

Vision of the Jeweled Stupa

Chapter 11

At that time, there manifested before the Buddha, a Stupa made of the seven jewels. It was five hundred yojanas in height and two hundred and fifty yojanas in breadth. It welled up out of the earth and stood in empty space, adorned with all kinds of jeweled objects. It had five thousand railings and thousands of myriads of alcoves.

Countless banners and pennants adorned it as well. Jeweled beads were hung from it and myriads of millions of jeweled bells were suspended from its top. The scent of Tamalapatracandana issued from all four sides and filled the entire world. All its banners and canopies were made of the seven jewels: gold, silver, lapis lazuli, mother of pearl, carnelian, pearls and agate reaching up to the palace of the four heavenly kings.

From the Heaven of the Thirty-Three there rained heavenly mandarva flowers as an offering to the jeweled Stupa. All the gods, dragons, yakshas, gandharvas, asuras, garudas, kinnaras, mahoragas, humans, non-humans and so forth, thousands of myriads of millions of them, made offerings to the jeweled Stupa of all kinds of flowers, incense, beads, banners, canopies, and instrumental music, reverently honoring it and praising it.

At that time, a loud voice issued from the Stupa speaking in praise, saying, "Good indeed, good indeed, Shakyamuni, World Honored One, that you are able, by means of your undifferentiating great wisdom, to speak for the great assembly, The Wonderful Dharma Flower Sutra, a Dharma for teaching Bodhisattvas of whom the Buddhas are protective and mindful. So it is, so it is, Shakyamuni, World Honored One, that all you say is true and real."

Just then the four assemblies, seeing the great jeweled Stupa standing in mid-air and hearing the voice from within it, all gained Dharma joy and marveled at this unprecedented occurrence. They rose from their seats, reverently placed their palms together and withdrew to one side.

Just then a Bodhisattva Mahasattva by the name of Great Delight in Speaking, knowing the doubts in the minds of all the gods, humans, and asuras and others from all the worlds, spoke to the Buddha saying, "World

Honored One, by means of what causes and conditions has this jeweled Stupa welled up out of the earth and produced this loud sound?”

Then the Buddha told the Bodhisattva Great Delight in Speaking: within this jeweled Stupa is the complete body of the Thus Come One. Long ago, limitless thousands of myriads of millions of asamkheya worlds to the east, in a land called Jeweled Purity, there was a Buddha by the name of Many Jewels. When this Buddha was practicing the Bodhisattva Path, he made a great vow saying, “After I have become a Buddha and passed into extinction, in any of the ten direction lands where The Dharma Flower Sutra is spoken, my Stupa shall appear there, that I may hear the Sutra and certify it, praising it, saying, ‘Good indeed! Good indeed!’”

After that Buddha had realized the Way, when he was about to enter into extinction, in the great assembly of gods and humans he spoke to the Bhikshus saying, “After my extinction, those who wish to make offerings to my complete body should build a large Stupa.”

By the power of his spiritual penetrations and his vow, throughout the ten direction worlds wherever anyone speaks The Dharma Flower Sutra that Buddha’s jeweled Stupa containing his complete body wells up from the earth before the one speaking and expresses praise by saying, “Good indeed! Good indeed!”

Great Delight in Speaking! Because he has heard The Dharma Flower Sutra being spoken, the Stupa of the Thus Come One Many Jewels has now welled up out of the earth with these words of praise, “Good indeed! Good indeed!”

Just then, the Bodhisattva Great Delight in Speaking, by means of the spiritual power of the Thus Come One, spoke to the Buddha saying, “World Honored One, we all wish to see this Buddha’s body.”

The Buddha told the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Great Delight in Speaking: The Buddha Many Jewels has made a profound and solemn vow: “When my jeweled Stupamanifests in the presence of the Buddhas because The Dharma Flower Sutra is heard, if there is anyone who wishes me to show my body to the four assemblies, then the division body Buddhas of that Buddha who is speaking Dharma in the worlds of the ten directions, must

all return and gather together in one place. Afterward, my body will appear.

Great Delight in Speaking, my division body Buddhas present in the ten direction worlds speaking Dharma, should now gather together.

