

CHAPTER 23³⁶⁵

Forty Dharmas Exclusive to Buddhas (Part 3)

XXIII. CHAPTER 23: FORTY DHARMAS EXCLUSIVE TO BUDDHAS (PART 3)

A. 10) THOROUGH KNOWING OF MATTERS THAT ARE UNFIXED

As for knowing well the unfixed dharmas, the Tathāgata's wisdom has achieved power within the sphere of all dharmas even at that point when they have not yet arisen, have not yet come forth, have not yet reached completion, have not become definitively fixed, and have not yet become clearly distinguishable. This is as stated in the *Sutra on the Buddha's Distinguishing of Karma* wherein it states:

The Buddha told Ānanda, "There are people who practice good deeds with the body, who practice good deeds through speech, and who practice good deeds with the mind, and yet, when their lives come to an end, they then fall into the hells. There are yet other people who practice evil deeds with the body, who practice evil deeds through speech, and who practice evil deeds with the mind, and yet, when their lives come to an end, they are nonetheless reborn in the heavens."

Ānanda addressed the Buddha and asked, "Why do events occur in this way?"

The Buddha replied, "It may have been that the causes and conditions associated with previous life karmic offenses or meritorious deeds had already ripened, whereas the karmic offenses or meritorious deeds of the present life had not yet ripened. Or, alternatively, when approaching the end of life, they gave rise to either right views or erroneous views that precipitated either wholesome or evil thoughts, this because the power of the thoughts produced as one approaches the moment of death—their power is immense."³⁶⁶

Additionally, in the *Śuka Sutra*, it states:

Śuka, son of a brahmin, addressed the Buddha and asked, "Gotama, why is it that the brahmin laity are in some cases able to cultivate meritorious deeds and roots of goodness in a manner superior to that of some of those who have left the home life and become monastics?"

The Buddha replied, "For these sorts of matters, I do not present a fixed reply. There may be cases in which someone who has left behind the home life does not cultivate goodness and, as a consequence, in this endeavor, he does not equal the efforts of a given

householder. This is a case in which a householder is able to cultivate goodness in a manner superior to that of a particular monastic.”

Furthermore, the *Great Nirvāṇa Sutra* states that the city of Pāṭaliputra is bound to be destroyed by one of three circumstances: by flood, by fire, or by a conspiracy between insiders and outsiders.

Also, [another example of an unfixed statement] arose because of a *brahmacārin* named Patikaputra about which the Buddha said:

As for this naked ascetic, the *brahmacārin* named Patikaputra, if he fails to relinquish this statement, these thoughts, and these wrong views, then it will be impossible for him to come and appear before me. He will either be trapped by a broken rope or prevented from leaving by a broken body. In any case, he will never be able to arrive here in the presence of the Buddha.

Additionally, in the *Sutra on the Analogy of the Raft*, the Buddha said:

This Dharma of mine is extremely deep. It is by resort to expedients that I enable even those who are shallow to easily reach an understanding of it. If there be anyone possessed of a straightforward mind who is willing to practice in accordance with the teachings, he will gain one of two kinds of benefit from this, either the cessation of the contaminants in this present lifetime or, in the event that he doesn't achieve the cessation of the contaminants, he will still succeed in attaining the path of the non-returner (*anāgāmin*).³⁶⁷

Also, in the *Ekottara Āgama's Shejiali Sutra*,³⁶⁸ the Buddha told Ānanda:

As for whosoever deliberately undertakes the requisite karmic actions, none among them will fail to gain the karmic rewards and thus achieve success in the path, whether that be through receiving the results of present-life karma in this present life, whether that be through receiving them in the next birth, or whether that be through receiving them in subsequent lives.³⁶⁹

In addition, we also have this statement in the *Ekottara Āgama's Afuluo Sutra*:³⁷⁰ “The Buddha told the bhikshus, ‘When evil people die, they may become animals or they may fall into the hells. Good people will be reborn either in the heavens or among humans.’”

Also, in the *Prince Fearless Sutra*, it states:

Prince Fearless addressed the Buddha, saying, “Does the Buddha not have instances in which what he proclaims is able to cause others to become angry?”

The Buddha replied, “Prince, this is an unfixed matter. It may happen that the Buddha, motivated by pity, will influence someone to become angry with the intended result that they will thereby

plant the causes and conditions for goodness. This is analogous to a wet-nurse having to use a crooked finger to clear an infant's mouth of some dangerous object. Although it may inflict injury, it is done in order to prevent a calamity."³⁷¹

There is also the statement recorded in the Abhidharma: "Beings fall into three groups. From the [karmically] indefinite group, they may fall into the definitely deviant group or the definitely righteous group."³⁷²

There are several thousand or even myriads of similar such types of unfixed phenomena that are cited within the four repositories of the Dharma.³⁷³

Question: If a person's wisdom is unfixed and characterized by indefinite thought that takes a given circumstance to perhaps be this way or perhaps not be this way, then this is not someone who is omniscient. One who is omniscient would not make two different statements [with regard to a single matter], but rather would instead be able to make definitive pronouncements, pronouncements that are utterly clear. Because of this, "thoroughly knowing unfixed matters" cannot be referred to as a dharma exclusive to the Buddha.

Response: Unfixed matters are such that they may either be this way or not this way. It is because they develop in accordance with a multiplicity of causes and conditions that one should not make definite pronouncements about them.

Moreover, were one to offer definite answers regarding indefinite phenomena, then that itself would indicate that one is *not* omniscient. Consequently, in assessing unfixed phenomena, it is essential to employ the knowledge of unfixed matters. Hence there is this exclusive dharma referred to as "the knowledge of unfixed matters."

Additionally, if one were to claim definitive knowledge with respect to all dharmas, then one would fall into the erroneous determinist fallacy. If all dharmas really were already definitely fixed, then all that one does would not require any human effort and skillful means to bring it about. This idea is as set forth here:

If good or bad experiences were already definitely determined, then the character of a person's efforts should be fixed as well.

There would be no need for any of the causal factors involved in the skillful means that one uses in one's cultivation.

Moreover, it is already manifestly clear that if one fails to take care with regard to one's personal behavior, then one will bring about manifold sufferings, whereas, if one is guarded with respect to one's personal behavior, then one will enjoy peace and benefit as a result of doing so.

Also, this is just as in all sorts of endeavors involved in carrying on one's livelihood wherein, on the one hand, one is required to endure a good deal of weariness and suffering to later acquire a reward in the form of all manner of wealth and happiness, whereas, on the other hand, someone else is able to simply remain still and silent in this present life, doing nothing whatsoever, only to then reap karmic rewards. So it is that there are these unfixed circumstances. It is because they are cognizant of these unfixed circumstances that we can know that the Buddhas possess the knowledge of what is unfixed.

Question: Whether or not you personally take care and whether or not you make a direct personal effort, these unfixed circumstances will still occur. On the one hand there are those who skillfully defend against untoward developments and yet still end up being subjected to intense anguish while on the other hand there are those who do not defend against such exigencies at all and yet do not encounter any intense anguish at all. Also, there are those who, in their diligence, undergo much weariness and pain, but still do not obtain the fruits of their efforts, whereas there are others who are not the least bit diligent and make no particular effort and, even so, they still manage to gain fruits [otherwise] associated with making an effort. These matters are all unfixed.

