

CHAPTER 20

Mindfulness of the Buddhas

XX. CHAPTER 20: MINDFULNESS OF THE BUDDHAS

A. ON FINISHING 1ST GROUND PRACTICES, THE BODHISATTVA SEES BUDDHAS

When the bodhisattva dwelling on the first ground has completed what is to be practiced, due to the power of his roots of goodness, he will naturally be able to see several hundred buddhas.³¹²

When, in this [above-discussed] manner, the bodhisattva subdues his own mind, he develops a deep love for the path to buddhahood. He then completely fulfills the first-ground practices in accordance with the way he learned them. Then, due to the power of his roots of goodness and merit, he is naturally able to see the present-era buddhas of the ten directions right before his very eyes.

1. Q: IS THERE ANY OTHER WAY TO BE ABLE TO SEE THE BUDDHAS?

Question: Is it solely through the power of roots of goodness and merit that one is then able to see buddhas or is there some other method by which one can do so?

2. A: ON ENTERING THE PRATYUTPANNA SAMĀDHI, ONE SEES THE BUDDHAS

Response:

There is a deep samādhi that the Buddha explained for the sake of Bhadrāpāla. If one acquires this samādhi treasure, one becomes able to see the Buddhas.

Bhadrāpāla was a lay bodhisattva well able to practice the *dhūta* austerities. It was for the sake of this bodhisattva that the Buddha spoke the *Pratyutpanna Samādhi Sūtra*.³¹³ The *pratyutpanna* samādhi is one in which one sees the Buddhas right before one's very eyes. When the bodhisattva accesses this magnificently precious samādhi, even though he might not yet have gained the heavenly eye and heavenly ear, he is nonetheless able to see the buddhas of the ten directions and he is also able to listen to the Dharma of the sutras being taught by those buddhas.

3. Q: HOW CAN ONE ACQUIRE THIS SAMADHI?

Question: What means should one use to acquire this samādhi?

4. A: ENVISION THE BUDDHAS WITH THE 32 MARKS AND 80 CHARACTERISTICS

Response:

One should bring to mind the Buddhas,
envisioning them as residing in a great assembly,
replete with all thirty-two major marks
and eighty secondary characteristics adorning their bodies.

a. RECOLLECTION OF THE BUDDHAS' QUALITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In cultivating this samādhi, the practitioner brings to mind the Buddhas with the thirty-two major marks and eighty secondary characteristics gracing their bodies, with bhikshus close by, with devas making offerings, and with a grand and reverential assembly surrounding them. With focused mind, one envisions each of the major marks of those buddhas.

One also recollects the Buddhas as those who are possessed of great vows, recollects their perfection of the great compassion and the fact that it has not been cut off, recollects their perfection of the great kindness through which they bring profound peace to beings, recollects their practice of the great sympathetic joy and their fulfillment of beings' aspirations, and recollects their practice of equanimity through which they have abandoned aversion and craving and do not abandon beings.

One also recollects their practice of the truthfulness basis of meritorious qualities by which they are never deceptive, recollects their practice of the relinquishment basis of meritorious qualities by which they have rid themselves of the miserliness defilement, recollects their practice of the thorough [quiescence]³¹⁴ basis of meritorious qualities by which their minds maintain a state of thorough-going quiescence, and recollects their practice of the wisdom basis of meritorious qualities through which they have acquired great wisdom.³¹⁵

One recollects too their perfect practice of *dāna pāramitā* by which they have become the lords of Dharma giving, their perfect practice of *śīla pāramitā* by which their observance of the moral precepts is pure, their perfect practice of *kṣānti pāramitā* by which their capacity for patient endurance is analogous to that of the earth, their perfect practice of *vīrya pāramitā* by which their vigor is preeminent, their perfect practice of *dhyāna pāramitā* by which they have destroyed all hindrances to meditative absorption, and their perfect practice of *prajñā pāramitā* by which they have destroyed all obstacles to wisdom.

b. RECOLLECTION OF THE 32 MARKS OF THE BUDDHAS

One recollects too:

