

CHAPTER 25

Teachings to Aid the Mindfulness-of-the-Buddha Samādhi

XXV. CHAPTER 25: TEACHINGS AIDING MINDFULNESS-OF-THE BUDDHA SAMĀDHI

A. INITIAL INSTRUCTIONS ON THE MINDFULNESS-OF-THE BUDDHA SAMĀDHI

The bodhisattva should rely on these
forty exclusive dharmas
in his mindfulness of the Buddhas' Dharma body,
for the Buddhas are not their form bodies.

These [preceding] verses have sequentially and summarily explained six categories of meanings associated with the forty exclusive dharmas.⁴⁰⁸ In doing so, the practitioner therefore first takes up the mindfulness of the Buddha's form body and then takes up the mindfulness of the Buddha's Dharma body.

Why is this the case? The bodhisattva who has only recently brought forth the resolve [to attain buddhahood] should first take up the practice of mindfulness of the Buddha in reliance on the thirty-two marks and eighty secondary characteristics [of the Buddha's form body], doing so in the manner described earlier.

Then, as one's practice progressively penetrates more deeply, one will develop a middling degree of strength in that practice. One should then rely on the Dharma body in his mindfulness of the Buddha.

Then, as one's mind progressively penetrates yet more deeply, one will then achieve a supreme degree of power in the development of this practice. At that point, one should then take up mindfulness of the Buddha in accordance with the true character of [all dharmas]⁴⁰⁹ and remain free of any sort of attachment in doing so.

One must not become deeply attached to the form body.⁴¹⁰

One also refrains from becoming attached to the Dharma body.

One should thoroughly realize that all dharmas
are as eternally quiescent as empty space.

As this bodhisattva develops a superior degree of power [in this practice], he refrains from developing a deep attachment to the Buddha on the basis of either the form body or the Dharma body. Why not? Through one's resolute belief in the dharma of emptiness, one understands that all dharmas are like empty space.

Empty space is defined by the absence of obstruction. The causal circumstances associated with obstruction include phenomena like

Mount Sumeru, Yugaṃdhara Mountain, the rest of the ten jeweled mountains, the Iron Ring Mountains, Black Mountain, Stone Mountain, and the others. There are all sorts of other such causal bases for the existence of obstructions.

Why is this [a point at issue]? Because this person has still not yet gained the heavenly eye, if he brings to mind buddhas abiding in the worlds off in the other directions, the various mountains will block them from his view. Consequently, The bodhisattva who has only recently brought forth the resolve [to attain buddhahood] should use the sublime characteristics described by the ten names as bases for his mindfulness of the Buddha. This is as described in these lines:

The bodhisattva who has only recently brought forth the resolve
uses the sublime features described by the ten names
in practicing mindfulness of the Buddhas that is free of fault,
seeing them just as if they were images in a mirror.

As for “the sublime features described in the ten names,” those ten names are:

Tathāgata;⁴¹¹
Worthy of Offerings;
The Right and Universally Enlightened One;
Perfect in the Clear Knowledges and Conduct;
Well Gone One;
Knower of the Worlds;
Unsurpassable Trainer of Those to Be Tamed;
Teacher of Devas and Humans;
Buddha;
Bhagavat.

As for “free of fault,” the phenomena that one contemplates are beheld as empty and like space itself. Thus [one’s contemplation] is free of any fault with regard to the Dharma. And how is this so? It is because all dharmas, from their very origin on forward to the present, have been unproduced and quiescent. Just as this is true [with respect to these dharmas], so too is this also true of all other dharmas.

By taking these names as the object [of his contemplation], this person develops his practice of the dharma of *dhyāna* meditation. Having done so, he is then able to take these characteristic signs themselves as the object of his contemplation.

At this time, this person then immediately acquires these signs in his practice of the dharma of *dhyāna* meditation and experiences what is referred to as the direct personal experience of an especially

extraordinary bliss. One should realize that when this occurs, one has acquired the *pratyutpanna* samādhi. Because of developing this samādhi, one is then able to see the Buddhas.

As for “as if they were images in a mirror,” once the bodhisattva has developed this samādhi, it is as if one is seeing one’s own face in a clean, brightly-lit mirror or like seeing the image of one’s own body in a clear, still pool of water.

