

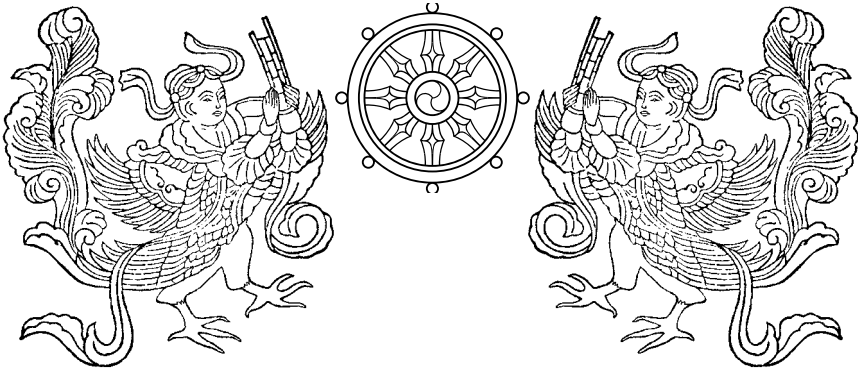
THE FLOWER ADORNMENT SUTRA

*The Great Expansive
Buddha's Flower Adornment Sutra*

An Annotated Translation of the Avatamsaka Sutra
By Bhikshu Dharmamitra

WITH A COMMENTARIAL SYNOPSIS
OF THE FLOWER ADORNMENT SUTRA

VOLUME ONE



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Vol. 10, no. 279). It consists of 39 chapters that introduce an interpenetrating,

infinitely expansive, and majestically grand multiverse of countless buddha

worlds while explaining in great detail the cultivation of the bodhisattva path

to buddhahood, most notably the ten highest levels of bodhisattva practice

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

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

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CHAPTER 15

The Ten Abodes

At that time, assisted by the awesome power of the Buddha, Dharma Wisdom Bodhisattva entered “the bodhisattva’s countless expedients samādhi,” whereupon, due to the power of this samādhi, there came from beyond a number of worlds in each of the ten directions as numerous as the atoms in a thousand buddha *kṣetras*, buddhas as numerous as the atoms in a thousand buddha *kṣetras*, all identically named “Dharma Wisdom,” all of whom manifested before him and said to Dharma Wisdom Bodhisattva:

Good indeed, good indeed, O Son of Good Family. Son of Good Family, that you have been able to enter this “bodhisattva’s countless expedients samādhi” is because these buddhas from each of the ten directions who are as numerous as the atoms in a thousand buddha *kṣetras* have all joined in assisting you with their spiritual powers.

That you have entered this samādhi and are enabled to expound on the Dharma is also due to the awesome spiritual power arising from the power of Vairocana Tathāgata’s past vows as well as from the power of the roots of goodness you yourself have cultivated. [That this has occurred is]:

- To enable an increase in [understanding] the Buddha’s wisdom;
- To enable deep entry into the Dharma realm;
- To enable a thorough comprehension of the realms of beings;
- To enable unimpeded access to whatever one enters;
- To enable freedom from obstacles in whatever one practices;
- To enable incomparable skillful means;
- To enable penetration of the nature of all-knowledge;
- To enable awakening to all dharmas;
- To enable the knowing of all faculties; and
- To enable the ability to retain and expound on all dharmas.

That is to say, this is to bring about the arising of the ten abodes of all bodhisattvas. Son of Good Family, you should accept the assistance of the buddhas’ awesome spiritual powers and then expound on these dharmas.

At this time, the buddhas then bestowed on Dharma Wisdom Bodhisattva: unimpeded knowledge; unattached knowledge;

uninterrupted knowledge; undeluded knowledge; unvarying knowledge; unending knowledge; measureless knowledge; invincible knowledge; unremitting knowledge, and irreversible knowledge. Why? The dharmas associated with this samādhi's power are of this very sort.

At this time, each of the buddhas extended his right hand and rubbed the crown of Dharma Wisdom Bodhisattva's head. Dharma Wisdom Bodhisattva then arose from meditative absorption and told the bodhisattvas:

Sons of the Buddha, the abodes of the bodhisattvas are so vast that they equal the Dharma realm and the realm of empty space. Sons of the Buddha, the bodhisattvas dwell within the family of all buddhas of the three periods of time. I will now describe the bodhisattvas' abodes.

Sons of the Buddha, the bodhisattvas have ten abodes. All buddhas of the past, the future, and the present have taught them, will teach them, and now teach them. What are those ten? They are:

- The abode of initial generation of the resolve;
- The abode of preparation of the ground;
- The abode of cultivation of the practices;
- The abode of acquiring noble birth;
- The abode of complete fulfillment of skillful means;
- The abode of right mindedness;
- The abode of irreversibility;
- The abode of the pure youth;
- The abode of the prince; and
- The abode of the crown-anointing consecration.

These are what constitute the ten abodes of the bodhisattvas as taught by all buddhas of the past, the future, and the present.

Sons of the Buddha, what is the bodhisattva's abode of generation of the resolve? This bodhisattva may see the Buddha's, the Bhagavat's, majestic form and appearance that is perfectly full in the form body's signs, that people delight in seeing, that is rarely ever encountered, and that is possessed of the great awesome powers. Or perhaps he witnesses the Buddha's power of unimpeded physical travel, or hears his utterance of a prediction, or hears him teaching and remonstrating, or witnesses beings undergoing all kinds of intense sufferings, or hears the vast dharmas of the buddhas as taught by the Tathāgata, and then resolves to attain bodhi and seek all-knowledge.

