisive cultivation on the Fourth Ground, for the benefit of every single god and human. It wouldn’t just be Dharma spoken for our sakes, but it would be of benefit to all the gods. These disciples of the Buddha all would like to hear. All the Buddhist disciples within this Dharma assembly would really like to hear these Dharma-doors.”

Heroically Great-Hearted Moon of Liberation, the great-minded Bodhisattva of heroic vigor who was in the assembly at the time named Moon of Liberation bodhisattva, requested Vajra Treasury saying: “Disciples of the Buddha.” He again made a request of Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, this time asking him to speak about the meaning of the Fourth Ground, and said, “From here, in turn, to enter into the Fourth Ground-the doors of practice for going from this, the Third Ground, in turn to the Fourth Ground, all the marks of practice we wish you would proclaim-how to go about cultivating all the Dharma-doors of practice. Please, disciple of the Buddha, tell everyone about that.”

**Sutra:**

**At that time, Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva addressed moon of Liberation Bodhisattva saying: Disciples of the Buddha, the Bodhisattva Mahasattva who has already purified the Third Ground and who wishes to enter the Fourth, the Ground of Blazing Wisdom, should cultivate ten doors for understanding the Dharma. What are the ten? They are: contemplating realms of living beings, contemplating realms of Dharma, contemplating realms of worlds, contemplating realms of empty space, contemplating realms of desire, contemplating realms of form, contemplating realms of formlessness, contemplating realms of vast minds’ faith and understanding. The Bodhisattva, using these ten kinds of doors for understanding Dharma, obtains entry to the Fourth Ground, that of Blazing Wisdom.**

**Commentary:**

When the great assembly and Moon of Liberation Bodhisattva had finished speaking the preceding verses, at that time, Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva addressed Moon of Liberation Bodhisattva saying: Disciples of the Buddha, the Bodhisattva, Mahasattva, the Great Bodhisattva, who has been cultivating and has already purified the Third Ground, having well cultivated and purified it so he has been certified to it, and who wishes to enter the fourth, the ground of blazing wisdom, at that time should cultivate ten doors for understanding Dharma. What are the ten?

They are: Contemplating realms of living beings-contemplating all the various causes and conditions underlying the realms of living beings; contemplating realms of Dharma, what period the Dharma has reached, whether it is the Proper Dharma Age, the Dharma Semblance Age, or the Dharma Ending Age; contemplating realms of worlds-contemplating all the living beings of world-realms and what period the world-systems themselves have reached in the cycle of coming into being, dwelling, decaying, and going empty; contemplating realms of empty space-what Dharma should be spoken upon contemplation of the realm of empty space; contemplating realms of consciousness-contemplating the realm of consciousness of all living beings; contemplating realms of desire, what desires living beings have, and which dharmas need to be employed to save living beings in the heavens of the Desire Realm; contemplating realms of form-what methods need to be used to rescue living beings in the heavens of the Form Realm; contemplating realms of formlessness-what means to employ to cross over living beings in the heavens of the Formless Realm; contemplating realms of vast minds’ faith and understanding-what level of understanding has been reached by the living beings in the heavens who have vast minds; contemplating realms of great minds’ faith and understanding, what level of understanding has been attained by beings in the heavens who possess great minds-those who are about to undertake cultivation of the Bodhisattva Way.

The Bodhisattva, using these ten kinds of doors for understanding Dharma, obtains entry to the Fourth Ground, that of Blazing Wisdom. By employing those ten kinds of doors to understanding Dharma, he can enter the position of the Fourth Ground on which one’s wisdom is as bright as a blazing fire.

**Sutra:**

**Disciples of the Buddha, the Bodhisattva, while dwelling on this, the Ground of Blazing Wisdom, then can, by using ten kinds of wisdom for maturing dharmas, obtain those internal dharmas and be born in the Thus Come One’s household, what are the ten? They are: by having a deep mind that does not retreat; by giving rise to pure faith in the Triple Jewel which is ultimately indestructible; by contemplating the production and extinction of all activities; by contemplating the non-production of the self-nature of all dharmas; by contemplating the comings into being and destructions of world realms; by contemplating how there is production because of karma; by contemplating birth and death and Nirvana; by contemplating the karma of living beings and countries; by contemplating the boundary of before and the boundary of afterwards; by contemplating what has no exhaustion. Those are the ten.**

**Disciples of the Buddha, the Bodhisattva who dwells upon this, the Fourth Ground, contemplates inside his body, making a methodical contemplation of the body, diligently and heroically is mindful of wisdom and expels worldly greed and worry.**

**Commentary:**

Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva calls out again: All of you disciples of the Buddha, do you know that the Bodhisattva, while dwelling on this, the Fourth Ground, the Ground of Blazing Wisdom, then can, by using ten kinds of wisdom for maturing dharmas-employing ten kinds of wisdom to contemplate and bring to maturity all dharmas that he cultivates-obtain those internal dharmas, dharmas pertaining to the mind within, and be born in the Thus Come One’s household. He is born in the family of the Buddha.

What are the ten, the ten kinds of wisdom through which one can bring internal dharmas to maturity? They are: by having a deep mind that does not retreat. The Bodhisattva brings forth a deep resolve, a great resolved, and never retreats from his resolve for Bodhi. It is also by giving rise to pure faith in the Triple Jewel. He is able to produce pure belief in the Triple Jewel which is ultimately indestructible. That pure resolve for Bodhi will never be destroyed or disappear. It is also by contemplating the production and extinction of all activities. He contemplates how all activities are produced and destroyed and are all impermanent. It is also by contemplating the non-production of the self-nature of all dharmas. The self-nature of all dharmas has no production and no destruction, the reason being that all dharmas are characterized by still extinction, having no substance of their own, but being the product of causes and conditions. Therefore it is said:

Dharmas produced from causes and conditions
I proclaim are empty.
On the one hand, they are called false names,
On the other, called the meaning of the Middle Way.

It is also by contemplating the comings in being and destructions of world-realms-how world-systems come into being, dwell, decay, and go empty-and he brings forth a great resolve for Bodhi; by contemplating how there is production because of karma, it is due to karma that all causes and retributions are brought about; by contemplating birth and death and Nirvana, he contemplates what is meant by birth and death, and what is not being born and not dying, that is, Nirvana; by contemplating the karma of living beings and countries, all beings born in a given country create a certain kind of karma and undergo a certain kind of retribution; by contemplating the boundary of before and the boundary of afterwards, he also contemplates how all false thoughts, the preceding thought and the thought after it-are produced; by contemplating what has no exhaustion, he contemplates how there is not exhaustion to living beings and no exhaustion to afflictions or any end to empty space; those are the ten. He makes those ten kinds of contemplations.

Disciples of the Buddha, the Bodhisattva who dwells upon this, the Fourth Ground, the Ground of Blazing Wisdom, contemplating inside his body, making a methodical contemplation, in order, of what is inside the body, diligently and heroically is mindful of wisdom-mindful of All Wisdom-and expels worldly greed and worry. He gets rid of the kind of greedy craving worldly people have and their kinds of worries and anxieties.

If anyone who has committed offenses can change, repent of them, and reform, then those offenses can disappear. If you cover them up and don’t want to change, the offenses remain. When the Buddha was in the world, if any Bhikshu or Bhikshuni had committed an offense, he or she had to make a public repentance of it in front of everyone. This is as when your clothes are dirty and you wash them so they are clean again. When your mind ground is not bright and luminous, if you repent, that brightness can return to your mind ground. You go back to your original wisdom.