Initially, whichever buddha one first brings to mind, it is that very image that one sees. After one has seen this image, if one wishes to see buddhas in other regions, then, in accordance with whichever region one brings to mind, one obtains an unimpeded vision of those very buddhas. Hence, regarding this person:

Although he does not yet possess the spiritual superknowledges
by which he could fly to visit them,
he is nonetheless able to see those buddhas
and has an unimpeded ability to listen to their Dharma.

For this bodhisattva who has only recently brought forth the resolve [to attain buddhahood], neither Mount Sumeru nor any other mountain can present an obstacle and, even though he has not yet acquired any of the spiritual superknowledges, the heavenly eye, or the heavenly ear, and even though he has not yet developed the ability to fly from this country to that country, through the power of this samādhi, even while still abiding in this country, he is able to see the Buddhas, the Bhagavats, abiding in the other regions and is able to hear the Dharma as they are speaking it. Through always cultivating this samādhi, he becomes able to see all of the buddhas throughout the ten directions just as they really are.

B. FOUR DHARMAS CAPABLE OF BRINGING FORTH THIS SAMĀDHI

Question: Through which dharmas is one able to bring forth this meditative absorption and how can one acquire it?

Response:

One draws close to the good spiritual guide,
brings forth non-retreating vigor,
develops extremely solid and durable wisdom,
and develops the power of unshakeable faith.

It is through utilizing these four dharmas that one is able to bring forth this samādhi.

As for “drawing close to the good spiritual guide,” someone able to instruct a person in the acquisition of this samādhi qualifies here as “the good spiritual guide.” One should bring forth reverential respect

and assiduous diligence and, in drawing close [to the good spiritual guide], one must not allow any indolence, diminishment in motivation, or relinquishing of effort to take place. If one acts accordingly, one will then be able to hear the teaching of the deep meaning of this samādhi.

Sharp wisdom, wisdom characterized by penetrating comprehension, and undiminishing wisdom are what qualify as “solid and durable” [wisdom]. One’s faculty of faith is deeply and firmly established, so much so that, no matter whether it be a *śramaṇa* or a brahmin or a celestial *māra* or Brahmā or anyone else in the world—none of them could cause it to quaver even slightly. This is what is meant by an unshakeable power of faith. It is these very four dharmas described here that are able to bring forth this samādhi.

C. FOUR MORE DHARMAS CAPABLE OF BRINGING FORTH THIS SAMĀDHI

Furthermore:

With a sense of shame, dread of blame, cherishing reverence, and offerings to those who proclaim the Dharma presented as if they were given to the Bhagavats themselves, one thereby becomes able to bring forth this samādhi.

As for “with a sense of shame, dread of blame, and cherishing reverence,” one brings forth a profound sense of shame and dread of blame in relation to those who teach the Dharma. With sincere reverence and affectionate delight, one makes offerings to them as if they were the Buddhas themselves. In this way, these four dharmas are able to produce this samādhi.

D. FOUR MORE DHARMAS CAPABLE OF BRINGING FORTH THIS SAMĀDHI

Another preliminary set of fourfold dharmas is as follows:

First, for a period of three months, one strives to refrain from sleeping and, with the exception of using the toilet and eating and drinking, one refrains from sitting down;

Second, for that period of three months, one avoids, even for the duration of a finger snap, indulgence in any thought seizing on the existence of a self;

Third, for that entire three months, one strives to always walk and never rest;

Fourth, for that entire three months, when also engaged in the giving of Dharma, one refrains from seeking offerings from others.

These are the four. There are four more such dharmas, as follows:

E. FOUR MORE DHARMAS CAPABLE OF BRINGING FORTH THIS SAMĀDHI

First, one becomes able to see the Buddhas;

Second, one reassures and encourages others to listen to the teaching of this samādhi;

Third, one is never envious or jealous of anyone who is putting the resolve to attain bodhi into practice;

Fourth, one is able to accumulate the dharmas of the bodhisattva path.