- Their mark of having the wheel insignia on the hands and feet, emblematic of their ability to turn the wheel of Dharma;
- Their mark of securely planted feet, emblematic of their standing securely in every dharma;
- Their mark of proximal webbing on fingers and toes, emblematic of the extinguishing of all afflictions;
- Their mark of seven places of fullness, emblematic of their complete fulfillment of merit;
- Their mark of soft and tender hands and feet, emblematic of their harmonious manner of proclaiming the Dharma;
- Their mark of slender and long fingers and toes, emblematic of their cultivation and accumulation of every sort of good and sublime dharma during the long night [of previous lifetimes];
- Their mark of having broad heels and wide eyes, emblematic of their vast learning;
- Their mark of having a large and erect body, emblematic of their proclamation of the great and upright Dharma;
- Their mark of having high arches, emblematic of their being lofty in all things;
- Their mark of having upwardly spiraling bodily hairs, emblematic of their ability to cause beings to abide in the supreme and sublime dharma;
- Their mark of having legs gradually growing in thickness like those of the *aiṇeya* antelope;
- Their mark of long arms reaching past the knees, their arms appearing like golden gate bars;³¹⁶
- Their mark of the stallion-like retracted male organ, emblematic of their possession of the treasury of Dharma jewels;
- Their mark of the golden-hued body emanating light of countless colors;
- Their mark of fine and thin skin, emblematic of their proclamation of subtle and sublime Dharma;
- Their mark of one hair per hair pore, emblematic of their revealing of the single-mark Dharma;
- Their mark of the [mid-brow] white-down tuft adorning the countenance, due to which beings happily and tirelessly gaze at the Buddha's face;
- Their mark of a lion-like upper torso, emblematic of the Buddha, like the lion, being one who is fearless;
- Their mark of round and large shoulders, emblematic of their ability to make skillful distinctions regarding the nature of the five aggregates;

- Their mark of fullness in the sub-axillary region, emblematic of their possession of a full measure of good roots;
- Their mark of distinguishing every flavor, emblematic of their having perfectly tasted the flavor of quiescence;
- Their mark of having a square-set body, emblematic of having crushed the fear of births and deaths;
- Their mark of the fleshy prominence atop the crown, emblematic of their heads never having to be lowered in reverence [to someone superior];
- Their mark of the large tongue the color of real coral that is even able to cover the face;
- Their mark of the Brahmā-like voice and the physical mark that reaches even to the Brahma Heaven;
- Their mark of the lion-like jaw;
- Their mark of the broad shoulders, these being emblematic of their ability to demolish [the views held by] non-Buddhist traditions;
- Their mark of even teeth, emblematic of their practice of pure *dhyāna* meditation;
- Their mark of their teeth being of even height, emblematic of their minds' equal regard for all beings;
- Their mark of closely set teeth, emblematic of their abandonment of the desires;
- Their mark of having forty teeth, emblematic of their perfection of the forty dharmas exclusive to buddhas;
- Their mark of blue eyes, emblematic of their looking on beings with minds imbued with kindness;
- Their mark of having eyelashes like those of the royal bull, with the lashes long and in no way disarrayed;
- Their obtaining of a rare physical form that beings look on without ever tiring of holding it in their gaze;
- Their having bodies adorned with these thirty-two marks;

c. RECOLLECTION OF OTHER QUALITIES OF THE BUDDHAS

- Their having the eighty minor characteristics like inlaid adornments on their bodies, emanating brilliant radiance;
- Their complete fulfillment of merit;
- Their transcendentally supreme and awesome powers;
- Their wide-spread illustrious esteem;
- Their bodies' incense-like fragrance produced by purity in observing the moral precepts;
- Their invulnerability to being moved by worldly dharmas;
- Their ability to remain undefiled by any arising of afflictions;

- Their ability to remain unsullied by others' verbal abuse;
 Their ability to roam and sport through use of their spiritual powers;
 The ability of the Buddhas to be so intensely magnificent in the manifestation of their awe-inspiring powers that no one would dare obstruct them;
 Their freely exercised sovereign mastery in using wisdom to proclaim the Dharma that is like the roaring of a lion;
 Their ability to dispel the darkness of delusion by marshaling the power of vigor;
 Their use of magnificent brilliance to everywhere illuminate the heavens and the earth;
 Their utter invincibility in debate;
 Their being such that everyone looks up to them and no one can look down on them;
 Their constancy in regarding all beings with kindness;
 Their possession of mindfulness as vast as the great oceans;
 Their meditative absorption that is like Mount Sumeru [in its unshakability];
 Their possession of patience comparable to the earth's [ability to endure anything];
 Their ability to bring about growth in the merit planted by beings that is analogous [to the growth-enhancing capacity of] water's moisture;³¹⁷
 Their ability to bring forth roots of goodness in beings that, in its power, is like the rising of the wind;
 Their ability to ripen beings that is like fire's ability to cook things;
 Their possession of wisdom as boundless as empty space;
 Their universal raining down of the great Dharma [rain] that is like [the rain that pours down from] immense dense clouds;
 Their ability to remain unstained by worldly dharmas that is like lotus blossoms' [ability to rise from mud and yet remain unsullied by it];
 Their ability, like lions pouncing on deer, to decisively refute [the doctrines of] non-Buddhist masters;
 Their ability to bear a heavy burden that is like that of the great king of the elephants;
 Their ability to lead a great congregation of followers that is like that of the great king of bulls;
 Their possession of a retinue of pure followers that is like [the retinue of] a wheel-turning king;
 Their utter supremacy in the world that is like that of the lord of the Mahābrahma Heaven;

