Phil Treloar Jeeling to Hought

Sudhana Cycle # 49



transcendent power

for Tenor Saxophone, Drum-set, and Acoustic Bass

Able to enter all realms of being in the cosmos And find the ultimate wherever they enter, Their spiritual powers free and all-embracing; Those illumined by truth travel this path.

> Spoken by Forest of Virtues, from the gāthā of Book twenty-one – 'Ten Practices' – Avatamsaka Sūtra

The enlightening being, Universal Wisdom, asked Universally Good (*Samantabhadra*), "Please tell us, what is the speech of great enlightening beings?" Samantabhadra replied:

"Great enlightening beings have ten kinds of speech: gentle speech, causing all sentient beings to be calm; Sweet elixir speech, causing all sentient beings to be clear and cool; non-deceptive speech, everything they say being true; truthful speech, not lying even in dreams; great speech, being honored by all the gods; profound speech, revealing the essence of things; steadfast speech, expounding truth inexhaustibly; straightforward speech, their statements being easy to understand; various speech, being spoken according to the occasion; speech enlightening all sentient beings, enabling them to understand according to their inclinations. Based on these, enlightening beings attain the supreme subtle speech of buddhas."

Avatamsaka Sūtra, Book Thirty-Eight - Detachment from the World

The enlightening being, Diamond Banner, asked rhetorically: "What is great enlightening beings' boundless dedication equal to the cosmos?" Answering he says:

"Here they wrap their heads with the turban of non-defilement, dwell in the position of a teacher of truth, and extensively carry out the giving of teaching, with great kindness and compassion establishing sentient beings in the aspiration for enlightenment."... They "act without delusion and teach doctrine that is free from delusion; what they say is truthful, and they practice what they preach. They themselves abide by the truth, and also cause others to live by the truth."

"Great enlightening beings also dedicate the revelations and enlightenment of the giving of teaching, as well as the roots of goodness arising therefrom, in this way: May all sentient beings become teachers with skill in means of vocal expression, skillfully explaining the boundless treasury of the realm of truth." May they "attain the mind that happily seeks the supreme truth...in order to become adorned by the hundreds of thousands of light beams of the sun of knowledge of the supreme truth of the enlightened ones and illumine the sentient beings of all realms." "Great enlightening beings also dedicate the roots of goodness produced by this giving of teaching in this way: they cause all sentient beings to acquire clear beautiful voices, gentle voices, voices like celestial drums, voices filling the cosmos, voices able to pick up the languages of all sentient beings; and to acquire all pure adorning speech tones, tones which all beings never tire of hearing, speech not ultimately bound to any world, joyful tones, pure tones of the speech of Buddhas, tones of speech expressing all Buddha teachings; tones of speech containing indestructible expressions of inconceivable truths, speech shining with the light of all truths; harmonious speech, beautiful speech."

"Great enlightening beings dedicate the roots of goodness amassed by such practices as the giving of teaching to nurturing all roots of goodness; to purifying all buddha-lands; to causing all sentient beings to attain unobstructed great knowledge and be able to comprehend with certainty all treasuries of truths; and to attain the great spiritual knowledge of all truths."

"Great enlightening beings also dedicate these roots of goodness in this way: they dedicate them by abiding in the equality of practices and vows infinite as the cosmos; and by abiding in the equality of teaching and training of enlightening beings infinite as the cosmos. By the practice of dedication in this way they abide in equal pure embodiments infinite as the cosmos, they abide in equal pure speech infinite as the cosmos, in equal pure minds, equal pure knowledge, and they abide in equal pure fearlessness of the light of all truths able to cut away the nets of doubts of all sentient beings with one voice."

"When great enlightening beings dedicate all roots of goodness, such as giving of teaching, in this way, they fulfill the infinite, boundless commitment of Universal Good (*Samantabhadra*). They also realize the infinite purities—purities of all sentient beings, purities of all buddha-fields, and purity of knowledge of all different vocal sounds, using various kinds of verbal expressions adapted to all sentient beings. In these they attain fulfillment, completion, accomplishment, equanimity, actualization, direct knowledge, and true realization, having seen into all of them, attain purity in all respects, and reach the other shore." (The other shore being that of Enlightenment.)

Avatamsaka Sūtra, Book Twenty-Five – Ten Dedications (Tenth Dedication)

The enlightening being, Universally Good (*Samantabhadra*), said to the great congregation of enlightening beings: "The Buddha, the one who realizes Thusness, the worthy, the truly awake, becomes manifest by means of infinite phenomena. Why?" Having asked this rhetorically, Universally Good goes on to expound the characteristics of Buddha's manifestations, including his body, speech, mind, the sphere of Buddha, the conduct of Buddha, the Buddha's attainment of enlightenment, Buddha's ultimate nirvana, the roots of goodness planted by seeing, hearing, and attending Buddha; and this all within the purview of enlightening beings.