These are the four. There are four more such dharmas, as follows:

F. FOUR MORE DHARMAS CAPABLE OF BRINGING FORTH THIS SAMĀDHI

First, one makes buddha images that may also include painted images;

Second, one should carefully write out copies of the sutra that discusses this samādhi and then encourage others who have a resolute faith in it to study and recite it aloud once they have obtained it;⁴¹²

Third, teach those of overweening pride⁴¹³ to abandon their overweening pride⁴¹⁴ and then influence them to pursue the attainment of *anuttarasamyakṣaṃbodhi*;

Fourth, one should devote oneself to the protection and preservation of the right Dharma of all buddhas.

These are the four. There are four more such dharmas, as follows:

G. FOUR MORE DHARMAS CAPABLE OF BRINGING FORTH THIS SAMĀDHI

First, one avoids speaking;

Second, both lay and monastic practitioners are to refrain from dwelling together with others;

Third, one always anchors one's mind on the characteristic sign that has been chosen as the object of one's mental focus;⁴¹⁵

Fourth, one delights in dwelling far apart from others, in a location that is vacant, serene, and silent.

These are the four. The first of the five-fold sets of associated dharmas is as follows:

H. FIVE MORE DHARMAS CAPABLE OF BRINGING FORTH THIS SAMĀDHI

First, abiding in the unproduced-dharmas patience (*anutpattika-dharma-kṣānti*), one renounces all conditioned dharmas, does not delight in any of the destinies of rebirth, refuses to accept any of the non-Buddhist dharmas, and remains so disgusted with all worldly desires that one does not even bring them to mind, how much the less might one draw physically close to them;

Second, even as one's mind always cultivates and practices countless dharmas, it remains in a state of one-pointed concentration;

One remains free of the obstacle of hatred toward any being and one's mind always accords with the practice of the four means of attraction;

Third, one becomes able to perfect kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity while also refraining from exposing others' transgressions;

Fourth, one becomes able to accumulate a multitude of dharmas proclaimed by the Buddha while also being able to carry them out in accordance with the way they were taught;

Fifth, one purifies one's physical, verbal, and mental actions as well as one's views.

These are the five. There are five more associated dharmas, as follows:

I. FIVE MORE DHARMAS CAPABLE OF BRINGING FORTH THIS SAMĀDHI

First, one delights in according with the practice of giving as praised in the sutras, doing so without miserly thoughts. One delights in speaking on profound dharmas, withholds nothing due to stinginess, and also remains able to dwell in those very dharmas oneself;

Second, one abides in patience, mental pliancy, and delight when abiding in close proximity to others and, if subjected to harsh speech, scolding and cursing, whippings, beatings, being tied up, or other such experiences, one simply attributes it to one's own karmic conditions and does not hate others for doing this;

Third, one always delights in listening to teachings that explain this samādhi, in reading and reciting them, in thoroughly understanding them, in explaining them for others, and in causing them to circulate and spread ever more widely even as one diligently practices and cultivates [this samādhi];

Fourth, one's mind remains free of any jealous feelings toward others, one refrains from elevating oneself and looking down on others, and one strives to rid oneself of the hindrance of drowsiness;

Fifth, one maintains a mind of pure faith in the Buddha Jewel, the Dharma Jewel, and the Sangha Jewel, offers up deeply sincere service to those of senior, middling, and lower station, always remembers and never forgets even the smallest kindnesses of others, and always abides in truthful speech.

These are the five. In addition, there are the following lines:

J. THE GUIDELINES FOR LAY AND MONASTIC CULTIVATION OF THIS SAMĀDHI

As for those samādhi dharmas
in which monastic bodhisattvas train,
householder bodhisattvas
should also know these dharmas.

1. TWENTY GUIDELINES FOR LAY CULTIVATORS OF THIS SAMĀDHI

If a householder bodhisattva wishes to cultivate this samādhi, [he should observe the following twenty guidelines]:

