

The Bodhisattva Wondrous Sound

Chapter 24

At that time Shakyamuni Buddha emitted a light from his flesh cowl, the mark of a great person, and a radiance issued forth from the white hair-mark between his eyebrows, everywhere illumining Buddha worlds to the east equal in number to the grains of sand in one hundred and eight myriads of kotis of nayutas of Ganges Rivers.

Beyond these, there was a world by the name of Adorned with Pure Light. In that world was a Buddha by the name of Wisdom of Pure Flower Constellation King Thus Come One, One Worthy of Offerings, One of Right and Universal Knowledge, One Whose Clarity and Conduct Are Complete, Well-Gone One Who Understands the World, Supreme Lord, Regulating Hero, Teacher of Gods and Humans, Buddha, World Honored One. He was reverently surrounded by a great multitude of limitless, boundless Bodhisattvas to whom he was speaking the Dharma.

The light that issued forth from Shakyamuni Buddha's white hair-mark universally illumined that country.

At that time in the country Adorned with All Pure Light, there was a Bodhisattva by the name of Wondrous Sound, who had, for a long time, planted the roots of virtue by making offerings and drawing near to limitless hundreds of thousands of myriads of kotis of Buddhas and had completely accomplished profound wisdom.

He had obtained the Samadhi of the Wonderful Banner Mark, the Samadhi of the Dharma Flower, the Samadhi of Pure Virtue, the Samadhi of the Playfulness of Constellation King, the Samadhi of No Affinity, the Samadhi of the Seal of Wisdom, the Samadhi of Understanding the Speech of all Living Beings, the Samadhi of the Accumulation of All Merit and Virtue, the Samadhi of Purity, the Samadhi of Playful Roaming of Spiritual Penetrations, the Samadhi of the Wisdom Torch, the Samadhi of Royal Splendor, the Samadhi of Pure Light, the Samadhi of the Pure Treasury, the Samadhi of Difference, and the Samadhi of Sun-Revolution.

He obtained such great samadhis as these, equal in number to the grains of sand in a hundred thousand myriad kotis of Ganges Rivers.

When Shakyamuni Buddha's light illumined his body, he immediately spoke to the Buddha Wisdom of Pure Flower Constellation King, saying, "World Honored One, I should go to the Saha world to bow to, draw near to, and make offerings to Shakyamuni Buddha, and to see the Dharma Prince Bodhisattva Manjushri, the Bodhisattva Medicine King, the Bodhisattva Courageous Giving, the Bodhisattva Constellation King Flower, the Bodhisattva Mind of Superior Practice, the Bodhisattva King of Adornment, and the Bodhisattva Medicine Superior."

At that time the Buddha Wisdom of Pure Flower Constellation King told the Bodhisattva Wondrous Sound, "You should not look lightly upon that country or think of it as inferior. Good man, the Saha world is uneven, its earth, stones,

and mountains are filled with filth and evil. The Buddha's body is lowly and small. The Bodhisattvas are also small in shape. Your body is forty-two thousand yojanas in height. My body is six hundred and eighty myriad yojanas in height. Your body is superb and upright, with a hundred thousand myriad blessings and fine and subtle light. Therefore if you go, do not look lightly upon that country, its Buddha, Bodhisattvas, or lands."

The Bodhisattva Wondrous Sound said to the Buddha, "World Honored One, I shall now go to the Saha world, and this is all through the power of the Thus Come One; the playful roaming spiritual penetrations of the Thus Come One; and the adornments of merit, virtue, and wisdom of the Thus Come One."

Then the Bodhisattva Wondrous Sound, without rising from his seat, his body motionless, entered samadhi. With the power of samadhi he went to Mount Gridhrakuta, not far from the Dharma seat. He then created by transformation eighty-four thousand jeweled lotuses, their stems of Jambunada gold, their leaves of silver, their pistils of vajra, and their sepals of kumshuka jewels.

The Dharma Prince Manjushri, seeing the lotuses, asked the Buddha, "World Honored One, what is the reason for this portent, these several thousands of myriads of lotuses, their stems of Jambunada gold, their leaves of silver, their pistils of vajra and their sepals of kumshuka?"

