

PART NINE

The Excellent Intelligence Ground

I. THE NINTH GROUND: THE EXCELLENT INTELLIGENCE GROUND

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

Once the eighth bodhisattva ground's explanation had concluded, the Tathāgata manifested great spiritual superknowledges' powers, causing tremors in an inconceivable and incalculable number of *koṭis* of lands throughout the ten directions. ⁽¹⁾

The body of that all-knowing and seeing Supremely Honored One then sent forth everywhere immensely radiant light that illuminated with dazzling brilliance all those countless lands, causing all beings therein to be filled with happiness. ⁽²⁾

The incalculably many hundreds of thousands of *koṭis* of bodhisattvas simultaneously ascended into space where they remained and presented offerings superior even to the devas' marvelous gifts to he whose proclamations are the most superior of all. ⁽³⁾

The Great Vaśavartin Heaven King and the Vaśavartin devas then all together and with unified minds felt measureless joy. They each then presented all different sorts of the many types of gifts as offerings to the extremely deep ocean of meritorious qualities. ⁽⁴⁾

A thousand myriads *koṭis* of celestial nymphs were also present who, filled with joyous exultation in body and mind, each played measurelessly many kinds of music as offerings to the great guiding teacher among humans. ⁽⁵⁾

Then the many sorts of music played simultaneously a hundred thousand myriads of *koṭis* of countless musical variations that, by the awe-inspiring spiritual power of the Well Gone One, uttered praises with sublime voices, saying: ⁽⁶⁾

"The quiescent and pliant one free of defilements or injuriousness skillfully cultivates whichever ground he enters. Possessed of a mind like space, he goes forth to the ten directions, broadly proclaiming the Buddha's path to awaken the many beings. ⁽⁷⁾

"In all places throughout the heavens and among men, he manifests incomparably marvelous adornments arising from the meritorious qualities of the Tathāgata that cause those who observe them to delight in Buddha's wisdom. ⁽⁸⁾

“Without leaving that single land, he goes to visit the many lands. In this, he is like the moon everywhere illuminating the entire world. Even as his voice’s conceptual thoughts have all become quiescent,²¹⁷ like echoes in a valley, there is no place where they do not resound. (9)

“Where there are beings of lesser resolve, he expounds for them the practices of *śrāvaka*-disciples. If their minds are bright, sharp and pleased by the *pratyeka* vehicle,²¹⁸ then he discourses for them on the path of that intermediate vehicle. (10)

“For the kind and compassionate who delight in beneficence, he explains for them the deeds practiced by bodhisattvas. For those with the resolve to acquire the most superior wisdom, he shows them the unsurpassable Dharma of the Tathāgata. (11)

“In this, he is like a conjurer in his creation of many phenomena wherein none of those forms or features are real. So too it is with these conjurations born of this bodhisattva’s wisdom. Though showing all, they transcend existence and nonexistence.” (12)

Having thus sung with a thousand myriad beautiful sounds these songs praising the Buddha, they all then stood there in silence. Liberation Moon then spoke, saying: “This congregation is now pure. Please expound now on the path as practiced on the ninth ground.” (13)

2. VAJRAGARBHA COMMENCES THE NINTH GROUND’S EXPLANATION

(A) At that time, Vajragarbha Bodhisattva informed Liberation Moon Bodhisattva, saying:

3. TEN EARNESTLY PURSUED ENDEAVORS ENABLING NINTH GROUND ACCESS

O Son of the Buddha. Here we have the bodhisattva *mahāsattva* who, resorting to such immeasurably vast knowledge as this, has pursued reflective meditative contemplations and has additionally sought:

To seek out ever more supreme realizations of quiescent liberation;

To further cultivate the wisdom of the Tathāgata;

To access the secret dharmas of the Tathāgata;

To contemplate the nature of inconceivably great knowledge;

To purify all gateways to *dhāraṇīs* and *samādhis*;

To become equipped with the great spiritual superknowledges;

To enter the different sorts of worlds;

To cultivate the powers, fearlessnesses, and dharmas exclusive to the Buddhas;

To accord with all buddhas in turning the wheel of the Dharma;

And to never relinquish his greatly compassionate original vows.

It is he who then succeeds in entering the bodhisattva's ninth ground, the Ground of Excellent Intelligence.

4. THIS BODHISATVA'S TEN TYPES OF REALITY-BASED KNOWLEDGE OF KARMA

(B) Son of the Buddha, the bodhisattva *mahāsattva* dwelling on this Ground of Excellent Intelligence knows in accordance with reality:

- The effects of practicing²¹⁹ dharmas that are good, bad, and karmically neutral;
- The effects of practicing dharmas either associated with or free of the contaminants;
- The effects of practicing worldly dharmas and world-transcending dharmas;
- The effects of practicing dharmas that are conceivable and dharmas that are inconceivable;
- The effects of practicing the dharmas that are definite and the dharmas that are indefinite;
- The effects of practicing *śrāvaka* dharmas and dharmas of *pratyekabuddhas*;
- The effects of practicing the bodhisattva practice dharmas;
- The effects of practicing dharmas of the Tathāgata's ground;
- The effects of practicing conditioned dharmas;
- And the effects of practicing unconditioned dharmas.