This bodhisattva may rely on ten rarely acquired dharmas as the bases for arousing his resolve. What are these ten? They are:

- The knowledge that knows what can and cannot be;
- The knowledge that knows the karmic retributions ensuing from good and bad actions;
- The knowledge that knows the supremacy and inferiority of all faculties;
- The knowledge that knows the differences in beings' understanding;
- The knowledge that knows the differences in all beings' realms of existence;
- The knowledge that knows where all paths lead;
- The knowledge that knows all *dhyāna* absorptions, liberations, and samādhis;
- The knowledge that is unimpeded in knowing beings' previous lives;
- The knowledge that is unimpeded in what is known by the heavenly eye; and
- The knowledge of the complete cessation of all contaminants throughout all three periods of time.

These are the ten. Sons of the Buddha, this bodhisattva should encourage training in ten dharmas. What are these ten? They are:

- Diligently making offerings to the Buddha;
- Happily dwelling in *saṃsāra*;
- Guiding those in the world to enable them to do away with evil karma;
- Always using supreme and sublime dharmas in instructing others;
- Praising the unsurpassable Dharma;
- Training in the Buddha's meritorious qualities;
- Taking rebirth in the presence of the buddhas in order to always be drawn forth into their company;
- Using skillful means in expounding the cultivation of quiescent samādhis;
- Praising the renunciation of cyclic existence in *saṃsāra*; and
- Serving as a place of refuge for suffering beings.

Why does he do this? This is because he wishes to enable bodhisattvas to broaden their resolve to attain the dharmas of buddhahood while also enabling them to spontaneously understand whatever Dharma they hear without relying on instruction from others.

Sons of the Buddha, what is the bodhisattva's abode of preparation of the ground? This bodhisattva brings forth ten types of intentions toward beings. What are these ten? They are:

- The intention to bestow benefit;
- The intention to act with great compassion;
- The intention to bestow happiness;
- The intention to facilitate their establishment;²⁴⁵
- The intention to [treat them with] kindly sympathy;
- The intention to attract and sustain them;
- The intention to protect them;
- The intention to see them as the same as oneself;
- The intention to serve them as a teacher; and
- The intention to serve them as a guide.

These are the ten. Sons of the Buddha, this bodhisattva should encourage training in ten dharmas. What are these ten? They are:

- Recitation and extensive learning [of Dharma];
- [Cultivation of] quiescence in an unoccupied and quiet location;
- Drawing close to a good spiritual guide;
- Harmonious and pleasing discourse;
- The necessity of speaking at the right time;
- Having a mind free of timidity or fearfulness;
- Complete comprehension of meanings;
- Cultivation in accordance with the Dharma;
- Abandonment of delusion and confusion; and
- Establishment in an unmoving state.

Why does he do this? This is because he wishes to enable bodhisattvas to increase their great compassion toward beings and immediately understand by themselves whatever Dharma they hear without relying on instruction from others.

Sons of the Buddha, what is the bodhisattva's abode of cultivation of the practices? This bodhisattva uses ten types of practices in contemplating all dharmas. What are these ten? They are:

- Contemplation of all dharmas as impermanent;
- Contemplation of all dharmas as suffering;
- Contemplation of all dharmas as empty;
- Contemplation of all dharmas as non-self;
- Contemplation of all dharmas as devoid of any functioning;²⁴⁶
- Contemplation of all dharmas as flavorless;
- Contemplation of all dharmas as unlike their names;
- Contemplation of all dharmas as devoid of any dwelling place;

Contemplation of all dharmas as beyond discriminations; and
 Contemplation of all dharmas as devoid of substantial reality.

These are the ten. Sons of the Buddha, this bodhisattva should encourage training in ten dharmas. What are these ten? They are:

Contemplation of the realms of beings, the Dharma realm, and the world's realms;
 Contemplation of the realm of the earth element, the realm of the water element, the realm of the fire element, and the realm of the wind element; and
 Contemplation of the desire realm, the form realm, and the formless realm.

Why does he do this? This is because he wishes to enable bodhisattvas' wisdom to be completely clear while also enabling them to immediately understand by themselves whatever Dharma they hear without relying on instruction from others.

Sons of the Buddha, what is the bodhisattva's abode of acquiring noble birth? This bodhisattva who is born from the teachings of the *āryas* perfects ten dharmas. What are these ten? They are:

Perpetual irreversibility from abiding in the buddhas' presence;
 Deeply developed pure faith;
 Skillful contemplation of dharmas; and
 Complete knowing of beings, lands, worlds, karmic actions, karmic retributions, *saṃsāra*, and *nirvāṇa*.

These are the ten. Sons of the Buddha, this bodhisattva should encourage training in ten dharmas. What are these ten? They are:

Complete knowing of all dharmas of all buddhas of the past, the future, and the present;
 Cultivation and accumulation of all dharmas of all buddhas of the past, the future, and the present;
 Perfect fulfillment of all dharmas of all buddhas of the past, the future, and the present; and
 Complete knowledge of the equality of all buddhas.

Why does he do this? This is because he wishes to enable others to progress in their development of equanimity of mind with respect to the three periods of time while also enabling them to spontaneously understand whatever Dharma they hear without relying on instruction from others.

Sons of the Buddha, what is the bodhisattva's abode of complete fulfillment of skillful means? The roots of goodness cultivated by this bodhisattva are all established:

- To rescue and protect all beings;
- To benefit all beings;
- To enable all beings to be happy;
- To have deep sympathy for all beings;
- To liberate all beings;
- To enable all beings to leave behind all conditions of disaster and adversity;
- To enable all beings to escape from the sufferings of *saṃsāra*;
- To enable all beings to develop pure faith;
- To enable all beings to acquire the training; and
- To enable all beings to attain the realization of *nirvāṇa*.

These are the ten. Sons of the Buddha, this bodhisattva should encourage training in ten dharmas. What are these ten? They are:

- The realization that beings are boundless;
- The realization that beings are measureless;
- The realization that beings are innumerable;
- The realization that beings are inconceivable;
- The realization that beings exist in incalculably many forms;
- The realization that beings are incalculable;²⁴⁷
- The realization that beings are empty;
- The realization that beings are devoid of any functioning;
- The realization that beings are nonexistent; and
- The realization that beings have no inherently existent nature.

