

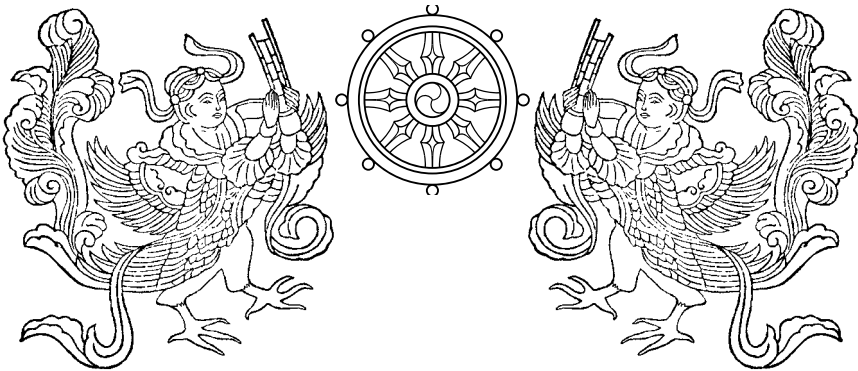
THE FLOWER ADORNMENT SUTRA

*The Great Expansive
Buddha's Flower Adornment Sutra*

An Annotated English Translation

WITH A COMMENTARIAL SYNOPSIS
OF THE FLOWER ADORNMENT SUTRA

VOLUME TWO



KALAVINKA PRESS
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON
WWW.KALAVINKAPRESS.ORG

KALAVINKA PRESS
8603 39TH AVE SW
SEATTLE, WA 98136 USA
(WWW.KALAVINKAPRESS.ORG)

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Kalavinka Buddhist Classics Book 15 / Edition: HY-EO-1022-1.0

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This Volume Two ISBN: 978-1-935413-36-3 / LCCN: 2022946845

(Vol. 1 ISBN: 978-1-935413-35-6 / Vol. 3 ISBN: 978-1-935413-37-0)

The Three-Volume Set ISBN: 978-1-935413-34-9

Publisher's Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Dharmamitra, Bhikshu, 1948, translator. | Śikṣānanda, 652 CE, translator.

Title: The Flower Adornment Sutra. An Annotated Translation of the

Avataṃsaka Sutra. With a Commentarial Synopsis of the Flower Adornment Sutra.

Other titles: *Maḥāvaiṣṭya Buddha Avataṃsaka Sūtra*. English

Description: HY-EO-1022-1.0 | Seattle, Washington : Kalavinka Press, 2022. |

Series: Kalavinka Buddhist Classics, Book 15 | Includes bibliographical refer-

ences. | Summary: "The Flower Adornment Sutra is Bhikshu Dharmamitra's extensively annotated original translation of the *Maḥāvaiṣṭya Buddha*

Avataṃsaka Sūtra or 'The Great Expansive Buddha's Flower Adornment Sutra' rendered from Tripitaka Master Śikṣānanda's circa 699 CE Sanskrit-to-Chinese

80-fascicle translation as *Da Fangguang Fo Huayan Jing* (大方廣佛華嚴經 / Taisho Vol. 10, no. 279). It consists of 39 chapters that introduce an interpenetrating,

infinitely expansive, and majestically grand multiverse of countless buddha worlds while explaining in great detail the cultivation of the bodhisattva path to buddhahood, most notably the ten highest levels of bodhisattva practice

known as 'the ten bodhisattva grounds.' To date, this is the first and only

complete English translation of the *Avataṃsaka Sutra*."-- Provided by publisher.

Identifiers: LCCN 2022946845 | 3-vol. set ISBN 978-1-935413-34-9 (paperback).

This Volume Two ISBN: 978-1-935413-36-3

Subjects: LCSH: Tripiṭaka. Sūtrapiṭaka. Avataṃsakasūtra. | Bodhisattva stages (Mahayana Buddhism)

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2022946845>

Kalavinka Press books are printed on acid-free paper.

Cover and interior designed by Bhikshu Dharmamitra.

Printed in the United States of America

CHAPTER 36

The Practices of Samantabhadra

At that time, Samantabhadra Bodhisattva-mahāsattva again addressed that immense congregation of bodhisattvas, saying:

Sons of the Buddha, as for the preceding proclamation, it represents only a general explanation of a small part of the Tathāgata's domain of objective experience that has been adapted as fitting to the faculties and capacities of beings. Why? All of the buddhas, the *bhagavats*, come forth into the world for the sake of beings, doing so because:

- [Beings], having no wisdom, commit evil deeds;
- They conceive the existence of a self and possessions of a self;
- They are attached to the body;
- They are affected by inverted views and skeptical doubt;
- They engage in discriminations based on wrong views;
- They constantly involve themselves with the fetters and the bonds;
- They follow along with the flow of *samsāra*; and
- They stray far away from the path of the Tathāgata.

Sons of the Buddha, I see no single dharma constituting a greater transgression than that of bodhisattvas who produce thoughts of hatred toward other bodhisattvas. And why is this? Sons of the Buddha, if bodhisattvas produce thoughts of hatred or anger toward other bodhisattvas, they immediately create a gateway to a million obstacles.

What sorts of circumstances constitute those million obstacles? They are as follows:

- The obstacle of not perceiving bodhi;
- The obstacle of not hearing right Dharma;
- The obstacle of being reborn in an impure world;
- The obstacle of being reborn in the wretched rebirth destinies;
- The obstacle of being reborn into the [eight] difficult circumstances;³⁴⁵
- The obstacle of being much beset by illnesses;
- The obstacle of being extensively slandered by others;
- The obstacle of being reborn in destinies where beings are unintelligent;³⁴⁶
- The obstacle of diminished right mindfulness;

- The obstacle of deficient wisdom;
 Obstacles associated with the eyes;
 Obstacles associated with the ears;
 Obstacles associated with the nose;
 Obstacles associated with the tongue;
 Obstacles associated with the body;
 Obstacles associated with the mind;
 The obstacle of association with bad spiritual guides;
 The obstacle of association with bad companions;
 The obstacle of merely delighting in Small Vehicle practice;
 The obstacle of delighting in proximity to what is common and coarse;
 The obstacle of not having resolute faith³⁴⁷ in those possessed of great awesome virtue;
 The obstacle of delighting in dwelling with those who have abandoned right views;
 The obstacle of being reborn into households of those adhering to non-Buddhist paths;
 The obstacle of abiding in realms of objective experience influenced by *māras*;
 The obstacle of being separated from the Buddha's right teachings;
 The obstacle of never encountering a good spiritual guide;³⁴⁸
 The obstacle of encountering restraining difficulties³⁴⁹ in developing roots of goodness;
 The obstacle of increasing unwholesome dharmas;
 The obstacle of coming upon inferior circumstances;³⁵⁰
 The obstacle of birth into outlying lands;
 The obstacle of birth into the household of evil people;
 The obstacle of being born among evil spirits;
 The obstacle of being born among evil dragons, evil *yakṣas*, evil *gandharvas*, evil *asuras*, evil *garuḍas*, evil *kiṃnaras*, evil *mahoragas*, or evil *rākṣasas*;
 The obstacle of not delighting in the Buddha's Dharma;
 The obstacle of habitually immature behavior;
 The obstacle of delighting in attachment to the Small Vehicle;
 The obstacle of not delighting in the Great Vehicle;
 The obstacle of being naturally excessively fearful;
 The obstacle of having a mind always afflicted by worry;
 The obstacle of being fondly attached to [life in] *saṃsāra*;
 The obstacle of not remaining focused on the Buddha's Dharma;
 The obstacle of not delighting in seeing or hearing of the Buddha's mastery of the spiritual superknowledges;