Samantabhadra asks the assembly: "How should great enlightening beings know the voice of Buddha?" He then goes on to elucidate ten characteristics of Buddha's voice, beginning: "They should know Buddha's voice is omnipresent, because it pervades all sounds. They should know Buddha's voice pleases all according to their mentalities, because its explanation of truth is clear and comprehensive." A wonderful array of characteristics follow, and, reaching the ninth, he explains:

"In the ocean is a great water spirit called Magnificent Array; when it showers rain on the ocean, it may shower rain in ten kinds of arrays, or a

hundred, or a thousand, or rain in a hundred thousand kind of arrays. The water has no discrimination; it is just the inconceivable power of the water spirit that causes its arrays to be infinitely different. Similarly, when Buddha teaches truth, it may be expressed in ten different tones, or a hundred, or a thousand, or a hundred thousand, or eighty-four thousand tones explaining eighty-four thousand practices, up to countless hundreds of thousands of millions of tones, each explaining the truth in particular ways to gladden all who hear. The voice of Buddha makes no discrimination; it is just that buddhas, complete and pure in the profound realm of truth, are able to make various utterances in accord with the needs of sentient beings, making them happy. Great enlightening beings should know it as such."

Avatamsaka Sūtra, Book Thirty-Seven – Manifestation of Buddha

Sudhana, having visited the householder, *Ajitasena*, in the city of Roruka, made his way to Dharma Village where he called on the brahmin, *Shivaragra*. Meeting him, Sudhana said: "Noble one, I have set my mind on supreme perfect enlightenment, but I do not know how an enlightening being is to learn and carry out the practice of enlightening beings. I hear you give enlightening beings instruction, so please tell me how to learn and carry out the practice of enlightening beings."

Shivaragra relpied:

"I act on a vow of truth, that as by truth, by speaking truth, there has never been, is not now, and never will be, a single enlightening being who has turned away from supreme perfect enlightenment, who is turning away, or will turn away, by that vow of truthful speech this work of mine may succeed. So whatever I wish comes to fruition. By this vow of truth, I accomplish all my tasks. It is this vow of truth that I know. How can I know the practice or tell the virtues of the enlightening beings whose words and deeds mutually accord in truth?

"South of here is a city called Sumanamukha, where there lives a boy named *Shrisambhava* and a girl named *Shrimati*. Go ask them how an enlightening being is to learn and carry out the practice of enlightening beings."

Then, with great reverence for the Teaching, Sudhana paid his respects to the brahmin, *Shivaragra*, and left, heading south.

Avatamsaka Sūtra, Book Thirty-Nine – Gandavyūha Sūtra, Sudhana's fourty-ninth spiritual friend

<sup>&</sup>quot;Because great enlightening beings fulfill Universally Good practice, they acquire the power of the enlightened, purify the path of emancipation, are imbued with universal knowledge, and by unimpeded intellectual powers, spiritual faculties, and mystical emanations, ultimately harmonize and pacify all sentient beings. Full of the spiritual force of enlightenment, they purify Universally Good practice, abide in the path of Universally Good, and operate the subtle cycles of teaching of all buddhas for ever and ever, to pacify all living beings.

<sup>&</sup>quot;Why? When these great enlightening beings accomplish the practices of enlightening beings guided by such lofty, great vows, they become teachers of all worlds, suns of truth for all worlds, moons of knowledge for all worlds; they become lofty polar mountains for all worlds, majestically standing out high, steadfast, immutable; they become shoreless oceans of knowledge for all worlds, they become bright lamps of right teaching for all worlds, illumining everywhere, boundlessly, continuously, uninterrupted; they reveal boundless pure virtues for all sentient beings, inducing them to live steadily based on virtuous qualities and foundations of goodness; they act in accord with universal knowledge, and their great vows are impartial; they cultivate the far reaching practice of Universal Good and are always able to inspire countless beings; persisting in untold numbers of concentrations of great efficacy, they manifest great freedom."

Avatamsaka Sūtra, Book Twenty-Seven – The Ten Concentrations – Universally Good (Samantabhadra) to the assembly, from the tenth concentration, 'The Great Concentration of the Unimpeded Wheel'.

Their knowledge has impartial access To all rules of language, While they dwell in the realm of real truth; This is the path travelled by those who see the essence.

Abiding at peace in the deep ocean of truth, Able to verify all actualities They understand the true aspect of signlessness of things: This is the path travelled by those who see the truth.

They know the ocean of worlds in the ten directions And also know the oceans of all buddha-lands, And comprehend the oceans of knowledge and truth; All who see them are filled with joy.

> Spoken by Forest of Virtues, from the gāthā of Book twenty-one – 'Ten Practices' – Avatamsaka Sūtra

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