What prevents your inherent wisdom from appearing? It’s because each of us puts on a false mask and tries to keep other people from seeing what is wrong with us. That’s why the Buddha instructed people to repent. Sometimes someone doesn’t know what his or her offenses are, and if someone else knows what the offenses are, they should bring them up, to enable that person to return to purity. It was that way when the Buddha was in the world and is known as the Proper Dharma dwelling in the world. Afterwards, the Bhikshus and Bhikshunis forgot about repenting and covered up their offenses.

The Dharma, therefore, declined day by day. Now in this country we are emphasizing the Proper Dharma, and so, no matter who has what offense, if they can make a public repentance of it before the great assembly, after repenting and reforming they return to purity. If you don’t repent, you will always have blackness stored away in your self-nature. If you speak out and let others know of it, then you can go back to the basic purity of your fundamental nature.

In cultivation, the essential thing is not to be selfish and to have no thought of benefitting the self-to have no self. If something is harmful to oneself but of benefit to the larger group, one should not hesitate to do it. If something is beneficial to oneself but harmful to the group at large, then you can’t do it. So one takes what is beneficial to the large group as important, and is willing to divide up one’s body and grind up one’s bones to benefit the larger group. But if something has no public benefit but benefits oneself, even if it only means doing a hair’s worth of harm to the group so as to reap an enormous amount of benefit for oneself, one must not do it. So you shouldn’t be selfish, and then you can accomplish the Way cultivated by a Bodhisattva.

**Sutra:**

**He contemplates outside his body, making a methodical contemplation of the body, diligently and heroically is mindful of wisdom, and expels worldly greed and worry. He contemplates inside and outside his body, making a methodical contemplation of the body, diligently and heroically is mindful of wisdom, and expels worldly greed and worry.**

**In the way, he contemplates inner feelings, outer feelings, inner and outer feelings, making a methodical contemplation of feelings. He contemplates the inner mind, the outer mind, the inner and outer mind, making a methodical contemplation of the mind. He contemplates inner dharmas, outer dharmas, inner and out dharmas, making a methodical contemplation of dharmas, diligently and heroically is mindful of wisdom, and expels worldly greed and worry.**

**Commentary:**

He contemplates outside his body. Sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and objects of touch are what is outside the body. He contemplates that, making a methodical contemplation of the body. He follows along the body in order, contemplation all the myriad things and events outside the body, all of which speak Dharma. If you realize that everything is speaking Dharma, you will thoroughly understand the real mark of all dharmas. He makes that systematic contemplation of the body, diligently and heroically is mindful of wisdom, and expels worldly greed and worry. He is heroically vigorous at all times. We need to know how constantly to return the light and look within, and see how to expel all worldly greed and love and all worldly worry and anxiety.

He contemplates inside his body and outside his body, making a methodical contemplation of the body, both of the five skandhas inside his body-form, feeling, thinking, activities and consciousness-and of the six dusts outside his body-sights, sounds, smells, tastes, objects of touch and dharmas. Again, he cultivates diligently and heroically is mindful of all wisdom, and expels worldly greed and worry. We shouldn’t have any greed for worldly fame or profit, unlike some left-home people who are greedy for offerings. When someone donates a red envelope, they quickly think, “There must be a lot of money in it.” Then when they open it and take a look, it’s just a dollar, and they’re incredibly disappointed-all because of greed.

In that way, he contemplates inner feelings, outer feelings, inner and outer feelings, making a methodical contemplation of feelings. He contemplates like that, returning the light and turning back the illumination, in a very detailed investigation of what his inner emotional feelings are all about, as well as the feelings coming from outside. He also looks into what feelings that are both internal and external are like-that’s methodically contemplating feelings. He contemplates the inner mind, the outer mind, the inner and outer mind, making a methodical contemplation of the mind. He looks at what the mind inside is like and what the mind outside is like, along with what inner and outer minds working together are all about.

He investigates in systematic contemplation of the conscious mind. He contemplates inner dharmas, outer dharmas, inner and outer dharmas, making a methodical contemplation of dharmas. He contemplates all the dharmas inside and all the dharmas external to the body, along with internal and external dharmas, systematically contemplating dharmas, again having to do so diligently with vigor and heroically is mindful of all wisdom and expels worldly greed and worry, every kind of greed and anxiety worldly people have. We who have left the home-life should leave the home of the Three Realms-the home of the Desire Realm, the Form Realm, and the Formless Realm. We should also leave the home of afflictions, by cutting all of them off. We also have to leave the home of the mundane, which means dispelling worldly greed and worry. It’s easy to say, but very hard to do. Yet, even so, the harder it is, the more you have to do it. If you don’t do it because it’s hard, it will never get done. As it is said:

Humaneness is difficult at first, but afterwards acquired.

If you want to master humaneness, you first must go through some very difficult experiences, and after that you come to have kindly and humane concern for other people.

**Sutra:**

**Furthermore, to prevent all evil and unwholesome dharmas which have not yet arisen from arising, that Bodhisattva wishes to bring forth diligent vigor and makes up his mind to properly cut them off. To cut off all evil and unwholesome dharmas which have already arisen, he wishes to bring forth diligent vigor and makes up his mind to properly cut them off. In order to cause all wholesome dharmas which have not yet arisen to arise, he wishes to bring forth diligent vigor, and makes up his mind to properly cultivate them. In order to cause all wholesome dharmas which have already arisen to remain and not be lost, he cultivates to increase and extend them. He wishes to bring forth diligent vigor, and makes up his mind to properly cultivate them.**

**Commentary:**

The text has not finished explaining about how casting out all worldly greed and worry brings forth world-transcending bliss, and so it continues in more detailed explanation saying, furthermore, after having cultivated the Third Ground of Emitting Light and being on the Ground of Blazing Wisdom, to prevent all evil and unwholesome dharmas which have not yet arisen from arising, that Bodhisattva wishes to bring forth diligent vigor. So that all evil thoughts and unwholesome dharmas which have not arisen in his mind will not arise, he wants to be courageous, which is identical with being diligent and vigorous; and he makes up his mind, with a great resolve for Bodhi, to properly cut them off. He wants to keep all those evil and unwholesome dharmas from arising and wants to cut off all evil and unwholesome dharmas which have already arisen.

No matter who you are, or what kind of offense you’ve committed, if you can cut off those evil, unwholesome dharmas-the body’s three evil acts of killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, the mouth’s four evil acts of loose, false, harsh, and double-tongued speech; and the mind’s three evil acts of greed, hatred, and stupidity-then you stop creating that kind of bad karma. In order to do that he, the Bodhisattva, wishes to bring forth diligent vigor, act with utmost courage, and makes up his mind, in a great resolve for Bodhi, to properly cut them off. Evil not yet arisen should be prevented from arising, and if it’s already arisen, one cuts it off. But what about good and wholesome dharmas?

In order to cause all wholesome dharmas which have not yet arisen to arise-that is, not being greedy, angry, or stupid, not killing, stealing or committing sexual misconduct, not speaking loosely, falsely, harshly, or in a double-tongued manner, which together constitute the Ten Wholesome Acts of refraining from the ten kinds of evil karma-he wishes to bring forth diligent vigor and makes up his mind to properly cultivate them. Again, one must be courageous in one’s vigor, be greatly resolved on Bodhi, and actually go and do the work. In order to cause all wholesome dharmas which have already arisen to remain and not be lost, to hang onto those good dharmas which have come into being, he cultivates to increase and extend them. He wishes to bring forth diligent, courageous vigor and makes up his mind to properly, reliably and actually, cultivate them, so those states of wholesome dharmas daily expand and grow.

