

CHAPTER TEN

The Dharma Cloud Ground

J. THE TENTH GROUND: THE DHARMA CLOUD GROUND

1. THE TENTH GROUND'S INTRODUCTORY VERSES AND DHARMA REQUEST

When these unsurpassably excellent endeavors
practiced by the great bodhisattvas had been described,
the countless *nayutas*
of devas from the Śuddhāvāsa Heaven,
witnessing this from high in the sky,
felt great delight in mind
and then, with thoughts imbued with reverence,
they presented a multitude of marvelous offerings to the Buddha. (1)

The *nayutas* of bodhisattvas,
having felt immeasurably great delight,
then lit all manner of exotic and sublime incenses
that had the effect of extinguishing all afflictions. (2)

The Paranirmita Vaśavartin Heaven King
as well as that great assembly of devas
that stood there in the sky
all felt great delight in their minds.

With thoughts imbued with reverence,
they all presented all different sorts of gifts as offerings
as they each scattered down raiment adorned with many jewels
that swirled down, descending from the sky. (3)

Incalculably many *koṭis* of celestial nymphs,
with all their faculties suffused with happiness,
from on high where they stood in the sky,
with reverential minds, presented offerings to the Buddha.

They all then joined in creating measurelessly many *koṭis*
of *nayutas* of skillful musical offerings
as from all of their many gifts
there came forth voicings such as these: (4)

“The Buddha sits here in this place
while everywhere pervading all
of the lands throughout the ten directions wherein,
in all of them, there are also manifestations of the Buddha

of many different sorts that are countless *koṭis* in number,
all with the major marks and subsidiary signs adorning their bodies
that, in their incomparably refined sublimity,
completely fill up the worlds. (5)

Even from within a single hair pore,
there are sent forth incalculably many rays of light
that extinguish all
of the world's fires of affliction.

The number of atoms throughout the ten directions
is such as one could never calculate.
The number of light rays sent forth from but a single hair pore
are also such that one could never exhaustively count them. (6)

In each of them, one sees that there are Buddha bodies
adorned with the thirty-two major marks
and the eighty subsidiary signs,
turning the unsurpassable wheel.

One may see there all the different circumstances wherein
the Buddha expounds on Dharma for beings' sakes. (7)

One may see his residing in the Tuṣita Heaven,
teaching all the devas,
may see him descending from the Tuṣita Heaven,
coming down to reside in the womb,
may see him when he is first born,
and may see him in the night, leaving behind the home life. (8)

One may see him sitting in the *bodhimāṇḍa*
whereupon he then achieves the unsurpassable enlightenment,
may see him turning the wheel of Dharma,
or may see him entering nirvāṇa. (9)

Throughout incalculably many lands,
he brings forth all different kinds of manifestations.
It is because he wishes to bring about the liberation of beings
that, in all such cases, there come to be such circumstances as these.

In this, he is comparable to a master conjurer
who knows well the arts of conjuration
and thus presents many such displays to beings
of all different sorts of different bodies.

From the midst of such wisdom of the Buddha as this,
he is skillful in presenting manifestations
wherein he transformationally creates all manner of bodies
that manifest everywhere throughout all worlds. (10)

Just as all dharmas are empty, quiescent,
and, from their origin onward, devoid of nature or marks
and identically comparable to empty space,
so too it is with the Great Teacher.

Having achieved entry into the ultimate truth's
sublime nature and characteristics,
he accords with dharmas' nature and characteristics
in manifesting the Buddha's great spiritual powers. (11)

As for the very nature of that in which the Buddhas course,
all beings themselves
in every case abide within this nature wherein signs
and whatever can be vested with signs are of the same character.

All dharmas equally
enter and abide in the ultimate truth's
meaning and purport of quiescence
wherein, in every case, they are all entirely signless. (12)

If one wishes to acquire the knowledge of the Buddha,
one should abandon all conceptual thought,
penetratingly comprehend both existents and non-existents,
and swiftly become a teacher of both devas and men." (13)

Having all sung forth
a thousand myriad sorts of marvelous voicings such as these,
that assemblage of celestial nymphs
then fell silent and gazed up at the Buddha. (14)

Seeing that the assembled congregation had become entirely silent,
Liberation Moon Bodhisattva
then set forth a request to Vajragarbha Bodhisattva, saying:
"O Greatly Eminent Son of the Buddha." (15)

"We pray that you will now present a general explanation
of all the powers of great spiritual superknowledges involved in
the bodhisattva's going forth from the ninth ground
to then arrive on the tenth ground." (16)

2. VAJRAGARBHA COMMENCES THE TENTH GROUND'S EXPLANATION

{A} At that time, Vajragarbha Bodhisattva then said:

3. THE CATEGORIES OF PRACTICE BEFORE ENTERING THE TENTH GROUND

O Son of the Buddha, having employed such measureless wisdom as this in skillful cultivation of the path to buddhahood on through to the ninth ground, the bodhisattva *mahāsattvas*:²⁹¹

Thoroughly accumulate every sort of white dharma;
 Accumulate the measurelessly many dharmas constituting the
 provisions for the path;
 Become protected by immense merit and wisdom;
 Practice the great compassion on a vast scale;
 Deeply know and distinguish the differences between worlds;
 Deeply penetrate beings' entangling difficulties;²⁹²
 Reach the Tathāgatas' domains of practice;
 Carry forth mindfulness in a manner concordant with the
 Tathāgata's stations of quiescent practice;
 And progress toward the powers, fearlessnesses, exclusive
 dharmas, and other such attainments of the Buddhas.

Firmly maintaining and never relinquishing these [practices],
 they thereby succeed in reaching the station [wherein they receive
 the consecration of imminent realization] of all-knowledge.

4. THIS BODHISATTVA'S SUBSEQUENT ACQUISITION OF SAMĀDHIS

(B) Sons of the Buddha, it is through practicing in accord with
 knowledge such as this that the bodhisattva *mahāsattva* nearing
 the ground of buddhahood then acquires the direct manifesta-
 tion of the bodhisattva's stainless samādhi. He then additionally
 enters:²⁹³

The distinctions within the Dharma realm samādhi;
 The adornment of the *bodhimaṇḍa* samādhi;
 The showering of all worlds with floral radiance samādhi;
 The oceanic treasury samādhi;
 The oceanic reflection samādhi;
 The vastness of empty space samādhi;
 The contemplative investigation of the nature of all dharmas
 samādhi;
 The adaptation to the minds and actions of all beings samādhi;
 The selection of all dharmas in accordance with reality samādhi;
 And the acquisition of the Tathāgata's knowledge and reliability
 samādhi.

Hundreds of myriads of *asaṃkhyeyas* of samādhis such as these all
 manifest directly before him. This bodhisattva enters all of these
 samādhis and thoroughly knows the differences in their func-
 tions. Among them, the very last samādhi is known as "enhance-
 ment of the station of all-knowledge."

5. THE FINAL SAMĀDHI'S MANIFESTATION OF AN IMMENSE RADIANT LOTUS

(C) When this samādhi manifests directly before him, there then emerges an immense bejeweled king of lotus blossoms with a circumference comparable to that of a hundred myriad great trichilocosms. It is adorned by and inlaid with all of the many sorts of precious gems and surpasses any other that exists anywhere in any world. It comes forth from his roots of world-transcending goodness and is perfected by his practice of the wisdom that fathoms all dharmas as like mere illusions and as devoid of any inherently existent nature.

Its radiant light is able to illuminate all worlds. Its stem is composed of immense jewels and beryl that is superior to any existing anywhere in the heavens. A measurelessly immense king of *candana* incenses composes its central dais and huge emerald gems form its floral pistils. Radiant *jambūnada* gold forms its petals. There is measureless light shining forth from its center and every sort of marvelous gem resides there within it. It is covered over by a bejeweled net canopy and it is attended by a retinue of lotus blossoms as numerous as the atoms in ten great trichilocosms.

6. THIS BODHISATTVA SITS ATOP A LOTUS ENCIRCLED BY RETINUE BODHISATTVAS

At that time, this bodhisattva's body, especially beautiful in its marvelousness, matches the scale of that flower throne. Because he has acquired the power of the samādhi of "enhancement of the station of all-knowledge," his body then appears atop that great lotus blossom throne. Then, on all of the lotus blossoms forming its retinue, bodhisattvas immediately appear and encircle it with each and every one of those bodhisattvas sitting atop a lotus blossom. Each of them then immediately acquires a hundred myriad samādhis and they all abide there in single-minded reverence, gazing up at that great bodhisattva.

(D) When this bodhisattva ascends that lotus blossom throne, all of the present-era worlds throughout the ten directions undergo an immense quaking, whereupon everything occurring in the wretched destinies ceases. Those light rays everywhere illuminate the worlds of the ten directions, whereupon they all become adorned and purified and everyone is able to see and hear what is transpiring in the Buddha's great assembly.

7. HIS BODY EMANATES LIGHT ILLUMINATING TEN REALMS OF BEINGS

How is it that this takes place? As this bodhisattva sits atop the throne on that immense lotus blossom, from the bottom of his feet, he suddenly puts forth a hundred myriads of *asaṃkhyeyas* of

light rays that, throughout the ten directions, illuminate the Avīci Hells as well as the rest of the hells, thus extinguishing the sufferings of the beings dwelling in them.

From his two knees, he releases just such a number of light rays that, throughout the ten directions, entirely illuminate the animal realms, thus extinguishing their sufferings. From his navel, he releases just such a number of light rays that, throughout the ten directions, illuminate the realms of hungry ghosts, thus extinguishing their sufferings.

From his right and left sides, he releases just such a number of light rays that, throughout the ten directions, illuminate the bodies of all of those in the human realms, thereby causing them to feel secure and happy. From his two hands, he releases just such a number of light rays that, throughout the ten directions, illuminate the palaces of all the devas and *asuras*.

From his two shoulders, he then releases just such a number of light rays that, throughout the ten directions, illuminate those persons who are *śrāvaka*-disciples. From his neck, he then releases just such a number of light rays that, throughout the ten directions, illuminate those who are *pratyekabuddhas*.

From his mouth, he then releases just such a number of light rays that, throughout the ten directions, illuminate the bodies of the bodhisattvas, inclusive of all of those who have reached the ninth ground.

