

Mahāratnakūṭa Sūtra

21. Bhadra the Magician

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Thus have I heard. At one time, the Buddha was in the city of Rājagṛha, on the mountain of Gṛdhṛakūṭa, along with a great assembly of bhikṣus, twelve hundred and fifty in all. All were arhats who were well known to the assembly. The bodhisattva-mahāsattvas numbered five thousand, and had all attained great spiritual powers which they freely manifested; they had realized the patience of non-arising, and had attained Dhāraṇī. The preceding were named Lion Bodhisattva, Lion Wisdom Bodhisattva, Wondrous Sandalwood Bodhisattva, Tamer Bodhisattva, Great Tamer Bodhisattva, Surpassing Light Bodhisattva, Revealing Light Bodhisattva, Powerful Light Bodhisattva, Adorning Light Bodhisattva, Brilliant Awakening Bodhisattva, Assembly Leader Bodhisattva, Sentient Being Tamer Bodhisattva, as well as all the bodhisattvas of the Worthy Eon. Maitreya Bodhisattva-mahāsattva, Dharma Prince Mañjuśrī, and others were at the head. There were also the Four Great Heavenly Kings, Śakra Devānāmindra, lords of the Sahā World, and Great Brahmā the deva king. Encircling them were innumerable devas, nāgas, yakṣas, asuras, gandharvas, kiṃnaras, mahoragas, and so forth.

The Tathāgata, the Bhagavān, had a great name that was universally known throughout the world — the Tathāgata, Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly Enlightened, Perfect in Knowledge and Conduct, Well Gone, Knower of the World, Supreme Master, Tamer of Men, Teacher of Devas and Humans, Buddha, Bhagavān. All-knowing and all-seeing, he had accomplished the Ten Powers and the Four Kinds of Fearlessness, Four Unimpeded Liberations, the Eighteen Unique Dharmas, great kindness and great compassion, and perfected the Five Eyes. He could miraculously make pronouncements, teach others, and wield spiritual powers perfectly and completely. He was able to take three thousand great thousand-worlds, with their earth, cities, towns, grass, trees, forests, Mount Sumerus, oceans, rivers, and celestial palaces and halls, and place them on the tip of a single hair abiding in empty space, for an eon or more, and just like his mindfulness during this time, they would not falter or move.

At this time in the city of Rājagṛha, the kings, high ministers, brāhmaṇas, lay disciples, and all the common people, all regarded the Tathāgata with great reverence and honor. They arranged many exquisite drinks, food, clothes, and

special medicines, all as offerings of respect. In that city, there was a magician named Bhadra, who was well-versed in heterodox theories, skilled in the techniques of mantras, and who was foremost among the magicians. In the land of Magadha, with the exception of those who could perceive the truth, and those who had right faith, such as the upāsakas and upāsikās, the others in their foolishness were easily confused by his illusions and believed in them. When the magician heard of the merits and designations of the Tathāgata, he thought, “Now in this city amongst its sentient beings, everyone has a mind of reverence toward me. Śramaṇa Gautama is the only one who does not yet believe and has not yet been subdued. I will go now to compare with him and test him. If he yields to me, then the people of Magadha will certainly respect me even more!”

Then that magician, due to formerly planted good karma which had matured at that time, through the sovereign power of the Bhagavān, went from the city of Rājagṛha to Gṛdhrakūṭa Mountain. There he saw the radiance of the Buddha which surpassed that of a hundred thousand suns. His round face was pleasant like the full moon. His bodily appearance was full and complete like a nyagrodha tree. The appearance of his hair was pure like the light of a maṇi jewel. The appearance of his eyes was deep blue like a blue lotus flower. The crown of his head was such that even the brahmā devas were unable to see it. With sixty types of pure tones he spoke the Dharma for the multitudes.

Although the magician had seen the sovereign power and extraordinary honor of the Tathāgata, he still cherished his false pride. Moreover, he thought, “I should now test him. If he is the all-knowing one, then he should know my intent!” After he had thought this, he then bowed his head at the feet of the Buddha, and said, “I wish that tomorrow you will receive my small offering.” At that time, the Bhagavān observed the magician as well as the sentient beings of Rājagṛha had roots that had matured, and to mature them, he silently accepted the invitation. Then that magician saw that the Bhagavān had accepted the invitation, and thought, “Now this Gautama does not know my intent. He is certainly not one who is all-knowing!” He then withdrew, paid his respects, and departed.

Venerable Maudgalyāyana was then in the assembly and had seen this. He faced the Buddha and addressed him, saying, “This Bhadra wishes to deceive the Tathāgata as well as the assembly of bhikṣus! I respectfully ask that the Bhagavān not accept this invitation!” The Buddha told Maudgalyāyana, “Do not think this way. Only those with craving, hatred, and delusion are able to be deceived and confused. I have long since severed and extinguished these, and attained realization that dharmas are fundamentally unarisen. Throughout eons, I have peacefully abided in correct practice. Who would be able to deceive me? You

should now know that this person does not create true magic. The Tathāgata is the one who makes true magic. Why? This is due to the present realization that dharmas are all like illusions. Even if all types of sentient beings could accomplish magical techniques like Bhadra, they would not match even one hundred thousandth those of the Tathāgata.”

He again spoke to Maudgalyāyana, saying, “What do you think? Is that magician able to manifest three thousand great thousand-worlds, causing them to be gloriously adorned?” He replied, saying, “Certainly not.” “Maudgalyāyana, you should know that I am able to manifest and adorn as many worlds as there are sand grains in the Ganges River on the tip of a single hair, and still this does not exhaust the spiritual powers of the Tathāgata!