- The obstacle of not acquiring the faculties of a bodhisattva;
 The obstacle of not practicing the bodhisattva's pure practices;
 The obstacle of timidly retreating from the bodhisattva's deep resolve;³⁵¹
 The obstacle of not making the bodhisattva's great vows;
 The obstacle of not resolving to acquire all-knowledge;
 The obstacle of indolence in carrying out the bodhisattva practices;
 The obstacle of being unable to purify all of one's karma;
 The obstacle of being unable to gather an immense accumulation of merit;
 The obstacle of being unable to develop clarity and acuity in the power of one's knowledge;
 The obstacle of interrupting one's development of vast wisdom;
 The obstacle of not preserving and sustaining all the bodhisattva practices;
 The obstacle of delighting in slandering the words of those who are omniscient;
 The obstacle of distancing oneself from the bodhi of the buddhas;
 The obstacle of delighting in abiding in the spheres of experience of the many *māras*;
 The obstacle of not focusing on cultivating the Buddha's sphere of action;
 The obstacle of not decisively making the bodhisattva's vast vows;
 The obstacle of not delighting in dwelling together with bodhisattvas;
 The obstacle of not seeking to develop the bodhisattva's roots of goodness;
 The obstacle of being naturally inclined to hold numerous views and have many doubts;
 The obstacle of having a mind that is always dull and dim;
 The obstacle of not relinquishing things that arises due to an inability to practice the bodhisattva's impartial giving;
 The obstacle of creating broken moral precepts that arises due to an inability to uphold the Tathāgata's moral prohibitions;
 The obstacle of stupidity, maliciousness, and hatred that arises due to an inability to enter the gateway of patience;
 The obstacle of indolence-related defilements that arises due to an inability to practice the bodhisattva's great vigor;
 The obstacle of being scattered and disordered that arises due to an inability to acquire any of the samādhis;

- The obstacle of developing an evil intelligence that arises due to failing to cultivate the *prajñāpāramitā*;
- The obstacle of not having skillfulness sufficient to deal with various possible and impossible situations;³⁵²
- The obstacle of having no skillful means with which to liberate beings;
- The obstacle of being unable to apply analytic contemplations to the wisdom of the bodhisattva;
- The obstacle of being unable to completely understand the dharmas by which a bodhisattva achieves emancipation;
- The obstacle of having eyes like those born blind due to not perfecting the bodhisattva's ten kinds of great eyes;³⁵³
- The obstacle of having verbal abilities like those who are mute because one's ears have never heard the unimpeded Dharma;
- The obstacle of having diminished olfactory faculties because one does not possess the major marks and subsidiary characteristics;
- The obstacle of impaired verbal skills due to being unable to distinguish and completely understand beings' speech;
- The obstacle of impaired physical faculties due to having slighted other beings;
- The obstacle of impaired mental faculties due to having a crazed and disordered mind;
- Physical karmic obstacles due to not upholding three categories of moral precepts;³⁵⁴
- Verbal karmic obstacles developed due to constantly committing four types of transgressions;³⁵⁵
- Mental karmic obstacles developed due to much production of covetousness, ill will, and wrong views;³⁵⁶
- The obstacle of seeking the Dharma with the mind of a thief;
- The obstacle of having cut oneself off from the bodhisattva's domain of objective experience;
- The obstacle of having a mind that timidly retreats from the bodhisattva's heroically courageous dharmas;
- The obstacle of having a mind that is indolent in its pursuit of the bodhisattva's path of emancipation;
- The obstacle of having a mind that stops and rests at the gateway to the bodhisattva's light of wisdom;
- The obstacle of having a mind that becomes inferior and weak in developing the bodhisattva's power of mindfulness;
- The obstacle of being unable to maintain and preserve the Tathāgata's teaching dharmas;

- The obstacle of being unable to draw near to the bodhisattva's path of transcending births in cyclic existence;
- The obstacle of being unable to cultivate the uncorrupted path of the bodhisattva;
- The obstacle of pursuing realization of the Two Vehicles' right and fixed position,³⁵⁷ and
- The obstacle of distancing oneself from the lineage of all buddhas and bodhisattvas of the three periods of time.

Sons of the Buddha, if a bodhisattva raises even a single thought of hatred for another bodhisattva, he then produces a million obstacles such as these. And why? Sons of the Buddha, I do not see any single dharma constituting such an immense transgression as that created by any bodhisattva who produces thoughts of hatred toward other bodhisattvas. Therefore, if a bodhisattva-mahāsattva wishes to swiftly fulfill all the bodhisattva practices, he should diligently cultivate ten kinds of dharmas. What then are those ten? They are as follows:

- His mind never abandons any being;
- He envisions all bodhisattvas as *tathāgatas*;
- He never slanders any dharma of the Buddha;
- He realizes that all lands are endless;
- He feels deep faith and delight in the bodhisattva practices;
- He never relinquishes a bodhi resolve that is commensurate with empty space and the Dharma realm;
- He contemplates bodhi and enters the powers of the Tathāgata;
- He is energetically diligent in cultivating unimpeded eloquence;
- He is tireless in teaching beings; and
- He abides in any world with a mind free of attachments.

These are the ten.

Sons of the Buddha, after the bodhisattva-mahāsattva comes to securely abide in these ten dharmas, he is then able to completely fulfill ten kinds of purity. What then are the ten? They are as follows:

- Purity in the penetrating comprehension of extremely profound dharmas;
- Purity in drawing close to good spiritual guides;
- Purity in guarding and preserving all dharmas of the Buddha;
- Purity in the complete penetration of the realm of empty space;
- Purity in deeply entering the Dharma realm;
- Purity in contemplation of the boundless mind;
- Purity in roots of goodness identical to those of all bodhisattvas;

Purity in refraining from attachment to any kalpa;
 Purity in contemplation of the three periods of time; and
 Purity in cultivation of all buddhas' dharmas.