- 1) One should proceed with a mind of deep faith;
- 2) One should not seek any sort of karmic reward;
- 3) One should give up all personal and extra-personal things;
- 4) One should take refuge in the Three Jewels;
- 5) One should uphold the five moral precepts purely and in a manner free of any transgression or deficiency;
- 6) One should perfect the practice of the ten courses of good karmic action while also influencing others to abide in these dharmas;
- 7) One should cut off all sexual desire;
- 8) One should repudiate the five types of desire;
- 9) One should refrain from any feelings of jealousy toward others;
- 10) One should not nurture an affectionate attachment for either one's spouse or one's children;
- 11) One should always maintain an aspiration to leave the householder's life to become a monastic;
- 12) One should always take on and observe the layperson's precepts of abstinence;⁴¹⁶
- 13) One's mind should delight in the opportunity to abide within the precincts of a temple;⁴¹⁷
- 14) One should be well possessed of a sense of shame and a dread of blame;
- 15) One should bring forth thoughts of reverential respect toward bhikshus who are pure in upholding the moral precepts;
- 16) One should not act in a miserly way with the Dharma;
- 17) One should maintain a mind of deep affection and reverence toward those who teach the Dharma;
- 18) One should think of teachers of Dharma as if they were one's father, mother, or great teaching master;
- 19) One should respectfully present all manner of delightful gifts as offerings to the Dharma teaching masters;
- 20) One should feel gratitude for the kindnesses that have been bestowed upon one and one should repay those kindnesses accordingly.

If a householder bodhisattva abides in meritorious qualities such as these, he will then be able to learn this samādhi.

2. SIXTY GUIDELINES FOR MONASTIC CULTIVATORS OF THIS SAMĀDHI

As for [the guidelines appropriate to] a monastic bodhisattva's cultivation of dharmas pertaining to this samādhi, they are as follows:

- 1) One remains free of any defect as regards observance of the moral precepts;
- 2) One maintains uncorrupted observance of the moral precepts;
- 3) One maintains unsullied observance of the moral precepts;
- 4) One maintains pure observance of the moral precepts;
- 5) One maintains undiminished observance of the moral precepts;
- 6) One does not seize on the moral precepts themselves [as constituting the very essence of moral virtue];
- 7) One does not rely on the moral precepts [alone as the sole component of one's practice];
- 8) One realizes that the moral precepts cannot finally be apprehended at all [as inherently existent entities];
- 9) One never retreats from one's observance of the moral precepts;
- 10) One upholds the moral precepts in the manner that is praised by the Āryas;
- 11) One upholds the moral precepts in the manner that is extolled by the wise;
- 12) One accords with the *prātimokṣa* precepts;
- 13) One perfects the bases for the awe-inspiring deportment;
- 14) One remains immensely fearful of committing even the most minor transgression of the precepts;
- 15) One purifies the actions of body, speech, and mind;
- 16) One maintains purity in right livelihood;
- 17) One completely upholds all of the moral precepts;
- 18) One maintains resolute belief in the extremely profound dharmas;
- 19) One is able to patiently acquiesce in the dharma of the non-apprehension [of any dharma whatsoever] and is able to not be frightened even by the dharmas of emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness;
- 20) One remains diligent in bringing forth vigor [in one's practice];
- 21) One always maintains ever-present mindfulness;
- 22) One maintains a mind of solid faith;
- 23) One is well possessed of a sense of shame and a dread of blame;
- 24) One does not covet offerings;
- 25) One remains free of jealousy toward others;
- 26) One abides in the meritorious qualities associated with practicing the *dhūta* austerities;
- 27) One abides in the subtleties of Dharma practice;
- 28) One takes no delight in speaking the coarse language of the world;

- 29) One avoids gathering in groups for [idle] conversation;
- 30) One knows to repay kindnesses one has received;
- 31) One acknowledges those who bestow kindnesses and those who repay kindnesses;
- 32) Toward one's monastic preceptors and monastic Dharma teachers, one brings forth thoughts of sincere reverence and appreciation for the rarity of being able to encounter them;⁴¹⁸
- 33) One does away with any arrogance one might be harboring;
- 34) One overcomes the self-cherishing mind;
- 35) Because a good spiritual guide can only rarely be encountered, one strives with diligence to look after his needs;
- 36) With regard to the source from which one first learned about this Dharma, whether by obtaining a sutra text from someone or by hearing someone recite it, one thinks of them with the same regard as one would maintain for one's own father or mother, one's good spiritual guide, or a great teaching master, and with regard to them, one also feels a sense of shame, dread of blame, affection, and reverence;
- 37) One always delights in dwelling in a forest hermitage;
- 38) One does not delight in dwelling in a city or village;
- 39) One does not covet the opportunity to frequent the homes of benefactors⁴¹⁹ and good spiritual friends;
- 40) One does not maintain a stinting covetousness for one's own physical survival;
- 41) One remains ever mindful of death;
- 42) One does not hoard offerings;
- 43) One does not indulge any defiling attachment for possessions.
- 44) One remains free of cravings;
- 45) One guards and preserves right Dharma;
- 46) One is not attached to one's robes or bowl;
- 47) One does not hoard leftover things;
- 48) One prefers to eat only food that has been obtained on the alms round;
- 49) On the alms round, one moves along seeking alms according to the proper sequence;⁴²⁰
- 50) One always maintains a sense of shame and dread of blame and always feels remorse [for one's past transgressions];
- 51) One refrains from hoarding gold, silver, precious jewels, or money and also avoids indulging in unwholesome remorsefulness;⁴²¹
- 52) One's mind remains free of entangling defilements;
- 53) One always puts the mind of kindness into practice;

