

FLOWER ADORNMENT SUTRA

THE SECOND GROUND

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"FURTHERMORE, WHEN THE SUPREME GRADE OF THESE TEN WHOLESOME KARMIC PATHS--the highest category of the Ten Good Deeds--IS CULTIVATED TO PURITY--when well cultivated--AND WHEN ONE HAS NOT BEEN TAUGHT BY OTHERS BUT BECOMES ENLIGHTENED ON ONE'S OWN--when one does not hear others speak, but one becomes enlightened on one's own refers to the Solitarily Enlightened Ones. WHEN ONE IS NOT FULLY ENDOWED WITH GREAT COMPASSION OR EXPEDIENT MEANS--when one has not yet perfected great compassion or skill in means and so needs to cultivate the Ten Wholesome Acts; WHEN ONE IS ENLIGHTENED THROUGH UNDERSTANDING OF PROFOUND DHARMAS OF CAUSES AND CONDITIONS--one understands the interactions of causes and conditions, those profound Dharmas--ONE ACCOMPLISHES THE VEHICLE OF THOSE SOLITARILY ENLIGHTENED." Then one becomes one solitarily enlightened.

"FURTHERMORE, WHEN THE SUPREME GRADE OF THESE TEN WHOLESOME KARMIC PATHS IS CULTIVATED TO PURITY--if you can cultivate it to total purity--AND WHEN ONE'S MIND IS VAST AND LIMITLESS, WHEN ONE IS ENDOWED WITH COMPASSION AND SYMPATHY, WHEN ONE USES EXPEDIENT MEANS TO GATHER IN BEINGS, WHEN ONE BRINGS FORTH GREAT VOWS, WHEN ONE DOES NOT ABANDON LIVING BEINGS, but forever teaches and transforms them, WHEN ONE SEEKS THE GREAT WISDOM OF ALL BUDDHAS; WHEN ONE PURIFIES AND REGULATES ALL THE BODHISATTVA GROUNDS--to seek the great wisdom of a Buddha, one should cultivate the Dharma doors of the Ten Grounds; WHEN ONE PURELY CULTIVATES ALL THE PARAMITAS--cultivating all the Six Paramitas and the Ten Thousand Practices of a Bodhisattva, ONE ACCOMPLISHES THE VAST, GREAT CONDUCT OF A BODHISATTVA.

"FURTHERMORE, AS TO THE MOST SUPREME GRADE OF THESE TEN WHOLESOME KARMIC PATHS, WHEN ONE HAS PURIFIED ALL MODES--when one has purified the wisdom of all modes--UP TO AND INCLUDING CERTIFYING TO THE TEN POWERS AND THE FOUR FEARLESSNESSES, THEN ONE ACCOMPLISHES ALL BUDDHA-DHARMAS--then one can bring all Buddhadharmas to successful conclusion. THEREFORE, I NOW EQUALLY CULTIVATE THE TEN WHOLESOME PATHS, AND I SHOULD BRING THEM ALL TO PERFECT PURITY. I should equally cultivate all the ten wholesome paths of karma to purity."

THE BODHISATTVA SHOULD STUDY SUCH EXPEDIENT MEANS AS THOSE. Bodhisattvas should study and practice those kinds of expedient Dharma doors.

SUTRA:

DISCIPLES OF THE BUDDHA, THIS BODHISATTVA, MAHASATTVA FURTHER MAKES THE FOLLOWING REFLECTION, "OF THE TEN UNWHOLESOME KARMIC PATHS, THE MOST SEVERE ARE CAUSES FOR THE HELLS, THE AVERAGE DEGREES ARE CAUSES FOR THE ANIMALS, AND THE LEAST SEVERE ARE CAUSES FOR THE HUNGRY GHOSTS.

AMONG THEM, THE OFFENSE OF KILLING CAN CAUSE LIVING BEINGS TO FALL TO THE HELLS, THE ANIMALS, AND HUNGRY GHOSTS. IF THEY ARE BORN AMONG PEOPLE, THEY HAVE TWO KINDS OF RETRIBUTION: ONE, A SHORT LIFE; TWO, MANY ILLNESSES. THE OFFENSE OF STEALING ALSO CAUSES LIVING BEINGS TO FALL INTO THE THREE EVIL PATHS. IF THEY ARE BORN AMONG PEOPLE, THEY HAVE TWO KINDS OF RETRIBUTION: ONE, THEY ARE POOR; TWO, THEIR WEALTH IS HELD IN COMMON, AND THEY DO NOT HAVE FREE USE OF IT.

COMMENTARY:

Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva again says: DISCIPLES OF THE BUDDHA, THIS BODHISATTVA, MAHASATTVA--this great Bodhisattva who cultivates the Bodhisattva Way and accumulates all kinds of good roots, when he attains the position of the Second Ground, that of Leaving Filth--FURTHER MAKES THE FOLLOWING REFLECTION--he makes another contemplation, saying: "OF THE TEN UNWHOLESOME KARMIC PATHS, the ten kinds of paths of karmic retribution which are not good, THE MOST SEVERE ARE CAUSES FOR THE HELLS. The most terrible and serious is that one has to fall into the hells. THE AVERAGE DEGREES ARE CAUSES FOR THE ANIMALS. The middle degree is that one has to become an animal, AND THE LEAST SEVERE ARE CAUSES FOR THE HUNGRY GHOSTS. The least serious is having to become a hungry ghost.

"AMONG THEM, THE OFFENSE OF KILLING CAN CAUSE LIVING BEINGS TO FALL TO THE HELLS, ANIMALS, AND HUNGRY GHOSTS." The first among the Ten Unwholesome Karmic Paths is the offense of killing, which makes living beings fall into the destiny of the hells. There are millions of hells, not just one single hell. Their varieties are limitless. Hells are one of the three evil destinies and so are the animals. There are also millions upon millions of different kinds of animals. There are also countless varieties of hungry ghosts of different species and types. "IF THEY ARE BORN AMONG PEOPLE, THEY HAVE TWO KINDS OF RETRIBUTION": If you commit the Ten Unwholesome Karmic Acts, afterward you fall into the three evil destinies. When that is over and you are born as a person among people, you have two kinds of retribution coming to you. What are they? "ONE, A SHORT LIFE." You like to kill? When you have finished undergoing your retribution in the three evil paths and become a person, you still have a short life. Maybe you will be born for a few days and then die. Or, you may die after a few months, or even a few years. You undergo the retribution of having a short life. "TWO, MANY ILLNESSES." Perhaps your life won't be short, but when you are a

person you will always be sick. If you don't have one illness, you will have another. That's from killing.

"The second is THE OFFENSE OF STEALING, which ALSO CAUSES LIVING BEINGS TO FALL INTO THE THREE EVIL PATHS." It, too, makes all living beings who violate, by committing the offense of stealing, fall into the hells, the animals, and the hungry ghosts, those three evil paths. "IF THEY ARE BORN AMONG PEOPLE, THEY HAVE TWO KINDS OF RETRIBUTION. ONE, THEY ARE POOR." Now you know why you are so poor. It's because you committed the offense of stealing too heavily in your previous lives, so now you are destitute. "TWO, THEIR WEALTH IS HELD IN COMMON, AND THEY DO NOT HAVE FREE USE OF IT." The first was being poor. In the second, you do have a little bit of money, but it is jointly owned with someone else. It's not entirely your own. Other people can tell you what to do with it. They control it, and so you can't use it freely as you wish.

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