From the white hair mark between his eyebrows, he then releases just such a number of light rays that, throughout the ten directions, illuminate the bodies of all those bodhisattvas who have reached the consecration stage and thus so cast shade on the palaces of all the *māras* that they no longer appear.

From the crown of his head, he then releases a number of light rays as numerous as the atoms in a hundred myriads of *asamkhyeyas* of great trichiliocosms that, throughout the ten directions, illuminate the great assemblies attending upon all buddhas.

8. THE LIGHT RAYS FORM A CANOPY THAT MAKES OFFERINGS TO ALL BUDDHAS

They then circle ten times around those worlds, dwell up in space, and then form a net-like canopy that, high above, shines with greatly radiant purity, sending forth offerings to all those buddhas.

Those offerings are so numerous that the offerings made by all the bodhisattvas, from those who have newly brought forth the resolve on through to those who have reached the ninth ground

could not compare to even a hundredth part and so forth until we come to their inability to compare to even a single part in a hundred thousand myriads of *koṭis* of parts and their inability to compare at all, even by resort to calculation or analogy.

The offerings rained down by this immense net-like canopy of light are superior to all offering gifts made anywhere throughout the worlds of the ten directions, including all floral, powdered, burnable, and unguent incenses, all raiment, banners, canopies, many-jeweled necklaces, precious *maṇi* jewels, and other such offerings. This is because they issue from world-transcending roots of goodness. This canopy that rains down the many sorts of precious treasures into each and every one of the Buddhas' great assemblies has the appearance of an immense cloud.

If any being were to even become aware that such offerings as this were taking place, one should realize that these are all beings who have already become definitely bound to succeed in realizing the unsurpassable great path.

9. THE LIGHT RAYS CIRCLE AROUND ALL BUDDHAS AND ENTER THEIR FEET

After these light rays rain down all their great offerings, they again circle ten times around those buddhas and their great assemblies and then enter the feet of all those buddhas.

At that time, all the buddhas and the great bodhisattvas become aware that in such-and-such a world, there is such-and-such a bodhisattva *mahāsattva* who has traveled this path to the point where he has succeeded in reaching the stage of consecration.

10. THE 10 REGIONS' BODHISATTVAS COME, MAKE OFFERINGS & ENTER SAMĀDHI

Sons of the Buddha, at that time, all bodhisattvas throughout the ten directions inclusive of those who dwell on the ninth ground immediately come, surround him, present grand offerings, single-mindedly and respectfully gaze up at him, and pay reverence to him, whereupon each of them acquires a myriad samādhis.

11. THEY EMANATE LIGHT FROM THEIR CHESTS THAT ENTERS HIS CHEST

Then all of those bodhisattva *mahāsattvas* who have reached the consecration stage emanate a single large beam of light from the vajra adornment symbol on their chests. This light named "destroyer of Māra's thieves" is attended by a retinue of countless many hundreds of thousands of myriads of light rays that illuminate the worlds of the ten directions, reveal measurelessly many spiritual powers, and then also arrive and enter this great

bodhisattva's chest. After this light disappears, this bodhisattva immediately acquires great powers, spiritual superknowledges, and wisdom that then increase a hundred thousand myriad fold.

12. ALL BUDDHAS SEND FORTH LIGHT THAT ENTERS THIS BODHISATVA'S CROWN

(E) Sons of the Buddha, at that time, the Buddhas put forth a beam of light from the white hair mark between their eyebrows, one known as "enhancer of all-knowledge"²⁹⁴ that is attended by a retinue of measurelessly and boundlessly many light rays that illuminate all worlds of the ten directions without exception. It circles ten times around all those worlds, displaying the immense spiritual powers of all buddhas, encourages the progress of countless and boundlessly many hundreds of thousands of myriads of *koṭis* of bodhisattvas, causes all worlds throughout the ten directions to shake in six ways, extinguishes all the sufferings in the wretched destinies, obscures the palaces of the *māras* so they no longer appear, displays all those places in which buddhas achieved realization of the path, and reveals all the adorning phenomena in the great assemblies of all buddhas that are as vast as the Dharma realm and as extensive as empty space.

After those light rays have illuminated all worlds, they then gather together in the midst of space and circle around in a rightward direction, thus revealing the adornments produced by great spiritual powers, whereupon that beam of light enters the crown of this bodhisattva's head as all of its retinue light rays enter the crowns of the heads of those retinue bodhisattvas that are present there atop their own lotus blossoms.

13. THIS BODHISATVA ACQUIRES SAMĀDHIS AND ALL BUDDHAS' CONSECRATION

At that point, these bodhisattvas each immediately acquire a myriad samādhis they had never previously acquired. Just as this beam of light sent out by this one buddha enters this bodhisattva's crown, so too does this occur in this very same way in the case of the beams of light sent forth by all buddhas. Just when all those beams of light sent forth from all buddhas of the ten directions enter the crown of this bodhisattva's head, he becomes known as one who has received the consecration and becomes known as one who has entered the realm of the Buddhas wherein, having completely developed the Buddha's ten powers, he is then bound to join the ranks of the Buddhas.

14. THE SIMILE OF THE CONSECRATION OF THE WHEEL TURNING SAGE KING'S SON

Sons of the Buddha, this circumstance is analogous to that of the eldest son of a wheel-turning sage king who, born to his primary wife, is replete with the marks of the wheel-turning king. That wheel-turning sage king orders his son to mount the throne of *jambūnada* gold atop his precious white elephant treasure, whereupon he takes water from each of the four great seas and, after having raised up a canopy with all different sorts of adornments, banners, and music, he takes up that gold vase of perfumed waters and pours it over the crown of his son's head, whereupon he is henceforth known as one who has received the consecration and is thereby completely invested with the status of a great king. Because he then turns the wheel of the ten courses of good karmic action, he is then able to be known as a wheel-turning sage king.

Sons of the Buddha, so too it is with the bodhisattva *mahāsattva*. At that time when he receives his consecration, the Buddhas pour the waters of knowledge onto the crown of this bodhisattva's head whereupon he becomes known as a consecrated Dharma king. Through complete development of the Buddha's ten powers he joins the ranks of the Buddhas.

15. THE CAPACITIES ARISING FROM THIS BODHISATTVA'S CONSECRATION

Sons of the Buddha, this is what is known as all bodhisattva *mahāsattvas'* great wisdom consecration. It is by means of this consecration that all bodhisattva *mahāsattvas* are able to take on countless-many hundreds of thousands of myriads of *koṭis* of austere practices and difficult endeavors. After this bodhisattva acquires this consecration, he thereupon dwells on the Dharma Cloud Ground wherein he brings about ever increasing growth in incalculably many forms of merit and wisdom.

16. THIS BODHISATTVA'S KNOWLEDGE OF ATTAINMENTS

(F) Sons of the Buddha, the bodhisattva dwelling on this Dharma Cloud Ground knows in accordance with reality:

Attainment as it takes place within the desire realm;²⁹⁵
 Attainment as it takes place within the form realm;
 And attainment as it takes place within the formless realm;

He knows in accordance with reality:

Attainment as it takes place within the worldly realms;
 Attainment as it takes place within the realm of beings;
 Attainment as it takes place within the realms of consciousness;
 Attainment as it takes place within the realm of the conditioned;

Attainment as it takes place within the realm of the unconditioned;
 Attainment as it takes place within the realm of empty space;
 Attainment as it takes place within the Dharma realm;
 Attainment as it takes place within the realm of nirvāṇa;
 And attainment as it takes place in the realm of the afflictions associated with erroneous views.

He knows in accordance with reality [attainment] as it takes place in all worlds' dharmas of enactment and dharmas of returning [to dissolution]²⁹⁶ and also knows in accordance with reality:

Attainment as it takes place on the path of *śrāvaka* disciples;
 Attainment as it takes place on the path of *pratyekabuddhas*;
 Attainment as it takes place on the path of bodhisattvas;
 Attainment as it takes place with a buddha's powers, fearlessnesses, and exclusive dharmas;
 Attainment as it takes place with form bodies and the Dharma body;
 And attainment as it takes place with the cognition of all-knowledge.

In this same manner, he knows:

Attainment as it takes place in realization of the path to buddhahood;
 Attainment as it takes place in the turning of the Dharma wheel;
 And attainment as it takes place in the manifestation of crossing into a state of cessation.

To speak of what is essential, he knows in accordance with reality the distinctions occurring in attainment as it takes place in relation to all dharmas.

17. THIS BODHISATTVA'S KNOWLEDGE OF TRANSFORMATION

This bodhisattva employs wisdom such as this that accords with the bodhi practices, penetrates ever more deeply, and knows in accordance with reality:

Transformation as it takes place in beings;
 Transformation as it takes place in karmic actions;
 Transformation as it takes place among the afflictions;
 Transformation as it takes place in the views;
 Transformation as it takes place in worldly realms;
 Transformation as it takes place in the Dharma realm;
 Transformation as it takes place among *śrāvaka*-disciples;

Transformation as it takes place among *pratyekabuddhas*;
 Transformation as it takes place among bodhisattvas;
 Transformation as it takes place among *tathāgatas*;
 And transformation as it occurs in the presence and absence of
 differences.

He penetrates into all of these in a way that accords with reality.

18. THIS BODHISATTVA'S KNOWLEDGE OF SUSTAINING BASES

At that time, this bodhisattva:

Knows in accordance with reality the sustaining bases²⁹⁷ of a
 buddha's powers;
 Knows in accordance with reality the sustaining bases of the
 Dharma's abiding;
 And knows in accordance with reality the sustaining bases of
 karmic deeds.

So, too, he knows in accordance with reality:

The sustaining bases of the afflictions;
 The sustaining bases of time;
 The sustaining bases of vows;
 The sustaining bases of prior lifetimes;
 The sustaining bases of practices;
 The sustaining bases of kalpas' duration;
 And the sustaining bases of knowledge.

19. THIS BODHISATTVA'S KNOWLEDGE OF SUBTLITIES OF PRACTICE

This bodhisattva dwells in all buddhas' knowledge regarding the
 subtleties of practice on the ten grounds, specifically including:

Their knowledge regarding the subtleties involved in births and
 deaths;
 Their knowledge regarding the subtleties involved in worlds;
 Their knowledge regarding the subtleties involved in abandon-
 ing the home life;
 Their knowledge regarding the subtleties involved in achieving
 realization of the path;
 Their knowledge regarding the subtleties involved in sovereign
 mastery in the exercise of the spiritual powers;
 Their knowledge regarding the subtleties involved in turning
 the Dharma wheel;
 Their knowledge regarding the subtleties involved in the sus-
 taining of a lifespan;

Their knowledge regarding the subtleties involved in manifesting the appearance of entering nirvāṇa;
 And their knowledge regarding the subtleties involved in the long endurance of the Dharma.