“Maudgalyāyana, you should know there is a great wind wheel named ‘Crushing,’ which can destroy the three thousand worlds. There is also a wind wheel named ‘Vairambha,’ which is able to destroy worlds and re-establish them. There is also a wind wheel named ‘Rousing Motion,’ which is able to spin and transform worlds. There is also a wind wheel named ‘Peaceful Abiding,’ which blows to the highest place. There is also a wind wheel named ‘Scattering,’ which is able to disperse Mount Sumeru, the Black Mountain, and so forth. There is also a wind wheel named ‘Fierce Flames,’ and at the time of the burning eon, it blows blazing flames upward to the Brahmā Heavens. There is also a wind wheel named ‘Subsiding,’ and at the time of the burning eon, it is able to cause the fires of the eon to subside. There is also a wind wheel named ‘Cooling,’ able to cause a single cloud to cover three thousand great thousand-worlds. There is also a wind wheel named ‘Universal Downpour,’ and when the fires burn the eon, it is able to descend upon subdue the fires with a great downpour of rain. There is also a wind wheel named ‘Drying,’ and when the eon is flooded with water, it is able to cause that water to dry up. If I were to fully explain such wind wheels, even an eon would not be enough. Maudgalyāyana, you should know this.

“What do you think, is this magician able to peacefully abide in such wind wheels even for a moment?” He replied, saying, “Certainly not.” The Buddha said to Maudgalyāyana, “In such wind wheels, the Tathāgata is able to walk, stand, sit, or lie down without being moved. Moreover, the Tathāgata is able to place such wind wheels into a tiny mustard seed, and the wind wheels would be able to function there, with the mustard seed neither expanding nor contracting, and without one obstructing another. Maudgalyāyana, you should know this. The Tathāgata can accomplish magical dharmas limitlessly.”

At that time, Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana, as well as the great multitude, heard

what the Tathāgata had spoken. At that time, they developed an unprecedented mind, and bowed their heads at the feet of the Buddha. In one voice, they said, “We have now encountered the great sovereign authority and spiritual powers of the Teacher, and received great benefits. If someone is able to hear the Tathāgata, the Bhagavān, and his spiritual power, giving rise to belief and understanding, then this person will certainly receive great benefits and give rise to the mind of Anuttarā Samyaksambodhi.”

Then the night before, the magician went to the city of Rājagṛha, to the lowest and most filthy place, and transformed it into a place for teaching that was extensive, level and square. The scent of flowers proliferated throughout, and it was covered with a jeweled canopy. There were also eight thousand rows of jeweled trees, and below each tree there was a lion throne. Innumerable provisions were all arranged nicely as offerings for the bhikṣus. Moreover, there were drinks and food of a hundred flavors, along with five hundred servants wearing white clothes decorated with ornaments.

After these transformations, the Four Heavenly Kings arrived at the assembly place and spoke to the magician, saying, “You have made these transformations of adornments and provisions as offerings for the Tathāgata tomorrow, and from these causes and conditions you will attain great merit. We also wish to help you make offerings to the Tathāgata. Would you permit us to create a second place for teaching, by transformation?” When the magician heard what had been said, his mind was curious, and he immediately granted the request. Then the four kings immediately manifested innumerable wondrous adornments and furnishings, twice those of the magician’s. Then Śakra Devānāmindra, along with thirty thousand devaputras, came to the teaching place and spoke to the magician, saying, “I also wish to help you to make offerings and adorn the place for the teaching.” The magician was startled, but he once again permitted it. Then that lord of devas, for the sake of the Tathāgata, by transformation created a hall that was similar to the extraordinary palace of Trāyastriṃśa Heaven. He also by transformation established pārijātas, kovidāras, and other wondrous heavenly trees such as these, arranged in orderly rows.

When the magician saw these things, he cried out in fear and remorse, wishing to take back his transformations. He exhausted all his mantra techniques, but the magical illusions remained just as they had been before. He thought, “This is extremely strange! Since long ago, I have been able to use my mind to hide or manifest illusory transformations. It is only now that I am unable to make them disappear. Certainly it is this way due to the Tathāgata!” Then Śakra Devānāmindra was aware of the thoughts in his mind, and spoke to the magician, saying,

“Because you have now done this for the Tathāgata, the adorned place for the teaching is unable to disappear. From this you should know that if there is someone who brings forth even one recollection in his mind for the Tathāgata, then this good root will ultimately be a cause for his Parinirvāṇa!” After hearing the Lord of Devas speak thusly, his mind was extremely happy.

After the night passed, he went to the place of the Tathāgata and spoke to the Bhagavān, saying, “I have now finished the undertaking, so please show your compassion and kindness.” At that time, in the morning, the Bhagavān put on his robe and picked up his alms bowl. With a great multitude encircling him, he entered the city of Rājagṛha and proceeded to the place of the magician’s place for the teaching. In the land of Magadha, those of outer paths, such as the brāhmaṇas and so forth, all wished that the Tathāgata would be deceived by the illusions of the magician. Because they wanted to see this, they all came to the assembly. The bhikṣus, bhikṣuṇīs, upāsakas, and upāsikās, happily wished to perceive and hear the Tathāgata’s spiritual transformations and the Lion’s Roar, also gathered at the assembly. At that time, the Tathāgata, through the spiritual power of the Buddha, caused that magician, as well as Lord Śakra, and the Four Kings, to each perceive the Bhagavān in their place of adornment.

At that time, when the magician had seen this, he abandoned his pride and bowed at the feet of the Buddha. He spoke, saying, “Bhagavān, I now repent to the Tathāgata. Previously I rashly attempted to deceive the Buddha by producing magical transformations of many adorned things. Although I came to regret this, I was unable to make these things disappear.” At that time, the Buddha spoke to the magician, saying, “All sentient beings as well as the provisions are all illusory transformations. They are like illusory transformations brought about by karma. The bhikṣus of the assembly are also illusory transformations. They are like illusory transformations from the Dharma. My body is also illusory, conjured up from wisdom. All world realms of the three thousand great thousand-worlds are also illusory, conjured up by the totality of all sentient beings. Worldly existing dharmas are without any that are not illusions, conjured up by the combining of causes and conditions. Now you should give away these illusory provisions of drinks and food one by one.”

