

The Flower Adornment Sutra: The Second Ground

with commentary by Tripitaka Master Hua

continued from Issue #186

SUTRA:

HE FURTHER MAKES THE FOLLOWING REFLECTION, "ALL LIVING BEINGS ARE SWALLOWED UP IN THE GREAT TORRENT'S WAVES. THEY ENTER THE FLOW OF DESIRE, THE FLOW OF EXISTENCE, THE FLOW OF IGNORANCE AND THE FLOW OF VIEWS. THEY REVOLVE IN THE WHIRLPOOL OF BIRTH AND DEATH. THEY TOSS AND TURN IN THE RIVER OF LOVE. THEY ARE CARRIED AWAY BY THE GALLOPING FLOOD, AND HAVE NO LEISURE TO CONTEMPLATE. THEY FOLLOW AFTER AWAKENINGS TO DESIRE, AWAKENINGS TO HATRED, AWAKENINGS TO HARMING, AND DO NOT GIVE THEM UP. IN THE MIDST OF THAT, THEY ARE SEIZED BY THE RAKSHASAS OF THE VIEW OF A BODY. THEY ARE ON THE POINT OF ETERNAL ENTRY TO THE DENSE FOREST OF LOVE AND DESIRE. THEY BRING FORTH DEEP DEFILED ATTACHMENT TOWARDS WHAT THEY GREEDILY LOVE. THEY DWELL IN THE FERTILE PLAIN OF PRIDE. THEY SETTLE IN THE TOWN OF THE SIX PLACES. THEY HAVE NO ONE GOOD TO SAVE THEM. THEY HAVE NO ONE TO RESCUE THEM.



"I SHOULD BRING FORTH THE THOUGHT OF GREAT COMPASSION TOWARDS THEM, AND USE ALL MY GOOD ROOTS TO RESCUE AND SAVE THEM, SO THEY HAVE NO CALAMITIES OR DISASTERS, LEAVE DEFILEMENT AND ARE AT PEACE AND DWELL ON THE JEWELLED ISLAND OF ALL WISDOM."

COMMENTARY:

HE FURTHER MAKES THE FOLLOWING REFLECTION. The Bodhisattva who had certified to the Second Ground, the Ground of Leaving Filth, thinks as follows: before he wanted to cause living beings to dwell in the City of the Unconditioned of All Wisdom. This time his contemplation is, "ALL LIVING BEINGS ARE SWALLOWED UP IN THE GREAT TORRENT'S WAVES. The great torrent is just as when a great flood pours into the sea. It causes great waves

to rise up, and if anybody stands where this great tide occurs, they will be pulled under by the current, and drowned by the water.

"THEY ENTER THE FLOW OF DESIRE, that fast flood, and THE FLOW OF EXISTENCE. They enter into the flood of Three Realms and the Twenty Five Existences, or the Three Existences, and THE FLOW OF IGNORANCE, AND THE FLOW OF VIEWS. They enter into the flowing water of ignorance, of not understanding anything, or lack of comprehension. THEY REVOLVE IN THE WHIRLPOOL OF BIRTH AND DEATH. In the sea of birth and death they are caught up in the whirlpool formed by the waves. THEY TOSS AND TURN IN THE RIVER OF LOVE. They are spun around by love and emotion, which are like a rampaging river. THEY ARE CARRIED AWAY BY THE GALLOPING FLOOD. The waves stir up the current very fiercely, and it is like a galloping horse. At any moment the person could be carried into the sea, AND HAVE NO LEISURE TO CONTEMPLATE. While this is happening, there is no time to observe what is going on.

"THEY FOLLOW AFTER AWAKENINGS TO DESIRE, AWAKENINGS TO HATRED. They awaken to views of desire and of hatred, to the knowledge of how to have thoughts of desire and how to lose their tempers; AWAKENINGS TO HARMING; they learn how to do harm. They flow along with those awakenings AND DO NOT GIVE THEM UP. They flow along with the current of desire, hatred, and harming, which they never relinquish.

IN THE MIDST OF THAT, THEY ARE SEIZED BY THE RAKSHASAS OF THE VIEW OF A BODY. One's view of a body is like a rakshasa ghost. They are ensnared by their attachments. THEY ARE ON THE POINT OF ETERNAL ENTRY TO THE DENSE FOREST OF LOVE AND DESIRE. The rakshasa ghosts seize them and drag them into the very thick forest of love and desire.

"THEY BRING FORTH DEEP DEFILED ATTACHMENT TOWARDS WHAT THEY GREEDILY LOVE. These people develop deep attachments to whatever they feel greed and love for. THEY DWELL IN THE FERTILE PLAIN OF PRIDE. They inhabit the expanse of haughtiness and arrogance.