Why does he do this? This is because he wishes to enable others' minds to become ever more superior and free of any defiling attachment while also enabling them to immediately understand by themselves whatever Dharma they hear without relying on instruction from others.

Sons of the Buddha, what is the bodhisattva's abode of right mindedness? Even when this bodhisattva hears ten kinds of dharmas, his mind remains concentrated and unmoving. What are these ten? They are:

- Whether he hears praise of the Buddha or slander of the Buddha, his mind's alignment with the Buddha's Dharma remains concentrated and unmoving;
- Whether he hears praise of the Dharma or slander of the Dharma, his mind's alignment with the Buddha's Dharma remains concentrated and unmoving;
- Whether he hears praise of the bodhisattvas or slander of the bodhisattvas, his mind's alignment with the Buddha's Dharma remains concentrated and unmoving;

Whether he hears praise of the Dharma practiced by the bodhisattvas or slander of the Dharma practiced by the bodhisattvas, his mind's alignment with the Buddha's Dharma remains concentrated and unmoving;

Whether he hears beings are measurably many or measurelessly many, his mind's alignment with the Buddha's Dharma remains concentrated and unmoving;

Whether he hears beings are defiled or undefiled, his mind's alignment with the Buddha's Dharma remains concentrated and unmoving;

Whether he hears beings are easy to liberate or difficult to liberate, his mind's alignment with the Buddha's Dharma remains concentrated and unmoving;

Whether he hears the Dharma realm is measurable or measureless, his mind's alignment with the Buddha's Dharma remains concentrated and unmoving;

Whether he hears the Dharma realm has a creation or has a destruction, his mind's alignment with the Buddha's Dharma remains concentrated and unmoving; and

Whether he hears the Dharma realm exists or does not exist, his mind's alignment with the Buddha's Dharma remains concentrated and unmoving.

These are the ten. Sons of the Buddha, this bodhisattva should encourage training in ten dharmas. What are these ten? They are:

The realization that all dharmas are signless;

The realization that all dharmas have no substance;

The realization that all dharmas cannot be cultivated;

The realization that all dharmas are nonexistent;

The realization that all dharmas have no genuine reality;

The realization that all dharmas are empty;

The realization that all dharmas have no inherent nature;

The realization that all dharmas are like a mere conjuration;

The realization that all dharmas are like a mere dream; and

The realization that all dharmas are beyond all discriminations.

Why does he do this? This is because he wishes to enable others' minds to progress ever more and achieve irreversibility with respect to realizing the unproduced-dharmas patience while also enabling them to immediately understand by themselves whatever Dharma they hear without relying on instruction from others.

Sons of the Buddha, what is the bodhisattva's abode of irreversibility? Even when this bodhisattva hears ten kinds of dharmas, he remains solidly irreversible. What are these ten? They are:

Whether he hears that the Buddha exists or that the Buddha does not exist, his resolve within the Buddha's Dharma remains irreversible;

Whether he hears that the Dharma exists or that the Dharma does not exist, his resolve within the Buddha's Dharma remains irreversible;

Whether he hears that bodhisattvas exist or that bodhisattvas do not exist, his resolve within the Buddha's Dharma remains irreversible;

Whether he hears that the bodhisattva practices exist or that the bodhisattva practices do not exist, his resolve within the Buddha's Dharma remains irreversible;

Whether he hears that there are bodhisattvas who cultivate and gain emancipation or hears that cultivation does not lead to emancipation, his resolve within the Buddha's Dharma remains irreversible;

Whether he hears that buddhas did exist in the past or that no buddhas existed in the past, his resolve within the Buddha's Dharma remains irreversible;

Whether he hears that buddhas will exist in the future or that no buddhas will exist in the future, his resolve within the Buddha's Dharma remains irreversible;

Whether he hears that buddhas exist in the present era or hears that no buddhas exist in the present era, his resolve within the Buddha's Dharma remains irreversible;

Whether he hears that the Buddha's wisdom is exhaustible or that the Buddha's wisdom is inexhaustible, his resolve within the Buddha's Dharma remains irreversible; and

Whether he hears that the three periods of time are of a single character or that the three periods of time are not of a single character, his resolve within the Buddha's Dharma remains irreversible.

These are the ten. Sons of the Buddha, this bodhisattva should encourage training in ten types of vast dharmas. What are these ten? They are:

To speak of one is just to speak of many;

To speak of many is just to speak of one;

Texts follow from meanings;

Meanings follow from texts;

Whatever is nonexistent is itself existent;

Whatever is existent is itself nonexistent;

Whatever has signs is signless;

Whatever is signless is characterized by signs;
 Whatever has no nature is identical with a nature; and
 The nature itself has no nature.

Why does he do this? This is because he wishes to enable others to progress and become well able to achieve emancipation with respect to all dharmas while also enabling them to immediately understand by themselves whatever Dharma they hear without relying on instruction from others.

Sons of the Buddha, what is the bodhisattva's abode of the pure youth? This bodhisattva dwells in ten kinds of karmic actions. What are these ten? They are:

Physical action free of error;
 Verbal action free of error;
 Mental action free of error;
 Taking rebirth wherever he wishes;
 Knowing all the different kinds of desires that beings possess;
 Knowing all the different kinds of understandings that beings possess;
 Knowing all the different kinds of realms of beings;
 Knowing all the different kinds of karmic actions of beings;
 Knowing the creation and destruction of the world; and
 Sovereign mastery of the spiritual power of unimpeded physical action.

