**The Wonderful Dharma Lotus Flower Sutra**

**Chapter 21: The Spiritual Powers of the Thus Come**

With Commentary by the Venerable Master Hsuan Hua

**Sutra:**  
 **At that time the Bodhisattvas Mahasattvas equal in number to the motes of dust in a thousand worlds, who had welled forth out of the earth, in the presence of the Buddha, single-mindedly, with palms joined, gazed up at the Buddha and spoke to him, saying, “World Honored One, after the Buddha’s passing, in countries where there are division bodies of the Buddha, in places where he has passed into stillness, we shall extensively speak this Sutra. Why? Because we also wish to obtain this true, pure, and great Dharma; to receive, uphold, read and recite, explain, write out, and make offerings to it.”**  
Outline:  
  
A3. Propagation—roots and traces.

B1. Bequeathing the job of propagation—Chapters on “Spiritual Powers” and “The Entrustment”

C1. Chapter on “Spiritual Powers”—Bodhisattvas receive a command to propagate the Sutra.

**Commentary:**   
  
This chapter is called The Spiritual Powers of the Thus Come One. "Thus Come One" is one of the Buddha's ten titles. "Thus" is stillness. "Come" is movement. "Thus" means "still and silent." "Come" means "able to be humane"—able to do the kind and humane work of the Buddha. "Still and silent" represents the comfortable spiritual powers enabling one to become a Buddha.   
  
"Spiritual" means natural, not artificial. "Spiritual" refers to an inner quality. "Power" refers to external function. When there is internal spirituality, there is power outwardly. If you have no spirituality, there can be no power. "The spiritual powers of the Thus Come One" refers to the inconceivable, wonderful functioning of the Buddha's spiritual powers, an inconceivable state.   
  
Even though we have discussed it at length, some people still do not understand the concept of spiritual power. I will now speak of it in general terms. It is like the previous appearance of Shakyamuni Buddha’s division bodies of the ten directions. Where did they come from? They came from the spiritual power of Shakyamuni Buddha.   
  
The Thus Come One Many Jewels came to the Way-place to certify the Dharma Flower Sutra, and this event also occurred through the spiritual power of the Thus Come One. The Bodhisattvas who welled forth out of the earth also did so through the spiritual power of the Thus Come One. The interpenetration of the six sense organs in the chapter "The Merit and Virtue of a Dharma Master" also happened through the spiritual power of the Thus Come One. Thus, the spiritual power of the Thus Come One is limitless and boundless. If you speak of it in detail, everything is a creation of the spiritual power of the Thus Come One.   
  
**At that time,** when the chapter on “Never-Slighting Bodhisattva” was finished, **the Bodhisattvas Mahasattvas** in the Dharma Flower Assembly **equal in number to the motes of dust in a thousand worlds, who had welled forth out of the earth**—these were all Bodhisattvas whom the Buddha in former lives had taught and transformed—**in the presence of the Buddha, single-mindedly, with palms joined,** reverent in body, **gazed up at the Buddha** with his fine marks **and spoke to him, saying, "World Honored One, after the Buddha's passing, in countries where there are division bodies of the Buddha, in places where he has passed into stillness,** regardless of which world or which country, wherever the World Honored One has manifested a division-body Buddha and then entered Nirvana, **we shall extensively speak this Sutra.** We will propagate the Dharma Flower Sutra. **Why? Because we also wish to obtain this true, pure, and great Dharma."** Bodhisattvas also wish to obtain this true, pure, and great Dharma. "True" represents the real Dharma. "Pure" represents the provisional Dharma. The real and the provisional are nondual—this is the great Dharma. The provisional is the real and the real is the provisional. This is the great Dharma of the nonduality of the provisional and the real.   
  
"We wish **to receive, uphold, read and recite, explain, write out, and make offerings to it,** to the Dharma Flower Sutra."   
  