These are the ten.

Sons of the Buddha, after the bodhisattva-mahāsattva abides in these ten dharmas, he then completely fulfills ten kinds of vast knowledge. What then are those ten? They are as follows:

The knowledge that knows the actions of all beings' minds;
 The knowledge that knows the consequences of all beings' karma;
 The knowledge that knows all dharmas of the Buddha;
 The knowledge that knows the deeply secret principles and purport of all dharmas of the Buddha;
 The knowledge that knows all *dhāraṇī* gateways;
 The knowledge that knows and possesses eloquence in all written languages;
 The knowledge by which one knows all beings' languages and speech and is skillful in the unimpeded knowledge of eloquent phrasing;³⁵⁸
 The knowledge by which one everywhere manifests bodies in all worlds;
 The knowledge by which one everywhere manifests reflected images within all congregations; and
 The knowledge by which one possesses all-knowledge wherever one is born.

These are the ten.

Sons of the Buddha, after the bodhisattva-mahāsattva comes to abide in these ten types of knowledge, he then succeeds in entering into ten kinds of universal penetration. What then are those ten? They are as follows:

All worlds enter into a single hair pore and a single hair pore enters all worlds;
 All beings' bodies enter a single body and a single body enters all beings' bodies;
 An ineffable³⁵⁹ number of kalpas enter a single mind-moment and a single mind-moment enters an ineffable number of kalpas;
 All dharmas of the Buddha enter a single dharma and a single dharma enters all dharmas of the Buddha;
 An ineffable number of places enter a single place and a single place enters an ineffable number of places;
 An ineffable number of faculties enter a single faculty and a single faculty enters an ineffable number of faculties;

All faculties enter what is not a faculty at all and what is not a faculty at all enters all faculties;
 All thoughts enter a single thought and a single thought enters all thoughts;
 All sounds of speech enter a single sound of speech and a single sound of speech enters into all sounds of speech; and
 All three periods of time enter a single period of time and a single period of time enters all three periods of time.

These are the ten.

Sons of the Buddha, after the bodhisattva-mahāsattva has contemplated in this way, he then abides in ten kinds of supremely sublime mind. What then are those ten? They are as follows:

He abides in the supremely sublime mind that comprehends all worlds' language and non-language;
 He abides in the supremely sublime mind that comprehends that the thoughts of all beings have nothing whatsoever on which they rely;
 He abides in the supremely sublime mind that comprehends the realm of ultimate emptiness;
 He abides in the supremely sublime mind that comprehends the boundless Dharma realm;
 He abides in the supremely sublime mind that comprehends all the deeply secret dharmas of the Buddha;
 He abides in the supremely sublime mind that comprehends the extremely profound Dharma as free of any differentiations;
 He abides in the supremely sublime mind that extinguishes all doubt;³⁶⁰
 He abides in the supremely sublime mind that comprehends all periods of time³⁶¹ as the same and as free of any differentiation;
 He abides in the supremely sublime mind that comprehends the equality of all buddhas of the three periods of time; and
 He abides in the supremely sublime mind that comprehends the immeasurable powers of all buddhas.

These are the ten.

Sons of the Buddha, after the bodhisattva-mahāsattva has come to abide in these ten kinds of supremely sublime mind, he then acquires ten kinds of skillful knowledge with regard to the Dharma of the Buddha. What then are these ten? They are as follows:

The skillful knowledge that completely comprehends the extremely profound Dharma of the Buddha;
 The skillful knowledge that brings forth the vast Dharma of the Buddha;

- The skillful knowledge that proclaims the many different kinds of dharmas of the Buddha;
- The skillful knowledge that brings about realization of and entry into the equally accessible Dharma³⁶² of the Buddha;
- The skillful knowledge that completely understands the different dharmas of the Buddha;
- The skillful knowledge that awakens to and understands the absence of differences in the Dharma of the Buddha;
- The skillful knowledge that deeply enters into the adornments of the Dharma of the Buddha;
- The skillful knowledge that uses a single expedient means to penetrate the Dharma of the Buddha;
- The skillful knowledge that uses countless many expedient means to penetrate the Dharma of the Buddha;
- The skillful knowledge that knows the absence of differences in the boundlessly many dharmas of the Buddha,³⁶³ and
- The skillful knowledge by which, relying on one's own resolve and one's own powers, one does not retreat from any of the Buddha's dharmas.

These are the ten.³⁶⁴

Sons of the Buddha, once they have heard these dharmas, all bodhisattva-mahāsattvas should resolve to respectfully accept and uphold them. Why is this? By applying a small amount of effort, the bodhisattva-mahāsattvas who uphold these dharmas will be able to quickly reach *anuttara-samyak-saṃbodhi* and completely fulfill all dharmas of the Buddha which are equal to the dharmas of all buddhas of the three periods of time.

At that time, because of the Buddha's spiritual powers and because the Dharma is just this way, in worlds in each of the ten directions as numerous as the atoms in ten ineffable numbers of hundreds of thousands of *koṭīs* of *nayutas* of buddha *kṣetras*, there occurred the six kinds of shaking and moving along with the raining down of flower clouds superior even to those of the devas, incense clouds, powdered incense clouds, clouds of robes, canopies, banners, pennants, *maṇi* jewels, and other such things, as well as clouds of all manner of adornments.

There were clouds that rain the many kinds of music, clouds that rain bodhisattvas, clouds that rain an ineffable number of *tathāgatas'* physical signs, clouds that rain an ineffable number of praises of the Tathāgata, exclaiming "Good indeed!," clouds that rain *tathāgatas'* voices that fill the entire Dharma realm, clouds that rain an ineffable

number of adorned worlds, clouds that rain an ineffable number of means to promote the realization of bodhi, clouds that rain an ineffable number of brightly shining lights, and clouds that rain an ineffable number of proclamations of Dharma through the use of spiritual powers.

And just as, in this world with its four continents, beneath the bodhi tree, in the *bodhimaṇḍa*, within the bodhisattva's palace, one could see the Tathāgata realize the universal and right enlightenment and then proclaim this Dharma, so too could one see this in all worlds throughout the ten directions.

At that time, because of the Buddha's spiritual powers and because the Dharma is just this way, from each of the ten directions, beyond a number of worlds as numerous as the atoms in ten ineffable numbers of large buddha *kṣetras*, bodhisattva-mahāsattvas as numerous as the atoms in ten buddha *kṣetras* came forth to this land to pay their respects and, filling up the ten directions, they spoke words such as these: "It is good indeed, good indeed, O Son of the Buddha, that you have now been able to speak of the profound dharmas of the greatest vows and the prediction of buddhahood of all buddhas, all *tathāgatas*.