5. HIS TEN TYPES OF REALITY-BASED KNOWLEDGE OF ENTANGLING THICKETS

(C) This bodhisattva uses such wisdom to know in accordance with reality the entangling thickets²²⁰ in beings' minds, specifically knowing:²²¹

- The entangling thicket of the afflictions;
- The entangling thicket of karmic actions;
- The entangling thicket of the faculties;
- The entangling thicket of resolute beliefs;²²²
- The entangling thicket of the sense realms;²²³
- The entangling thicket of resolute intentions;²²⁴
- The entangling thicket of latent tendencies;²²⁵
- The entangling thicket of births;²²⁶
- The entangling thicket of the continuity of karmic propensities;²²⁷
- And the entangling thicket associated with the differences among the three groups of beings.²²⁸

6. TEN TYPES OF REALITY-BASED KNOWLEDGE OF BEINGS' MENTAL ASPECTS

(C) This bodhisattva knows in accordance with reality all of the different sorts of characteristics of beings' minds, specifically knowing:

The characteristic of arising with diverse character;
 The characteristic of swift transformation;
 The characteristic of either being destroyed or undestroyed;
 The characteristic of having no physical form;²²⁹
 The characteristic of becoming boundless;²³⁰
 The characteristic of purity;
 The characteristic of being either defiled or undefiled;
 The characteristic of being either held in bondage or freed of
 bondage;
 The characteristic of being deceptive about its endeavors;
 And the characteristic of manifesting in accordance with the
 destinies of rebirth.

So it is that he knows in accordance with reality such characteristics numbering in the hundreds of thousands of myriads of *koṭis*, knowing characteristics that in number extend to the point of incalculability.

7. HIS REALITY-BASED KNOWLEDGE OF THE AFFLICTIONS' CHARACTERISTICS

(E) So too does he know all of the different characteristics of the afflictions, specifically knowing:

Their characteristic of following one long and far;
 Their characteristic of possessing boundlessly many bases for
 their arising;
 Their characteristic of accompanying [the mind] in their arising
 and thus not being abandoned;
 Their characteristic of possessing the same quality in both their
 latent and arisen states;
 Their characteristic of being either associated with mind or dis-
 associated from mind;
 Their characteristic of abiding in a manner corresponding to the
 destiny of rebirth one enters;
 Their characteristic of differing in each of the three realms of
 existence;
 The characteristic of craving, views, ignorance, and pride to be
 as calamitous as deeply penetrating arrows;
 And their characteristic of uninterrupted continuity in serving
 as causes and conditions of the three categories of karmic
 actions.

Briefly stated, he knows in accordance with reality all such characteristics, thus knowing even up to eighty-four thousand such characteristics.

8. HIS REALITY-BASED KNOWLEDGE OF CHARACTERISTICS OF KARMIC ACTIONS

(F) So too does he know the characteristics of all of the different sorts of karmic actions, specifically knowing:

- Their characteristic of being either good, bad, or neutral;
- Their characteristic of being either manifest or not manifest;
- Their characteristic of arising in association with and not separate from mind;
- Their characteristic of being, due to their very nature, extinguished in every *kṣaṇa* even as there occurs the sequential accumulation of karmic fruits that are never lost;
- Their characteristic of involving or not involving karmic retribution;
- Their characteristic of involving the undergoing of multiple sorts of karmic retributions as when black actions are rewarded with black retributions, and so forth,²³¹
- Their characteristic of being comparable to immeasurably vast farm fields [in which their karmic causes are planted],²³²
- Their characteristic of possessing differences as performed by the foolish common people and by the Āryas;
- Their characteristic of involving the undergoing of their retribution in the present life, in the immediately ensuing rebirth, or in some subsequent life;
- And their characteristic of being either definite or indefinite as determined by their association with any of the Vehicles or non-association with any of the Vehicles.

Briefly stated, he knows in accordance with reality all such characteristics, thus knowing even up to eighty-four thousand such characteristics.

9. HIS REALITY-BASED KNOWLEDGE OF CHARACTERISTICS OF BEINGS' FACULTIES

(G) So too does he know the characteristics of the various faculties, specifically knowing:

- Their characteristic of being either weak, middling, or superb;
- Their characteristic of possessing or not possessing distinct differences between the past and the future;
- Their characteristic of existing in association with what is either superior, middling, or inferior;
- Their characteristic of arising in association with and being inseparable from the afflictions;
- Their characteristic of being either definite or indefinite as determined by their association with any of the Vehicles or non-association with any of the Vehicles;

- Their characteristic of being entirely ripened and trained to the point of pliancy;
- Their characteristic of vulnerability, as befits the state of the individual web of faculties, to transformation and destruction;
- Their characteristic of becoming so especially superb that they are insuperable by anyone;
- Their characteristic of differing as regards their reversibility or irreversibility;
- And their characteristic of possessing differences in the degree to which they continue even distantly to accompany one in their arising.