**Sutra:**  
 **At that time, in the presence of Manjushri and the others, limitless hundreds of thousands of myriads of kotis of Bodhisattvas Mahasattvas who had long resided in the Saha world, as well as the Bhikshus, Bhikshunis, Upasakas, Upasikas, gods, dragons, yakshas, gandharvas, asuras, garudas, kinnaras, mahoragas, humans, non-humans, and so forth, the World Honored One manifested great spiritual powers.**  
Outline:  
  
E2. The Buddha manifests spiritual powers.  
F1. The audience.  
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**At that time, in the presence of Manjushri,** Wonderfully Auspicious Bodhisattva, **and the others, limitless hundreds of thousands of myriads of kotis of Bodhisattvas Mahasattvas who had long resided in the Saha world**—these were Shakyamuni Buddha's old disciples, the great Bodhisattvas—**as well as the Bhikshus; Bhikshunis; Upasakas; Upasikas; gods; dragons; yakshas; gandharvas,** musical spirits; **asuras,** the ugly ones; **garudas,** the great golden-winged peng birds; **kinnaras,** also musical spirits; **mahoragas,** big snakes; **humans; non-humans; and so forth, the World Honored One manifested great spiritual powers.**   
  
**Sutra:**  
 **He put forth his vast and long tongue which reached upward to the Brahma worlds. From all of his hair pores, he emitted lights of limitless, countless colors, all of which pervasively illuminated the worlds of the ten directions. In the same way, all the Buddhas seated on lion thrones beneath jeweled trees also put forth their vast and long tongues and emitted limitless lights.   
  
When Shakyamuni Buddha and the Buddhas beneath the jeweled trees had manifested their spiritual powers for a full hundred thousand years, they withdrew their tongues.**  
Outline:  
  
F2. The manifestation.  
G1. Putting forth their tongues.  
G2. Emitting light from their hair pores.  
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**He put forth his vast and long tongue, which reached upward to the Brahma worlds.** The Buddha's tongue reaches all the way up to his hairline. People with great blessings and virtue can touch their nose with their tongue. The tongue of the Perfect, Full Reward Body Buddha reaches all the way up to the Brahma Heaven. Here the Buddha is manifesting his great spiritual powers and putting forth his vast and long tongue. **From all of his hair pores, he emitted lights of limitless, countless colors, all of which pervasively illuminated the worlds of the ten directions.**  
  
**In the same way, all the Buddhas seated on lion thrones beneath jeweled trees also put forth their vast and long tongues and,** like Shakyamuni Buddha, **emitted limitless lights** which shone upon the worlds of the ten directions.  
  
**When Shakyamuni Buddha and the Buddhas beneath the jeweled trees,** the division body Buddhas, **had manifested their spiritual powers for a full hundred thousand years, they withdrew their tongues.**   
  
**Sutra:**   
  
**Then they coughed and snapped their fingers, and those two sounds pervaded the Buddha worlds of the ten directions.**  
Outline:  
  
G3. Coughing.  
G4. Snapping their fingers.  
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**Then they coughed,** very softly, to show they were thinking of living beings, to let them know they were there. This represents calling out and getting living beings' attention. The Buddhas of the ten directions all made this coughing sound at the same time.   
  
**And** they then **snapped their fingers;** this represents alerting beings with sound. **And those two sounds pervaded the Buddha worlds of the ten directions.**  
**Sutra:**  
 **The earth quaked in six ways and the living beings in those worlds—the gods, dragons, yakshas, gandharvas, asuras, garudas, kinnaras, mahoragas, humans, non-humans, and so forth—by means of the Buddha’s spiritual powers, all saw, in the Saha world, the limitless, boundless, hundreds of thousands of myriads of kotis of Buddhas seated on lion thrones beneath jeweled trees. They also saw Shakyamuni Buddha, together with the Thus Come One Many Jewels, seated on the lion throne within the jeweled stupa.  
  
They further saw limitless, boundless, hundreds of thousands of myriads of kotis of Bodhisattvas Mahasattvas, as well as the four assemblies, reverently circumambulating Shakyamuni Buddha. Having seen this, they greatly rejoiced, having gained what they had never had.**  
Outline:  
  
G5. Earthquakes.  
G6. Seeing the entire great assembly.  
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**The earth quaked in six ways**—banging, roaring, cracking, shaking, rising, and surging—throughout the ten directions. The first three ways refer to sound; the second three refer to movement. This also represents the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind, the six sense organs functioning in mutual interpenetration.   
  