Their ability to inspire fondness and delight that is like that of a bright moon in the clear night sky;
 Their universal illumination that is able to burn as brightly as the brilliantly shining sun;
 Their bestowal on beings of the causes and conditions for peace and happiness that is like [the generosity of] a humane father;
 Their acting out of pity toward beings, protecting them in whatever way is appropriate, that is like the actions of a lovingly kind mother;
 Their purity of conduct that is like [the purity of] the real gold in the heavens;
 Their possession of the power of great strength that is like that of Indra in the heavens;
 Their diligence in benefiting those in the world that is like that of a world-protecting lord;
 Their ability to cure the disease of the afflictions that is like [the curative power of] a king of physicians;
 Their ability to rescue one from disastrous circumstances that is like that of close relatives;
 Their ability to accumulate a store of meritorious qualities that is like an immense treasury;
 Their possession of immeasurably vast moral virtue;
 Their possession of boundless meditative absorptions;
 Their ineffable wisdom;
 Their unequaled liberation;
 Their knowledge and vision of liberation that is the equal of the unequaled;
 Their incomparability in all things;
 Their supremacy over everyone in the world due to which they are recognized as foremost among men;
 And their perfection of great dharmas by which they are recognized as great men.

It is in this way that the bodhisattva engages in recollective contemplation of all buddhas in accordance with their possession of the qualities characteristic of the great men. [So, too, he recollects]:

d. RECOLLECTION OF MORE SPECIAL QUALITIES & ABILITIES OF BUDDHAS

That these buddhas have cultivated these meritorious qualities for a countless, boundless, inconceivable, and incalculable number of hundreds of thousands of myriads of *koṭis* of kalpas during which they have been well able to guard their physical, verbal, and mental karma;

- That they are well able to completely sever all doubts with respect to the five categorical repositories of dharmas: past dharmas, future dharmas, present dharmas, unconditioned dharmas, and ineffable dharmas;
- That, without falling into any error, they employ the four modes of reply: the definitive reply, the distinguishing reply, the counter-questioning reply, and the reply that sets aside the question;³¹⁸
- That they skillfully explain the dharmas of the thirty-seven enlightenment factors, namely: the faculties, the powers, the limbs of enlightenment, the path, the stations of mindfulness, the right efforts, and the foundations of psychic power;³¹⁹
- That they are well able to distinguish [each link comprising the chain of] cause-and-effect, namely: ignorance, actions, consciousness, name-and-form, the six sense faculties, contact, feeling, craving, grasping, becoming, birth, and aging-and-death;
- That they are free of any attachment to the eye or visual forms, to the ear or sounds, to the nose or fragrances, to the tongue or flavors, to the body or touch, or to the mind or dharmas [as objects of mind];
- That they skillfully expound the nine types of passages contained in the Dharma of the sutras, namely: sutras; *geyas*; prophetic teachings or expositions; *gāthās*; *udānas*; *nidānas*; [short] discourses beginning with “Thus [spoke the Buddha]...”; *vaipulyas*; and unprecedented events;
- That they are not influenced by any of the negative influences such as: greed, hatred, delusion, arrogance, the view that conceives of the existence of true personhood, extreme views, wrong views, seizing upon views; seizing on rules and regulations, or doubts;
- That they are not assailed by such afflictions as absence of faith, absence of a sense of shame, absence of a dread of blame, flattery, deviousness, frivolousness, neglectfulness, indolence, somnolence, animosity, miserliness, or jealousy;
- That they have known and seen the truth of suffering, have cut off its origination, have realized cessation, have cultivated the path, have abandoned what is to be abandoned, have seen what is to be seen, have done what is to be done, have utterly destroyed the foes,³²⁰ and have perfectly fulfilled their vows;
- That they are venerated in the world, are as fathers to the world, and are lords of the world, are well come, are well gone, are possessed of the well-cultivated mind, are consummately skilled in meditative stillness, are well-realized in the realization of cessation, and are well liberated;
- That, as they abide in countless and boundless worlds throughout the ten directions in worlds as numerous as the sands in the