Response: Your statement simply serves to cooperate in the establishment of my position regarding unfixed matters. If these unfixed matters do indeed exist, then this wisdom that is cognizant of whatsoever is unfixed should exist. I never claimed that, if someone failed to guard against untoward events they would always be subjected to suffering. Nor did I ever claim that, without the expenditure of effortful action, one would necessarily be able to enjoy fruitful results. There are those people who, despite making an effort, are still blocked from the enjoyment of happiness by karmic obstacles originating in earlier lifetimes. I never claimed that all cases were necessarily this way. Therefore the challenges that you have posed on this topic are wrong.

This is what is meant [when it is said] with regard to unfixed circumstances that it is the Buddhas alone who possess complete knowledge of what is unfixed.

B. 11) THOROUGH KNOWING OF FORMLESS ABSORPTION PHENOMENA

As for knowing the formless realm stations, *śrāvaka* disciples and *pratyekabuddhas* know a lesser portion of the beings and dharmas associated with the formless realm stations of existence whereas the Buddhas, the Bhagavats, have a perfectly complete knowledge of the

beings and dharmas associated with the formless realm stations of existence.

Regarding these formless realm stations of existence, the Buddhas know:

- That a certain number of beings are born into this station;
- That a certain number of beings are born into that station;
- That a certain number of beings are born into the station associated with the first formless absorption;
- That a certain number of beings are born into the second station;
- That a certain number of beings are born into the third station;
- That a certain number of beings are born into the fourth station;
- That a certain number of beings have dwelt there for a particular amount of time since they were born there;
- That a certain number of beings, after a particular period of time, will fall away from that realm;
- That a certain number of beings will enjoy a maximum lifespan of a particular amount of time;
- That a certain number of beings will have a definitely fixed lifespan;
- That a certain number of beings will enjoy a lifespan the length of which is not definitely fixed;
- That a certain number of beings will be born here after their lifetimes in the desire realm have come to an end;
- That a certain number of beings will be born here after their lifetimes in the form realm have come to an end;
- That a certain number of beings will return to be reborn here after their lifetimes in this formless realm have come to an end;
- That a certain number of beings will be born here directly after their lives in the human realm come to an end;
- That a certain number of beings will be reborn here directly after their lives in the heavens have come to an end;
- That, when the lives of these particular beings end here, they will then take birth in the desire realm, that they will then take birth in the form realm, or that they will then take birth in the formless realm;
- That, when the lives of these particular beings end here, they will then take birth in the celestial realm rebirth destiny, that they will then take birth in the human realm rebirth destiny, that they will then take birth in the *asura* realm rebirth destiny, or that they will then take birth in the rebirth destinies of the hell realms, the animal realms, or the hungry ghost realms;
- That these particular beings will enter nirvāṇa in that particular place;

- That a particular group of beings are all merely common people;
 That a particular group of beings are *ārya* disciples of buddhas;
 That a particular group of beings are [buddhas'] disciples who are common people [that have not yet become *āryas*];
 That a particular group of beings will achieve success in the Śrāvaka Disciple Vehicle;
 That a particular group of beings will achieve success in the Pratyekabuddha Vehicle;
 That a particular group of beings will all achieve success in the Great Vehicle;
 That a particular group of beings will fail to achieve success in the Śrāvaka Disciple Vehicle;
 That a particular group of beings will fail to achieve success in the Pratyekabuddha Vehicle and will also fail to achieve success in the Great Vehicle;
 That a particular group of beings will develop their practice to the point of reaching nirvāṇa;
 That a particular group of beings will fail to develop their practice to the point where they reach nirvāṇa;
 That a particular group of beings will pursue a superior level of practice;
 And that a particular group of beings are all disciples of a particular buddha.

The Buddhas also know:

- That this particular meditative absorption is one in which one is exposed to delectably blissful experiences;³⁷⁴
 That in this particular meditative absorption there will be no exposure to delectably blissful experiences;
 [That this particular meditative absorption] is wholesome or is merely neutral;
 That in this particular meditative absorption one may successfully sever a certain number of fetters;
 And that this particular meditative absorption is superior, is middling, or is inferior.

To summarize, only the Buddhas, by employing their knowledge of all modes are able to clearly distinguish which of these formless-realm meditative absorptions are greater or lesser, which are deeper or shallower, which involve mental dharmas, which involve dharmas not associated with the mind, which are acquired as resultant effects [of previous karma], which are not acquired as resultant effects [of previous karma], and so forth. This is what is meant when it is said that the

Buddhas thoroughly know the stations of existence corresponding to the formless meditative absorptions.

C. 12) THE KNOWLEDGE OF ALL MATTERS RELATED TO ETERNAL CESSATION

As for [the completely penetrating knowledge of all] dharmas pertaining to cessation, the Buddhas possess a penetrating knowledge of the *pratyekabuddhas* and arhats who have entered nirvāṇa either in the past or present eras. This is as recorded in the sutras where it states:

Bhikshus, ninety-one kalpas prior to this “Worthy Kalpa” (*bhadra-kalpa*), Vipaśyin Buddha appeared. After thirty-one kalpas, there followed two more buddhas, the first of whom was Sikhin and the second of whom was Viśvabhū. Then, in this Worthy Kalpa, Krakucchanda, Kanakamuni, and Kāśyapa Buddha emerged.³⁷⁵

Just such great knowledge and vision regarding all buddhas of the past should be discussed [more extensively] herein in relation to this sutra.³⁷⁶ It also reaches to those *śrāvaka* disciples who have entered the nirvāṇa without residue and extends also to the *pratyekabuddha* named “Success,” to the one named “Floral Insignia,” to the one named “Seer of Dharma,” to the one named “Dharma Basket,” to the one named “Delightful Vision,” to the one named “Stainless,” to the one named “Free of Gain,” and to the other such *pratyekabuddhas* as well. So it is that the Buddhas possess a completely penetrating knowledge of those who have entered the nirvāṇa without residue.³⁷⁷

Additionally, in cases where they have not yet entered final nirvāṇa, but rather still abide in the nirvāṇa with residue, the Buddhas possess a penetratingly comprehensive knowledge with regard to the utter ending of all conditions associated with taking birth. [These matters] also pertain to their penetrating knowledge of [the phenomena associated with] cessation.

This is as recorded in the sutras wherein it states, “The Buddha told Ānanda, ‘I entirely know with respect to this person that he no longer has even the slightest darkness. This person has definitely put an end to these particular inward dharmas. When this person reaches the end of this life, he will enter nirvāṇa.’” This too is included in what is meant by “having knowledge of cessation.”³⁷⁸

Also, regarding other people’s penetrating comprehension of the four truths, he is able to know their circumstances. This too is included in what is meant by “having knowledge of cessation.”

As it is said in the sutras, “Why should I not simply resort to expedients to cause this person in this very place to gain the liberation associated with ending the contaminants?”

And as the Buddha told Ānanda, "You delight in *dhyāna* concentration and delight in cutting off the fetters." These circumstances too are associated with what is meant by having a completely penetrating knowledge of cessation.

This is also as illustrated in the Buddha's statement to Śāriputra, "I know nirvāṇa, know the path leading to the realization of nirvāṇa, and know those beings who will arrive at the realization of nirvāṇa."³⁷⁹

Such sutras as we have cited herein should all be discussed at greater length. The ideas cited above are indicative of what is meant by all buddhas possessing the penetrating comprehension of all matters having to do with cessation.