Each of the six types of earthquakes divides into three varieties: banging, universal banging, and equal universal banging. This applies to the other five kinds of quaking as well, thus making eighteen kinds in all, representing the eighteen realms.   
  
**And the living beings in those worlds—the gods, dragons, yakshas, gandharvas, asuras, garudas, kinnaras.**Kinnaras are music spirits in the court of the Jade Emperor. They can also dance. Their music is millions of times better than music in the human realm. If people ever heard this music, they would fly. Their thoughts would fly off into heaven. Mahoragas are big pythons. They turned into snakes because although they cultivated, they did not keep the precepts. There were **humans, non-humans, and so forth,** who, **by means of the Buddha's** inconceivable **spiritual powers, all saw, in the Saha world, the limitless, boundless, hundreds of thousands of myriads of kotis of Buddhas seated on lion thrones beneath jeweled trees.** The lion thrones were five yojanas high. **They also saw Shakyamuni Buddha, together with the Thus Come One Many Jewels, seated on the lion throne within the jeweled stupa.**  
  
**They further saw limitless, boundless, hundreds of thousands of myriads of kotis of Bodhisattvas Mahasattvas as well as the four assemblies, reverently circumambulating Shakyamuni Buddha. Having seen this,** through the Buddha's great spiritual powers**, they greatly rejoiced, having gained what they had never had.** They had never witnessed such an inconceivable state before.   
  
**Sutra:**  
 **Just then the gods in space called out in a loud voice: “Passing from here through limitless, boundless, hundreds of thousands of myriads of kotis of asamkhyeyas of worlds, there is a country called Saha. Within it is a Buddha named Shakyamuni who now, for the sake of all the Bodhisattvas Mahasattvas, proclaims a Great Vehicle Sutra by the name of the Wonderful Dharma Lotus Flower, a Dharma for teaching Bodhisattvas, of whom the Buddha is protective and mindful. You should all rejoice deep within your hearts, bow, and make offerings to Shakyamuni Buddha.”**  
Outline:  
  
G7. Calling out in space.  
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**Just then the gods.** Having just seen Shakyamuni Buddha in the Saha world being circumambulated by all the Bodhisattvas and other beings in the Saha world, the gods manifested great spiritual powers and spoke in space. The gods, dragons, and eightfold division passed on the word and **in space called out in a loud voice.** The voice sounded like thunder; all could hear it. It came through clearer than radio or television. And it said, **"Passing from here through limitless, boundless, hundreds of thousands of myriads of kotis of asamkhyeyas of worlds,** now hear this! Now hear this! **There is a country called Saha."** Saha means "able to be endured," because the living beings in that world really know how to cultivate patience. It is so bitter, and still they can take it. So we are pretty good, hanging in here in the Saha world practicing the Bodhisattva path. It is so much suffering, but we can still stand it. **Within it is a Buddha named Shakyamuni who now, for the sake of all the Bodhisattvas Mahasattvas** and the Arhats, too, **proclaims a Great Vehicle Sutra by the name of the Wonderful Dharma Lotus Flower,** the great Dharma of the real mark, the wonderful Sutra of the Great Vehicle. The Dharma is wonderful and the vehicle is great. It is the Great Vehicle's Wonderful Dharma Lotus Flower Sutra. The wonderful Dharma is as beautiful and immaculate as a lotus flower, which grows up out of the mud but is not defiled.

This king of Sutras is **a Dharma for teaching Bodhisattvas.** So we are now hearing the Great Vehicle Wonderful Dharma Lotus Flower Sutra, a teaching for great Bodhisattvas. Even though we have not yet realized the fourth fruit of Arhatship, we have already heard the Bodhisattva Dharma, **of whom the Buddhas are protective and mindful.** The Buddhas are protective of this Sutra, and if you recite it, they are protective and mindful of you. If you recite the Dharma Flower Sutra, the Buddhas of the ten directions will be protective and mindful of you. If you obtain the wonderful doctrine of the Dharma Flower Sutra you will develop wisdom and your stupidity will disappear. If it were not that the Buddhas were being protective and mindful of you, how could you get so intelligent? It is because you recite the Dharma Flower Sutra that you gain this kind of wisdom, wisdom like the sea. Wouldn't you say this was wonderful? **You should all rejoice deep within your hearts.** All of you should bring forth the great Bodhi resolve, bring forth the mind of true Prajna and rejoice in the merit and virtue of this Sutra, **bow, and make offerings to Shakyamuni Buddha** in the Saha world."   
  