"O Son of the Buddha, all of us have the same name, 'Samantabhadra.' We have each come to pay our respects in this land, coming here from the abode of Universal Banner of Mastery Tathāgata in the Universal Supremacy World. Through the Buddha's spiritual powers, all of us proclaim this Dharma everywhere just as it is set forth in the midst of this congregation, doing so in a way that everything is the same, free of any additions or omissions. Through having received the aid of the Buddha's awesome spiritual power, we have all come to this *bodhimaṇḍa* to serve as certifying witnesses for you. And just as we bodhisattvas as numerous as the atoms in ten buddha *kṣetras* have come to this *bodhimaṇḍa* to serve here as certifying witnesses, so too is this also so in all other worlds throughout the ten directions."

At that time, in reliance upon the Buddha's spiritual power and the power of his own roots of goodness, Samantabhadra Bodhisattva-mahāsattva surveyed the ten directions, including everywhere throughout the Dharma realm, and:

- Wishing to provide instruction in the bodhisattva practices;
- Wishing to proclaim his teaching on the Tathāgata's realm of bodhi;
- Wishing to speak of the realm of great vows;
- Wishing to explain all worlds' permutations of kalpas;

- Wishing to clarify the manner in which the buddhas appear in accordance with the time;
 Wishing to explain how the Tathāgata appears for the sake of beings with ripened faculties to enable them to make offerings;
 Wishing to clarify that the efforts of the Tathāgata in appearing in the world are never wasted;
 Wishing to clarify that roots of goodness that have been planted will definitely result in harvesting karmic rewards; and
 Wishing also to clarify the manner in which the bodhisattva possessed of great awesome virtue manifests his forms for the sake of all beings, speaking Dharma for them in a manner that causes them to awaken—

He then spoke verses, saying:

You should all be filled with joyous delight,
 abandon all of the hindrances,
 and single-mindedly and respectfully listen
 to the vows and practices of the bodhisattva.

Just as it has been with all bodhisattvas of the distant past
 as well as with the supreme lions among men,³⁶⁵
 in accordance with what they have cultivated,
 so shall I now explain it in accordance with its sequence.

I shall also describe the numbers of all kalpas,
 the world systems, and all karma,
 as well as the peerless Bhagavat's
 coming forth and appearing within them,

how these buddhas of the past,
 due to great vows, came forth into the world,
 how it was that, for beings' sakes,
 they extinguished sufferings and afflictions,
 and how it has been that all the lions of reasoned discourse³⁶⁶
 have so continuously fulfilled what they have practiced
 and have acquired the Buddha's equal Dharma
 and their omniscient sphere of cognition.

Seeing that all the Lions Among Men
 throughout the past
 have emanated a great net of light
 that everywhere illuminates the worlds of the ten directions,
 they reflected on this and then made this vow:
 "I shall become a lamp for the world
 and perfect the meritorious qualities of the Buddha,
 the ten powers, and all-knowledge.

The greed, hatred, and delusion
of all the many kinds of beings blazes intensely.
I shall rescue and liberate them all
and enable them to extinguish the wretched destinies' sufferings."

They have brought forth vows such as this
that are solid and irreversible
and, completely cultivating the bodhisattva practices,
they acquire the ten unimpeded powers.³⁶⁷

Having made vows such as this,
they then cultivate without ever retreating in fear
and whatever they do is never done in vain.
It is these who are known as "lions of reasoned discourse."

In this single age, "the worthy kalpa,"
a thousand buddhas come forth into the world.
All of those possessed of universally seeing eyes,
I shall proceed to describe here in an orderly fashion.

Just as this is the circumstance in this one "worthy kalpa,"
so too shall this be so in a measureless number of kalpas.
I shall now describe in a way that distinguishes them
the practices engaged in by those buddhas of the future.

Just as the circumstances exist in a single type of *kṣetra*,
so too do they also exist in a measureless number of *kṣetras*.
I shall now discuss all the practices
engaged in by those future *bhagavats* possessed of the ten powers.

Those buddhas sequentially appear in the world,
doing so in accordance with vows and their corresponding names,
in accordance with the predictions that they have received,
in accordance with the life spans they are destined to fulfill,

in accordance with the right Dharma they cultivate
and their focused quest to pursue the unimpeded path,
in accordance with those beings that they teach
and the right Dharma that abides in the world,

in accordance with the buddha *kṣetras* that they purify,
their beings, their turning of the wheel of Dharma,
and their expounding according to what is and is not the right time
as they pursue the orderly purification of the many types of beings,

and in accordance with all those beings' karmic deeds,
what they practice, what they resolutely believe in,
and how they differ due to superior, middling, and inferior capacities
as they teach them and influence them to pursue the cultivation.

[I shall describe as well] how they penetrate such types of knowledge,
cultivate their supreme types of practices,
and always perform the works of Samantabhadra,
and engage in the extensive liberation of beings,
doing so with physical actions that are never impeded,
with verbal actions that are entirely pure,
and with mental actions that are also of this same sort so that,
in all three periods of time, there are none that are not this way.

It is in this way that the bodhisattva practices
the ultimate path of Samantabhadra
and brings forth the rising of pure wisdom's sun
to everywhere illuminate the Dharma realm.

In all the kalpas of future time,
there are an ineffable number of lands.
In but a single mind-moment, they completely know them all
even as they make no discriminations regarding any of them.

The practitioner is able to progress into
such supreme grounds as these.
I shall now describe a minor portion
of these dharmas of the bodhisattva.

Their boundless wisdom penetratingly comprehends
the Buddha's spheres of cognition.
They skillfully enter them all
and never retreat from what they practice.

They become fully possessed of the wisdom of Samantabhadra,
completely fulfill the vows of Samantabhadra,
and enter into incomparable wisdom.
I shall describe their practices.

Within but a single atom,
they completely see all worlds.
If beings were to hear of this,
they would become so confused as to be driven insane.

Just as this is so with a single atom,
so too is this true of every atom.
The worlds all enter into them
in such an inconceivable manner as this.

In each and every atom there exist
the dharmas of the ten directions and three periods of time.
The rebirth destinies and *kṣētras* therein are countless,
yet they are able to distinguish and know them all.

In each and every atom there exist
countless types of buddha *kṣetras*.
Every one of those types is measurelessly numerous,
yet there is not even a single one they do not know.

All of the Dharma realm's
many different types of varying aspects,
the rebirth destinies, and types of beings, each of which are different—
They are able to distinguish and know them all.

They deeply enter into the most subtly refined knowledge,
with which they distinguish all worlds
and they are able to thoroughly understand and explain
the development and destruction of all kalpas.

