

DHARMA FLOWER SUTRA

with commentary of Tripitaka Master Hua

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Sutra: T.23a11

The Buddha, Shakyamuni, told the Bhikshus, "When the Buddha-Great-Penetrating-Wisdom-Victory attained anuttarasamyaksambodhi, in each of the ten directions, five hundred myriads of millions of Buddha worlds quaked in six ways. The dark recesses between those lands that the awesome light of the sun and moon could not illumine then were brightly lit, and the living beings therein were able to see one another. They all said 'where have all these living Beings come from?' Further, in those lands, all the heavenly palaces, up to the Brahma palaces, quaked in six ways. A great light shone everywhere, illumining the entire universe and surpassing the light of the heavens."

COMMENTARY:

The Buddha, Shakyamuni, told the Bhikshus, "When the Buddha, Great Penetrating Wisdom Victory, attained Annuttarasamyaksambodhi, **The utmost right and perfect enlightenment.** In each of the ten directions, five hundred myriads of millions of Buddha worlds quaked in six ways. The dark recesses between those lands, that the awesome light of the sun and moon could not illumine, then were brightly lit, and the living beings therein were able to see one another. They all said, 'Where have all these living beings come from?'" **Basically, there weren't any living beings in those dark places. Why are there suddenly living beings there now? Actually, they thought there weren't any living beings because it was dark, and they couldn't see them. Now it was light and so they were visible.**

"Further, in those lands, all the heavenly palaces up to the Brahma palaces, quaked in six ways. A great light shone everywhere, illumining the entire universe and surpassing the light of the heavens."

Sutra: T. 23a1s

At that time, in five hundred myriads of millions of lands to the east, the Brahma Heaven palaces shone with a light twice that of their usual brightness. Each of the Brahma Heaven Kings had this thought, "now the palaces are brighter than ever before. What is the reason for this manifestation?"

COMMENTARY:

At that time, in five hundred myriads of millions of lands to the East, the Brahma Heaven Palaces shone with a light twice that of their usual brightness. **All darkness was dispersed. Never had they seen such a dazzling display of light.** Each of the Brahma Heaven Kings had this thought, "Now the palaces are brighter than ever before. What is the reason for this manifestation?"

Sutra: T 23a20

Then, the Brahma Heaven kings visited one another and discussed this matter. In the assembly there was one great Brahma Heaven King by the name of Rescuing All, who on behalf of the Brahma hosts spoke verses, saying,

*All of our palaces
Are Bright as never before;
What is the reason for this?
Let us seek it together.
Is it because a great and virtuous god has been born?
Or because a Buddha has appeared in the world
That this great light Shines throughout the ten directions?*



COMMENTARY:

Then, the Brahma Heaven kings visited one another and discussed this matter. **They had a meeting to investigate this question.** In the assembly there was one great Brahma Heaven king by the name of Rescuing All, who on behalf of the Brahma hosts, spoke verses, saying:

All of our palaces/ are bright as never before/ What is the reason for this?/ Let us seek it together/ **Let's find out why.** Is it because a great and virtuous god has been born/ or because a Buddha appeared in the world/ That this great light/ shines throughout the ten directions/ **Such bright light must surely be an auspicious sign. What does it portend?**

Sutra: T. 23a27

At that time, the Brahma Heaven Kings from five hundred myriads of millions of lands, together with their palaces, each with sacks filled with heavenly flowers, went to the west to seek out this manifestation. They saw the Thus Come One Great-Penetrating-Wisdom-Victory seated on the lion throne beneath the Bodhi tree in the Bodhimanda, revered and circumambulated by gods, dragon kings, gandharvas, kinnaras, mahoragas, and beings both human and non-human. They saw as well the sixteen sons of the king requesting the Buddha to turn the Dharma wheel.