**Sutra:**  
 **Hearing this sound in space, all the living beings placed their palms together, faced the Saha world, and said, “Namo Shakyamuni Buddha! Namo Shakyamuni Buddha!”**  
Outline:  
  
G8. Taking refuge from afar.  
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**Hearing this sound in space,** this amazing voice booming through the air, **all the living beings placed their palms together.** The Bodhisattvas and Arhats may have spiritual powers, but common folks do not. This sound, however, was heard not only by the Bodhisattvas and Arhats, but by the common people as well. All the living beings thought, "This is truly inconceivable. They are telling us from empty space that Shakyamuni Buddha has appeared in the Saha world. Let's put our palms together and face that world which is 'able to be endured.'" And from such a long distance away they **faced the Saha world and said, "Namo Shakyamuni Buddha! Namo Shakyamuni Buddha!"** Shakyamuni Buddha is our teacher. After this, if someone asks you who your teacher is, just say, "Shakyamuni Buddha," because that is correct. If they say you are being evasive, you can say, "You just do not understand the Buddhadharma."   
  
**Sutra:**  
 **And then from afar, they scattered all kinds of flowers, incense, beads, banners, canopies, ornaments for the body, and precious and rare objects on the Saha world. The objects they scattered came from the ten directions like clouds gathering, and turned into jeweled canopies, completely covering the Buddhas in that region.**  
Outline:  
  
G9. Making offerings from afar.  
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**And then from afar, they scattered all kinds of flowers, incense, beads,** millions of **banners, canopies, ornaments for the body, and precious and rare objects on the Saha world.** “Ornaments for the body” refers to caps and clothing, which are used to adorn the body. If you run out into the street without wearing any clothes, even though this is a free country, the police will stop you and ask what you are doing. The gods sent down very nice-looking and beautiful clothing. They did not follow the current American fashion of buying new clothes and cutting holes in them. That is really stupid. Why would you cut a hole in your sleeve and another one in your pants before wearing them? You think that shows you are an old cultivator, wearing such tattered clothes? That is extremely stupid. People who do this are just too confused. They do not know the difference between right and wrong. The young people start a fad, competing to cut holes in their clothes. You cut one hole, he cuts two, and others cut three, four, and five holes, even to the point of deliberately exposing their private parts of their bodies. The point of wearing clothes is to cover up those parts, but they cut holes there. Wouldn't you say that was stupid? This competition in stupidity—this new fad—is really a joke. You should not wear clothing that is too fancy, but you should not dress too poorly either. And you should not destroy your clothes, cutting holes in them for no good reason. **The objects they scattered came from the ten directions like gathering clouds, and turned into jeweled canopies completely covering the Buddhas in that region.** They covered Shakyamuni Buddha, the division-body Buddhas, and Many Jewels Buddha.   
  
**Sutra:**  
 **Then the worlds of the ten directions interpenetrated without obstruction, as if they were one Buddhaland.**  
Outline:  
  
G10. The ten directions interpenetrating as if they were one Buddhaland.  
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**Then the worlds of the ten directions,** the other limitless worlds, **interpenetrated without obstruction.** The worlds of the ten directions joined into one world; one world was just the worlds of the ten directions. In this world, we do not know the situation in other worlds. But at that time, when Shakyamuni Buddha was speaking the Dharma Flower Sutra, the worlds of the ten directions united into one world. One world and the worlds of the ten directions had no distinctions. They penetrated one another without impediment, **as if they were one Buddhaland.** Shakyamuni Buddha appeared in the Saha world, and the Saha world and the worlds of the ten directions became one world.   
  