Ganges, [one envisions them] as if they were appearing directly before one's very eyes.

e. CONTEMPLATIVE RECOLLECTION OF THE 80 SECONDARY CHARACTERISTICS

The bodhisattva should also envision in contemplation all of the buddhas as graced with their eighty secondary characteristics,³²¹ recollecting:

That their nails are copper-colored is emblematic of their practice of pure dharmas;

That their nails are prominent and large is emblematic of birth into the great clan;

That their nails are glossy and smooth is emblematic of a deep affection for beings;

That their fingers are round, tapered, and long is emblematic of the depth and duration of their practice;

That their fingers are fully fleshed is emblematic of fully developed roots of goodness;

That their fingers are tapered and long is emblematic of sequential accumulation of all dharmas of a buddha;

That their veins are hidden and invisible, but they do not hide the lineage of [the quality of their conduct in] body, mouth, and mind;

That there are no thick knots in their veins is emblematic of their having broken up the knots of afflictions;

That their ankle bones are flat and inconspicuous is emblematic of their not hiding away the Dharma;

That their feet are not misaligned in their track is emblematic of their liberation of the multitudes who have fallen into deviant conduct;

That their gait is like that of the lion is emblematic of their being the lions among men;

That their gait is also like that of the king of elephants is emblematic of their being the elephant kings among men;

That their gait is also like the king of geese is emblematic of their flying high, like the wild goose;

That their gait is also like the king of bulls is emblematic of their being the most revered of all men;

That, when walking, they turn around to the right, is emblematic of their skillful proclamation of the right path;

That their posture is not hunched or crooked is emblematic of the fact that their minds are never crooked;

That their bodies stand solid and erect in their posture is emblematic of their praise of solidity and durability in upholding the moral precepts;

- That their bodies gradually grew large is emblematic of their sequential exposition of Dharma;
- That all parts of their bodies are large and majestic is emblematic of their ability to skillfully explain the great and sublime meritorious qualities;
- That their bodies are perfectly developed is emblematic of their perfection in the Dharma;
- That their strides are of equal length is emblematic of their equal-minded regard for all beings;
- That their bodies are pristine in their cleanliness is emblematic of the purity of their three types of karma;
- That their skin is fine and soft is emblematic of the naturally pliant character of their minds;
- That their bodies remain free of all dust and dirt is emblematic of their good views that have abandoned all defilement;
- That their bodies do not shrink through wasting [even in old age] is emblematic of their minds' always remaining unsinkable;
- That their bodies are boundless and immeasurable is emblematic of the immeasurability of their roots of goodness;
- That the flesh of their bodies is taut and finely textured is emblematic of their eternal severance of [karmically-compulsory] later incarnations;
- That all of their joints are smooth in their articulations is emblematic of their skillful explication of the twelve causes and conditions and their perfectly clear distinguishing of each of them;
- That the hue of their bodies is not dark is emblematic of their knowledge and vision being free of any darkness;
- That their waists are full all around is emblematic of their disciples' possession of fully developed conduct;
- That their bellies are clear [of blemishes] and of fresh and immaculate appearance is emblematic of their being well able to completely know the serious faults of *saṃsāra*;
- That their bellies do not protrude is emblematic of their having crushed the mountain of arrogance;
- That their bellies are flat and do not show is emblematic of the fact that their proclamation of Dharma is directed equally toward everyone;
- That their umbilici are round and deep is emblematic of their penetrating comprehension of extremely deep dharmas;
- That their umbilici have a rightward swirl is emblematic of their disciples' compliance with instruction;

- That their bodies are in every way graceful in their refinements is emblematic of the thoroughgoing purity of their disciples;
- That their awesomeness in deportment is utterly immaculate is emblematic of the incomparable purity of their minds;
- That their bodies are free of blemishes is emblematic of their being completely free of any black dharmas;
- That the softness of their hands is superior even to that of *tūla*-cotton silk is emblematic of the experience of those receiving their instruction who feel as if their bodies have become as light as a wisp of down;
- That the lines on their palms form a deep pattern is emblematic of the profoundly dignified nature of their awesome deportment;
- That the lines on their palms are long is emblematic of their contemplative regard for the long-term future of those receiving their Dharma teaching;
- That the pattern on their palms is lustrous and smooth is emblematic of their relinquishing of the affection of relatives and of their acquisition of the fruits of the great path;
- That their countenances remain free of any long-faced expression is emblematic of the presence of exceptional circumstances in the moral precepts they establish;
- That their lips are as red as *bimba* fruit is emblematic of their looking on the entire world as merely like an image reflected in a mirror;
- That their tongues are soft and pliant is emblematic of their initial use of gentle speech in liberating beings;
- That their tongues are thin and wide is emblematic of the purity and abundance of their meritorious qualities;
- That their tongues are crimson red is emblematic of their Dharma's ability to cause common people to understand what they find difficult to understand;
- That their voices are like thunder is emblematic of their not fearing the boom of a thunderclap;
- That their voices are harmonious and gentle is emblematic of their proclamation of soft and gentle Dharma;
- That their four central incisors are rounded [in their visible profile] and straight is emblematic of their proclamation of the Dharma of the straight path;
- That their four central incisors are all sharp is emblematic of their liberation of those beings who are possessed of sharp faculties;
- That their four central incisors are immaculately white is emblematic of their being foremost in purity;