**Sutra:**

**Moreover, this Bodhisattva cultivates the samadhi of zeal, cutting off activities and accomplishes the basis of psychic power, relying on disgust, relying on leaving, relying on extinction, and makes transference to renunciation. He cultivates the samadhi of vigor, the samadhi of thoughts, and the samadhi of contemplation, cutting off activities, and accomplishes the Bases of Psychic Power, relying on disgust, relying on leaving, relying on extinction, and makes transference to renunciation.**

**Commentary:**

Moreover, continues Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, this Bodhisattva we’ve been talking about cultivates the Samadhi of zeal. This is the first of the Four Bases of Psychic Power among the Thirty-seven Wings of Enlightenment, the Stations of the Bodhi Share Dharmas which the Bodhisattva was previously described as taking rebirth in order to perfect. This includes cutting off of all evil activities while bringing forth all good conduct. There are:

Eight Cutting-off Activities (Conducts of Severance)

1. Zeal (to do so).
2. Diligence (of applied effort).
3. Faith (in what is certified to).
4. Securing (oneself in joy).
5. Mindfulness (dwelling in “stopping”-*shamatha*).
6. Proper Knowledge (dwelling in “contemplating”-*vipashyana*).
7. Reflection (one’s mind operating according to stopping and contemplating).
8. Renunciation (of views of states that appear).

And the Bodhisattva thus accomplishes the Bases of Psychic Power, the fruit of Samadhi. He does this by relying on disgust for all dharma-doors of evil actions, by relying on leaving them-cutting them off-by relying on extinction of those doors to evil conduct; and he makes transference to renunciation. He transfers this to the cultivation of all practices of giving. One must give away what one cannot bear to part with, and put down what one does not want to let go of. He cultivates the samadhi of vigor, always keeping at his cultivation of samadhi, which is the second Basis of Psychic Power. He also cultivates the samadhi of thought, so that his mind in samadhi is not moved by the Eight Winds:

The Eight Winds

1. Approval.
2. Ridicule.
3. Suffering.
4. Happiness.
5. Benefit.
6. Devastation.
7. Acclaim.
8. Bad repute.

(Sometimes: 7. Gain; 8. Loss.)

That means if someone praises you, your mind does not move, and it’s also unmoving if people make fun of you. No matter how much suffering you undergo, you don’t feel it’s bitter, and whatever happiness you experience, you don’t feel happy. You’re not moved by outer states or inward emotions. Benefit is when you obtain some personal advantages, while devastation means you undergo harm-but if neither situation moves you, your mind, your thought, is in samadhi. Then, too, you may be acclaimed and enjoy fame, or have bad repute and be slandered. Or else, you may get something or lose it. If your mind remains unmoved when those eight winds blow, then you have Samadhi power. But if you become delighted at a few words of praise from someone or upset when scolded just a little, you’ve been all stirred by those winds from outside-proof that you lack samadhi power. If you had it, you would be such that:

The eyes see forms and shapes, but inside there is nothing;
The ears hear defiling matters, but the mind does not know.
Then you have a bit of samadhi power, but not yet the total amount.

And he cultivates the samadhi of contemplation (*mimamsa*, often “worldly wisdom”), of whether or not his samadhi has reached accomplishment, cutting off all evil activities, and in that way he accomplishes the bases of psychic power, which are one of the six types of spiritual penetrations, also called the penetrations of spiritual states. He does this by relying on disgust for all worldly dharmas, by relying on leaving them all behind, by relying on extinction of all evil practice of worldly dharmas, and makes transference to renunciation. He transfers this to the Dharma-door of giving.

**Sutra:**

**Furthermore, this Bodhisattva cultivates the root of faith, relying on disgust, relying on leaving, relying on extinction, and makes transference to renunciation. He cultivates the root of vigor, the root of mindfulness, the root of samadhi, and the root of wisdom, relying on disgust, relying on leaving, relying on extinction, and makes transference to renunciation.**

**Commentary:**

Furthermore, to explain the previous principle in more detail, this Bodhisattva cultivates the root of faith, relying on disgust, relying on leaving, relying on extinction, and makes transference to renunciation. He cultivates the root of vigor, the root of mindfulness, the root of samadhi, and the root of wisdom. These are the Five Roots:

* Faith
* Vigor.
* Mindfulness.
* Samadhi
* Wisdom

He does that by relying on disgust for the Saha World, relying on leaving behind all afflictions, relying on extinction of all habit patterns, and makes transference to renunciation, the Paramita of Giving.

**Sutra:**

**Furthermore, this Bodhisattva cultivates the power of faith, relying on disgust, relying on leaving, relying on extinction, and makes transference to renunciation. He cultivates the power of vigor, the power of mindfulness, the power of samadhi, and the power of wisdom, relying on disgust, relying on leaving, relying on extinction, and makes transference to renunciation.**

**Commentary:**

Furthermore, to go into even more detail, this Bodhisattva who is on the Ground of Blazing Wisdom, cultivates the power of faith, and that, too, is done by relying on disgust, relying on leaving, relying on extinction, and again he makes transference to renunciation. He also cultivates the power of vigor, the power of mindfulness, the power of samadhi, and the power of wisdom, by relying on disgust, relying on leaving, relying on extinction, and makes transference to renunciation. Before it discussed the Five Roots, and now these are the Five Powers:

Faith.
Vigor.
Mindfulness.
Samadhi.
Wisdom.

Being produced from the roots, they have a lot of strength. Based on those, he becomes disgusted with and leave behind all worldly dharmas, cultivates all world-transcending dharmas, and transfers that to the Dharma-door of giving.

**Sutra:**

**Furthermore, this Bodhisattva cultivates the enlightenment share of mindfulness, relying on disgust, relying on leaving, relying on extinction, and makes transference to renunciation. He cultivates the enlightenment share of selecting a Dharma, the enlightenment share of vigor, the enlightenment share of joy, thee enlightenment share of casting out, the enlightenment share of samadhi, and the enlightenment share of renunciation, relying on disgust, relying on leaving, relying on extinction, and makes transference to renunciation.**

**Furthermore, this Bodhisattva cultivates proper views, relying on disgust, relying on leaving, relying on extinction, and makes transference to renunciation. He cultivates proper thought, proper speech, proper actions, proper livelihood, proper vigor, proper mindfulness, and proper samadhi, relying in disgust, relying on leaving, relying on extinction, and makes transference to renunciation.**

**Commentary:**

The text has been going through the Thirty-seven Wings of Enlightenment, and now Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva continues, furthermore, this Bodhisattva who is on the Fourth Ground, that of Blazing Wisdom, cultivates the Seven Bodhi Shares, also knows as the Seven Enlightenment Shares, for “Bodhi” means “Enlightenment.” He cultivates the enlightenment share of mindfulness by relying on disgust for the mundane, by relying on leaving it, by relying on extinction of involvement with it, and makes transference to renunciation-to giving. The Thirty-seven Wings of Enlightenment are discussed at length in the Commentary to the *Dharma Flower Sutra*, in which it says they are composed of:

The Four Applications of Mindfulness.
The Four Right Efforts.
The Four Bases of Psychic Power.
The Five Roots.
The Five Powers.
The Seven Limbs of Enlightenment.
The Eight Sagely Way Shares (the Eightfold Path).

He, this Bodhisattva, also cultivates the remaining Bodhi Share Dharmas, cultivating the enlightenment share of selecting a Dharma, the enlightenment share of vigor in cultivating it, the enlightenment share of joy as response is attained, the enlightenment share of casting out coarse delusions, the enlightenment share of samadhi, the fruit of his cultivation, and the enlightenment share of renunciation of subtle delusions. The seventh is the Enlightenment Share of Mindfulness. He does that by relying on disgust, relying on leaving, relying on extinction, and makes transference to renunciation.