Briefly stated, he knows in accordance with reality all such characteristics, thus knowing even up to eighty-four thousand such characteristics.

10. HIS KNOWLEDGE OF BELIEFS, SENSE REALMS, AND RESOLUTE INTENTIONS

So too does he know:

- With respect to resolute beliefs,²³³ the degree to which they may be either weak, middling, or superior;
- With respect to sense realms,²³⁴ the degree to which they may be either weak, middling, or superior;
- With respect to resolute intentions,²³⁵ the degree to which they may be either weak, middling, or superior.

With respect to all of these matters, briefly stated, he knows all of their associated characteristics, thus knowing of each of them even up to eighty-four thousand such characteristics.

11. HIS KNOWLEDGE OF THE LATENT TENDENCIES' CHARACTERISTICS

(H) He also knows with respect to the latent tendencies,²³⁶ all of their different sorts of characteristics, specifically knowing:

- Their characteristic of arising in association with resolute intentions;²³⁷
- Their characteristic of arising in association with thought;
- Their characteristic of differing when concomitant with mind or not concomitant with mind;
- Their characteristic of following one long and far;
- Their characteristic of having existed beginninglessly and thus never having been extricated;
- Their characteristic of running counter to the realization of any and all of the *dhyāna* absorptions, liberations, samādhis, *samāpattis*, and spiritual superknowledges;

- Their characteristic of being what holds one in bondage to continuous rebirth within the three realms;
- Their characteristic of causing the boundlessly continuous manifestation of mind;
- Their characteristic of opening the gateway to all of the sense bases;
- Their characteristic of possessing such solidity as to be difficult to counteract;
- Their characteristic of determining success or failure in acquisition of any of the grounds as stations of the path;
- And their characteristic of being only such as may be extricated through the path of the Āryas.

12. HIS KNOWLEDGE OF THE CHARACTERISTICS ASSOCIATED WITH BIRTHS

(1) He also knows with respect to the taking on of rebirths, all of their different sorts of characteristics, specifically knowing:

- The characteristic of taking on rebirths in accordance with one's karmic deeds;
- The characteristics associated with differences in the six rebirth destinies;
- The characteristics associated with differences between form realm and formless realm rebirth;
- The characteristics associated with differences between rebirths with perception and rebirths without perception;
- The characteristics associated with karmic action acting as a field, craving as moistening water, ignorance as sheltering darkness; and consciousness as a seed giving birth to the sprout of subsequent becoming;
- The characteristics of simultaneous arising and inseparability of name and form;
- The characteristic of delusion and craving to seek continued existence;
- The characteristic of beginningless desirous attachment to desire feelings and to desire rebirth;
- And the characteristic of erroneously thinking one has already escaped the desires involved in existence within the three realms.

13. HIS KNOWLEDGE OF CHARACTERISTICS OF HABITUAL KARMIC PROPENSITIES

(1) He also knows with respect to the habitual karmic propensities,²³⁸ all their different sorts of characteristics, specifically knowing:

- The characteristic of differing when active or inactive;
- The characteristic of their imbued impressions to follow into the rebirth destinies;

- The characteristic of their imbued impressions to accord with beings' actions;
- The characteristic of their imbued impressions to accord with karma and afflictions;
- The characteristic of their imbued impressions to accord with what is karmically good, bad, or neutral;
- The characteristic of their imbued impressions to follow one into subsequent existences;
- The characteristic of their creation of imbued impressions to occur in a sequential manner;
- The characteristic of their imbued impressions to be associated with ceaseless afflictions that follow one afar and are not relinquished;
- The characteristic of their imbued impressions to be associated with what is substantially true or associated with what is not substantially true;
- And the characteristic of their imbued impressions to be associated with observing, listening to, and drawing close to either *śrāvaka*-disciples, *pratyekabuddhas*, bodhisattvas, or *tathāgatas*.

