



妙法蓮華經淺釋

THE DHARMA FLOWER SUTRA WITH COMMENTARY

【分別功德品第十七】

ROLL FIVE, CHAPTER SEVENTEEN: DISCRIMINATION OF MERIT AND VIRTUE

宣化上人講 Commentary by the Venerable Master Hua
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「佛說是諸菩薩摩訶薩得大法利時」：佛說這些個證果的聖人——阿羅漢和菩薩得他們的利益、又說這一切的凡夫得他們的利益；在佛說這一切菩薩得大法利的時候，「於虛空中，雨曼陀羅華、摩訶曼陀羅華」：在虛空中好像下雨似的，散下這小白華——又叫適意華；又下大白華。「以散無量百千萬億寶樹下，師子座上諸佛」：用這寶華來供養無量百千萬億寶樹王（菩提樹）的下邊，在每一個師子座上的諸佛的身上。這些佛是釋迦牟尼佛的分身化佛。「並散七寶塔中，師子座上釋迦牟尼佛及久滅度多寶如來」：又散於坐在七寶塔中，師子座上的釋迦牟尼佛，以及這位滅度很久以前的多寶如來的身上。「亦散一切諸大菩薩及四部眾」：又散到這一切的大菩薩、從地湧出這一些個菩薩，及四部眾。四部眾，就是比丘、比丘尼、優婆塞、優婆夷。用這小白華和大白華來普同供養。這一段是「雨華瑞」，兩大白華、小白華這種的祥瑞。

「又雨細末、栴檀、沉水香等」：這一段文是「雨香瑞」。細末，就是把栴檀香研成末粉；好像我們燒的檀香，先放那個香粉，這就是「細末」。沉水，又叫「沉香」；本來木頭，你放到水裏，它是漂浮起來的，但是這種沉香木放到水裏，它沉到水底下去，這叫「沉水香」。又雨下以上的這種香。

「於虛空中，天鼓自鳴，妙聲深遠」：這一段文是「天鼓瑞」。在虛空中，天鼓自己就響了。天上有一種鼓，在佛有法會的時候，就有天鼓鳴。這天鼓不是像我們人間的鼓，要用人來敲一敲、打一打才響；這天鼓自己就會響。天鼓所發

As the Buddha proclaimed these great advantages in the Dharma that the Bodhisattvas Mahasattvas had attained, and the benefit to Arhats and sages certified to fruition and ordinary living beings as well, **there rained from empty space *mandarava* flowers**, white flowers “which accord with one’s wish,” and big, white ***mahamandarava* flowers**. These flowers **floated down and settled upon the Buddhas seated on lion thrones beneath limitless hundreds of thousands of myriads of millions of jeweled trees**, Bodhi trees, as an offering. They also settled as an offering on the division body Buddhas of Shakyamuni Buddha, **as well as upon both Shakyamuni Buddha and Long-Since Well Gone One Many Jewels Thus Come One, seated together on the lion throne within the *stupa* of Seven Treasures**. The flowers also settled as an offering **upon the great Bodhisattvas and the fourfold assembly** of Bhikshus, Bhikshunis, Upasakas, and Upasikas. This is the Portent of the Raining of Flowers.

Sutra:

There also rained down finely ground *chandana* powder and sinks-in-water incense. In empty space, heavenly drums sounded of themselves, and their wonderful sounds reached afar. There also rained down thousands of kinds of heavenly garments strung with beads, as well as laces of real pearls, laces of *mani* pearls, and laces of As-You-Will pearls that covered the nine directions. Another offering to all in the great assembly was priceless incense burning in a multitude of precious censers, so that its scent naturally pervaded the great assembly and its surroundings.

Above each Buddha were Bodhisattvas holding aloft banners and canopies in a procession that extended clear up to the Brahma Heavens. All the Bodhisattvas, with wonderful sounds, sang limitless chants in praise of all Buddhas.

出來這種的聲音，妙聲又傳播得很深遠，是很細的，不是像我們人間那種很粗的聲音。

「又雨千種天衣，垂諸瓔珞，真珠瓔珞、摩尼珠瓔珞、如意珠瓔珞」：這一段文是「天衣瓔珞瑞」。又雨下一千多種同樣子的天衣——天上人所穿的衣服，垂著一切的瓔珞，有真珠瓔珞、摩尼珠瓔珞、如意珠瓔珞，有這四種的瓔珞。這如意珠，表示是一個「總持」。「遍於九方」：你們大約都知道是哪「九方」了吧？在《華嚴經》上，就講「遍於十方」，這兒是講「遍於九方」；你們各位說來聽一聽，這個「九方」，都是哪九方？這花下到哪一方去？雨華、又雨香、雨瓔珞，這是雨到上方去？那把下方除去？還是往下，下到上面去？很容易的嘛！所以我問的意思，就是看你們智慧怎麼樣？不是除去下方，這是除去上方！因為那個「下」，是往下方雨下，不是往上方雨下，所以這是除「上方」。由上方往下，雨下滿了九方；這九方，表示除了「佛法界」而外的「九法界」。