Then that magician, along with the Four Heavenly Kings and Śakra Devānāindra, along with all their followers, and the magical transformations of servants, then provided the drinks and food as offerings to the Buddha and to the assembly, until all the people at the assembly were all full. At that time, Mahākāśyapa spoke a gāthā:

Know that the food is illusory,
And likewise are the recipients;
When these are in equality,
Then this is called 'pure giving.'

Mahāmaudgalyāyana said:

Know that the seats are illusory,
And those who sit upon them also;
When these are in equality,
Then this is called 'pure giving.'

Śāriputra said:

Just like the illusory servants,
Are the minds of the receivers;
When one is able to give thusly,
Then this is called 'pure giving.'

Subhūti said:

Not giving for the sake of giving,
Nor receiving for the sake of receiving;
When one is able to give thusly,
Then this is called 'pure giving.'

Ānanda said:

What is given is like empty space,
And the one who receives cannot be grasped;
Not attached to body and mind,
This giving is the most clear and pure.

Light Banner Bodhisattva said:

By analogy, just as that magician
Created magically adorned things,
All dharmas are also such as these,
Yet foolish people are unaware of it.

Light Adornment Bodhisattva said:

The seats as well as the trees
Are all illusions of the mind;
Of such illusions and empty space,
How could there be a distinction?

Lion Bodhisattva said:

The jackal who has never before heard
The roaring of a lion
Will have a mind without fear,
Barking throughout the forest,
But upon hearing the sound of a lion,
He will hide and disappear;
The magician was also like this
Before standing before the Tathāgata.
When he was with those of outer paths,
He would praise himself above the Buddha.
Although the magician can create things,
His techniques of magic are limited.
However, the Tathāgata's mastery
Of the techniques of magic are endless—
All the devas and māras
Are unable to know its limits!

Lion Wisdom Bodhisattva said:

Fully know that the servants,
Drinks and food, and those who eat,
Are all magical transformations—
This is supreme and virtuous giving.

Maitreya Bodhisattva said:

Just as when ghee is added to a fire,
It spreads and flares up abundantly,
When the Bhagavān is compared to the magician,
The magical transformations are also so.

Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva said:

The multitude of good deeds at this assembly
Have never before come into being;
All dharmas are entirely this way,
Always similar to what has past.

At that time, because the Bhagavān wished to bring the magician to maturation, produced an elder by transformation, who entered the assembly. He spoke to the magician, saying, “Why did you wish to come here?” The magician replied, saying, “I wish to make offerings of food and drinks to Śramaṇa Gautama.” The Elder spoke to him, saying, “Do not speak that way. The Tathāgata is now with the bhikṣus at the palace of Ajātaśatru, receiving offerings of food.” The spiritual power of the Buddha caused the magician to perceive the Tathāgata and the bhikṣus there eating.

He then produced a second elder by transformation, who spoke to the magician, saying, “Why are you now here?” The magician replied, saying, “I came here to make offerings to Śramaṇa Gautama.” The elder again said, “Do not speak that way. The Tathāgata is now with the bhikṣus, begging for food in the streets of the villages where brāhmaṇas live.” Then the spiritual power of the Buddha caused the magician to also perceive the Tathāgata and the noble assembly in the village streets, begging for food.

He then produced a third elder by transformation, who spoke to the magician, saying, “The Tathāgata is now at the garden of Jīva, the king of physicians, explaining the wondrous Dharma to the Four Groups.” The spiritual power of the Buddha caused the magician to see all such things. Next, Śakra Devānāindra was produced by transformation, and approached the magician and spoke to him, saying, “The Buddha is in Trāyastriṃśa Heaven, speaking the Dharma to the multitude there.” At that time, the magician again perceived the Tathāgata amongst the multitude of devas, expounding the essentials of the Dharma.

At that time, within the forests, flowers, and leaves, and upon all the lion thrones, and in all the streets throughout the city of Rājagṛha, and amongst the houses, halls, and palaces, and in various lofty places, the magician saw the auspicious marks of the Tathāgata, and saw himself there repenting before the tathāgatas.

At that time, the magician perceived only the body of the Buddha, and nothing else was perceived. He then blissfully arose and danced about, and naturally attained

the Samādhi of Mindfulness of the Buddha. From this samādhi, he arose and joined his palms together, and facing the Buddha, spoke a gāthā:

I was always thinking, 'Within Jambudvīpa,
My illusory transformations are supreme.'
Now compared with the Buddha's spiritual powers,
They are not even a fraction by comparison!
From this I can correctly and fully know
The inconceivable powers of the Buddha.
In accordance with the mind he can manifest
Transformation buddhas like the Ganges' sands.
All of these various tathāgatas perceived
Are each furnished with auspicious marks.
May the Bhagavān now demonstrate for me
Which one of these is the true Buddha!

To these various tathāgatas
I wish to cultivate and make offerings,
Wishing respectfully to be taught
How one can reach the supreme fruit.
If there are those who regard the Buddha,
Without giving rise to a mind of reverence,
Then these ordinary worldly people
Are turning away from peace and happiness.
Now before the Bhagavān,
I disclose my previous offenses,
My deceitful testing of the Tathāgata,
Which I wish to extinguish without remainder!
Brahmā, Śakra, and the great assembly—
I wish that they will testify that I,
In order to cross over sentient beings,
Am now developing the mind of Bodhi,
And with the light of wisdom,
Will awaken those in the world,
Give the sweet nectar of the Dharma,
And fill the entire world with it!
If someone, regarding the Buddha,
Perceives such spiritual transformations,
And hears such wonderful speech,
The supreme practice of unimpeded wisdom,
How could one be intelligent and wise

And yet not develop the mind of Bodhi?
Please reveal for us the path to Bodhi,
As well as all the practices of purity!