14. HIS KNOWLEDGE OF THOSE FIXED IN RIGHT, IN WRONG, OR UNFIXED

(K) He also knows with respect to beings the characteristics of being fixed in what is right, fixed in what is wrong, or unfixed, specifically knowing:²³⁹

- The characteristic of being fixed in what is right through the possession of right views;
- The characteristic of being fixed in what is wrong through the possession of wrong views;
- The characteristic of being unfixed in both of these respects;
- The characteristic of being fixed in what is wrong through the five heinous karmic offenses;²⁴⁰
- The characteristic of being fixed in what is right through the five root faculties;
- The characteristic of being unfixed in both of these respects;
- The characteristic of being fixed in what is wrong through following the eight-fold wrong path;
- The characteristic of being fixed in what is right through following what right by its very nature;
- The characteristic of being unfixed in either respect by no longer engaging in either [what is right or what is wrong], thus separating from both;
- The characteristic of being fixed in what is wrong through being deeply attached to wrong dharmas;

The characteristic of being fixed in what is right through habitual practice of the path of the Āryas;
 And the characteristic of being unfixed in either respect through abandoning both [what is right and what is wrong].

15. HIS KNOWLEDGE-BASED ADAPTIVE TEACHING AND LIBERATION OF BEINGS

(L) Son of the Buddha, the bodhisattva who accords with knowledge such as this is said to dwell on the Ground of Excellent Intelligence. Having come to dwell on this ground, he completely knows all the different aspects of beings' actions, teaches and trains them, and thereby causes them to gain liberation.

Son of the Buddha, this bodhisattva is well able to expound on the dharmas of the Śrāvaka-disciple Vehicle, the dharmas of the Pratyekabuddha Vehicle, the dharmas of the Bodhisattva Vehicle, and the dharmas of the ground of the Tathāgata.

Because, in all aspects of practice, he acts in accordance with such knowledge, he is able to adapt to variations in beings' faculties, natures, desires, understandings, and practices as well as to differences in their groups.²⁴¹ He also accords with whichever destiny they have been born into as well as with their particular afflictions, latent tendencies, karmic bonds, karmic actions and habitual karmic propensities. Having done so, he then explains the Dharma for them accordingly, thereby causing them to develop resolute belief,²⁴² to increase their wisdom, and to then achieve liberation through whichever vehicle is appropriate for them.

16. THE BODHISATTVA'S COMMAND OF FOUR TYPES OF UNIMPEDED KNOWLEDGE

(M) Son of the Buddha, the bodhisattva who dwells on this Ground of Excellent Intelligence becomes a great expounder of the Dharma²⁴³ thoroughly equipped with the practice appropriate to an expounder of the Dharma. He is thus well able to preserve and protect the Dharma treasury of the Tathāgata.

(N) Availing himself of immeasurably vast knowledge, he brings forth the four types of unimpeded knowledge and uses the bodhisattva's command of phrasing to expound the Dharma. This bodhisattva always accords with permutations of the four kinds of unimpeded knowledge²⁴⁴ and never abandons them even briefly. What then are those four? They are:

Unimpeded knowledge of Dharma;
 Unimpeded knowledge of meaning;
 Unimpeded knowledge of language;
 And unimpeded knowledge of eloquence.

a. TEN PERMUTATIONS OF EXPERTISE IN THE FOUR UNIMPEDED KNOWLEDGES

(O) It is through unimpeded knowledge of Dharma that this bodhisattva knows the specific characteristics of individual dharmas, through unimpeded knowledge of meaning that he knows the differentiating characteristics of dharmas, through unimpeded knowledge of language that he remains free of errors in his discourse, and through unimpeded knowledge of eloquence that his discourse is neither interrupted or exhausted.

(P) Additionally, it is through unimpeded knowledge of Dharma that he knows the nature of dharmas, through unimpeded knowledge of meaning that he knows the production and destruction of dharmas, through unimpeded knowledge of language that he establishes [the conventional designations of] all dharmas and discourses on them continuously,²⁴⁵ and through unimpeded knowledge of eloquence that he presents boundless discourses that accord with and do no violence to [those conventional designations] he has established.

(Q) Also, it is through unimpeded knowledge of Dharma that he knows the distinctions among present dharmas, through unimpeded knowledge of meaning that he knows the distinctions among past and future dharmas, through unimpeded knowledge of language that he discourses without error on past, future, and present dharmas, and it is through unimpeded knowledge of eloquence that he discourses completely and with boundless Dharma light on each of the periods of time.

(R) Then again, it is through unimpeded knowledge of Dharma that he knows the differences among dharmas, through unimpeded knowledge of meaning that he knows the differences among meanings, through unimpeded knowledge of language that he accords with others' language in his discourse, and through unimpeded knowledge of eloquence that he adapts to others' mental dispositions.

(S) Additionally, it is through unimpeded knowledge of Dharma that he uses Dharma knowledge to know differentiating and non-differentiating aspects. It is through unimpeded knowledge of meaning that he employs comparative knowledge to know differences in accordance with reality. It is through unimpeded knowledge of language that he uses worldly knowledge to discourse on differentiating aspects. And it is through unimpeded knowledge of eloquence that he uses the knowledge of ultimate truth to discourse skillfully.