These are the ten. Sons of the Buddha, this bodhisattva should encourage training in ten types of dharmas. What are these ten? They are:

Knowing all buddha *kṣetras*;
 Moving all buddha *kṣetras*;
 Holding all buddha *kṣetras*;
 Contemplating all buddha *kṣetras*;
 Visiting all buddha *kṣetras*;
 Roaming to countless worlds;
 Receiving countless dharmas of the Buddha;
 Manifesting bodies possessed of sovereign mastery in spiritual transformations;
 Emanating vast and fully pervasive voices; and
 Serving and making offerings to countless buddhas in but a single *kṣāṇa*.

Why does he do this? This is because he wishes to enable others to progress in their ability to attain skillfulness in all dharmas while

also enabling them to immediately understand by themselves whatever Dharma they hear without relying on instruction from others.

Sons of the Buddha, what is the bodhisattva's abode of the prince? This bodhisattva has thorough knowledge of ten kinds of dharmas. What are these ten? They are:

- Thorough knowledge of beings' taking on of rebirths;
- Thorough knowledge of the arising of all afflictions;
- Thorough knowledge of the continuation of habitual karmic propensities;
- Thorough knowledge of the skillful means that are implemented;
- Thorough knowledge of the immeasurable dharmas;
- Thorough knowledge of all aspects of the awesome department;
- Thorough knowledge of the differences in the worlds;
- Thorough knowledge of past and future phenomena;
- Thorough knowledge of how to expound in accordance with mundane truth; and
- Thorough knowledge of how to expound in accordance with ultimate truth.

These are the ten. Sons of the Buddha, this bodhisattva should encourage training in ten types of dharmas. What are these ten? They are:

- Skillfulness in the abode of the Dharma King;
- According with the norms in the abode of the Dharma King;
- [Appropriate behavior] in the palace of the Dharma King;
- Entry into the abode of the Dharma King;
- Contemplation of the abode of the Dharma King;
- The Dharma King's crown-anointing consecration;
- The Dharma King's empowerments;
- The Dharma King's fearlessnesses;
- The Dharma King's taking of meals and rest; and
- The Dharma King's praises.

Why does he do this? This is because he wishes to enable others to progress to the attainment of the unimpeded mind while also enabling them to immediately understand by themselves whatever Dharma they hear without relying on instruction from others.

Sons of the Buddha, what is the bodhisattva's abode of the crown-anointing consecration? This bodhisattva perfects ten kinds of knowledge. What are these ten? They are:

- How to cause the shaking of innumerable worlds;
- How to illuminate innumerable worlds with dazzling radiance;

- How to sustain innumerable worlds;
- How to go forth to visit innumerable worlds;
- How to purify innumerable worlds;
- How to provide instruction to innumerable beings;
- How to contemplate innumerable beings;
- How to know the faculties of innumerable beings;
- How to enable innumerable beings to achieve entry;²⁴⁸ and
- How to enable innumerable beings to undergo the training.

These are the ten. Sons of the Buddha, this bodhisattva's bodies, physical deeds, spiritual superknowledges, spiritual transformations, knowledge of the past, knowledge of the future, knowledge of the present, establishment of buddha lands, spheres of mind, and spheres of knowledge are all unknowable. Not even a dharma prince bodhisattva is able to fathom them.

Sons of the Buddha, this bodhisattva should encourage training in ten types of knowledge possessed by all buddhas. What are these ten? They are:

- The knowledge of the three periods of time;
- The knowledge of the Buddha's Dharma;
- The knowledge of the unimpeded nature of the Dharma realm;
- The knowledge of the boundlessness of the Dharma realm;
- The knowledge that fills all worlds;
- The knowledge that everywhere illuminates all worlds;
- The knowledge that sustains all worlds;
- The knowledge that knows all beings;
- The knowledge that knows all dharmas; and
- The knowledge that knows all the boundlessly many buddhas.

Why does he do this? This is because he wishes to enable others' growth in the knowledge of all modes while also enabling them to immediately understand by themselves whatever Dharma they hear without relying on instruction from others.

At that time, due to the Buddha's spiritual powers, worlds in each of the ten directions as numerous as the atoms in a myriad buddha *kṣētras* all moved and shook in six ways, namely: movement, universal movement, equal-and-universal movement; rising, universal rising, equal-and-universal rising; upward thrusting, universal upward thrusting, equal and universal upward thrusting; shaking, universal shaking, equal-and-universal shaking; roaring, universal roaring, equal-and-universal roaring; and striking, universal striking, and equal-and-universal striking.

It rained down marvelous heavenly flowers, powdered celestial incenses, heavenly flower chaplets, various celestial perfumes, jeweled celestial robes, clouds of jewels from the heavens, and celestial adornments, all accompanied by all kinds of celestial music which, even without the instruments being played, resounded on its own while emanating great light and ethereal sounds.

Just as this proclaiming of the ten abodes accompanied by the appearance of spiritual transformations occurred in Indra's palace atop Mount Sumeru in this four-continent world, so too did this also occur in all the worlds throughout the ten directions.

Furthermore, because of the Buddha's spiritual powers, from beyond a number of worlds in each of the ten directions as numerous as the atoms in a myriad buddha *kṣetras*, bodhisattvas as numerous as the atoms in ten buddha *kṣetras* all came there and, filling up the ten directions, spoke these words:

It is good indeed, good indeed, O Son of the Buddha, that you have so well proclaimed this Dharma. We are all identically named "Dharma Wisdom" and we all come from countries identically known as "Dharma Cloud." The *tathāgatas* in those lands are all known as "Sublime Dharma." These ten abodes were also proclaimed in the dwelling places of all of our own buddhas in which the congregations, retinues, scriptural phrasings, and meanings were all also just as set forth here, free of any additions or subtractions.