What is this cultivation practice
That those of the Two Vehicles cannot enter?
What is the foundation of practice
For giving reverence and making offerings?
How can one possess majestic deportment
And be apart from all doubts and regrets?
How can one, regarding many teachings,
Endlessly cultivate them with strength?
How can one speak to the people
Causing delight in the correct Dharma,
Without consideration for profit,
And gratefully returning compassion?
How can one, to sentient beings,
Always be a permanent friend?
How can one draw near to virtuous friends,
And separate oneself from evil friends?
How can one meet the buddhas
And make offerings without tiring?
How can one, for one's training and study,
Have reverence and purity?
How can one, regarding the various samādhis,
Achieve their essential principles,
As well as abandon contrary principles,
And perfect correct thought?
How can one be without timidity and weakness,
And not be overtaken by Māra,
Considering meaning and principles,
And not abandoning sentient beings?
What is it that should not be abandoned,
And should be embraced without attachment,
To attain entry into correct practice,
And perfect virtuous skillful means?
How can one cultivate compassion
And accomplish spiritual powers,
Realization of unimpeded eloquence,
And even the attainment of Dhāraṇī?
How can one attain dharma-patience

And eloquence that is clear and pure,
Abandoning the dharmas to be abandoned,
Attaining entry into the extremely profound?
How can one, regarding one's vows,
Bring every single one to completion,
And regarding the pāramitās,
Advance to attain non-retrogression?
Regarding dharmas such as these
I wish to diligently cultivate,
And wish from great compassion and respect
That you would fully explain it to me!

At that time, the Bhagavān responded in a gāthā:

If one has been aware that all dharmas
Are all similar to illusory transformations,
Then this person is able to then manifest
Hundreds of myriads of buddha-bodies,
And go off to myriads of lands
In order to liberate sentient beings.
By way of analogy, just as Bhadra
From formlessness manifests myriad forms,
These are neither created nor destroyed,
Without abiding, and without coming and going.
The Bhagavān's transformation body
As well as the assembly of bhikṣus
Are also without birth and death,
And it is even so for Nirvāṇa—
These are all the Tathāgata's
Inconceivable spiritual transformations.
This is like one who creates an illusion
Manifesting elephants, horses, and soldiers
To perplex and baffle sentient beings
Who mistakenly view these as real.
Just as the elephants, horses, and soldiers
Are without nature and without arising,
The buddhas' appearance without form
Is without coming and without going.

Abiding in the self-perception of a person
Is giving rise to a deluded thought of the Buddha.

One should not do so from an appearance of form,
Or from nature, caste, or birthplace,
Or even from the sound of his brahmā voice
If one wishes to observe the Tathāgata.
It is even difficult from mental discriminations
To draw divisions between the various buddhas
And the bodies of the nature of the buddha dharmas
Which surpasses the three phases of time.
This self-nature is apart from all characteristics,
Not falling into categories of dharmas to be reckoned,
This which manifests the various tathāgatas,
The arising of the self-nature is without arising.
It is also without skandhas, entrances, or elements,
Abiding without anything as its basis;
As such, the Buddha's Dharmakāya
Is unable to be perceived by the Five Eyes.
If one says that, 'I perceive the Buddha,'
There actually cannot be this perception;
It is from perception without perception,
As empty as the trace of a bird's flight.
As such, the buddha that you perceive
As well as others you have not yet perceived
Are in equality, like empty space,
And of one appearance, without difference.

In śīla, samādhi, prajñā, liberation,
And the knowledge and vision of liberation,
All of these various tathāgatas'
Merits are without difference.
All abide in the empty nature,
Unattached to dharmas,
As all illusory transformations
Are without nature and without arising.
By making offerings to one tathāgata,
The offerings are to many buddhas,
Since the Dharmakāya of the buddhas
Is in equality and without division.
Thusly, since all of the buddhas
Together give rise to fortune and benefit,
Universally giving to the tathāgatas
Certainly yields a great fruit.

Due to their same and equal realization
Of the clear and pure nature of dharmas,
Those various tathāgatas
Are without a proliferation of differences.

As for your previous question,
'Which of these is the true buddha?'
You should abandon your mental confusions
And listen carefully to my explanation.
Abide in the wisdom of correct mindfulness
And carefully observe dharmas—
All of these are unarisen,
Yet they are falsely viewed as real.
If an appearance of form arises,
Then it should also cease;
Therefore, the tathāgatas
Are ultimately unarisen.
They are also not self-arisen,
Otherwise they would scatter in extinction;
Hence observation of the Tathāgata
Is from perception without perception.
Just as your perception of the Buddha
Is not in according to any direction or place,
All ordinary people have perceptions
Always from the Five Skandhas.
You should, regarding these skandhas,
Observe them as you have the Buddha—
The buddhas as well as the dharmas,
And even the sentient beings.
From the appearance without appearance,
Without having anything that you dwell in—
If you establish this careful observation,
You will quickly have realization of Bodhi.
Dharmas are all without existence
And thereby false discriminations arise;
The nature of causes and conditions is empty
Because they are apart from a fixed nature.
From this you are able to fully know
The pure Dharma apart from defilements
And by means of the pure Dharma Eye
Attain perception of the tathāgatas.

When the magician heard these words, he attained the patience of compliance with the Dharma. Five thousand sentient beings developed the mind of Anuttarā Samyaksambodhi, and two hundred bodhisattvas accomplished the patience of non-arising. At that time, after the Bhagavān had finished his food, the magician, wishing to give, then spoke a gāthā:

If one is able to regard the gift,
The giver, and the receiver
As equal and without division,
Then this giving is perfect and complete.

At that time, Ānanda addressed the Buddha, saying, “Bhagavān, we wish that the Tathāgata, by means of the spiritual power of the Buddha, would assist the magician, so these various offerings and adornments would not disappear for seven days. At this time, the Tathāgata, in accordance with the request of the assembly, caused that magician’s illusory transformation of the bodhimaṇḍa to be gloriously adorned as before, for a full seven days.