**Sutra:  
  
At that time the Buddha told Superior Conduct and all the great assembly of Bodhisattvas, “The spiritual power of all the Buddhas is limitless, boundless, and inconceivable like this. If, using these spiritual powers, I were to speak of the meritorious virtues of this Sutra for limitless, boundless, hundreds of thousands of myriads of kotis of asamkhyeyaeons by way of entrustment, I could not finish.”**  
Outline:  
  
E3. Conclusion: Exhortation to uphold the Sutra.  
F1. Praising and entrusting.  
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**At that time the Buddha told Superior Conduct Bodhisattva and all the great assembly of Bodhisattvas,** all the Bodhisattvas who had welled forth out of the earth and the Bodhisattvas who came with the division-body Buddhas, **"The spiritual power of all the Buddhas is limitless, boundless, and inconceivable like this. If, using these spiritual powers, I were to speak of the meritorious virtues of this Sutra for limitless, boundless, hundreds of thousands of myriads of kotis of asamkhyeya eons by way of entrustment,** so as to urge living beings to receive, uphold, read, recite, and propagate the Dharma Flower Sutra, **I could not finish."**   
 **Sutra:**  
 **“In general, all the Dharmas of the Thus Come One, all the sovereign spiritual powers of the Thus Come One, all the secret storehouses of the Thus Come One, all the extremely profound deeds of the Thus Come One are all proclaimed and revealed in this Sutra.”**  
Outline:  
  
F2. Entrustment in general.  
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**In general, all the Dharmas of the Thus Come One, all the sovereign spiritual powers of the Thus Come One, all the secret storehouses of the Thus Come One.** The Dharma Flower Sutra is the secret storehouse and contains all of the Buddha's Dharmas. **All the extremely profound deeds of the Thus Come One are all proclaimed and revealed in this Sutra.** All the Dharma I did not speak during the past over forty years of my teaching is contained in this final Dharma Flower Sutra. No one had ever understood this Dharma, and now it is plainly revealed. I am revealing it to you all. It is not like before when I held back the wonderful Dharma and did not speak it. Now I proclaim it.

**Sutra:**  
 **“Therefore, all of you, after the passing of the Thus Come One, should with a single mind receive, uphold, read, recite, and explain it, write it out, and cultivate it as spoken. Those who receive, uphold, read, recite, explain, write out, and cultivate it as spoken, in whatever land they may be, in a place where the Sutra is kept, whether in a garden, in a forest, or beneath a tree; in a Sangha dwelling; in the dwelling of the white-robed; in a palace or hall; or in the mountains, valleys, or wilderness—in all of these places they should build a stupa and make offerings.”**  
Outline:  
  
F3. Exhortation and entrustment.  
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**Therefore, all of you, after the passing of the Thus Come One, should with a single mind receive, uphold, read, recite, and explain it, write it out, and cultivate it as spoken**. In cultivation the most important thing is to be single-minded. No matter what you do, you should turn to one. Do not have two minds. If you have two minds, there is no response. Those who believe in the Buddha should do so with one mind and have no doubts. Do not think, "Is there really a Buddha? Wouldn't it be better to be a Catholic or some kind of Protestant?" If you are that scattered, no matter what you do, you would not gain merit and virtue or accomplishment. So you must turn your mind to one.   
  
Now we are having a Guanyin Session. You could say that this is a Dharma hard to meet in a hundred thousand myriad eons. You should not think that it is so simple to recite "Namo Guanshiyin Pusa." For every line you recite, there is one line of advantage gained. The “Universal Door Chapter” says, "If a person has much desire and always recites, reverently, the name of Guanyin Bodhisattva, he will be separated from desire." Isn't that a great advantage? If you have a lot of desire and lust, then your mind will not be peaceful. How do you leave desire? By reciting the name of Guanyin Bodhisattva.   
  
"If a person has much hatred and always recites, reverently, the name of Guanyin Bodhisattva, he will be separated from hatred." Let us say there is a person who gets mad all the time and rages with the fire of ignorance, like a tiger—very fierce. It is said,

The fire of ignorance,   
The spirit of a tiger,   
Are the results of offenses   
Committed in the past.

If you always recite Guanyin Bodhisattva's name, your hatred will decrease.   
  
I will tell you something. I used to have a bigger temper than anyone. I was always getting mad at people. If I was not beating them, then I was yelling at them. I have told you this many times. When I was little I loved to hit and scold people. No matter who they were, they had to submit to me. Anyone who refused to follow my orders got clobbered. Now I no longer like to hit or scold people. I do not know how I got rid of my anger, but it is gone.   
  
