

THE PRACTICES AND VOWS OF THE BODHISATTVA SAMANTABHADRA

IBDSCL, Sep. 15, 16, 2018, by Nancy Yu

Good morning! Welcome to the International Buddha Dharma Society for Cosmic Law to listen to today's Dharma talk! Today, we will continue to learn cultivation methods. There are eighty-four Dharma methods as the Buddha said, which literally means limitless methods. Every sentient being has their own habits and characters, so their cultivation road is different from each other. In the Shurangama Sutra, twenty-five Bodhisattvas talked about their Dharma door. For example, Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva cultivated from the hearing root and Mahāsthāmaprāpta Bodhisattva entered Samadhi by chanting the Name of Amitabha. Today, we will learn the ten Practices and Vows of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva. Every practice and vow is a higher level cultivation method. We will recite chapter 40 of āvatamsaka Sūtra, the Practices and Vows of the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra. Let's recite the sutra and turn the Dharma wheel.

THE PRACTICES AND VOWS OF THE BODHISATTVA SAMANTABHADRA (THE AVATAMSAKA SUTRA, CHAPTER 40)

Translated into Chinese from Sanskrit by Dharma Master Prajna (8th Century)
Translated from Chinese into English by UPASIKA CHINMANN (MISS. P. C. LEE)

DEDICATION

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.

INCENSE PRAISE

*The censer's incense now is lit, perfuming the dharma realm,
The ocean-wide host of Bodhisattvas inhales it from afar,
Auspicious are the clouds that gather as we now request,
With hearts sincere and earnest that all Buddhas manifest.
Homage to the Bodhisattvas Mahasattvas under incense-cloud canopies
(Repeat last line 3 times, and ending with a half bow)*

VERSE UPON OPENING A SUTRA

*The unsurpassed, deep, profoundly subtle and wonderful Dharma,
Is difficult to encounter in hundreds of millions of kalpas.
Now I have the chance to see, to listen,
Receive and uphold the Dharma,
May I deeply understand the true meaning of the Thus Come One.
Homage to the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra, Universal Worthy of Great Conduct
(Repeat last time 3 times, and ending with a half bow)*

When the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Samantabhadra having discoursed upon and praised the exalted merits and virtues of the Tathagata, He addressed Kumara Sudhana and a great company of Bodhisattvas as follows: O Noble-minded Man, the (infinite) merits and virtues of the Tathagata are so great and wonderful. If such were preached by all the Buddhas of the ten directions who consecutively enumerated them during unspeakable and incalculable aeons in the Buddha-domains equal to the smallest dust-motes (in the atmosphere) in number, they could not thereby be exhausted. If someone aspires to attain this high state of merit, he should understand that its realization depends upon the attainment of the Ten Great Vows: the vows of widest and highest aspiration and the actual practice of them.

And what are the Ten Great Vows? They are

- 1. To pay the highest homage and respect to all Buddhas.*
- 2. To preach (the virtue of) and to praise (the glory of) the Tathagatas*
- 3. To make abundant offerings for the veneration to the Buddhas.*
- 4. To repent and confess one's evil deeds and evil karma.*
- 5. To approve of and rejoice at the merits and virtues of others.*
- 6. To request the Buddhas to set in motion "The Wheel of Dharma".*
- 7. To request the Buddhas to remain in the world.*
- 8. To be faithful follower of "The Teaching of the Buddhas" forever.*
- 9. To be always in harmony with all beings (bestowing on them gifts according to their needs).*
- 10. To dedicate all of one's merits to (benefit) all beings.*

Kumara Sudhana said to the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra: "What course shall we follow, O Holy One, to fulfill all these virtues, from "rendering homage to Buddhas" to "turning over one's own merits" to all beings?"

The Bodhisattva Samantabhadra replied to Kumara Sudhana: "O Noble-minded Man, as to what is said "homage to and respect of the Buddhas", it means that by the power of the Virtues and the Vows of the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra, I ("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 smallest dust-motes, in number, throughout the worlds of Dharma and the empty space of the ten directions and the three

periods of time. I worship and adore them constantly with my pure deeds, namely, the bodily, vocal, and mental deeds."