Furthermore, the same Bodhisattva, cultivates the Noble Eightfold Path-the Eightfold Proper Way-the first of which is proper views. Again, he is relying on disgust, relying on leaving, relying on extinction, and makes transference to renunciation. He also cultivates the rest of the eight: proper thought, proper speech, proper actions, proper livelihood proper vigor, proper mindfulness, and proper samadhi, by relying on disgust, relying on leaving, relying on extinction, and he makes transference again to renunciation. These are all explained in detail in the Commentary to the *Dharma Flower Sutra*.

**Sutra:**

**The Bodhisattva cultivates such merit and virtue in order not to abandon any living being, through the maintaining of his original vows, because he takes great compassion as foremost, due to the accomplishment of great kindness.**

**Commentary:**

Why is it that the Bodhisattva cultivates such merit and virtue? It’s in order not to abandon any living being whatsoever. It also happens through the maintaining assistance of his original vows made in the past that sustain him. Another reason is because he takes great compassion as the foremost, most important thing there is. And it is due to the accomplishment of all living beings performed through his great kindness. That’s why he cultivates the Five Roots, the Five Powers, the Seven Enlightenment Shares, and the Eightfold Proper Path.

**Sutra:**

**Because he remembers and ponders the wisdom of All Wisdom; in order to bring about the adornment of Buddhalands; to become perfectly endowed with the powers, fearlessnesses, uncommon Buddhadharmas, marks, characteristics, and sounds of a Thus Come One; because he seeks the very highest, most supreme Way; because he follows in accord with the deeply profound liberations of a Buddha he has heard; and because he thinks of clever expedients of great wisdom.**

**Commentary:**

The Bodhisattva upon the Ground of Blazing Wisdom also cultivates the Bodhisattva Way because he remembers and ponders-thinks about-the wisdom of All Wisdom, which also means the Wisdom Body of All Wisdom. It is also in order to bring about the adornment of all Buddhalands of all Buddhas. Another reason is to become perfectly endowed with the Ten Powers, the Four Fearlessnesses, the Eighteen uncommon Buddhadharmas, and all the marks, characteristics, and sounds of a Thus Come One. It, too, is because he, the Bodhisattva, seeks the very highest, most supreme Buddha Way, and because he follows in accord with wonderful Dharma of the deeply profound liberations of a Buddha of which he has heard, and it is because he thinks of clever expedients, Dharma-doors of great wisdom which he can use to teach and transform living beings. That is why he cultivates the Bodhisattva Way.

**Sutra:**

**Disciples of the Buddha, when this Bodhisattva dwells upon the Ground of Blazing Wisdom, he makes all views of a body his primary consideration. That is because with regard to a self, others, living beings, ones with lifespans, skandhas, realms and locations as arising, being attached to, made to appear and disappear, thought about, contemplated, or regulated, and because with regards to anything as belonging to a self, wealth and possessions and places of attachment, he can become completely free.**

**Commentary:**

Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva again calls out saying: All of you disciples of the Buddha, at the time when this Bodhisattva dwells upon the Ground of Blazing Wisdom, in his cultivation he makes all of his views of a body his primary consideration, the very first thing he has to expel. That is because with regard to a self he has none. For him there are no others either, or any living beings or any ones with lifespan.

There are also none of the Five Skandhas: 1) Form; 2) Feeling; 3) Thinking; 4) Activities; 5) Consciousness or the Eighteen Realms: 1) Eyes; 2) Ears; 3) Nose; 4) Tongue; 5) Body; 6) Mind (the Six Organs); 7) Sights; 8) Sounds; 9) Smells; 10) Tastes; 11) Objects of Touch; 12) Dharmas (the Six Sense Objects); 13) Eye consciousness; 14) Ear Consciousness; 15) Nose Consciousness; 16) Tongue Consciousness; 17) Body Consciousness; 18) Mind Consciousness (the Six Consciousnesses) are also empty. And the Twelve Locations: 1) Eyes; 2) Ears; 3) Nose; 4) Tongue; 5) Body; 6) Mind; 7) Sights; 8) Sounds; 9) Smells; 10) Tastes; 11) Objects of Touch; 12) Dharmas are also gone.

Any view of them as arising or as being attached to has been emptied. In the midst of those dharmas, any view of them as being made to appear and disappear, as thought about, contemplated, or regulated is totally emptied, so all attachments are absolutely gone. And it is also because with regard to anything as belonging to a self, he has seen all those states as empty, along with what a self could own--wealth and possessions and places of attachment-as false thoughts of desire. Concerning all of that, he can become completely free. He leaves behind all the previously listed Five Skandhas, Eighteen Realms, and Twelve Locations (the six sense faculties and their corresponding six objects). He frees himself from them, empties them, and empties any thought of them, so he has emptied any attachment to person or to dharmas.

**Sutra:**

**If this Bodhisattva sees karmic actions that have been reproved by the Thus Come One and are defiled by afflictions, he abandons them all. He sees karmic actions that accord with the Bodhisattva Way and have been praised by the Thus Come One, he completely cultivates them.**

**Disciples of the Buddha, thought the wisdom of expedients to which this Bodhisattva gives rise and his cultivation of the Way and the shares that aid the Way, he thus obtains a kind and nourishing mind; a compliant and yielding mind; a mind of blending and according; a mind of bringing benefit and making happy; an undefiled mind; a mind of seeking the very highest, supreme Dharma; a mind of seeking most supreme wisdom; a mind of rescuing all world; a mind of revering honored virtuous ones and not opposing teachings and instructions; and a mind of according with the Dharma he has heard and well cultivating it all.**

**Commentary:**

If this Bodhisattva sees evil karmic actions that have been reproved as not wanted by the Buddha, the Thus Come One, and that are defiled by all the impure dharmas of afflictions, he abandons and puts them all down. If he sees wholesome karmic actions that accord and are not in conflict with the Bodhisattva Way, and have been praised by the Thus Come One as for cultivation, he completely bases himself upon those dharmas and cultivates them.

All of you disciples of the Buddha, says Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, through the wisdom of expedients to which this Bodhisattva gives rise on the Ground of Blazing Wisdom and his cultivation of the Dharma-doors of the Way and the shares that aid in cultivation of the Way, he thus obtains a kind and nourishing mind; a very compliant and yielding mind; a mind of blending and according; a mind of bringing benefit to all beings, and making all living beings happy; an unmixed, undefiled mind, which has no thoughts of desire stemming from greed, hatred, and stupidity; a mind of always with utmost sincerity seeking the very highest, unsurpassed, and most supreme Dharma. He also obtains a mind of always seeking the most supreme wisdom; a mind of rescuing the beings of all worlds; a mind of ever revering and respecting honored, greatly virtuous ones, and following not opposing, the teachings and instructions from those Good Knowing Advisor. And he also come to have a mind of according with the Dharma he has hear, wherever he hears it, and well cultivating by relying upon it all.

**Sutra:**

**This Bodhisattva knows kindness done for him, and knows to repay that kindness. His mind is well-disposed for the good, and he is pleasant to associate with. He is upright and gentle, not acting like a dense thicket. He is free from pride, well accepts teachings and advice, and well grasps the intention of what is said.**

**The Bodhisattva in that way becomes accomplished in patience, and in that way becomes accomplished in self-control, compliance, and still extinction. In that way being accomplished in patience, self-control, compliance, and still extinction, he purifies and regulates the karmic actions of the next Ground. When he sets his mind on cultivating and maintaining, he attains to unresting vigor; unmixed, undefiled vigor;**

**Commentary:**

When someone is kind to this Bodhisattva, he certainly knows the kindness that was done for him, and he knows to repay the person who has been good to him thought that kindness. His mind is very well-disposed for the good, and he is pleasant for anyone to associate with. He is upright, not wayward, yet very accommodating and gentle, not acting like a dense thicket. It’s not as if his entire body were covered with thorns that stab people and cause them lots of pain. He is free from pride and arrogance, and very well and very willingly accepts and he well grasps the intention of what is said and liked by Dharma Masters, Bodhisattvas who are propagating the Dharma.

