

# The Vows of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra Sutra

Translated by Upasika Chihmann



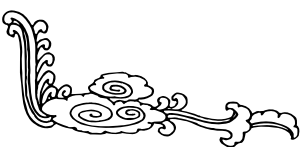
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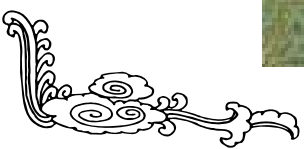
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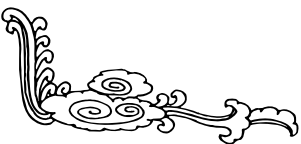
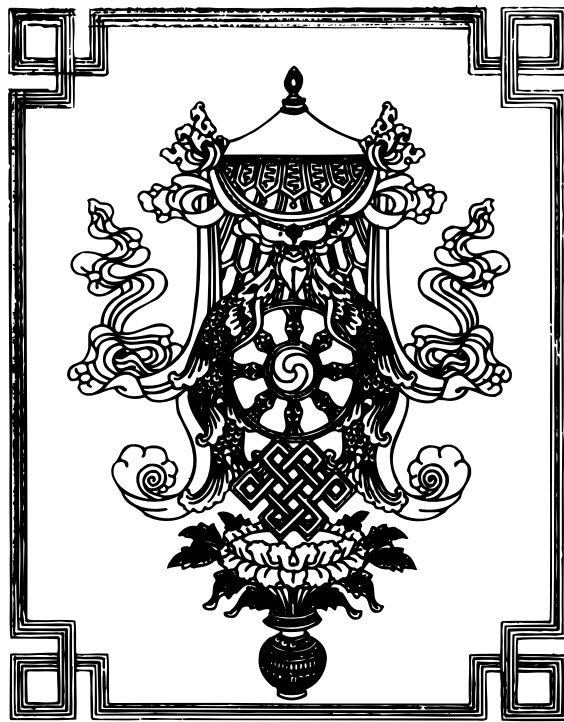




# *Dedication*

願以此功德  
莊嚴佛淨土  
上報四重恩  
下濟三塗苦  
若有見聞者  
悉發菩提心  
盡此一報身  
同生極樂國

May all living beings come to know,  
practice and benefit from the Sublime Dharma.  
May all share the merits of this Dharma-giving and  
attain the wisdom that can liberate from all suffering.





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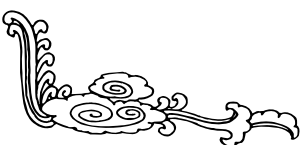
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*On Entering Into  
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of Emancipation By  
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The Bodhisattva Samantabhadra  
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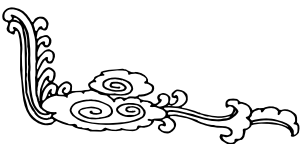


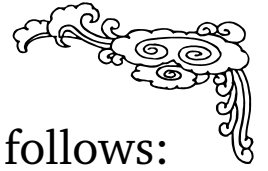


## Chapter XXXIV

When the Bodhisattva<sup>1</sup> Mahasattva<sup>2</sup> Samantabhadra<sup>3</sup> having discoursed upon and eulogized the exalted merits and virtues of the Tathagata<sup>4</sup>, addressed the kumara

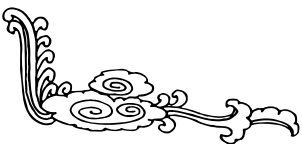
- 
1. A Bodhisattva is a “Buddha-to-be” whose rank is immediately below that of a Buddha. But it is not necessarily inferior to the state of Buddhahood in perfection, as a Bodhisattva may also be a Buddha, who renounces Buddhahood in order to remain in touch with the beings of various worlds, in order to sustain and support them with his spiritual power, and so help forward their attainment of Nirvana.
  2. Mahasattva means “A Great Being”, or “One of Noble Character”.
  3. Samantabhadra is a great Bodhisattva; one of the principal Bodhisattvas, the other being Manjusri; they are the two subordinates of the Tathagata (or Dhyani Buddha) Vairocana, and known as the Triple Saints of the Avatmasaka Sutra. Samanta means general or universal; bhadra means sage; and Samantabhadra, which is derived from these words, means the principle of universal love or compassion. He is also known as the Bodhisattva of Great Activity. Samantabhadra is also known as the Universally worthy Bodhisattva, is one of Three Venerables of the Lord Buddha Sakyamuni. He is always on the right side of the Buddha Sakyamuni, representing the guardian of the law, the lord of the law and the practice of all Buddhas. Samantabhadra usually reposes with dignity on a six-tusked white elephant, while Bodhisattva Manjusri rides on a lion. He holds a sword indicating that the Law is the basis of wisdom. Samantabhadra is the patron of the lotus Sutra and its devotees, and has close connection with the Avatamsaka Sutra. Samantabhadra is assigned his universe in the East. In China, people worship Samantabhadra as the object of pilgrimage in E-mei Shan (mountain), which is regarded as his dwelling place. Samantabhadra is a Great Bodhisattva of the Tenth Stage, with the particular quality representing cultivation and practice. He is one of the Four Great Bodhisattvas; the Bodhisattva of Great Conduct. He has Ten Great Vows, which are the scope of practices in Buddhism (Refer to the Ten Great Vows). Regarding His past history, he was said to be born by being transformed from a lotus of the seven gems by means of his wisdom.





Sudhana<sup>5</sup> and a great company of Bodhisattvas as follows:  
O Noble-minded Man, the (infinite) merits and virtues of the Tathagata are ineffable. If such were preached by all the Buddhas<sup>6</sup> of the ten quarters<sup>7</sup> who consecutively enumerated them during unspeakable and incalculable æons<sup>8</sup>

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4. Tathagata is an appellation of Buddhas, and means “One who has attained full realization of Suchness”, i.e. become one with the absolute “Body of Law” (Dharmakaya) so that he neither “comes from anywhere” (na-agamana) nor “goes to anywhere” (na-gaman). He is the “Norm which has thus appeared”.
  5. Kumara Sudhana i.e. “The Celestial Youth of the Treasure of Merit”, who, having consecrated his life to the attainment of Buddhahood, visited fifty-three Saints, and finally met the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra, who advised him to be born in Sukhavati, the Most Happy World of the Buddha Amitabha, by means of practicing the Ten-fold Vow. The account is given in the Avatamsaka Sutra.
  6. Buddha: the highest degree of saintship of an enlightened being. Any person who has attained transcendental wisdom, and has broken the bondage of birth and death, is ready to enter Nirvana. There have been innumerable Buddhas in the past, and there will be others becoming Buddhas in the future.
  7. The ten quarters are : North, South, East, West, North-east, South-east, North-west, South-west, the nadir, and the zenith.
  8. Æon i.e. kalpa, is an age or great period not to be reckoned by usual calendars, during which the evolution in four divisions of a physical universe have taken place. The divisions are: (1) The antara-kalpa, in which the universe is formed; (2) The vivarttasiddha-kalpa, in which the universe possesses stability; (3) The samvartta-kalpa, in which the universe is gradually destroyed; (4) The sunya-kalpa, in which the universe disappears. Then the process of cosmic activity begins again in a cyclic evolution. The kalpas are divided into three measures (1) A great kalpa of 1,344,000,000 years; (2) A medium kalpa of 336,000,000 years; (3) A small kalpa of 16,800,000 years. Calculated by the solar system.







in the Buddha-domains equal to the smallest dust-motes<sup>9</sup> (in the atmosphere) in number, they could not thereby be exhausted. If (there be any who) aspire to attain this high state of merit, (let them understand that) its realization depends upon the attainment of the Ten-fold Paramita<sup>10</sup>: the vows of widest and highest aspiration and the actual practice of them.

But what is the Ten-fold Paramita? (you might ask)  
It is:

- First, to pay the highest homage and veneration to all Buddhas.
- Second, to preach (the virtues of) and to praise (the glories of) the Tathagatas.
- Third, to make abundant offerings for the veneration to the Buddhas.

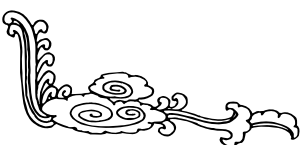
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- 9. Dust-motes (Param-anuh) do not mean fine, dry particles of earth, but are the “atoms” or ultimate units of the ratified matter of the super-physical planes of being. They are waves of vibration of inconceivable rapidity, and are used to symbolize numbers or quantities of inconceivable magnitude.
  - 10. Paramitas are the six stages of study and practice followed by the Bodhisattvas in their progress to Buddhahood. They are Charity or alms-giving; Observance of precepts; Patience; Perseverance or joyous effort; Meditative concentration; Wisdom. There are also the ten Paramitas (see the text of this version). The Chinese version of this text refers to the term “Paramita” as the gate or path through which the saints enter and cross to the “Other Shore” of Buddha-land.





- Fourth, to be penitent and confess one's evil deeds and hindrances<sup>11</sup>.
- Fifth, to approve of and rejoice at the merits and virtues of others<sup>12</sup>.
- Sixth, to request Buddhas to set in motion "The Wheel of Dharma"<sup>13</sup>.
- Seventh, to beseech Buddhas to remain in the world<sup>14</sup>.
- Eighth, to be a zealous follower of the "Way of the Buddhas" forever.
- Ninth, to be always in harmony with all beings (bestowing on them gifts according to their needs).
- Tenth, to turn over all one's merits to (benefit) all beings<sup>15</sup>.

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11. Hindrances refer to the evil deeds committed in the past (in the present life and in the previous lives); such are now obstacles in the path to enlightenment, and have to be overcome by severe penitence and strong meritorious deeds.
12. To approve of and rejoice in the merits of others, instead of being jealous of them.
13. To "Set in motion the Wheel of Dharma" means proclaiming the doctrine of the Buddha to the world.
14. To beseech the Buddhas to remain in the world, instead of entering into Nirvana.
15. To turn over one's merits to all beings, is to refuse the rewards of merit one has earned for oneself and hand them over for the credit of others. This is a practical realization of the doctrine of Mahayana of "no-ego" (Anatta).





The Kumara Sudhana said to the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra: What course shall we follow, O Noble One, to fulfil all these virtues, from “rendering homage to Buddhas” to “turning over one’s own merits” to all beings?

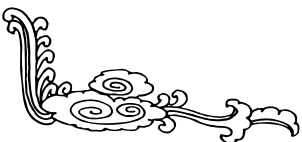
The Bodhisattva Samantabhadra replied to the Kumara Sudhana: O Noble-minded Man, as to what is said regarding the homage and worship of the Buddhas. It means that by the power of the virtues and the vows of the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra, I (note “I” means any person) have profound faith and deep understanding. As though I were face to face simultaneously with all the Buddhas of all the Buddha-worlds (such Buddhas) equal to the (flying) smallest dust-motes in number, throughout the worlds of Dharma and the cosmic void of the ten quarters and the three ages<sup>16</sup>. I worship and adore them constantly with my pure deeds viz. the bodily<sup>17</sup>, vocal<sup>18</sup>, and mental deeds<sup>19</sup>.

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16. The “Three Ages” (Tryadhva) are great periods comprising the past, present, and future, which we arbitrarily divided.

17. Bodily Deeds are the bodily actions; they may be either noble or evil deeds. The evil bodily deeds are those such as taking of life, (this includes the killing of any being, human or animal); theft (all forms of acquiring for oneself that which belongs to another); and sensuality (all forms of sex-indulgence).

18. Speech Deeds are the result of speech, the evil oral deeds being lying, slandering (double crossing tongue, which means to speak ill of one friend to another, thus causing ill-feeling and dissension between them), abusive language, harsh and unkind language and obscene and frivolous language.



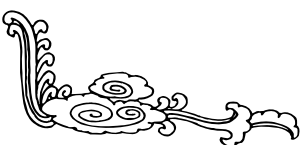


Before every Buddha in the Buddha-land, I present myself by (miraculous) transformation in unutterable and innumerable bodies like unto the smallest specks of dust in number. With every one of my manifestations I pay homage to all the Buddhas of every Buddha-domain and such Buddhas are equal to the smallest dust-motes in number.

