



普勸僧俗發菩提心文 (續)

An Essay of Universal Exhortation to Sanghans and Laity to Generate the Bodhi Mind (CONTINUED)

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次明發菩提心功德

天帝釋白法慧菩薩言。佛子。菩薩初發菩提心。所得功德其量幾何。法慧菩薩言。此義甚深。難說。難知。難分別。難信解。難證。難行。難通達。難思惟。難度量。難趣入。雖然。我當承佛威神之力而為汝說。佛子。假使有人以一切樂具。供養東方阿僧祇世界所有衆生。經於一劫。然後教令淨持五戒。南西北方四維上下。亦復如是。此人功德寧為多否。天帝言。此人功德。唯佛能知。

16) Explanation of the Merit from Generating the Bodhi Mind

[Translator's Note: This entire section is extracted from the *Flower Adornment (Avataṃsaka) Sutra*.¹]

[At that time], the God, Śakra Devānām Indra inquired of Dharma Wisdom Bodhisattva, saying, "Son of the Buddha, how much merit is gained by the bodhisattva when he first generates the bodhi mind?"

Dharma Wisdom Bodhisattva replied, saying, "The meaning of this is extremely profound, difficult to describe, difficult to know, difficult to analyze, difficult to believe and comprehend, difficult to achieve the realization of, difficult to bring into action, difficult to penetratingly understand, difficult to contemplate, difficult to calculate, and difficult to proceed into. Although this is the case, I shall nonetheless endeavor, through the support of the Buddha's awesome spiritual powers, to explain this matter for you.

"Son of the Buddha. If there were a person who took up every form of happiness-providing phenomena and made offerings of them to all of the beings in the eastern direction in a number of worlds amounting to an *asamkhyeya*'s quantity, and continued to do this for an entire kalpa, and then afterwards instructed them and influenced them to uphold the five precepts purely—and if he also performed the same actions in the same way in all of the other directions of the south, west, north, the four midpoints, the zenith, and the nadir—would that person's merit be abundant, or not?"

Śakra Devānām Indra replied, "Only the Buddha would be able to know the extent of this person's merit."

¹ This entire section devoted to the merit involved in generating the bodhi mind consists of selected passages sequentially extracted from the *Floral Adornment (Avataṃsaka) Sutra*'s Chapter Seventeen: "The Merit from the Initial Generation of the Bodhi Mind" (T10.89a-91c).

This edition of the sutra is a translation of the 80-fascicle edition brought to Luo-yang in 695ce by the Khotanese tripiṭaka master Śikṣānanda who served as the primary translator, assisted by such luminaries as Bodhiruci and Yi-jing. This translator data according to FG: 5784c-a.

