

- 3) taking turns at begging for food;
- 4) eating only one meal a day;
- 5) eating only a small amount of food;
- 6) taking no food, and no drinks made with fruit or honey, after midday;
- 7) wearing garments of cast-off rags;
- 8) having only three garments;
- 9) dwelling among graves;
- 10) staying under a tree;
- 11) sitting on bare ground; and
- 12) never lying down.

30. To become detached from all dharmas and achieve mental liberation is tantamount to attaining Arhatship, the fourth and ultimate fruit of a Śrāvaka.

31. To leave mundane filth behind and attain the clear Dharma-eye is to achieve the fruit of a Stream-enterer, the first fruit of a Śrāvaka.

32. Literally, "When one does not remember and think, they do not arise."

33. Discipline, meditation, wisdom, liberation, and the knowledge and awareness derived from liberation are called 'the five factors and the Dharma-body'.

34. The Chinese word *hsiang* (想) is here rendered as 'thought', which is not an altogether satisfactory translation. Other renderings have difficulties, too, however. *Hsiang* seems to contain many meanings; here, in this context, it denotes thoughts, concepts, notions, ideas, etc., a broad range of mental activities.

35. Alternate translation: "We are subdued because we realize that the body has no definite nature and the mind does not act." (W.H.)

36. Shih Hu's translation reads:

"When will you enter nirvāṇa?"

The monks said, "When the Tathāgata enters nirvāṇa, we will then enter nirvāṇa." (Taishō 352, p. 215)

37. This can also be translated, "We are unimpededly liberated." (Y.T.L.)

## 21 無盡慧菩薩會

### Dialogue With Bodhisattva Infinite Wisdom

Thus have I heard. Once the Buddha was dwelling near Rājagṛha on Mount Gṛdhrakūṭa, together with an assembly of twelve hundred fifty monks. There were also ten thousand Bodhisattva-Mahāsattvas present, among whom were Bodhisattva Wisdom Banner, Bodhisattva Dharma Banner, Bodhisattva Moon Banner, Bodhisattva Sun Banner, and Bodhisattva Boundless Banner; sixteen lay Bodhisattvas, with Bhadrāpāla foremost; sixty Bodhisattva-Mahāsattvas of incomparable mind, with Mañjuśrī foremost; all the Bodhisattva-Mahāsattvas of the Worthy Kalpa, with Bodhisattva Maitreya foremost; and sixty thousand other Bodhisattva-Mahāsattvas, with Bodhisattva Infinite Wisdom foremost.

At that time, Bodhisattva Infinite Wisdom rose from his seat, uncovered his right shoulder, knelt upon his right knee, faced the Buddha with palms joined, and paid homage to him by bowing down with his head at the Buddha's feet. He then scattered precious flowers around the Buddha as an offering and said, "The World-Honored One speaks of bodhi-mind [*bodhicitta*]. By what principle do you speak of it? What are the ways in which a Bodhisattva achieves bodhi-mind? What is bodhi-mind? In bodhi, the mind is inapprehensible; in the mind, bodhi is also inapprehensible. Apart from bodhi, the mind is inapprehensible; apart from the mind, bodhi is also inapprehensible. Bodhi is formless, signless, and inexpressible; the mind is also formless, signless, and not demonstrable; thus, too, are sentient beings. None of the three is apprehensible. World-Honored One, since all dharmas are such, by what principle should we cultivate ourselves?"

The Buddha said, "Good man, listen to me attentively. The bodhi I speak of has intrinsically no name or description. Why? Because in bodhi, name and description are inapprehensible. The same is true of the mind and sentient beings. Such an understanding is called bodhi-mind.

\* Sūtra 45, Taishō 310, pp. 648-650; translated into Chinese by Bodhiruci.

"Bodhi has nothing to do with the past, present, or future. The mind and sentient beings also have nothing to do with the past, present, or future. He who understands this is called a Bodhisattva. However, in Bodhisattvahood, too, there is nothing apprehensible.