My homage will be ended when the limitation of the infinite space is ended, as the space is boundless, so also is my hom-

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19. Mental deeds refer to either noble or evil thoughts. The evil thoughts are covetousness, malice (anger and ill-will), and infatuation or foolishness. The Bodily deeds, speech deeds, and mental deeds are known as “Three Deeds”, the results from action, or speech, or thought. The effects, whether meritorious or sinful, depend on the motives, whether noble or evil. All karmas are controlled by the Three-fold Deed. The details of the three deeds which constitute the “Ten-fold Karma” are the three deeds of the body, four deeds of the mouth, and three deeds of the mind, as above stated. If one has committed these deeds which are of an evil nature, then he is bound by a system known as the “Ten-fold Vice” (Dasakusala). The “Ten Meritorious Deeds” (Dasabhadra) are the positive virtues reversing to the aforesaid ten vices, for instance, once one frees oneself from the Ten-fold Wickedness, he is regarded as having performed the ten meritorious deeds. “Deed” means something that is done; even though the actual “doing” or “committing sin” may have taken place in the past, yet its karma thereof will continue to exist, and will work out its retributive effect sooner or later. So one is liable to reap what he sows, unless the cause is removed by a further strong action which reverses his previous deed, a great merit attained by some noble action, or a great sin committed, would deprive him of the merit acquired by his past noble deed. The ten meritorious deeds will be reward to any performer, either in this present life or in one of his future lives, the choice of being born in the heavenly or human worlds. Should he devote such good deeds to Bodhi, they will be credited to his Buddha-hood.





age to the Buddhas without end. So it is, when the spheres of beings are ended, the karmas<sup>20</sup> of beings are ended, the sorrows of beings (Klesa<sup>21</sup>) are ended, these too, are endless: even so is my homage to all the Buddhas endless. Thought following upon thought without interruption<sup>22</sup>, and in bodily, vocal and mental deeds without weariness.

Again, O Noble-minded Man, what signifies “to preach (the virtues of) and to praise (the glories of) the Tathagatas”? It means that in the smallest dust-motes of all the worlds of the ten quarters, and the three ages throughout the

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20. Karma is the law of cause and effect; it mostly applies to the act of individuals, but it may be applied to the united-result action of many people together, such as the groups of persons, families, nations, etc. So there is group karma, family karma, and national karma. The result of karma, whether favourable or unfavourable, depends on past deeds, whether good or evil. It is not limited to the actions of the present life, but may extend back into infinite past and forward into the infinite future. It is karma that forms the connecting link between one’s consecutive lives. And it is also most imperative, thereby making one’s life a mixture of misery and happiness. Buddhas teach us how to break the fetters of karma and escape from rebirth.
  21. Kilesa means sorrows, vexation, suffering, anger, ill-will, infatuation; greed, and includes all forms of passion.
  22. Thought succeeds thought without interruption. The minds of ordinary beings are weak and vacillating; a thought cannot be sustained without interruption: but the mind of a devotee can be firmly fixed, and in the case of a Bodhisattva such as Samantabhadra, there is no cessation or vacillation.





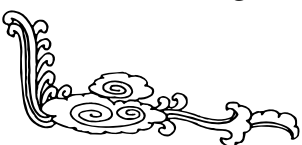
Dharma-circles and the cosmic void, upon each speck of dust, there the Buddhas are dwelling; equal in number to the smallest specks of dust of all the worlds<sup>23</sup>. And each Buddha is surrounded by an assembly of Bodhisattvas, as wide as the ocean.

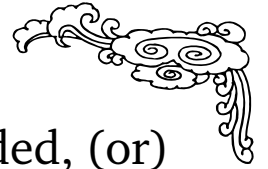
I shall apply my profound insight and my temporal knowledge to fathom them till I thoroughly understand, then will I praise them with my oration, as though it were with the angelic and eloquent tongues of the Goddess (Sarasvati<sup>24</sup>). Each tongue emitting a boundless ocean of all forms of sound, each voice emitting a boundless ocean of all forms of speech, proclaiming the ocean of the merits of all Tathagatas. Such praises shall continue without cessation through endless time and the limitless realms of the Dharma-worlds.

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23. A thing large in size or number which can be contained in an atom without impediment, is made possible under the law of spiritual freedom (Isvara) beyond the limitations of "space"; and those which enter into the twinkling thought, are beyond the limitation of "Time". A singular number transformed into a plural, or a plural embodied in a singular, are ideas common to Buddhism, and especially are found in the Avatamsaka Sutra. They express paradoxes too profound in meaning to enable intellectual explanation to be given. Hundreds of volumes of explanatory commentaries on the Avatamsaka Sutra have been written in the effort made to elucidate its profound doctrines.

24. Sarasvati is the (Hindu) Goddess of Eloquence who possesses many tongues, each tongue having many voices.





My praises will cease when the void of space is ended, (or) the spheres of beings are ended, (or) the karmas of beings are ended, (or) the sorrows of beings are ended. But all the things from the space of the void even to the sorrows of beings are endless; so also are my praises endless; thought succeeding thought without interruption; and in bodily, vocal, and mental deeds without weariness.

Again, O Noble-minded Man, what is meant by abundant offerings out of veneration to the Buddhas? It means that in the smallest dust-motes of the Buddha-domains of the Dharma-circles and of the cosmic void, and of the ten quarters and three yugas<sup>25</sup>, in each speck of dust exist the Buddhas, equal in number to the smallest dust-motes of all worlds. Each Buddha is surrounded by an ocean-wide assembly of Bodhisattvas, in whom I have profound faith and reverent understanding through the power of the vows of the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra. I would offer them the most rare and wondrous gifts such as the flowery-clouds<sup>26</sup>, garland-clouds, heavenly music-clouds, celestial tapestry-

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25. Yuga is a period of time. The three yugas are the past, the present, and the future. A yuga is one thousandth part of a kalpa.





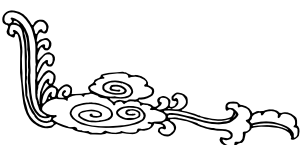
clouds, angelic garment-clouds; all kinds of heavenly perfumes, scented balms, aromatic incenses, aromatic powders, each equal in quality to mount Sumeru<sup>27</sup>, the king of mountains. I would present lighted lamps of various kinds, such as the cream lamps, the oil lamps, and the lamps of sweet perfumes. The wick of each lamp being in size as Mount Sumeru, the king of mountains; and the burning oil of each as great as the water of the ocean. Ceaselessly would I offer such gifts in veneration.

O Noble-minded Man, among all gifts, the crown of them are the gifts of Dharma. Such gifts are called: the offering of “Following the instructions (of all the Buddhas), the offering of benefits for all beings, the offering of embracing and sustaining all beings, the offering of taking upon oneself the suffering of others, the offering of fostering the root of merit diligently, the offering of swerving not from the Bodhisattva vows; and the offering of departing not from the love of the Bodhi-heart<sup>28</sup>.”

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26. Clouds mean that the quantity of gifts is as great as that of the clouds; or the term may have a symbolic meaning. The Chinese term refers to actual clouds.

27. Sumeru is the heavenly mountain, its height being 168,000 yodjanas; some say that it is the axis of the universe and forms the solar system; numerous commentaries have been given to it, which here are omitted.







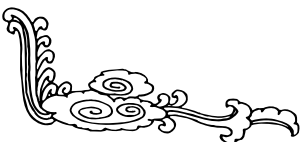
O Noble-minded Man, truly the merit to be derived from the offering of (material) gifts, such as those enumerated, are infinite; yet, in comparison with a single thought of Dharma (they are as nothing). Those merits (derived from material offerings), would not be equal to a hundredth part (of the merit of a thought of Dharma); nay, not to a hundred thousandth part of koties<sup>29</sup>, of nayutas, of kalans, and of upannishads. And why? Because the Dharma is held in the highest esteem by all the Tathagatas. Moreover, all the Buddhas are begotten from the Dharma, through the perfecting of their conduct in accordance with it. If the Bodhisattvas make offerings to the Dharma (to the Buddhas) then their offerings to the Tathagatas are completed. Thus do the Bodhisattvas present the truest offering of gifts to the Tathagatas.

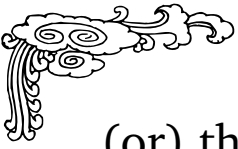
My offering of such great and noble gifts to Buddhas will cease if the Cosmic Void of space is ended, (or) the spheres of beings are ended, (or) the karmas of beings are ended,

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28. Bodhi-heart is the inner perception of absolute wisdom and all-embracing love that pours forth as compassion for all living beings. It is the fruit of Truth in the spiritual heart of mankind, the fruition of which is Buddhahood.

29. Koti, nayuta, Kala, etc, are terms indicating an infinity of multiplication.





(or) the sorrows of beings are ended. But as all the things from the space of the void to the sorrows of all beings are endless; so also will my offering to Buddhas be endless. Thought succeeding thought without interruption, in bodily, vocal, and mental deeds without weariness.

Again, O Noble-minded Man, what is meant by being penitent and confessing one's evil deeds and hindrances? A Bodhisattva would think thus: all the evil deeds<sup>30</sup> I have committed hitherto during the Kalpas without beginning of the past, caused by the emotion of lust, hatred, and stupidity leading to bodily, speech, and mental actions are boundless. If such deeds were corporeal and in forms, all the cosmic spaces unlimited as it is, could not contain them. I now confess and repent them all, by my three purified deeds<sup>31</sup>, and with a sincere heart, pledging myself not to commit an evil deed hereafter. I will always keep myself pure in the prohibitive precepts, and in all active moral deeds.

I will lay this penitence before all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of all worlds and Dharma-circles equal in

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30. See hindrance 11.

31. See bodily deeds 17, speech deeds 18 and mental deeds 19.





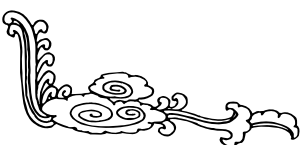
number to the smallest dust-motes. My penitence will cease when the void of space is ended, (or) the spheres of beings are ended, (or) the karmas of beings are ended, (or) the sorrows of beings are all ended. But as all the things from the void of space to the sorrows of beings are endless, so also is my penitence endless.

Thought succeeding thought without interruption, in bodily, vocal, and mental deeds without weariness.

Again, O Noble-minded Man, what is meant by “approving of and rejoicing at the merits and virtues of others”? In Buddhalands, the Buddhas, equal in number to the smallest dust-motes of all the worlds, throughout all the Dharma-circles and cosmic void, of the ten quarters and in the duration of the three yugas, have devoted their lives to the sole purpose of acquiring all wisdom, and diligently accumulating merit. Since they began to direct their minds (toward Bodhi<sup>32</sup>), throughout the duration of unutterable and innumerable kalpas and in Buddha-domains, equal in number to the smallest dust-motes of all worlds. During

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32. Refer to Bodhi-heart 28.





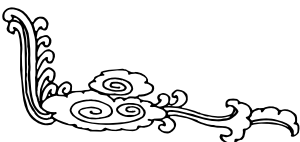
each Kalpa, having sacrificed their heads, eyes, hands, and feet, in unutterable and incalculable numbers as the smallest dust-motes of Buddha-spheres, having thus overcome all difficulties, and accomplished all the arduous tasks, perfected the various stages of paramita, passing through the experiences of the Bodhisattva-wisdom, and accomplished the highest Bodhi of Buddhas till entered into Parinirvana<sup>33</sup>, whereupon they distributed the sariras<sup>34</sup>. All such good roots of merit I emulate and rejoice in.

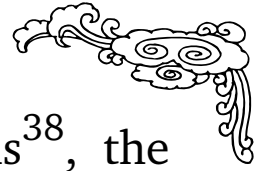
Moreover, whatever merit or virtue may be possessed by any being, either of the six divisions of existence<sup>35</sup>, or belonging to the four kinds of birth<sup>36</sup>, or appertaining to any species of life in the worlds of the ten quarters, though such merit may be as infinitesimal as a grain of dust, all will have my sympathy and corresponding regard, with all such I rejoice.