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 end when the limitation of infinite space is ended, as the space is boundless, so also is my homage to the Buddhas without end. So is it, when the spheres of beings are ended, the karmas of beings are ended, the sorrows of beings (klesa) are ended, these too are endless: even so is my homage to all the Buddhas endless. Thought following upon thought without interruption, 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 directions, and the three periods of time throughout the Dharma-circles and the empty space, upon each speck of dust, there the Buddhas are dwelling, equal in number to the smallest specks of dust of all the worlds. 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 was with the angelic and eloquent tongues of the Goddess (Sarasvati). 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.

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 void of space 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 empty space, and of the ten directions and three periods of time, in each speck of dust exists 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 will offer them the most rare and wondrous gifts such as the flowery-clouds, garland-clouds, heavenly music-clouds, celestial tapestry-clouds, angelic garment-clouds; all kinds of heavenly perfumes, scented balms, aromatic incenses, aromatic powders, each equal

in quantity to Mount Sumeru (the king of mountains). I will 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, and the burning oil of each as great as the water of the ocean. Ceaselessly will I offer such gifts, in veneration. O Noble-minded Man, among all gifts, the crown of them is the gifts of Dharma. Such gifts are called: the offering of "Following the instructions (of all Buddhas), the offering of benefits for 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 Bodhicitta."

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, of nayutas, of kalans, and of upannishads. And why? Because the Dharma is held in the highest esteem by all the Tathagatas. Moreover, all Buddhas are begotten from the Dharma, through the perfecting of their conduct in accordance with it. If the Bodhisattvas make offering 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 the Buddhas will only cease if 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 as all the things from the void of space to the sorrows of all beings are endless; so also will my offering to Buddhas endless. Thought succeeding thought without interruption, in bodily, vocal, and mental deeds without weariness.

Again, O Noble-minded Man, what is meant by "repenting and confessing one's evil deeds and evil karma"? A Bodhisattva would think thus: all the evil deeds 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 empty spaces unlimited as it is, could not contain them. I now confess and repent them all, by my three purified deeds of body, speech, and mind, and with a sincere heart, pledging myself not to commit any evil deed here-after. I will always keep myself pure in the prohibitive precepts, and in all active moral deeds.

I will lay this repentance before all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of all worlds and Dharma-circles equal in number to the smallest dust-motes. My repentance 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 the space to the sorrows of beings are endless, so also is my repentance 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 Buddha lands, the Buddhas, equal in number to the smallest dust-motes of all the worlds, throughout all the Dharma-circles and empty space, of the ten directions and three periods of time, have devoted their lives to the sole purpose of acquiring all wisdom, and diligently accumulating merit. Since they began to direct their minds (toward Bodhicitta), throughout the duration of unutterable and innumerable kalpas and in Buddha-domains, equal in number to the smallest dust-motes of all worlds. During each Kalpa, having sacrificed their heads, eyes, hands, and feet, in unutterable and incalculable number as the smallest dust-motes of Buddha-spheres, having thus overcome all difficulties, and accomplished all the arduous tasks, perfected the various stages of paramitas, passing through the experiences of the Bodhisattva-wisdom, and accomplished the highest Bodhi of Buddhas till entered into Parinirvana, whereupon they distributed the sariras. 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 realms of existence, or belonging to the four kinds of birth, or belonging to any species of life in the worlds of the ten directions, though such merit may be as infinitesimal as a grain of dust, all will have my support and corresponding regard. With all such I rejoice.

Again, all the Sravakas, the Pratyeka-Buddhas, Arhats, and those who are still to be advanced on the path of discipline, all such are the saints of the ten directions and the three periods of time, with whom I rejoice at their merit if any may be possessed.