- That their four central incisors are evenly and equally set is emblematic of their standing on the level ground of the moral precepts;
- That the profile of their rows of teeth gradually taper to those that are smaller [in height] is emblematic of the graduated sequence in their explanation of the dharma of the four truths;
- That they have noses that are high and straight-ridged is emblematic of their standing atop the high mountain of wisdom;
- That their nasal apertures are clear and clean is emblematic of the purity of their disciples;
- That their eyes are wide and laterally long is emblematic of their wisdom's qualities of being vast and far-reaching;
- That their eyelashes are not sparse or in disarray is emblematic of their skill in their differential assessment of beings;
- That the whites and pupils of their eyes are as fresh and pristine as the petals of a blue lotus blossom is emblematic of their being such that even devas and heavenly maidens are moved to gaze upon them fondly and bow down in reverence before them;
- That their eyebrows are high and long is emblematic of the far-reaching spread of their fame;
- That the hair of their eyebrows is smooth and glossy is emblematic of their thoroughgoing knowledge of the dharmas of mental pliancy;
- That their ears are equal in their appearance is emblematic of the equality of all who listen to the Dharma;
- That their faculty of hearing is undamaged is emblematic of their ability to liberate any being possessed of an undamaged mind;
- That their foreheads are flat and of fine appearance is emblematic of their having skillfully abandoned all views;
- That their foreheads are unrestricted in their wide breadth is emblematic of their having broadly refuted [the claims of] non-Buddhist traditions;
- That their heads are in all respects perfectly developed is emblematic of their having thoroughly perfected [the goals of] their great vows;
- That their hair is the color of the black bee is emblematic of their having transformed the pleasures associated with the five types of desire;
- That their hair is dense and fine is emblematic of their having already put an end to the fetters;
- That their hair, so pleasing in its appearance, is soft in texture is emblematic of their pliant and sharp wisdom's ability to know well the flavor of dharmas;

That their hair is not in disarray is emblematic of their words never being disordered;
 That their hair is smooth and glossy is emblematic of their always being free of any sort of coarse speech;
 That their hair has a marvelous fragrance is emblematic of their use of the fragrant blossoms of the seven branches of bodhi to teach and guide beings in whatever way is appropriate.
 That their mark of virtue, peace, and joy appears in their hair.
 And that their mark of virtue, peace, and joy also appears on the palms of their hands and on the soles of their feet.

f. ENVISIONING THE BUDDHAS IN AN ASSEMBLY, TEACHING, ON THE LION SEAT

1) ENVISIONING THE BUDDHAS AS THEY SIT ON THE LION'S SEAT

It is in this manner that a bodhisattva should envision the Buddhas residing in the midst of a great assembly, speaking on right Dharma, and sitting on the lion seat. The lion seat has feet made from *vaiḍūrya* inset with various jewels, a headrest made from real coral with marvelous red pearls, and a canopy made of hammered gold. It is draped with all sorts of soft, silky, and lustrous heavenly robes and is supported by bejeweled lions whose bodies are made of purple gold. Their eyes are amber and their tails are mother-of-pearl. They have carnelian tongues, four white-diamond tusk-teeth, hair made of real white silver, and long, full manes. That seat rests upon these four lions. They form [the base of] the throne that has armrests made from royal elephant tusks and a footrest made of the many sorts of jewels.

The Buddhas receive there the reverential obeisance of the devas, dragons, *yakṣas*, *gandharvas*, *asuras*, *garuḍas*, *kinnaras*, and *mahoragas*. The Buddhas appear in this way on this throne. They wear the *saṃkakṣikā*³²² and the *nivāsana*,³²³ neither too high nor too low, so that they cover the three regions of the body and are neatly arranged and straight all around. They wear a light-colored *saṃghāṭī* robe,³²⁴ with the strips composing it clearly visible, neither too high nor too low, and not misaligned.

