

FLOWER ADORNMENT SUTRA

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7. Door of the State of Indra's Net

TEXT:

SEVEN: WITHIN EACH MOTE OF DUST IN THE LOTUS PETAL, THE BOUNDLESS SEAS OF KSHETRAS ARE MANIFEST. THE SEAS OF KSHETRAS FURTHER CONTAIN FINE DUST MOTES, ALL OF WHICH CONTAIN SEAS OF KSHETRAS. THIS IS THE STATE OF THE MULTILAYERED AND INFINITE, WHICH DOES NOT LIE WITHIN THE REALM OF CONSCIOUS THOUGHT.

COMMENTARY:

This corresponds to the seventh of the Ten Esoteric Doors, the "Door of the State of Indra's Net," the state of the multi-layered infinity. SEVEN: WITHIN EACH MOTE OF DUST IN THE LOTUS PETAL, THE BOUNDLESS SEAS OF KSHETRAS ARE MANIFEST. THE SEAS OF KSHETRAS FURTHER CONTAIN FINE MOTES OF DUST, ALL OF WHICH FURTHER CONTAIN SEAS OF KSHETRAS. THIS IS THE STATE OF THE MULTILAYERED AND INFINITE WHICH DOES NOT LIE WITHIN THE REALM OF CONSCIOUS THOUGHT. In each and every mote of dust in the lotus petal, there appear countless seas of kshetras, "fields," or "lands." It's not that one dust mote manifests one Buddhaland, but rather that one mote of dust manifests boundless numbers of seas of kshetras (Buddhalands). Not only does one mote of dust manifest boundless seas of kshetras, but each and every mote of dust manifests them. Each one of the seas of kshetras further contains motes of dust. You can't say the seas of kshetras don't contain motes of dust. If they didn't, how could they have been formed? What is more, within the dust motes contained in the seas of kshetras there are farther seas of kshetras. We can see that this progression goes on infinitely. There is no way to figure out the exact numbers involved. That is because it is not something that can be figured out by the common mind with its common knowledge. This state is beyond the realm of conscious thought.

TEXT:

THIS IS LIKE THE NET OF PEARLS COVERING THE PALACE OF THE HEAVENLY LORD. IN ONE BRIGHT PEARL THE MYRIAD IMAGES COMPLETELY MANIFEST. ALL THE PEARLS ARE LIKE THIS. EACH

OF THE BRIGHT PEARLS IS REFLECTED IN ALL THE OTHERS. THE REFLECTIONS ARE FURTHER REFLECTED AND GO ON ENDLESSLY.

COMMENTARY:

THIS IS LIKE THE NET OF PEARLS COVERING THE PALACE OF THE HEAVENLY LORD. Shakra is the God who dwells in the Heaven of the Thirty-three. It is he who is being referred to here as the "heavenly lord." The net which covers his palace contains multilayered arrangements of pearls reflecting one another endlessly. IN ONE BRIGHT PEARL THE MYRIAD IMAGES COMPLETELY MANIFEST. ALL THE PEARLS ARE LIKE THIS. EACH OF THE BRIGHT PEARLS IS REFLECTED IN ALL OF THE OTHERS. THE REFLECTIONS ARE FURTHER REFLECTED AND GO ON ENDLESSLY. Each bright pearl is shining, inside and out, and so each is like a mirror in which all the myriad images are reflected. This is true of all the pearls, not just one. The mountains, rivers, earth, and all the images are reflected in all of the pearls. Each pearl is translucent and brightly interpenetrating.

In the lotus petal there are fine dust motes. In the fine dust motes there are lotus petals. In each dust mote the Buddhalands of the ten directions manifest. The past can be moved to the present. The future can be moved to the present. The present can be moved to the past or the future. This state is not one that common people can fathom. Within the great, the small can manifest. Within the small, the great can manifest. Within existence, non-existence can manifest. Within non-existence, existence can manifest. It's neither one nor many. This state is endless and infinite, and so inconceivable that its hard for many people to believe it.

According to the usual mode of thinking, the past cannot become the present, and the present cannot turn into the future. Nor can the future become the past. But I'll illustrate this principle by way of an analogy. We are now in the present, here in the United States. In Asia, our present is their past. Here, today is Sunday, while in Asia, it's Monday right now. Isn't that the present moving to the past? How can the past move to the present? Let's consider television. On television you can watch things that happened in the past. The past then returns to the present. Most people wouldn't believe this concept of interpenetrating times, but by using television as an example, we can make it clear. However, television is only an analogy for this state, because in fact, the states that occur in the Buddhadharma are inconceivable and cannot be fully explained.