They know the length³⁶⁸ of all kalpas
and know the three periods of time as but a single mind-moment.
They are able to distinguish and know
of the many types of practices, all their identities and differences.

They deeply enter into all worlds,
whether they be vast or not vast,
manifesting a single body in countless *kṣetras*,
or countless bodies within a single *kṣetra*.

With regard to the different types of worlds
throughout the ten directions
and their vastness as well as their countless other characteristics,
they are able to completely know them all.

With regard to all the countlessly many lands
throughout the three periods of time,
completely possessed of such extremely deep knowledge,
they entirely know both their creation and ruination.

In all the worlds throughout the ten directions,
some are just being formed and some are being destroyed.
Those possessed of the worthy's³⁶⁹ virtue deeply comprehend
all the ineffable number of phenomena such as these.

Some have all kinds of lands
possessed of many different types of adornments of their grounds.
So too it is with their rebirth destinies.
This all arises from the purity of karmic deeds.

In some cases there are all kinds of worlds
possessed of countless types of defilement.
These arise as circumstances elicited by beings
that are all accordant with their own actions.

They completely know the countless and boundless *kṣetras* as identical with any single *kṣetra*.

In this way, they enter into all *kṣetras* whose number is so great that it cannot be known.

All of those many worlds entirely enter into but a single *kṣetra* even as those worlds still do not become but one and even as they still do not become mixed together or disordered.

Worlds may exist in either an upright or inverted position and may be characterized by either lofty terrain or low-lying terrain. In all cases, these circumstances reflect the thoughts of their beings. They are able to distinguish and know all of these matters.

All of these vast worlds are countless and boundlessly many. They know the many different types to be but one and know the one to be the many different types.

All of these Samantabhadras, these sons of the Buddha, are able by using Samantabhadra's knowledge to completely know the number of all these *kṣetras* whose number is so boundlessly large.

They know the transformations of all worlds, the transformations of the *kṣetras*, the transformations of beings, the transformations of dharmas, and the transformations of buddhas, and know them all to the most ultimate degree.

They know with regard to all worlds, including the very small *kṣetras* as well as the vast *kṣetras*, including, too, all of their many different kinds of adornments, that all of these phenomena arise as a consequence of karmic actions.

Even if countless sons of the Buddha who were well trained in entering the Dharma realm and who were possessed of mastery in the spiritual powers by which they could go everywhere throughout the ten directions were to recite the names of all those worlds for kalpas equal in number to that of all beings, they would still be unable to come to the end of them all unless this was disclosed to them by the Buddha.

Even if, in reciting all the many different names of those worlds and their *tathāgatas*, they continued to do so for a measureless number of kalpas, they would still be unable to reach the end of their recitation.

How much the less, with their supreme knowledge, could they do so with the dharmas set forth by all buddhas of the three periods of time which, having come forth from the Dharma realm, completely pervade the ground of the Tathāgatas.

With pure and unimpeded mindfulness and unimpeded wisdom, they made distinctions as they explained the Dharma realm and achieved complete perfection³⁷⁰ in doing so.

As for all the worlds throughout the past, whether vast or whether minute, which were then adorned by cultivation— they are able to know them all in but a single mind-moment,³⁷¹

knowing as well how, within them, the lions among men cultivated the many different types of practices of a buddha and then reached the universal and right enlightenment and manifested all the sovereign masteries.³⁷²

In this same way, during the course of the future, how all of those most revered among men will sequentially appear in countless ensuing kalpas— these bodhisattvas are also able to know all of these matters, including the content of all their practices and vows and all of their domains of objective experience as, in this way, they shall proceed with their diligent cultivation and then will achieve right enlightenment during those times.

They also know their future congregations, the life spans they will have, and the way they will teach beings as, using all of these gateways into the Dharma, they will turn the wheel of Dharma for the sake of the multitude.

Bodhisattvas who are possessed of these kinds of knowing dwell on the ground of Samantabhadra's practices. This wisdom that completely understands all these matters is what gives birth to all buddhas.

All of the buddha lands that exist during this present period of time— they also deeply enter into all of those *kṣetras* and command a penetrating comprehension of the Dharma realm and all buddhas of the present within all those worlds, those who have gained sovereign mastery of the Dharma and who are unimpeded in their discourse.

They also know these buddhas' congregations,
 their pure lands, and their powers to manifest in response to beings.
 Throughout countless *koṭīs* of kalpas,
 they always contemplate these matters.

All of the awesome spiritual powers
 of these world-taming *bhagavats*
 as well as their inexhaustible treasury of wisdom—
 they are able to know them all.

They develop the unimpeded eye,
 the unimpeded ear, nose, and body,
 and the unimpeded vast and long tongue
 with which they can inspire joyous delight in the many.

They develop supremely unimpeded minds
 that are vast in their reach and thoroughly pure
 and wisdom that is universally pervasive
 with which they know all dharmas of the three periods of time.

They thoroughly train in all types of transformations,
 including transformations of *kṣētras*, transformations among beings,
 transformations of worlds, transformations in training beings,
 and ultimately achieve perfection in the practice of transformations.³⁷³

That the world's many different kinds of distinctions
 all arise and abide because of thought—
 Through penetrating the Buddha's knowledge of skillful means,
 they completely understand all of these matters.

They manifest bodies in each and every one
 of an ineffable number of congregations,
 enabling them all to see the Tathāgata,
 and thereby liberating a boundless multitude of beings.

The extremely profound wisdom of all buddhas
 is like the sun when it rises in the world.
 Within all of the countries,
 it keeps appearing everywhere incessantly.

They completely comprehend the entire world
 as but artificial designations devoid of any reality,
 while understanding both its beings and the world
 as like dreams or like lights and shadows.

They do not produce any discriminations or views
 regarding any of the world's dharmas.
 They skillfully transcend "one who discriminates"
 while also not even perceiving "that which is discriminated."

They understand a period of measureless and countless kalpas
to be identical to a single mind moment even as
they realize mind-moments themselves are devoid of mind-moments.
It is in this way that they perceive the world.

They step beyond a measureless number of lands
in but a single mind-moment
and pass through a measureless number of kalpas
without ever moving from their original place.

An ineffable number of kalpas
are identical to a single instant.
To never even perceive “long” as opposed to “short”
is the ultimate *kṣaṇa* dharma.³⁷⁴

The mind abides in the world
and the world abides in the mind.
With regard to these, they do not erroneously generate
any discriminations construing them to be either dual or non-dual.

Beings, worlds, and kalpas,
the buddhas, and the dharmas of the buddhas—
They are all comparable to conjurations or transformations
even as the Dharma realm itself is everywhere the same.