2) ENVISIONING THE AUDIENCE AS THE BUDDHAS TEACH DHARMA

They abide in the midst of an audience adorned by the presence of the eight kinds of great *āryas*,³²⁵ surrounded by a great assembly of humans and devas. When in attendance there, the dragons and golden-winged *garuḍa* birds all listen together to the teaching of Dharma, remaining free of any thoughts of mutual hostility.³²⁶

Everyone in the entire assembly is imbued with a deeply sincere sense of shame and dread of blame as, with reverential affection for the Buddha, they all listen single-mindedly to the discourse of the

Buddha, accept and uphold it, reflect upon it, and practice in accordance with what is taught. Because their minds are focused as they listen and because their thoughts are pure, they are able to block any interference by the hindrances. Everyone in the great assembly gazes insatiably up at the Tathāgata, with all the hairs raised on their bodies, with their eyes filled with tears, with their minds afire with intensity, or with hearts filled with great joy.

Wherever people have become like this, one knows that their minds have become purified. They remain there motionless and silent, serenely still, and as if having entered *dhyāna* absorption. Their minds are free of either love or hatred and remain undistracted by any extraneous matters. They have thoughts of great compassion³²⁷ by which they feel kindness and pity for beings, wishing to rescue them all. Their minds do not descend into flattery or deviousness, but rather have become utterly quiescent and pure as they distinguish what is good from what is bad. They have an immensely strong determination from which they neither fall away or shrink back and they do not regard themselves as superior or others as inferior.

3) ENVISIONING THE MANNER IN WHICH THEY TEACH DHARMA

The Buddhas are all observed abiding in such great assemblies, teaching Dharma that is easy to understand and easy to completely fathom. [Their audiences] listen with insatiable delight. Their voices are deep, are not subject to fading [even at a distance], are gentle, and are pleasing to the ear. Originating in the belly, through the interaction of the throat, tongue, nasopharynx, dental palate, teeth, and lips, the air is caused to become sounds and sentences that may be soft and pleasing to the ear, may be as powerfully strong as the earth-quaking thunder emanating from huge, dense rain clouds, may be like those fierce winds off the great ocean that drive up the surf, or may be like the voice of the devas in the Mahābrahma Heaven. With voices such as these, they lead forth and guide those beings that are capable of being liberated.

They have abandoned any modes of expression associated with scolding that may involve contortion of the brow, the countenance, or the lips. Their speech is neither deficient in any way nor unnecessarily long and redundant. There is no doubt in what they proclaim and their words will certainly be beneficial. Their speech is entirely free of any deceptive statements, any statements vulnerable to refutation, or any other such statements. It is entirely free of these faults and it is heard equally well by those far and near.

The Buddhas are freely able to answer the four types of challenging questions. They explain the four truths, thereby causing beings to gain the four fruits of the path. They establish points of meaning and make statements supported by reasons. They are completely equipped with all of the methods used in speaking. In the many different sorts of matters that they discuss, their meaning is easy to completely comprehend. Whatever they proclaim is entirely clear and never intentionally cryptic or convoluted. Their speech is neither too fast nor too slow. The beginnings and conclusions of each discourse are mutually compatible and invulnerable to anyone's challenges.

4) ENVISIONING THE EFFECTS OF THE BUDDHAS' TEACHING OF DHARMA

With speech such as this, they spread forth and proclaim the Dharma which is good in the beginning, middle, and end, imbued with meaning, beneficial, devoted solely to Dharma, and, in all respects, perfect.³²⁸ It is able to cause beings to gain karmic rewards in in this very lifetime. Their discourse is not meaningful only for a time, is such that one can test it for oneself, and is such that will lead to the fulfillment of one's aspirations. Those possessed of profound and sublime wisdom realize it within themselves. It can extinguish in beings the raging fire set ablaze by the three poisons. It is able to rid one of all karmic offenses committed by body, speech, and mind, and it is also well able to open up and reveal the essence of moral virtue, the meditative absorptions, and wisdom.

It begins with mere naming that in turn provokes realization of meaning that then in its own turn causes one to be filled with joy. From this joy, there then arises bliss, and from this bliss, there then arises meditative concentration. From this meditative concentration, there arises a wise knowing in accordance with reality, and from this wise knowing in accordance with reality, one then develops renunciation. Due to having developed this renunciation, one becomes able to destroy the fetters, and due to having destroyed those fetters, one then gains liberation.