THEY SETTLE IN THE TOWN OF THE SIX PLACES. They listen to the orders of the Six Faculties: eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind. THEY HAVE NO ONE GOOD TO SAVE THEM. They fall into a situation in which there is no one able to use clever expedient devices to save them. THEY HAVE NO ONE TO RESCUE THEM. No one can rescue those kinds of people.

"I SHOULD BRING FORTH THE THOUGHT OF GREAT COMPASSION TOWARDS THEM." The Bodhisattva himself says, "I should have great kindness and compassion towards those kinds of living beings, cause them to leave suffering and attain bliss, AND USE ALL MY GOOD ROOTS TO RESCUE AND SAVE THEM. I should employ all the good roots I have accumulated from cultivating to save those living beings, SO THEY HAVE NO CALAMITIES OR DISASTERS; so living beings who are like that don't have disasters befall them; so they LEAVE DEFILEMENT, ARE AT PEACE --so that they separate from defiled dharmas and

attain to purity--AND DWELL ON THE JWELED ISLAND OF ALL WISDOM, the precious island of all wisdom."

SUTRA:

HE ALSO MAKES THE FOLLOWING REFLECTION: "ALL LIVING BEINGS LIVE IN THE PRISON OF THE WORLD. THEY HAVE MANY SUFFERINGS AND TROUBLES. THEY CONSTANTLY CHERISH LOVE AND HATE. FOR THEMSELVES THEY BECOME WORRIED AND AFRAID. THEY ARE BOUND BY THE HEAVY FETTERS OF GREED AND DESIRE. THEY ARE BLOCKED AND OBSTRUCTED BY THE THICK FOREST OF IGNORANCE. FROM WITHIN THE THREE REALMS, NOT ONE CAN BY HIMSELF ESCAPE. I SHOULD CAUSE THEM TO LEAVE BEHIND THE THREE EXISTENCES FOREVER, AND DWELL WITHIN THE NON-OBSTRUCTION OF THE GREAT NIRVANA."

COMMENTARY:

HE, the Bodhisattva on the Second Ground, the Ground of Leaving Filth, ALSO MAKES THE FOLLOWING REFLECTION. He says, "ALL LIVING BEINGS LIVE IN THE PRISON OF THE WORLD. Their being in the world is like being in jail. They are unable to escape from the Three Realms, and so it is said:

The Three Realms are like a jail.
Birth and death are like shackles.

Those of the Two Vehicles look upon the Three Realms as a prison. We people are within birth and death like birds in a cage. "THEY HAVE MANY SUFFERINGS AND TROUBLES." When we are born into this world, we have lots of suffering and many afflictions which we can't escape from.

"THEY CONSTANTLY CHERISH LOVE AND HATE. They are always loving and hating, having the suffering of being separated from what they love, and being together with what they hate, and this is constantly going on. For THEMSELVES THEY BECOME WORRIED AND AFRAID. They always worry and are scared, being afraid of not having food to eat, fearing they will have no clothes to wear, and worrying that they will not have any place to live. There are so many things they are afraid of. They also fear not having money to use, or not having sons or daughters. If they do have sons and daughters, they fear having no grandsons and granddaughters. They are always worried and afraid.

"THEY ARE BOUND BY THE HEAVY FETTERS OF GREED AND DESIRE. They are never able to stop their greed. When they have been greedy their whole life long and the time comes to die, they can't take anything with them. Greed and desire are like fetters, like a ball and chain that tie you up. Greed and desire fetter you so you cannot obtain liberation. THEY ARE BLOCKED AND OBSTRUCTED BY THE THICK FOREST OF IGNORANCE. The dense

woods of not understanding anything, of lacking wisdom, hinders and obstructs one's own wisdom.

"FROM WITHIN THE THREE REALMS, NOT ONE CAN BY HIMSELF ESCAPE." No one can, on his own, escape from the Desire Realm, the Form Realm, and the Formless Realm--those Three Realms. And so the Bodhisattva says, "I SHOULD CAUSE THEM TO LEAVE BEHIND THE THREE EXISTENCES FOREVER." I should cause living beings to throw off the Three Existences once and for all:

- 1) Existence in the Desire Realm.
- 2) Existence in the Form Realm.
- 3) Existence in the Formless Realm.

AND DWELL WITHIN THE NON-OBSTRUCTION OF GREAT NIRVANA, dwell in the state of the Four Virtues of Nirvana:

- 1) permanence;
- 2) bliss;
- 3) true self;
- 4) purity.