D. 13) THOROUGH KNOWING OF NON-FORM DHARMAS UNRELATED TO MIND

As for thorough knowing of the non-form dharmas unassociated with the mind, roots of goodness associated with the moral precepts influence all of those non-form dharmas unassociated with the mind such as the moral regulations requiring wholesome actions and the moral regulations prohibiting bad actions. *Śrāvaka* disciples and *pratyekabuddhas* are unable to possess a completely penetrating comprehension of such matters. The Buddhas, however, are so well able to penetratingly comprehend them that these become as manifestly clear to them as if they were right before their very eyes. This is because they have perfected the foremost power of wisdom with respect to dharmas unassociated with the mind.

Question: Moral regulations requiring wholesome actions and moral regulations prohibiting bad actions are form dharmas. Why do you refer to them as "non-form" dharmas?

Response: Moral regulations requiring wholesome actions and moral regulations prohibiting bad actions are of two kinds, namely those involving actions and those not involving actions. Those involving actions are within the sphere of form dharmas whereas those not involving actions are "non-form" dharmas. As for those non-form dharmas not involving actions, employing his exclusive power of knowing, the Buddha is able to have a clear and present knowledge of them whereas others are compelled to rely upon inferential knowledge to understand them.

Question: Are the Buddhas only able to thoroughly know the non-form dharmas unassociated with the mind while not being able to thoroughly know the dharmas associated with the mind?

Response: If one already possesses a penetrating comprehension of the unassociated dharmas, then there is no need even to bring up the associated dharmas. It is as if we were speaking of an archer able to

pierce a single fine feather [floating through the air]. One would have no need in such a case to inquire if his arrow might be able to hit something large.

Furthermore, *śrāvaka* disciples and *pratyekabuddhas* are able to employ their sixth consciousness to know but seven among the seven hundred unassociated dharmas, namely: first, names; second, characteristic marks; third, meanings; fourth, impermanence; fifth, production; sixth, non-production; and seventh, crossing on beyond. The Buddhas, however, are able to employ their sixth consciousness to know every one of them. The Buddhas also know the marks of the four truths as well as the mundane dharmas. It is for these reasons that it is said that the Buddhas thoroughly know the non-form dharmas unassociated with the mind.

E. 14) THE GREAT POWERS PĀRAMITĀ

As for the powers *pāramitā*, [the Buddhas] gain the power of the knowledge of all modes with respect to all knowable dharmas without exception and are assisted in this by the ten powers, the four fearlessnesses, and the four bases of meritorious qualities. Also, it is due to having gained the ten powers that the Buddhas are therefore able to perfect the powers *pāramitā*. This power is increased in the sixteenth mind-moment [involved in achieving the direct seeing of the path]. All-knowledge is always present in the person of the Buddha until he attains the *nirvāṇa* without residue. It is because of this that he gains the unimpeded knowledge of all dharmas.

F. 15) THE FOUR UNIMPEDED KNOWLEDGES PĀRAMITĀ

As for the *pāramitā* of the [four] unimpeded knowledges (*pratisaṃvid*), they are unimpeded knowledge with respect to: dharmas (*dharmaprasaṃvid*), meaning (*artha-prasaṃvid*), language (*nirukti-prasaṃvid*), and eloquence (*pratibhāna-prasaṃvid*). [The Buddhas] possess an unlimited penetrating comprehension of these four dharmas that is unimpeded in its implementation. As described in the sutras.³⁸⁰

The Buddha told the bhikshus, “There are four of the Tathāgata’s disciples who have perfected the foremost power of mindfulness, power of wisdom, and power of endurance so consummately that they are like a skilled archer who can shoot any single tree leaf without difficulty. Even if these disciples were to all come forth and pose challenging questions on the four stations of mindfulness, setting aside the time required for drink, food, toilet and sleep, I could always and incessantly respond to their questions for a hundred years during which the Tathāgata would always reply with inexhaustible eloquence and wisdom.”

Here the Buddha, with his characteristically scant wish to do so, discussed his own implementation of these knowledges. Supposing that there were a number of great trichiliocosms as numerous as all the atoms in all four continents of all worlds in a great trichiliocosm, supposing also that all those world systems were filled with beings all of whom were the likes of Śāriputra and the *pratyekabuddhas*, and suppose too that all of these men employed their perfected knowledges and eloquence to pose difficult questions to the Tathāgata on the four stations of mindfulness, doing so to the exhaustion of lifetimes extending to a number of kalpas as numerous as all the aforementioned atoms—the Tathāgata would still be able to reply to their questions on the meanings involved in the four stations of mindfulness, expounding on their meaning without redundancy and with inexhaustible eloquence.³⁸¹

Now, as for the unimpeded knowledge with respect to dharmas, [the Buddhas] are well able to distinguish all details involved in the designations of dharmas with an unimpededly penetrating comprehension.

As for the unimpeded knowledge with respect to meaning, they are able to bring to bear an unimpededly penetrating comprehension of the meanings associated with those dharmas.

In the case of their unimpeded knowledge with respect to language, the Buddhas are able to accord with the languages and phrases through which the various sorts of beings are caused to understand those meanings, doing so with an unimpededly penetrating comprehension.

Regarding their unimpeded knowledge as it applies to eloquence, during that entire time in which they are answering questions, they are skillful and clever in speaking on Dharma and they are able to carry on in this fashion endlessly. Whatever topic all other worthies and *āryas* are unable to treat exhaustively, it is only the Buddhas who can reach the limits of that topic.

It is on these bases that we speak of the *pāramitā* of the unimpeded knowledges.

G. 16) THE PĀRAMITĀ OF PERFECTLY COMPLETE REPLIES AND PREDICTIONS

Regarding the *pāramitā* of perfection in the answering of questions, the Buddha is well able to answer in all situations involving the posing of difficult questions. And why is this so? It is because, in the four types of responses, he remains utterly free of erroneous or disordered presentations, because he well knows the conceptual meanings, because he has perfected the *pāramitā* of preserving the undamaged meaning, and because he delights in a profound knowing of the natures of

all beings, what they themselves practice, and what they themselves find pleasing. This is illustrated by the instance in which Śāriputra addressed the Buddha, saying:

Bhagavat, when the Buddha discourses on the good Dharma, many are the beings who, upon hearing this, then gain realizations. Having gained such realizations, their minds become free of all craving. And because they become free of all craving, they no longer have anything in the world that they indulge. And once they no longer have anything at all that they indulge, their minds achieve a state of inward cessation.

The Buddha exhaustively knows, without exceptions, the unsurpassable aspects of the good Dharma. There is no one who is superior to him in this regard.

Question: You spoke of the four types of replies. What are those four?

Response:

First, the definitive reply.

Second, the distinguishing reply.

Third, the counter-questioning reply.

And, fourth, the reply that sets aside the question.

In the case of the definitive reply, this is illustrated by the instance where a bhikshu asked the Buddha, “Bhagavat, is it or is it not the case that there could be some form that is eternal and unchanging? Bhagavat, is it or is it not the case that there could be any feelings, perceptions, formative factors, or consciousnesses that are permanent and unchanging?”