Great Delight in Speaking said to the Buddha, “World Honored One, we also wish to see the division bodies of the World Honored One so that we may bow to them and make offerings.”

At that time the Buddha emitted a white hair-mark light in which were seen the Buddhas of the lands in the eastern direction equal in number to the grains of sand in five hundred myriads of millions of nayutas of Ganges rivers.

All the Buddhalands had crystal for soil, and were adorned with jeweled trees and jeweled clothing. Countless thousands of myriad of millions of Bodhisattvas filled them. They were covered with jeweled canopies and jeweled nets. The Buddhas in those lands with a great and wonderful sound were speaking the Dharma. Also seen were limitless thousands of myriads of millions of Bodhisattvas filling those lands speaking the Dharma for the multitudes. Thus it was also in the south, west, north, the four intermediate directions, as well as upward and downward wherever the white hair-mark light shone.

At that time all the Buddhas of the ten directions addressed the host of Bodhisattvas saying, “Good men! We should now go to the *Saha* world, to the place of Shakyamuni Buddha and make offerings to the *Stupa* of the Thus Come One Many Jewels.”

Just then the Saha world was transformed into one of purity, with lapis lazuli for soil and adorned with jeweled trees. Its eight roads were bordered with golden cords. In it there were no towns, villages, cities, oceans, rivers, streams, mountains, brooks, forests or thickets. Precious incense was burned and mandarava flowers completely covered the ground. Above it jeweled nets were spread and banners hung with jeweled bells. Only those in the assembly remained, as the gods and humans had been moved to another land.

Then all of the Buddhas, each bringing with him one great Bodhisattva as

an attendant, reached the Saha World and went to the foot of a jeweled tree. Each jeweled tree was five hundred yojanas in height and adorned with branches, leaves, flowers and fruits. Beneath each jeweled tree was a lion throne five hundred yojanas in height adorned with great jewels. Then each of the Buddhas sat in the lotus posture on his own throne.

In this way, by turns, the lands of the three thousand great thousand worlds were filled, and still there was no end to the division bodies of Shakyamuni Buddha from even one direction.

Then, Shakyamuni Buddha, wishing to accommodate his division body Buddhas, transformed in each of the eight directions, two hundred myriads of millions of nayutas of lands, purifying them all. They were without hells, hungry ghosts, animals or asuras. The gods and humans were all moved to other lands. The lands he transformed all had lapis lazuli for soil and were adorned with jeweled trees five hundred yojanas tall, decorated with branches, leaves, flowers and fruits.

Beneath each tree was a jeweled lion throne, five yojanas tall decorated with various gems. There were no oceans, rivers or streams and no mucilinda or mahamucilinda mountains, no iron ring or great iron ring mountains, and no Mount Sumerus or any other kinds of mountains. All became one Buddha land. The jeweled earth was level and flat, covered entirely with gem-studded canopies and hung with banners. Precious incense was burned and heavenly, precious flowers covered the ground.

Shakyamuni Buddha, in order that the Buddhas who were coming might have a place to sit, then further transformed in each of the eight directions, two hundred myriads of nayutas of lands, purifying them all. They were without hells, hungry ghosts, animals or asuras. The gods and humans were all moved to other lands. The lands he transformed all had lapis lazuli for soil and were adorned with jeweled trees five hundred

yojanas tall, decorated with branches, leaves, flowers, and fruits.

Beneath each tree was a jeweled lion throne five yojanas tall decorated with various gems. There were no oceans, rivers, or streams, and no mucilinda or mahamucilinda mountains, no iron ring or great iron ring mountains, and no Mount Sumerus or any other kings of mountains. All became one Buddha land. The jeweled earth was level and flat, covered entirely with gem-studded canopies, and hung with banners. Precious incense was burned and heavenly, precious flowers covered the ground.

Then, the division bodies of Shakyamuni Buddha from the eastern direction, Buddhas in number to the grains of sand in a hundred thousand myriads of millions of nayutas of lands, each speaking the Dharma, assembled there. In like manner, in turn, the Buddhas from all the ten directions arrived and assembled there, taking their seats in the eight directions.