- 54) One cuts off all feelings of anger;
- 55) One always puts the mind of compassion into practice;
- 56) One cuts off affectionate attachments;
- 57) One always seeks ways to benefit and bring peace to the entire world;
- 58) One always feels pity for all beings;
- 59) One always delights in [meditative] walking;
- 60) One does away with lethargy and sleepiness.

The monastic bodhisattva who abides in dharmas such as these should cultivate and practice this samādhi. Additionally:

3. FIFTY DHARMAS SUPPORTING CULTIVATION OF THIS SAMĀDHI

One should also train in this same manner
in the other dharmas pertaining to the cultivation of samādhi.

In order to be able to bring forth this *pratyutpanna* samādhi, one should also cultivate the other supportive dharmas. And what are these? They are:

- 1) One takes the Buddha's kindness as one's objective focus and always mindfully contemplates him as if he were directly before one;
- 2) One does not allow one's mind to become scattered;
- 3) One anchors one's attention directly before one;
- 4) One guards the gates of the sense faculties;
- 5) With respect to food and drink, one is easily satisfied;
- 6) One always cultivates samādhi in both the first and last watches of the night;
- 7) One abandons the obstacle of the afflictions;
- 8) One brings forth all of the *dhyāna* absorptions;
- 9) In one's practice of *dhyāna* meditation, one does not indulge in the delectably pleasurable meditation states;
- 10) One demolishes through separation the appearance of attractive forms;⁴²²
- 11) One acquires the sign of unloveliness;⁴²³
- 12) One does not desire the five aggregates;
- 13) One does not become attached to the eighteen sense realms;
- 14) One does not indulge any defilement in relation to the twelve sense bases;
- 15) One does not presumptuously rely on one's [superior] caste origins;
- 16) One destroys any arrogance;
- 17) One's mind always remains empty and quiescent in relation to all dharmas that one encounters;

- 18) One imagines all beings as one's close relatives;
- 19) One does not seize on the moral precepts themselves [as constituting the very essence of moral virtue];
- 20) One does not make discriminating distinctions regarding the meditative absorptions;
- 21) One should diligently pursue abundant learning;
- 22) One does not become arrogant because of this abundant learning;
- 23) One remains free of doubts with respect to any of the dharmas.
- 24) One does not oppose the Buddhas;
- 25) One does not act in a manner that is contrary to the Dharma;
- 26) One does not do anything that contributes to the destruction of the Sangha;
- 27) One always goes to pay one's respects to worthies and *āryas*;
- 28) One distances oneself from foolish common people;
- 29) One delights in discussion of world-transcending topics;
- 30) One cultivates the six dharmas of mutual harmony;⁴²⁴
- 31) One always cultivates the five bases of liberation;⁴²⁵
- 32) One rids himself of the nine bases for generating the affliction of anger;⁴²⁶
- 33) One cuts off the eight dharmas associated with indolence;⁴²⁷
- 34) One cultivates the eight types of vigor;⁴²⁸
- 35) One always contemplates the nine signs [of the deterioration of the corpse];⁴²⁹
- 36) One has realized for himself the eight realizations of great men;⁴³⁰
- 37) One perfects all of the *dhyāna* concentrations and samādhis;
- 38) One has no covetous attachment to these *dhyāna* concentrations and realizes they have no apprehensible reality;⁴³¹
- 39) When listening to Dharma, one does so with a focused mind;
- 40) One demolishes the perception of the five aggregates [as inherently existent phenomenal];
- 41) One does not abide in the perception of phenomena [as inherently existent];
- 42) One is deeply fearful of *saṃsāra*'s births and deaths;
- 43) One contemplates the five aggregates as like enemies;⁴³²
- 44) One contemplates the sense bases as like an empty village;
- 45) One contemplates the four great elements as like venomous serpents;
- 46) One brings forth the contemplation of nirvāṇa as quiescent, secure, and happy;⁴³³
- 47) One contemplates the five desires as worthy of being spat upon and one's mind delights in escaping from them;