At that time, the Tathāgata, along with the bhikṣus and great bodhisattvas, as well as the devas, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, and so forth surrounding him, returned to Gr̥dhrakūṭa Mountain to speak the Dharma. At that time, the magician again went to the Buddha, and then bowed his head at the feet of the Buddha. He circumambulated the Buddha clockwise three full times, and moved back to one side. He then addressed the Buddha, saying, “Bhagavān, I wish that you would expound the path of the bodhisattvas, so that those who diligently cultivate it will quickly be able to arrive at the bodhimaṇḍa.” The Buddha said, “Listen carefully and well-mindfully, because I will tell you.” The magician replied, “Just so, Bhagavān, we are joyfully wishing to hear it.”

The Buddha said, “Good man, there are four types of dharmas of this bodhisattva path. If one is able to cultivate them, then they will quickly arrive at the bodhimaṇḍa. What are these four? [1] The first is to never fall back from the Bodhi Mind, or lose it. [2] The second is to never abandon sentient beings. [3] The third is to seek all good roots insatiably. [4] The fourth is to protect and maintain the correct Dharma with great zeal.

“Good man, a bodhisattva also has four dharmas of thoroughly pure practice. What are these four? [1] The first is to maintain purity of the precepts. [2] The second is to maintain purity of mental joy. [3] The third is to maintain purity of wisdom. [4] The fourth is to maintain purity when subject to arising.

“There are also four dharmas which only the bodhisattvas practice, and that those of the Two Vehicles are unable to enter into. What are these four? [1] The first is to cultivate dhyāna without following arising conditions. [2] The second is for one’s mind to be able to discern extremely profound meanings. [3] The third is to be able to give rise to the mind of great compassion for sentient beings. [4] The fourth is to be able to eloquently expound the Dharma in a proliferation of different ways without impediment.

“There are also four dharmas for the station of practice. [1] The first is happily abiding in peaceful quietude. [2] The second is to detest troubles and disputes. [3] The third is to arise a mind of great compassion for sentient beings. [4] The fourth is to engage in various practices without the existence of coming and going.

“There are also four dharmas for respectfully making offerings. What are these four? [1] The first is not cherishing one’s own body and life. [2] The second is having a mind of constant joy. [3] The third is abandoning pride and arrogance. [4] The fourth is cultivating correctly as one has been taught.

“There are also four dharmas for perfect deportment. [1] The first is awareness of timing. [2] The second is awareness of the location. [3] The third is being calm and quiet. [4] The fourth is being in accordance with the truth.

“There are also four dharmas for being able to cast off doubts and regrets. What are these four? [1] The first is to protect oneself from evil deeds and matters. [2] The second is to delight in and draw close to wise people. [3] The third is to carefully consider the meaning of what one has heard. [4] The fourth is to have a mind of compassion, not enumerating the faults of others.

“There are also four dharmas for learning much without fatigue. What are these four? [1] The first is to cause oneself and others to grow in the right wisdom. [2] The second is to cause oneself to be able to sever others’ doubts and confusions. [3] The third is to cause oneself to be able to concentrate on receiving the correct Buddha Dharma. [4] The fourth is to cause oneself to endlessly praise the tathāgatas.

“There are also four dharmas for one’s learning to be solid and firm. What are these four? [1] The first is that having heard the correct Dharma, one is able to fully understand it. [2] The second is that having heard the correct Dharma, one does not do various evil deeds. [3] The third is that having heard the correct Dharma, one reveals it to others. [4] The fourth is that having heard the correct Dharma, one

transfers it over to Bodhi.

“There are also four dharmas of benefit for those who speak the Dharma. What are these four? [1] The first is always receiving fragrant drinks and food from others. [2] The second is always receiving clothing and various offerings from others. [3] The third is weakening the influence of the followers of Māra. [4] The fourth is that the heavenly protectors will prevail and Māra will not gain advantage.

“There are also four dharmas which cause others to believe and delight in the Dharma when it is spoken. What are these four? [1] One is to cause oneself to have a mind with few desires. [2] The second is to cause oneself to always know what is necessary and sufficient. [3] The third is to cause oneself to speak gently. [4] The fourth is to cause oneself to be in accordance with the Dharma.

“There are also four dharmas for expounding the correct Dharma without craving. What are these four? [1] The first is that regarding existence within birth and death as something to be feared. [2] The second is not seeking worldly gains and close friends. [3] The third is always nurturing and protecting sentient beings. [4] The fourth is being able to cultivate the seeds of wisdom.

“There are also four dharmas for knowing kindness and repaying kindness. What are these four? [1] The first is to cause sentient beings to be nurtured along to the path of Bodhi. [2] The second is to cause one to be aware of the task without losing it. [3] The third is to have kindness and affection for sentient beings as though they were oneself. [4] The fourth is to cause oneself to cultivate well the deeds of a bodhisattva.

“There are also four dharmas for always being a friend to sentient beings. What are these four? [1] The first is to cause oneself to be able to wear the great armor of forbearance. [2] The second is to cause oneself to benefit sentient beings without seeking reward. [3] The third is to cause oneself to not step back from the mind of great compassion. [4] The fourth is to cause oneself to not abandon others even in the face of suffering and harm.

“There are also four dharmas regarding virtuous friends to draw near to. What are these four? [1] The first is accomplishing skillful means. [2] The second is accomplishing the highest intention. [3] The third is accomplishing the correct practices of a bodhisattva. [4] The fourth is accomplishing the praises of Bodhi.

“There are also four dharmas regarding bad friends to be avoided. What are these

four? [1] The first is speaking the praises of the Two Vehicles. [2] The second is causing others to retreat from Bodhi. [3] The third is the accumulation of evil dharmas. [4] The fourth is destruction and injury of various good things.