This Bodhisattva in that way becomes accomplished in all kinds of patience of mind and ability to endure, and in that way becomes accomplished in self-control, compliance, and the *kung fu* of still extinction. In that way being thoroughly accomplished in the Paramita of Patience, in self-control, compliance, and still extinction, he purifies and regulates-through cultivation-the karmic actions which need to be cultivated of the next, the Fifth, Ground. When he sets his mind on cultivating and maintaining, he attains to unresting vigor, as well as unmixed, undefiled vigor.

**Sutra:**

**Non-retreating vigor; vast, great vigor; boundless vigor; blazing vigor; incomparable vigor; indestructible vigor; vigor to bring all living beings to maturation; and vigor that well distinguishes what is and what is not the Way.**

**The realm of this Bodhisattva’s mind is pure. His deep resolve is never lost. His enlightened understanding is clear and keen. His good roots increase and grow. He leaves behind worldly filth and turbidity. He cuts off all doubts and delusions. He is endowed with perfect clarity of severance, and his joy is full. The Buddhas draw near to and mindfully protect him. His limitless resolutions and inclinations all become accomplished.**

**Disciples of the Buddha, when this Bodhisattva dwells upon this Ground of Blazing Wisdom, through the power of his vows he comes to see many Buddhas. That is, he comes to see many hundreds of Buddhas, sees many thousands of Buddhas, up to and including seeing many hundreds of thousands of millions of nayutas of Buddhas. He reveres and honors them all, attends upon them, and makes offerings to them, completely offering up all the necessities of life-clothing, bedding, food and drink, and medicines. He also makes offerings to all the multitudes of the Sangha, and completely transfers those good roots to Anuttarasamyaksambodhi. In the presence of those Buddhas, he reverentially listens to the Dharma, and having heard it, he himself accepts and maintains it and perfectly cultivates it.**

**Commentary:**

This Bodhisattva has non-retreating vigor, never giving up or turning back but remaining vigorous and unretreating in the Three Irreversibilities:

Irreversibility in Thought.
Irreversibility in Position.
Irreversibility in Conduct.

He also has the vast, great vigor, so that the range of his cultivation of the Bodhisattva Way extends to the exhaustion of empty space and the Dharma Realm, and boundless vigor, which has no limits. He is as exuberant as a blazing fire in his vigor, and nothing can be compared to his incomparable vigor. It is also indestructible, unbreakable vigor, and vigor to bring all living beings to maturation. He himself cultivates the Bodhisattva Way, and he is also able to teach all other living beings to cultivate it, so their good roots ripen. And he has vigor that well distinguishes what is and what is not the Way.

The realm of this Bodhisattva’s mind within is pure. His deep resolve for Bodhi is never lost-he never retreats from it. His enlightened understanding-what he comprehends and has become enlightened to-is clear and keen, exceptionally penetrating. All of his good roots day by day increase and grow. He leaves behind worldly defilements of filth and turbidity. He cuts off all doubts and delusions whatsoever. He is endowed with perfect clarity of severance, clearly understanding what should be cut off and what should not be, and his joy is full. He is always happy. All of the Buddhas of the ten directions personally draw near to this Bodhisattva and mindfully protect him. His limitless resolutions and inclinations all become accomplished.

Disciples of the Buddha, when this Bodhisattva dwells upon this Ground of Blazing Wisdom, through the power of his vows made in the past, he comes to see many Buddhas. That is, he comes to see many hundreds of thousands of millions of nayutas of Buddhas. He reveres and honors them all, attends upon them, and makes offerings to them, completely offering up all the necessities of life-the four requisites of clothing, bedding, food and drink, and medicines, giving them to all those Buddhas. He also makes offerings of them to all the multitudes of the Sangha of Worthies and Sages, and completely transfers those kinds of good roots to Anuttarasamyaksambodhi, Unsurpassed Proper and Equal Right Enlightenment, the position of Buddhahood. In the presence of those Buddhas, he reverentially listens to the Dharma, and having heard it, he himself accepts and maintains it and perfectly cultivates it-all the Dharma he has heard.

**Sutra:**

**Moreover, within all those Buddhas’ Dharma, he leaves the home-life to cultivate the Way. He then even more cultivates and regulates his deep mind of faith and understanding. Passing though limitless hundreds of thousands of millions of nayutas of kalpas, he causes all of his good roots to become increasingly bright and pure. Disciples of the Buddha, it is just as when a goldsmith smelts and refines true gold, making it into ornaments: no other gold is able to match it. The Bodhisattva Mahasattva is also that way. When he dwells upon this Ground, all of his good roots cannot be matched by any of the good roots of the Grounds below. It is just like a mani jewel, whose pure and luminous orb is able to send out light which no other jewels can match, and no factors such as wind or rain and so forth are able to destroy. The Bodhisattva Mahasattva also is that way. When he dwells upon this Ground, the Bodhisattvas of the Grounds below are not able to match him, and the hordes of demons and afflictions all cannot destroy him.**

**This Bodhisattva, among the Four Dharmas of Attraction, emphasizes similar work. Among the Ten Paramitas he emphasizes vigor. It is not that he fails to cultivate the others, but he only does so according to his strength and proportionately.**

**Disciples of the Buddha, this is called general discussion of the Bodhisattva Mahasattva’s Fourth Ground, that of Blazing Wisdom. When the Bodhisattva dwells upon this Ground for the most part he becomes King of the Suyama Heaven. Using skillful expedients, he can make living beings expel their delusions, such as the view of a body, and so forth, and cause them to dwell in proper views. In giving, kind words, beneficial conduct, and similar work, all of the karmic actions he performs are not separate from mindfulness of the Buddha, not separate from mindfulness of the Dharma, not separate from mindfulness of the Sangha, up to and including not being separate from mindfulness of endowment with the wisdom of the wisdom of all modes.**

**Commentary:**

Moreover, within all those Buddhas’ Dharma which this Bodhisattva on the Ground of Blazing Wisdom hears them speak, he leaves the home-life. He can renounce it and leave home, cutting off desire and casting out love to cultivate the unsurpassed Buddha Way. He then even more cultivates with increasing ability and regulates his deep mind, in its innermost recesses, of faith in and understanding of all Buddhadharmas. That is, he has not a hair’s breadth of doubt about any Buddhadharma. Passing through as many as limitless hundreds of thousands of millions of nayutas of great kalpas, he causes all of his good roots which a Bodhisattva cultivates to become daily better, increasing more numerous, more bright and pure.

Disciples of the Buddha, what is this like? It is just as when a goldsmith, an artisan, smelts and refines true gold, making it into ornaments: no other gold which has not gone through the refining process is able to match it, the refined gold, the Bodhisattva Mahasattva, great among Bodhisattvas, is also that way, the same as the gold which is refined to be shaped into ornaments. When he dwells upon this, the Ground of Blazing Wisdom, all of his good roots upon the Ground of Blazing Wisdom cannot be matched by any of the good roots of the Grounds below. None of the good roots of the First, Second, or Third Grounds can compare to the good roots upon the Fourth Ground. It is just like a mani jewel, a precious mani gem, whose pure and luminous orb is able to send out light which no other jewels can match. They can’t compare, and no factors such as wind or rain, and so forth, are able to destroy that mani jewel. The Great Fourth Ground, the Ground of Blazing Wisdom, also is that way. When he dwells upon this, the Ground of Blazing Wisdom, the Bodhisattvas of the Grounds below, the First, Second, and Third Grounds-are not able to match him, and the demonic hordes of any kind, the heavenly demons and those of outside ways, and the various afflictions all cannot destroy him. They cannot harm the good roots of the Bodhisattva upon the Fourth Ground.