They manifest incalculably many bodies
everywhere throughout the *kṣetras* of the ten directions
even as they realize that the body arises from conditions
and that there is ultimately nothing to which one can be attached.

Relying on their non-dual wisdom,
they come forth and appear as the lions among men
even as they do not become attached to non-dual dharmas
and realize that there is nothing that is either dual or non-dual.

They completely realize that the entire world
is like flames, like lights and shadows,
like echoes, like dreams,
like conjurations, or like transformations.

It is in this way that they accord with and enter into
the stations of all buddhas’ action,
perfect the wisdom of Samantabhadra,
and everywhere illuminate the deep Dharma realm.

The defiling attachments associated with beings and *kṣetras*—
they completely relinquish all of them
and then raise up their minds of great compassion
to everywhere purify the entire world.

The bodhisattvas always abide in right mindfulness
of the wondrous Dharma of the lions of reasoned discourse
and, with purity like that of empty space,
they then bring forth their great skillful means.

Seeing that the world always abides in confusion and inverted views,
they resolve to rescue and liberate everyone.
Whatever they practice is in all cases pure
as they go forth everywhere throughout the entire Dharma realm.

All buddhas as well as all bodhisattvas,
the Dharma of the Buddha, and the dharmas of the world—
If one perceives their reality,
one realizes they are all devoid of any differences.

The treasury of the Tathāgata's Dharma body
everywhere enters into the world.
Yet, although it abides within the world,
it has nothing in the world to which it is attached.

Just as it is true of a body of clear water
that the reflected images on it neither come into it nor leave it,
in the case of the Dharma body's pervasive presence in the world,
one should realize it is just the same as this.

In this same way, they transcend all defiling attachments,
both the body and the world are seen to be pure
and as quiescent as empty space,
and everything is realized as unproduced.

They realize that the body is endless,
that it is neither produced nor destroyed,
that it is neither permanent nor impermanent,
and that it manifests throughout the world.³⁷⁵

They extinguish all wrong views
and reveal right views.
They realize the nature of dharmas has no coming or going
and they are not attached to a self or anything belonging to a self.

It is just as in the case of a master conjurer
who manifests many different kinds of phenomena which,
when they appear, have no place from which they come,
and when they disappear, have no place to which they go.

The nature of those conjurations is not finite,
nor is it infinite.
Yet, in the midst of those large crowds,
he manifests both the finite and the infinite.

Using this mind of quiescent meditative absorption,
 they cultivate all roots of goodness
 and bring about the birth of all buddhas.
 This is not inherently either finite or infinite.

The finite and the infinite
 are in every case merely erroneous perceptions.
 They completely comprehend all destinies of rebirth
 and do not become attached to either the finite or the infinite.

The extremely profound Dharma of all buddhas
 is that of vast and deep quiescence.
 Their extremely profound and measureless wisdom
 knows the extremely profound aspects of all the rebirth destinies.

The bodhisattvas abandon confusion and inverted views.
 The purity of their minds is continuous
 as they skillfully use the powers of their spiritual superknowledges
 to liberate countless beings.

Those who have not yet reached peace, they enable to find peace.
 To those who have already found peace, they reveal the *bodhimaṇḍa*.
 In this way, as they go everywhere throughout the Dharma realm,
 their minds having nothing at all to which they are attached.

They do not dwell in ultimate reality
 and do not opt for entry into nirvāṇa.
 In this way, they go everywhere throughout the world,
 awakening the many kinds of beings.

They completely understand and yet are not attached to
 all the categories of dharmas and the categories of beings.
 They everywhere rain down the Dharma rain,
 causing it to completely drench the entire world.

Everywhere in all worlds and in each successive mind-moment,
 they are achieving right enlightenment
 and are cultivating the bodhisattva practices
 without ever retreating from them.

They completely understand
 all of the world's many different kinds of bodies,
 and, by understanding the Dharma as it pertains to those bodies,
 they are then able to acquire the body of all buddhas.

They everywhere know all beings,
 all kalpas, and all *kṣetras*
 throughout the boundless realms of the ten directions,
 and they have no part of the ocean of wisdom they do not enter.

The bodies of beings are incalculably many,
yet they manifest bodies for each of them.
Though the Buddha's bodies are boundlessly many,
the wise are able to contemplate and see them all.

What they know in a single mind-moment
about the manifestations of all *tathāgatas* is so much that,
were they to spend countless kalpas attempting to do so,
they still could never come to the end of their praises.

All buddhas are able to manifest bodies
that, in place after place, enter *parinirvāṇa*,
producing in but a single mind-moment countless
śarīra relics, each of them distinctly different from the others.

In this way, throughout the course of the future,
there will be those who seek the fruit of buddhahood
and there will be countless beings who resolve to attain bodhi.
With their definitive wisdom, they know all of these matters.

In this manner, they are all able to entirely know
all of the *tathāgatas*
throughout the three periods of time.
This is what is known as "dwelling in Samantabhadra's practices."

In this way, they distinguish and know
countless practices and grounds,
enter into the stations of wisdom,
and never retreat from their turning of the Dharma wheel.

Their sublime and vast wisdom
deeply penetrates the Tathāgata's domain of objective experience
and, once it has entered it, they attain irreversibility.
This is what is known as "Samantabhadra's wisdom."

All of these who become supremely revered ones
everywhere enter the Buddha's domain of objective experience,
cultivate the practices without ever retreating,
and attain unsurpassable bodhi.

The countless and boundlessly many minds—
each and every one of them has different karma
and it all accumulates due to thoughts.
They know all of them equally and completely.

Whether they be defiled or undefiled,
and whether they be minds still in training or minds beyond training,
in each successive mind-moment, they completely know
all of these ineffably numerous minds.

They completely realize that they are neither singular nor dual,
that they are neither defiled nor pure,
that they are also free of any mixing or disorder,
and that, in every case, they arise from one's own thoughts.

In this way, they completely and clearly see
with regard to all beings,
that their minds and thoughts are all different
and that this is what creates the many different kinds of worlds.

With skillful means such as these,
they cultivate all of the supreme practices,
become transformationally born from the Buddha's Dharma,
and come to be known as "Samantabhadra."³⁷⁶

Beings all erroneously generate
thoughts leading to the good and bad destinies.
Because of this, they may be reborn in the heavens
or else may fall into the hells.

The bodhisattvas contemplate the world
as produced by karmic actions based on erroneous thoughts.
Because erroneous thoughts are boundlessly numerous,
the worlds themselves are also measurelessly manifold.

All lands are manifestations
produced by networks of thoughts.
Due to skillful means addressing these networks of illusions,
they are able to enter them all in but a single mind-moment.