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33. Parinirvana, the final emancipation from the limits of existence, in which all attributes of phenomenal existence cease; the extreme stillness, and the supreme state of peace.

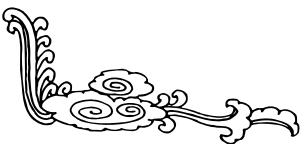
34. Sariras are the relics to be found in the bones of a Buddha or a Bodhisattva, after cremation. They are in the shape of pearls, extremely hard and of brilliant colours. The term sariras also has its wider sense. The expression is here used with the symbolic meaning that such beings will use every particle of themselves in the service of others, even to the dust of their relics.





Again, all the Sravakas<sup>37</sup>, the Pratyeka-Buddhas<sup>38</sup>, the thoroughly learned ones<sup>39</sup>, and those who are still to be advanced on the path of disciples, all such are the saints of the ten quarters and the three generations, with whom I rejoice in their merit if any may be possessed.

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35. The six divisions or the six states of existence are: existence in the Heaven Worlds (Deva-lokas); the Human state of existence; the state of Asuras (semi-blessed beings, powerful, but fierce and quarrelsome of nature, who are thought of as half good and half evil, but who are nevertheless included among the three good states of existence); the three bad states are those of the Animals; the Hungry Ghosts; and the state of those in the various Hells or the purgatorial regions. These six divisions are not dominated by a tyrant, who created all beings from mankind to bedbugs, house-flies, etc. such a theory certainly is false. The various beings fall into such divisions themselves, by their own karmas, which are either of noble aspirations, or downward deeds.
  36. The four kinds of birth are: born from the womb, from the egg, from heat and moisture, and by metamorphosis.
  37. Sravakas are the “Hearers”, a grade of disciples in the Hinayana School, who attain liberation through a pious life, but who lack the intellectual power of the Pratyeka-Buddhas, and the active compassion of the Bodhisattvas.
  38. Pratyeka-Buddha is one who attains enlightenment along the line of intellect. He attains the goal by self-discipline, but lacks the loving self-sacrifice of the Bodhisattvas, and is in consequence less esteemed by mankind.
  39. The thoroughly learned one or Perfected in discipline (Saiksa). There are four grades of attainments in the Hinayana School (the small vehicle) namely the Srotapana, which means, “He who has reversed the current of birth and death. The Sakridagamin is he who has but one more birth before the attainments of Nirvana. The Anagamin is he who will never return to this state of existence. The Arhat is he who is free from attachment to existence, and can attain Nirvana whenever he chooses to pass away from life. With the exception of the Arhat, all these need to learn more discipline.



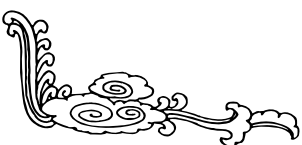


All the Bodhisattvas who through infinite self-sacrifice and boundless achievement have overcome all obstacles and having formed the wish to attain the highest goal of Bodhi, with them also I rejoice in their vast merits.

Thus, even though the void of space, together with the states of beings, with the karmas of beings, with the sorrows of beings, though all these be ended, yet my approval and joy in the merits of all beings will not be ended. Thought succeeding thought without interruption, in bodily, vocal, and mental deeds without weariness. Again, O Noble-minded Man, what is meant by beseeching the Buddhas to set in motion the “Wheel of Dharma”<sup>40</sup>? It means that I will apply my body, speech, and mental efforts, and various expedient means, and the most skilful methods, earnestly to request the Buddhas to rotate the wondrous wheel of Dharma. Such Buddhas are incalculable in number as the smallest (flying) dust-motes of the Buddha-domains of the ten quarters, and the three yugas, throughout the Dharma-realms and the cosmic void; each

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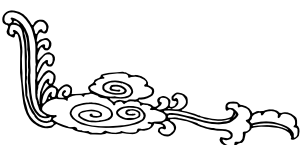
40. To set in motion the Wheel of Dharma” means proclaiming the doctrine of the Buddhas to the world. The Buddhas not only preach the good law which releases all beings from the wheel of Birth and Death (Samsara), but being channels or reservoirs of spiritual power, help mankind to overcome the power that binds one to Samsara. They are thus Saviours of mankind as well as teachers.





dust-mote respectively contains therein unutterable and innumerable vast Buddha-lands, equal in number to the smallest dust-motes. In each country dwell ineffable and innumerable Buddhas equal to the smallest dust-motes in number. In each moment there are Buddhas, equal to the smallest dust-motes in number, who are attaining enlightenment, and each is surrounded by an ocean-wide assembly of all Bodhisattvas. I constantly request such Buddhas to turn the Wheel of Right Dharma. Thus, even though the space of the void has ended, and likewise the world of beings, the karmas of beings, and the sorrows of beings, all have ended, yet my request is endless. Thought succeeding thought without interruption, and in bodily, vocal, and mental deeds, without weariness.

Again, O Noble-minded Man, what is meant by “beseeching the Buddhas to remain in the world”? The Buddhas are infinite in number as the minutest dust-motes of the ten quarters and three generations throughout the Dharma-realms and cosmic void; and so are the Bodhisattvas, the Sravakas, the Pratyeka-Buddhas, the wholly learned ones, the partly learned ones, and the well learned laymen. When they set their minds on the attainment of Nirvana; I entreat them all to remain in touch with mankind, instead





of entering Nirvana<sup>41</sup>; even to the duration of kalpas of Buddha-lands, equal to the minutest dust-motes in number, in order to benefit all living beings. Thus even though the cosmic void has ended, and likewise the states of beings, the karmas of beings, and the sorrows of beings, though all such have an end, yet my petition to the Buddhas is endless. Thought succeeds thought without interruption, and in bodily, speech, and mental deeds, without weariness.

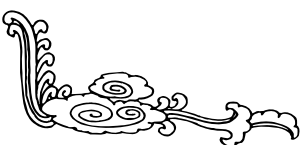
Again, O Noble-minded Man, what is meant by being “Under Buddhas’ guidance forever”? It means, for instance, the Tathagata Vairocana<sup>42</sup> of the Saha-world<sup>43</sup>, who from the beginning, when He made an earnest wish

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41. Nirvana is the abridged form of Parinirvana.

42. Tathagata Vairocana, the name Vairocana means “The Great Sun Which Illuminates Everywhere”, i.e. the Spiritual Sun of Righteousness which removes the darkness of ignorance, and illuminates the heart of man with spiritual grace. Here it is used to indicate the Buddha Gautama Sakyamuni, who was the vehicle for the power of Vairocana.

43. The Saha-world means the world of “Tolerance of Affliction”, or the Endurable World”. This explanation is popular in China, but some say “Saha” refers to spiritual power. Since writing the above I find that Eitel, in his “Handbook of Chinese Buddhism” supports the former explanation. He gives the meaning as “The World of Suffering”, or the capital of a chiliocosm. The inhabited portion of every universe (the “island universes” of modern science), including all persons subject to transmigration and needing a Buddha’s instruction, and divided into 3 worlds (Trailokya) ruled by Sahampati.





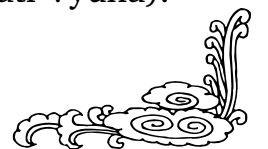
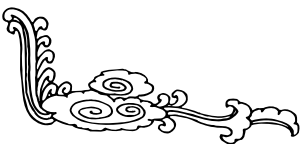


(for obtaining Buddhahood, in order to deliver all beings), and having made the exquisite advance by unremittingly skilful exertion, and sacrificed His lives and bodies, in unutterable and countless number, for the sake of almsgiving. He stripped off His own skin for parchment, used His own blood for ink, and His bones for writing-instruments. Thus the scripture have been written in bulk as great as Mount Sumeru. In appreciation of the Dharma, He would disregard the royal throne, dominions, palaces, gardens, and all that appertained to him. He spared no energy in his arduous career and pains-taking, until He accomplished the great Bodhi under the tree<sup>44</sup>. Then He displayed various exalted powers (Abhidjnas<sup>45</sup>), manifested

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44. The “Tree” is the sacred Bodhi Tree (Bodhi-druma), under which the Lord Buddha Sakyamuni attained Enlightenment and became the Buddha.

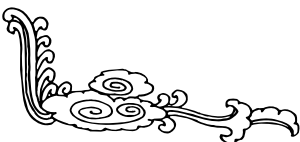
45. Abhidjnas (or Abhijna) are the supernatural powers attained by the heavenly beings. They are (1) Riddhi-sakchakriya (the heavenly step) with a transmutable body which can travel throughout space without impediment; (2) Divyachakchus (heavenly eye) giving sight without limitation of space and of time; (3) Divyassrotra (heavenly ear), that can hear all sounds, and understand all languages and voices; (4) Paratchittajna (intuitive mind), knowing and understanding the thoughts of all beings; (5) Purvanivasanu-smritijnana (knowledge of previous existences of oneself and all other beings); (6) Asravakchaya (knowledge of the stream of life and the exhaustion of worldly passions). The ordinary heavenly beings possess these powers with the exception of the sixth (The Asravakchaya) which is attainable only by the saints of the Three Vehicles. Buddhas and Bodhisattvas certainly possess supernatural powers not limited by these six; even the inhabitants of the Paradise Sukhavati possess more powers than the heavenly beings (see the Larger Sukhvati-Vyuha).

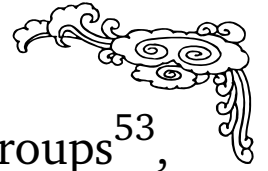




various transmutations, revealed various Buddha-figures<sup>46</sup>, and presided at the various assemblies; such as the assemblies of great Bodhisattvas, the assemblies of Sravakas and Pratyeka-Buddhas, the assemblies of the Tchakra-varti-radja<sup>47</sup> and petty Kings<sup>48</sup> and their retinues, the assemblies of Kshatriya<sup>49</sup>, Brahmins<sup>50</sup>, Elders, and lay-

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46. All Buddhas have the “Threefold Embodiment”: (1) The Dharmakaya (the Body of Law), which is the essential body omnipresent in all the universes; (2) the Sambhokaya (the Body of Retribution), achieved through the merits cultivated during countless kalpas, and having its fixed abiding place, such places as the Western Paradise, etc; (3) the Nirmanakaya (the Body of Manifestation or revelation), which is often transformed into countless myriads of figures and types, in order to deliver the various beings according to their affinities (Nidhana). All personalities and qualities of a Buddha and Bodhisattva, such as a golden body, encircling light, and miraculous powers, are called the “Bodily Retribution” (or Principle Retribution). These are not limited to those exalted beings, but belong also to all sentient beings who have both their bodily and abiding retributions. For instance, a powerful brain and intellect are the bodily retributions of mankind; buildings and furnitures etc. are the man’s abiding retributions. Roosts, sites and the like, are the abiding retributions of animals; horns, paws, tusks and claws are the animals’ bodily retributions.
47. Tchakra-varti-radjas or “The Holy Kings who turns the Wheel”. There are four grades of them, and they are the rulers of some worlds, but are not Buddhas and are perhaps even inferior to great Bodhisattvas.
48. The “Petty Kings” are also known as “The Kings of Scattered Corn”. They are inferior to the “Wheel Turning Kings.
49. Kshatriya. At the time of the Lord Buddha Sakyamuni, the people of India were divided into four castes, the highest being the Brahmins or priests; the next the Kshatriya or warrior-statesmen; the third was that of the Vaisya or merchant class; and the lowest the Sudra or common people. The last-named were mostly of non-Aryan descent.
50. Brahmin, refers to 49.

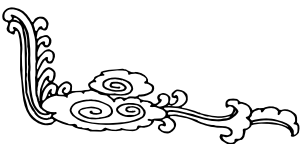




men, the assemblies of Devas<sup>51</sup>, Nagas<sup>52</sup>, Eight Groups<sup>53</sup>, mankind, and sub-human. At these assemblies and sanctuaries, He spoke in a full and round voice of thunder, with expedient means and skilful methods, teaching the beings in a manner befitting their inclinations and happiness. Thus He led them to the maturity (of Bodhi), until He entered into Nirvana.