"Sure, we know, we know," you say. "He has still got a big temper!"   
  
You never saw it when it was really big! It would have scared you to death. I got rid of my temper by reciting the name of Guanyin Bodhisattva.   
  
"If a person is very stupid, but always recites reverently the name of Guanyin Bodhisattva, he will be separated from stupidity." Now we are having a Guanyin Session and everyone--left-home and laypeople--should recite if you have time. Do not fail to participate. If you are especially busy or tied up with some business, that is one thing. Otherwise, laypeople who are not working should come and recite. If you recite one phrase, it is better than earning a hundred dollars a day. You should not think, "What use is reciting Guanyin Bodhisattva's name?" It is very useful.   
  
"But if I earn a hundred dollars, I can buy things to eat. If I recite Guanyin Bodhisattva's name, that is not going to fill me up when I am hungry."   
  
That is because you do not have a true heart. If you had a true heart, you would automatically become full. Not only would you be full, but when Guanyin Bodhisattva gave you some sweet dew, you would recite and feel it was sweeter than honey. If you do not recite, you would not attain this state; but if you do recite, it will happen naturally. I am definitely not cheating you. If you are sincere and recite Guanyin Bodhisattva's name, it is sweeter than eating candy. You do not know about the good points, and so you think you can goof off or make phone calls or do other things. You are just wasting precious time and not being single-minded. Concentrating on one thing, you forget everything else. You forget about eating; you forget about wearing clothes: all that remains is that one sentence, "Namo Guanshiyin Pusa." If you can be like that, then Guanshiyin Bodhisattva will pour sweet dew on your crown, pat you on the head, and say, "You are really a good kid. Good boy! Good girl! Bring forth the great resolve for Bodhi. I will help you. Cultivate the true, and you will get a share and make progress in the Way, free from demons."   
  
Then your cultivation will be successful. But you have to be sincere. And so the present Sutra passage says, "with a single mind receive it, uphold it, read it, recite it, explain it, and write it out, and cultivate it as spoken." You cultivate in accord with the doctrines in the Dharma Flower Sutra.   
  
"What doctrine is that?" you ask.   
  
I have told you a million times! It is a doctrine wonderful beyond words. You forgot it? Never-Slighting Bodhisattva bowed whenever he met anyone, saying, "I dare not slight you, for you will all become Buddhas." Note that he said, "You will become Buddhas." He did not say, "I am a Buddha." He forgot himself. He was cultivating according to the doctrines in the Dharma Flower Sutra.   
  
**Those who receive, uphold, read, recite, explain, write out, and cultivate it as spoken, in whatever land they may be, in a place where the Sutra is kept: whether in a garden** or a pavilion, **in a forest, or beneath a tree; in a Sangha dwelling; in the dwelling of the white-robed,** that is, at a layperson's home; **in a palace or hall,** such as a Buddha hall or a lecture hall; **or in the mountains, valleys or** a desolate **wilderness—in all of these places they should build a** adorned **stupa and make offerings.**

**Sutra:**   
  
**“For what reason? You should know that this place is a Way-place wherein all Buddhas gain anuttarasamyaksambodhi, wherein all Buddhas turn the Dharma-wheel, and wherein all Buddhas enter Nirvana.”**  
Outline:  
  
F4. Explaining the entrustment.  
 **Commentary:**   
  
**For what reason? You should know that this place is a Way-place wherein all Buddhas gain anuttarasamyaksambodhi, wherein all Buddhas turn the Dharma-wheel, and wherein all Buddhas enter Nirvana.** "Wherein" here refers not to a place, but to the Dharma Flower Sutra. It was just in the Dharma Flower Sutra that the Buddhas gained Unsurpassed, Proper and Equal, Right Enlightenment. It was just because all the Buddhas received, upheld, read, recited, explained, and wrote out the Dharma Flower Sutra that they turned the Dharma-wheel. Lecturing the Dharma Flower Sutra is turning the Dharma-wheel. The Buddhas of the ten directions, within the Dharma Flower Sutra, turn the great Dharma-wheel and enter Nirvana, obtaining the four virtues of Nirvana: permanence, bliss, true self, and purity.  
  