- 48) One never opposes the teachings of the Buddha;
 49) One has no disputes or quarrels with any other being;
 50) In teaching beings, one influences them to dwell securely in all of the meritorious qualities.

K. THE BENEFITS OF CULTIVATING THIS PRATYUTPANNA SAMĀDHI

In addition:

The bodhisattva should understand the benefits that result from such a samādhi.

The bodhisattva should also understand the benefits that result from practicing this *pratyutpanna* samādhi.

Question: What are the resulting benefits gained by cultivating this samādhi?

Response: One obtains the resulting benefit of becoming irreversible with respect to the unsurpassable path. Additionally, as for what the sutra says about these resulting benefits, we have the following:⁴³⁴

The Buddha told Bhadrāpāla Bodhisattva, “By way of analogy, suppose there was a person who was able to crush to dust all the earth in all worlds in a trichiliocosm and was also able also to crush to dust all the grasses, trees, flowers, leaves, and everything else throughout all of the worlds in a great trichiliocosm.

“Bhadrāpāla, let us consider now that each and every one of those motes of dust were to constitute one world in which a single buddha dwells and suppose then that one filled to overflowing just such a number of worlds with sublimely marvelous precious jewels and presented all of these jewels as an offering to them.

“Bhadrāpāla, what do you think? By performing such an act of giving, would this person gain a great deal of merit or not?”

“Indeed, O Bhagavat, he would reap a great deal.”

The Buddha said, “Bhadrāpāla, I will now tell you truthfully that if there was a son of good family who heard of this samādhi in which all buddhas appear before one and he were then to be neither startled nor frightened by hearing of it, the merit he would reap from that alone would be immeasurably vast. How much the more so would this be the case if he were to have faith in it, accept it, uphold it, read [teachings in which it is explained], recite them, and explain them for others. How much the more so yet would this be the case if he were to actually cultivate it with concentrated mind even for the time it takes to tug a single squirt of milk from the udder of a cow.

“Bhadrāpāla, let me tell you: Even this person’s merit would surpass one’s ability to measure it. How much the more so would this be so in the case of someone who was actually able to succeed in acquiring this samādhi.”

The Buddha continued, telling Bhadrapāla, “If a son or daughter of good family who receives, upholds, reads, recites, and explains [teachings on this samādhi] for others were on the verge of falling into the fires arising at the end of the kalpa, those fires would immediately become extinguished.

“Bhadrapāla, whosoever sustains this samādhi—supposing that he were to encounter some difficulty with officialdom, or supposing that he were to encounter hostile thieves, lions, tigers, wolves, fearsome beasts, fearsome dragons, any of the venomous serpents, or any other such threat, whether from *yakṣas*, *rākṣasas*, *kumbhāṇḍas*, *piśācis*, and such, or from humans, non-humans, or any other sort of entity—that any of those entities might succeed in physically harming him, taking his life, or causing him to break the precepts—this would be an utter impossibility.

So too would this also be the case with respect to those who might be reading, reciting, or teaching this to others. In those cases too they would remain free of any destructive affliction, with the sole exception of instances where they were already bound to undergo compulsory karmic retributions.⁴³⁵

“Furthermore, Bhadrapāla, when a bodhisattva accepts, upholds, reads, or recites the sutra on this samādhi, if he happens to contract some sickness of the eye, ear, nose, tongue, mouth, or teeth, some disease instigated by wind or cold, or any other such disease, that he might then lose his life because of any of these diseases would be an utter impossibility with the sole exception of instances where he was already bound to undergo compulsory karmic retributions.