He knows in accordance with reality all of the other such sorts of knowledge with regard to subtleties.

20. THIS BODHISATTVA'S KNOWLEDGE OF THE TATHĀGATAS' SECRETS

So too does he know in accordance with reality the secret circumstances of all buddhas, specifically including:

Their secrets associated with the body;
 Their secrets associated with the mouth;
 Their secrets associated with the mind;
 Their secrets associated with the assessment of what is and is not the right time;
 Their secrets associated with bestowing predictions on bodhisattvas;
 Their secrets associated with the attraction and training of beings;
 Their secrets associated with the distinctions among vehicles;
 Their secrets associated with the eighty-four thousand sorts of different root faculties;
 Their secrets associated with the doing of karmic deeds in accordance with reality;
 Their secrets associated with actions;
 And their secrets associated with the realization of bodhi.

He knows all such secrets in accordance with reality.

21. THIS BODHISATTVA'S KNOWLEDGE OF THE INTERPENETRATION OF KALPAS

This bodhisattva fathoms all of the knowledge of the Buddhas with regard to the interpenetration of kalpas [and other such measures of time], specifically knowing:

How a single kalpa may subsume an *asaṃkhyeya* of kalpas;
 How an *asaṃkhyeya* of kalpas may subsume a single kalpa;
 How an enumerated number of kalpas may subsume innumerable kalpas;
 How innumerable kalpas may subsume an enumerated number of kalpas;
 How a single mind-moment may subsume an incalculably long period of time;
 How an incalculably long period of time may subsume a single mind-moment;

How a kalpa may subsume what does not constitute a kalpa;
 How what does not constitute a kalpa may subsume a kalpa;
 How a kalpa in which there is a buddha subsumes a kalpa in
 which there is no buddha;
 How a kalpa with no buddha subsumes a kalpa in which there
 is a buddha;
 How past and future kalpas subsume the present kalpa;
 How the present kalpa subsumes past and future kalpas;
 How future and past kalpas subsume the present kalpa;
 How the present kalpa subsumes future and past kalpas;
 How long kalpas subsume short kalpas;
 And how short kalpas subsume long kalpas.

So, too, he knows in accordance with reality all the other characteristic features of how kalpas [and other such measures of time] may mutually subsume each other.²⁹⁸

22. THIS BODHISATVA'S KNOWING OF THE BUDDHA'S PENETRATING KNOWLEDGE

This bodhisattva [knows in accordance with reality]:

The Buddhas' penetrating knowledge²⁹⁹ that knows ordinary common people;³⁰⁰

The penetrating knowledge that knows atoms;

The penetrating knowledge that knows [the bodies of buddha] lands;³⁰¹

The penetrating knowledge that knows bodies and minds;

The types of enlightened penetrating knowledge such as the enlightened penetrating knowledge that knows beings' bodies and minds, the enlightened penetrating knowledge that knows beings' actions, or the enlightened penetrating knowledge that knows universally pervasive practices;

The penetrating knowledge that knows the manifestation of adaptive practices;

The penetrating knowledge that knows the manifestation of contrary practices;

The penetrating knowledge that knows what is inconceivable;

The penetrating knowledge that knows what beings of the world, *śrāvaka*-disciples, *pratyekabuddhas*, and bodhisattvas are capable of knowing;

And the penetrating knowledge that knows what no one else is capable of knowing for only a *tathāgata* is capable of knowing it.

He penetratingly comprehends all of these in accordance with reality.

Sons of the Buddha, the knowledge of all buddhas is vast, measureless, and boundless. If one is a bodhisattva dwelling on this ground, then one is able to have a penetrating knowledge of wisdom such as this.

23. THIS BODHISATTVA'S ACQUISITION OF COUNTLESS LIBERATIONS

(G) Sons of the Buddha, as this bodhisattva *mahāsattva* engages in the practices associated with this ground, he acquires:

- The bodhisattva's inconceivable liberation;
- The bodhisattva's unimpeded liberation;
- The pure practice liberation;
- The light of the universal gateway liberation;
- The *tathāgata* treasury liberation;
- The accordance with the unimpeded wheel liberation;³⁰²
- The penetration of the three periods of time liberation;
- The Dharma realm treasury liberation;
- The liberation light liberation;
- The transcendence of differences liberation.

Sons of the Buddha, these ten liberations are chief among those acquired by this bodhisattva. It is on this ground that he acquires all of the measurelessly and boundlessly many hundreds of thousands of myriads of *koṭis* of *asaṃkhyeyas* of liberations such as these.

24. THIS BODHISATTVA'S SAMĀDHIS, DHĀRAṆĪS, AND SUPERKNOWLEDGES

In this very same manner, he acquires hundreds of thousands of myriads of measureless *asaṃkhyeyas* of samādhis, acquires hundreds of thousands of myriads of measureless *asaṃkhyeyas* of *dhāraṇīs*, and acquires hundreds of thousands of myriads of measureless *asaṃkhyeyas* of spiritual superknowledges.

25. THIS BODHISATTVA'S LIMITLESS MEMORY POWER

(H) In this bodhisattva's complete development of bodhi-concordant wisdom such as this, he completely develops measureless memory power. He is able in but a single mind-moment to go to the dwelling places of the measurelessly many buddhas throughout the ten directions, receiving illumination in measurelessly many dharmas and taking in the rain of measurelessly many dharmas. In every case, he is able to take in and retain all of these.

26. HIS LIMITLESS MEMORY COMPARED TO THE OCEAN'S LIMITLESS CAPACITY

Just as, with the sole exception of the great ocean, all other land is unable to take in the great rains poured down by Sāgara, the

dragon king, so too, O Sons of the Buddha, is this also the case for this bodhisattva *mahāsattva*. Because he is able to take in the great Dharma rains, he becomes able to enter into the Tathāgata's secret places. This Dharma rain is such that all beings including *śrāvaka*-disciples and *pratyekabuddhas* are in every case unable to take it in. Even all bodhisattvas from the first ground on through the ninth ground are also unable to take it in and retain it. It is only this bodhisattva *mahāsattva* who dwells on the Dharma Cloud Ground who is able to take it all in and retain it.

Sons of the Buddha, this circumstance is comparable to that of the great ocean. It is always able to take in all the rain sent down from the great clouds created by a single dragon king. So, too, even if the rain sent down from the clouds created by two dragon kings, three, four, five, ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, a hundred, a thousand, a myriad, a *koṭi*, a hundred *koṭis*, a thousand myriads of *koṭis* of *nayutas* of dragon kings, or even up to countless and boundlessly many dragon kings who were to all simultaneously pour down their rains, the great ocean would still be able to take it all in and retain it. How is this the case? This is because the great ocean is a vessel possessed of incalculably great capacity.

Sons of the Buddha, so too it is with this bodhisattva *mahāsattva*. As he dwells on the Dharma Cloud Ground in the abode of but a single buddha, his capacity to take in the great rain of Dharma illumination is such that, whether it be the rain which is rained down by two buddhas, three, four, five, ten, a hundred, a thousand, a myriad, a *koṭi*, and so forth up to all the rain that is rained down by countless and boundlessly many buddhas, so many buddhas that their number is indescribable and ineffable, beyond limits, and beyond calculation, he is always able even then to take in all of the rain poured down from their great Dharma clouds, doing so in but a single mind-moment. It is for this very reason that this ground is known as the Dharma Cloud Ground.

27. VIMUKTICANDRA ASKS ABOUT THE LIMITS OF THIS BODHISATTVA'S MEMORY

[Liberation Moon Bodhisattva] then asked, "Son of the Buddha, from how many buddhas is this bodhisattva *mahāsattva* able in but a single mind-moment to take in their great rain of Dharma illumination?"

28. VAJRAGARBHA'S ANALOGY TO DESCRIBE THIS BODHISATTVA'S MEMORY POWER

[Vajragarbha Bodhisattva] then replied:

This is something that one could not know even through numerical calculations. It could only be described by resort to analogy. Sons of the Buddha, suppose for instance that all the beings in worlds as numerous as the atoms in all the ineffably many hundreds of thousands of myriads of *koṭis* of *nayutas* of worlds of the ten directions had each acquired the “hearing-and-retaining” *dhāraṇī*, had each become the attendant of a buddha, had each become foremost in learning among all of the *śrāvaka*-disciples, and had each become the likes of Great Differentiation Bhikshu,³⁰³ foremost in learning among the disciples of Vajra Lotus Blossom Supremacy Buddha.³⁰⁴ Suppose too that, just as one of these beings had perfected just such power of extensive learning, so too had all of those other beings also done so in the same manner. Suppose as well that the Dharma acquired by any one of them was not duplicated in that received by the second and that this was also true of all the rest of them so that the Dharma received by every one of them was in each and every case different.

Sons of the Buddha, what do you think? Would all of that which is taken in and retained by all these beings through their powers of extensive learning be a great amount, or not?

[Liberation Moon Bodhisattva] replied, “It would be incalculably so.”

[Vajragarbha Bodhisattva] then said:

Sons of the Buddha, I should now inform you that, in but a single mind-moment, all at the same time, in the abode of but a single Buddha, this bodhisattva dwelling on this Dharma Cloud Ground is able to take in the entire Dharma realm’s Dharma treasury of all three periods of time, that which is known as “the great rain of Dharma light.”

When compared with the extensive learning power of this bodhisattva, the extensive-learning power of all those beings described above would not even amount to a hundredth part, would not even amount to a thousandth part or one part in a myriad parts, would not amount to even a single part in a thousand myriads of *koṭis* of *nayutas* of parts, and so forth until we come to its inability to become comparable even by resort to numerical calculation or analogy.

And just as this is the case regarding what he hears from one single buddha, so too is he also able in every case to simultaneously take in the great rain of Dharma light rained down by all the buddhas as numerous as the atoms in however many worlds there are throughout the ten directions.

Furthermore, he is even able in every case to take in simultaneously and in but a single mind-moment the entire great rain of Dharma light sent down by incalculably and boundlessly many more buddhas than this.