**Sutra:**  
 **At that time the World Honored One, wishing to restate this meaning, spoke verses, saying,**

**“The Buddhas, ones who save the world,Dwelling in great spiritual penetrations,In order to delight living beings,Manifest limitless spiritual powers.**

**Their tongues reach to the Brahma Heavens,Their bodies emit countless lights.They make appear these rare eventsFor the sake of those who seek the Buddha Way.**

**The sounds made when the Buddhas coughAnd the sounds made when they snap their fingersAre heard throughout the lands of the ten directionsAs the earth quakes in six ways.**

**Since after the Buddha’s passingOne can uphold this Sutra,All Buddhas rejoiceAnd display limitless spiritual powers.**

Outline:  
  
D2. Verse.  
E1. Verses about spiritual power.  
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**At that time the World Honored One,** being very compassionate and **wishing to restate this meaning** in a very simple form, **spoke verses, saying, "The Buddhas, ones who save the world,** who are greatly kind and compassionate and rescue all from suffering and difficulty, wish to save all living beings." **Dwelling in great spiritual penetrations:** the Buddhas have great spiritual powers, and so they are able to rescue living beings. If they were just like ordinary people, what would they use to rescue living beings with? So they use the power of great spiritual penetrations.   
  
**In order to delight living beings,** they **manifest limitless spiritual powers. Their tongues reach to the Brahma Heavens.** They put forth their vast and long tongues, which reach all the way up to the Great Brahma Heaven. **Their bodies emit countless lights,** light of countless colors. **They make appear these rare events, for the sake of those who seek the Buddha Way.   
  
The sounds made when the Buddhas cough and the sounds made when they snap their fingers.** These sounds are very soft, but all of the living beings throughout the ten directions can hear them. For example, if weinuo [the person in charge of starting and ending a meditation sit] has entered Samadhi or has fallen asleep and it is time to end the sit, you can snap your fingers and he will awaken. The Buddhas make these sounds to wake living beings up. They clear their throats or snap their fingers, signaling to living beings that they should not remain asleep, living drunk and dying in a dream.   
  
These kinds of sounds **are heard throughout the lands of the ten directions as the earth quakes in six ways.** All the lands in the ten directions quake in six ways—banging, roaring, shaking, cracking, surging, rising—which are auspicious portents.   
  
**Since after the Buddha's passing, one can uphold this Sutra,** the Dharma Flower Sutra, **all Buddhas,** World Honored Ones, **rejoice and display limitless spiritual powers.**   
  
**Sutra:**

**In order to bequeath this Sutra,He praises those who receive and hold it.Doing so throughout limitless eons,Still he cannot finish.**

**The merit and virtue of these peopleIs boundless and infinite,Like space in the ten directions,Without any boundary.**

Outline:  
  
E2. Conclusion.  
F1. Praise.  
 **Commentary:**   
  
**In order to bequeath this Sutra,** Shakyamuni Buddha wanted to hand on the teaching to the Bodhisattvas and living beings, exhorting them to receive and uphold this Sutra. "Bequeath" means to pass on some work, to appoint someone to a job. Shakyamuni Buddha is appointing all the Bodhisattvas as keepers and propagators of the Dharma Flower Sutra.   
  
**He praises those who receive and hold it. Doing so throughout limitless eons, still he cannot finish. The merit and virtue of these people is boundless and infinite** and eternal, **like space in the ten directions.** Where are the boundaries of space? They cannot be found. The merit and virtue of reciting the Dharma Flower Sutra is also like space—it is **without any boundary.**  
  
Someone says, "Space is empty! There is nothing there. Is our merit and virtue also empty and nonexistent?"   
  