SUTRA:

HE FURTHER MAKES THE FOLLOWING REFLECTION: "ALL LIVING BEINGS ARE ATTACHED TO A SELF. THEY ARE IN THE CAVE-DWELLING OF ALL THE SKANDHAS, AND DO NOT SEEK TO ESCAPE. THEY RELY UPON THE EMPTY MASS OF THE SIX PLACES. THEY GIVE RISE TO THE FOUR KINDS OF UPSIDE-DOWN CONDUCT. THEY ARE INVADDED BY THE POISONOUS SNAKES OF THE FOUR ELEMENTS. THEY ARE HARMED AND KILLED BY THE VENGEFUL THIEVES OF THE FIVE SKANDHAS. THEY UNDERGO LIMITLESS SUFFERING. I SHOULD CAUSE THEM TO DWELL IN THE MOST SUPREME PLACE OF NON-ATTACHMENT, THAT IS, IN UNSURPASSED NIRVANA WHERE ALL OBSTRUCTIONS ARE DESTROYED."

HE FURTHER MAKES THE FOLLOWING REFLECTION: "ALL LIVING BEINGS HAVE MINDS THAT ARE BASE AND NARROW. THEY DO NOT WALK THE MOST SUPREME PATH OF ALL KNOWLEDGE. ALTHOUGH THEY MAY WISH TO ESCAPE, THEY MERELY LIKE THE VEHICLE OF SOUND HEARERS AND PRATYEKA-BUDDHAS. I SHOULD CAUSE THEM TO DWELL IN THE VAST, GREAT BUDDHADHARMA'S VAST AND GREAT WISDOM."

COMMENTARY:

HE FURTHER MAKES THE FOLLOWING REFLECTION. The Bodhisattva on the Second Ground says, "ALL LIVING BEINGS ARE ATTACHED." What are they attached to? "TO A SELF. THEY ARE IN THE CAVE-DWELLING OF THE FIVE SKANDHAS." The Five

Skandhas are form, feeling, thinking, activities, and consciousness, which are like a very dark cave-dwelling. "AND DO NOT SEEK TO ESCAPE. It never occurs to them to get out of that cave. THEY RELY UPON THE EMPTY MASS OF THE SIX PLACES. Basically the six places are an empty conglomeration, but living beings base themselves upon them. THEY GIVE RISE TO THE FOUR KINDS OF UPSIDE-DOWN CONDUCT." The Four Ways of Being Upside Down are:

- 1) Mistaking the impermanent for the permanent.
- 2) Mistaking what is not bliss for bliss.
- 3) Mistaking what is not self for self.
- 4) Mistaking what is not pure for pure.

Those four ways of being upside down confuse one's self-nature.

"THEY ARE INVADED BY THE POISONOUS SNAKES OF THE FOUR ELEMENTS." See how fierce the poisonous snakes of the Four Elements are! The Four Elements are:

- 1) earth;
- 2) water;
- 3) fire;
- 4) wind.

THEY ARE HARMED AND KILLED BY THE VENGEFUL THIEVES OF THE FIVE SKANDHAS." The vengeful thieves of the Five Skandhas--form, feeling, thinking, activities, and consciousness--harm and kill them. "THEY UNDERGO LIMITLESS SUFFERING." The suffering they undergo is infinite. "I SHOULD CAUSE THEM TO DWELL IN THE MOST SUPREME PLACE OF NON-ATTACHMENT." I should teach living beings who are suffering like that to dwell where there is no attachment, the highest location, "THAT IS, IN UNSURPASSED NIRVANA WHERE ALL OBSTRUCTIONS ARE DESTROYED. I should cause all living beings to obtain the happiness of having all obstacles eradicated, and dwelling in the state of Nirvana, which is the very highest."

HE FURTHER MAKES THE FOLLOWING REFLECTION. He thinks, "ALL LIVING BEINGS HAVE MINDS THAT ARE BASE AND NARROW." Living beings have petty minds which are very inferior.

THEY DO NOT WALK THE MOST SUPREME PATH OF ALL KNOWLEDGE. They don't cultivate the very highest path of all wisdom. ALTHOUGH THEY "MAY WISH TO ESCAPE, THEY MERELY LIKE THE VEHICLE OF SOUND HEARERS AND PRATYEKA-BUDDHAS. Even though they might want to get out of the Three Realms--the Desire Realm, the Form Realm, and the Formless Realm--nonetheless the measure of their minds is very small. They only like the Sound Hearer Vehicle, the Pratyekabuddha Vehicle, the low and inferior way of thinking of the Two Vehicles.

I SHOULD CAUSE THEM TO DWELL IN THE VAST, GREAT BUDDHADHARMA'S VAST AND GREAT WISDOM. Now that I have realized the Sound Hearers and the Pratyekabuddhas are of the Small Vehicle, I should teach all living beings to dwell in Great Vehicle Buddhadharmā, that vast, great wisdom, so they obtain limitless and boundless great wisdom."