All these examples I will follow, not only that of the present World-honoured One Vairocana, but of all the

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51. The Devas are the heavenly beings, gods or angels.
  52. The Nagas, a word meaning dragons, is applied to a certain class of deities of great wisdom.
  53. These are supposed to be spiritual and powerful beings. (1) The devas or the heavenly beings, whose bodies radiate light, and who dwell in the Heavens as follows: The six Karma-heaven (Heaven of Desire), the sphere where Lust still exists: next come the four Rupadhatu-heavens (Heaven of ethereal form) which are superior to the six kama-heavens, because the Rupadhatu-heavens are without sexual and dietetic desires but every material convenience is of the great beauty and utmost excellence, and the dwellers enjoy states of mental ecstasy. Next come the Arupadhatu-heavens (Formless heavens), the worlds of pure abstract thought, where everything is without material form, the dwellers having no body, but only feelings. The Devas of all these Heavens are certainly blessed ones; yet, they backslide into the evil orders when their merits are exhausted, unless they reach the ultimate goal of Buddhahood. (2) The Nagas. (3) The Yakas or flying deities. (4) The Gandhavas, who live on perfumes only, and are the musicians of the Indra, the chief God. (5) The Asuras. (6) The Ganrudas or the golden winged birds, the length between their wings is more than three million miles. They feed on dragons. (7) The Kinaras, a horn-headed species in semi-human form. They are the singers of the Indra. (8) The Maharajas, a type of Naga deity with a large abdomen. All these Eight Groups are invisible to mankind.



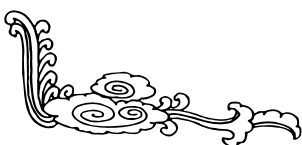


Tathagatas of the Buddha-countries, equal in number to the dust-motes of the ten quarters and three yugas, throughout the Dharma-realms and cosmic void. I will follow the examples of the Buddhas from thought to thought. Even though the void of space has ended, and the worlds of beings, the karmas of beings, the sorrows of beings all have ended, yet my practice and following of the examples of the Buddhas will not be ended. Thought succeeds thought without interruption, and in bodily, vocal and mental deeds, without weariness.

Again, O Noble-minded Man, what is meant by “Always in compliance with beings”? It means always in harmony with the beings of the worlds of ten quarters, throughout the Dharma-circles and cosmic void; they are known as the beings to be born from the womb, from the egg, from moisture, and produced by metamorphosis. They live in different elements<sup>54</sup>, either abiding on the earth, in the water, in the fire (that is heat), or in the wind (air). There are also some beings flying in the void, perching in forests and bushes. They are of various species, forms, lineaments,

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54. Elements refers to the “Four Great Elements” they are: earth, water, fire (heat) and wind (air). These are the fundamental ingredients of the universe.





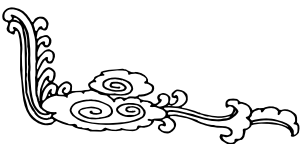
colors, length of life, appellations, natures, knowledge, habits, characteristics, manners, costumes, and diets. They dwell in innumerable abiding places; in towns, villages, cities, and palaces.

They comprises the Devas, the Nagas, the Eight Groups, human beings, sub-humans; some have no feet, some two feet, some four feet, and other have many feet; some are with form, some without form; with sense, without sense, or neither with nor without sense. All of these should be accommodated and served by me (according to their needs and their natures), as attentively as I would show filial respect to my parents, due respect to my teachers, to elders, and arhats<sup>55</sup>, up to the Tathagatas, all in equality.

I would be a good physician to the sick, a guide to those who have wandered from the path, setting their feet in the right way. I would be a light to those who wander in the darkness. I would enable the people in poverty to discover the vaults of treasure. A Bodhisattva should thus benefit all beings with equal treatment, and bestow his loving care on

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55. Refer to Note 39.





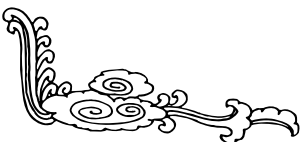
all beings alike. And why? Because if a Bodhisattva serves all beings, that is equal to serving the Buddhas dutifully. To hold all beings in high esteem, and render them respectful services, that is equal to reverencing and serving the Tathagatas. To make all beings happy, is to please all Tathagatas. And why? Because the Great Compassionate Heart is the essence of Buddhahood. For the sake of (delivering) all beings, (the Bodhisattva) develops great compassion, and from the great compassion springs the Bodhi-heart, from the Bodhi-heart comes the enlightenment.

This is like unto the king of mighty trees<sup>56</sup> growing in the wilderness and barren desert; (if it gets no water, it wilts and dies, but) if its roots be well watered, we shall see it flourishing with full foliage, blossoming in its full efflorescence, and bearing plentiful fruit. A king Bodhi-tree<sup>57</sup> is even thus, all beings are roots of the Bodhi-tree, the Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas are its fruits and its flowers.

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56. The King of Mighty Trees. The Bodhi-tree is the greatest of trees. The term “King” is applied in Buddhist writings, to the greatest of its kind in every sphere of life.

57. Refer to Note 56.



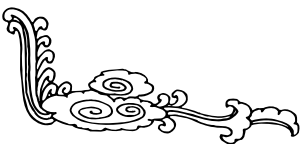


If (Bodhisattvas) apply the water of great compassion to all beings (who form its roots), the Bodhi-tree will bloom with flowers, and bear the fruits of the wisdom of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. And why? If Bodhisattvas apply the nectar of great compassion to benefit all beings, they will attain the “Anuttara-Samyak-Sambodhi<sup>58</sup>”. Therefore the beings are essential to the Bodhi; for without them, there are no Bodhisattvas able to attain the supreme transcendental wisdom. Ponder O Noble-minded Man, on the truth in this parable. Look upon all beings with impartial mind and equality, thus will the great compassion be brought to the state of fullness and completion. To bestow the great compassion upon all beings, that is equal to serving the Tathagatas (to their satisfaction).

My compassionate embrace of all beings shall never cease. Even though the space of the void has ended, the worlds of beings, the karmas of beings, and the sorrows of beings are all ended, yet, my boundless compassion is endless, and in bodily, vocal, and mental deeds, without weariness.

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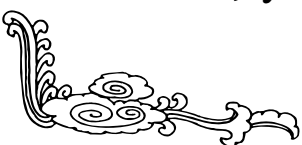
58. Anuttara-Samyak-Sambodhi is transcendental knowledge, the highest form of wisdom attained by the Buddhas.





Again, O Noble-minded Man, what signifies “Turning over all one’s merits (to benefit all sentient beings)”? This means that all one’s merits acquired from the commencement of paying the highest homage to all Buddhas, and serving the needs of all beings, shall be transferred to all beings throughout the Dharma-worlds and immeasurable spaces of the universe, wishing them to be happy and free from affliction or illness. All their evil projects will fail, and all their virtuous intentions will be quickly achieved. Close the door against evil, and open the right path of Nirvana to men and devas. If the beings are suffering the most terrible tortures in expiation of their accumulated evil doings, I will substitute myself and take upon myself the sufferings that their evil deeds have bought upon them, so shall they be released (from evil deeds), and finally attain the supreme Bodhi. Thus do all the Bodhisattvas devote themselves to the cultivation of virtue and merit, and turn the rewards over to the benefit of all beings.

My loving embrace of all beings is eternal. Even though the void of space has ended, (or) the worlds of beings, (or) the karmas of beings, (or) the sorrows of beings all have ended, yet my compassion for all beings, by turning over



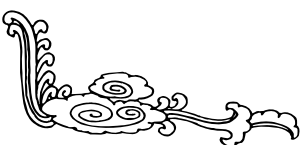




my rewards of merit to them is endless. Thought succeeds thought without interruption, and in bodily, vocal, and mental deeds, without weariness.

O Noble-minded Man, such is the Ten-fold Great Vow of all Bodhisattvas and Mahasattvas, in completion. The Bodhisattvas who achieve the performance of these Vows, will lead all beings to the fruition (of Bodhi), and attainment of Anuttara-Samyak-Sambodhi. He (whomsoever is a Bodhisattva), can fulfil the ocean of Vows of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra; therefore, O Noble-minded Man, thou shouldst comprehend the truth, (and attain thereto).

If a noble-minded man or woman filled the incalculable Buddha-spheres in unutterable and innumerable number, equal to the dust-motes of the ten quarters, with the seven exquisite gems and with the highest joys of men and devas offer all as gifts to the beings of all worlds. And offered the same in adoration to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of all worlds; and continued such offerings for a period of kalpas of Buddha-countries, equal to the dust-motes of the universe in number, and so produced great stores of merit. (Yet such an offering would be infinitesimal) in comparison with the merit acquired by one who has only listened





to the very king of Vows<sup>59</sup>. The measure of the stock of merit of the former one, would not equal one hundredth part (of the latter); nay, not one thousandth part, even not to an upanisandth part of the merit (of the latter)<sup>60</sup>.

Again, whosoever has profound faith in this great Vow, and will accept, recite, or write, even one gatha<sup>61</sup> of four lines only, such will quickly expiate the five deadly sins<sup>62</sup>, and all physical illness, or mental anguish, and afflictions of the (mundane) world, even his sinful deeds equal to the dust-motes of all Buddha-lands in number, will all be blotted out.

All malignant forces, yakas<sup>63</sup>, raksasas<sup>64</sup>, Kumbhandas<sup>65</sup>, pisacas<sup>66</sup>, bhutas<sup>67</sup>, vampires (the blood-suckers) and

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59. The King of Vows refers to the Vows of Samantabhadra. For the meaning of “King” refer to Note 56.

60. Upanishad. Refer to Note 29.

61. Gatha is a hymn or verse; the versified part of the Buddhist scriptures.

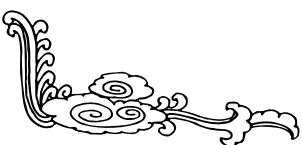
62. The five deadly sins (Panchanantaryani), are patricide, matricide, setting the Buddha order in discord, killing an Arhat, and causing blood to flow from the body of a Buddha. (The last term I believe being a metaphor of destroying the pictures, images etc. which represent the Buddhas.)

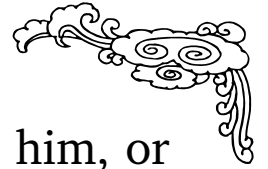
63. The Yakas are evil flying spirits.

64. The Rakasas are nocturnal demons of malignant nature.

65. Kubhandas are demons of gluttony, with bodies like big jars (Kumbhi), which incite men to greed and lust.

66. Pisacas are mad ghosts.





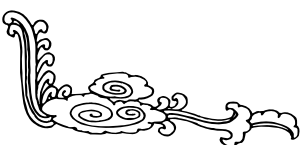
cannibals, all such evil spirits will keep afar from him, or even willingly protect him (by acting as his tutelary gods). Therefore, he who recites these Vows will have no obstacles (to impede his progress) wherever he goes in the world, as the moon comes out from the hazy clouds. Praised by Buddhas and Bodhisattvas; he will be honored by men and devas, and adored by all beings. This noble-minded man is well incarnated in a human body, and has brought to perfection all the merits and virtues of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra. He will soon become like the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra, with the glorious body of bliss, resplendent with the thirty-two attributes<sup>68</sup> of a hero. If he be born in the deva or human worlds, such a one will always be born into most noble class; and he will destroy all evil influences, and keep away from wicked friends. He will be free from all passions; he will conquer the men of wrong doctrines, he will be like unto the King of Lions, able to subdue all animals; he deserves to receive gifts from all beings.

Again, when such a person comes to die, and at the last ksana<sup>69</sup> (moment) approaches death, all his sense-organs

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67. Bhutas are ghosts of self-creative birth, or created from metamorphosis.