(r) Also, it is through unimpeded knowledge of Dharma that he knows dharmas' singular and indestructible character. It is through unimpeded knowledge of meaning that his knowing of the aggregates, the sense realms, the sense bases, the truths, and conditioned origination is skillful. It is through unimpeded knowledge of language that he is able to employ in his discourse a beautifully sublime voice and choice of phrasing that are easily and completely understood by all inhabitants of the world. And it is through unimpeded knowledge of eloquence that he becomes ever more supremely able to discourse with boundless Dharma light.

(u) Then again, it is through unimpeded knowledge of Dharma that he knows the uniformly equal nature of the One Vehicle, through unimpeded knowledge of meaning that he knows the different natures of all the vehicles, through unimpeded knowledge of language that he expounds on the absence of differences among all of the vehicles, and through unimpeded knowledge of eloquence that he expounds on each and every one of the vehicles with boundless Dharma [light].²⁴⁶

(v) Also, it is through unimpeded knowledge of Dharma that he knows the practices of all bodhisattvas, the practice of knowledge, the practice of the Dharma, and the realizations following from knowledge. It is through unimpeded knowledge of meaning that he knows the differences in meaning associated with the stations on ten grounds. It is through unimpeded knowledge of language that he discourses on the aspects of the path of the grounds that do not differ. And it is through unimpeded knowledge of eloquence that he expounds on the boundless practice aspects of each and every one of the grounds.

(w) Then again, it is through unimpeded knowledge of Dharma that he knows the realization of the right enlightenment in but a single mind-moment as achieved by all Tathāgatas. It is through unimpeded knowledge of meaning that he knows the individual distinctions in the many different times, the many different places, and so forth. It is through unimpeded knowledge of language that he expounds on the different aspects associated with the realization of right enlightenment. And it is through unimpeded knowledge of eloquence that he may discourse on each and every sentence of Dharma for measurelessly many kalpas and yet still not come to the end of it.

(x) Also, it is through unimpeded knowledge of Dharma that he knows the corresponding realizations associated with all

Tathāgatas' proclamations, powers, fearlessnesses, dharmas exclusive to buddhas, great kindness, great compassion, eloquence, skillful means, turning of the Dharma wheel, and cognition of all-knowledge. It is through unimpeded knowledge of meaning that he knows the means by which the Tathāgata's voice adapts to beings' eighty-four thousand different implementations of resolute intentions,²⁴⁷ different faculties, and different resolute beliefs.²⁴⁸ It is through unimpeded knowledge of language that, adapting to all of the courses of action engaged in by beings, he uses the voice of the Tathāgata to present different explanations to them. And it is through unimpeded knowledge of eloquence that, adapting to beings' resolute convictions,²⁴⁹ he uses the Tathāgata's knowledge and perfectly pure practice to discourse for them.

17. HIS ACQUISITION OF DHĀRAṆĪS & FURTHER RECEIPT OF BUDDHAS' DHARMA

(Y) Son of the Buddha, the bodhisattva dwelling on the ninth ground acquires just such skill in the unimpeded knowledges, acquires the Tathāgata's treasury of sublime Dharma, becomes a great master of the Dharma, and also acquires the meanings *dhāraṇī*, the Dharma *dhāraṇī*, the wisdom *dhāraṇī*, the radiant illumination *dhāraṇī*, the good intelligence *dhāraṇī*, the manifold wealth *dhāraṇī*, the awe-inspiring virtue *dhāraṇī*, the unimpeded gateway *dhāraṇī*, the boundless *dhāraṇī*, and the variety of meanings *dhāraṇī*. He acquires in their fullness a hundred myriads of *asaṃkhyeyas* of *dhāraṇī* gateways and he employs a hundred myriads of *asaṃkhyeyas* of gateways of skillfulness in voice and eloquence with which he expounds the Dharma.

Having acquired hundreds of myriads of *asaṃkhyeyas* of *dhāraṇīs* such as these, this bodhisattva, appearing before each and every one of measurelessly many buddhas wherever those buddhas dwell, then uses hundreds of myriads of *asaṃkhyeyas* of *dhāraṇī* gateways such as these in listening to their teachings of right Dharma. Then, having heard them, he never forgets them. He then takes up those measurelessly many different gateways and expounds on them for others.

(Z) When this bodhisattva first enters the presence of a buddha, he bows, head to the ground, in reverential obeisance, and then, straightaway, in their very presence, acquires measurelessly many gateways into the Dharma. These dharmas that he acquires are so extensive that, even in a hundred thousand kalpas, none of the great *śrāvaka*-disciples who are skillful in learning and retention could ever be able to absorb them.

18. HIS EXPOUNDING ON DHARMA THROUGHOUT A GREAT TRICHILIOCOSM

Having acquired such *dhāraṇīs* and such unimpeded knowledges as these, even as this bodhisattva sits on the Dharma throne and expounds on Dharma, he is just then explaining it for the beings abiding throughout the worlds of a great trichiliocosm, doing so in a manner adapted to their different mental dispositions.²⁵⁰ With the sole exception of the Buddhas and those bodhisattvas who have already received the consecration, there is no one in any other assembly whose awe-inspiring virtue and brilliant radiance could ever rival that which he manifests.