"One who realizes that all dharmas are inapprehensible is said to have attained bodhi-mind. An Arhat who has attained Arhatship has actually attained nothing; it is only to follow convention that he is said to have attained Arhatship.

"All dharmas are inapprehensible, and bodhi-mind is no exception. To guide novice Bodhisattvas, bodhi-mind is mentioned, but there is neither mind nor the term 'mind' in all this, neither bodhi nor the term 'bodhi,' neither sentient beings nor the term 'sentient beings,' neither Śrāvakas nor the term 'Śrāvakas,' neither Pratyekabuddhas nor the term 'Pratyekabuddhas,' neither Bodhisattvas nor the term 'Bodhisattvas,' neither Tathāgatas nor the term 'Tathāgatas,' neither the conditioned nor the term 'the conditioned,' neither the unconditioned nor the term 'the unconditioned,' neither attainment at present nor attainment in the future.

"Nevertheless, good man, I will use words as a means of expression and explain to you [the ten ways to generate bodhi-mind]:

"First is the vow to be foremost in the cultivation of extensive good roots, just as Mount Sumeru towers above everything else. This is the basis of the pāramitā of giving.

"Second is the vow to establish all one's undertakings firmly, just as the great earth anchors all things. This is the basis of the pāramitā of discipline.

"Third is the vow to have a strong will to bear all afflictions with courage and ease, just as an awesome lion fearlessly subdues all beasts. This is the basis of the pāramitā of patience.

"Fourth is the vow to have overwhelming power to conquer defilements, just as Nārāyaṇa vanquishes his opponents. This is the basis of the pāramitā of vigor.

"Fifth is the vow to cultivate virtues and develop all kinds of good roots, which will blossom like flowering pārijāta and kovidāra trees. This is the basis of the pāramitā of meditation.

"Sixth is the vow to eradicate ignorance and delusion, just as the boundless light of the sun dispels darkness. This is the basis of the pāramitā of wisdom.

"Seventh is the vow to consummate all meritorious aspirations and all glories, so that one can deliver people from dangers and disasters, like a wealthy, [benevolent] merchant who uses his resources skillfully. This is the basis of the pāramitā of ingenuity.

"Eighth is the vow to overcome all obstacles, and thus acquire a mind as perfectly peaceful and pure as a clear, full moon. This is the basis of the pāramitā of power.

"Ninth is the vow to adorn and purify all beings and all Buddha-lands, to perform all wholesome deeds, and to succeed in whatever one does, just as a poor man who acquires inexhaustible treasures can fulfil all his wishes. This is the basis of the pāramitā of volition.

"Tenth is the vow to acquire blessings and knowledge as boundless as space, and to master all dharmas, like an anointed universal monarch [who is master of the world]. This is the basis of the pāramitā of knowledge.

"Good man, one who succeeds in cultivating these ten ways to generate bodhi-mind is called a Bodhisattva, a pre-eminent being, a being free of hindrance, not an inferior being. Yet, since the reality of things is inapprehensible, there is actually neither sentient being nor mind nor bodhi in all this.

"Furthermore, good man, a Bodhisattva who practices the pāramitā of giving regards ten things as foremost:

- (1) the root of faith;<sup>1</sup>
- (2) the power of faith;
- (3) aspiration;
- (4) ever-increasing aspiration;
- (5) benefiting sentient beings;
- (6) great kindness;
- (7) great compassion;
- (8) the practice of the four inducements;
- (9) love for the Buddha-Dharma; and
- (10) the quest for all-knowing wisdom.

These are the ten.

"Good man, a Bodhisattva who practices the pāramitā of discipline regards ten things as foremost:

- (1) keeping his bodily actions pure and clean;
- (2) keeping his verbal actions pure and clean;
- (3) keeping his mental actions pure and clean;
- (4) not bearing grudges or ill will;
- (5) purification and abolition of the miserable planes of existence;
- (6) avoiding the eight adversities;
- (7) transcending the stages of Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas;
- (8) abiding securely in the Buddha's merits;
- (9) fulfillment of all wishes; and
- (10) fulfillment of his great vows.