「眾寶香爐，燒無價香」：這一段文是「供養瑞」。以這個眾寶的香爐，又燒起最名貴、最有價值的香。這無價的香是什麼香呢？這個香，你多少錢也買不著的。怎麼樣呢？這是心香；燒起來我們每個人的心香。這無價寶爐，也就是你這個心；在這個心裏，燒上無價的香。「自然周至，供養大會」：自然，是不加造作的意思，也不用你想、也不用你怎麼樣叫它這樣子；不用的，它自然的就會這樣子。周至，這為什麼說「心香」呢？因為你這一念是周遍的、你這一粒微塵也是周遍法界的，所以說「自然周至」；周至，所有的地方都到了。你燒上你這個心香，能熏惡成善——把你惡的這種習氣都熏出去了，就變成善了；所以由這個善、由這一種誠心來供養大會。

「一一佛上，有諸菩薩，執持幡蓋，次第而上，至於梵天」：從十方所來的釋迦牟尼佛分身諸佛，在每一位佛的上邊，又有很多的菩薩，手拿著幢幡、寶蓋就來了。次第，就是很有次序的。沒有次第，就是沒有規矩；有次第，就是很有規矩的、有條不紊，就一行一行的，這麼一個跟著一個。好像我們繞佛，一個跟著一個，這都叫次第而行。這是「次第而上」，一個跟著一個的往上排列，排到大梵天上去。「是諸菩薩，以妙音聲，歌無量頌，讚歎諸佛」：所有這麼多的菩薩，都是以微妙的音聲，作出無量的偈頌，來讚歎諸佛的功德。

待續

Commentary:

There also rained down finely ground *chandana* powder and sinks-in-water incense. Previously, it was the Portent of the Raining of Flowers. This section is the Portent of the Raining of Incense, all portents of offerings. Basically, wood should float in water, but this kind of incense is so condensed it sinks in water. **In empty space, heavenly drums sounded of themselves, and their wonderful sounds reached afar.** This is the Portent of the Heavenly Drums. There are drums in the heavens that sound when the Buddha has a Dharma assembly. Unlike the drums in the human realm, they don't need to be played by someone in order to sound; they play all by themselves. The sound of heavenly drums, too, is not like the coarse sound of drums in the human realm; it is very subtle, wonderful, and penetrating.

There also rained down thousands of kinds of heavenly garments, which people in the heavens wear and which are strung with beads. This is the Portent of the Beaded Heavenly Garments. These rained down **as well as laces of real pearls, laces of *mani* pearls, and laces of As-You-Will pearls.** The “As-You-Will pearl” is a kind of “uniting” and represents *dharani*—“uniting and holding.” There were these four kinds of beadwork **that covered the nine directions.** The *Avatamsaka Sutra* talks about the ten directions, but here there are nine directions. The nine directions are the ten directions minus the direction from which the adornments were falling—the zenith or upper direction. The nine directions represent the nine Dharma Realms, that is, the Ten Dharma Realms minus the Dharma Realm of the Buddhas.

Another offering was priceless incense burning in a multitude of precious censers. What incense is this? It is the highest-quality incense, which money cannot buy, the “heart-incense.” It is the fragrance of the heart. The censer was the heart, and in it the heart incense was burned as an offering **to all in the great assembly, so that its scent naturally, without thought or planning, and all by itself, pervaded everywhere in the great assembly and its surroundings.** It is called heart incense because just as one thought can pervade everywhere in the Dharma Realm and as one dust particle can pervade the Dharma Realm, naturally permeating all places, so too, when you light the heart incense, it infuses and perfumes, so evil is dispelled and good is created. Your evil habits get smoked out and only the good ones remain. This goodness and sincerity is used as an offering to the great assembly.

Above each Buddha in the ten directions, Shakyamuni Buddha's division bodies, were Bodhisattvas holding aloft banners and canopies studded with jewels in a procession that extended clear up to the Brahma Heavens. They formed orderly rows, one following another, as we do when we recite the Buddha's name. **All the Bodhisattvas, with wonderful sounds, sang out limitless chants in praise of all Buddhas.** They made up verses and sang them in praise of the Buddhas.

To be continued