29. THE DHARMA CLOUD BODHISATTVA'S GREAT DHARMA RAIN

Additionally, O Son of the Buddha, through the power of his vows, the bodhisattva *mahāsattva* dwelling on this Dharma Cloud Ground brings forth the great kindness and compassion, thus setting loose the great Dharma thunder. His superknowledges, clarities, and fearlessnesses are the radiance of his lightning, his bringing forth of great wisdom is the blowing of his swift winds, his immense merit and roots of goodness are his dense clouds, his manifestation of all the different sorts of form bodies are his variously colored clouds, and his defeat of the *māras* through the proclamation of the Dharma is the sound of his thunder.

He is able, simultaneously and in but a single mind-moment, to reach everywhere without exception throughout all those worlds as numerous as or even greater than the above-described number of atoms and, in accordance with beings' dispositions, he rains down the sweet-dew Dharma rain of the good Dharma, extinguishing the smoke and flames of beings' ignorance-generated afflictions. It is for this reason that this is known as the Dharma Cloud Ground.

Additionally, O Sons of the Buddha, from the time this bodhisattva *mahāsattva* who dwells on the Dharma Cloud Ground descends from a world's Tuṣita Heaven on through to the time he manifests entry into *mahāparinirvāṇa*, in carrying out all the buddha works that he does, he adapts to the beings that he brings to liberation, using the power of spiritual superknowledges in every case. He also does this in the worlds contained within two great trichiliocosms and so forth on up to worlds as numerous as the atoms described above and additionally does this in a number of worlds exceeding even this, doing so even in a hundred thousand myriads of *koṭis* of *asaṃkhyeyas* of additional worlds wherein, from the time he descends from the Tuṣita Heaven to the time that he manifests entry into *mahāparinirvāṇa*, in carrying out all the buddha works that he does, he adapts to the beings that he brings to liberation, using the power of spiritual superknowledges in every case.

30. THIS BODHISATTVA'S USE OF SPIRITUAL POWERS IN TRANSFORMING WORLDS

(1) In using his wisdom, this bodhisattva who dwells on this ground acquires the power of supreme sovereign mastery. Through skillful selectivity in the application of his great wisdom, he may transform a narrow land into a broad one, a broad land into narrow one, or a defiled land into a pure one. In this manner, throughout all worldly realms, he is in every case possessed of spiritual powers such as these.

Or this bodhisattva may bring it about that an entire great trichiliocosm together with its Iron Ring Mountains and rivers is placed within a single atom even without there being any constriction occurring therein as a result of this.

Or he may manifest the entry into a single atom of all the adornments in two, three, four, five, ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty worlds, a hundred or a thousand worlds, a myriad *koṭis* of worlds, or measurelessly many ineffable numbers of ineffably many worlds.

Or he may manifest within the adornments associated with a single world those associated with an ineffably large number of worlds.

Or he may see to the placement into but a single world all the beings contained within up to an ineffably large number of worlds, in all such cases being able to do so without there being any constriction occurring therein.

Or it may be that he sees to the placement of the beings contained in a single world into an ineffably large number of worlds.

Or it may be that he sees to the placement onto the tip of a single hair an ineffably large number of worlds, doing so even without causing any disturbance to the beings contained within them.

Or he may manifest within but a single hair all of the adornments associated with all buddhas' spiritual powers.

31. HIS USE OF POWERS IN MANIFESTING BODIES & SUPERNATURAL PHENOMENA

Or it may be that, in but a single mind-moment, he manifests bodies as numerous as the atoms in an ineffably large number of worlds while also manifesting for each and every one of those bodies just such an incalculably great number of hands that proceed with diligent mind to make offerings to all buddhas of the ten directions. Each and every one of those hands then takes up a number of lotus blossoms as numerous as the sands of the Ganges, gathers them together, and scatters them down as offerings to the Buddhas. In the same manner, they gather up perfumes, blends

of various scents, powdered incenses, raiment, banners, canopies, and precious things to present as offerings to the Buddhas.

Additionally, for each and every one of those bodies, he may transformationally manifest a number of heads as numerous as all those atoms. For each and every one of those heads he may manifest tongues as numerous as all those atoms from each and every one of which, through the exercise of his spiritual powers, there then resound his praises of all buddhas.

In each succeeding mind-moment, he may fill up the ten directions with phenomena such as these and, in each succeeding mind-moment, he may then employ his spiritual superknowledges to manifest in countless worlds the appearances of realizing the path to buddhahood, turning the wheel of the Dharma, and so forth on through to his manifestation of entering *mahāparinirvāṇa*.

Using the powers of his spiritual superknowledges, he manifests throughout the three periods of time countless bodies while manifesting within his bodies the appearance of the Buddhas' measurelessly and boundlessly numerous adornments of buddha lands while also manifesting within his bodies the appearance of the phenomena occurring during the creation and destruction of all worlds.

He may cause all the various sorts of winds to blow forth from a single one of his hair pores while still not disturbing any being, or he may wish to form measurelessly and boundlessly many worlds into the waters of a single sea in which sea he then creates a great lotus blossom the form, color and brilliant light of which illuminate everywhere throughout measurelessly and boundlessly many worlds even as it manifests within itself the appearances of the marvelous adornments associated with the realization of bodhi, and so forth up to and including the appearances associated with acquiring the knowledge of all modes.

He may manifest within his bodies all the different sorts of light including that of precious *maṇi* pearls, lightning, the light of the sun, moon, and stars, and so forth, including all the radiant phenomena throughout the worlds of the ten directions, manifesting the appearance of all such things within his bodies.

Or it may be that, with the breath from his mouth, he is able to cause all the measurelessly and boundlessly many worlds of the ten directions to tremor while nonetheless not causing any of their beings to be seized with thoughts of terror.

Or it may be that he manifests the appearances of the kalpa-ending water disasters and kalpa-ending wind and fire disasters taking place in the worlds of the ten directions.

Or in this same way, he may manifest adornments of a being's body that accord with beings' predilections. He may wish to manifest within his own body the body of a *tathāgata*, manifest his own body within that of a *tathāgata*, manifest his own buddha land within the body of a *tathāgata*, or manifest the body of a *tathāgata* within his own buddha land.

Sons of the Buddha, the bodhisattva *mahāsattva* dwelling on this Dharma Cloud Ground may carry out just such transformations of spiritual powers as these as well as measurelessly many other sorts of extraordinary appearances produced through his sovereign mastery of the spiritual powers.

32. THE CONGREGANTS WONDER: "WHAT MORE COULD EVEN A BUDDHA DO?"

(j) At that time, there were bodhisattvas, devas, dragons, *yakṣas*, *gandharvas*, *asuras*, *garuḍas*, *kinnaras*, and *mahoragas* as well as Śakra Devānām Indra, the Brahma Heaven devas, the Four Heavenly Kings, the devas' sons of the Maheśvara Heavens, and the devas of the Pure Dwelling Heaven who each had this thought: "If the powers of spiritual superknowledges and wisdom powers of this bodhisattva are so measurelessly and boundlessly great as this, what more in addition to that could be done even by a buddha?"

33. LIBERATION MOON ASKS VAJRAGARBHA FOR AN EXPLANATION

At that time, Liberation Moon Bodhisattva Mahāsattva himself well aware of the thoughts in the minds of those in that great assembly, then posed a question to Vajragarbha Bodhisattva, saying: "O Son of the Buddha, those in the great assembly all have that about which they are now beset with doubts. Having heard about this bodhisattva's great powers of spiritual penetration and wisdom, they have fallen into a net of doubts. You should now cut off all their doubting delusions by revealing the marvelous phenomena associated with this bodhisattva's spiritual superknowledges and adornments."

34. VAJRAGARBHA ENTERS "THE NATURE OF ALL BUDDHA LANDS SAMĀDHI"

Vajragarbha Bodhisattva then immediately entered "the nature of the physical form of all buddha lands samādhi."³⁰⁵ The devas, dragons, *yakṣas*, *gandharvas*, *asuras*, *garuḍas*, and *mahoragas* as well as Śakra Devānām Indra, the Brahma Heaven devas, the World-protecting Heavenly Kings, the devas' sons of the Maheśvara

Heavens, and the devas of the Pure Dwelling Heaven all observed their own bodies enter into the body of Vajragarbha Bodhisattva wherein they saw the multitude of adorning phenomena transpiring throughout a great trichiliocosm that were such that, even were they to spend an entire kalpa attempting to describe them all, they could never come to the end of them.

They observed therein a buddha's bodhi tree within the *bodhimāṇḍa*. It had a trunk ten myriads of trichiliocosms in circumference that was a hundred myriads of trichiliocosms in height and that shaded an area of three thousand *koṭis* of trichiliocosms. Beneath it, there was a lion throne matching in scale the height and breadth of that tree upon which sat a buddha named All-Knowledge King Tathāgata.³⁰⁶ Everyone in that great assembly observed that buddha seated upon his throne along with all the supremely marvelous offerings that, even were one to try to describe them for an entire kalpa, one could still never finish.

After Vajragarbha Bodhisattva had manifested such great spiritual powers, he caused everyone in that great assembly to return once again to their original circumstance. Then the entire great assembly had thoughts of amazement at the rarity of what they had experienced, whereupon they fell silent and single-mindedly gazed up at Vajragarbha Bodhisattva.

35. LIBERATION MOON ASKS ABOUT THIS SAMĀDHI'S NAME AND CAPACITY

Liberation Moon Bodhisattva then inquired of Vajragarbha Bodhisattva, asking, "O Son of the Buddha, this is the most profoundly rare of circumstances. This samādhi is possessed of such immense power. What then is the name of this samādhi?"

Vajragarbha Bodhisattva then replied, "This samādhi is known as "the nature of the physical form of all buddha lands samādhi."

Liberation Moon Bodhisattva then inquired, "To how many places is the power of this samādhi able to extend?"

Vajragarbha Bodhisattva then replied:

O Son of the Buddha, were a bodhisattva *mahāsattva* to well cultivate and develop the power of this samādhi, he would thus be able in this way to manifest within his own body great trichiliocosms in number as the atoms in measurelessly many Ganges' sands of worlds and would in fact be able to exceed even this number. O Son of the Buddha, the bodhisattva *mahāsattva* dwelling on this Dharma Cloud Ground acquires measurelessly and boundlessly

many hundreds of thousands of myriads of *koṭis* of such bodhisattva samādhis.