O Son of the Buddha, it is through having received the assistance of the Buddha's spiritual powers that we have come and entered this assembly to bear witness for you that, just as all of this has occurred here, so too has this all transpired in the same way in all worlds throughout the ten directions.

At that time, assisted by the awesome power of the Buddha, Dharma Wisdom Bodhisattva surveyed the ten directions of the Dharma realm and then spoke these verses:

Perhaps²⁴⁹ due to seeing the Supremely Wise One's marvelous body, replete with the majestic adornments of all the marks and signs, seeing such a venerable one as this who is only very rarely met, bodhisattvas courageously arouse their initial resolve.

Or due to seeing his incomparably great spiritual superknowledges, due to thoughts on hearing predictions, teachings, or remonstrances, or due to seeing the measureless suffering of beings in all destinies—because of these, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

Or due to hearing of all the meritorious qualities, all perfected, of the *tathāgatas*, those universally supreme venerable ones, who, like empty space, do not discriminate.

Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

Cause and effect in the three times constitute “what can be.”

An inherently existent nature of “self” and such are “what cannot be.”

They may wish to fully comprehend the true meaning of such matters.

Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

They may wish to completely comprehend all without exception of the karmic [retributions] ensuing from good and bad actions of the past, the future, and the present.

Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

They may wish to fully know entry, abiding, and emergence as they relate to the *dhyānas*, the liberations, and the *samādhis* in their countless varieties, whether defiled or pure.

Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

They seek a fully comprehending and distinguishing knowledge that accords with the relative acuity or dullness of beings’ faculties and their correspondingly varying powers to bring forth vigor.

Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

All beings possess varying degrees of understanding and what their minds prefer is in each case different.

They may wish to fully know all such countless distinctions.

Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

All realms in which beings exist are each different and all the worlds they occupy are measurelessly many.

They may wish to fully know the essential nature of them all.

Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

All the paths that are traveled throughout all of conditioned existence in every case have those places to which they lead.

They may wish to fully know the essential nature of them all.

Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

All beings in all worlds, without a moment’s rest, drift along on the current in accordance with their karmic deeds.

They may wish to acquire the heavenly eye and clearly see all of this.

Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

They may seek to completely know all their past existences and the essential nature and features of circumstances such as these associated with all that has occurred in their previous lifetimes.

Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

They may wish to fully know the ultimate cessation
of the continual arising of all beings' fetters and delusions
as well as of their habitual karmic propensities.

Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

They may wish to fully know in accordance with their mundane truth
all the different paths of discussion and language
as established in accordance with all the different kinds of beings.

Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

All dharmas transcend description with words.

They are by nature empty, quiescent, and devoid of any functioning.

They seek a clear comprehension of the true meaning of all this.

Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

They may wish to shake all the lands of the ten directions
or even overturn all the great oceans

by fully perfecting all buddhas' great spiritual superknowledges.

Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

They may wish to emanate light rays from a single pore
that everywhere illuminate the countless lands of the ten directions
and awaken everyone illuminated by every light ray.

Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

They may wish to place all the inconceivably many buddha *kṣētras*
into one of their palms and yet still remain unmoving
even as they fully realize everything is like a mere conjuration.

Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

They may wish to take the beings in countless *kṣētras*
and place them, without any crowding, on the tip of a single hair,
realizing they are all both devoid of "others" and devoid of "self."

Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

They may seek to extract the oceans' water drops with a single hair
and thus cause all the great oceans to dry up completely
even as they can distinguish and know the number of those drops.

Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

They may wish to distinguish and know the number of motes
produced by completely grinding to dust all without exception
of the inconceivably great number of all lands.

Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

They may wish to know with complete comprehension,
even to their distant borders, the signs of creation and destruction
of all worlds in the countless kalpas of the past, future, and present.

Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

They may wish to completely know without exception all the Dharma of all *tathāgatas*, *pratyekabuddhas*, and *śrāvaka* disciples throughout the three periods of time.

Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

They may wish with but a single hair to raise up and assess all the countless and boundless worlds, fully knowing them all in accordance with their substance and signs. Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

They may wish to cause all of the measureless and innumerable rings of mountains²⁵⁰ to completely enter a single pore and be able to know them all according to their size.

Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

They may wish with but a single serene and sublime voice to respond to all in the ten directions according to type, expounding in a way enabling all to gain a pure and complete understanding.

Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

They may wish to completely know the inherent nature of the language dharmas of all beings and expound them all without exception by using but a single word.

Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

They may wish to acquire such a marvelous tongue faculty that there is no word or sound in the world they cannot make, thus enabling all to understand and realize quiescence.

Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

They may wish to cause all the signs of creation and destruction in all the worlds of the ten directions to become entirely visible while also enabling all to realize they are all born of discriminations.

Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

All worlds throughout the ten directions are full of countless *tathāgatas*.

They may wish to completely know the Dharma of all those buddhas.

Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

They may wish to attain a complete comprehension that all the different kinds of transformations and countless bodies as numerous as the atoms in all worlds arise entirely from the mind.

Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

They may wish to completely know in but a single mind-moment all the incalculably and innumerably many *tathāgatas* of the past, the future, and the present.

Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

They may seek the ability to fully explain a single phrase of Dharma throughout an endless number of *asaṃkhyeya* kalpas and still enable the meanings of that phrase to all be different. Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

They may seek clear comprehension in but a single mind-moment of the signs of cyclic existence in *saṃsāra* of all beings throughout the ten directions. Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

They may wish through deeds of body, mouth, and mind to be unimpeded in paying respects everywhere in the ten directions, fully realizing the three periods of time are all empty and quiescent. Because of this, bodhisattvas arouse their initial resolve.

After the bodhisattvas have aroused their resolve in this way, they should be enabled to go and visit the lands of the ten directions to respectfully make offerings to all the *tathāgatas*, so that, by this they are caused to never turn back.

The bodhisattvas courageously seek the path to buddhahood and are not wearied by abiding in the midst of *saṃsāra*. For others, they praise this, causing them to accord with this practice so that, in this way they are caused to never turn back.