68. For the 32 attributes or signs of a Great One, please refer to Buddhist Dictionary.





perish, all kinsmen and relatives are abandoned, all influences are lost, his state-ministers and courtiers (are departed), trappings of the inner or outer palaces, elephants and horses, carriages, jewels and the treasure-repositories, all such are left behind. However, the King of Vows, will be his sole companion, and will forsake him not, but at all times will go before him and lead him to Sukhavati<sup>70</sup>, the World of Highest Happiness (the land of Buddha Amitabha).

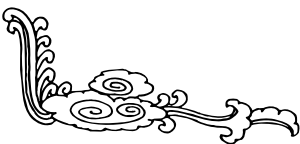
In a ksana, having already reached that Buddha-land and been re-born there, upon his arrival he sees the Buddha Amitabha<sup>71</sup>, surrounded by the Bodhisattvas Manjusri<sup>72</sup>,

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69. Ksana is a moment in time; the twinkling of an eye; a moment of thought.

70. Sukhavati is a Western Paradise (or Pure Land) of the Buddha Amitabha known as the “Most Happy World.” For a description see “The Smaller Sukhavati-vyuha” and the “Large Sukhavati-vyuha” translated by Max Miller; especially in the “Amitayur-Dhyana Sutra” translated by J. Takakusu, all of these contained in “Sacred Books of the East” volume 49, Oxford University Press.

71. The Buddha Amitabha is the Lord of the Western Paradise or the “Most Happy World” (Sukhavati). He was formerly the Bhikku Dharmakara, prior to the time of prehistoric kalpas (of our world), and on a world long since vanished, he made forty-eight vows for delivering all beings to his prospective Buddha-land which he realized ten kalpas ago and is now known as the “Most Happy World”. *Amit* means boundless, *abha* means light or splendour. He is also called the Buddha Amitayur, which means endless life. The life of this Buddha, and the lives of the people in that country are eternal; therefore He is named Amitayus.

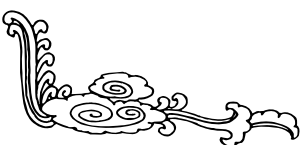




Samantabhadra, Avalokitesvara<sup>73</sup>, Maitreya<sup>74</sup>, and others. These are of magnificent form and noble appearance, and are perfected with all virtues and merits.

While the man (the vower), finds himself born from the lotus flower<sup>75</sup>, and favoured by the Buddha with the pre-

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72. Manjushri is one of the two principle Bodhisattvas, who are the subordinates of the Buddha Sakyamuni; the other is Bodhisattva Samantabhadra. Manjusri represents the principle of Universal Wisdom, as Samantabhadra represents that of Universal Love.
73. Alvalokitesvara is one of the two principle Bodhisattvas of the Western Paradise or the Pure Land (Sukhavati), the other being Mahasthama (the Mightiest One). Avalokitesvra is the figure best known and most pleasing to the people in general in China and Japan. In some cases, he appeared in the form of a female Bodhisattva, and therefore he has been misunderstood by the people as being a Goddess. Account is given in the famous 24<sup>th</sup> chapter of the “Saddharma Pundarika” (Lotus of the Pure Law) in the volume 21 of the “Sacred Books of the East”.
74. Maitreya, also named the Bodhisattva Ajita, is the future Buddha of our Saha-world, and is to come when Buddhism has perished in this world, as told by Buddha Sakyamuni in the Maitreya Vyakarana Sutra. The existence of Buddhism in this world is divided into three periods, which began with the Buddha Sakyamuni as follows: (1) The Law of Origin, taught by Buddha Sakyamuni and his successors, which ended after 500 years; (2) The Law of Reproduction, taught through images and books only, which lasted 1,000 years; (3) The Law of Finality, which will carry forward for 10,000 years, then decline to the point of zero. At that time a Renaissance of Buddhism will be caused by the Bodhisattva Maitreya. At present, we Buddhists are under the period of Final Law.
75. Lotus is the symbolic flower of Buddhism; especially in the Pure Land (Sukhavati) where the holy beings are springing into existence by apparitional birth from these flowers, to whom parentage and sexual differentiation are unknown.





diction (Vyakarana<sup>76</sup>) (of attaining Buddhahood in the future). After having received the Vyakarana, he will pour out the power of his wisdom to benefit all beings according to their (faith, or the strength of their) mind. Such deeds shall be performed throughout the ten quarters of infinite and innumerable worlds.

Soon he will be sitting in the Bodhi-mandala<sup>77</sup>, quelling the forces of maras<sup>78</sup>, attaining enlightenment, and rotating the wondrous Wheel of Dharma. So will he enable the

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76. Prediction (Vyakarana) is the term applied to the prophecy of a future Buddha in long ages to come, and will be called by the name of a certain Tathagata (a personal name symbolizing the character of the Buddha). The prediction of Buddhahood is a great event for the followers of Buddha, because their achievement is therefore assured. Vyakarana must not be confused with predestination, for the Law predestines no one, and Buddhahood is attainable only by one's own effort; no others can fore-ordinate him. Even Buddhas cannot predestine anyone. But Buddha can foresee certain events and foretell them. This is one reason why Buddhism is more open than all other religions of the world.

77. Bodhi-mandala is somewhat like a conclave of divine beings, which unites to carry out some definite object, such as a meeting held where the Precepts are to be given (not an ordination). Here it means the platform of Bodhi, or the Platform of Dharma, where all the Bodhisattvas sit down when about to become Buddhas.

78. Maras are powerful evil spirits, but the word is used generally in its meaning of the evil power which invades the mind of men, and which can be expelled only by mind control and strengthened by the power of Bodhi on which to draw. Meditation empowers the mind to overcome the force of Mara.



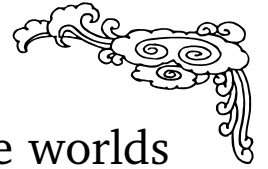
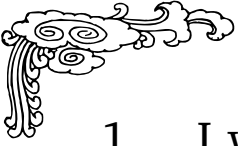


innumerable worlds of Buddha-lands, in number as the infinitesimal dust-motes, to direct their minds towards the attainment of Bodhi, according to their ability and nature being brought to maturity thereby. And so he will continue (such doings) throughout coming Kalpas, and thus widely benefit all beings.

O Noble-minded Man, whosoever of the multitude has awakened faith on hearing this Great King of Vows, observes, reads, recites, and widely preaches it to others, the merits produced thereby, none but the Buddha can estimate. Therefore, you should allow no doubts to cloud your minds on hearing this King of Vows, but carefully accept, read, recite, and put the teaching into actual practice, and publish it to others. Such persons will attain to the fulfillment of this vow by a single thought, and their accumulation of bliss acquired therefrom is boundless. It can deliver all beings from the great ocean of pain and sorrow, and ensure their re-birth in the Paradise of Buddha Amitabha.

Thereupon, the Bodhisattvas Mahasattva Samantabhadra in confirmation of this truth, turning around to the ten quarters, uttered the following stanzas:

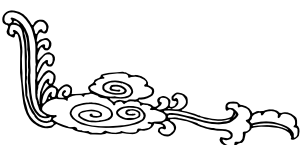




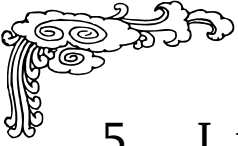
1. I worship all the “Lions among men<sup>79</sup>” of the worlds of the ten quarters and three yugas. With my pure body, speech, and mind, I do homage to them all, without exception.
2. By the divine power of the merits and vows of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra, I manifest myself before all Tathagatas. From my original body emanate innumerable bodies, and with each of my bodies I do homage to the innumerable bodies, and with each of my bodies I do homage to the innumerable Buddhas (simultaneously).
3. I deeply believe that in a grain of dust there exist countless Buddhas and assemblies of Bodhisattvas. Likewise, that the dust in boundless circles of the Dharma are filled with Buddhas.
4. Emitting from the ocean-like infinity all voices, with the wondrous speeches I praise the profound merits and virtues of Buddhas. And (continue to do so) through all æons in the future.

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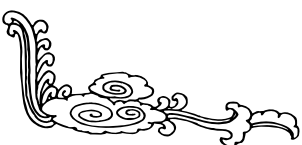
79. The Lions among Men, or “Human Lions”. The latter sounds strange in English, but may perhaps be better translated as “Lion-hearted Men”, but the text makes no mention of the word “Heart”, so I translate it literally. Human Lions refers to men of great valour who break the wheel of birth and death, attaining the eternal freedom and transcendental wisdom. Here it indicates Buddhas.







5. I present Tathagatas with the best gifts of flowery canopies, banners, garlands, fragrant ointments, and music.
6. Again, I offer to Tathagatas the best garments, incenses, lamps, and candles, in an assemblage as high as Mount Sumeru.
7. Through my wise understanding and high inspiration, I have profound faith in all Buddhas of the three yugas. By the power of the merits and vows of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra, I adore and serve all Tathagatas without omission.
8. The various wickednesses I committed in the past are derived from time without beginning, and through avarice, hatred, and from infatuation of bodily actions, speech, and thoughts, I now repent and abstain from them all.
9. Any merit or virtue of all Tathagatas or the Bodhisattvas, the thoroughly learned ones, and the partly learned one of the two Vehicles (Both are the Hinayana School<sup>80</sup>); even of the ordinary beings of the ten quarters, I approve all and am pleased with.





10. Those pioneers of Bodhi, and the brilliant ones who are to be likened unto a lamp illuminating the worlds of the ten quarters and three yugas, I request them to turn the wondrous wheel of the Dharma.
11. When the Buddhas set their minds on the attainment of Nirvana, I earnestly entreat them to remain (in the worlds) for the duration of boundless kalpas, in order to benefit and delight all beings.
12. All the treasures of merit and roots of goodness, produced from the Ten-fold Aspiration of Samanta-

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80. Hinayana School is the ancient form of Buddhism. The name signifies “Small Vehicle” as contrasted with the Mahayana or “Great Vehicle”. Hinayana commences with the Sravakas, leading upwards to Arhatship. Its dogmas are “the Four Noble Truths” (Catvari-aryasattvani) which range as follows: (1) Dukkha or “Suffering”, which is the concomitant of sentient beings and is unavoidable to any physical body. (2) “Samudaya” or “Accumulation” which means that the sufferings are accumulated and intensified by the passions. (3) Nirodha or the “Extinction of Passions”. (4) Marga or the “Path” which leads to the extinction of passions. Also the twelve Nidana, the twelve links in the chain of conditioned existence. They are (1) ignorance; (2) formation; (3) consciousness; (4) mental and physical; (5) six sense-object realms; (6) contact; (7) sensation; (8) craving; (9) clinging; (10) becoming; (11) birth; (12) old age and death. (Refer to Buddhist Dictionary for detailed explanation on “Dependent Origination”). This analysis help us to understand the riddle of life and death, and to understand the emptiness of existence. Therefore all beings should seek the path which puts an end to birth and death and attain the final Parinirvana. The final goal of Hinayana is the obtaining of Arhatship, or becoming a Pratyeka-Buddha, whereas the aim of the Mahayana or Bodhisattva is obtaining enlightenment for all sentient beings. It is because of this that the Hinayana is called the small vehicle and the Mahayana the big vehicle.



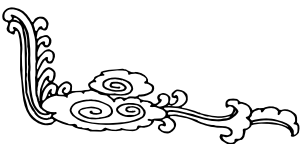


bhadra, I shall turn over to all beings in their favour,  
and in Buddhahood.

13. I follow the ways of the Tathagatas, and elaborate the merits of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra in completion. Making offerings out of veneration for the Tathagatas in the ten quarters and of the three generations.
14. I desire to carry out the principles of the “Teachers of Devas and Men<sup>81</sup>” to their satisfaction; and I train myself by studying their teachings and quickly reach the goal of great Bodhi.
15. The Buddha-countries of the ten quarters are vast, pure and magnificent. There the Tathagatas are surrounded by various assemblies; respectively under each Bodhi-tree, the king of trees.