Hence the body and physical deeds of this bodhisattva dwelling on this ground are difficult to fathom. His speech and verbal deeds are difficult to fathom. His mind and mental deeds are difficult to fathom. His sovereign mastery of the spiritual powers is difficult to fathom. His ability to contemplate the dharmas of the three periods of time is difficult to fathom. The samādhis he practices and enters are difficult to fathom. The power of his knowledge is difficult to fathom. His roaming and sporting in the liberations is difficult to fathom. And as for what he accomplishes through transformations, what he accomplishes through spiritual powers, and what he accomplishes through his strength, these are all difficult for anyone to fathom. To state it briefly, all that this bodhisattva does even up to and including when he raises up and sets down his feet cannot be fathomed by any bodhisattva even up to and including one who dwells in the position of the Dharma Prince on the Ground of Sublime Goodness.

Sons of the Buddha, I have now concluded this summary explanation of such incalculable circumstances as pertain to the this bodhisattva dwelling on the Dharma Cloud Ground. Were one to attempt an extensive explanation of it, one could never finish it even in measurelessly and boundlessly many *asaṃkhyeyas* of kalpas.

36. HE ASKS: "WHAT MORE MIGHT A BUDDHA'S POWERS ACCOMPLISH?"

[Liberation Moon Bodhisattva] then inquired, "O Son of the Buddha, if the powers of the practice domain and powers of spiritual superknowledges possessed by this bodhisattva are of this sort, then what additional factors must characterize the powers of the practice domain and powers of spiritual superknowledges as possessed by a buddha?"

37. VAJRAGARBHA CONTRASTS A FEW CLUMPS OF SOIL TO ALL WORLDS

[Vajragarbha Bodhisattva] replied:

O Son of the Buddha, by way of comparison, suppose there was someone who picked up two or three clumps of earth from somewhere on the four continents and then asked, 'Is the quantity of earth element contained in all of the boundlessly many worlds of even greater quantity than this?' As I see it, the question you have just asked is of this very sort. How could it be that one might

employ the wisdom of a bodhisattva as a basis for seeking to fathom the measureless wisdom of the Tathāgata?

Sons of the Buddha, if one were to pick up a small amount of earth from somewhere on the four continents, what remains would exceed it by the most extremely great amount. If it would take measurelessly many kalpas to merely describe a minor portion of the circumstances of those bodhisattvas dwelling on the Dharma Cloud Ground, how much the less could one succeed in describing the circumstances associated with one who dwells on the ground of the Tathāgata?

38. VAJRAGARBHA COMPARES MANY BODHISATTVAS' WISDOM TO ONE BUDDHA'S

Sons of the Buddha, I shall now describe this matter, causing you to understand it in a manner to which the Buddha will now attest. Suppose for example that there existed in each and every one of the directions a number of buddha worlds as numerous as the atoms in a measurelessly and boundlessly great number of world systems, all of which were filled as densely as paddy rice or thick forests with bodhisattvas dwelling on the tenth ground who had performed measurelessly and boundlessly many deeds in cultivation of a bodhisattva's meritorious qualities, wisdom, and *dhyāna* absorptions. Even so, when compared with the power of a single *tathāgata's* merit and wisdom, theirs could not amount even to a hundredth part, could not amount even to one part in a hundred thousand myriad *koṭis* of parts, and so forth until we come to its inability to achieve comparability even by resort to numerical calculation or analogy.

39. THE NATURE OF THIS BODHISATTVA'S PRACTICE AND WISDOM LIGHT

Sons of the Buddha, employing wisdom such as this, this bodhisattva accords with the physical, verbal, and mental actions of the Tathāgata himself even while never relinquishing any of his bodhisattva samādhis. Thus he continues in each and every kalpa to diligently make offerings of material gifts to all buddhas, thereby making offerings to countless and boundlessly many buddhas even while being able to completely take on the spiritual powers of all buddhas. So it is that he becomes ever more supreme in his illumination.

There is no one anywhere throughout the entire Dharma realm who, challenging him with difficult questions, would ever be able to prevail over this bodhisattva even if they were to pursue such challenges for hundreds of thousands of myriads of *koṭis* of kalpas.

40. THE LIGHT OF HIS WISDOM, MERIT, AND GOOD ROOTS COMPARED TO GOLD

Sons of the Buddha, it is as if there were a great master goldsmith who was skilled in refining gold to make adornments inlaid with precious *maṇi* pearls, adornments to be worn about the neck of the Vaśavartin Heaven King³⁰⁷ that are so superior that such adornments cannot be outshone [by the radiance of] any of the other devas and cannot be rivaled by any other deva's adornments.

Sons of the Buddha, the wisdom, meritorious qualities, and roots of goodness of this bodhisattva dwelling on the tenth ground could never be rivaled by that of all the bodhisattva *mahāsattvas* dwelling on the first ground through the ninth ground. Because the bodhisattva dwelling on this ground has acquired the illuminating light of great wisdom, it is able to accord with all-knowledge. Hence it is such that the wisdom light of the others cannot outshine it.

41. THE RADIANCE OF THIS BODHISATTVĀ'S WISDOM COMPARED TO GOLD

Sons of the Buddha, this is analogous to the light of the Maheśvara Heaven King³⁰⁸ that cannot be rivaled by the light of any being in any other station of rebirth. It has the capacity to cause beings' bodies and minds to feel clear and cool.

Sons of the Buddha, so too it is with this bodhisattva *mahāsattva*. As he dwells on this Dharma Cloud Ground, his wisdom light cannot be rivaled by that of any *śrāvaka*-disciple or *pratyekabuddha*. So too, that of bodhisattva *mahāsattvas* dwelling on the first ground through the ninth ground is also unable to rival it. The bodhisattva dwelling on this ground is able to influence incalculably many beings to abide in the path to the realization of all-knowledge.

42. THE BUDDHAS' ONGOING TEACHING OF THIS BODHISATTVĀ

Sons of the Buddha, all buddhas of the ten directions expound on wisdom for the bodhisattva *mahāsattva* who dwells on this ground, thereby causing him to achieve a penetrating comprehension of the three periods of time, causing him to rightly know the characteristic features of the Dharma realm, causing him to everywhere cover all worlds with his knowledge, causing him to illuminate all worldly realms, causing him to everywhere cover all beings with great compassion and great kindness, and causing him to rightly and universally see and know all dharmas. To speak of what is essential, they completely explain the path to all-knowledge for his sake.

43. VAJRAGARBHA'S FINAL STATEMENTS ABOUT A 10TH GROUND BODHISATTVA

Sons of the Buddha, this has been the presentation on the bodhisattva *mahāsattva*'s tenth ground, the Dharma Cloud Ground.

a. THE BODHISATTVA'S STATION AND DHARMA PRACTICE

Dwelling on this ground, he most often becomes a Maheśvara Heaven King endowed with the penetrating light of wisdom with which he skillfully expounds on *śrāvaka*-disciple and *pratyekabuddha* practice as well as on the bodhisattva's *pāramitās*. Even if challenged with any of the difficult questions posed by anyone in the Dharma realm, there would still be no one who could exhaust his ability to answer.

b. THE BODHISATTVA'S MINDFULNESS

In all of the good works that he pursues, no matter whether it be in his practice of giving, pleasing words, beneficial actions, or joint endeavors, he never departs from his mindfulness of the Buddha, his mindfulness of the Dharma, his mindfulness of his bodhisattva companions, his mindfulness of the bodhisattva practices, his mindfulness of the *pāramitās*, and his mindfulness of all the practices associated with the grounds. He never departs from his mindfulness of the ten powers, his mindfulness of the fearlessnesses, his mindfulness of the exclusive dharmas, and so forth until we come to his never departing from his mindfulness of his quest to achieve complete fulfillment of the knowledge of all modes.

c. THE BODHISATTVA'S ASPIRATION TO SERVE BEINGS

He always thinks, "Oh when will I become able to serve these beings as a leader, one who is supremely excellent, one who is great, one who is marvelous, one who is superior, one who is insuperable, one who serves them as guide, one who serves them as a general, one who serves them as a mentor, one who is worthy of their veneration?," and so forth on up to "...one upon whom all beings can rely?"

d. THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE BODHISATTVA'S VIGOR AND VOWS

If he wishes in this way to devote himself to the diligent practice of vigor, then, in but a single mind-moment, he succeeds in acquiring samādhis as numerous as the atoms in immeasurably many hundreds of thousands of myriads of *koṭis* of *nayutas* of ineffable numbers of ineffably many worlds and becomes able to manifest a bodhisattva retinue as numerous as just so very many atoms.

Were he to avail himself of the power of vows, through sovereign mastery in the spiritual superknowledges, he could freely manifest these phenomena in even greater numbers so large that, no matter whether we speak of his practices, of his supremely marvelous offerings, of his resolute faith, of the physical or verbal karma that he generates, of his radiance, of his faculties, of his employment of psychic powers, of his voice, or of his domains of practice, one could never enumerate them even in however many hundreds of thousands of myriads of *koṭis* of *nayutas* of kalpas one might attempt to do so.

III. THE FINAL SUMMARIZING DISCUSSION OF THE TEN GROUNDS³⁰⁹

A. HIS EVENTUAL ALL-KNOWLEDGE LIKENED TO RIVERS' FLOW INTO THE SEA

(A) Sons of the Buddha, this is what is known as the bodhisattva *mahāsattva*'s sequential progression through the grounds as he moves toward acquisition of the knowledge of all modes.

Sons of the Buddha, this circumstance is analogous to that of Lake Anavatapta from which the four rivers flow forth and completely fill the four continents' waterways, progressively increasing without ever being exhausted until they finally flow into the great ocean.

Sons of the Buddha, so too it is with the bodhisattva *mahāsattva*. The waters of roots of goodness and great vows flow forth from the bodhisattva. Employing the four means of attraction, he becomes inexhaustible in his complete satisfaction of beings' needs and continually increases in this until he finally reaches the knowledge of all modes.