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 requesting the Buddhas to set in motion "the Wheel of Dharma"? It means that I will apply my bodily, speech, and mental efforts, and various expedient means, and the most skillful 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 directions, and the three periods of time, throughout the Dharma-realms and the empty space; each dust-mote respectively contains therein unutterable and innumerable vast Buddha lands, equal in number to the smallest dust-motes. In each country dwell innumerable and ineffable Buddhas equal to the smallest dust-motes in number. 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 void has ended, and likewise the states 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 "requesting the Buddhas to remain in the world"? The Buddhas are infinite in number as the minutest dust-motes of the ten directions and three periods of time throughout the Dharma-realms and empty space; and so are the Bodhisattvas, the Sravakas, the Pratyeka-Buddhas, the Arhat, 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 living beings, instead of entering Nirvana; 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 void of space has ended, and likewise the states of beings, the karmas of beings, and the sorrows of beings, though all such have ended, yet, my request to the Buddhas is endless. Thought succeeds thought without interruption, and in bodily, vocal, and mental deeds, without weariness.

Again, O Noble-minded Man, what is meant by being "Under Buddhas' guidance forever"? It means, for instance, the Buddha Sakyamuni, who was the vehicle for the power of Tathagata Vairocana of the Saha-World, who from the beginning, when He made an earnest wish (for obtaining Buddhahood, in order to deliver all beings), and having made the exquisite advance by continuous skillful exertion, and sacrificed of His lives and bodies, in unutterable and countless number, for the sake of almsgiving. He stripped off His own skin for paper, used His own blood for ink, and His bones for writing-instruments. Thus the scriptures have been written in bulk as great as Mount Sumeru. In appreciation of the Dharma, He would disregard the royal thrones, kingdoms, palaces, gardens, and all that belonged to Him. He spared no energy in his arduous and painstaking career, until He accomplished the great Bodhi under the sacred Bodhi Tree. Then He displayed various exalted powers (Abhidhinas), manifested various transmutations, revealed various Buddha-figures of the three kayas, and presided at various assemblies; such as the assemblies of Great Bodhisattvas, the assemblies of Sravakas and Pratyeka-Buddhas, the assemblies of cakravarti (world rulers) and petty kings (scattered corn kings) and their retinues, the assemblies of kshatriya (warrior-statesmen), brahmin, elders, and laymen, the assemblies of devas (gods), nagas (dragon), eight divisions of supernatural beings, human, and non-human. At these assemblies and sanctuaries, He spoke with the full and round voice of thunder, with expedient means and skilful methods, teaching the beings in manner befitting their inclinations and happiness. Thus He led them to the maturity (or 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 Tathagatas of the Buddha lands, equal in number to the dust-motes of the ten directions and three periods of time, throughout the Dharma-realms and empty space. 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 harmony with beings"? It means always to accommodate and benefit all living beings of the worlds of ten directions and three periods of time, throughout the Dharma-circles and empty space; 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, either abiding on earth, in the water, in the fire (that is heat), or in the wind (air). There are also some beings dwelling in space, living in forests and bushes. They are of various species, forms, appearances, life-spans, names, natures, knowledge, habits, characteristics, manners, costumes, and diets. They dwell at innumerable abiding places; in towns, villages, cities, and palaces.

They comprise the devas, the nagas, the eight divisions of supernatural beings, human, and non-humans; some have no feet, some two feet, some four feet, and others have many feet; some are with form, some without form; with sense, or neither with or without sense. All of these shall 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, up to the Tathagatas, all in equality.

I will be a good doctor to those who are sick, a guide to those who have wandered away from the right path. I will be a bright light to those who wander in darkness. I will enable the poor and destitute to discover hidden treasure. A Bodhisattva should thus benefit all beings in equal treatment, and bestow his loving care on 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 revering 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 Bodhisattvas) develop Great Compassion, and from the Great Compassion springs the Bodhicitta, and from Bodhicitta comes the Enlightenment.

This is like unto the king Bodhi tree 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 fruits. It will live to the full length of its normal existence. A king Bodhi-tree is even thus, all living beings are roots of the Bodhi tree, the Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas are its fruits and its flowers. 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

Supreme Perfect Enlightenment. Therefore, the beings are essential to the Bodhi; for without them, there are no Bodhisattvas able to attain the Supreme Perfect Enlightenment. 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 void of space has ended, the worlds of beings, the karmas of beings, and the sorrows of beings are all ended, yet, my boundless compassion is endless. Thought succeeds thought without interruption, and in bodily, vocal, and mental deeds, without weariness.