“There are also four dharmas for being able to meet the buddhas. What are these four? [1] The first is to cause oneself to single-mindedly concentrate on mindfulness of the Buddha. [2] The second is to cause oneself to praise and acclaim the merits of the Tathāgata. [3] The third is to cause oneself to maintain complete purity of conduct. [4] The fourth is to cause oneself to develop great vows with the highest intention.

“There are also four dharmas of making offerings to the buddhas without a mind of laziness or fatigue. What are these four? [1] The first is taking delight in making offerings to the supreme field of merit. [2] The second is that as one makes offerings this way, all sentient beings also make offerings. [3] The third is that making offerings this way causes the mind of Bodhi to attain firmness and strength. [4] The fourth is that observing the thirty-two marks of the Tathāgata causes one’s good roots to grow.

“There are also four dharmas for giving rise to a mind of respect while at the stages of study. What are these four? [1] The first is rising above the evil paths. [2] The second is giving rise to a good destiny. [3] The third is honoring the Tathāgata. [4] The fourth is the fulfillment of aspirations.

“There are also four dharmas for those who are at the stages of study. What are these four? [1] The first is never abandoning the mind of Bodhi. [2] The second is having a mind of equality for sentient beings. [3] The third is diligently cultivating the pāramitās. [4] The fourth is hearing innumerable dharmas without giving rise to fear and terror.

“There are also four dharmas for purity at the stages of study. What are these four? [1] The first is not doing evil deeds. [2] The second is having a profound understanding of the nature of emptiness. [3] The third is not slandering the buddhas. [4] The fourth is the extinction and destruction of various views.

“There are also four dharmas for the nature of samādhi. What are these four? [1] The first is to cause oneself to be separated from troubles and disputes. [2] The second is to cause oneself to delight in calmness and quietude. [3] The third is to cause oneself to have a mind that is unconfused. [4] The fourth is to cause oneself to increase in good roots.

“There are also four dharmas of mental principles that should be accomplished. What are these four? [1] The first is cultivating the good Dharma and turning toward the destination of Bodhi. [2] The second is the mind always being peaceful and silent without attachments. [3] The fourth is always striving to cultivate gateways to liberation. [4] The fourth is no longer seeking realization of Nirvāṇa at the level of the Two Vehicles.

“There are also four dharmas of mental principles that should be abandoned. What are these four? [1] The first is the fear and terror of birth and death. [2] The second is not having confidence in cultivation. [3] The third is not seeking the supreme understanding of the underlying teachings. [4] The fourth is not cultivating the various good roots.

“There are also four dharmas of correct thought that one should study well. What are these four? [1] The first is that a bodhisattva should suffer birth and death for innumerable eons, even if only for one sentient being. [2] The second is that one should anticipate the differences in faculties and natures of sentient beings, and speak the Dharma causing them to abandon their sufferings. [3] The third is that one should sever all evil deeds, cultivate all good deeds, subdue the armies of Māra, and have realization of Anuttarā Samyaksambodhi. [4] The fourth is that one should, with the single brahmā voice, expound the essentials of the Dharma for innumerable sentient beings of the three thousand great thousand-worlds.

“There are also four dharmas for having a mind that is fearless, that Māra is unable to destroy. What are these four? [1] The first is to observe that all dharmas are similar to illusory transformations. [2] The second is to always associate with the truth and with correct wisdom. [3] The third is being without discrimination regarding all dharmas. [4] The fourth is being without attachment regarding all appearances.

“There are also four dharmas for considering meaning. What are these four? [1] The first is knowing that all dharmas arise from causes and conditions. [2] The second is knowing that there are no dharmas which may be designated as arisen. [3] The third is knowing that dharmas, arising from conditions, are themselves unarisen. [4] The fourth is knowing that dharmas are unarisen and also not extinguished.

“There are also four dharmas for not abandoning sentient beings. What are these four? [1] The first is not abandoning great vows. [2] The second is enduring weariness and suffering. [3] The third is not begrudging one’s own body and life. [4] The fourth is always cultivating the four methods of winning over others.

“There are also four dharmas which should not be abandoned. What are these four? [1] The first is that one should not abandon giving offerings. [2] The second is that one should not abandon the development of sentient beings. [3] The third is that one should not abandon careful observations. [4] The fourth is that one should not abandon increasing the goodness of others.

“There are also four dharmas which should always be retained. What are these four? [1] The first is that even the smallest good roots should be cultivated. [2] The second is increasing the goodness of the minds of others without become tired. [3] The third is that after hearing of giving and of morality, one is able to believe and accept it. [4] The fourth is not seeking any type of benefit or fame.

“There are also four dharmas for entering into correct practice. What are these four? [1] The first is the accomplishment of penetrating wisdom. [2] The second is abiding in great samādhi. [3] The third is cultivating the nature of emptiness. [4] The fourth is being without attachments.

“There are also four dharmas of skillful means. What are these four? [1] The first is that of all types of mental development, a bodhisattva regards the mind of Bodhi as the foremost, so even afflictions cause one to follow the path to supreme Bodhi, much less initiating various good mental qualities. [2] The second is observing sentient beings, even those who abide in wrong views, as all vessels for the Dharma. [3] The third is full knowledge that dharmas are without self-nature. [4] The fourth is the cultivation of the samādhi gateways of liberation without attachment to thoughts.

“There are also four dharmas for cultivating a mind of great kindness. What are these four? [1] The first is cultivating a mind of great kindness by saving and protecting sentient beings. [2] The second is cultivating a mind of great kindness by liberating sentient beings. [3] The third is developing a mind of great kindness by awakening sentient beings. [4] The fourth is cultivating a mind of great kindness by causing sentient beings to enter Nirvāṇa.