COMMENTARY:

AT that time, the Brahma Heaven Kings from five hundred myriads of lands **to the east**, together with their palaces... **The gods do not ride, like we do, in buses or airplanes. They ride in their palaces. They can fly through the air, or travel on the ground. They are sort of like celestial Winnebagos complete with every convenience. Riding in them, they can go everywhere they please. They are even more wonderful than our airplanes. So, the great Brahma Heaven Kings come with their palaces that they lived in.** Each with sacks filled with heavenly flowers, went to the

west to seek out this manifestation. They saw the Thus Come One Great-Penetrating-Wisdom-Victory, seated on the lion throne beneath the Bodhi tree in the Bodhimanda revered and circumambulated by gods, dragon kings, gandharvas, kinnaras, mahoragas and beings both human and non-human. **The gods, dragons, and eightfold division--they were reverently walking around him.** They saw, as well, the sixteen sons of the King, the Wheel Turning King, requesting the Buddha, **Great-Penetrating-Wisdom-Victory**, to turn the Dharma Wheel.

Sutra: T.23b2

Then, the Brahma Heaven Kings bowed with their heads at the Buddha's feet, circumambulated him a hundred thousand times, and scattered heavenly flowers upon him. The flowers were piled as high as Mount Sumeru, and they offered them as well to the Buddha's Bodhi tree, which was ten yojanas in height. Having made offerings of flowers, each presented his palace to the Buddha, saying, 'pray show us pity, and benefit us by accepting and occupying these palaces that we offer you!'

Then the Brahma Heaven Kings, in front of the Buddha, with a single mind and the same voice, spoke verses in praise, saying:

*"World Honored One, you are very rare,
And difficult to encounter;
Complete with limitless meritorious virtues,
You are able to rescue and protect all creatures.
Great teacher of gods and humans,
You who pity all the world
All beings in the ten directions
Receive your beneficence.
We have come from
Five hundred myriads of millions of lands,
Setting aside the bliss of deep Dhyana Samadhi,
For the sake of making offerings to the Buddha
Blessings we've gained in former lives
well ornament our palaces.
Now we offer them to the World Honored One,
Only praying you will show mercy and accept them.*



COMMENTARY:

Then, the Brahma Heaven Kings bowed with their heads at the Buddha's feet, **in obeisance**, circumambulated him a hundred thousand times and scattered heavenly flowers upon him, **the flowers they had brought were in cloth bags**. The flowers were piled as high as Mount Sumeru. "Well," you might wonder, "If the flowers were that many, how could they all fit in their bags?"

They could even fit Mount Sumeru into their bags. You know why? Because their bags are treasures. They might look like ordinary heavenly-flower carry-alls, but you could even fit the three thousand great thousand worlds into them if you needed to. They are "miraculous." Our bags can only be stuffed just so full, but their bags always have room for more. That's because they are treasures. Probably, in former existences the bags were cultivators who were greedy for treasures, and persisted until finally from the force of their greed, they turned into bags which could carry Mount Sumeru! You shouldn't try to figure these things out with your ordinary, common understanding, either, because this is an inconceivable type of state.

"If the Buddha was seated on a lion throne that was one yojana tall, and the flowers were as high as Mount Sumeru, which is many, many yojanas high, then did the flowers smother the Buddha so that he could not even move?" you wonder. "They aren't heavy, but in such quantities, I would imagine they would weigh quite a bit."

You are too compassionate, really, worrying about the Buddha. The Buddha doesn't want you to worry. Mount Sumeru is Mount Sumeru, and the Buddha's throne is the Buddha's throne. They don't obstruct each other. All those flowers don't get in the way of the Buddha's throne, and the Buddha's throne doesn't obstruct the flowers. That's why we say it's wonderful. Don't try to figure it out with your ordinary mind.