Again, O Noble-minded Man, what signifies "Dedicating all one's merits (to benefit all sentient beings)"? This means that all one's merits acquired from the first vow of paying the highest homage and respect to all Buddhas, up to and including the vow to dedicating all one's merit to all beings. All these shall be transferred to all beings throughout the Dharma-worlds and immeasurable spaces of the universe, wishing them to be constantly peaceful and happy without sickness or suffering. I will see all beings' evil projects fail, and all their virtuous intentions will be quickly achieved. I will close the door against evil destinies, and open the right paths 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 brought upon them, so shall they be released (from their evil deeds), and finally attain the supreme Bodhi. Thus do all the Bodhisattvas devote themselves to the cultivation of virtue and merit, and dedicate all the rewards over to the benefit of all beings (in this way).

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 Ten Great Vows of all Bodhisattvas Mahasattvas in completion. The Bodhisattvas who achieve the performance of these Vows, will lead all beings to the fruition (of Bodhi), and attainment of Supreme Perfect Enlightenment. He (whosoever is a Bodhisattva), can fulfill the ocean of Vows of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra; therefore, O Noble-minded Man, you should comprehend the Truth, (and attain thereto).

If a good man or woman filled the incalculable Buddha-spheres in unutterable and innumerable numbers, equal to the dust-motes of the ten directions, with the seven exquisite gems and with the highest joys of men and devas 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. The measure of the stock of merit of the former one, would not equal one hundredth part (or the latter); nay, not one thousandth part, even not to an upanisandth part of the merit (of the latter).

Again, whosoever has profound faith in this Great Vows, and will accept, recite, or write, even one verse of four lines only. Such will quickly purify the five deadly sins, 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 evil harmful forces, yakas (evil flying spirits), raksasas (evil night demons), kumdhadas (demons of greed and lust), pisacas (mad ghosts), bhutas (self-created ghosts), vampires and 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 good man is well incarnated in a human body, and has been 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 of the Great One. If he be born in the devas or human worlds, such an 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 is on the verge of death, at the last instant of life, when all his faculties scatter and he departs from all relatives, when all power and statues are lost and nothing survives, his state-ministers and great officials, his inner palaces and outer cities, elephants and horses, carriages, jewels and the treasuries of precious jewels, can no longer accompany him, these Great Vows alone will stay with him. At all times they will guide him forward, and in a single instant he will be born in Sukhavati, the Land of Highest Bliss (the Pure land of Buddha Amitabha).

Arriving there (the Pure land of Buddha Amitabha), he will see the Lord Buddha Amitabha, surrounded by the Bodhisattvas Manjusri, Bodhisattva Samantabhadra, Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, Bodhisattva Maitreya, and others. The appearance of these Bodhisattva will be magnificent and their virtues and merits complete. Together they will surround him.

This man (the vower), will find himself born from a lotus flower, and favoured by the Buddha with the prediction of attaining the Buddhahood (in the future). After having received the prediction he will pour out the power of his wisdom to benefit all beings according to their (faith,

or the strength of their) minds. Such deeds he shall performed, throughout the duration of countless myriad of kalpas and throughout the ten directions of infinite and innumerable worlds.

Soon he will be sitting in the Bodhimandala, subduing the demonic forces of maras, attaining Supreme Perfect Enlightenment, and rotating the wondrous Wheel of Dharma. He will cause the living beings of the innumerable worlds of Buddha lands, as numerous as the infinitesimal dust-motes, to direct their minds towards the attainment of Bodhicitta. According to their ability and natures, he will teach, transform, and bring them to maturity. And 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 Buddhas 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 people will attain 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 Western Paradise of Buddha Amitabha.