B. THE 10 GROUNDS' DIFFERENCES LIKENED TO THOSE OF 10 MOUNTAIN KINGS

(B) Sons of the Buddha, these ten bodhisattva grounds each have distinct differences that all originate in the Buddha's knowledge. This is just as it is with the ten great mountain kings the existence of which originates in the great earth. What then are these ten? They are: the Snow Mountain King, the Fragrance Mountain King, the Khadira Mountain King, the Rishis-and-Āryas Mountain King, the Yugaṃdhara Mountain King, the Horse Ear Mountain King, the Nimindhara Mountain King, the Cakravāḍa Mountain King, the Manifold Features Mountain King, and the Sumeru Mountain King.

1. THE FIRST GROUND COMPARED TO THE SNOW MOUNTAIN KING

Sons of the Buddha, just as the Snow Mountain King has all the various sorts of herbs gathered thereon so abundantly that one

could never harvest them all, so too is this the case, O Sons of the Buddha, for the bodhisattva *mahāsattva* who dwells on the bodhisattva's Ground of Joyfulness, for the world's classical texts, cultural arts, literature, verse, mantras, and occult techniques are all so completely gathered together in him there that one could never come to the end of them all.

2. THE SECOND GROUND COMPARED TO THE FRAGRANCE MOUNTAIN KING

Sons of the Buddha, just as on the Fragrance Mountain King, all of the various sorts of incenses are all so abundantly gathered together there that they are endless, so too it is with the bodhisattva *mahāsattva* who dwells on the Ground of Stainlessness, for the moral precept observances, *dhūta* practices, awe-inspiring deportments, and supportive dharmas are all so completely gathered together in him there that one could never come to the end of them all.

3. THE THIRD GROUND COMPARED TO THE KHADIRA MOUNTAIN KING

Sons of the Buddha, just as the Khadira Mountain King composed solely of jewels has all the marvelous flowers so abundantly gathered together on it that one could never harvest them all, so too it is for the bodhisattva who dwells on the Ground of Shining Light, for the world's *dhyāna* absorptions, spiritual superknowledges, and samādhi gateways are all so completely gathered together in him there that one could never come to the end of them all.

4. THE 4TH GROUND COMPARED TO THE RISHIS-AND-ĀRYAS MOUNTAIN KING

Sons of the Buddha, just as on the Rishis-and-Āryas Mountain King composed solely of jewels there are endlessly many *āryas* possessed of the five spiritual superknowledges, so too it is, O Sons of the Buddha, with the bodhisattva *mahāsattva* dwelling on the Ground of Blazing Brilliance, for the causes and conditions by which beings are caused to enter the path along with his facility in responding to the many different sorts of related challenging questions are so completely gathered together in him there that one could never come to the end of them all.

5. THE FIFTH GROUND COMPARED TO THE YUGAMDHARA MOUNTAIN KING

Sons of the Buddha, just as on the Yugaṃdhara Mountain King composed solely of jewels, there are gathered together there so many *yakṣas*, those great spirits, that the aggregation of *yakṣas* and *rākṣasas* is endlessly abundant, so too it is, O Sons of the Buddha, with the bodhisattva dwelling on the bodhisattva's Difficult-to-Conquer Ground, for the sovereign masteries, psychic powers, and

spiritual superknowledges are so completely gathered together in him there that one could never describe them all.

6. THE SIXTH GROUND COMPARED TO THE HORSE EAR MOUNTAIN KING

Sons of the Buddha, just as on the Horse Ear Mountain King composed solely of jewels, the many kinds of marvelous fruits are gathered there in such abundance that one could never harvest them all, so too it is, O Sons of the Buddha, with the bodhisattva *mahāsattva* dwelling on the Ground of Direct Presence, for the profound dharmas of causes and conditions and the facility to discourse on *śrāvaka*-disciples' fruits of the path are so completely gathered together in him there that one could never come to the end of them all.

7. THE SEVENTH GROUND COMPARED TO THE NIMINDHARA MOUNTAIN KING

Sons of the Buddha, just as on the Nimindhara Mountain King composed solely of jewels all of the greatly powerful dragon spirits are so abundantly gathered together there that one could never come to the end of them, so too it is, O Sons of the Buddha, with the bodhisattva *mahāsattva* dwelling on the Far-Reaching Ground, for the many different skillful means and wisdom as well as his facility to discourse on a *pratyekabuddha*'s path are so completely gathered together in him there that one could never come to the end of them all.

8. THE EIGHTH GROUND COMPARED TO THE CAKRAVĀDA MOUNTAIN KING

Sons of the Buddha, just as on the Cakravāḍa Mountain King composed solely of jewels, those whose minds have achieved sovereign mastery are so abundantly gathered together there that one could never come to the end of them, so too it is, O Sons of the Buddha, with the bodhisattva *mahāsattva* dwelling on the Ground of Immovability, for all bodhisattvas' paths of sovereign mastery and their abilities to discourse on the world's realms are so completely gathered together in him there that one could never come to the end of them all.

9. THE NINTH GROUND COMPARED TO THE MANIFOLD SIGNS MOUNTAIN KING

Sons of the Buddha, just as on the Manifold Signs Mountain King composed solely of jewels, all the *asuras* possessed of great spiritual powers are so abundantly present there that one could never come to the end of them, so too it is, O Sons of the Buddha, in the case of the bodhisattva dwelling on the bodhisattva's Ground of Sublime Goodness, for the practices and knowledge by which one transforms beings and discourses on the world's aspects are so

completely gathered together in him there that one could never come to the end of them all.

10. THE TENTH GROUND COMPARED TO THE SUMERU MOUNTAIN KING

Sons of the Buddha, just as on the Sumeru Mountain King, there are endlessly gathered together all of the devas and spirits, so too it is, O Sons of the Buddha, in the case of the bodhisattva dwelling on the Dharma Cloud Ground, for the Tathāgata's ten powers, four fearlessnesses, and proclamations of the Dharma of all buddhas are so completely gathered together in him there that one could never come to the end of them all.

11. THE 10 GROUNDS IN ALL-KNOWLEDGE LIKENED TO MOUNTAINS IN THE SEA

Sons of the Buddha, just as these ten jeweled mountains all abide in the midst of the great sea and possess their distinctive features based on the waters of that great sea, so too it is with the bodhisattva *mahāsattva*'s ten grounds that all reside within the knowledge of the Buddha and possess their distinctive aspects in reliance upon all-knowledge.

C. THE TEN GROUNDS COMPARED TO TEN ASPECTS OF THE GREAT OCEAN

(c) Sons of the Buddha, [these ten bodhisattva grounds] are comparable to the great ocean that, because of ten characteristic features, is inalterably referred to as “the great ocean.”³¹⁰ What then are those ten features? They are:

- First, it progresses gradually from its shallows to its depths;
- Second, it refuses to remain together with dead bodies;
- Third, all other waters lose their names on flowing into it;
- Fourth, it is of a single flavor;
- Fifth, it is a place in which an abundance of precious jewels are found;
- Sixth, it is the most extremely deep and difficult to fathom;
- Seventh, it is incalculably vast;
- Eighth, it is a place in which beings with huge bodies reside;
- Ninth, it does not move beyond its long-established boundaries;
- Tenth, it is able to take in all the great rains without ever overflowing.

Sons of the Buddha, so too it is with the bodhisattva practices that on the basis of ten causes and conditions acquire the inalterably exclusive designation “bodhisattva practices.” What then are those ten? They are:

- On the Ground of Joyfulness one gradually and sequentially develops increasingly solid vows;
- On the Ground of Stainlessness one does not abide in company with those who break the moral precepts;
- On the Ground of Shining Light one relinquishes the world's false designations;
- On the Ground of Blazing Brilliance one acquires a single-minded and indestructible pure faith in the Buddha;
- On the Difficult-to-Conquer Ground one develops incalculably many skillful means and spiritual superknowledges and initiates endeavors within the world;
- On the Ground of Direct Presence one contemplates the extremely profound dharmas of causes and conditions;
- On the Far-Reaching Ground one employs a vast mind in skillful examination and selection of dharmas;
- On the Ground of Immovability one becomes able to initiate the manifestation of immense works of adornment;
- On the Ground of Sublime Goodness one becomes able to acquire profound liberations and reach a penetrating comprehension of practice in the world that accords with reality and never goes beyond it;
- On the Dharma Cloud Ground one becomes able to take in all buddhas' great rain of Dharma light.

D. THE TEN GROUNDS COMPARED TO A LARGE MAÑI JEWEL

(D) Sons of the Buddha, this circumstance is analogous to that of a large and precious *mañi* jewel that by virtue of possessing ten characteristic aspects is able to bestow all manner of precious things on beings. What then are those ten? They are:

- First, it comes forth from the great sea;
- Second, it is enhanced by the refinements of a skillful artisan;
- Third, it is made ever more refined;
- Fourth, it is rid of defilements;
- Fifth, fire is used in its refinement;
- Sixth, it is adorned with a multitude of precious jewels;
- Seventh, it is strung with precious thread;
- Eighth, it is placed atop a tall pillar composed of lapis lazuli;
- Ninth, its light rays radiate in the four directions;
- Tenth, it rains down the many sorts of precious things in response to the King's wishes.

Sons of the Buddha, in his bringing forth the precious jewel of the resolve to realize bodhi, the bodhisattva *mahāsattva* is also possessed of ten characteristic aspects. What then are those ten? They are:

- First, from the point of bringing forth that resolve, he pursues the practice of giving and abandons miserliness;
- Second, he cultivates the observance of the moral precepts and practices the *dhūta* austerities;
- Third, through the *dhyaṇa* absorptions, liberations, and samādhis, he is caused to become increasingly refined in his marvelousness;
- Fourth, he brings forth purity in his path practices;
- Fifth, he trains himself in skillful means and spiritual super-knowledges;
- Sixth, he creates adornments based on the profound dharma of causes and conditions;
- Seventh, whatever he does is strung together with all the different sorts of profound skillful means and wisdom;
- Eighth, he is placed high atop the pillar of the spiritual super-knowledges and sovereign masteries;
- Ninth, he contemplates the actions of beings and then emanates the light of extensive learning and wisdom;
- Tenth, all buddhas bestow on him their consecration of his knowledge at which time he becomes able to carry out for all beings the works of a buddha and then falls in among those counted as possessed of all-knowledge.

E. THE PREREQUISITE CONDITIONS FOR HEARING THE TEN GROUNDS TEACHINGS

(E) Sons of the Buddha, as for this chapter on all bodhisattvas' practice of the Dharma gateways to the attainment of all-knowledge and the meritorious qualities, if one had not already deeply planted roots of goodness, one would be unable even to obtain a hearing of it.