This Bodhisattva of the Fourth Ground of Blazing Wisdom, among the Four Dharmas of Attraction-Giving, Kind Words, Beneficial Conduct, and Similar Work-emphasizes similar work. That is what he stresses. Among the Ten Paramitas he emphasizes the Paramita of Vigor. It is not that he fails to cultivate the others, the remaining three Dharmas of Attraction or the other nine Paramitas, but he only does so according to his strength and proportionately, in conformity with his own causes and conditions.

Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva calls out again. All of you disciples of the Buddha, this is called a very general and summary discussion of the states of the Bodhisattva Mahasattva’s Fourth Ground, that of Blazing Wisdom. When the Bodhisattva dwells upon the position of this Ground and cultivates those doors of practice, for the most part he becomes the Heavenly King of the Suyama Heaven. Using all kinds of clever and skillful expedients, he can make all living beings expel their doubts and delusions, such as the view of a body, and so forth:

Views of a Body.
Views of Extremes.
Views of Grasping at Views.
Deviant Views.

And cause them to dwell in proper knowledge and proper views. In giving, kind words, beneficial conduct, and similar work, all of the wholesome karmic actions he performs are not separate from mindfulness of the Buddha-he is always mindful of the Buddha-and not separate from constant mindfulness of the Dharma, not separate from mindfulness of all the Worthies and Sages of the Sangha, up to and including not being separate from mindfulness of endowment with the wisdom of the wisdom of all modes.

**Sutra:**

**He further makes the following reflection, “I should among all living beings be a leader, be supreme, be especially supreme, be wonderful, be subtle and wonderful, be superior, be unsurpassed, up to and including being one with the wisdom of all wisdom upon whom one may rely.”**

**This Bodhisattva, if he brings forth diligence and vigor, within the space of a though enters a hundred million samadhis. He comes to see a hundred million Buddhas. He comes to know a hundred million Buddhas’ spiritual powers. He is able to quake a hundred million world-systems, up to and including being able to manifest a hundred million bodies, and with each and ever body being able to manifest a hundred million Bodhisattvas as his retinue.**

**If he employs especially supreme power of Bodhisattva vows to manifest at ease, he surpasses that number. In a hundred kalpas, a thousand kalpas, up to and including a hundred thousands million nayutas of kalpas, the number could not be counted or known.**

**At that time, Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, wishing to restate his meaning, spoke verses, saying:**

**Commentary:**

He, the Bodhisattva on the Fourth Ground of Blazing Wisdom, further makes the following reflection and contemplation, saying “I should among all living beings be a leader, be supreme, be especially supreme, be wonderful, be subtle and wonderful, be superior, be unsurpassed, up to and including being one with the wisdom of all wisdom upon whom one may rely.”

This Bodhisattva of the Ground of Blazing Wisdom, if he further brings forth the vow to have diligence and vigor, within the space of a thought enters a hundred million samadhis,\* that many proper concentrations and proper receptions. He comes to see as many as a hundred million Buddhas. He comes to know a hundred million Buddhas’ spiritual powers. He is able to quake a hundred million world-systems, up to and including being able to manifest as many as a hundred million bodies, and with each and ever body being able to manifest as many as a hundred million Bodhisattvas acting as his retinue.

If it should be that he employs the especially supreme power of Bodhisattva vows to manifest at ease, he surpasses that number. In such a long time as a hundred kalpas, a thousand kalpas, up to and including a hundred thousands million nayutas of kalpas, the number of them could not be clearly counted or known.

At that time, Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, wishing to restate his meaning, spoke verses, saying once again these principles.

**Sutra:**

**The Bodhisattva who has already purified the Third Ground
Then contemplates realms of beings, worlds, and Dharma,
The realm of space, the realm of consciousness, and the Three Realms,
Minds’ understandings, thoroughly, and can tend towards and enter them.**

**Commentary:**

Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, having received the great and awesome might of the Buddhas of the ten directions, takes a look at all living beings’ causes and conditions. He causes those who have not yet planted good roots to plant them. He causes those who have already planted good roots to make them increase and grow. He causes those whose good roots have already increased and grown to bring them to maturity. He causes those whose good roots are already mature to obtain liberation.

Therefore, he wishes to use repeating verses to again state what as said in the preceding passage of prose. That’s why he says: the Bodhisattva who has already purified the Third Ground-when he has already successfully completed his cultivation of the First Ground of Happiness, the Second Ground of Leaving Filth, and the further position of the Third Ground of Emitting Light and purified it-then contemplates realms of living beings, worlds, and Dharma, the realm of space, the realm of consciousness, and the Three Realms, the Desire Realm, the Form Realm, and the Formless Realm, along with the realms of minds’ understandings thoroughly, and can tend towards and enter them those Ten Doors of Understanding Dharma the Bodhisattva cultivates to enter the Fourth Ground, which were discussed before. He completely understands what minds understand, and is thoroughly aware of them, and then can tend towards and enter the Dharma doors of the Fourth Ground.

**Sutra:**

**He first ascends to the Fourth Ground, increasing strength and might,
Is born in the Thus Come One’s family, and never retreats.
Towards Buddha, Dharma, Sangha his faith cannot be destroyed.
He contemplates Dharmas as impermanent and having no arisal.**

**He contemplates worlds’ becomings and decayings as produced from karma,
Birth, death, Nirvana, and kshetras as equally from karma,
Contemplates before and after’s bounds, and contemplates their exhaustion-
That is how he cultivates to be born in the Buddha’s household.**

**Having obtained this Dharma, he increases in sympathy and kindness,
And with ever-increasing diligence cultivates the Four Stations of Mindfulness.
Body, feelings, thoughts, and dharmas inside and outside contemplating,
Worldly greed and worries in that way are all expelled.**

**Commentary:**

He first ascends to the Fourth Ground, increasing strength and might. This says, when the Bodhisattva tends towards and enters the Fourth Ground of Blazing Wisdom, there is an increase in the Bodhisattva’s work in the Way, as well as in his wisdom, strength, light, and great mind for the Way. He is born in the Thus Come One’s family and never retreats. When he reaches the Fourth Ground, he is born in the family of the Buddha and becomes forever unretreating from Unsurpassed Proper and Equal Right Enlightenment. Towards Buddha, Dharma, Sangha his faith cannot be destroyed.

At the position of the Fourth Ground, the Bodhisattva deeply believes in the Buddha, in the Dharma, and the Sangha. Due to his solid mind of faith, his root of faith could never be destroyed by heavenly demons or those of outside ways. He contemplates dharmas as impermanent and having no arisal. He contemplates all dharmas as being impermanent without any production or arising, and without any destruction or end. He contemplates worlds’ becomings and decayings as produced from karma. He contemplates how the entire cycle that worlds go through of coming into being, dwelling, decaying, and disappearing into emptiness, is produced from the karma of living beings, and birth, death, Nirvana, and kshetras as equally from karma. Whether there is birth, or death, or certification, or rebirth in a given Buddhaland, all of it is due to the existence of karma and the undergoing of retribution. He contemplates before and after’s bounds, and contemplates their exhaustion. He contemplates how the boundary of afterwards cannot be got at, and the boundary of the present cannot be got at, which is why he is said to contemplate their exhaustion. That is how he cultivates to be born in the Buddha’s household. Through that kind of cultivation he is born in the lineage of the Buddhas, which means being certified to the position of Buddhahood.