Thereupon, the Bodhisattvas Mahasattva Samantbhadra in confirmation of this Truth, turning around to the ten directions, uttered the following stanzas:

1

*Before the Lions among Men,
Throughout the worlds of the ten directions,
In the past, in the present, and also in the future,
With body, speech, and mind entirely pure,
I bow before them all, omitting none.*

2

*With the awesome spiritual power of Samantabhadra's vows,
I appear at the same time before every Tathagata,
And in transformed bodies as numerous as motes of dust in all lands,
Bow to the Buddhas as numerous as motes of dust in all lands.*

3

*In every mote of dust are Buddhas as numerous as motes of dust,
Each dwelling amid a host of Bodhisattvas.
Throughout the motes of dust
In endless Dharma Realms it is the same:
I deeply believe they all are filled with Buddhas.*

4

*With oceans of sound I everywhere let fall
Words and phrases, wonderful and endless,
Which now and through all the aeons of the future,
Praise the wide, deep sea of Buddhas' merits and virtues.*

5

*Flower garlands, supreme and wonderful,
Music, perfumes, parasols, and canopies,
And other decorations rich and rare,
I offer up to every Tathagata.*

6

*Fine clothing, superior incense,
Powdered and burning incense, lamps and candles,
Each one heaped as high as Mount Sumeru,
I offer completely to all the Tathagatas.*

7

*With a vast, great, supremely liberated mind,
I believe in all the Buddhas of the three periods of time;
With the strength of Samantabhadra's conduct and vows,
I make offerings to all the Tathagatas everywhere.*

8

*For all the evil deeds I have done in the past,
Created by my body, mouth, and mind,
From beginningless greed, anger, and delusion,
I now know shame and repent them all.*

9

*I rejoice in the merits and virtues
Of all beings in the ten directions,
From the most humble to the Arhats,
Pratyeka-Buddhas, Bodhisattva, and all the Tathagatas.*

10

*Before the Lamps of the Worlds of the ten directions,
Who have just accomplished Supreme Bodhi,
I now request and beseech them all
To turn the foremost, wondrous Dharma wheel.*

11

*If there are Buddhas who wish for Nirvana,
I request with deep sincerity
That they dwell in the world for a longer time
To bring benefits and bliss to every being.*

12

*I worship those with blessings, praise them and make offerings;
I request that the Buddhas remain in the world
And turn the Dharma Wheel;
The good roots gained from following and rejoicing
In the merits and virtues and from repentance and reform,
I transfer to living beings and the Buddha Way.*

13

*I study with the Buddhas and practice
The perfect conduct of Samantabhadra;
I make offerings to all the Tathagatas of the past,
And to all present Buddhas throughout the ten directions.*

14

*All future Teachers of Gods and Men
Whose aspirations and vows have been completed,
I will follow in study throughout the three periods of time
And quickly attain Great Bodhi.*

15

*In all lands of the ten directions,
Vast, great, pure, and wonderfully adorned,
All the Tathagatas sit beneath regal Bodhi trees,
While assemblies circumambulate them.*

16

*I vow that every being in all directions
Will be peaceful, happy, and without worry.
May they obtain the proper Dharma's profound aid,
And may all their sufferings be wiped away, without exception.*

17

*While striving to attain Bodhi,
I will gain the knowledge of past lives in all destinies.
I will always leave the home-life and cultivate pure precepts.*

Without outflows, never broken, and without stain.

18

*Be they devas, nagas, yakshas, or kumbhandas,
Humans, non-humans, and the rest,
In the many languages of all such living beings,
With every sound I will speak the Dharma.*

19

*I will cultivate the pure paramitas with vigor,
And never abandon the Bodhi Mind.
I will banish all obstructions and defilements,
And fulfill all wondrous practices.*

20

*From all delusions, karma, and demon-states,
Amid all worldly paths, I will be freed,
As the lotus does not touch the water,
As the sun and moon do not stop in space.*

21

*Ending the sufferings of the paths of evil,
And to everyone equally bringing joy,
May I for aeons like the motes of dust in all lands
Ever benefit all in the ten directions.*

22

*Always in accord with living beings,
Cultivating through all future aeons
The vast conduct of Samantabhadra,
The unsurpassed Great Bodhi will I perfect.*

23

*May all who cultivate with me
Assemble with me in every place,
Our karmas of body, mouth, and mind the same,
As we cultivate and study all practices and vows.*

24

*With all advisors, good and wise, who aid me
By explaining Samantabhadra's deeds,
I vow always to congregate together:*

May they never be displeased with me.