At that time, each direction was filled with Buddhas, Thus Come Ones, from the four hundred myriads of millions of nayutas of lands in each of the four directions.

At that time, all those Buddhas each seated on a lion throne beneath a jeweled tree, sent an attendant to inquire after Shakyamuni Buddha giving them each a sack full of flowers and saying to them, "Good men! Go to Mount Grdhrakuta, to the place of Shakyamuni Buddha and ask, in our name, 'Are you free from illness and distress? Are you strong and at ease? Are the hosts of Bodhisattvas and Hearers at peace?' Then scatter these precious flowers before the

Buddha as an offering, saying, 'The Buddha so-and-so wishes that the jeweled Stupa be opened.'" All the Buddhas sent attendants in this manner.

Then, Shakyamuni Buddha seeing that the division body Buddhas had all assembled there, each seated on a lion throne, and hearing that all the Buddhas together wished that the jeweled Stupa be opened, immediately arose from his seat into empty space. All those in the four assemblies rose, placed their palms together, and single-mindedly beheld the Buddha.

Then, Shakyamuni Buddha, using his right forefinger, opened the door of the Stupa of seven jewels, which made a great sound like that of a bolt being removed from a large city gate.

Thereupon, the entire assembly perceived the Thus Come One Many Jewels seated upon the lion throne inside the jeweled Stupa, his body whole and undecayed as if he were in dhyana samadhi. They also heard him say, "Good indeed! Good indeed! Shakyamuni Buddha! Quickly speak The Dharma Flower Sutra! I came here to hear this Sutra!"

The four assemblies, upon seeing a Buddha who had crossed over into extinction limitless thousands of myriads of millions of eons ago, speak in this way, praised it as something unprecedented, they scattered heaps of precious heavenly flowers upon the Buddha Many Jewels and Shakyamuni Buddha.

The Buddha Many Jewels, in the jeweled Stupa, offered half of his seat to Shakyamuni Buddha, saying, "Shakyamuni Buddha, would you take this seat?" Shakyamuni Buddha then entered the Stupa and sat down in full lotus on half of that seat.

The great assembly, seeing the two Thus Come Ones seated in the jeweled Stupa in full lotus on the lion throne, all had this thought, “The Buddhas are sitting up so high and far off. We only wish that the Thus Come One would use the power of his spiritual penetrations and enable us all to dwell in empty space.”

Shakyamuni Buddha then used his spiritual powers and took the entire assembly up into empty space.

With a great voice he addressed the four assemblies, saying: “Who, in this Sahaland, can broadly speak this Sutra of the Dharma Flower? Now is the proper time, for the Thus Come One will shortly enter Nirvana. The Buddha wishes to bequeath The Dharma Flower Sutra.”

The World Honored One, wishing to restate this meaning, spoke verses saying:

“The sagely lord, World
Honored One,
Although long extinct
Within this jeweled Stupa
Has come here for the Dharma.
Who would not be diligent
For the sake of the Dharma?

This Buddha became extinct
Countless eons ago and yet,
In place after place, he listens
to the Dharma,
Because it is difficult to
encounter.

In the past this Buddha made a
vow,
“After my extinction,
I will go everywhere
In order to hear the Dharma.”

Also, my division bodies,
Limitless Buddhas,
Equal in number to the Ganges’

sands
Have come, wishing to hear the
Dharma
And to see the extinct
Thus Come One Many Jewels.

Casting aside their wondrous
lands
And assemblies of disciples
Gods, people, dragons and
spirits,
And various offerings,
They have come here
To cause the Dharma long to
abide.

In order to seat those Buddhas,
I have used my spiritual powers,

To move countless multitudes
And purify the lands.

Each one of the Buddhas
Takes his place beneath a
jeweled tree
Like a lotus adorning
A clear, clean pond.

Beneath the jeweled trees,
There are lion thrones
Upon which the Buddhas sit,
Adorned with brilliant light,
Like great torches gleaming
In the darkness of the night.

Their bodies emit a delicate
fragrance
Pervading the ten direction
lands

All beings perfumed by it
Are overwhelmed with joy.