Having obtained this Dharma, he increases in sympathy and kindness. Once born in the Buddha’s household, he brings forth a mind of great kindness and compassion, the effect of obtaining the great wisdom of the Fourth Ground, and with ever-increasing diligence cultivates the Four Stations of Mindfulness:

Contemplation of the body as impure.
Contemplation of feelings as suffering.
Contemplation of thoughts as impermanent.
Contemplation of dharmas as without a self.

Inside he contemplates the mind, and does not see the mind.
Outside he contemplates shapes, and does not see shapes.
In the distance he contemplates objects, and does not see objects.

Worldly greed and worries in that way are all expelled. What worldly people are greedy for, the Bodhisattva has no greed for, and what they worry about does not worry him. He has expelled a worldly person’s thoughts of love and desire and, therefore, has a kind of samadhi power which enables him not to be turned by outside states. How can one manage to be that way? The first way to apply one’s efforts is by contemplating the body as impure. You contemplate how your body has nine orifices which constantly pour out impurities. Your two eyes have eye matter, your two nostrils have snot, your two ears have wax, your mouth has saliva and phlegm-all filthy. In addition to those seven holes, there are the outlets for urine and excrement, making nine. Unclean matter is always flowing form them, and what is there to love about that? Then you contemplate all feelings you experience as suffering, and how happiness itself is suffering’s cause. You contemplate thoughts as impermanent, each being produced and then passing away, not lasting. You contemplate dharmas as without a self:

All dharmas at their basis are characterized by extinction and cannot be expressed in words.

So how could they have a self to them? The Bodhisattva cultivates those dharmas of the Four Stations of Mindfulness and expels all greed for the five objects of desire, so it’s gone.

**Sutra:**

**The Bodhisattva cultivates the Four Right Efforts Conduct.
Evil dharmas are extinguished, and the good increased.
The Bases of Psychic Power, the Roots, the Powers he all well cultivates.
The Seven Enlightenment Shares, the Eightfold Path are also that way.**

**To rescue living beings, he cultivates those conducts,
Protected by his basic vows, with compassion foremost.
He seeks all wisdom and the Buddha countries,
And is mindful of Thus Come Ones’ Ten Kinds of Powers.**

**The Four Fearlessnesses and the Uncommon Dharmas,
The most special marks and characteristics, the deep, beautiful, sounds.
He also seeks the wondrous Path, the Stations of Liberation,
Along with great expedients-he cultivates these.**

**With view of body as the fist, the sixty-two views,
Of self and what belongs to self, of limitless kinds,
Of skandhas, realms, locations, all attachment to such,
Upon this, the Fourth Ground, all is left behind.**

**Afflicted types of behavior reproved by the Thus Come One
As non-beneficial are completely cut off.
What the wise one cultivates is purified karma,
To save living beings, there is none not performed.**

**Commentary:**

The Bodhisattva cultivates the Four Right Efforts Conduct within the Thirty-seven Wings of Enlightenment, just as were the Four Stations of Mindfulness. With the Four Right Efforts, evil dharmas are extinguished, and the good increased. All evil karma that has not yet arisen he keeps from arising, and evil karma already produced he causes to be extinguished. All good karma that has not yet arisen he causes to arise, and good karma already produced he causes to increase and grow. Then one adds the Bases of Psychic Power, the Roots, the Powers-the Four Bases of Psychic Power, the Five Roots, the Five Powers-those he all well cultivates. One further adds the Seven Enlightenment Shares, the Eightfold Path-the Seven Bodhi Shares and the Eight Sagely Way Shares, which are also that way. He cultivates them too with diligence. To rescue living beings, he cultivates those conducts. Because he wants to cross over every living being, he cultivates the Thirty-seven Wings of Enlightenment, protected by his basic vows, with compassion foremost. This is brought about by the vows he made in the past, and also because he makes great kindness and compassion of primary importance.

He seeks all wisdom and the Buddha countries, and is mindful of Thus Come Ones’ Ten Kinds of Powers. He constantly cultivates and is mindful of the Ten Powers the Buddha has, along with the Four Fearlessnesses, Eighteen Dharmas Special to a Buddha-the most special marks and characteristics, the deep, beautiful sound. He also seeks the wondrous Path, the Stations of Liberation. He cultivates the inconceivable Way, and achieves dhyana-samadhi, along with great expedients-he cultivates these. He acquires the most greatly expedient Dharma-doors. With view of body as the first, the sixty-two views-he expels the sixty-two views, starting with the views of a body, views of extremes, views of observances, views of grasping at views, and deviant views, of self and what belongs to self, of limitless kinds.

There are also those of skandhas, realms, locations, all attachment to such, all grasping at the Five Skandhas, the Eighteen Realms, or the Twelve Locations, upon this, the Fourth Ground, all is left behind. All of it is emptied, for when one cultivates the Dharma-doors of the Fourth Ground, one has to become free from all such dharmas of attachment. Afflicted types of behavior were reproved by the Thus Come One. Afflictions are what the Buddha said not to have as non-beneficial. Since there are no advantages whatsoever to afflictions, they must be cut off. Therefore, they are completely cut off. What the wise one cultivates is purified karma. Of the good and pure karma which the Thus Come One praised, to save living beings, there is none not performed. Because he wants to rescue all beings, there is none he fails to cultivate.

**Sutra:**

**The Bodhisattva diligently cultivates and is never lax or lazy.
He right away obtains Ten Minds, all of them perfected.
Intently seeking Buddhahood, he never tires or wearies,
Determined to take office to rescue living beings.**

**Commentary:**

In his cultivation, the Bodhisattva sacrifices himself for the sake of others, only knowing to benefit living beings, and constantly forgetting about himself in his concern for them. You can see that people who cultivate the Bodhisattva Path are not the same as ordinary people. What common mortals are greedy for, like, and are attached to, the Bodhisattva has no greed for, does not like, and has no attachment to. Anyone can walk the Bodhisattva Way, the only condition being the ability to forget about oneself to benefit others, having no greed for enjoyments or pleasures for oneself. If one can be happy at others’ happiness and like it when other people like things, then one is a Bodhisattva.

A Bodhisattva would willingly sacrifice his own body and life if that would be of benefit to living beings, and would do what he himself does not want to do if living beings needed him to do it for them. He can do that because he doesn’t see himself as existing, he has no self, but only knows about other living beings. That’s why when a Bodhisattva suffers, he doesn’t feel that it is suffering, and no matter what difficulties he encounters in his cultivation, he doesn’t feel they are difficulties. That’s because he wishes to cross over living beings to they all leave suffering and attain to bliss, end birth, and cast off death. So, the Bodhisattva diligently cultivates and is never lax or lazy. He realizes that living beings are all waiting for him to come teach and transform them and cross them over, and so at all times he is vigorous, both in body and mind.

The Bodhisattva even in his sleep has work he does, and even teaches living beings in his dreams. You may see the Bodhisattva as simply being asleep, but actually he is sending out hundreds of thousands of millions of transformation bodies to other world-systems to instruct and transform living beings. The Bodhisattva’s state, therefore, is an inconceivable one that we ordinary common beings are unable to recognize, understand, or know. The Bodhisattva at all times is diligently vigorous and never remiss or indolent, and he right away obtains Ten Minds, all of them perfected.