The Buddha replied, saying, “Bhikshu, there is no form that is permanent and unchanging. There are no feelings, perceptions, formative factors, or consciousnesses that are permanent and unchanging.”

Cases such as these illustrate the “definitive reply.”

The distinguishing reply is illustrated by the instance where Potaliputta,³⁸² the Brahmacārin, inquired of Samiddhi,³⁸³ asking: ³⁸⁴ “In instances where a person deliberately performs actions of body, speech, or mind, what sorts of karmic retributions ensue therefrom?”

Samiddhi responded with a definitive reply, saying, “In instances where persons deliberately perform actions of body, speech, or mind, they are bound to undergo retributions involving suffering and anguish.”

But this should have involved a distinguishing reply. This *brahmacārin* later came and asked the Buddha about this matter, to which the Buddha replied, saying, “Potaliputta, in instances where

someone deliberately performs actions of body, speech, or mind, this karma may result in undergoing painful retributions, in undergoing pleasurable retributions, or in undergoing retributions that are neither painful nor pleasurable. Pain-inducing actions result in undergoing painful retributions. Pleasure-inducing actions result in undergoing pleasurable retributions. Actions that are neither pain-inducing nor pleasure-inducing result in undergoing karmic retributions that are neither painful nor pleasurable."

Scriptural passages such as these illustrate instances of the distinguishing reply.

The counter-questioning reply is illustrated by that instance in which the *brahmacārin* named Śreṇika inquired of the Buddha and the Buddha replied, "I shall now return the question to you whereupon you may reply in accordance with your own idea on this matter. Śreṇika, what do you think? Do physical forms constitute the Tathāgata, or not? Or is it that feelings, perceptions, formative factors, or consciousnesses constitute the Tathāgata?"

He replied, "No, Bhagavat. They do not."

[The Buddha then asked him], "Is the Tathāgata apart from form, feelings, perceptions, formative factors, or consciousnesses, or not?"

He replied, "No, Bhagavat. He is not."

These types of passages from scripture should be more extensively discussed. They illustrate what is meant by the counter-questioning reply.

As for the reply that sets aside the question, this applies to the response to questions regarding the fourteen classic erroneous views, namely:

Is the world eternal?

Is the world non-eternal?

Is the world both eternal and non-eternal?

Is the world neither eternal nor non-eternal?

Is the world bounded?

Is the world unbounded?

Is the world both bounded and unbounded?

Is the world neither bounded nor unbounded?

Does the Tathāgata exist after his nirvāṇa?

Does the Tathāgata not exist after his nirvāṇa?

Does the Tathāgata both exist and not exist after his nirvāṇa?

Does the Tathāgata neither exist nor not exist after his nirvāṇa?

Is the body identical with a spiritual soul (*jīva*)?

Is the body different from a spiritual soul?

As stated above, even in an instance where all beings possessed the wisdom and eloquence of the *pratyekabuddha* and they inquired of the Buddha on these four matters, the Buddha would in all cases adapt to their needs in answering their questions, offering replies that are neither excessive nor deficient. It is for these reasons that the Buddhas are said to possess the *pāramitā* of perfection in the answering of questions.

H. 17) INVULNERABILITY TO HARM BY ANYONE

There is no one whatsoever who can harm the Buddha. This is because he has gained that dharma by which one cannot be killed. There is no one who can cut off any part of the Buddha's body. He has sovereign mastery over whether he will live or die. This is as stated in scripture, wherein it states: "Were one to seek some method by which to inflict harm on the Buddha—there simply is no such possibility at all."

Question: Is the lifespan of a buddha fixed or is it unfixed?

Response: There are those who claim that it is unfixed. But if a buddha's lifespan were actually fixed, what difference then would there be between his case and that of all others who have fixed lifespans? Still, in truth, the lifespan of a buddha is not fixed. That there is no one who can harm a buddha—now *that* is extraordinary. There are those who say that the lifespan of a buddha is fixed. However, whereas others whose lifespans are fixed are indeed subject to having hands, feet, ears, and nose sliced off, the Buddha [is unique in that he] is entirely free of any such vulnerability.

Question: How is it that the Buddhas have this exclusive dharma of being invulnerable to being harmed?

Response: The inconceivability of the Buddhas can be understood by resort to analogy. Suppose for instance that all beings throughout the worlds of the ten directions were to have a given amount of power. Now, if a single *māra* could possess a certain amount of power, also suppose that each and every one of those beings throughout the ten directions was caused to possess powers like those of Māra, the Evil One. Even if all of those beings then joined in wishing to inflict harm on the Buddha, they would still be unable to move even a single hair on the Buddha's body. How much the less might they actually succeed in harming the Buddha.

Question: Well, if that is the case, how then could Devadatta have succeeded in injuring the Buddha?

Response: This question was already answered earlier. The Buddha wished to show beings the character of the three poisons. Even though

Devadatta had previously upheld the moral precepts and cultivated goodness, because he was attached to receiving offerings, he committing immensely evil deeds.

[The Buddha] also allowed this to happen in order to cause [beings] to realize that the mind of the Buddha does not vary in the way it regards any human or deva. His having compassion and pity for Devadatta on the one hand and Rāhula³⁸⁵ on the other was the same as his equal regard for his own left and right eyes.

The Buddha always spoke of the mind of uniformly equal regard for everyone. He revealed his equality of regard at this time. When the devas and people observed this, they were struck by the extraordinary nature of this and thus felt even stronger resolute faith.

In addition, because of this, the devas of the long-life heavens could see that the Buddha was still bound to undergo retribution for bad karmic actions done in previous lives. Had he not undergone it now, they might have thought that bad actions could be free of corresponding karmic retributions. Because the Buddha wished to cut off their wrong views, he thereby revealed his own undergoing of this karmic retribution.

Furthermore, the Buddha's mind is no different in the presence of pain or pleasure. His mind is free of any concept of a self. This is because it is ultimately empty. Because his sense faculties have all been made pliant and imperturbable by change, he has no need to use expedients to separate from pain and enjoy pleasures. This is as described in the Bodhisattva canon where it states: "It was merely as an expedient that the Buddha manifested as subject to this experience." One should infer the broader implications of this.

The above points illustrate what is meant by the Buddha's exclusive dharma of being invulnerable to being killed or harmed.

I. 18) THEIR WORDS ARE NEVER SPOKEN WITHOUT A PURPOSE

In speaking on the Dharma, their words are never empty. All words spoken by the Buddhas have a corresponding intended effect. Therefore, when the Buddhas speak on Dharma, their words are never empty. And how is this so? Before the Buddhas begin to speak on Dharma, they first contemplate from root to branch where beings' minds abide and whether their fetters are thick or only scant. Thus they know the origins of their meritorious qualities in previous lives, observe the nature and strength of their karmic roots, and know:

Where and when beings [will encounter] obstacles;
Whether they are susceptible to liberation through gentle teaching methods;

Whether they are susceptible to liberation through harsh teaching methods;

Whether they are susceptible to liberation through a combination of gentle and harsh teaching methods.³⁸⁶

Whether they need only a little bit of instigation to gain liberation;

Whether they require extensive distinguishing instructions to gain liberation;

That there are those who gain liberation through [teachings on] the aggregates, the sense bases, the sense realms, or the twelve links of conditioned co-production;

Whether they may gain access [to liberation] through the gateway of faith or through the gateway of wisdom;

That this person should gain liberation through the teaching of a buddha;

That this person should gain liberation through the teaching of a *śrāvaka* disciple;

That this person should gain liberation through some other set of conditions;

That this person should be able to gain success in the Śrāvaka Disciple Vehicle;

That this person should be able to gain success in the Pratyekabuddha Vehicle;

That this person should be able to gain success in the Great Vehicle;

That this person has long practiced habitual greed, habitual hatred, and habitual delusion;

That this person has practiced habitual greed and hatred;

And that this person has practiced habitual greed and delusion.