SUTRA:

DISCIPLES OF THE BUDDHA, THE BODHISATTVA IN THAT WAY PROTECTS AND MAINTAINS THE PRECEPTS AND IS WELL ABLE TO INCREASE HIS THOUGHTS OF KINDNESS AND COMPASSION.

DISCIPLES OF THE BUDDHA, THE BODHISATTVA WHO DWELLS ON THIS, THE GROUND OF LEAVING FILTH, BECAUSE OF THE POWER OF HIS VOWS, COMES TO SEE MANY BUDDHAS, THAT IS, HE SEES MANY HUNDREDS OF BUDDHAS, MANY THOUSANDS OF BUDDHAS, MANY HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF BUDDHAS, MANY MILLIONS OF BUDDHAS, MANY HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF BUDDHAS, MANY THOUSANDS OF MILLIONS OF BUDDHAS, MANY HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF MILLIONS OF BUDDHAS, AND SO FORTH UP TO AND INCLUDING SEEING MANY HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF MILLIONS OF NAYUTAS OF BUDDHAS. IN THE PRESENCE OF ALL BUDDHAS HE, WITH A VAST, GREAT MIND, A DEEP MIND, A REVERENT AND RESPECTFUL MIND, SERVES AND MAKES OFFERINGS TO THEM BY RESPECTFULLY GIVING THEM CLOTHING, FOOD, AND DRINK, BEDDING, AND MEDICINE, AND ALL THE NECESSITIES OF LIFE. HE ALSO MAKES OFFERINGS TO ALL THE ASSEMBLED SANGHA, AND HE TRANSFERS THOSE GOOD ROOTS TO ANUTTARASAMYAKSAMBOधि. IN THE PRESENCE OF ALL BUDDHAS, WITH A REVERENT MIND, HE FURTHER RECEIVES AND PRACTICES THE DHARMAS OF THE TEN WHOLESOME PATHS. HE FOLLOWS WHAT HE HAS RECEIVED EVEN UP TO BOधि, AND NEVER FORGETS OR LOSES IT.

COMMENTARY:

Vajra Treasury Bodhisattva calls again: All of you DISCIPLES OF THE BUDDHA, THE BODHISATTVA IN THAT WAY PROTECTS AND MAINTAINS THE PRECEPTS. He holds the Precepts like that, AND IS WELL ABLE TO INCREASE HIS THOUGHT OF KINDNESS AND COMPASSION. He becomes more and more kind and compassionate. All of you DISCIPLES OF THE BUDDHA, THE BODHISATTVA WHO DWELLS ON THIS, THE GROUND OF LEAVING FILTH, BECAUSE OF THE POWER OF HIS VOWS, the vows that he has made, COMES TO SEE MANY BUDDHAS. THAT IS, HE SEES MANY HUNDREDS OF BUDDHAS, MANY THOUSANDS OF BUDDHAS. He can see MANY HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF BUDDHAS, MANY MILLIONS OF BUDDHAS, MANY HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF BUDDHAS, MANY THOUSANDS OF MILLIONS OF BUDDHAS, MANY HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF MILLIONS OF BUDDHAS, AND SO FORTH, continually increasing the number, UP TO AND INCLUDING SEEING MANY HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF MILLIONS OF NAYUTAS OF BUDDHAS. IN THE PRESENCE OF ALL BUDDHAS, where all Buddhas are, HE, WITH A VAST, GREAT MIND, A DEEP

MIND, A REVERENT AND RESPECTFUL MIND, SERVES AND MAKES OFFERINGS TO THEM BY RESPECTFULLY GIVING THEM CLOTHING, FOOD AND DRINK, BEDDING, AND MEDICINES, AND ALL THE NECESSITIES OF LIFE. He offers up the four types of offerings and other items which people use to maintain their lives. HE ALSO MAKES OFFERINGS TO ALL THE ASSEMBLED SANGHA, all left-home people, AND HE TRANSFERS THOSE GOOD ROOTS TO ANUTTARASAMYAKSAMBOODHI—the Unsurpassed, Proper, Equal Right Enlightenment. IN THE PRESENCE OF ALL BUDDHAS, WITH A REVERENT MIND, HE FURTHER RECEIVES AND PRACTICES THE DHARMAS OF THE TEN WHOLESOME PATHS, the Ten Good Acts. HE FOLLOWS WHAT HE HAS RECEIVED EVEN UP TO BODHI, until he becomes a Buddha, AND NEVER FORGETS OR LOSES IT. He never loses track of, or forgets those Dharma doors.

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