Throughout the countless *kṣetras* of the worlds of the ten directions, they serve as honored lords there within them all where, for the sake of bodhisattvas, they speak in this way, so that, by this they are caused to never turn back.

Using the supreme, highest, and foremost of the extremely profound and sublime pure dharmas, they encourage bodhisattvas to teach and bestow them on still others, using teachings such as these to enable them to abandon afflictions.

In all the worlds, they are peerless, dwelling in stations where they are unshakable and invincible where, for those bodhisattvas, they always praise teachings such as these to cause them to attain irreversibility.

The Buddha is the greatly powerful lord of the worlds who, perfected in all the meritorious qualities, enables the bodhisattvas to abide in these and thus, through these teachings, to become supremely great men.

To the abodes of countless and boundlessly many buddhas— They all become able to go there to visit and draw near to them. They are always drawn forth and sustained by the buddhas. By teachings such as these, they are enabled to attain irreversibility.

They freely expound on and proclaim
all the quiescent samādhis without exception.
They speak in this way for the sake of those bodhisattvas
and by this they are enabled to attain irreversibility.

“Demolish the wheel of *saṃsāra* in all the stations of existence.”

“Turn the wheel of the pure and sublime Dharma.”

“Remain free of all attachments to any of the worlds.”

They speak in this way for the sake of the bodhisattvas.

“All beings fall down into the wretched destinies
and are bound up and driven along by countless severe sufferings.
Become for them their savior, their protector, and their refuge.”
They speak in this way for the sake of the bodhisattvas.

This is the bodhisattva’s abode of generation of the resolve in which
he proceeds directly and resolutely in quest of the unexcelled path.
The teaching dharmas such as I have spoken here
are those that all buddhas also teach in this way.

The bodhisattva in the second abode, preparation of the ground,
should bring forth a resolve such as this:

“I vow to enable all beings throughout the ten directions
to follow the teachings of the Tathāgata.”

Beneficial, greatly compassionate, and happiness-inducing intentions,
securely establishing, kindly sympathetic, and attracting intentions,
intentions to protect beings and see them as the same as oneself, and
intentions to serve them as a teacher, and intentions to act as a guide—

After dwelling in such supreme and sublime intentions as these,
they next enable beings to practice recitation, seek extensive learning,
to always delight in quiescent meditation and right reflection,
to draw close to all good spiritual friends,

to speak in a congenial way, to abandon coarseness and rudeness,
to know the need to observe timeliness in speaking, to be fearless,
to fully comprehend meanings, to cultivate in accord with Dharma,
to abandon delusion and confusion, and to have an unmoving mind.

These are the bodhi practices of those in the initial phase of training.
Those able to practice these practices are true sons of the Buddha.

As I now explain what they should practice,
such sons of the Buddha as these should be diligent in their training.

The third is the bodhisattva’s abode of cultivation of the practices.
One should rely on the Buddha’s teaching in diligent contemplation
of all dharmas as impermanent, suffering, and empty,
as devoid of self or others, as not moving or functioning,

[contemplating] all dharmas as unenjoyable, as involving nothing corresponding to their names, as having no place they dwell, as having nothing to discriminate, and as devoid of reality.

One contemplating them in this way is to be known as a bodhisattva.

Next, one enables others to contemplate the realms of beings while also encouraging contemplation of the Dharma realm.

So too should one encourage them all to contemplate all the different worlds without exception.

One also encourages contemplations, all pursued exhaustively, of all the elemental earth, water, fire, and wind throughout all worlds and empty space of the ten directions as well as of the desire realm, the form realm, and the formless realm.

Contemplate those realms, each of them different, as well as their essential natures, all to the ultimate degree.

If one acquiring such teachings diligently cultivates their practice, this one is then worthy to be known as a true son of the Buddha.

At the fourth abode, that of acquiring noble birth, the bodhisattva is born from the teachings of the *āryas*.

He completely comprehends all that exists as entirely nonexistent, and, stepping beyond those dharmas, is born into the Dharma realm.

He has indestructibly solid faith in the Buddha, his mind is established in contemplating dharmas' quiescence, and he completely knows with regard to beings of whatever sort that their essential nature is false and devoid of reality.

So, too, the world, *kṣetras*, karmic actions, and retributions, as well as *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa* are all just like this.

A son of the Buddha who contemplates dharmas in this way has been born from the Buddha and is known as the Buddha's son.

He completely knows, accumulates, and perfectly fulfills all the dharmas of the Buddha

of the past, the future and present eras.

Cultivating and training thus, he achieves their ultimate realization.

He is able to pursue the contemplation of all *tathāgatas* of the three periods of time as all equal, finding that none of their various differences are apprehensible at all. One contemplating in this way comprehends all three periods of time.

As for what I have here proclaimed and praised, these are the meritorious qualities of the fourth abode.

If one is able to diligently cultivate them in accordance with Dharma, he will swiftly attain the realization of the Buddha's unexcelled bodhi.

Following upon this, the fifth category of bodhisattvas are those described as at the abode of the complete fulfillment of skillful means who deeply enter into the countless sorts of skillful expedients and bring forth karmic works born of ultimate meritorious qualities.

The many kinds of merit cultivated by these bodhisattvas are all produced to rescue and protect the many kinds of beings. They focus their minds on benefiting them and making them happy while all along being deeply sympathetic and enabling their liberation.

For the entire world, they do away with the many kinds of adversity, lead them forth from all existences, and enable their happiness. They strive to train them all, having none they neglect, thus enabling all to perfect the qualities and progress toward nirvāṇa.

They realize all beings are boundlessly numerous, measureless, innumerable, and inconceivably many, as well as incalculable, and so forth.

They hear and accept such dharmas of the Tathāgata as these.