In this way, they distinguish and determine with regard to each and every situation:

That this person has fallen into an annihilationist view;

That this person has fallen into an eternalist view;

That this person is for the most part attached to the view that seizes on the existence of a real self in association with the body [or any of the other four aggregates];³⁸⁷

That this person is most often habitually attached to extreme views;

That this person is most often habitually attached to the views that seize upon either prohibitions or on opinionated views;

That this person is for the most part habitually arrogant;

That this person is for the most part habitually inclined toward feelings of inferiority and the tendency to flattery and deviousness;

That this person's mind is mostly inclined toward doubt and regret.

That this person has developed a fondness for refined literary expressiveness;
 That there are those who prize refinement in meanings and principles;
 That there are those who delight in profundities;
 That there are those who enjoy topics that are merely superficial;
 That, in previous lifetimes, this person has accumulated the Dharma provisions requisite to success in the path;
 That this person is accumulating the Dharma provisions for the path in this present lifetime;
 That this person has only accumulated roots of goodness conducive to enjoying karmic rewards [from previous meritorious actions];
 That this person has only accumulated roots of goodness associated with thorough understanding;
 That this person should be able to rapidly become enlightened;
 And that this person will require a long time before he can become enlightened.³⁸⁸

The Buddha first engages in investigative contemplation and assessment of individual circumstances and then, according with whichever approach is appropriate to instigate someone's liberation, he then speaks Dharma for them and thereby brings about their liberation.

It is as a consequence of this that every instance of the Buddha's speaking of Dharma is free of any merely empty discourse. This is as described in a sutra: "The Bhagavat first knows and sees and only then speaks Dharma. It is not the case that he speaks Dharma without first knowing and seeing."

J. 19) THEIR SPEECH IS FREE OF ERROR

Regarding the absence of errors and mistakes [in their speech], when the Buddhas speak Dharma, they do not commit any errors or make any mistakes. "Absence of errors" refers to there being no instances in which the meaning of what they say is contradictory. "Absence of mistakes" means they make no mistakes with regard to meanings.

It is because they do not make mistakes with regard to causes and conditions as they relate to the path that they are said to not make mistakes. It is because they do not commit errors with regard to causes and conditions as they relate to the fruits of the path that they are said to not commit any error.

It is because they are not deficient that they are said to not make mistakes and it is because they are not excessive that they are said to not commit any error.

This is accomplished through their possession of a penetrating comprehension of the four unimpeded knowledges, through their constant harmonization of mindfulness and stable wisdom, and through their utter abandonment of views associated with annihilationism, eternalism, acausality, erroneous causality, or other such wrong views.

In the Dharma that they speak, there is no cause by which people become perplexed. In whatsoever they say, there are no faults involving inconsistencies between what is set forth in the beginning and in the end.

Scriptures accordant with these concepts should be discussed more extensively herein. As it says in one of the sutras: “Bhikshus. When I speak Dharma for you, it is good in the beginning, good in the middle, and good in the end. The phrasings are good and the meanings are good. It possesses a singular purity free of any debasing admixture and it is perfectly complete in its proclamation of *brahmacharya*.”³⁸⁹

K. 20) COMPLETE USE OF THE THREE TURNINGS IN SPEAKING DHARMA

As regards the matter of [the Buddha’s] speaking of Dharma involving rarities, whomever they undertake to teach is immediately enabled to realize the fruits of the path. This is a rarity.

Whenever they provide a reply or offer a prediction, their statements are always genuine and do not differ [from actual circumstances]. This too is a rarity.

The Buddha has the path as the subject of his discourse. This path as it is proclaimed by the Buddha is not admixed with afflictions and is able to bring about the severance of the afflictions. This too is a rarity.

Whenever the Buddha speaks, benefit ensues from it and it never involves mere empty words. This too is a rarity.

Whenever a person applies mental diligence and vigor to the cultivation of the Buddha’s Dharma, he can cut off the unwholesome dharmas and bring about increase in the good dharmas. This too is a rarity.

There are three additional rarities: the rarity of displaying spiritual powers, the rarity of foretelling the content of others’ thoughts, and the rarity of being able to accomplish the transformational teaching of others. It is on the basis of these three sorts of rarities in the proclaiming of Dharma that the Buddha’s discourse on Dharma is said to be characterized by rarities.³⁹⁰

L. 21) THEY ARE THE GREAT GENERALS AMONG ALL ĀRYAS

Regarding [the Buddha’s] eminence as the most superior spiritual guide among all the Āryas, buddhas know what the minds of beings course in, know what they delight in, know whether their fetters are

deep or shallow, know whether their faculties are sharp or dull, and know whether their wisdom is superior, middling, or inferior. It is because they know these matters well and know them with penetrating comprehension that they are the most superior spiritual guides among all the Āryas.

They are also able to well know the characteristics of the four truths, and to well know all the general and specific characteristics of all dharmas.

It is also because, when they speak on the Dharma, their words are not empty and because, when they speak on the Dharma, they commit no errors and make no mistakes that they are therefore the most superior spiritual guides among all the Āryas.

Question: But the other four groups are also able to speak on the Dharma and thus refute the teachings of the non-Buddhists and thereby cause them to enter into the Dharma of the Buddha. Why then does one only speak of the Buddha as the most superior spiritual guide?

Response: This should be explained by an analogy. Suppose all beings possessed the wisdom powers of a *pratyekabuddha*. If all of these beings did not receive the intentional assistance of the Buddha and yet wished somehow to bring about the liberation of but a single person, this would be a complete impossibility. When all of these persons spoke Dharma, they would still be unable to cause the severance of a tiny fraction of even one of the formless realm fetters.

If, on the other hand, the Buddha wished to bring about the liberation of some being and then proceeded to say something, even those burdened with the erroneous views of the non-Buddhists, the dragons, the *yakṣas*, and the various other sorts of beings who do not understand the language of the Buddha—these would all still be caused to understand. Then all of these would in turn be able to teach countless other beings. And so this proceeds even to the point that, today, whenever those within the community of *śrāvaka* disciples cause beings to abide in the four fruits of the path, they are all emblematically representative of the Tathāgata as the most superior of all spiritual guides.

It is for these reasons that the Buddha is known as the most superior spiritual guide, and it is for these reasons that this is regarded as an exclusive dharma not held in common with the other *āryas*.

M. 22–25) THEY ARE ABLE TO REMAIN UNGUARDED IN FOUR WAYS

As for the four unguarded dharmas, the Buddhas are unguarded in their physical actions, are unguarded in their verbal actions, are unguarded in their mental actions, and are unguarded with respect to

the means for sustaining life. And why is this? These four matters are not protected from others' [knowledge]. They do not think, "Regarding my [actions of] body, speech, and mind, and my [means of sustaining] life—I fear that others might come to know about them."