19. THIS BODHISATTVA'S 10 TYPES OF VOICE-LIKE EXPRESSION IN TEACHING

When this bodhisattva sits on the Dharma throne:

He may wish to use but a single voice to cause everyone within a great assembly to gain complete comprehension, whereupon they will immediately acquire complete comprehension.

He may wish to employ many different sorts of voices to cause everyone in an entire great assembly to equally develop an understanding.

He may at times wish, by emanating great radiant light, to thereby proclaim gateways to the Dharma.

He may at times wish for the sound of Dharma to be proclaimed from each and every single hair pore on his body.

He may at times wish to cause all things with and without form throughout the worlds of a great trichiliocosm to simultaneously send forth the sublime sounds of Dharma.

He may at times wish to utter the sound of a single word that will then pervade the entire Dharma realm, causing all within it to achieve complete comprehension.

He may at times wish for the sounds of all words to emanate the sound of the Dharma, doing so in a way that constantly endures and never fades away.

He may at times wish for all musical sounds throughout all worlds, including those of flutes, pipes, bells, drums, songs, and chants, to proclaim in unison the sounds of the Dharma.

He may at times wish for but a single word to become entirely replete in itself with all of the words contained in all utterances of Dharma.

He may at times wish to cause each and every one of the finest atoms comprising the four great elements of earth, water, fire, and wind throughout an ineffable and measureless number of worlds to each proclaim an ineffable number of Dharma gateways.

In just this way, whatever he brings to mind comes to pass in accordance with his intentions so that none of them do not do so.

20. HIS INDEPENDENT COMMAND OF COUNTLESS SIMULTANEOUS VOICES

Son of the Buddha, even if all the beings within the worlds of a great trichiliocosm all came before this bodhisattva, and each and every one of them, using measurelessly many words, let flourish questions wherein each and every one of those questions was different from the others, this bodhisattva would still be able in but a single mind-moment to absorb them all and then, employing but a single voice, he would be able to explain and resolve every one of those questions, thereby causing each individual to become delighted in a manner accordant with whatever suits his mental disposition.

In this same way, even if each and every one of all the beings in an inexpressibly great number of worlds were, in but a single *kṣaṇa*, to use measurelessly many words as they let flourish questions wherein each and every one of those questions was different from the others, in but a single mind-moment, this bodhisattva would be able to absorb them all and, employing but a single voice, he would be able to explain and resolve every one of them, thereby causing each individual to become delighted in a manner accordant with his mental disposition.

So, too, even were this to be the case with all the beings filling up an ineffably great number of ineffably many worlds, this bodhisattva would still be able to explain the Dharma for each of them, in every case according with whatever suits each being's mental disposition, suits his faculties, and suits his resolute beliefs.

So it is that, receiving the assistance of the Buddhas' spiritual powers, he engages on a vast scale in accomplishing the Buddha's works, everywhere serving as someone upon whom everyone can rely.

21. THE BODHISATTVA'S VIGOR IN QUEST OF THE LIGHT OF KNOWLEDGE

Son of the Buddha, this bodhisattva redoubles his application of vigor in order to perfect the light of knowledge, doing so even to this degree: Suppose that on the tip of every single hair there were buddha assemblies as numerous as the atoms in an ineffably great number of worlds. Suppose as well that, in every one of those assemblies, there were beings as numerous as the atoms in an ineffably great number of worlds, each and every one of which beings possessed individual dispositions as numerous as the atoms in an ineffably great number of worlds. Suppose also

that all of those buddhas bestowed on those beings a gateway into the Dharma suited to those beings' individual dispositions. And suppose too that this circumstance obtaining with this one single place on the tip of a single hair was also true of all other places throughout the entire Dharma realm. Even so, this bodhisattva would still be able in but a single mind-moment to take in and never forget even all of those measurelessly many gateways to the Dharma as have been described herein.

Son of the Buddha, the bodhisattva dwelling on this ninth ground is intensely focused in the diligence of his practice both day and night, never indulging any other thought other than his aspiration that is solely devoted to entering the realm in which the Buddha courses,²⁵¹ to drawing close to the Tathāgata, and to entering the extremely profound liberations of all bodhisattvas. He always abides in samādhi, constantly sees the Buddhas, and never relinquishes this circumstance.

22. THE BODHISATTVA'S SEEING AND SERVING OF COUNTLESS BUDDHAS

In each and every kalpa, he sees measurelessly many buddhas, measurelessly many hundreds of buddhas, measurelessly many thousands of buddhas, and so forth on up to his seeing of measurelessly many hundreds of thousands of *koṭis* of *nayutas* of buddhas. He pays reverence to, venerates, renders service to, and presents offerings to those buddhas. He also presents inquiries to them on many different sorts of difficult topics and acquires the *dhāraṇīs* facilitating the proclamation of Dharma.