These true sons of the Buddha at the fifth abode perfect the skillful means with which they liberate beings. The greatly wise Bhagavat possessed of all the meritorious qualities instructs them in dharmas such as these.

At the sixth abode, where right mindedness is perfectly fulfilled, they become free of delusion about the inherent nature of dharmas, practice right mindfulness and reflection apart from discriminations, and become such that they cannot be shaken by any deva or human.

Whether they hear praise or slander of the Buddha, Buddha's Dharma, the bodhisattvas, or the practices they engage in, or hear beings are measurable or measureless, defiled or undefiled, difficult to liberate or easy to liberate,

or hear the Dharma realm is immense or small, created or destroyed, existent or nonexistent, their minds nonetheless remain unshaken.

Whether in the past, the future, or now in this present era, their careful mindfulness and reflection remain constantly resolute.

All dharmas are signless, devoid of substance, devoid of any inherent nature, empty, unreal, like a conjuration, like a dream, and beyond discriminations.

They always delight in hearing meanings such as these.

Bodhisattvas at the seventh abode, that of irreversibility, may hear that the Buddha, the Dharma, or bodhisattva practices exist, do not exist, lead to emancipation, or don't lead to emancipation. Although they hear such statements, they remain irreversible.

Concepts such as that buddhas of the past, future, and present
 either do exist or do not exist,
 that the Buddha's wisdom is exhaustible or is inexhaustible,
 that the character of the three times is singular or various,
 that one is just many or that many are just one,
 that texts follow from meanings or that meanings follow from texts—
 these ideas are all established on the basis of [rational] progressions
 and are such that this irreversible person should explain for others.

The idea that dharmas are possessed of signs, that they are signless,
 that dharmas have an inherent nature, or that they have no nature—
 These different sorts of distinctions are all based on each other.
 After this person has heard this, he grasps the ultimate truth.

At the eighth of the bodhisattva abodes, that of the pure youth,
 their physical, verbal, and mental actions are all perfected,
 pure in all things, and free of fault. They attain sovereign mastery
 in taking on rebirths in accordance with their intentions.

They know the mental dispositions of beings,
 know each of their various different kinds of mental understandings
 as well as all their other associated dharmas and
 the signs of creation and destruction of the ten directions' worlds.

They attain swiftly invoked marvelous spiritual superknowledges
 by which they freely go everywhere at will
 to wherever buddhas dwell in order to hear them teach the Dharma
 and praise unremitting and tireless cultivation.

They completely know all the buddha lands,
 cause quaking in them, hold them, contemplate them,
 and, stepping beyond incalculably many buddha lands,
 they roam to boundlessly and countless many worlds.

They pose questions about dharmas numbering in the *asaṃkhyeyas*,
 have sovereign mastery in all the bodies they wish to take on,
 have no type of skill in words and speech they have not perfected,
 and they devote themselves to serving countless buddhas.

At the ninth of the bodhisattva abodes, that of the prince,
 they are able to see the differences in beings' taking on of rebirths.
 There are no afflictions or habitual propensities they do not recognize
 and they thoroughly understand all the skillful means they practice.

All the different dharmas, the distinctions in awesome deportment,
 the differences among worlds, the aspects of the past and future,
 and how to accord with worldly and ultimate truth—
 They thoroughly understand and know them all without exception.

They are skillfully established in the Dharma kings' abodes and they accord with all the protocols of their abodes, whether they are regarding entry into the Dharma kings' palaces or the contemplations to be taken up within them.²⁵¹

As for all the Dharma kings' crown-anointing consecration dharmas, their empowerment with spiritual powers, their fearlessnesses, their taking of meals and rest, their palace quarters, their praises— They instruct the Dharma princes in all these matters.

They explain all such matters as these for them, none not completely, and thus enable their minds to become free of attachments. Upon fully knowing these matters and cultivating right mindfulness, all buddhas then manifest directly before them.

At the tenth abode, that of the crown-anointing consecration, the true Buddha's sons fulfill the supreme and foremost Dharma and are able to cause quaking and pervasive radiant illumination in countless worlds throughout the ten directions.

They sustain and visit them all without exception, completely purifying and adorning them all. They provide instruction to innumerable beings and are able to contemplate them and know their faculties completely.

Those they resolve to train are also limitless. They are all enabled to progress toward the great bodhi. They contemplate the entire Dharma realm and go forth to visit all the lands in the ten directions.

Their bodies therein, the deeds done by those bodies, their spiritual powers, and their transformations are all unfathomable. Their knowing of the three times, buddha lands, and spheres of mind are such that not even a Dharma prince could completely know them.

The All-Seeing Ones' knowledge of the three times, their utterly complete knowledge of the Dharma of all buddhas, their unimpeded and boundless knowledge of the Dharma realm, and their knowledge of the means of filling up all worlds—

Their knowledges of universal illumination and sustenance of worlds, their knowledges of completely knowing beings and all dharmas, and their knowledge knowing limitless rightly enlightened ones— The Tathāgata explains these for them so they are all fully understood.

It is in this way that the bodhisattvas of these ten abodes are all transformationally born from the Tathāgata's Dharma. Whichever meritorious qualities or practices they possess, they are all such that no deva or human could possibly fathom them.

Those throughout the past, the present, and the future periods of time who have resolved to seek buddhahood are so boundlessly many that they would fill up all lands throughout the ten directions. None of them will not succeed in attaining all-knowledge.

The totality of all lands is boundless.

So too are the worlds, beings, and dharmas.

Delusions, karma, and mental dispositions each differ.

It is because of them that they resolved to attain bodhi.

Their first thoughts of resolve to seek the buddha path are such that the beings in the world and the adherents of the Two Vehicles could never fathom even that. How much the less could they fathom all of the rest of their meritorious qualities and practices?