And why is this? This is because, during the long night [of previous lifetimes], they have cultivated every sort of pure karmic deed and have always well seen, well known, and well severed every one of the dharmas associated with the afflictions. And this is because they have perfected every sort of peerless root of goodness, because they have so well practiced whatever dharma is amenable to practice, because they have reached the point where there is nothing about them the least bit worthy of criticism, and because they have utterly perfected the *pāramitā* of equanimity.

Now, on this matter of their "equanimity," when their eyes view form, they relinquish any thoughts of either distress or delight. And so it goes [with the other sense faculties and objects] up to and including the mind faculty's engagement with dharmas [as objects of mind]. In this connection, one would ideally also discuss here citations from such scriptures as the *Poheti* and *Uttara* sutras.³⁹¹

N. 26–29) THEY POSSESS THE FOUR TYPES OF FEARLESSNESSES

Now, as for the four types of fearlessness....

Question: There is a single dharma known as "fearlessness." How is it that we here have four of them?

Response: It is because there are four matters in which there is an absence of doubt or fear that we therefore speak of four of them, as follows:³⁹²

First, as the Buddha told the bhikshus, "I myself here utter these truthful words: 'I am a man possessed of all-knowledge.' If anyone here, whether he be a *śramaṇa*, brahmin, deva, Māra, Brahmā, or other person possessed of worldly knowledge were to challenge this statement in a manner consistent with Dharma, claiming that I do not indeed possess a direct knowledge of this Dharma, I would not then experience in this challenge even the slightest sign of fearfulness, and it is because of not experiencing any such sign that I have become established in security and fearlessness in this regard." This is the first type of fearlessness. It is a result of exhaustively knowing all dharmas in accordance with reality.

As for the second type of fearlessness, the Buddha said, "I myself here utter these truthful words: 'I have brought all of the contaminants to an end.' If any *śramaṇa*, brahmin, deva, Māra, or Brahmā were to claim that these contaminants have not indeed been brought to an

end, I would not then experience in this challenge even the slightest sign of fearfulness.³⁹³ It is because of not experiencing any such sign that I have become established in security and fearlessness in this regard." This is the second type of fearlessness. It is a result of having thoroughly cut off all afflictions and having also cut off the habitual propensities associated with past afflictions.

As for the third [type of fearlessness], [the Buddha said], "I have proclaimed which dharmas constitute obstacles to realization of the path. If anyone herein, whether he be a *śramaṇa*, brahmin, deva, Māra, Brahmā, or other person possessed of worldly knowledge were to challenge this statement in a manner consistent with Dharma, claiming that, even though one might avail oneself of these dharmas, they would not be able to cause an obstacle to the path, I would not then experience in this challenge even the slightest sign of fearfulness. It is because of not experiencing any such sign that I have become established in security and fearlessness in this regard." This is the third type of the fearlessness. It is a result of having thoroughly known those dharmas that constitute obstacles to the achievement of liberation.

As for the fourth [type of fearlessness, the Buddha said], "Whoever practices the path I have proclaimed, practicing it in accordance with the way I have explained the Dharma, will succeed in reaching the end of suffering. If any *śramaṇa*, brahmin, deva, Māra, Brahmā, or other person possessed of worldly knowledge were to challenge this statement in a manner accordant with Dharma, claiming that, although one might practice a dharma such as this in a manner consistent with the way it has been explained, one would be unable to reach the path that brings about the end of suffering, I would not then experience in this challenge even the slightest sign of fearfulness. It is because of not experiencing any such sign that I have become established in security and fearlessness in this regard." This is the fourth type of fearlessness. It is a result of thoroughly knowing the path leading to the extinguishing of suffering.

All four of these types of fearlessness are referred to as "fearlessnesses" because they all involve leaving behind such characteristic signs as fearfulness, terror, or horripilation. They are also termed "fearlessnesses" because they are able to maintain within the Great Assembly an awe-inspiring power of virtue extraordinary in its excellence. They are also called "fearlessnesses" because they so well know how to respond to all sorts of questions. Here, one should extensively discuss citations from *The Sutra on the Convocation of the Devas*.³⁹⁴

Question: If the Buddhas are indeed possessed of all-knowledge, then they should be fearless in relation to all dharmas. Why is it then that we speak only of these four types [of fearlessness]?

Response: These serve to raise the major essential topics in order to introduce the most important instances. All other instances are similar to these.

O. 30–39) THEY POSSESS THE TEN POWERS

As for the ten powers of the Buddha, “power” refers to the inexhaustible energetic strength that assists them and makes them invulnerable to interference by anyone. Although there are ten designations in this regard, in truth, this involves a single type of knowledge that, because it takes ten different circumstances as objective conditions, [these ten exemplary manifestations] are known as “the ten powers.”

Because the knowledge of the Buddha takes all things as its objective conditions, it should be that there are countless powers. But it is because these ten powers are adequate to bring about the liberation of beings that we only speak of “the ten powers.” Through merely introducing these ten powers, one can then know the others by inference.

1. THE FIRST POWER

The first power is [the Buddha’s] definite and completely penetrating knowledge with respect to all dharmas of what does and does not constitute the cause. This is the first power. [This was the basis for, as cited earlier], the Buddha’s having said [in reference to the *brahmacārin* named Patikaputra], “If this crazy person does not relinquish these claims, does not relinquish these perverse views, and does not relinquish these thoughts, then, as for his being able to arrive here in the presence of the Buddha—this is an utter impossibility.”

[This is also the basis for] the Buddha’s having said to Ānanda:

“It is utterly impossible that two buddhas might arise in the world at the same time. However, it is indeed possible for a single buddha to come forth into the world.”³⁹⁵ This was said solely with respect to the circumstance of a single buddha emerging in a single world. In truth, in all of the countless and limitless worlds throughout the ten directions, there are countless hundreds of thousands of myriads of *koṭis* of buddhas simultaneously emerging throughout those worlds.

Additionally, the sutras state: “It is impossible that bad physical, verbal, and mental karmic actions might have excellent and desirable results. However, it is indeed possible that good physical, verbal, and mental karmic actions may have excellent and desirable results.”³⁹⁶

Here one should extensively discuss related scriptural citations from among the five categorical repositories of Dharma.

2. THE SECOND POWER

The second power is [the Buddha's] knowing in accordance with reality and with distinguishing clarity the place, the circumstances, and the karmic retributions associated with all past, future, and present karmic deeds along with all the dharmas that are involved in experiencing [those retributions].

If the Buddha wishes to know with regard to any being their past karmic deeds and their past karmic retributions, he is able to immediately know them. So too, he is immediately able to know:

- With respect to past karmic deeds, their retribution in the present;
- With respect to past karmic deeds, their retribution in the future;
- With respect to past karmic deeds, their retribution in the past;
- With respect to past karmic deeds, their retribution in both the past and the future;
- With respect to past karmic deeds, their retribution in both the past and the present;
- With respect to past karmic deeds, their retribution in both the future and the present;
- With respect to past karmic deeds, their retribution in the past, the future, and the present;
- With respect to present karmic deeds, their retribution in the present;
- With respect to present karmic deeds, their retribution in the future;
- With respect to present karmic deeds, their retribution in both the present and the future;
- And with respect to future karmic deeds, their retribution in the future.