Space is nonexistent. However, if you can understand this "nonexistence" then you can understand "all of existence." Besides, this analogy is not comparing the merit and virtue to space by its nonexistence, but rather because it is boundless and infinite. Basically, within true emptiness, there is wonderful existence. Wonderful existence cannot be seen, but you cannot presume that because you cannot see it, it does not exist. It truly exists--you just do not understand it.   
 **Sutra:**

**Those who can uphold this SutraHave already seen meAnd also seen the Buddha Many JewelsAnd all of the division-bodies.They also see me on this dayTeaching and transforming the Bodhisattvas.**

Outline:  
  
F2. Explaining the meaning of the entrustment.  
G1. All the Dharmas.  
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**Those who can uphold this Sutra**—who can receive, uphold, read, recite, write out, and explain the Dharma Flower Sutra—**have already seen me.** They have seen my true body **and also seen the Buddha Many Jewels and all of the division-bodies,** the Buddhas who are division-bodies of Shakyamuni Buddha. **They also see me on this day,** here with Many Jewels Thus Come One in the jeweled stupa, **teaching and transforming the Bodhisattvas.**   
  
**Sutra:**

**Those who can uphold this SutraCause me and my division-bodiesAnd the previous Buddha, Many Jewels,To all rejoice.**

**They shall also see and make offeringsTo the Buddhas of the ten directions—in the present,The past, and the future—Causing them to rejoice as well.**

Outline:  
  
G2. Comfort and spiritual powers.  
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**Those who can uphold this Sutra cause me and my division-bodies and the previous Buddha, Many Jewels, to all rejoice. They shall also see and make offerings to the Buddhas of the ten directions—in the present, the past, and the future—causing them to rejoice as well.** The Buddhas throughout the ten directions will be happy.   
  
**Sutra:**

**The secret and essential Dharma obtainedBy the Buddhas seated in their Way-placesWill also be gained before too longBy those who can uphold this Sutra.**

Outline:  
  
G3. The secret storehouse.  
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**The secret and essential Dharma**—their secret treasuries—**obtained by the Buddhas seated in their Way-places will also be gained before too long by those who can uphold this Sutra.** Why? Because they read and recite the Dharma Flower Sutra.   
  
**Sutra:**

**Those who can uphold this SutraWill take delight in speaking, without end,The meaning of the Dharmas,Their names and expressions,Like the wind blowing through space,Without obstacle.**

**After the Thus Come One’s passing,They will understand the Sutras spoken by the Buddha,The causes and conditions in sequence,And speak them truly, according with their meanings.**

**Like the light of the sun and moonDispelling all darkness,These people walk through the worldDispersing the darkness of living beings,Teaching limitless BodhisattvasUltimately to dwell in the One Vehicle.**

Outline:  
  
G4. The profound work.  
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**Those who can uphold this Sutra,** who can read, recite, explain and write out the Dharma Flower Sutra, **will take delight in speaking, without end, the meaning of the Dharmas, their names and expressions, like the wind blowing through space, without obstacle.** He will gain the Four Kinds of Unobstructed Eloquence: Unobstructed Eloquence of Expression, Unobstructed Eloquence of Meaning, Unobstructed Eloquence of Dharma, and Unobstructed Eloquence of Delight in Speech. He shall speak with unobstructed eloquence like the wind in space, blowing where it will, without obstacles.   
  
**After the Thus Come One's passing, they will understand the Sutras spoken by the Buddha.** They will deeply enter the Sutra store and gain wisdom like the sea. They will understand **the causes and conditions in sequence, and speak them truly, according with their meanings**—according with the doctrine of the real mark.   
  
**Like the light of the sun and moon dispelling all darkness, these people walk through the world dispersing the darkness of living beings,** helping living beings get rid of their stupidity. Basically living beings do not understand, they are confused. They take day to be night, sleeping during the day and running around at night. I have seen a lot of people like this. They are like cats prowling around at night. They are also like mice that hide in their holes during the day and run around at night looking for food. But a person who upholds the Dharma Flower Sutra is intent on **teaching limitless Bodhisattvas ultimately to dwell in the One Vehicle** and attain Buddhahood.   
  
**Sutra:**

**Therefore, those with wisdom, Hearing the advantages of this merit and virtue, Should, after my passing, Receive and uphold this Sutra. These people most certainly and without a doubt Will attain the Buddha Way.**

Outline:  
  
F3. Exhortation.  
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**Therefore, those with wisdom, hearing the advantages of this merit and virtue, should, after my passing**—after I enter Nirvana, **receive and uphold this Sutra. These people most certainly and without a doubt will attain the Buddha Way.** He will certainly attain Buddhahood. There is no doubt about it.