F. LIBERATION MOON ASKS: "HOW MUCH MERIT BY HEARING THIS TEACHING?"

Liberation Moon Bodhisattva then asked, "If one does succeed in hearing it, how much merit does such a person thereby acquire?"

G. VAJRAGARBHA EXPLAINS MERIT AND IMPORTANCE OF 10 GROUNDS TEACHING

[Vajragarbha Bodhisattva] replied, saying, "This corresponds to the merit associated with the power of all buddhas' omniscient wisdom. Thus the merit acquired from this person's hearing of these Dharma gateways is equivalent to the merit associated with

the goal sought when bringing forth the resolve to gain all-knowledge.

“How could this be? If one did not possess the bodhisattva’s resolve, then, on hearing this Dharma gateway, one would not have resolute faith in it, would not accept it, and would not uphold it. How much the less might one be able to actually personally carry forth its cultivation and achieve success in this endeavor?

“Sons of the Buddha, therefore one should realize that this person’s pursuit of the knowledge of all modes occurs because of having been able to hear this, because of having resolute faith in it, because of accepting it, and because of maintaining it in his cultivation of the practices.”

H. THE AUSPICIOUS SIGNS THAT OCCURRED WHEN THIS SUTRA’S TEACHING ENDED

On finishing the proclamation of this sutra, because of the spiritual powers of the Buddha, worlds throughout the ten directions as numerous as the atoms in ten *koṭis* of buddha lands underwent the six types and eighteen varieties of characteristic movements. Additionally, it was because of the very nature of the Dharma that such quaking occurred. The heavens then all rained down flowers that, like a cloud, floated on down. They also rained down all manner of incenses, necklaces, precious heavenly raiment, heavenly banners and canopies, precious things from the heavens, and heavenly physical adornments while also raining down celestial music, songs, and verses. As they descended, there arose even greater sounds of praises to the extraordinarily supreme matter of the ten grounds.

I. THE TEN DIRECTIONS’ BODHISATTVAS ATTEST TO THE TEACHING’S UNIVERSALITY

Just as the proclamation of this sutra on the ten grounds was taking place in the Paranirmita Vaśavartin Heaven associated with these four continents, so too did this also occur everywhere throughout all worlds of the ten directions. Because of the Buddha’s spiritual powers, from a number of worlds throughout the ten directions greater than the number of atoms in ten *koṭis* of buddha lands, bodhisattvas in numbers equal to the atoms in ten *koṭis* of buddha lands all came there and, completely filling up the space of the ten directions, they all spoke thus:

It is good indeed, good indeed, Vajragarbha, O Son of the Buddha, that you have so well proclaimed the characteristic features of the grounds in which all bodhisattva *mahāsattoas* dwell.

Son of the Buddha, we too have all identically been given the name “Vajragarbha.” We come here from a land called “Vajra Qualities,” from that place in which Vajra Banner Buddha resides. In all those places through which we passed in coming here, there was this proclamation of this sutra.

The assembled congregations were also of this very sort. So too were the words and phrases spoken also of this very sort. And so too were their meanings of this very sort, being neither enhanced nor reduced by comparison.

O Son of the Buddha, it is because of the power of the Buddha that we have arrived here in this great assembly, offering this certifying corroboration regarding these circumstances.

Son of the Buddha, just as we have come here to this assembled congregation, so too do bodhisattvas as numerous as the atoms in ten *koṭis* of buddha lands also go forth throughout all worlds of the ten directions to each and every one of the types of world realms, proceeding then to offer this certifying corroboration in all the Maṇi Jewel Palaces of the Paranirmita Vaśavartin Heaven Kings above their four-continent worlds.

J. VAJRAGARBHA’S SUMMARIZING VERSES AUGMENTED BY THE BUDDHA’S POWERS

At that time, Vajragarbha Bodhisattva contemplated the ten directions, contemplated that entire great assembly, and contemplated the deep Dharma realm, and, in order to offer praises to the generation of the resolve to gain all-knowledge, in order to reveal to beings the great power of the bodhisattvas, wishing to purify all the bodhisattva practices, wishing to draw in all beings, wishing to hold forth on the pursuit of all-knowledge, wishing to do away with all forms of worldly defilement, wishing to bestow upon all beings the causes and conditions associated with the knowledge of all modes, wishing to reveal the marvelous adorning phenomena associated with inconceivable wisdom, wishing to explain the differentiating aspects in the meritorious qualities possessed by all bodhisattvas, and wishing to cause the meaning of this to become ever more supremely and brightly manifest to beings, he took on the augmentation of the spiritual powers of the Buddha and then uttered verses, saying:

In all that bodhisattvas practice,
 they delight in skillfully achieved quiescence
 wherein their minds are free of any sort of attachment
 and, in this, are like empty space.

They are rid of the defilements of covetousness, hatred, and delusion and abide securely in the knowledge of the path.

Such unsurpassable practices as these are such that one should wish to listen to them. (17)

It is in this way that bodhisattvas throughout incalculably many kalpas persevere with diligent minds in always cultivating myriads of *koṭis* of types of roots of goodness,

in making offerings to countless buddhas, *pratyekabuddhas*, and arhats, and, for the sake of benefiting beings, then bring forth the bodhi resolve. (18)

They are intensely diligent in upholding moral precept practice, in *dhūta* austerities, and in eliminating the defilement of offenses. Their cultivation of goodness and patience are ever more sublime. Sensible to shame and blame, they are replete in awesome virtue.

Due to the causes and conditions provided by merit and knowledge, they have lofty and supreme minds that are bright and pure.

They deeply delight in the knowledge of the Buddha and, to become the same as Buddha, they generate the bodhi resolve. (19)

They present offerings to all buddhas throughout the ten directions and the three periods of time, bringing about the complete purification of so many lands that they are commensurate with the expanse of empty space.

Due to skillfulness in the completely penetrating comprehension of the uniform equality of all dharmas, and for the sake of bringing about the liberation of all beings, they bring forth the bodhi resolve.³¹¹ (20)

In this manner, all bodhisattvas bring forth this incalculably vast resolve and, on reaching the Ground of Joyfulness, put evils to rest and delight in the practice of giving.

They acquire the power of their original vows and give greater devotion to practicing kindness and compassion. They institute the profound practice of the ten good karmic paths and thereby become able to reach the Ground of Stainlessness.

Through moral precepts and learning, they develop a wealth of merit and, with a mind imbued with kindness, they feel pity for the world.

They eternally abandon every form of defilement and thus possess a profound mind that is always pure.

They everywhere contemplate in all worlds
the blazing fires of the three poisons.
Great eminences of this sort
are then able to enter the third ground, the Ground of Shining Light.

They contemplate the three realms as entirely empty,
as impermanent, as like a disease,
as like a boil, like an open sore shot with an arrow,
and as constantly aflame with the hundred varieties of suffering.

Observing all the faults of conditioned existence,
they have a desire to acquire a buddha's meritorious qualities,
develop the radiant flaming of a buddha's wisdom,
and then succeed in entering the Ground of Blazing Brilliance.

They perfect mindfulness and wisdom
and thus succeed in arriving in the knowledge of the path.
As they abide on this ground, they present offerings
of a hundred thousand varieties to all buddhas,
and are always able to deliberate with mindfulness
on the measureless qualities of the Buddhas.
They then succeed in entering what in all worlds
is known as the Difficult-to-Conquer Ground.

They are able to employ wisdom and skillful means
that they manifest in all different ways.
Everything to which they devote themselves
is done for the sake of benefiting those in the world.

They present offerings to all buddhas,
pursue endeavors that benefit beings,
and, keeping the dharma of the unproduced directly before them,
then enter the Ground of Direct Presence.

All that these bodhisattvas engage in
is such that everyone in the world would find difficult to know.
They are always free of any thought conceiving of a "self,"
while also having abandoned "existence" and "nonexistence" as well.

From their origin onward, all dharmas are empty and quiescent,
and function as they do because of the twelve-fold chain of causation.
They skillfully and completely fathom these subtleties
and become able then to enter the Far-Reaching Ground.

Practicing wisdom, skillful means, and such,
they realize that dharmas are characterized by quiescent cessation.
A great eminence of this sort
is someone who is difficult to fathom and difficult to rival.

Out of a desire to cause those in the world
to achieve skillful realization of quiescent cessation,
he returns to bring forth his cultivation of all of the practices
and engages in the various sorts of merit-generating endeavors.

He acquires a universally penetrating understanding
of the bases of all beings' different sorts of mental actions
and, in this manner, becomes able to enter
that ground comparable to empty space, the Ground of Immovability.

All of these bodhisattvas possessed of great wisdom
are completely able to embody the practice
of all the different sorts of wise endeavors
and acquire the power of the ten types of sovereign mastery.

Availing themselves of incalculably
and boundlessly many bodies, they are able
to manifest everywhere throughout the realms of the ten directions
and thereby expound on the sublime Dharma for others' sakes.

They have a skillful penetrating comprehension of all worldly realms
as well as of all realms of beings,
and, possessed of such great kindness and compassion as this,
they are then able to enter the Ground of Sublime Goodness.

Employing the foremost sort of marvelous and pure wisdom,
they skillfully contemplate the continuously-woven
fabric of karma and afflictions of the world's beings,
their deeply entangling and hazardous difficulties.

In order to bring beings such as these to liberation,
they acquire all buddhas' Dharma treasury
and skillfully discourse on the supreme meaning
while always remaining free of contradiction and error.

In this manner, they carry forth the sequential practice
and become completely equipped with all good dharmas,
thus progressing on to acquire the merit and wisdom
cultivated and accumulated on the ninth ground.

Wishing to acquire all buddhas' powers
and their foremost profound and marvelous benefit,
they then become able to receive the wisdom consecration
that is bestowed on them by all buddhas.

They first acquire countless meditative absorptions
with knowledge and practices that are the most ultimately vast.
At the very last, they acquire the indestructible
samādhi of the consecration of all-knowledge.

In this case where one becomes able to achieve realization of just such a samādhi of all-knowledge consecration as this, an immense lotus blossom immediately emerges, adorned with all sorts of precious jewels.

The bodhisattva, matching the scale of that lotus blossom, manifests his body as sitting on it with the other bodhisattvas, each sitting on his own lotus, all together gazing single-mindedly up at him.