The eye, ear, nose, tongue, body,
and mind faculties are also like this,
for they each differ due to the thoughts of those in the world.
They are equally able to fathom all of them.

Each and every one of those realms of visual experience
as well as their countless eye faculties—they enter all of them.
So, too, in the case of the differences in all the various kinds of natures
which are measurelessly and ineffably numerous.

There are no differences in what each one sees,
nor is there any mixing up or disorder in this,
for each one, in accordance with his individual karma,
experiences his own resulting karmic consequences.

The powers of Samantabhadra are measureless.
They completely know all of those things.
Such great wisdom is able to completely penetrate
all of those realms of visual experience.

They are entirely able to distinguish and know
all such aspects of the world as these
even as they cultivate all of the practices
and still never retreat from practicing them.

The speech of the buddhas and the speech of beings
as well as the speech particular to various lands—
speech like this as it is spoken throughout the three periods of time—
they completely know it all in all its many different variations.

The future within the past,
the present within the future,
and all such mutual perceptions between the three periods of time—
they clearly know each and every one of them.

They use countless many different approaches such as these
to awaken everyone throughout the world.
Their all-knowledge and skillful means are so extensive
that their bounds could never be found.

The End of Chapter Thirty-Six

creases in its outer flesh. As of this writing, images are available in abundance on the internet.

344. “Jewel King” (寶王 / *rāja-ratna*) is one of the titles of the Buddha. Although all three jewels of “the Three Jewels” are finally equally important, in this “Jewel King” or “King of Jewels” name, the inference appears to be that the buddhas are the most supreme of the Three Jewels (Buddha, Dharma, Sangha), for without them there would not be their teaching of the Dharma or their community of enlightened Sangha members.
345. As unequivocally specified in the BB translation (T09n0278_p0607a17: “生八難處障,” or “The obstacle of being born in to the eight difficult circumstances.”), “difficult circumstances” here refers to “birth into the eight difficult circumstances (*aṣṭa kṣaṇa*) consisting of inopportune rebirths: in the hells; among hungry ghosts; as an animal; in the long-life heavens; in a border region (where the Dharma does not exist); as deaf, blind, or mute; as one possessed of oratorical skill tethered to merely worldly knowledge; or at a time before or after a buddha appears in the world.
346. What I translate here as “unintelligent” is more literally “stupid” (頑鈍). Typically this is referring to rebirth among animals, among the hungry ghosts, or in the hells where the beings lives are so dominated by the three poisons and basic instincts that they remain unable to understand karma, unable to reliably distinguish right from wrong, and unable to understand the path of liberation from karma-bound suffering in *saṃsāra*.
347. *Xinle* (信樂), which would seem to mean “having faith in and being pleased by” is actually a Chinese translation of the Sanskrit *adhimukti* which, at least in this context, simply means “resolute faith.”
348. The BB translation makes it clear that this refers directly to a *kalyāṇamitra* (T09n0278_p0607a22: “不見善知識障”) and not merely to the SA translation’s slightly ambiguous “good friends” (善友), hence my more specific translation: “good spiritual guide,” what in common parlance one might refer to as “the good guru.”
349. “Restraining difficulties” (*liunan* / 留難) often implies interference wrought by demonic influences which lead to the slowing or halting of a cultivator’s attempts to advance on the path.
350. HH: “Although reborn as a human—but one’s six sense faculties are incomplete, one’s five sense organs are not normal—this is also an obstacle.” (雖生為人，但六根不全，五官不正，這也是障。)
BB translated this as: “the obstacle of being born among evil people” (生惡人中障, T09n0278_p0607a23).

351. Comparison with the Sanskrit of the Ten Grounds Sutra shows that *shenxin* (深心) is one of Śikṣānanda's translations of *āśaya* ("resolution," "resolute intention," "intention," "inclination," etc.).
352. For the skill the absence of which is said to be an obstacle here "skill in dealing with various possible and impossible situations" (處非處善巧), BCSD (p. 1033), gives the Sanskrit as *sthāna-asthāna-kausalya*. BHS (p. 85, column 1) translates essentially the same phrase (*sthānāsthānakusālāḥ*) as: "clever in regard to various sound and unsound conclusions (or, possibilities and impossibilities)." The BB translation is perhaps a little clearer: "The obstacle of not knowing the skillful means [appropriate for dealing with various] possible or impossible situations." (不知是處非處方便障。 / T09n0278_p0607b10-11.)
353. Regarding the "ten eyes," in Chapter 38, "Transcending the World," we have:
- Sons of the Buddha, the *bodhisattva-mahāsattva* has ten kinds of eyes, namely:
- The fleshly eye, this associated with the seeing of all forms.
 - The heavenly eye, this associated with the seeing of all beings' minds.
 - The wisdom eye, this associated with the seeing of all beings' faculties and objective states.
 - The Dharma eye, this associated with the seeing of all dharmas in a manner consistent with their real character.
 - The Buddha eye, this associated with the perception of the Tathāgata's ten powers.
 - The eye of knowledge, this associated with the knowing perception of all dharmas.
 - The radiance eye, this associated with the seeing of the Buddha's light.
 - The eye that transcends the realm of births and deaths, this associated with the perception of nirvāṇa.
 - The unimpeded eye, this associated with its being unobstructed in all that it sees.
 - The eye of all-knowledge, this associated with the seeing of the Dharma realm's universal gateways.
- These are the ten. If *bodhisattvas* abide in these dharmas, then they acquire the Tathāgata's eye of unexcelled great wisdom. (T10n0279_p302c17-25).
354. This is a reference to the three moral failings in physical conduct as listed in the ten courses of unwholesome karmic action, namely killing, stealing, and sexual misconduct.