EACH OF THE BRIGHT PEARLS IS REFLECTED IN ALL OF THE OTHERS. THE REFLECTIONS ARE FURTHER REFLECTED AND GO ON ENDLESSLY. The reflections are infinite and the light is infinite.

TEXT:

BELOW IT SAYS, "JUST AS THE WORLD OF INDRA'S NET AND ALSO AS LAMPS REFLECTED REPEATEDLY IN FACING MIRRORS ARE INFINITE, SO TOO ARE THE BUDDHAS INFINITE."

COMMENTARY:

BELOW IT SAYS, "JUST AS THE WORLD OF INDRA'S NET AND ALSO AS LAMPS REFLECTED REPEATED IN FACING MIRRORS ARE INFINITE, SO TOO ARE THE BUDDHAS INFINITE." In a single lotus petal, worlds manifest. The mirrors reflect each other and reflect the light of the lamps. The lights of the lamps also shine upon one another. One lamp doesn't say to the other, "Your light cannot shine with mine over here." There is no distinction. The lights blend. "Unite the light" is an expression used to indicate cooperation among people too. Just as these two analogies represent infinite concepts, so too in the same way are the Buddhas infinite. One Buddha would never say, "I am the only Buddha. You can't be a Buddha." All living beings can become Buddhas. Buddhas do not compete with each other. The path of all the Buddhas is identical. For the Buddhas there is no great or small, no inside or outside. They all cultivate, develop their understanding, and take care of their own arrangements.

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BUDDHIST NEWS from Cultivating Virtue Boys' School

DO NOT WASTE FOOD!

By using fewer clothes, one can lengthen one's life.

By using less food, one can increase one's blessings.

During the 1983 school year, the students of Cultivating Virtue Boys' School put on a performance at the Buddhist Council Refugee Center to inform people how bad it is to waste food. Each of the students held in their hands an illustration of a way in which we should not waste food or a reason why we should be careful about the use of food. One such sign said, "Do not waste food or next life you might end up starving like the people in Africa are." The sign showed a young boy who was so hungry his ribs stuck out. An important point one student made was that not wasting food does not just apply to refugees but to everyone.

Each person comes into this world with a certain amount of blessings. Some have more, some have less. It depends on what they did in their previous lives. But in this life we must be careful to save our blessings and not spend them. If we spend our blessings this life, then next life we won't have any. If we save our blessings this life, we will still have blessings in the future. Better yet is to think of ways to increase our blessings this life. How do we do that? One way is by not wasting food. If we waste food, we are making it impossible for others to use the food. But there are so many people in this world who are starving, just because in the past they wasted food. If we deprive them of food now by wasting it ourselves, in the future we will have to starve like they are now. When people are hungry, they become resentful of those who have food to eat. If on top of that, the

people who have food carelessly waste it, how much deeper do you think the hungry people's resentment becomes? Therefore, wastefulness becomes a cause of wars.

Also, when we are wasteful, we are opposing our own compassionate nature. We are not even being human. We are indulging in greed, causing hatred in others, and setting an example of being selfish and stingy. Besides, if we take too much food ourselves and then throw away what we can't eat, we are being unfilial. First of all we are not honoring our parents, who worked so hard to provide the food. Second, we are not honoring all living beings, because we are only worried about ourselves and are not thinking about the suffering of others.

One of the boys from the school commented that the performance also was helpful for the students who put it on. He said, "I think schools like this one should flourish in America and around the world. When students from a school like this finally grow up, they will be able to truly, truly benefit our world.

Greed Infects the World

Talk to Instilling Virtue and Cultivating Virtue Students by Venerable Master Hua

Notes taken by Amy Dickerson, age 11

Abbot: Is this world we live in now a good world or a bad world?

Dharma, age 7: Bad because there is so much suffering.

Sari, age 13: Both because there is good and bad.

Karen, age 17: People have forgotten the difference between good and evil.

Abbot: Establish virtue and have a noble personality. Many teachers teach children to go out and make money, enjoy themselves, and then die. People don't want anything to do with their family. They just want money and beautiful things. They get confused by pretty things and have to have them. Everything is based on greed. People want to satisfy their ignorant greed. It is best to be filial to your parents, but all this is forgotten. The world is infected by greed. We should learn not to fight, not to be selfish, not to seek for self-benefit. Most people strive for profit and fight for gain. If you don't do this, then you will be able to cure the world of its sickness. We should take on this responsibility and use our wisdom and virtue instead of studying how to earn money.