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81. The “Teacher of Devas And Men”, is one of the ten appellations of the Buddhas. The other nine are: Tathagata, or He who has come to suchness, Arhan, or He who is deserving to be adored by Devas and Men: Samsaksambuddha, or He who has a perfect knowledge of all supernatural power; Sagata, or the charioteer who possesses all the wisdom and completes the eight-fold truth, thus entering into Nirvana; Lokavit, or He who knows the world; Anuttarah, or He who is the highest one without a superior; Purusadam-yasarathin, or the Great Tamer of Men; and Lokajyesthah, or the World-honoured One.



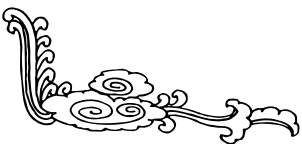


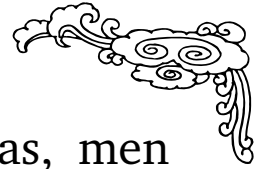
16. I wish that the beings in the ten quarters may be free from passions and afflictions and be always happy; may they acquire the deep profit of the right Dharma; may they tear out the passions even to the very root.
17. When I strove for the attainment of Bodhi, I was able to gain the Purvanivasanu Smritidjnana<sup>82</sup> (supernormal power of remembering previous lives and karmas), in all worlds wheresoever I was born; and during each of my pre-existences I attained the same knowledge. Always I joined the order, observed the pure precepts strictly, without stain or leakage (Anasravah<sup>83</sup>).

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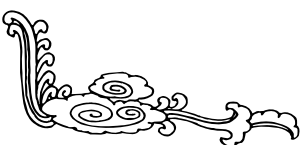
82. Purvanivasanu is having the supernormal knowledge of all forms of pre-existence of oneself and others, this being one of the “six supernormal powers”. Stanza No.17 refers to the fact that the Bodhisattva has the power of remembering his previous lives (in metempsychosis) in all the six realms of existence; i.e. Deva (God) realm, Human realm, Asura realm, Animal realm, Hungry Ghost realm and Hell realm. Doubtless many readers will say in surprise “How can an exalted being such as a Bodhisattva fall into such as the lower realms; the animal, hungry ghost or hell realm”. To this the answer is that “Ordinary beings fall into such evil states by the karma of their past evil deeds; but a Bodhisattva enters such states by his own free will, and in order to deliver those beings from the lower states of existence. He would be reborn into one of those lower realms and stay close in touch with them. An example is the Bodhisattva Kshifgradha (The Bodhisattva of the Treasure-Chamber of the Earth) is well known for His liberation of sentient beings from hell.

83. Anasravah means a deed without leakage; any meritorious act without selfishness is called without leakage. For example, he who performs a noble deed with an expectation of worldly reward cannot attain the Bodhi by it, but reaps what he sowed as a siphon transfers liquid from one vessel to another.





18. There are Devas, Nagas, yakas, kumbhandas, men and subhumans etc., to whom I preach the law, by using various voices befitted to their native languages.
19. Diligently cultivating the pure paramitas, I forget not the Bodhi-heart. Annihilating hindrances and defilements without exception, I achieved all the marvelous merits.
20. I am able to free myself from worldly life and the environment of maras, just as the lotus flower shoots up from the water, but is not wetted thereby; and as the sun and moon appear in the void, but abide not in it.
21. I relieve the distress of the beings of all evil realms, and equally bestow happiness on them. I continue to do so throughout the lapse of boundless kalpas, and in the extent of the ten quarters of the Universe. The benefits for all are eternal, and omnipresent.
22. I will always be harmonious to the beings and render them aid, and will continue such doings throughout all coming kalpas. And I will cherish the great merits



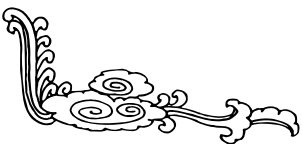


of Samantabhadra, and perfect the supreme great Bodhi thereby.

23. All my fellow devotees shall be gathered together from all parts. Our bodily, speech, mental deeds are equivalent to one another. We study the same doctrine and vows together.
24. Any well-learned man, who shows me the practice of the vows of Samantabhadra, thus benefits me. I wish always to be in his company. May he be pleased with me.
25. I desire to see the Tathagatas often, and also their retinue, the sons of Jina<sup>84</sup>. I will make vast offerings of veneration to them in all coming Kalpas without cessation or indolence.
26. I desire to magnify and expand all the activities of Bodhi, by applying the wondrous Dharma of Buddhas. Perfecting the pure doctrine of Samantabhadra by studying and practicing it throughout all the coming kalpas.

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84. The sons of Jina (Jinadharah) are the heirs to the doctrine of the Buddhas, viz. Bodhisattvas.





27. Among all the beings (or Sarvastivadah<sup>85</sup>), I will cultivate merits and wisdom boundlessly. Thereby I will gain a never-exhausting store of Samadhi<sup>86</sup>, Prajna<sup>87</sup>, Upaya<sup>88</sup>, and multi-moksa<sup>89</sup>.

28. A single grain of dust contains therein the incalculable countries<sup>90</sup>. In each country dwell incalculable Buddhas; each Buddha is surrounded by many assemblies. I see them constantly performing the practice of Bodhi.

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85. Sarastivadah is the school which discusses the existence and reality of all visible phenomena. It is the reverse of “Nihilism” or “Voidness”. However, it is unlikely to have that meaning as it is used in this verse, because the word used in this verse, in the Chinese version, means “existence” only. Some say “existence” means the lives of the various beings.

86. Samadhi is an undisturbed state of mind, or concentrated equanimity.

87. Prajna is transcendental wisdom, divine intuition; one of the six Paramitas (Refers to No. 10).

88. Upaya means a “device” or “expedient”. The Bodhisattvas used every method their all-embracing love could devise to instruct humanity and remove the sorrows of existence.

89. Multi-moksa means emancipation; or deliverance from bondage.

90. To understand this verse one should refer to Note No. 20, and understand that, as modern science is now explaining to us, there is a universe in an atom. Yet the (physical) atom is a manifestation of still more wonderful life: it is a crystallization of superphysical forces, usually termed etheric. A grain of dust, then, contains innumerable universes, stretching back in their ultimate origin to superphysical worlds, having their origin in ultimate reality; the Buddha-worlds.

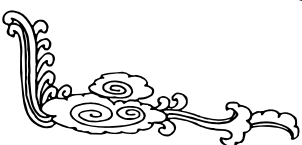




29. Throughout the ocean-like system of worlds, and the ocean-like gathering of the Buddhas of the ten quarters, whereof each hair-point<sup>91</sup> appears an ocean-like system of the three yugas. I will cultivate my merit by passing through all these oceans, and (continue to do so) for the period of an ocean of kalpas.
30. The speeches of all Tathagatas are pure and clear. Each word comprises the ocean of all voices, and respectively swelling the ocean of the orations of Buddhas. In order to preach the Dharma for the beings according to their understanding and pleasure, (the various forms of speech are applied).
31. All the Tathagatas of the three ages possess the ocean of everlasting speech, and constantly rotate the wheel of the wonderful meaning of truth. Such I thoroughly fathomed by my profound wisdom.
32. I can clearly behold the state of the future, and combine all coming kalpas into a single thought. I penetrate all the kalpas of the three ages thoroughly in a mental flash of vision.

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91. A hair-point means an infinitesimally small unit of matter. A reference to the preceding explanation (Refers to No. 90) will help in the understanding of this.





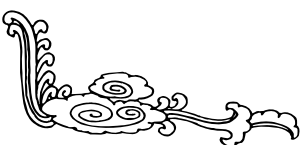


33. I can foresee the three ages by one thought. Those who are called “Lion among Men” also can enter the Buddha-state, as it were in a phantasm or vision, and that power enables them to reach the stage of emancipation.
34. From the smallest breadth as that of the point of a hair<sup>92</sup>, come forth the magnificent and holy countries of the three yugas. I penetrate deeply all the innumerable, magnificent, and pure countries of the hair-points of the ten quarters.
35. I come into contact with those who shall be the light of the world in the future; who will be enlightened, and will turn the wheel of Dharma to awaken all beings. They will enter into Nirvana after having perfected their Buddha-works; with all of these I will be friendly.
36. (May I possess the following powers<sup>93</sup>): the power of Abhidjna which goes over every part (of the world)

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92. A thoughtful consideration of Nos. 9 & 90 will help the reader in understanding this paragraph. All are efforts made to express the transcendental nature of the Buddha-worlds and the profundity of the teaching.

93. Here the text makes no mention as to who possesses these powers, neither does it indicate how one is to acquire them. With the view to completing the sense of this verse, the translator has taken the liberty of adding the words in parenthesis, but does not guarantee that the added words correctly represent the meaning.





with supernormal speed; the power of Mahayana which penetrates the universal gate of all directions; the power of merits and virtues which is wisely and widely cultivated; and power of great compassion which shelters all who come for that refuge through the Divinity and Grace (of the Buddhas).

37. (Again), the power of blessing dignifies and purifies every part (of the world). The power of wisdom is independent, is attached to nothing, and abides nowhere. The power of concentrated immobility of meditation (Samadhi), wisdom (Prajna), and expedient means (Upaya), are endowed with supernormal might. The power of Bodhi is in the positive and accumulative nature, throughout every part.
38. (Also), the power of purity refines all meritorious deeds. The power of destruction destroys all passions (klesas). The power of conquest subdues all maras. The power of fulfillment perfects the merits of Samantabhadra.
39. (I wish to extend my power in the following directions): may I be able to purify and embellish the ocean of all the worlds. May I emancipate all beings from the





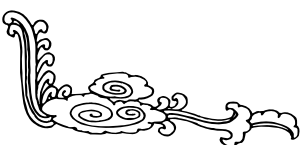
ocean (of life and death<sup>94</sup>). May I be able to discern the ocean of various Dharmas. May I be able to enter deeply into the ocean of wisdom.

40. (Also), may I be able to purify the ocean of all conduct. May I fulfill the ocean of all wishes in perfection. May I be in close touch with, and serve, the ocean of Buddhas. Shall I cultivate and cherish the principle without weariness, through the duration of an ocean of kalpas.

41. All the Tathagatas of the three yugas have their exalted activities and vows of Bodhi, which I fully practice in their adoration as my offerings. I shall be enlightened by the conduct of Samantabhadra.

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94. The Ocean of Birth and Death (Samsara). The existence of a human being or an animal in any one of the various phenomenal worlds is like a ceaselessly revolving wheel (a circle of continuous metempsychosis) under karmic law. For example, when one dies, his spirit may be reborn in the body of a sheep or other animal, owing to his evil deeds; or may be exalted to an angelic life in the heavenly world through his meritorious deeds. Thus the life never ceases, only the form changes. Even the Devas of the heavens cannot escape from birth and death, unless they attain Buddhahood. From the enlightened eyes of the Buddha, this continuous existence is nothing but suffering and misery, and it is extremely difficult to escape from it, on account of the concatenation of causes and effects which sentient beings are ever weaving by their actions. They themselves make their next, or rather their endless continuation of life. There is no other creator than themselves (see the “Buddhabhasita Dasabhara Karmamara Sutra”). The fundamental teaching of Buddhism instructs us in how to escape forever from Samsara, the ocean of birth and death.





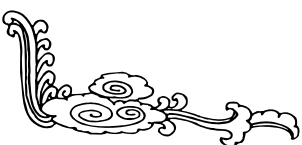
42. All the Tathagatas have their eldest son (of the Dharma), whose name is Samantabhadra. I now turn all my good roots towards the attainment of wisdom and behavior, may I be tantamount to the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra in all his qualities.

43. I wish that my body, speech, and thoughts always be pure, and that the behavior of others of the various worlds may be the same. Whosoever possesses such wisdom is entitled "Samantabhadra". I wish that I shall be equivalent to him in every quality.

44. For the purpose of purifying all my virtues of Samantabhadra; and the great vows of Manjusri, may I fulfill all those duties to the uttermost without any omission. May I continue my task through the coming kalpas without weariness.

45. My cultivation of merit is boundless, therefore have I acquired boundless good deeds. I aside myself in the boundless virtues; and attained the high understanding of all supernormal powers.

46. I now turn over my accumulated virtues towards the attainment of the brave (or sharp) advance of





Manjusri, and the wise conduct of Samantabhadra.  
May I follow the ways of them and study ceaselessly.