23. HIS GOOD ROOTS' PURITY LIKE THE GOLD OF A CAKRAVARTIN'S CROWN

All of his roots of goodness become ever more bright in the radiance of their purity in a manner comparable to the real gold that would be crafted by a skillful goldsmith into a jeweled crown made to adorn the head of a wheel-turning sage king, one that could never be rivaled by any adornment in the possession of any of the lesser kings, ministers, or citizens anywhere else on the four continents. Just so are the roots of goodness of this bodhisattva dwelling on the ninth ground, for they are such that none of the roots of goodness of any *śrāvaka*-disciple, *pratyekabuddha*, or bodhisattva dwelling on a lesser ground could ever rival.

24. HIS GOOD ROOTS' PURITY LIKE A BRAHMA HEAVEN KING'S RADIANCE

Son of the Buddha, this circumstance is comparable to that of a king of the Great Brahma Heaven, a lord of two thousand worlds, whose body emanates such radiant light that it illuminates with

dazzling brilliance even the most dark and distant places throughout those two thousand worlds, thus dispelling all darkness therein. So too it is with all the roots of goodness of the bodhisattva dwelling on this ground, for he is thereby enabled to emanate such brilliant light that it illuminates the minds of beings and thus causes all the darkness of their afflictions to become entirely extinguished.

25. THE NINTH GROUND BODHISATTVA'S FOCUS ON THE POWERS PĀRAMITĀ

Among the ten *pāramitās*, this bodhisattva has become most supreme in his perfection of the powers *pāramitā*. It is not that he does not practice the others. Rather, he simply accords them an amount of emphasis corresponding to his own strengths and to what is fitting.

26. VAJRAGARBHĀ'S FINAL STATEMENTS ABOUT THE 9TH GROUND BODHISATTVA

Son of the Buddha, this has been a general explanation of the bodhisattva *mahāsattva's*, ninth ground, the Ground of Excellent Intelligence. Were one to discourse on this extensively, then one would remain unable to finish the discussion of it even if one carried it forth for measurelessly many kalpas.

a. THE BODHISATTVA'S STATION AND DHARMA PRACTICE

Son of the Buddha, the bodhisattva dwelling on this ground often becomes a king of the Great Brahma Heaven, a lord ruling over two thousand worlds who is well able to govern and liberally serve the benefit of others with sovereign mastery. He is able to differentially expound on the practice of the *pāramitās* for the sake of all *śrāvaka*-disciples, *pratyekabuddhas*, and bodhisattvas. In this, he adapts to beings' mental dispositions²⁵² and, in addressing all of their challenging questions, there is no one who can prevail over him.

b. THE BODHISATTVA'S MINDFULNESS

In his practice of giving, pleasing words, beneficial actions, and joint endeavors, and, in all such works that he pursues, he never departs from mindfulness of the Buddha, and so forth until we come to his never departing from mindfulness of the knowledge of all modes and the cognition of all-knowledge.

c. THE BODHISATTVA'S ASPIRATION TO SERVE BEINGS

He also has this thought: "I should become one who serves these beings as a leader, as one who is supreme," and so forth until we come to "as one who relies on the cognition of all-knowledge."

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

If this bodhisattva brings forth diligently vigorous practice, then, in but a moment, he will become able to enter samādhis as numerous as the atoms in hundreds of myriads of *asaṃkhyeyas* of lands, and so forth until we come to his becoming able to transformationally manifest bodhisattvas to serve as his retinue that are as numerous as the atoms in hundreds of myriads of *asaṃkhyeyas* of lands. If he resorts to the power inherent in the bodhisattva's especially supreme vows, he becomes able then to freely manifest numbers beyond even this, such that one would never be able to count them even in a period of hundreds of thousands of *koṭis* of *nayutas* of kalpas.

27. VAJRAGARBHA BODHISATTVA'S SUMMARIZING VERSES

At that time, Vajragarbha Bodhisattva, wishing to restate his meaning, thereupon uttered verses, saying:

Through skillful meditation with measureless wisdom power that is the most supremely subtle and difficult for the world to know, he everywhere enters the Tathāgata's secret places, and, serving the benefit of beings, enters the ninth ground. {14}

Exercising sovereign mastery in both *dhāraṇis* and samādhis and gaining great spiritual superknowledges, he enters the many lands. Equipped with the powers, wisdom, fearlessness, exclusive dharmas, vow power, and compassionate mind, he enters the ninth ground. {15}

Dwelling on this ground he preserves the treasury of Dharma and utterly knows: what is good, bad, or neutral; what possesses or is free of the contaminants; what is worldly or world-transcending; and what is conceivable or inconceivable. He well knows them all. {16}