Like a great wind
Blowing the small trees.
By means of this expedient
device,
The Dharma is caused long to
abide.

To the great assembly, I say:
“After my extinction
Who can protect and uphold,
Read, speak and recite this
Sutra?
Now, in the presence of the
Buddhas
He should make a vow.”

The Buddha Many Jewels
Although long extinct
By means of his great vow
Utters the lion’s roar.

The Thus Come One Many
Jewels,
As well as myself,
And the transformation
Buddhas here assembled
Will know of this resolution.

All you disciples of the Buddha,
Whoever can protect this
Dharma,
Should make a great vow
To cause the Dharma long to
abide.

Whoever can protect

The Dharma of this Sutra,
Has thereby made offerings
To me and Many Jewels.

The Buddha Many Jewels
Dwelling in the jeweled Stupa,
Always travels throughout the
ten directions,
For the sake of this Sutra.

Moreover, they will have made
offerings,
To the transformation Buddhas
here,
Who adorn with splendor,
All the worlds.

If one speaks this Sutra,
They will then see me,
The Thus Come One Many
Jewels,
And the transformation
Buddhas.

All of you good men
Think it over carefully!
This is a difficult matter
Requiring a great vow.

Other Sutras number
Like the Ganges river's sands
But although one spoke them,
It would not be thought difficult.

If one took Mount Sumeru
And tossed it to another land
Across countless Buddhalands,
That also would not be difficult.

Or if with a toe
One kicked the great thousand
worlds
To another, far-off land,
That also would not be difficult.

Were one to stand on a peak on
the heavens
And for the multitudes proclaim,
Limitless other Sutras,
That, too, would not be difficult.

But if after the Buddha's
extinction
Within the evil age,
One can speak this Sutra,
That is difficult.

If someone took
Empty space in his hand
And wandered around with it
That would not be difficult.

But if, after my extinction
One can write out and uphold it
And encourage others to write it
out,
That is difficult.

If one were to take the earth
And place it on one's toenail,
And carry it up to the Brahma
Heavens,
That, too, would not be difficult.

After the Buddha's extinction,
In the evil age
To read this Sutra but for an
instant,

That is difficult.

If, during the fire at the kalpa's
end
One carried a load of dry grass
on one's back
And entering the fire was not
burned
That would not be difficult.

But after my extinction
If one can uphold the Sutra
And speak it to a single person,
That is difficult.

If one upheld eighty-four
thousand
Dharma treasures
And the Twelve Divisions of the
Canon
Expounding upon them to
others
Causing all the listeners
To gain the Six Spiritual
Penetrations,
Even if one could do this
It would not be difficult.

But if, after my extinction,
One can listen to and accept
this Sutra
And inquire into its meaning
That is difficult.

If one were to speak the
Dharma
And cause a thousand myriads
of millions
Of limitless, countless

Beings, like the Ganges' sands,
To obtain Arhatship
And perfect the Six Spiritual
Penetrations,
Although it would be beneficial,
It would not be difficult.

But after my extinction,
If one can reverently uphold
Such a Sutra as this,
That indeed is difficult!

I, for the sake of the Buddha
Way,
Throughout limitless lands,
From the beginning until now,
Have broadly expounded all the
Sutras
And among them all
This Sutra is foremost.
If one can uphold it
He then upholds the Buddha's
body.

Good men,
After my extinction,
Who can receive and uphold,
Read, and recite this Sutra,
Now, in the presence of the
Buddhas should make a vow.

This Sutra is hard to uphold,
If one upholds it for but an
instant,
I will rejoice,
And so will all the Buddhas.

One such as this
Shall be praised by all the

Buddhas:
“This is courage!
This is vigor,
This is called morality
And the practice of the dhutas.”

He will then quickly obtain
The supreme Buddha Way.
If, in the future, one
Can read and uphold this Sutra,

He is then a true disciple of the
Buddha,
Dwelling in the pure, good
stage.

And one who after the Buddha's
extinction,
Can understand its meaning,
Will act as eyes
For all gods and humans in the
world.

In the age of terror,
One who can speak it for an
instant,
Will be worthy of the offerings
Of all the gods and humans.