And they offered them as well to the Buddha's Bodhi Tree, which was ten yojanas in height. **Not only did they make offerings to the Buddha, but they offered their flowers to the Buddha's Bodhi Tree, as well.** Having made offerings of flowers, each presented his palace to the Buddha, saying, "Pray show us pity and benefit us by accepting and occupying these palaces that we offer you!" **Since they felt that their palaces were the most precious things in the world, and they loved them more than anything else, they gave them to the Buddha.**

Sometimes people get very fond of their cars. They may even dream about them at night, dreaming that they give them gas or take care of them. The gods are extremely fond of their palaces. Their palaces can fly, and they can travel by land in them, they can sail through space and ride on the clouds. They are their most prized possessions. Now, having met the Buddha, they give up their most cherished palace-cars, and they say, "Buddha, please have mercy on us. Be compassionate and benefit us by accepting the palaces. Accept the palaces and occupy them."

Then the Brahma Heaven Kings, in front of the Buddha, with a single mind and the same voice, spoke verses in praise, saying: **like singing in unison, they said,**

World Honored One, you are very rare/ and difficult to encounter/ **It is extremely hard to meet with a Buddha. It is extremely difficult to encounter the Dharma. It is extremely difficult to meet with the Sangha. Now we have met with the Triple Jewel, the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha, Complete with limitless meritorious virtues/ The Buddha is endowed with limitless virtues-that is**

how he became a Buddha. Living beings, also, must have limitless virtues to be able to meet the Buddha.

You are able to rescue and protect all creatures/ great teacher of gods and humans/ **a great guiding master among the gods and among people**, you who pity all the world/ **You are most compassionate and merciful towards all living beings**. All beings in the ten directions/ receive your beneficence/ **are all benefitted by you**.

We have come from/ five hundred myriads of millions of lands/ setting aside the bliss of deep dhyana samadhi/ **We saw the Buddha's light, and so we left our attachment to our daily meditation--and it was very blissful, indeed.**

Before you have attained the bliss of Dhyana samadhi, your cultivation will have its "ups and downs," and may be bit haphazard. But once you have attained that bliss, nobody could keep you from cultivating! You're like a child eating candy. He eats a piece and then wants another--and another--and another. When he sees candy, he forgets everything and grabs for it. Cultivators who attain the bliss of Dhyana samadhi will want to meditate everyday, for sure. They will insist on it. It won't be okay to skip meditation anymore, because they like its flavor. They would rather go without eating than go without meditating. Although this is not a good analogy, you might even say that it is like being addicted to drugs. If an addict doesn't get his fix, he starts going through withdrawal. If the cultivator doesn't get his fix, he doesn't like it one bit. Before you have gained this bliss, you won't care that much about meditating, but once you've gained it, you'll think it is more blissful than absolutely anything else in the world. The gods sit there meditating all day long in Dhyana samadhi without getting up. But now, seeing the light and not understanding where it came from, they all set aside the bliss of samadhi. Using their spiritual powers, they went sailing across millions of lands to find its source. For the sake of making offerings to the Buddha/

Blessings we've gained in former lives/ well ornament our palaces/ **Because of blessings we cultivated in former lives, we now have such fine, beautiful, all-purpose palaces, exquisitely adorned and beautiful**. Now we offer them to the World Honored One/ our most prized possessions, Only praying you will show mercy and accept them/

Sutra: T. 23b18

At that time, the Brahma Heaven Kings, having praised the Buddha, said "we only pray that the World Honored One will turn the Dharma wheel, crossing over living beings, opening up the way to Nirvana." Then all the Brahma Heaven Kings with one mind and the same voice, proclaimed these verses:

"Hero of the world, doubly perfect honored one, We only pray that you will expound and proclaim the Dharma,

*And through the power of your great compassion and pity
Cross over suffering and tormented living beings.*

COMMENTARY:

At that time, the Brahma Heaven Kings, having praised the Buddha, said, "We only pray that the World Honored One will turn the Dharma Wheel." **The Buddha was thinking about taking a rest, but living beings would not hear of it! They kept asking him to turn the Dharma wheel, to go to work. Turning the Dharma wheel is the Buddha's work.** "Crossing over living beings, and opening up the way to Nirvana, **the path of non-production and non-extinction.**" Then, all the Brahma Heaven Kings, with one mind and same voice, proclaimed these verses:

"Hero of the world, Doubly Perfect Honored One/ **Great hero, both in and beyond the world, you who are complete in both blessings and wisdom.** We only pray that you will expound and proclaim the Dharma/ and, through the power of your great compassion and pity/ cross over suffering and tormented living beings/ **Through the power of your great kindness bestow happiness upon living beings, and through the power of your great compassion, relieve them of their sufferings, taking them from the shore of birth and death across the massive flow of affliction and agony to the other shore of Nirvana.**

Sutra: T. 23b22

Thereupon, the Thus Come One Great Penetrating Wisdom Victory, assented by his silence.