47. I now devote my merits on the expectation of gaining the most excellent conduct of Samantabhadra. Such great vows will be praised by the Buddhas of the three generations.
48. I wish that at the approach of death I may annihilate all hindrances, thus I may be able to see the Buddha Amitabha face to face; so that with His aid, I may go and be reborn in (His) Peaceful and Happy World.
49. Upon my rebirth in that world, I shall actually fulfill my great aim, realize my every wish without any omission, and offer the benefits and happiness to all beings.
50. The members of the assembly of that Buddha are pure and holy. Even so am I, springing into existence by (apparitional) birth from the pure and holy flower of the lotus, and seeing face to face the Tathagata of Infinite Splendour<sup>95</sup>. In His presence, I shall receive assurance of my destiny to attain Bodhi, namely Vyakarana (i.e. the Buddha announces that so and so will become a Buddha at such and such a time).

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95. The Tathagata of Infinite Splendour, i.e. the Buddha Amitabha.





51. When I have been favoured by that Tathagata with the Prediction, then I reveal myself by transformation into incalculable bodies of myriad of koties in number, being possessed of great power and wisdom extending over the ten quarters, in order to benefit the various beings in all worlds.

52. When the infinitude of the universe comes to an end; beings and their karmas and passions all are ended; nevertheless, my vows of aspiration are ultimately and solely endless.

53. He who offers the precious gifts, produced from the boundless countries of the ten quarters, in honour of Tathagatas; and offers the best enjoyments to the devas and human beings, for a duration of kalpas equal in number to the finest atoms of dust composing all the worlds, make merits beyond computation.

54. (On the other hand) he who upon hearing of this King of unique Vows, and thus being awakened to faith with the intention of seeking the wonderful Bodhi in fervent aspiration, will acquires merits in consequence thereof which are still greater, (than the former one).





55. Thus he will keep afar from wicked advisers, and never sink into any of the evil realms<sup>96</sup>. Moreover, he will soon see the Tathagata of Infinite Light<sup>97</sup>. These are all the results of the wonderful Vows of Samantabhadra.

56. Such a person will easily be born in the human world, and enjoy an excellent life of longevity<sup>98</sup>. He will soon attain the Bodhisattvahood of Samantabhadra.

57. In past times, owing to the lack of wisdom, (I) have committed the most wicked five deadly sins (Pantch-anantarya). These will be expiated in a moment of thought, by reciting this great king of Vows of Samantabhadra.

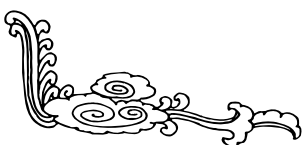
58. (If he wishes to be born in the human or deva worlds), he is certain to be a member of the highest race, perfecting with noble lineaments, and wisdom. No enemies of other religions or maras, can subdue him.

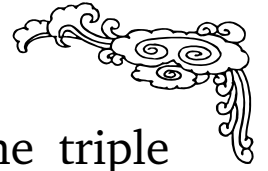
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96. Evil realms: The Three Evil Realms are the animal realm, the hungry ghost realm, and the hell realm.

97. Tathagata of Infinite Light, i.e. The Buddha Amitabha.

98. "He who will be born in the human world and has an excellent life" means, if he so desires to be born in the human world he will attain longevity. In its wider sense it means that if he has performed the vows he has used his life well, has taken full advantage of being a human, and has not wasted his human life; for only human beings can obtain the fruition of these vows: animals cannot.



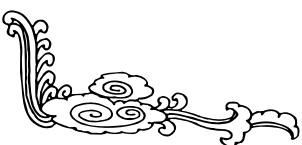


Moreover he is worthy to be adored by the triple worlds<sup>99</sup>.

59. Hasten to the king of great trees, the tree of Bodhi. Sitting there, subdue the maras. Attain enlightenment and turn the wheel of Dharma, in order to benefit all sentient beings.
60. If there be anyone who observes, recites, and preaches the vows of Samantabhadra, the result thereof none is able to estimate, except the Buddhas. He infallibly will attain the supremacy of Bodhi.
61. Whosoever recites the Vows of Samantabhadra, I affirm that, having planted good roots, at least they will bring every quality (of Dharma) into completion by a single thought, and finally will be able to deliver the beings, so as to fulfill his pure vows.
62. My practice of the unique Vows of Samantabhadra, from which boundless and marvelous blessedness is

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99. “The Triple Worlds” (Trilokya) are firstly “Kamadhatu” the world of appetites and sensual desires. These refer to our mundane world and include the heavens. Secondly, “Rupadhatu” the world of material excellence, but without sexual and dietetic desires, and thus superior to the Kamadhatu; and thirdly the “Arupadhatu” which are superlative and formless Heavens.



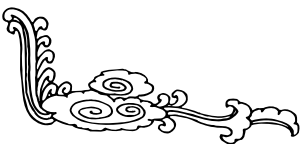




produced, are all to be turned over to the beings who are deeply sunken (into the sea of pain and sorrows, or of birth and death). Wishing them all to be delivered, I pray that they may soon attain to the country of the Buddha of Infinite Splendour.

When the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Samantabhadra had concluded his great oration on the Great King of Vows, and had recited the pure gathas before the Tathagata, the Kumara Sudhana was overwhelmed with joy, and all the Bodhisattvas enraptured with ecstasy. The Tathagata applauded: “Excellent! Excellent!”.

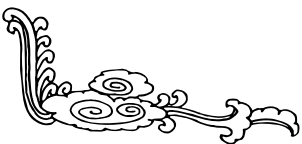
At the assembly where this inconceivable state of emancipation and exalted Dharma was proclaimed, there were present the World Honoured One and a great company of the saints, Bodhisattvas and Mahasattvas, with the Bodhisattva Manjusri at the head of the assembly. The great Bodhisattvas with their fully trained six thousand Bhikkus<sup>100</sup>, were led by the Bodhisattvas Maitreya. All the great Bodhisattvas of the Bhadrakalpa<sup>101</sup> were led by the Bodhisattva Vimala-Samantabhadra<sup>102</sup>. The Ekajati-Pratyeka-

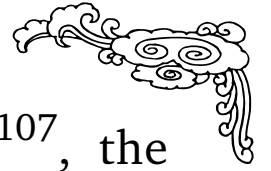




Buddhas<sup>103</sup>, who are in the stage of Murdhadhichikata<sup>104</sup>, and the great Bodhisattvas and others of the ten quarters of the various worlds, all were present in this congregation. Great and exalted beings of the ocean of worlds equal in number to the smallest dust-motes of all the worlds, all these were led by the Great Wise One Sariputra<sup>105</sup>, and by the Mahamaugalyayana<sup>106</sup>. There were present also the

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100. Bhikku: is an official member of the Buddhist Order (Sangha) who keeps the full precepts, and whose life is governed by 250 rules. The Bhikku relies for his sustenance upon the gifts of the lay disciples, not being allowed to possess money or property.
101. Bhadra-kalpa means the kalpa (era) of the sages, during which period a thousand Buddhas appear on earth. We are still living in this kalpa, so it is referred to as the “present Bhadra-kalpa”. This kalpa is to last 236 million years; but over 150 million years have already elapsed.
102. Vimala-samantabhadra: “Vimala” means pure, undefiled. The reference to this Bodhisattva is unknown to the translator.
103. Ekajati-pratibuddhas are Bodhisattvas who, from the first stage of their turning towards Buddhahood, have attained the pure Bodhi-heart. Thereupon they acquire boundless Samadhi (immobility of meditation) and Dharani (mystic powers) and thereby arrive at the Ten Stages in succession and become Buddha-elects. The old traditional explanation of the Ekajati-pratibuddhas was that they would attain Buddhahood in their next life, but this has been denied by some prominent Buddhists. However, I include it herein with reservation.
104. Murdhabhishikta, is the sprinkling of the top of the head with water; a ceremony of Buddhist baptism.
105. Sariputra, known as the wisest disciple of Buddha Sakyamuni.
106. Maudgalyayana, known as the most advanced in occult powers; whose position was similar to that of Sariputra.





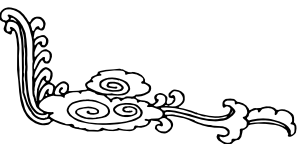
great Sravakas, Devas, Rulers of the worlds<sup>107</sup>, the Nagas, the Yakas, Gandharvas, Asuras, Garudas, Kinaras, and Mahoragas, Human and sub-human. And the whole multitude on hearing the discourse of the Buddha, were inspired with great joy to faithful observance (of the Vows).

*Here ends the Vows of Samantabhadra.*



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107. The rulers of the worlds are the heavenly kings.





## *The Aspiration of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra*

With purity of body, speech, and mind,  
I bow to all the heroic Buddhas of the past, present, and future,  
without exception in every world in all the ten directions.

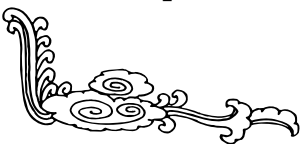
By the power of this Aspiration of Samantabhadra,  
I bow with as many bodies as there are atoms in the pure lands  
of all those victorious Buddhas manifest in my mind, and  
I pay homage to all of them.

I conceive the entire realm of truth to be completely  
filled with enlightened ones.  
On each atom I imagine there to be as many Buddhas  
as atoms in the pure lands,  
each Buddha surrounded by many Bodhisattvas.

I honour all these blissful lords,  
praising their perfection with all the sounds  
of an ocean of varied melodies, an ocean of endless praise.

I offer to those heroic Buddhas  
the finest flowers, garlands, music, and ointments,  
excellent canopies, choice lamps, and the best incense.

I offer as well to those victorious ones,  
the finest array of all excellent things,  
the finest robes and fragrances, and  
heaps of sweet smelling powders as high as Mt. Meru.





By the power of my faith in the deeds of Samantabhadra,  
I prostrate and present vast and unequalled offerings  
to each of the victorious Buddhas.

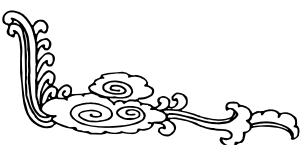
I confess every type of wrong that I have done in thought, word, or deed,  
under the influence of desire, anger, or ignorance.

I rejoice in the meritorious deeds  
of all Buddhas of the ten directions,  
the Bodhisattvas, Pratyeka-Buddhas,  
Arhats, practitioners, and all sentient beings.

I request the Enlightened Protectors,  
who have attained the detachment of Buddhahood  
and illuminated the worlds of the ten directions,  
to turn the peerless wheel of dharma.  
With folded hands, I beseech those who intend to manifest the final Nirvana,  
to remain for as many æons as there are atoms in all the pure lands,  
for the benefit and happiness of all living beings.

May whatever small amount of virtue I may have gained  
from prostrating, offering, confessing, rejoicing, requesting, and beseeching,  
be dedicated to attaining perfect enlightenment.

May I worship the Buddhas of the past  
and those now present in the worlds of the ten directions;  
may those to come quickly to fulfill their aspiration  
and reach Buddhahood by traversing the stages of Enlightenment.





May all the worlds of the ten directions become pure  
and filled with Bodhisattvas and victorious Buddhas  
who proceed to the royal tree of enlightenment.

May all living beings in the ten directions  
always be happy and free of sickness.

May the display of the dharma be in harmony  
with the needs of all living beings and fulfill their hopes.

May I perform all the deeds of enlightenment  
and remember all my lives in all states of existence.  
And in all my lives, after death, migration, and rebirth,  
may I always embrace spiritual life.

May I follow all the victorious Buddhas  
and perfect all the deeds of Samantabhadra.  
Pure in the immaculate deeds of morality,  
may my conduct always be flawless and without fault.

May I teach the dharma in every tongue,  
in whatever sounds are understood by living beings,  
in the language of the gods, nagas, demons, spirits, and human beings.

May I always diligently and patiently perform the perfection.  
May I never disregard my intention to attain enlightenment  
and completely remove whatever faults may obscure it.