As for whether any dharma is definite or indefinite as well as what Three Vehicle's adherents do, he meditatively contemplates it all. Regarding the differences in conditioned and unconditioned actions, he knows them just as they are and thus enters the worlds. {17}

If he wishes to know beings' minds, he can use knowledge to know as they truly are their many characteristics including whether they are diversely arising, swiftly transformed, deteriorating, not deteriorating, insubstantial, boundless, and so forth. {18}

He knows afflictions as boundless, as in constant accompaniment, as of the same quality, latent or arising, as continuing in the destinies, knows karmic actions' varying natures, each different, destruction of of causes, and accrual of effects. He is able to know all of these. {19}

All the different faculties, inferior, middling, or superior,
 their past and future differences, countless other distinctions,
 resolute beliefs, sense realms, and resolute intentions—
 of eighty-four thousand aspects, there are none he does not know. (20)

[He knows] beings' afflictions and views that ever follow and bind,
 their beginningless entangling thickets, never yet cut down, the
 [latent tendencies] arising with intentions and together with mind,
 and their always restraining and binding them, never being severed. (21)

He knows they are merely erroneous thought, are unreal phenomena,
 are inseparable from the mind, are devoid of dwelling place, are
 still able to cause retreat after being dispelled by *dhyāna* samādhis,
 and are extinguished on the vajra path and then are finally ended. (22)

He knows that taking birth in the six destinies, each case differs,
 that karma is the field, cravings are moisture, ignorance is covering,
 consciousness is the seed, name-and-form are the sprout, and these
 cause beginningless ever continuous becoming in the three realms. (23)

He knows afflicted acts and mental habits cause birth in the destinies,
 knows that, if one abandons these, there will be no further births,
 and knows beings as all existing within one of three groupings,²⁵³
 and as either drowning among views or else as practicing the path. (24)

Dwelling on this ground, he is skillful in meditative contemplation,
 adapts to their dispositions, faculties, and resolute beliefs, and,
 always employs the unimpeded knowledges and sublime eloquence
 by which he teaches each differently as befits what is appropriate. (25)

As he sits on the Dharma throne, he is like a lion,
 also is like the king of bulls, the king of jewel mountains,
 or a king of dragons who spreads forth dense clouds,
 showers down the sweet dew rain, and thus fills the great oceans. (26)

He knows well the nature of dharmas and their abstruse meanings,
 is able with concordant verbal expressions to expound eloquently,
 and with a hundred myriad *asaṃkhyeyas* of *dhāraṇīs*, he retains all
 just as the great ocean takes in the many showers of rain. (27)

With *dhāraṇīs* and samādhis that are all pure,
 he is able in but a single mind-moment to see the many buddhas,
 listens to the Dharma in the presence of each and every buddha,
 and then in turn expounds on it with a sublimely wondrous voice. (28)

Whenever he wishes, throughout the worlds of a great trichiliocosm,
 he teaches all of the many classes of beings, becoming in this
 like a vastly spreading cloud that has no place it fails to reach as he
 adapts to their faculties and predilections, causing all to feel joyful. (29)

Even with countless buddha assemblies on the tips of every hair and even with beings' mental predilections also being endless, they respond to all their minds in the bestowing of Dharma gates, doing so in this same manner throughout the entire Dharma realm.

The bodhisattva diligently applies the power of vigor and thereby gains yet more meritorious qualities, ever more supremely refined. His hearing and retaining of so very many Dharma gateways as this is comparable to the earth's ability to retain all seeds. (30)

If the countless beings throughout the ten directions all came and drew close to where he sits in the midst of an assembly, in but a moment, he would adapt to their minds as each poses queries and then, with a single voice, he would respond and satisfy them all. (31)

Dwelling on this ground, he serves as a king of Dharma, adapting to beings' potentials, tirelessly providing teaching and inducement. Day and night, he sees the Buddhas, never relinquishes that vision, and enters deeply quiescent knowledge and liberation. (32)

He makes offerings to buddhas, skillfully refines his brilliance so that it shines like the Sage King's marvelously bejeweled crown and also causes the darkness of beings' afflictions to be extinguished just as when the Brahma Heaven King's light shines on every place. (33)

Dwelling herein, he often becomes king of a Great Brahma Heaven who employs the Dharma of the Three Vehicles to teach beings. The good works he does are everywhere and liberally beneficial all the way on to his future realization of all-knowledge. (34)

The samādhis he enters in but a single mind-moment number as the atoms comprising an *asaṃkhyeya* of lands. So too is the number of buddhas he sees proclaiming the Dharma. By the power of vows these extend in number even beyond this. (35)

This has been the ninth, the Ground of Excellent Intelligence, the station in which bodhisattvas of great knowledge practice, one that is extremely profound, sublime, and recondite. I have now finished its explanation for the Sons of the Buddha. (36)