“Also, Bhadrapāla, if a person were to accept, uphold, read, or recite the sutra on this samādhi, the devas themselves would protect him. So too would he be protected by the dragons, *yakṣas*, *mahoragas*, humans, non-humans, the Four Heavenly Kings, Śakra, ruler of the devas, the Brahma Heaven King, and the Buddhas, the Bhagavats. They would all join in remaining protectively mindful of this practitioner.

“Furthermore, this person would be one of whom the devas would all be affectionately mindful, and so too would this be so for other such beings up to and including the Buddhas themselves who would also remain affectionately mindful of this practitioner.

“Additionally, this person would be one whom the devas praise, and so too, he would be one whom other beings up to and including all buddhas would praise as well.

“Also, this bodhisattva would be one whom the devas would all wish to see coming to visit them, and so too with the others on up to the Buddhas themselves who would all wish to see him coming to visit them.

“Furthermore, the bodhisattva who accepts and upholds the sutra on this samādhi will naturally become able to hear whichever other sutras he has not yet heard.

“Additionally, this bodhisattva who gains this samādhi will become able to acquire all of these beneficial experiences even in his dreams.

“Bhadrapāla, were I to attempt to describe the merit of this bodhisattva who accepts, uphold, reads, and recites the sutra on this samādhi, doing so even for an entire kalpa or somewhat less than a kalpa, I would still be unable to come to the end of it. How much the less would this be possible in the case of someone who actually succeeds in perfecting this samādhi.

“Bhadrapāla, if some man with strong body and speed like the wind ran for a hundred years without resting, always proceeding to the east, south, west, north, the four midpoints, above, and below, what do you think? Would anyone be able to know the number of miles he traveled in all those regions throughout the ten directions?”

Bhadrapāla replied, “That would be an incalculable number. Except for the Tathāgata, someone like Śāriputra, or an *avaivartika* [bodhisattva], nobody would be able to know such a number.”

“Bhadrapāla, suppose that, on the one hand, there was a son or daughter of good family who filled up with real gold all the area traveled by that man and then give it all away as gifts. Suppose too that, on the other hand, there was someone who merely heard of this samādhi and then engaged in four types of rejoicing and dedication of merit to *anuttarasamyaksambodhi* and the constant pursuit of abundant learning, [doing so by reflecting as follows]:

Just as all buddhas of the past when practicing the bodhisattva path rejoiced in this samādhi, so too do I now rejoice in it;

Just as the bodhisattvas of the present now rejoice in this samādhi, so too do I now rejoice in it;

Just as all future buddhas during their practice of the bodhisattva path shall rejoice in this samādhi, so too do I now rejoice in it;

And in just that fashion as this samādhi was practiced by all past, future, and present bodhisattvas, so too do I now also rejoice in all of that, and just as they all did so for the sake of pursuing abundant learning [essential to the path], so too do I now rejoice in this samādhi for the sake of the quest for such abundant learning.

“Bhadrapāla, if one were to attempt to compare the previously described merit with the merit from this rejoicing, it could not approach a hundredth part or even one part in a hundred thousand

myriads of *koṭis* of parts. The futility of this comparison simply could not be adequately described through any form of calculation or analogy. The benefits resulting from this samādhi are just so immeasurable and boundless as this.”

L. THIS SAMĀDHI’S VARIOUS STATIONS AND LEVELS OF CULTIVATION

In addition:

As for the stations in which one may abide in this samādhi as well as the distinctions pertaining to lesser, middling, and greater, the many different characteristics such as these should all be taken up for a discussion of their meaning.

The stations in which one may abide in this samādhi as well as its lesser, middling, and greater characteristics—all such things should be distinguished and known and these matters should then be explained.

Regarding “the stations in which one may abide in it,” this samādhi may be acquired in the first *dhyāna*, the second *dhyāna*, the third *dhyāna*, or the fourth *dhyāna* and one may acquire strength in it while in the first *dhyāna*.

It may be that someone who is “lesser” is able to bring forth this samādhi. Here, “lesser” may refer to the fact that a person is possessed of only a lesser degree of strength [in this practice]. “Lesser” may also refer to abiding [in the samādhi] for a shorter period of time. “Lesser” may also refer to the practitioner’s seeing a relatively smaller number of buddha worlds. Distinctions regarding “middling” and “greater” may be made in just the same way.