These are the ten.

"Good man, a Bodhisattva who practices the pāramitā of patience regards ten things as foremost:

- (1) abandoning hatred;
- (2) disregarding his own body;
- (3) disregarding his own life;
- (4) belief in and understanding of [the Dharma];
- (5) bringing sentient beings to maturity;
- (6) the power of kindness;

- (7) the realization of compliance with the Dharma;
- (8) the realization of the profound Dharma;
- (9) the vast, supreme patience; and
- (10) dispelling the darkness of ignorance.

These are the ten.

"Good man, a Bodhisattva who practices the pāramitā of vigor regards ten things as foremost:

- (1) acting in conformity with sentient beings;
- (2) always rejoicing over others' [meritorious] actions, words, and thoughts;
- (3) never being indolent;
- (4) devoting himself to progress;
- (5) cultivating right effort;
- (6) cultivating the [four] mindfulnesses;
- (7) destroying afflictions, the enemies;
- (8) observing all dharmas;
- (9) bringing sentient beings to maturity; and
- (10) pursuing all-knowing wisdom.

These are the ten.

"Good man, a Bodhisattva who practices the pāramitā of meditation regards ten things as foremost:

- (1) abiding securely in wholesome dharmas;
- (2) fixing the mind on one object;
- (3) attaining poise by fixing the mind on one object;
- (4) right concentration;
- (5) liberation through dhyāna;
- (6) the root of concentration;<sup>2</sup>
- (7) the power of concentration;
- (8) the destruction of afflictions, the enemies;
- (9) the perfection of all dhyānas;<sup>3</sup>
- (10) the samādhi that protects the Dharma.

These are the ten.

"Good man, a Bodhisattva who practices the pāramitā of wisdom regards ten things as foremost:

- (1) skillful observation of the [five] aggregates;
- (2) skillful observation of the [eighteen] elements and [twelve] entrances;
- (3) right view;
- (4) right mindfulness;
- (5) thoroughly understanding the [four] noble truths;
- (6) abandoning wrong views;
- (7) the root of wisdom;

- (8) the Realization of the Nonarising of Dharmas;
- (9) the power of wisdom; and
- (10) unimpeded knowledge.

These are the ten.

"Good man, a Bodhisattva who practices the pāramitā of ingenuity regards ten things as foremost:

- (1) penetrating the mentalities and desires of sentient beings;
- (2) strengthening sentient beings with his powers;
- (3) great kindness and great compassion;
- (4) untiringly bringing sentient beings to maturity;
- (5) rejecting the states of the Śrāvaka and Pratyekabuddha;
- (6) superior knowledge and views;
- (7) cultivating all the pāramitās;
- (8) seeing all dharmas as they really are;
- (9) acquiring the inconceivable powers; and
- (10) [attaining] the state of nonregression.

These are the ten.

"Good man, a Bodhisattva who practices the pāramitā of power regards ten things as foremost:

- (1) knowing the jungle of all beings' mentalities;
- (2) knowing the jungle of all beings' defiled activities;
- (3) knowing the jungle of all beings' activities of aspiration and superior understanding;
- (4) knowing the jungle of all beings' sensuous activities;
- (5) knowing the jungle of all beings' activities of the [eighteen] elements;
- (6) knowing the jungle of the secondary defiled activities<sup>4</sup> of all beings;
- (7) knowing the jungle of all beings' activities in saṃsāra;
- (8) knowing the jungle of all beings' karmic results from activities in the past, present, and future;
- (9) knowing the jungle of all beings' defiled habits; and
- (10) tirelessly bringing to maturity sentient beings with their jungle-like capacities.<sup>5</sup>

These are the ten.

"Good man, a Bodhisattva who practices the pāramitā of volition regards ten things as foremost:

- (1) knowing that no dharma arises;
- (2) knowing that all dharmas are formless;
- (3) knowing that no dharma ceases;
- (4) knowing that there are no dharmas;
- (5) being attached to nothing;

- (6) knowing that no dharma comes [into being];
- (7) knowing that no dharma goes [into extinction];
- (8) knowing that all dharmas are devoid of self-nature;
- (9) knowing that all dharmas are equal, without a beginning, middle, or end; and
- (10) not differentiating the beginning, middle, or end of any dharma.