“There are also four dharmas for cultivating a mind of great compassion. What are these four? [1] The first is to cause oneself to cultivate a mind of great compassion for causing sentient beings to leave evil paths and abide in good destinies. [2] The second is to cause oneself to cultivate a mind of great compassion for causing sentient beings to abandon evil practices and to practice good dharmas. [3] The third is to cause oneself to cultivate a mind of great compassion for causing sentient beings to depart from the Lesser Vehicle and enter the Great Vehicle. [4] The fourth is to cause oneself to cultivate a mind fo great compassion for causing

sentient beings to depart from birth and death, and to attain Nirvāṇa.

“There are also four dharmas for accomplishing supernormal powers. What are these four? [1] The first is to not begrudge one’s own body and life, and be without love and fondness for it. [2] The second is to cause oneself to fully know that all dharmas are like illusory transformations. [3] The third is to cause oneself to give rise to respect for sentient beings. [4] The fourth is to cause oneself to cultivate śamatha without mental scattering or confusion.

“There are also four dharmas for attaining unimpeded eloquence. What are these four? [1] The first is following the meaning rather than the letter. [2] The second is being in accordance with the Dharma rather than being in accordance with others. [3] The third is to thoroughly understand that dharmas are apart from words. [4] The fourth is that from full knowledge, words may be spoken endlessly.

“There are also four dharmas for attaining Dhāraṇī. What are these four? [1] The first is that when learning much, one does not become weary of it. [2] The second is that one respectfully makes offerings to those who are well-learned. [3] The third is that from a proliferation of names, one speaks the true meaning. [4] The fourth is that one is able to enter the correct path according to the underlying meaning.

“There are also four dharmas for being able to attain dharma-patience. What are these four? [1] The first is thoroughly cultivating supreme understanding. [2] The second is transforming without retrogression. [3] The third is provisions being full and complete. [4] The fourth is to endeavor without becoming weary.

“There are also four dharmas for attaining pure rhetorical abilities. What are these four? [1] The first is to not oppose those who speak the Dharma. [2] The second is to revere the Dharma teachers and respectfully listen and accept it. [3] The third is to not become proud and arrogant from having learned much. [4] The fourth is to not give rise to contempt for those who have learned little.

“There are also four dharmas which should be abandoned. What are these four? [1] The first is that one should abandon craving, hatred, and delusion. [2] The second is that one should abandon the Śrāvaka Vehicle. [3] The third is that one should abandon the Pratyekabuddha Vehicle. [4] The fourth is that one should abandon the appearances of good dharmas.

“There are also four dharmas for entering into extremely profound meanings. What are these four? [1] The first is to profoundly penetrate the dependent arising of

conditioned dharmas. [2] The second is being able to correctly and fully know the underlying meaning. [3] The third is giving rise to a profound and correct understanding of the nature of dharmas. [4] The fourth is thoroughly penetrating the meaning of the emptiness of all dharmas.

“There are also four dharmas for causing one’s aspirations to become fulfilled. What are these four? [1] The first is that śīla should be clear and pure. [2] The second is removing evil karma through purity. [3] The third is not engaging in flattery or deceit. [4] The fourth is increasing one’s good roots.

“There are also four dharmas of the pāramitās and advancing to non-retrogression. What are these four? [1] The first is that through skillful means of one pāramitā, one is able to completely penetrate all pāramitās. [2] The second is that through skillful means of fully knowing one sentient being, one is able to fully know all sentient beings. [3] The third is that through skillful means of the realization that one dharma is pure, one is able to fully realize that all dharmas are pure. [4] The fourth is that through the skillful means of fully knowing one buddha, one is able to fully know all buddhas. For what reason? This is because the nature of dharmas is without distinction.

After the Buddha had thusly spoken of the fourfold Dharma-gates of a bodhisattva, the magician Bhadra had realization of the patience of non-arising, and leaped with joy. He then ascended from the ground into the sky to the height of seven palm trees. At that time, the Bhagavān smiled a bright and peaceful smile, and from his forehead released immeasurable light. This light universally illuminated the buddha-realms, and then entered back into the crown of the Tathāgata.

At that time, Venerable Ānanda thought, “The Tathāgata, worthy and perfectly enlightened, has not smiled this way without a cause.” He then arose from his seat, bared his right shoulder, and knelt with his knee to the ground. Joining his palms together, he faced the Buddha, and spoke a gāthā to question him:

Universally heard in the Triple Realm, everywhere known and honored,
In the station of authority and wisdom inconceivable,
Having already reached the other shore of Bodhi and merits,
For what reason do you now manifest this smile?
The ten directions and five destinies of sentient beings,
The mental motions and natures of high, middle, and low—
The Tathāgata in all these cases is able to know these.
Now why do you manifest this smile, and for what reason?

Among the humans, devas, and eight divisions in the great assembly
There are those who are able to produce wonderful sounds,
But when compared to the pure voice of the Tathāgata,
They are not even a tiny fraction by compare!
The radiance of the Bhagavān goes through the ten directions
Universally illuminating innumerable buddha-lands.
The light of the sun and moon, of maṇi jewels and brahmā devas,
Is unable to compare with that of the Tathāgata!

Completely knowing the extremely profound dharma of emptiness,
Without self, without a person, as well as sentient beings,
Having fully abandoned the two extremes of emptiness and existence,
Well knowing the three times are like the moon's reflection on water—
Now, he whose destiny is within the Supreme Vehicle,
Who transmits the lineage of the Tathāgata's Dharma,
And who arises within the vast and great Triple Gem—
We wish you would explain the reason for this smile!

The Tathāgata's manifestation of light from his smile
Has a difference for those of the different vehicles.
If it enters back into the knee or into the shoulder,
Then this is for a person who is of the Two Vehicles.
Now this one releases immeasurable light
And this light enters into the crown of the Tathāgata.
Supreme one among devas, for what person
In this Buddha Vehicle will you give assurance to?