If one were able to use a single hair to lift up all the worlds throughout the ten directions, that is a person capable of understanding the practices of those Buddha's sons progressing toward the Tathāgata's wisdom.

If one were able to empty all the great oceans of the ten directions by lifting out all their water drops with the tip of a single hair, that is a person capable of knowing the meritorious practices cultivated in but a single mind-moment by these sons of the Buddha.

If all worlds were ground to dust motes and one was able to distinguish and know their number, then he is a person who could perceive the path that is practiced by these bodhisattvas.

All buddhas, *pratyekabuddhas*, and *śrāvaka* disciples of the past, future, and present throughout the ten directions might use all their many different kinds of marvelous eloquence to explain the initial generation of the bodhi resolve.

Still, since the merit from generating this resolve is so incalculably vast as to fill up the realms of all beings, even if they jointly described it with all the multitude's wisdom, they could never reach the end of it. How much less [the merit] of all the rest of the wondrous practices?

The End of Chapter Fifteen

to understand the fundamental substance of all dharmas.” (無見就是沒有凡夫那種分別識的見。這就是聖人本有智慧的見。有分別的識，是一切有為法；無分別的智，是一切無為法。聖人的智慧，能明白世出世間一切法，也就是了達諸法實相，而沒有法的執著，才能見到一切法。在法上若有凡夫分別那種知見，就永遠不會明白一切法的本體。 / HYQS)

243. Both QL and HH identify these as sixfold: the characteristic of knowing, the characteristic of continuity, the characteristic of grasping, the characteristic of assigning names, the characteristic of generating karmic actions, the characteristic of karma-bound suffering.
244. Both QL and HH identify these as threefold: the characteristic of karmic action, the characteristic of subject-based perception, and the characteristic of an objective realm.
245. HH explains this as: “[The intention] to enable beings to become securely established on the path to the awakening of bodhi. (令眾生安住在菩提覺道上。 / HYQS)
246. Regarding the perhaps somewhat opaque “devoid of any functioning,” QL interprets this as in essence owing to the fact that all dharmas are empty of any inherent existence of their own, thus implicitly asking, “If they don’t even exist, how *could* they function? His pronouncement however is much more terse than that, as follows: “As for ‘devoid of any functioning,’ this is because they only exist on the basis of conditions. Hence, because, in each successive mind-moment, they are impermanent, they are ‘devoid of any functioning.’” (無作者但緣有故由念念無常故無造作。 / L130n1557_0845a11ff)
247. QL interprets this “incalculability” (不可量) of beings as referring to their ultimately being beyond the grasp of two kinds of perception or assessment (出二量), that is to say, beyond either direct perception or inferential perception and as also referring to their being beyond either calculability or incalculability (又過量無量故). After saying in his commentary: “As for ‘incalculability,’ this is because they exceed [the grasp of] of two types of perception...(不可量者出二量故), he clarifies this in his subcommentary by saying, “When it is said that ‘they exceed [the grasp of] two types of perception,’ this is because they cannot be assessed by either direct assessment or inferential assessment. It is also because they transcend both calculability and incalculability.” (出二量者現量比量不能量故又過量無量故。 / L130n1557_0845a02ff)
248. HH explains this as referring to the ability to enable countless beings to enter the bodhisattva path. (能令無數眾生趣入菩提道。 / HYQS)
249. My insertion of the words “perhaps,” “may,” and “or” in the first thirty-five verses (86a01–86c12) is in order to accurately reflect the tenor of the text which these verses are intended to reiterate, namely

the text at the beginning of the chapter (84a26–84b01) which initially introduces and explains the first of the ten abodes, “the abode of initial generation of the resolve.”

250. “Rings of mountains” is a reference to the all-encircling ring-like ranges of mountains at the periphery of each world.
251. The BB translation of this quatrain seems clearer: “They are well able to completely comprehend the abode of the Dharma Kings and accord with the Dharma Kings’ protocols for the awesome deportment. They know well how to become established in and enter the position of the Dharma Kings and they know well how to distinguish the realms of the Dharma Kings.” (善能了達法王處，隨順法王威儀法，善知安入法王位，善知分別法王界。T09n0278_p0448c05 – 06)
252. “Brahman conduct” (梵行) or “*brahmacarya*” is usually a reference to pure spiritual practice in general and celibacy in particular.
253. If “mass of worms” (蟲聚) seems unintuitive, this actually follows very logically from the previous item (“a corpse”). The immediately proximate association may well have arisen from what one sees when doing the nine or ten standard “unloveliness” (*aśubha*) contemplations of the human body as a corpse, a practice which was usually done in a charnel ground where, before too long, the dead bodies inevitably become full of maggots, etc. Moreover, the concept of the body as a home for countless bacteria, etc. was already well-known to the Buddha and the monastic community.
254. QL clarifies the meaning of this “establishing speech” (安立說) as meaning “conventionally established” (假施設 / *prajñapti*).
255. HH follows QL in adding: “Is it non-compliance that is the Dharma? Or is it having nothing that is apprehensible that is the Dharma?” (不隨順是法耶無所得是法耶。) QL’s rationale for this addition is basically that, since all of these sets of questions are ten-fold and only this one set of questions is eight-fold, these two questions must have been accidentally dropped at some point from the Sanskrit text. It is unclear where QL sourced his emendations. There is nothing in the BB translation to support them.
256. The “three clarities” (三明) or *trividya* are the heavenly eye, cognition of past lives, and cessation of the contaminants.
257. The “six spiritual superknowledges” (六通 or 六神通) refers to unimpeded bodily action, the heavenly eye, the heavenly ear, cognition of others’ thoughts, recall of the previous lives of self and others, and cessation of the contaminants.
258. As SA translates it, one could as easily think it was saying: “This world does not move and those worlds do not change.” (此世不移動，彼世不改