25

*I vow always to meet the Tathagatas face to face
And the hosts of disciples who gather around them.
I will raise offerings, which are vast and great,
Untired to the end of future aeons.*

26

*I will hold high the subtly wondrous Buddhadharma
And illuminate all the practices of Bodhi;
I will be ultimately pure in Samtabhadra's way,
Practicing until the end of time.*

27

*Inexhaustible blessings and wisdom
I cultivate throughout all worlds;
By concentration, wisdom, skillful means, and liberation,
I will gain endless store of merits and virtues.*

28

*In one mote of dust are lands as numerous as motes of dust;
In each land are incalculable numbers of Buddhas.
In every place where the Buddhas dwell I see the host assembled,
Endlessly proclaiming all the practices of Bodhi.*

29

*In ten directions everywhere, throughout the sea of lands,
Every hair-tip encompasses oceans of past, present and future.
So, too, there is a sea of Buddhas, a sea of Buddha lands;
Pervading them all I cultivate for seas of endless time.*

30

*The speech of all Tathagatas is pure;
Each word contains an ocean of sounds.
According with what beings like to hear,
The Buddhas' sea of eloquence flows forth.*

31

*All the Tathagatas of the three periods of time
Forever turn the wonderful Dharma wheel,
With these inexhaustible seas of words and languages.*

I understand all with my deep wisdom.

32

*I can penetrate the future
And exhaust all aeons in a single thought.
In a single thought I completely enter
All aeons of the three periods of time.*

33

*In one thought I see all Lions of Men
Of the past, present, and future;
I constantly fathom the Buddhas' states,
Their magical liberations and their awesome strength.*

34

*On the tip of an extremely fine hair,
Appear jewelled lands of past, present, and future;
Lands on hair-tips as numerous as dust-motes
In all lands of the ten directions,
I deeply enter, adorn, and purify.*

35

*All Lamps of the Future that light the world,
Complete the way, turn the Dharma wheel,
And rescue living beings,
As they perfect the Buddhas' work and manifest Nirvana,
I draw near and attend to each one and obtain:*

36

*The spiritual power to go everywhere swiftly:
The power to enter the Mahayana universally through the
Universal Door;
The power of wisdom and conduct to cultivate merits and
Virtues universally;
The subtle spiritual power to shield all with Great Compassion;*

37

*The power to purify and adorn (all)
With supreme blessings everywhere;
The power of wisdom which is unattached and independent;
The awesome spiritual powers and the powers of concentration,
Wisdom, and skill-in-means;*

The power of universally accumulating Bodhi;

38

*The power of good karma which purifies all things;
The power to eradicate all afflictions;
The power to subdue all demons;
The power to perfect Samantabhadra's conduct.*

39

*The sea of lands I everywhere adorn and purify,
And I liberate all living beings, without exception.
With skill I make selections from among the sea of Dharmas
And enter deeply into the wisdom sea.*

40

*I cultivate the ocean of practices to purify,
Perfect and complete a sea of vows.
I draw near to a sea of Buddhas and make offerings,
And cultivate without fatigue for a sea of time.*

41

*To all the Tathagatas of the three periods of time,
With Bodhi, conduct, and vows the most supreme,
I completely offer up my perfect cultivation;
With Samantabhadra's practices, I awaken to Bodhi.*

42

*Each Tathagata has an elder disciple
Named Samantabhadra, Honoured One.
I now transfer all good roots, and I vow
To perform deeds of wisdom identical to His.*

43

*I vow that my body, mouth, and mind will be forever pure
And that all practices and lands will be also.
I vow in every way to be identical
To the wisdom of Samantabhadra.*

44

*I will wholly purify Samantabhadra's conduct,
And the great vows of Manjusri as well.
All their deeds I will fulfill, leaving nothing undone.*

Till the end of the future I will never tire.