At that time, the Bhagavān spoke to Ānanda, saying, “Do you now see this Bhadra?” He replied saying, “I have seen him.” The Buddha told Ānanda, “This good man, after 92,000 eons, in the land of Great Adornment, during the eon of skillful transformations, will attain buddhahood. He will be named Spiritual Transformation King Tathāgata, worthy and perfectly enlightened. In that buddha-land, the common people will flourish in peaceful tranquility and rich comfort. The earth will be flat and as soft as cotton. The flowering trees and fruit trees will be arranged evenly in rows. It will be adorned with hanging banners and precious canopies. A multitude of wondrous sounds and wonderful fragrances will spontaneously permeate everywhere. If drinks or food are necessary, then they will arrive with a single thought. All the provisions received and furnishings arisen there will be like those of Trāyastriṃśa Heaven and no different.

“In that land there will always be a proliferation of adornments manifest, and

therefore its name is the land of Great Adornment. In that land, all the common people will abide in the Great Vehicle with deep and solid faith. That Spiritual Transformation Tathāgata will have a lifespan of ten thousand years, and the correct Dharma will abide in the world for ten billion years. Before the time of his Nirvāṇa, he will give Renown Bodhisattva the prediction of Anuttarā Samyaksambodhi, saying, 'In the next era, you will attain buddhahood, named All Surpassing Tathāgata, worthy and perfectly enlightened.'"

When Bhadra heard the Tathāgata's prediction, he descended from the sky and bowed his head at the feet of the Buddha. He then said, "I now take refuge in the Tathāgata, worthy and perfectly enlightened, as well as the Dharma and the bhikṣus." Thusly, he sought to repeat this innumerable myriads of times. He then continued, saying, "The Buddha, the Bhagavān, from undifferentiated true suchness, speaks of all dharmas as undifferentiated from true suchness, even without differences, without shortcomings, without divisions, unarisen and uncreated. I now also take refuge in this."

At that time, Venerable Ānanda spoke to Bhadra, saying, "If your refuge is in the Buddha's teaching of true suchness, what in the nature of the Buddha Dharma may be obtained by you?" The magician replied, saying, "I myself am of the nature of the Tathāgata's Dharma. Why is this so? The Tathāgata and I are without duality and without division. Because all dharmas are true suchness, they are deemed true suchness, and all dharmas are without a different nature. All sentient beings are also such as this. The Venerable should know that what is without duality is without discrimination, and this is non-duality. For what reason? This is because the wisdom of the Buddha is fully knowing that dharmas are mere names."

Venerable Ānanda, before the Buddha, said, "Amazing, Bhagavān! This Bhadra even has such wisdom and eloquence! Before, he always baffled the world with his illusory transformations, and now he is baffling the world with his wisdom!" The Buddha spoke to Bhadra, saying, "Virtuous man, are you really doing so?" Bhadra replied, "As the Buddha establishes those matters which baffle the world, I also baffle the world. Why is this so? This is because the Buddha, the Bhagavān, from being without self, speaks of the existence of sentient beings and life, causing the world to be baffled. In the Tathāgata's realization of Bodhi, there is no perception of even the slightest dharmas of birth and death, and yet he speaks of birth and death. As I understand it, only the Tathāgata greatly baffles the world." The Buddha said, "Excellent, excellent, good man! It is just as you have spoken. The buddhas, the tathāgatas, from being without self and even apart from all birth and death, according to worldly conventions speak of sentient beings and so forth. There is also not even the slightest dharma which may be called Nirvāṇa, and from this

realization of the attainment of Nirvāṇa, they speak of Nirvāṇa.”

When Bhadra heard this spoken, he addressed the Buddha, saying, “I wish to leave the home life and become a bhikṣu.” At that time, the Bhagavān spoke to Maitreya Bodhisattva-mahāsattva, saying, “You should shave the hair and beard of this good man and give him the complete precepts.” In accordance with the Buddha’s instructions, Maitreya Bodhisattva allowed Bhadra to leave the home life and receive the complete precepts. After leaving the home life, Bhadra again addressed the Buddha, saying, “Bhagavān, this leaving the home life is merely form and appearance, and is not truly leaving the home life. If bodhisattvas have truly left home, then they depart from all appearances and mature sentient beings throughout the Triple Realm. These may be called those who have truly left home.” After saying these words, five thousand sentient beings developed the mind of Anuttarā Samyaksambodhi and were completely liberated from their mental outflows.

At that time, Ānanda addressed the Buddha, saying, “Bhagavān, what should we name this sūtra, and how should we bear it in mind?” The Buddha said to Ānanda, “This sūtra is called ‘The Dharma Gateway of the Pronouncement Given to Bhadra the Magician.’ It is also called, ‘The Dharma Gateway of the Gradual Realization of Bodhi.’ If there are sentient beings in a future era who wish to perceive the Tathāgata and do the work of the Buddha for sentient beings, then they should accept, maintain, study, recite, and extensively speak this sūtra for others. Why is this so? This person has perceived the Tathāgata and has also done the work of the Buddha. Therefore, Ānanda, if someone accepts, maintains, studies, recites, and transmits this sūtra to others, then it is to pity, to benefit, and to gladden sentient beings.

“If one wishes to develop the destiny going to supreme Bodhi, then one should diligently cultivate according to this sūtra, since this sūtra is able to produce supreme Bodhi. This sūtra is able to give rise to supreme Bodhi, so this sūtra is therefore also called ‘Yielding and Growing Bodhi.’ If there are those who accept and maintain this sūtra, then you should know that the buddhas abide with that person, much less those who cultivate according to its principles.” At that time, Bhadra again addressed the Buddha, saying, “Bhagavān, this sūtra is also called, ‘Revealing Good Roots.’ For what reason? Since hearing the Buddha’s teachings of this sūtra, all good roots are now completely manifest before me.”

After the Buddha had spoken this sūtra, then Venerable Ānanda, Bhadra, and the entire assembly of devas, humans, asuras, gandharvas, and so forth, heard what the Buddha had said. With great bliss, they believed, accepted, and practiced in

accordance.