These are the ten.

"Good man, a Bodhisattva who practices the pāramitā of knowledge regards ten things as foremost:

- (1) skillful understanding and analysis of all dharmas;
- (2) skillful perfection of white [i.e., wholesome] dharmas;
- (3) accumulating the numerous spiritual provisions of a Bodhisattva;
- (4) gathering an abundant provision of blessed deeds and knowledge;
- (5) perfecting great compassion;
- (6) entering all different worlds;
- (7) understanding the defiled activities of all sentient beings;
- (8) exerting himself to enter the Tathāgata's state;
- (9) seeking to enter the excellent states of possessing the ten powers, the [four] fearlessnesses, and the [eighteen] unique qualities of a Buddha; and
- (10) ascending to the throne of an Anointed One<sup>6</sup> and achieving the supreme qualities of an All-Knowing One.

These are the ten.

"Good man, when Bodhisattva-Mahāsattvas practice the ten pāramitās, they regard the ten things in each category as foremost.

"Furthermore, good man, what are the meanings [and functions] of the pāramitās? [They are to cause one:]

- to recognize clearly the practices that surpass those of Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas;
- to recognize clearly the vast, perfect wisdom of the Tathāgatas;
- to be detached from both conditioned and unconditioned dharmas;
- to understand the undesirability of saṃsāra as it really is;
- to enlighten those who are not yet enlightened;
- to acquire the inexhaustible Dharma-treasury of the Tathāgata;
- to obtain unhindered liberation;
- to save sentient beings by giving;
- to fulfill his original vows by discipline;
- to obtain all the majestic auspicious signs through patience;
- to fathom the ultimate depth of all the Buddha's teachings by vigor;
- to generate the four immeasurables by meditation;
- to eradicate all afflictions by wisdom;
- to accumulate the Buddha's teachings by ingenuity;

- to fulfill the Buddha's teachings by volition;
- to awaken sentient beings' pure faith by power;
- to obtain the all-knowing wisdom of the Tathāgata by knowledge;
- to acquire the Realization of the Nonarising of Dharmas;
- to attain the state of nonregression;
- to purify a Buddha-land;
- to bring sentient beings to maturity;
- to consummate at the bodhi-site the wisdom of all Tathāgatas;
- to vanquish all demons;
- to gain command of the four bases of miraculous powers;
- to abide neither in saṃsāra nor in nirvāṇa;
- to transcend all the virtues of Śrāvakas, Pratyekabuddhas, and Bodhisattvas;
- to overcome all heterodox doctrines;
- to achieve the ten powers, the four fearlessnesses, and the [eighteen] unique qualities of the Buddha;
- to realize supreme enlightenment; and
- to turn the twelve kinds of Dharma wheels.<sup>7</sup>

All these are the meanings [and functions] of the pāramitās.

"Furthermore, good man, when a Bodhisattva-Mahāsattva is about to abide in the Stage of Great Joy—the first stage of Bodhisattva development—he will first have a vision of all the hundreds of thousands of millions of myriads of hidden treasures in the billion-world universe.

"When a Bodhisattva is about to abide in the Stage of Stainless Purity—the second stage—he will first have a vision of a billion-world universe with its ground as flat as one's palm and with pure adornments of innumerable hundreds of thousands of millions of myriads of precious lotus flowers.

"When a Bodhisattva is about to abide in the Stage of Illumination—the third stage—he will first have a vision of himself clad in armor and brandishing a cudgel, repressing enemies dauntlessly and resolutely.

"When a Bodhisattva is about to abide in the Stage of Radiant Flames—the fourth stage—he will first have a vision of all kinds of rare flowers being scattered over the ground by the wind from the four quarters.