M. VARIOUS QUALITATIVE VARIATIONS IN HOW THIS SAMĀDHI MANIFESTS

In discussing this samādhi, one may speak of it as:

Sometimes involving the presence of ideation (*vitarka*) and the presence of discursion (*vicāra*);

Sometimes involving the absence of ideation and the presence of discursion;

Sometimes involving the absence of ideation and the absence of discursion;

Sometimes involving the presence of joy (*prīti*);

Sometimes involving the presence of bliss (*sukha*);

Sometimes involving neither suffering nor bliss;

Sometimes involving the presence of breathing;

Sometimes involving the absence of breathing;

Sometimes definitely being of a wholesome nature;

Sometimes involving the presence of the contaminants;

Sometimes involving the absence of the contaminants;

Sometimes connected with the desire realm;
 Sometimes connected with the form realm;
 Sometimes connected with the formless realm;
 Sometimes not connected with the desire realm;
 Sometimes not connected with the form realm;
 And sometimes not connected with the formless realm.

N. VARIOUS ABHIDHARMIC CLASSIFICATIONS OF THIS SAMĀDHI

This samādhi;

Is a mental dharma;
 Is [a dharma] associated with the mind;
 Is a dharma that occurs along with the mind;
 Is a non-form [dharma];
 Is a non-manifest [dharma];
 Is able to take an object;
 Is not karma [*per se*];
 Is associated with karmic activity;
 Is coexistent with karmic activity;
 Is not the result of karmic actions from a previous life except when it
 is the result of a particular cause;⁴³⁶
 Can be cultivated, can be known, and can be realized;
 Can be realized both with the body and by means of wisdom;
 Can be subject to severance or may be invulnerable to severance;
 Should be severed when contaminants are present;
 And is invulnerable to severance when free of the contaminants.

Similar distinctions of this sort may also made with respect to the knowledge and vision associated with this samādhi. Also, it is not necessarily conjoined with the seven limbs of enlightenment.⁴³⁷ Ideally, all of these distinctions should be discussed herein.

O. THE PRACTITIONER'S OFFERINGS, ROOTS OF GOODNESS, AND TEACHING

Furthermore, it is through the cultivation of this samādhi that one may succeed in seeing the Buddhas. Accordingly, it is said that:

After one has succeeded in seeing the Buddhas,
 one proceeds with diligent resolve to present offerings [to them].
 As one's roots of goodness are thus able to grow,
 one becomes able to rapidly teach beings.

"Making offerings" refers to having a pure mind imbued with reverence and delight as one brings to mind the countless meritorious qualities of the Buddha. When one praises him in various ways, this constitutes the making of verbal offerings. When one makes formal

reverential bows and presents flowers, incenses, and other such things, this constitutes the making of physical offerings.

Because of these actions, one's karmic merit grows ever greater just as a seed starts to grow when it is planted in earth and receives moisture from the rain. "Rapidly teaching" refers to influencing beings to abide in the Three Vehicles. It is in this way that the bodhisattva brings about the growth of his roots of goodness.

P. THE PRACTITIONER'S USE OF THE FOUR MEANS OF ATTRACTION

Through availing oneself of the first two dharmas of attraction, one is able to attract beings [to the Dharma].

One resorts to the latter two dharmas of attraction for those not yet fully able to believe and accept [Dharma teachings].

"The first two" refers to "giving" and to "pleasing words" whereas "beneficial actions" and "joint endeavors" constitute "the latter two dharmas" [of the four means of attraction]. Because this bodhisattva who abides on the first ground is as yet unable to completely comprehend everything, [there may be certain aspects of the teaching] that he can only accept on faith.

Q. THE PRACTITIONER'S DEDICATION OF ROOTS OF GOODNESS

He then takes all of his roots of goodness and dedicates them to the realization of buddhahood.

This is comparable to when others smelt gold and then refine it, whereupon it thereby becomes amenable to use.

It is through being smelted by the fire of wisdom that, in all the endeavors undertaken by the bodhisattva, his roots of goodness ripen and then finally become amenable to use.