355. This is a reference to the four moral failings in verbal conduct as listed in the ten courses of unwholesome karmic action, namely false speech, abusive speech, divisive speech, and frivolous or lewd speech.
356. This is a reference to the three moral failings in mental conduct as listed in the ten courses of unwholesome karmic action, namely covetousness, ill-will, and wrong views.
357. "Right and fixed position" corresponds here to the Sanskrit technical term, *samyaktva-niyāma*, which in the context of Two Vehicles practice refers to reaching a state of irreversibility on the path to arhatship. It is characterized as an obstacle here for anyone otherwise pursuing the bodhisattva path because to enter on such a state amounts to an immediate and permanent termination of the ability to ever complete the path to buddhahood. Nāgarjuna is emphatically clear in warning the aspiring bodhisattva against pursuing realization of this "right and fixed position."
358. Per BCSD, p. 1140, the Sanskrit antecedent for the Chinese (辭辯) which I translate as "unimpeded knowledge of eloquent phrasing" is *nirukti pratisamvoid*, an unambiguous reference to the fourth of the Buddha's four unimpeded knowledges.
359. An "ineffable" (*anabhilāpya*) is an inexpressibly large number, the 121st highest level of 123 levels of Sanskrit denominational numbers described in the Āsaṃkhyeya chapter of the Avataṃsaka Sutra. In this numbering schema, each level of denomination is the square of the immediately previous denominational number. (The first and lowest of those 123 levels is a *lakṣa* [100,000].)
360. Although *yihuo* (疑惑) here would appear to mean "doubts and delusions," it usually translates the Sanskrit *vicikitsā* which is simply "skeptical doubt" or "doubt," the fifth of the five hindrances.
361. Although the SA text is slightly ambiguous as to whether this *yiqie shi* (一切世) is meant to refer to "all worlds" or "all periods of time," because the BB translation instead refers to *san shi* (三世) which *always* refers to "periods of time," I translate this as referring to "time" in accordance with the BB translation's corroborating evidence.
362. *Pingdeng fa* (平等法), translated here and subsequently as "equally accessible Dharma," although slightly opaque at the first glance as simply "equal Dharma," generally refers directly and specifically to the fact that the Dharma of the Buddha and eventual highest enlightenment are equally accessible to all beings.
363. Through comparison with the BB translation, it appears that this list component is an accidentally included redundancy repeating the essential meaning of number six. It has no correlate at this point in the BB translation's tenfold list.

364. As the reader may readily observe, there are eleven items in this supposedly tenfold list. This appears to be the result of the accidental inclusion as item number ten of a repetition of the meaning found in item number six. I believe this “tenth” of eleven list items may be a textual corruption because it has no correlate at this point in the tenfold list preserved in the BB translation.
365. “Lion Among Men” is an often-encountered reference to a buddha. In his exegesis on the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā* Sūtra, Nāgārjuna says, “Just as the lion walks alone among the four-legged animals without fear because he is able to subdue them all, so too it is with the Buddha. Because he is fearless in subduing the proponents of all of the ninety-six types of spiritual paths, he is referred to as ‘the Lion Among Men.’” (T25n1509_p0111b06–08)
366. “Lion of reasoned discourse” is an epithet that refers to the Buddha’s and great bodhisattvas’ fearlessness in debating any and all challengers.
367. This is a reference to the ten powers of a buddha.
368. “Length” here translates a standard idiomatic expression for this concept, *xiuduan* (修短), lit. “length and brevity.”
369. “Worthy” here can refer either to: a) anyone on any of the preparatory levels on the bodhisattva path prior to becoming an *ārya*; or b) via a play on words, to Samantabhadra Bodhisattva whose name in Chinese is usually rendered as “Universally Worthy.”
370. “Achieved complete perfection” here is literally “succeeded in reaching the far shore” (得至於彼岸). “To reach the far shore” is just a Chinese translation of the Sanskrit term for “perfection” (*pāramitā*).
371. Both BB translation and HH clarify that it is these bodhisattvas that are the ones who are able to know these matters.
372. This is probably a reference to the ten types of sovereign mastery (*vaśitā*) listed in the discussion of the eighth bodhisattva ground in the Ten Grounds chapter of the Avataṃsaka Sutra and also in the same section of the Ten Grounds Sutra itself: sovereign mastery of the life span (*āyur-vaśitā*); sovereign mastery of the mind (*cittavaśitā*); sovereign mastery of equipage (*pariṣkāra-vaśitā*); sovereign mastery of karmic actions (*karma-vaśitā*); sovereign mastery of rebirths (*upapatti-vaśitā*); sovereign mastery of vows (*prañidhāna-vaśitā*); sovereign mastery of resolute faith (*adhimukti-vaśitā*); sovereign mastery of spiritual powers (*rddhivaśitā*); sovereign mastery of the knowledges (*jñāna-vaśitā*); and sovereign mastery of Dharma (*dharma-vaśitā*).
373. Again, what would otherwise appear here to mean “[reaching] the far shore” (彼岸) is just a reference to the quaint etymology of the Sanskrit word for “perfection” (*pāramitā*).

374. A *kṣaṇa* is the shortest possible span of time. To say here that, “To never even perceive ‘long’ as opposed to ‘short’ is the ultimate *kṣaṇa* dharma” appears to mean that not making such discriminations is the ultimately correct relationship to the concept of time. In his oral commentary on this quatrain, HH mentioned the extreme relativity of time as it occurs when a meditator enters the *dhyānas* and then emerges in what seemed to him to be only a short while when in fact three weeks may have passed. He also mentioned the extreme relativity of the experience of time as demonstrated by fifty years among humans being equivalent to only a day and a night in the Heaven of the Four Heavenly Kings (HYQS).
375. Given that the “body” here is described as possessed of so many ultimately transcendent qualities, it would be reasonable to conclude that this verse is referring to the Dharma body.
376. Here, “Samantabhadra” is not just a reference to the name of that great bodhisattva, but also a play on words intended to refer to the qualities of these particular bodhisattvas, this because “Samantabhadra” means “universally worthy” (or “universally good,” “universally excellent,” etc.).
377. QLSC cites scriptural bases for understanding these lotuses to be many, not just one as rendered by Cheng Chien Bhikshu and BTTS (in its preliminary digital manuscript as of 06/28/20): “Ānanda, why is this known as ‘the Worthy (*bhadra*) Kalpa?’ Ānanda, when this great trichiliocosm is about to be established, everything is a single body of water. The devas of the Pure Abode Heavens use their heavenly eyes to see that, on this world’s singular body of water, *there are a thousand marvelous lotus flowers*, seeing too that every one of these lotus flowers has a thousand petals that are especially lovely. Due to seeing these flowers, the minds of those Pure Abode Heaven devas are filled with measureless delight and exultation whereupon they utter praises, saying, ‘How very strange and rare! How very strange and rare it is that in a kalpa such as this there will be a thousand buddhas who appear in the world!’ It is for this reason that this kalpa came to be named ‘the Worthy Kalpa.’ After my entry into nirvāṇa, there will be another nine hundred and ninety-six buddhas.” (經云阿難何故名為賢劫阿難此三千大千世界劫欲成時盡為一水淨居天子以天眼觀見此世界唯一大水見有千枝諸妙蓮華一一蓮華各有千葉甚可愛樂彼淨居天子因見此華心生歡喜踊躍無量而皆讚言奇哉希有奇哉希有如此劫中當有千佛出興於世以是因緣遂名此劫號之為賢 / L130n1557_836b04-837a01)

Additionally, this passage in the BB translation reads, “Then, after Maheśvara and the other devas of the Pure Abode Heavens have seen these lotus flowers, they immediately know with certainty that, *in accordance with the number of lotus flowers, the buddhas will appear in the*