At that time, that great bodhisattva, emanates from his body countless many hundreds of thousands of *koṭis* of light rays that extinguish all the world's sufferings

and then, afterward, emanates from the crown of his head hundreds of thousands of *koṭis* of light rays that everywhere illuminate the great assemblies of all buddhas throughout the ten directions.

Those rays then transform into a net-like canopy of light dwell in space up above them.

After having then made offerings to all buddhas, those rays then enter the bottoms of all buddhas' feet.

At that time, all buddhas as well as all great bodhisattvas each know that this bodhisattva has succeeded in acquiring the consecration of his knowledge.

After this occurs in this way, all buddhas then respond with a beam of light sent forth from between their eyebrows known as "[enhancer of] the station of all-knowledge" that then enters the crown of this bodhisattva's head.

The bestowal on this bodhisattva of the consecration by all the incalculably many buddhas is analogous to that of a wheel turning king when he bequeaths his position to his crown prince.

At that time, the worlds throughout the ten directions are everywhere beset with a great quaking movement that, reaching all the way down to the Avīci Hells and other such places, entirely extinguishes all of their sufferings.

It is for the sake of consummating all-knowledge that this bodhisattva acquires this consecration.

It is in this way that he then becomes one who has reached the Dharma Cloud Ground.

Dwelling on this ground,
 his wisdom then becomes boundless.
 He then thoroughly knows those causes and conditions
 by which to bring about the liberation of everyone in all worlds.
 He gains a penetrating knowledge of form and formless dharmas,
 the desire realm, the form realm, and the formless realm,
 is able to know the realms of beings,
 the realms of lands, and the Dharma realm,
 and is able as well to penetratingly fathom the enumerated dharmas,
 the innumerable dharmas,
 and so forth, on up to his ability to employ meditative contemplation
 in fathoming the countless other realms throughout empty space.
 On entering this ground, he becomes entirely replete
 with all of the bodhisattva's transformative capacities,
 the awesome spiritual powers of the Buddhas,
 their subtle knowledge, and their secret matters as well.
 He is also able then to wield an utterly penetrating comprehension
 of all enumerations of kalpas,
 while also being able to contemplate the realms of worlds
 residing even on the point of a single hair.
 All of the Tathāgatas,
 when dwelling on this unsurpassable ground,
 whether it be in their first taking on birth, their leaving the home life,
 their gaining right enlightenment, their turning the Dharma wheel,
 or their manifesting the appearance of entering nirvāṇa—
 this is all done entirely in accordance with wisdom.
 The wondrous liberation of quiescent cessation
 is brought to complete realization on this ground.
 Due to the immensity of their powers of recollection,
 those great eminences who dwell on this ground
 are able to entirely take in and retain
 the great Dharma rain of all buddhas.
 This circumstance is analogous to that of the waters of the great sea
 that are able to retain all rains sent down by the dragon kings.
 This bodhisattva's taking in of all of the great Dharma rains
 sent down by the Buddhas is just the same as this.
 If one compared the Dharma he simultaneously hears and absorbs
 in the abode of but a single buddha
 to that acquired by beings as numerous as the dusts
 in the incalculably many ten directions lands

who had all acquired hearing-and-retention *dhāraṇīs* and had achieved the realization of the Śrāvaka Disciple Vehicle, that of the latter could never match that gained by this bodhisattva, and could never be made to compare even by numerical calculation.

Through the power of his great wisdom as well as through the power of his previous³¹² great vows, he is able in the space of but a single mind-moment to go forth and appear throughout the incalculably many lands of the ten directions.

He sends down the sweet-dew elixir of the Dharma rain and thereby extinguishes the fires of the afflictions.

It is for this reason that all buddhas refer to this as “the Dharma Cloud Ground.”

The number of gifts bestowed as offerings on all buddhas by the great eminence who dwells on this ground surpasses that of all gifts presented by the devas.

His manifesting great spiritual powers everywhere

to appear before the many is so much more superior in its power that it exceeds them by orders of magnitude so incalculably many times, if one wished to calculate this through pondering it, one would then become confused and discouraged and unable to comprehend it.

The works done by the greatly wise ones dwelling on this ground as they raise up and set down each step are such that not even any of the other bodhisattvas dwelling on the ninth ground

could ever be able to fathom them.

How much the less might they be known by any other being, including even any other *śrāvaka*-disciple or *pratyekabuddha* throughout the three periods of time.

As he dwells herein, all buddhas reveal to him the phenomena associated with all-knowledge and cause him to possess a penetrating comprehension and unobstructed knowledge of the three periods of time.

They reveal to him the quiescence of the Dharma realm, and reveal too all of their different sorts of transformations throughout all worlds

in the midst of all types of beings

wherein all the dharmas practiced

involve profound, subtle, hidden, and sublime phenomena.

It is in this way that all of the Buddha’s meritorious qualities are sequentially revealed to him so that he is caused to know them.

The bodhisattva dwelling on this ground
 is able, using grand gifts presented as offerings,
 to go everywhere throughout all of the directions,
 making offerings to the Buddhas of the ten directions,
 presenting such gifts in offering
 that all of the other gifts presented by any type of being
 in any world
 remain entirely unable to rival them.

The wise one who dwells on this ground
 is in every case able to dispel
 the darkness of every sort of ignorance
 while offering instruction in the path of the Buddha.

In this, he is comparable to the Maheśvara Heaven King
 whose radiance extinguishes the afflictions of the multitudes,
 for the extinguishing of the many sorts of afflictions
 by the wisdom light of this son of the Buddha is much the same.

Those dwelling on this ground may all become
 sovereignly independent kings within the three realms of existence
 who, possessed of deeply penetrating wisdom,
 are skilled in using the Three Vehicles in their teaching.

They are able in the space of but a single mind-moment
 to acquire incalculably many samādhis
 and are able to see the buddhas of the ten directions
 in just as many numbers.

Vajragarbha Bodhisattva
 informed all of those great eminences, saying,
 “I have now concluded this general explanation
 of the marvelous practices that take place on these ten grounds.

Were one to attempt an expansive explanation,
 one could never finish it even in a thousand *koṭis* of kalpas.
 These then are what constitute
 the pure grounds of all of the great bodhisattvas.

In order to acquire the wisdom of the Buddha,
 one dwells on these grounds,
 securely abiding there, unmoving,
 like the great king of mountains.

On the first ground, one becomes completely equipped
 with the classical texts and all of the culture’s skills and arts,
 and, in this, one is comparable to the Snow Mountain King
 on which all of the many types of herbs grow in abundance.

In one's observance of moral precepts and in one's extensive learning,
one abides on the second ground
in a way comparable to the Fragrance Mountain King
on which all varieties of incenses are found gathered together there.

And just as on the Khadira Mountain King,
the many sorts of precious flowers are found abundantly together,
on the Blazing Brilliance Ground, one gathers learning and wisdom
in a way that is comparable to this.

On the Ground of Blazing Brilliance, one extensively gathers together
the indestructible Dharma jewels of the path
and becomes comparable there to the Mountain of Rishis and Āryas
where those skilled in realization of quiescence are never rare.

On the fifth ground, one's spiritual superknowledges
become of a sort that no one is able to rival
and such that make one compare to the Yugamdhara Mountain King
wherein the *yakṣas* and spirits are never rare.

On the sixth ground, one becomes skillful in distinguishing
all of the endless number of fruitions
and, in this, one becomes comparable to the Horse Ear Mountain
whereon all the varieties of fruits are found in countless numbers.

On the seventh ground, one's great wisdom
becomes such that no one is able to rival them
and, in this, one becomes comparable to Nimindhara Mountain
whereon the dragon kings are never rare.

When dwelling on the eighth ground,
one's sovereign masteries and knowledge become incalculable
and one becomes comparable then to Cakravāda Mountain whereon
there are many whose minds are possessed of sovereign mastery.

On the ninth ground, one's mind is purified
and one becomes unimpeded in expounding on Dharma
in a manner comparable to Manifold Features Mountain
whereon the *asuras* dwelling there are never rare.

The meritorious qualities of buddhas
acquired by one dwelling on the tenth ground are inexhaustible
and comparable then to Sumeru Mountain King
whereon there is a congregation of many deva spirits.

Moreover, on the first ground,
one brings forth the vast vows.

On the second, one upholds all classes of moral precepts.

On the third ground, one cultivates the meritorious qualities.

On the fourth ground, one develops singular focus.
 On the fifth ground, one accomplishes many marvelous works.
 On the sixth ground, it is characterized by extreme profundity.
 On the seventh ground, one is possessed of the vast mind.

On the eighth ground, one practices all manner of adornments
 and brings forth the spiritual superknowledges.
 On the ninth ground, one's thought possesses such sublime wisdom
 that it exceeds that present anywhere in the world.

On the tenth ground, one becomes able to take in and retain
 the great Dharma rain sent down by all buddhas.
 Hence the great sea of this bodhisattva's practices
 is unshakeable and inexhaustible.

When one brings forth the initial resolve and transcends the world,
 one succeeds then in entering the first ground.
 On the second ground, one upholds the moral precepts purely.
 On the third ground, one cultivates the *dhyāna* absorptions.

On the fourth ground, one's path practices become purified.
 On the fifth, one trains in skillful means and wisdom.
 On the sixth, one uses causes and conditions in adorning practice.
 On the seventh, one employs profound skillful means and wisdom.

On the eighth, one reaches the top of the lapis lazuli pillar.
 On the ninth ground one's practice is with regard to beings wherein
 one addresses all of their hazardous entangling difficulties
 and the light of one's wisdom shines forth everywhere.

On the tenth, one receives the consecration of one's knowledge
 comparable to the certifying endorsement bestowed by the King.
 In this way, one sequentially purifies
 the marvelous jewel of one's bodhi resolve.

Even if, in the space of but a single thought,
 one might be able to calculate and know the number
 of all the atoms
 throughout all worlds of the ten directions,

and even if, using the point of but a single hair,
 one could measure all of empty space, one would still find
 that the vast number of all buddhas' meritorious qualities herein
 are so measurelessly numerous as to be utterly inexhaustible.

Once this Ten Grounds Sutra had been completely expounded, the Maheśvara Heaven King, that entire assembly of devas, Liberation Moon Bodhisattva, all of the other bodhisattvas, and those residing in the all worlds were all filled with great and joyous delight, and, imbued with faith, they accepted and upheld its teachings in practice.