45

*Infinite and measureless is my cultivation;
Boundless merits and virtues I obtain.
Amid limitless practices I will dwell in peace,
And penetrate the strength of spiritual powers.*

46

*Manjusri has wisdom, courage and bravery;
Samantabhadra's conduct and wisdom are the same.
I now transfer all good roots,
In order to follow them in practice and in study.*

47

*In the three periods of time, all Buddhas praise
Such vows as these, lofty and great.
I now transfer all good roots wishing to perfect
The supreme practices of Samantabhadra.*

48

*I vow that when my life approaches its end,
All obstructions will be swept away;
I will see Amitabha Buddha'
And be born in His Land of Ultimate Bliss and Peace.*

49

*When reborn in the Western Paradise,
I will perfect and completely fulfill,
Without exception, these Great Vows,
To delight and benefit all beings.*

50

*The Assembly of Amitabha Buddha is completely pure;
When from a matchless lotus I am born,
I will behold the Tathagata's Measureless Light
As He appears before me
To bestow a prediction of Buddhahood.*

51

*Receiving a prediction from the Tathagata,
I will take countless appearances and forms,*

*And with wisdom power vast and great, pervade ten directions
To benefit all the realms of living beings.*

52

*Realms of worlds in empty space might reach an end,
And living beings, karmas and afflictions be extinguished;
But they will never be exhausted, and neither will my vows.*

53

*With myriad jewels in boundless lands in all directions,
I will make decorations and offerings to the Tathagatas.
For aeons as numerous as the motes of dust in all lands, I bring
The foremost peace and joy to gods and humans.*

54

*Yet, if anyone believes in these Great Vows,
As they pass by the ear but a single time,
And in search of Bodhi thirstily craves these vows,
The merits and virtues gained will surpass these offerings.*

55

*With bad advisors forever left behind,
From paths of evil he departs for eternity,
Soon to see the Buddha of Limitless Light
And perfect Samantabhadra's Supreme Vows.*

56

*Easily obtaining the blessing of long life,
Assured of a noble rebirth in the human realm,
Before long he will perfect and complete
The practices of Samantabhadra.*

57

*In the past, owing to a lack of wisdom power,
The five offences of extreme evil he has committed;
In one thought they can all be wiped away
By reciting the Great Vows of Samantabhadra.*

58

*His clan, race, and color, marks and characteristics
With his wisdom are all perfected and complete;
Demons and externalisms will have no way to harm him,*

And he will be a field of merits in the Three Realms.

59

*To the regal Bodhi tree he will quickly go,
And seated there subdue hordes of demons.
Supremely and perfectly enlightened, he will turn the Dharma wheel,
To benefit the host of living beings.*

60

*If anyone can read, receive, and uphold high
Samantabhadra's Vows and proclaim them,
His reward only the Buddhas will know,
And he will obtain Bodhi's highest path.*

61

*If anyone recites Samantabhadra's Vows,
I will speak of a portion of his good roots:
In one single thought he can fulfill
The pure vows of sentient beings.*

62

*The supreme and endless blessing from Samantabhadra's conduct,
I now universally transfer.
May every living being, drowning and adrift,
Soon return to the Land of Limitless Light.*

When the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Samantabhadra finished speaking these pure verses on the Great King of Vows before the Tathagata, Kumara Sudhana was overwhelmed with boundless joy, and all the Bodhisattvas were enraptured with ecstasy. The Tathagata applauded: "Excellent Excellent!"

At the assembly, where this inconceivable state of emancipation and exalted Dharma was proclaimed, there were presented the World Honour 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 were led by the Bodhisattvas Maitreya. All the great Bodhisattvas of the Bhadra-kalpa were led by the Bodhisattva Vimala-Samantabhadra. The Ekajati-Pratyeka-Buddhas, who are in the stage of Murdhadhichikata, and the great Bodhisattvas and the others of the ten directions of the various worlds, were all 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 and by the Mahamaugalyayana. These were present also the great

sravakas, devas, heavenly kings, the nagas, yakas (evil flying spirits), gandhavas (musician perfuming-living gods), garudas (golden winged birds), kinaras (horn-headed semi-humans), and maharajas (large abdomen naga-deitys), human and sub-human. And the whole multitude on hearing the discourse of the Buddha, were inspired with great joy and faithful observance (of the Vows).

* Here ends the Vows of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra *

VERSE OF TRANSFERENCE

*May the merits and virtues 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.*

Amitabha! Homage to Samantabhadra Bodhisattva! Homage to Sakyamuni Buddha! Homage to all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas in the ten directions and three periods of time! Recite sutras often and let the Dharma Wheel turn in this world! Thank you! See you next week!