Freed from karma, defilement, and actions of demons,  
as a lotus is unsoiled by the mire,  
so in every rebirth in the world,  
may I proceed unhindered,  
like the sun and moon in the clear sky.





Throughout all the lands in all the directions,  
may the sufferings of the lower realms be completely relieved.  
Establishing beings in happiness,  
may I work for the benefit of all living beings.

Fully accomplishing the activities of enlightenment,  
may I work in harmony with the activities of all beings.  
May I practice and demonstrate the deeds of Samantabhadra,  
throughout all future æons.

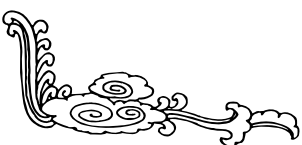
May I associate with those whose activities are similar to mine.  
May we act alike in thought, word, and deed,  
and may our aspirations be as one.

May those friends who wish to help me,  
and also demonstrate the deeds of Samantabhadra,  
always meet me again, and may I never cause them pain.

May I always personally behold the victorious Buddhas,  
those Guardians surrounded by Bodhisattvas.  
And without tiring, in all future æons,  
may I always present them magnificent offerings.

May I always uphold the Buddhas' sacred dharma  
and illuminate the deeds of enlightenment.  
May I train in the practice of Samantabhadra in all future æons.

Through rebirth in all states of existence,  
may I gather endless stores of merit and wisdom.  
May I become an inexhaustible treasure of all virtues of method, wisdom,  
concentration, and liberation.





May I always behold as many pure lands  
as there are atoms present in each pure land,  
with inconceivable Buddhas sitting in the midst of their Bodhisattvas  
and performing the activities of enlightenment.

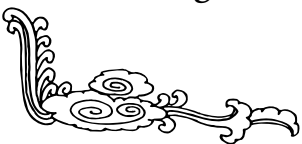
In this way may I be able to see everywhere,  
even on every mote of dust,  
countless Buddhas of the past, present, and future,  
limitless pure lands, and endless æons.

May I always heed the pure speech of the victorious Buddhas,  
which holds within each word  
the totality of the perfect dharma,  
and an ocean of words and languages  
precisely suited to the needs of all living beings.

May I possess perfect intelligence  
so as to heed the endless melody of speech  
when the victorious Buddhas of the past, present, and future  
turn the wheel of dharma.

May I accomplish the Bodhisattva's practice  
of entering the past, present and future  
in a fraction of a second.  
May I enter all the future æons in a single instant.

May I behold all the heroic Buddhas  
of the past, present, and future in a single instant.  
May I always perform their activities  
through the power of liberation from illusion.







May I perceive upon a single atom  
the perfect design of the pure realms of the past, present, and future.  
Thus may I enter into the realms of the victorious Buddhas in all directions.

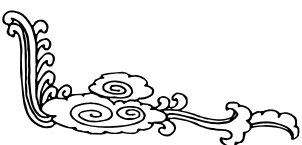
May the illuminators of the worlds of the future  
realize the stage of Buddhahood,  
of turning the wheel, and  
of the profound peace of nirvana, and  
may I always be in their presence.

May I acquire the perfectly accomplished powers of enlightenment:  
the power of miraculous swiftness,  
the power of perfection of every spiritual path,  
and the power of all virtuous qualities.

May I acquire the power of all-pervasive love,  
the power of the merit of every virtue,  
the power of all-transcendental wisdom, and  
the powers of perfect knowledge, method, and meditation.

May the power of action be utterly purified,  
the power of passions utterly subdued,  
the power of demons utterly destroyed, and  
the power of the deeds of Samantabhadra perfected.

May the ocean of lands be purified,  
the ocean of beings liberated,  
the ocean of Dharma realized, and  
the ocean of wisdom fully attained.





May the ocean of practice be purified and  
the oceans of aspirations accomplished.

May the oceans of Buddhas be ceaselessly worshipped and  
the deeds of enlightenment tirelessly performed.

May I completely fulfill all perfect aspirations to enlightened activities,  
in order to attain the stage of the victorious Buddhas  
of the past, present, and future  
according to the deeds of Samantabhadra.

The eldest son of the victorious Buddhas is called Samantabhadra.  
I dedicate all these victorious actions;  
that my deeds may be like His.

May my body, speech, mind,  
activities, and environment always be pure, and  
may I become equal to this excellent Aspiration of Samantabhadra.

May I tirelessly accomplish the virtuous deeds of Samantabhadra,  
and the aspirations of the Bodhisattva Manjusri,  
throughout all future æons.

May there be no limit to my activities.  
May there be no limit to my virtues.  
Through limitless perseverance,  
may I accomplish all miraculous deeds.

The limit of living beings is like the limit of open space.  
May the limit of my aspirations be equal  
to the limit of their activities and passions.





Whoever offers to the victorious Buddhas  
all the perfect joys of gods and men, and  
the infinite realms of the ten directions adorned with jewels,  
for as many æons as there are atoms in those realms,  
they shall gain great merit.

But whoever hears this greatest dedication prayer  
and is inspired by faith to intensely desire supreme enlightenment,  
shall gain even higher and holier merit.

Whoever recites this Aspiration of Samantabhadra  
will never again endure hellish rebirth,  
will abandon all evil friends, and  
will soon behold the Buddha of countless light.

They will gain all benefits, live in happiness,  
attain precious human rebirth, and  
soon become like Samantabhadra himself.

Even those who in ignorance  
committed the five unredeemable sins,  
will soon be completely purified  
by reciting this Aspiration of Samantabhadra.

They will achieve perfect wisdom,  
a radiant countenance, ethereal form,  
auspicious physical marks, and a noble birth.  
Profane and devilish beings will not trouble them, and  
they will be honoured in the three realms.





They will quickly reach the royal tree of enlightenment,  
residing there to benefit all living beings.

As enlightened Buddhas, they will turn the wheel of the dharma,  
taming the demonic hosts.

Whoever knows, teaches, or recites this Aspiration of Samantabhadra,  
shall ultimately attain perfect Buddhahood.

May none despair of complete enlightenment.

In whatever way valiant Manjusri and Samantabhadra  
know how to transfer merit,  
so do I dedicate all of my own virtues,  
that I might train to be like them.

Through this dedication, praised as supreme  
by the Victorious Buddhas of the past, present, and future,  
I dedicate all of these roots of virtue  
to accomplishing the deeds of Samantabhadra.

At the moment of my death,  
may all obscurations be removed, that I may behold  
the Buddha of Boundless Light and  
go to the pure land of perfect bliss.

In that blissful land,  
may I completely fulfill all of these aspirations, and  
benefit all beings as long as the universe remains.

Joyful there, in that blessed assembly of the Buddhas,  
may I be reborn like the holy ones, from an exquisite lotus, and  
may the Buddha Amitabha himself foretell my own enlightenment.



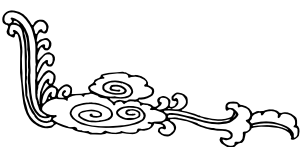


May I thereafter accomplish countless benefits  
for living beings in all the ten directions,  
by the power of perfect wisdom in its myriad incarnations.

Through whatever small virtue  
I have gathered by reciting this Aspirations of Samantabhadra,  
may all the virtuous aspirations of living beings  
be accomplished in a single instant.

Through the boundless merit gained  
by so dedicating these Aspiration of Samantabhadra,  
may the countless beings drowning in the torrent of suffering  
reach the stage of Amitabha.

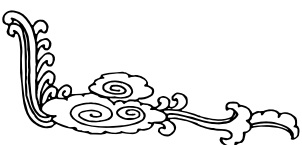
May this greatest of dedication prayers  
benefit countless living beings.  
May reciting this ornament of Samantabhadra  
release all beings from the suffering of the lower realms.





# *The Ten Great Vows of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra*

1. TO WORSHIP AND RESPECT ALL BUDDHAS.
2. TO MAKE PRAISES TO THE THUS COME ONES.
3. TO PRACTICE PROFOUNDLY THE GIVING OF OFFERINGS.
4. TO REPENT AND REFORM ALL KARMIC HINDRANCE.
5. TO REJOICE AND FOLLOW IN MERIT AND VIRTUE.
6. TO REQUEST THAT THE DHARMA WHEEL BE TURNED.
7. TO REQUEST THAT THE BUDDHAS REMAIN IN THE WORLD.
8. TO ALWAYS FOLLOW THE BUDDHA'S TEACHING.
9. TO CONSTANTLY ACCORD WITH ALL LIVING BEINGS.
10. TO TRANSFER ALL MERIT AND VIRTUE UNIVERSALLY.





THE PRAISE TO BODHISATTVA SAMANTABHADRA,  
CHANTED ON HIS BIRTHDAY  
(21<sup>ST</sup> OF FEBRUARY IN THE LUNAR CALENDAR)

*The Bodhisattva of Great Conduct is called Universal Worthy.*

*The Sea of His vow power is multi-layered without bounds.*

*With dignity He reposes upon a six-tusked elephant.*

*By wisdom He is born, transformational from a lotus of the  
seven gems.*

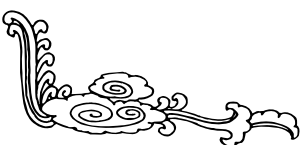
*In all Samadhis, He attains sovereignty.*

*His originally wonderful virtue is pervasive and perfected.*

*Praise of this jeweled awesomeness arrives to teach the Saha  
World.*

*His efficacious response and spiritual power shake the great-  
thousand realm.*

*Homage to Universally Worthy Bodhisattva of Great Conduct,  
who dwells in the silver world of E-mei Shan.*





## *Verse of Transference*

*May the merit and virtue accrued from this work,  
Adorn the Buddha's Pure Lands.  
Repaying four kinds of kindness above.  
And aiding those suffering in the paths below.*

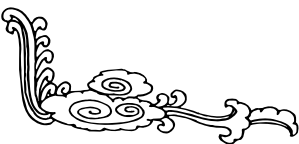
*May those who see and hear of this.  
All bring forth the resolve for Bodhi.  
And when this retribution body is over.  
Be born together in ultimate bliss.*



*Amita Buddha*

*Maha Sthama Prapta      Avalokitesvara  
Bodhisattva              Bodhisattva*

Note: One should recite this verse of transference to universally transfer all the merit and virtue that accrue from sutra recitation or performance of any meritorious deeds (e.g. giving)

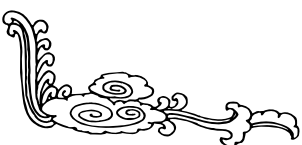






## TEN BENEFITS FROM PRINTING BUDDHIST SUTRAS AND MAKING BUDDHA-IMAGES

1. All evil karma made in the past will either be wiped off or retribution created by past serious offences reduced.
2. Auspicious spirits constantly protect you and you do not have to experience the disasters of plagues, floods, fires, thieves, armed conflict, or imprisonment.
3. Suffering inflicted by vengeful enemies made in the past will be avoided, and the merit derived from printing sutras will allow these enemies to receive the benefits of Dharma, and thereby untie the bond of hatred.
4. Evil ghosts and other yaksha-ghosts cannot encroach on you; poisonous snakes or man-eating beasts cannot harm you.
5. You will have peace of mind. During the day you will meet with no danger, and at night you will have no bad dreams. Your complexion will be healthy, smooth and moist. Your energy will be full of vitality. Your business will continue to prosper and meet with ultimate success.





6. You will always have ample food and clothing. Your families will always be at peace, and your prosperity and blessings will constantly increase.
7. Gods and other people will immediately take a liking to things you do or say. Wherever you go, you will always be greeted with respect and revered by happy crowds of dear friends.
8. Ignorant people will grow wiser, unhealthy people will grow healthier, troubled people will feel happier, and women can become men in their next lives if they wish to do so.
9. You will escape from the three lower realms, and always be reborn in wholesome places, with a handsome upright appearance and unusually fine character. You will enjoy supreme happiness and abundant wealth.
10. You will be able to plant innumerable roots of goodness in the blessed minds of all living beings. You will help the living beings to reap bounteous, measureless merits and help them attain the final Buddhahood.