"When a Bodhisattva is about to abide in the Stage of Invincible Strength—the fifth stage—he will first have a vision of women with garlands of atimuktaka, vārṣika, and campaka flowers on their heads and various adornments on their bodies.

"When a Bodhisattva is about to abide in the Stage of Direct Presence—the sixth stage—he will first have a vision of a beautiful pond filled with pure, lucid water having eight merits. Gold sand will form the bottom of the pond, four jewelled flights of steps will be on its sides, and it will be adorned with blue, red, white, and variously colored lotus flowers. He will see himself playing in this pond.

"When a Bodhisattva is about to abide in the Far-Reaching Stage—the seventh stage—he will first have a vision of hells to his left and right, and will see himself passing through them unharmed.

"When a Bodhisattva is about to abide in the Stage of Immovable Steadfastness—the eighth stage—he will first have a vision of himself bearing the signs of a lion king on his shoulders, frightening all beasts.

"When a Bodhisattva is about to abide in the Stage of Meritorious Wisdom—the ninth stage—he will first have a vision of himself as a universal monarch teaching the true Dharma, surrounded by innumerable hundreds of thousands of millions of myriads of kings, and shaded by various clean, white, jewelled canopies.

"When a Bodhisattva is about to abide in the Stage of the Dharma-Cloud—the tenth stage—he will first have a vision of himself [with a body] the color of genuine gold, complete with all the thirty-two auspicious signs of a Tathāgata, and haloed with a circle of light several feet in radius.<sup>8</sup> He will be seated comfortably on a broad, high lion-throne, and surrounded by innumerable hundreds of thousands of millions of myriads of gods from the Brahmā Heaven, who will respectfully make offerings to him and listen to his preaching of the Dharma.

"Good man, due to the power of samādhi, a Bodhisattva-Mahāsattva will have each of these visions respectively prior to his attainment of each of the ten stages.

"Furthermore, good man, a Bodhisattva:

in the first stage perfects the pāramitā of giving;  
in the second stage, the pāramitā of discipline;  
in the third stage, the pāramitā of patience;  
in the fourth stage, the pāramitā of vigor;  
in the fifth stage, the pāramitā of meditation;  
in the sixth stage, the pāramitā of wisdom;  
in the seventh stage, the pāramitā of ingenuity;  
in the eighth stage, the pāramitā of power;  
in the ninth stage, the pāramitā of volition; and  
in the tenth stage, the pāramitā of knowledge.

"Furthermore, good man, a Bodhisattva who brings forth:

the first vow [in generating bodhi-mind] will attain the Treasure-Revealing Samādhi;  
the second vow, the Well-Abiding Samādhi;  
the third vow, the Immovable Samādhi;  
the fourth vow, the Nonregressing Samādhi;  
the fifth vow, the Precious Flower Samādhi;  
the sixth vow, the Sunlight Samādhi;  
the seventh vow, the Samādhi of the Realization of All Meanings;  
the eighth vow, the Samādhi of the Torch of Wisdom;

the ninth vow, the Samādhi of Direct Realization of the Buddha-Dharma;  
and  
the tenth vow, the Śūraṅgama Samādhi.<sup>9</sup>

"Furthermore, good man, a Bodhisattva attains:

the Dhāraṇī of Superior Blessings in the first stage;  
the Unsurpassable Dhāraṇī in the second stage;  
the Well-Abiding Dhāraṇī in the third stage;  
the Indestructible Dhāraṇī in the fourth stage;  
the Stainless Dhāraṇī in the fifth stage;  
the Dhāraṇī of the Wheel of Wisdom-Light in the sixth stage;  
the Superb Deed Dhāraṇī in the seventh stage;  
the Pure Discernment Dhāraṇī in the eighth stage;  
the Dhāraṇī of the Manifestation of Boundless Doctrines in the ninth stage;  
and  
the Inexhaustible Dharma Store Dhāraṇī in the tenth stage."