In this very manner, this Dharma is caused to unfold in a sequence whereby:

- It is well able to open forth and reveal the four bases [of meritorious qualities]: truth, relinquishment, quiescence, and wisdom;
- It is able to reveal for beings the means by which they are caused to perfectly fulfill the *pāramitās* of giving, moral virtue, patience, vigor, meditative concentration, and wisdom;
- It is able to cause beings to sequentially enter and proceed through the Ground of Joyfulness, the Ground of Stainlessness, the ground

of Shining Light, the Ground of Blazing Brilliance, the Difficult-to-Conquer Ground, the Ground of Direct Presence, the Far-Reaching Ground, the Ground of Immovability, the Ground of Excellent Intelligence, and the Ground of the Dharma Cloud;
 It is able to make clear distinctions with regard to the Śrāvaka Disciple Vehicle, the Pratyekabuddha Vehicle, and the Great Vehicle;
 It is able to provoke realization of the fruits of the path gained by the stream enterer, once returner, non-returner and arhat;³²⁹
 And it is able too to cause complete success in gaining wealth and happiness in the realms of humans and devas.

This is what constitutes the treasury of meritorious qualities that provides all of the foremost forms of benefit.

5) INSTRUCTION ON THIS TYPE OF CONTEMPLATIVE MINDFULNESS

It is in this manner that one uses right thought in the recollective mindfulness of all buddhas. One abides in a peaceful and quiet place, rids oneself of sensual desire, ill will, dullness and drowsiness, doubtfulness, regret and agitation, and single-mindedly carries on focused mindfulness in which one refrains from generating thoughts that obstruct or cause one to lose meditative absorption. One employs this sort of mind in one's focused mindfulness of the Buddhas. If one's mind sinks, one should raise it up again. If one's mind becomes scattered, one should draw it back into a focused state. One then sees the entire great assembly as if it were always right before one's very eyes.

6) THE IMPORTANCE OF PRAISING THE MAJOR MARKS AND SECONDARY SIGNS

When one has not yet managed to enter concentrated meditative absorption, one should always praise the two types of phenomena that consist of the Buddha's major marks and secondary characteristics, using verses to celebrate the qualities of the Buddhas and to cause one's mind to become well trained in this.

a) VERSES IN PRAISE OF THE BUDDHAS' 32 MARKS

Accordingly, there are these lines of verse as follows:

Referring to the marks and characteristics of the Bhagavats and the karmic causes and conditions by which they acquired them, I shall use these marks and their corresponding karmic actions to set forth the praises of these great *āryas*:

The thousand-spoked wheel mark on the feet
 is associated with a pure retinue and with giving.
 It is because of these causes and conditions
 that the many worthies and *āryas* surround them.

The mark of the stable stance of the feet
 arises from upholding without fail all goodness one has taken on.
 It is because of this that the legions of Māra's armies
 are unable to succeed in destroying them.

Their fingers and toes join with proximal webs
and their bodies have the mark of purple golden coloration.
Because of their skillful practice of the means of attraction,
the great assembly naturally bows in deferential reverence.

Their hands and feet are extremely soft
and the body has the mark of fullness in the seven places.
It is due to giving food that accords with others' wishes
that they are naturally given many offerings.

They have long fingers, broad heels,
and the body has the mark of being large and upright.
This results from abandoning the causes and conditions of killing
and may lead to a lifespan lasting even up to a kalpa in length.

The hairs of the body grow in an upward and rightward spiral
and the feet have the mark of high arches.
By always advancing in good endeavors,
they thereby acquired the dharma of irreversibility.

They have the gradually tapering legs of the *aiṇeya* antelope
due to always delighting in study and recitation of scriptures.
It is through speaking the Dharma for others
that they rapidly realized the unsurpassable path.

As for having long arms that reach below the knees,
this is due to never being miserly in giving
anything one possesses to whoever seeks to acquire them.
Thus they can teach and guide others in ways suited to their wishes.

Genital ensheathment reflects a treasury of meritorious qualities
associated with skillfully reconciling those who are estranged.³³⁰
As a result, they acquire a great congregation of humans and devas
and use the pure wisdom eye to create their sons.³³¹

Their thin skin that radiates golden light
is associated with giving marvelous apparel and halls.
As a consequence, they acquire an abundance of fine robes
as well as pristine quarters, buildings, and viewing terraces.

The single hair in each pore
and the white hair tuft between the eyes
are associated with serving as a supreme protector.
Hence they are revered throughout the three realms of existence.

They have an upper body like that of a lion
with the two shoulders rounded and full.
These result from always using speech that is pleasing to others.
As a consequence, there is no one who opposes them.