Due to his constant vigor, he comes to have ten kinds of Bodhi minds, all perfected and complete. Intently seeking Buddhahood, he never tires or wearies. What the Bodhisattva is seeking is the Buddha Way, and his search is unrelenting. There’s never a time when he feels tired or wearies of it, because he knows living beings are waiting for him to save them. He is determined to take office to rescue living beings. His hope and wish is that in the future he will be able to accomplish Buddhahood, succeed to the position of Anointment of the Crown, and then take office as Dharma King, afterwards turning the boat of kindness around and vastly crossing over living beings. For that reason, he never, ever rests.

**Sutra:**

**He reveres honored virtuous ones, and cultivates their dharmas,
Knows kindness, is easily instructed, and without exasperation.
He abandons pride, does not flatter, in mind is tamed and compliant.
He increases in vigor and is irreversible.**

**When the Bodhisattva dwells upon this Ground of Blazing Wisdom,
His mind is purified, and it is never lost.
His enlightened understanding is decisive, his good increases and grows.
The net of doubts, turbidities, he completely leaves behind.**

**This Ground’s Bodhisattva among people is supreme,
And has made offerings to limitless nayutas of Buddhas.
Upon hearing proper Dharma, he also leaves home,
And is as indestructible as genuine gold.**

**The Bodhisattva dwelling here has merit and virtue.
Using wisdom and expedients, he cultivates the Way.
In spite of hordes of demons, his mind does not retreat,
The way a wondrous jewel cannot be destroyed.**

**Commentary:**

He reveres honored virtuous ones, and cultivates their dharmas. The Bodhisattva respects and venerates all Buddhas of the ten directions and three periods of time, honors their merit and virtue, and cultivates all dharmas. Therefore, we living beings, in turn, should respect and revere the Bodhisattva and repay his kindness to us. He knows kindness, is easily instructed, and without exasperation. The Bodhisattva recognizes the kindness done towards him by greatly virtuous Good Knowing Advisors, and wishes to repay that kindness by following their teachings, well cultivating the Way, and in his turn showing the same kindness towards other living beings. Whether the living beings are easy to tame and subdue, or not, in either case the Bodhisattva teaches and transforms them and would never abandon a single living being. Even if it’s the very worst possible living being, he still vows to teach and transform him to become a Buddha in the future, and does so without exasperation. At all times, and in all situations, the Bodhisattva treats living beings with an attitude of kindness, compassion, joy, and giving. He would never get angry at any living being. If he had a temper and it flared up, that would be becoming exasperated; but the Bodhisattva employs patience to teach and transform living beings and never gets mad at them.

He abandons pride, does not flatter, in mind is tamed and compliant. The Bodhisattva gets rid of all pride and arrogance, unlike we ordinary people who cling to our conceit, always feeling we are number one, the very best. He wants to rid himself of flattery which is playing up to the rich and looking down on the poor. He has no wish to do that, and his mind is tamed and compliant, very kind, and compassionate. He increases in vigor and is irreversible. This Bodhisattva is daily more vigorous in his cultivation of the Bodhisattva Way, day by day increasing his diligent cultivation of precepts, samadhi, and wisdom, and his eradication of greed, anger, and stupidity. He never retreats towards the Two Vehicles, never retreats to being a common person, and never retreats to future falling into the three evil destinies. He is irreversible in position, though, and conduct.

When the Bodhisattva dwells upon this Ground of Blazing Wisdom, his mind is purified, and it is never lost. When he reaches this position, he obtains purified wisdom, which he never loses. That is, he never has any defiled thoughts, specifically no thoughts of desire, of lust, and love. He has no mind with regard to states. He doesn’t give rise to defiled thinking when faced with that type of situation. His enlightened understanding is decisive, his good increases and grows. Since he has no defilement of mind, the great light of his wisdom shines forth. It’s true and actual wisdom, not the worldly knowledge and argumentative intelligence of an average, ordinary person. What that true wisdom, he can know what is meant by right and wrong, what is the Way and what is not, what is Dharma and non-Dharma. He has the Selective Dharma Eye and so is decisive and not confused by worldly dharmas. Every day his good roots increase, which is the ripening of good karma. The net of doubts, turbidities, he completely leaves behind. He has enlightened understanding of recognition of all dharmas, which frees him of all doubts, as well as all filth.

This Ground’s Bodhisattva among people is supreme. The Bodhisattva on the Ground of Blazing Wisdom is an especially supreme person, and he has made offerings to limitless nayutas of Buddhas in the past. Upon hearing proper Dharma, he also leaves home. In the Dharma Assemblies of the Buddhas of the ten directions he listens to the proper Dharma, and after that he leaves the home life, or else does so after hearing and understanding proper Dharma in the presence of all Dharma-speaking Dharma Masters throughout the world-systems of the ten directions, and is as indestructible as genuine gold. His cultivation is like the refining of true gold. All kinds of methods are used to smelt and refine that gold, so not the least admixture is left. The Bodhisattva dwelling here has merit and virtue. On the Ground of Blazing Wisdom he is replete with limitless meritorious qualities. Using wisdom and expedients, he cultivates the Way. He walks the Bodhisattva Path employing great wisdom and skillful expedient means. In spite of hordes of demons, his mind does not retreat. No impeding obstacles, states, or demonic tests cause him to change his mind. He does not retreat, just the way a wondrous jewel cannot be destroyed. Nothing can crack it, for it’s entirely a wondrous jewel.

**Sutra:**

**Dwelling here one mostly is a Suyama Heaven King,
Has self-mastery of dharmas, and is revered by multitudes,
Universally teaches flocks of beings to expel evil views,
Intently seeking Buddha’s wisdom and practicing good karma.**

**The Bodhisattva with diligence adds to power of vigor,
Acquires samadhis and so forth, numbering in the hundred millions.
If he uses power of vows and wisdom to enact them,
It exceeds that number by amounts one cannot know.**

**As it is upon the Fourth Bodhisattva Ground,
The purified, subtle, and wonderful Way cultivated,
Its merit, virtue, and interactions of aspiration and wisdom,
I, for Buddha’s disciples, have already proclaimed.**

**Commentary:**

Dwelling here one mostly is a Suyama Heaven King. When the Bodhisattva dwells upon the Ground of Blazing Wisdom, he regularly is the King of the Suyama Heaven, has self-mastery of dharmas, and is revered by multitudes. His freedom and sovereignty over all dharmas causes all the throngs of gods and humans to revere and respect him. He universally teaches flocks of beings to expel evil views. He causes all living beings to rid themselves of deviant views and return to proper knowledge and proper views, intently seeking Buddha’s wisdom and practicing good karma. He concentrates his mind in one direction, only seeking the wisdom of a Buddha and cultivating all good karmic deeds. The Bodhisattva with diligence adds to power of vigor. He is courageously vigorous in his cultivation of all dharmas, and acquires samadhis and so forth, numbering in the hundred millions. The proper concentrations and proper receptions are hundreds upon thousands of ten thousands of millions in number. If he uses power of vows and wisdom to enact them, if it’s through the vows the Bodhisattva made in the past and the powers he has cultivated, it exceeds that number by amounts one cannot know. How far it goes beyond that number no one could know.

As it is upon the Fourth Bodhisattva Ground, the purified, subtle, and wonderful Way cultivated, its merit, virtue, and interactions of aspiration and wisdom, I, for the Buddha’s disciples, have already proclaimed. I, Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva, for all of you disciples of the Buddha, have already described what the Dharma doors a Bodhisattva cultivates on the Fourth Ground are like. I have told you about the merit and virtue it has, along with all the aspirations and wisdoms which give mutual assistance.