There are all manner of such distinctions regarding the dharmas involved in undergoing karmic retributions. There are four dharmas categorizing such karmic retributions, namely:

- Undergoing blissful experiences in the present followed by undergoing suffering in future lifetimes;
- Undergoing suffering in the present followed by undergoing blissful experiences in future lifetimes;
- Undergoing blissful experiences in the present followed by blissful experiences in the future;
- And undergoing suffering in the present followed by undergoing suffering in the future as well.³⁹⁷

As regards [the Buddha's knowing] "the place," this refers to his knowing for any karmic deed the time and place [of its occurrence] as well as the precise place in which this retribution will be undergone.

As regards [the Buddha's] knowing "the circumstances," this refers to knowing the corresponding causes and conditions, knowing the three corresponding types of bad karmic roots, knowing whether the deed was primarily performed by oneself, or knowing whether the deed occurred for the most part through the instigation of someone else. The Buddha entirely knows all such causes and conditions associated with good and bad karmic deeds.

As regards [the Buddha's knowing] "the karmic retributions," he knows that all karmic deeds have their corresponding karmic retributions. For instance, good karmic deeds may result in being reborn in a good place or in attaining nirvāṇa, whereas bad karmic deeds may result in being reborn in any of the wretched destinies.

The Buddha knows entirely with respect to all these karmic deeds their roots, their branches, their associated causes and conditions, and whether they were done at one's own behest or at the behest of others. It is because this power of knowledge does not diminish that it is referred to as a "power."

3. THE THIRD POWER

The third power is the Buddha's knowing in accordance with reality the *dhyānas*, the meditative concentrations, the liberations, and the *samādhis*, together with their corresponding marks of defilement and purity.

"*Dhyānas*" refers to the four *dhyānas*. "Meditative concentrations" refers to the four formless-realm meditative concentrations, the four immeasurable minds, and other such states, all of which are referred to as "meditative concentrations." "Liberations" refers to the eight liberations. As for "samādhis" all of the other meditative concentrations aside from the *dhyānas* and the liberations are referred to as "samādhis."

There are others who claim that the three gates to liberation, meditative concentrations still characterized by initial ideation (*vitarka*) and discursive thought (*vicāra*), meditative concentrations characterized by the absence of initial ideation and the presence of discursive thought, and meditative concentrations devoid of both initial ideation and discursive thought—these may all be referred to as "samādhis."

There are yet others who claim that "meditative concentrations" are relatively minor [meditative states] whereas "samādhis" are relatively major. Therefore, one may refer to all meditative concentrations realized by any buddha or bodhisattva as constituting a "samādhi."

All four of these constituent categories are subsumed within all explanations of "*dhyāna pāramitā*."

As for “defilement,” this refers to [meditative states characterized by] the experience of delectably pleasurable (*āsvādana*) sensations whereas “purity” refers here to not indulging delectably pleasurable sensations.

Then again, “defilement” may refer to any meditative concentration still characterized by the contaminants (*āsrava*) whereas “purity” may refer to any meditative concentration characterized by the absence of the contaminants.

As for the distinctions among the samādhis, liberations, and so forth, [the Buddha] knows with distinguishing clarity these sorts of *dhyāna* meditation states.

4. THE FOURTH POWER

The fourth power is [the Buddha's] knowing in accordance with reality the relative superiority or inferiority of the faculties of other beings and other personages.

“Other beings” refers to common persons. “Other personages” refers here to the stream enterer and the other classes of worthies and *āryas*. There may be others who interpret “beings” as a reference not only to common persons, but also even to those practitioners still involved in the learning stages, this because all of these have still not succeeded in putting an end to all of the contaminants. For them, “other personages” is a reference reserved for arhats and such, this because they have utterly ended all afflictions.

Yet others point out that both “beings” and “other personages” are but a single category and it is only the designations themselves that differ.

As for their “faculties,” in this context they refer to faith, vigor, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom and *not* to the sense faculties such as the eye and so forth [as the word might otherwise signify].

“Superior,” as it applies to these faculties, refers to faculties that are fiercely sharp and which have the capacity to enable the attainment of enlightenment. “Inferior,” on the other hand, refers to [faculties] that are dim, dull, and inadequate to enable one to take up [the practice of] the path.

The Buddha knows the relative superiority and inferiority of these two types of faculties and knows these matters in accordance with reality and in a manner free of any sort of error.

5. THE FIFTH POWER

The fifth power is [the Buddha's] knowing in accordance with reality that in which the minds of other beings and other personages delight. “That in which they delight” refers to whatever endeavors they esteem

and are inclined to engage in. For instance, there are those people who esteem wealth and worldly pleasures, whereas there are others who deeply esteem karmic merit and the practice of good dharmas. The Buddha knows all of these matters in accordance with reality.

6. THE SIXTH POWER

The sixth power is the Buddha's knowing in accordance with reality the different types of natures of beings in the world as well as the countless [distinctions among those] natures. "Different types of natures" refers to the myriad variations in these natures. "Countless natures" is a reference to the countless distinctions in each and every one of these types of natures. As for the term "nature," it is because one's mind has always habitually practiced [particular sorts of endeavors] and has always delighted in practicing and cultivating them throughout one's past lives right up until the very present—it is for this reason that they therefore form the basis of one's "nature." The Buddha knows in accordance with reality these two categories of natures, the good and the bad.

7. THE SEVENTH POWER

The seventh power is [the Buddha's] knowing in accordance with reality the paths leading to all destinations. As for "the paths leading to all destinations," those are the means by which one may succeed in acquiring all meritorious qualities. These paths are referred to as "the paths leading to all destinations."

These include, for instance, the five-factor samādhi,³⁹⁸ the five-fold awareness samādhi,³⁹⁹ the eight-fold path of the Āryas, all dharmas subsumed by the path of the Āryas, or the four bases of psychic power, the latter as cited in a sutra that says: "If a bhikshu cultivates the four bases of psychic power, there is no benefit that he will not acquire."

There are others who claim that this may also refer to the four *dhyānas*, as cited in a sutra that says: "When a bhikshu gains the four *dhyānas*, his mind comes to abide with stability and purity in a single place in which he then succeeds in ridding himself of all afflictions and in destroying all obstacles. It then becomes well-regulated so that it becomes serviceable and no longer subject to movement or distraction."

8. THE EIGHTH POWER

The eighth power is the [Buddha's] immediate ability to know past-life matters whenever he chooses to direct his awareness to events from previous lives. If the Buddha wishes to recall any of the countless and limitless lifetimes of either himself or all other beings, he then

knows all of these matters entirely. There are no instances in which he is unable to know some particular matter even beyond a number of kalpas equal to the number of sands in the Ganges River.

He knows where this person was born, what his name was, whether he was of noble or lowly caste, what he drank and ate, how he sustained his life, whether he experienced suffering or happiness, the types of endeavors in which he engaged, the karmic retributions that he underwent, what his mind engaged in, and from whence he originally came. He knows all such matters.

9. THE NINTH POWER

The ninth power is the [Buddha's] ability to see with the heavenly eye purified beyond the power of man's eyes the beings of the six destinies taking on bodies in accordance with their karmic deeds.