The marks of sub-axillary fullness and cognition of all tastes stem from providing medical care and medicines for the sick. As a consequence, devas and men all revere and love them and their bodies remain ever free of disease.

The roundness of the mid-body and the crown's fleshy *uṣṇīṣa* sign reflect the merit of giving with a harmonious and delighted mind. As a consequence of exhorting and teaching even the stubborn, they reign as sovereignly masterful kings of Dharma.

As for the voice like that of a *kalavinka* bird, the broad tongue, and the voice like a Great Brahma Heaven deva, they are from the speaking of words that are both gentle and true. They therefore acquire the Great Ārya's eight voice qualities.³³²

Having first brought contemplative thought to bear and then afterward spoken words of definite truthfulness, they acquired the lion-like mark. Hence all who see them trust them and defer to them.

That their teeth are white, straight, and close-set is because they have always refrained from slighting those who have previously given offerings. Hence the minds of those in their retinue are agreeable and unified.

Above and below, they have a total of forty teeth that, being close-set, have no gaps. These result from never slandering and not lying. Hence their disciples' [loyalty] cannot be destroyed.

The pupils and whites of their eyes are clearly delineated and they have the mark of eyelashes like those of a royal bull. These are caused by kindly thought and an amicable view of others. Consequently all observers look on them with a tireless gaze.

Even though a wheel-turning king who rules over four continents possesses these major marks and secondary characteristics, their radiance still cannot compare with that of a buddha.

I pray that the power of the merit from my setting forth praises of the major marks and the secondary characteristics may be able to cause everyone to have purified minds as well as everlasting peace and happiness.

d) VERSES IN PRAISE OF THE BUDDHAS SECONDARY CHARACTERISTICS

The bodhisattva should also engage in contemplative mindfulness of the buddhas by way of their eighty secondary characteristics. Accordingly, there are these lines of verse, as follows:

All buddhas possess the marvelous secondary characteristics,
eighty in number, with which their bodies are adorned.

You should all delight in them
and listen intently as I describe them.

The Bhagavats have round and slender fingers,
nails that are purplish red in hue,
convex in profile, smooth, and glossy,
characteristics of having everything in measureless abundance.

Their veins lie flat, their ankle bones are invisible,
their feet are not skewed in their track,
their gait is like that of the king of lions,
and they are incomparably awe-inspiring to all observers.

When walking, the entire body turns to the right.
They are serene in manner and refined in their deportment.
The parts of their squarely set bodies are orderly in their posture
and their dignified grace inspires fondness and happiness.

Their bodies are firm in tone, but extremely soft.
The articulations of their joints are quite visibly distinct.
When walking, they do not travel in a meandering manner.
All of their sense faculties are fully and perfectly developed.

The flesh on their bodies is extremely taut, finely textured,
freshly radiant, and especially immaculate.
Their physical posture is especially upright, refined,
and devoid of any feature subject to dispraise.

The belly is round, but does not visibly bulge.
The navel, though deep, does not appear to be an orifice.
Its creases manifest as a rightward spiraling swirl.
Their deportment is extremely pure.

The body is free of any blemishes
and the hands and feet are extremely soft.
The lines in the palms are deep and long,
continuous, straight, and lustrous.

The tongue is slender, the face is not too long.
The central incisors are white, rounded, slender, and sharp.
The hue of the lips is like that of the *bimba* fruit.
Their voice is as deep as the king of the wild geese.

The nose is prominent in profile and the eyes are bright and clear.
The eyelashes are close-set and fine, but not in disarray.
The brow is elevated, has eyebrow hair that is soft,
and it is straight and not crooked.

The hair of the brows, being even and straight,
is emblematic of being well aware of the faults in any dharma.
The hair of the brows is smooth and glossy,
a feature emblematic of skillfully liberating and aiding beings.

The ears are full, long, even in shape,
undamaged, and especially pleasing to the eye.
The forehead is broad and straight.
All of the head's features are perfectly formed.

The hair is fine, dense, never in disarray,
the color of the king of the black bees,
clean, pleasantly fragrant, immaculate,
and possessed of three of the marks.

e) SUMMATION ON IMPORTANCE OF SUCH RECOLLECTIVE CONTEMPLATION

This has been the description of the eighty secondary characteristics. Because these eighty secondary characteristics are interspersed with and serve to adorn the thirty-two major marks, if one fails to take up contemplative mindfulness of both the thirty-two marks and the eighty secondary characteristics in one's praises of the Buddha's body, then one may lose forever the causal factors conducing to well-being and happiness in the present and future lives.