COMMENTARY:

Thereupon, the Thus Come One, Great-Penetrating-Wisdom-Victory, assented by his silence. **When the Brahma Heaven Kings came from the east and requested him to speak the Dharma, he assented by keeping silent. By not speaking, he indicated that he would speak Dharma.**

Sutra: T. 23b22

Furthermore, O Bhikshus, to the southeast the great Brahma Kings in five hundred myriads of millions of lands, seeing their palaces in dazzling brilliance as never before, jumped for joy, thinking it rare indeed.



COMMENTARY:

Furthermore, O Bhikshus, to the southeast the Great Brahma Kings in five hundred myriads of millions of lands, seeing their palaces in dazzling brilliance as never before, jumped for joy, thinking it

rare indeed. **They saw their palaces lit up as never before. They were exceedingly happy. It was something they had never seen before.**

Sutra: T 23b26

They visited one another and discussed this matter. Then, in the assembly, a Brahma Heaven King by the name of Great Compassion, on Behalf of the Brahma hosts spoke these verses:

*"What is the reason for this event?
Why has this sign appeared?
All of our palaces
Are aglow as never before.
Has a greatly virtuous god been born?
Or has a Buddha appeared in the world?
We have never seen such signs Before.
With one mind we should investigate it,
Passing through a thousand myriads of millions of lands,
Searching for the light, investigating it together.
It must be that a Buddha has appeared
To take across the suffering living Beings.*

COMMENTARY:

They visited one another and discussed this matter. **They got together and talked it over.** Then, in the assembly a Brahma Heaven King by the name of Great Compassion, on behalf of the Brahma hosts, spoke these verses:

What is the reason for this event/ Why has this sign appeared/ all of our palaces/ are aglow as never before/ **We have never seen such light!** Has a greatly virtuous god been born/ or has a Buddha appeared in the world/ we have never seen such signs before/ with one mind we should investigate it/ **We should concentrate our efforts to figure out where this light is coming from.** Passing through a thousand myriads of millions of lands/ searching for the light, investigating it together/ it must be that a Buddha has appeared/ to take across the suffering living beings/ **all suffering, miserable living beings.**

Sutra: T. 23c+

At that time, five hundred myriads of millions of Brahma Heaven Kings, together with their palaces, each with sacks filled with heavenly flowers, went to the southwest to seek out this manifestation, They saw the Thus-Come-One Great-Penetrating-Wisdom-Victory seated on the lion throne Be-neath the Bodhi tree in the Bodhimanda, revered and circumambulated by gods, dragon kings, gandharvas, kinnaras, mahoragas, and beings Both human and non-human. They saw, as well, the sixteen sons of the king requesting the Buddha to turn the Dharma wheel.

COMMENTARY:

At that time, five hundred myriads of millions of Brahma Heaven Kings, from the southeast, together with their palaces, each with sacks filled with heavenly flowers... **The gods are fond of flowers, and so they use them to make offerings to the Buddha, putting them in their cloth flower bags. They**

went to the southwest to seek out this manifestation. They saw the Thus Come One Great-Penetrating-Wisdom-Victory seated on the lion throne beneath the Bodhi tree in the Bodhimanda, **way up in the northwest**, revered and circumambulated by gods, dragon kings, gandharvas, kinnaras, mahoragas, and beings both human and non-human. They saw, as well, the sixteen sons of the king requesting the Buddha to turn the Dharma wheel.