A *śrāvaka* disciple possessed of great powers uses the heavenly eye to see the lands contained within a small chiliocosm and also sees when the beings therein are born and when they die.

A lesser *pratyekabuddha* sees the lands of a thousand small chiliocosms and sees when the beings therein are born and when they die.

A *pratyekabuddha* possessed of middling powers sees the lands contained in a hundred myriads of small chiliocosms and sees when the beings therein are born and when they die.

A *pratyekabuddha* possessed of great powers sees the lands contained in a great trichiliocosm and sees the destinies to which they proceed when they die and are reborn.

The Buddhas, the Bhagavats, see a countless, boundless, and inconceivable number of worlds and also see when the beings therein are born and when they die.

10. THE TENTH POWER

As for the tenth power, it is the [Buddha's] ending of all contaminants, including the contaminant of sensual desire, the contaminant of [craving for] existence, and the contaminant of ignorance, these together with the utter ending of all afflictions or affliction-associated energetic propensities. This is the tenth power.

P. 40) THEY HAVE ACHIEVED UNIMPEDED LIBERATION

As for unimpeded liberation, there are three types of liberations. The first is the liberation from the obstacles of the afflictions. The second is the liberation from the obstacles to meditative concentration. The third is the liberation from the obstacles to [the knowledge of] all dharmas. Among these, an arhat who has achieved liberation through wisdom gains liberation from the obstacles of the afflictions. Both the

doubly-liberated arhat and the *pratyekabuddha* succeed in achieving both the liberation from the obstacles of the afflictions and the liberation from the obstacles to the *dhyāna* concentrations.

It is only the Buddhas who have completely achieved all three of these liberations, namely liberation from the obstacles of the afflictions, liberation from the obstacles to acquisition of the *dhyāna* concentrations, and the liberation from the obstacles to [the knowledge of] all dharmas. It is because he brings together all three of the liberations that the Buddha is designated as having achieved unimpeded liberation. This [unimpeded liberation] always accompanies the mind all the way up to the point of entry into the nirvāṇa without residue.

Q. SUMMARY DISCUSSION OF THE DHARMAS EXCLUSIVE TO THE BUDDHA

These forty dharmas exclusive to the Buddhas provide a general introduction to an entryway into the dharmas of the Buddha. They are discussed here because this allows beings to thereby acquire an understanding of them. However, those [exclusive dharmas] that remain undiscussed herein are innumerable and boundless. Specifically, these include the following:

- 1) [The Buddha] never departs from wisdom.
- 2) He never errs in knowing the right time.
- 3) He has extinguished all habitual karmic propensities.
- 4) He has gained the meditative concentration *pāramitā*.
- 5) All of his meritorious qualities are possessed of extraordinary supremacy.
- 6) He has perfected the *pāramitā* of always according in his actions with what is appropriate to the circumstances.
- 7) No one is able to view the very top of [the light rays radiating from] the crown of his head.
- 8) No one is his equal.
- 9) No one is able to surpass him.
- 10) He is superior to all beings in the world.
- 11) His attainment of the path is not learned from anyone else.
- 12) He never turns away from the Dharma.
- 13) Whoever else might claim to be a buddha is forever unable to enter the presence of the Buddha.
- 14) He has perfected the dharma of never retreating.
- 15) He has acquired the great compassion.
- 16) He has acquired the great kindness.
- 17) He is the foremost among all whose teachings one may accept in faith.

- 18) He is the foremost among those [who are worthy of] fame and offerings.
- 19) No guru who is a contemporary of the Buddha is equal to the Buddha.
- 20) No guru gains a community of disciples equal to that of the Buddha.
- 21) The supreme refinement of his appearance causes all who see him to be delighted.
- 22) Whoever is sent forth as an emissary of a Buddha cannot be harmed by anyone.
- 23) No one is able to injure anyone whom the Buddha has set out to liberate.
- 24) From the very moment he first brings forth a thought, he is able to sever all thought-related fetters.
- 25) He never misses the right time [to provide appropriate instruction to] beings who are capable of achieving liberation.
- 26) In the sixteenth [mind-moment involved in the acquisition of] wisdom, a buddha attains *anuttarasamyakṣambodhi*.
- 27) He is the foremost among the world's fields of merit.
- 28) He emanates measureless radiant light.
- 29) His actions differ from those of anyone else.
- 30) He possesses the [physical] marks that are associated with a hundred-fold generation of merit.⁴⁰⁰
- 31) He has measureless and boundless roots of goodness.
- 32) When he enters the womb—
- 33) When he is born—
- 34) When he achieves buddhahood—
- 35) When he turns the wheel of the Dharma—
- 36) When he relinquishes the possibility of the long lifespan—
- 37) And when he enters nirvāṇa—[on all these occasions], he is able to cause all the worlds throughout the great trichiliocosm to shake.
- 38) [On all of the above occasions], he sets quaking the countless palaces of the *māras*, causing them to lose their awesome power and be struck with terror.
- 39) [When he achieves buddhahood], the world-protecting heavenly kings, Śakra, ruler of the devas, the Yāma Heaven King, the Tuṣita Heaven King, the Nirmāṇarati Heaven King, the Paranirmita Vaśavartin Heaven King, the Brahma Heaven King, the devas of the Pure Abodes, and the other devas—they all simultaneously assemble and request the turning of the Dharma wheel.
- 40) The Buddha's body is as solid as the body of Nārāyaṇa.⁴⁰¹

- 41) When the moral precepts have not yet been formulated, he is the one who first formulates the moral precepts.
- 42) Whenever he takes up any endeavor, his power in accomplishing this is superior to that of any man.
- 43) During the entire time the Bodhisattva is residing in his mother's womb, she loses all thoughts of defiling attachment for men.
- 44) His power is such that he is able to bring about the rescue and liberation of all beings.

There are measurelessly and innumerably many dharmas such as these that are exclusive to the Buddha. Because it would interfere with the explanation of other matters, there is no need to present an extensive discussion of them here. Although these dharmas as found in the Dharma of the Śrāvaka Disciples do resemble dharmas of the Buddha, due to dissimilarities in the degree of superiority or inferiority, there are distinct differences [in how they are described].

Moreover, to summarize, all of the dharmas of the Buddhas are measureless, limitless, inconceivable, of the foremost degree of rarity, and such that no other being is able to have them in common [with any buddha]. Even if all the countless beings in the worlds of all the great trichiliocosms throughout the ten directions possessed wisdom comparable to the king of the Great Brahma Heaven, comparable to a great *pratyekabuddha*, or comparable to Śāriputra, and one were somehow able to collect all this wisdom together in a single person—even if that one person then wished to approach the most minutely small fraction of these forty dharmas exclusive to the Buddhas—this would still be an utter impossibility. He could not even measure up to but one part in a hundred thousand myriads of *koṭis* of parts of just a single one of those dharmas.

The Buddhas possess the power of just such an immeasurable and limitless number of meritorious qualities. And why is this so? It is because they have securely established themselves in the four bases of meritorious qualities for a countless number of great kalpas during which they have deeply practiced the six *pāramitās* and have become well able to completely equip themselves with all dharmas practiced by the bodhisattva. Because [these dharmas] are not held in common with any other beings, so too, the fruits resulting [from their practice] are not held in common with any beings, either.