At that time, in the assembly, a god named Lion Banner of Unimpeded Light rose from his seat, bared his right shoulder, knelt upon his right knee, faced the Buddha with palms joined, and said, "How wonderful, World-Honored One! How wonderful, Well-Gone One! This doctrine is so profound and extensive that it comprises all the teachings of the Buddhas."

Thereupon, the Buddha told Lion Banner of Unimpeded Light, "So it is, so it is, as you have said. Good man, if a Bodhisattva can listen to and accept this doctrine, even temporarily, he or she will never regress from the pursuit of supreme enlightenment. Why? That good man or good woman has planted and matured various roots of virtue; therefore, he or she is impressed by the sūtra upon hearing it.

"Good man, if men or women hear this sūtra, all the good roots they have planted will be purified, and consequently they will not fail to see the Buddha, listen to the Dharma, make offerings to the Saṅgha, and bring sentient beings to maturity. They will not be separated from:

the Dhāraṇī of the Ocean Seal;  
the Dhāraṇī of Boundless Manifestations;  
the Dhāraṇī of Penetrating the Desires and Mentalities of Sentient Beings;  
the Dhāraṇī of the Banner of Pure Sunlight;  
the Dhāraṇī of the Banner of Stainless Moonlight;  
the Dhāraṇī of Breaking All Bonds;  
the Dhāraṇī of Destroying Boundless Afflictions as Adamant as a Diamond Mountain;  
the Dhāraṇī of Understanding Words Expressing the Equality of the Dharma-Nature;  
the Dhāraṇī of Understanding the Language and Voice of Reality;

the Dhāraṇī Imprinted by the Seal of Boundless Purity as Revealed by Emptiness; and  
the Dhāraṇī of Achieving and Manifesting the Boundless Buddha-Body.

“Good man, if a Bodhisattva achieves these dhāraṇīs, he will then be able to transform himself into Buddha-forms to teach sentient beings in all the lands of the ten directions. However, in light of the Dharma-nature, he neither comes nor goes, nor does he teach any sentient beings. He does not cling to the words he uses to teach the Dharma. He is impartial and steadfast. Although he manifests a body that lives and dies, in reality nothing ever arises or ceases; not a single dharma comes or goes. He realizes that all phenomena are originally quiescent, and thus abides securely in the Buddha-Dharma. Why? Because he makes no distinctions among dharmas.”

During the preaching of this doctrine, thirty thousand Bodhisattvas in the assembly achieved the Realization of the Nonarising of Dharmas; innumerable Bodhisattvas attained the state of nonregression from the pursuit of supreme enlightenment; innumerable sentient beings resolved to seek enlightenment; and innumerable monks attained the clear Dharma-eye.

When the Buddha finished teaching this sūtra, Bodhisattva Infinite Wisdom and the monks, gods, humans, asuras, gandharvas, and so on were all jubilant. They accepted it with faith, and began to practice it with veneration.

## NOTES

1. The root of faith is one of the five roots. See Numerical Glossary.
2. The root of concentration is another of the five roots.
3. We render the Chinese characters 定聚 as ‘all dhyānas’. 定聚 usually means ‘the group of people decided on enlightenment’, but this does not suit the context.
4. The activities resulting from the secondary defilements. Desire, hatred, ignorance, arrogance, doubt, and wrong views are the primary defilements. All other unwholesome mentalities, such as jealousy, vexation, and miserliness, are secondary defilements.
5. Literally, “tirelessly ripening the jungle-like capacities of sentient beings.”
6. One who has reached the tenth stage of Bodhisattvahood, and is about to attain Buddhahood.
7. We are not sure of the identity of the twelve kinds of Dharma wheels; they may refer to the threefold formula of the four noble truths.
8. The Chinese text reads 圓光一尋 . 尋 is a measure of eight Chinese feet. The original Sanskrit for this phrase is not known to us. It is also ambiguous whether the halo is eight feet in diameter or in radius. We expediently translate it as ‘several feet’.
9. Śūraṅgama means ‘heroic’, ‘durable’, or ‘all things completed’. This samādhi is attained by a Buddha or advanced Bodhisattva.

## VIII

### *On Skillful Means*