At that time Shakyamuni Buddha told Manjushri, "The Bodhisattva Mahasattva Wondrous Sound, surrounded by eighty-four thousand

Bodhisattvas, wishes to come from the country of the Buddha Wisdom of Pure Light Constellation King to this Saha world to make offerings, draw near to, and bow to me. He also wishes to make offerings and listen to the Dharma Flower Sutra.”

Manjushri said to the Buddha, “World Honored One, what good roots have this Bodhisattva planted, what merit and virtue has he cultivated that he can have this great power of spiritual penetrations? What samadhi has he practiced? I pray that you will tell us the name of this samadhi. We, too wish to cultivate it diligently, for by practicing this samadhi we will be able to see this Bodhisattva, his appearance, size, and awesome manner, and his comings and goings. We only pray that the World Honored One will, by means of the power of spiritual penetrations, let us see that Bodhisattva when he comes.”

At that time Shakyamuni Buddha told Manjushri, “The Thus Come One Many Jewels who passed into stillness long ago shall, for your sakes, manifest these signs.”

The Buddha Many Jewels then said to the Bodhisattva, “Good man, come here! The Dharma Prince Manjushri wishes to see you in person.”

The Bodhisattva Wondrous Sound then disappeared from his own country, and together with eighty-four thousand Bodhisattvas, set out on his way. The countries they passed through quaked in six ways, and all rained down lotuses made of the seven treasures, while a hundred thousand kinds of heavenly music played spontaneously.

The Bodhisattva’s eyes were like the broad, large petals of a blue lotus. A hundred thousand myriad moons combined would not surpass the awesome beauty of his facial features. His body was the color of gold, adorned with limitless hundreds of thousands of meritorious virtues. The

light of his awesome virtue blazed with brilliant splendor, and his marks were all perfect. His body was as solid as that of Narayana. He entered a terrace made of the seven treasures and rose up into space to the height of seven tala trees. With Bodhisattvas reverently circumambulating him, he came to Mount Gridhrakuta in the Saha world.

Having arrived, he stepped down from the terrace of seven treasures. Taking a necklace of beads, its value in the hundreds of thousands, he went before Shakyamuni Buddha, bowed with his head at the Buddha's feet, offered up the necklace and said to the Buddha, "World Honored One, the Buddha Wisdom of Pure Flower Constellation King inquires after the World Honored One.

Are you free from sickness and worry? Are you energetic in your comings and goings? Is your practice peaceful and happy? Are the four elements in harmony? Are you enduring the affairs of the world? Are living beings easy to save, without much greed, hatred, stupidity, jealousy, stinginess, or arrogance? None are not filial in their behavior toward their parents, are they, or disrespectful toward Shramanas, deviant in their views, unwholesome in their thoughts, or not in control of the five emotions? World Honored One, have living beings been able to conquer the hateful demons? Has the long since passed Thus Come One Many Jewels, within the jeweled Stupa, come to hear the Dharma?"

"He also wishes to inquire as to whether the Thus Come One Many Jewels is peaceful and secure, free from worry, and long abiding in the world 'Worthy of Being Endured.'"

"World Honored One, we now wish to see the Buddha Many Jewels. We only pray that the World Honored One will allow us to see him."

Shakyamuni Buddha told the Buddha Many Jewels, "The Bodhisattva Wondrous Sound wishes to see you."

The Buddha Many Jewels spoke to Wondrous Sound, saying, "Good indeed! Good indeed! That in order to make offerings to Shakyamuni Buddha and to hear the Dharma Flower Sutra, as well as to see Manjushri and the others, you have come here."

The Bodhisattva Flower Virtue then spoke to the Buddha, saying, “World Honored One, what good roots has the Bodhisattva Wondrous Sound planted, and what meritorious virtues has he cultivated that he has these spiritual powers?”

The Buddha told the Bodhisattva Flower Virtue, “In the past there was a Buddha by the name of Clouds and Thunder Sound King, Thus Come One, Arhat, Samyaksambuddha. His country was called Manifesting All Worlds. His eon was named Delightful to See. For twelve thousand years, the Bodhisattva Wondrous Sound made offerings to the Buddha Clouds and Thunder Sound King of a hundred thousand kinds of music. He also offered up eighty-four thousand bowls made of the seven treasures. As a result of these deeds, he has been born in the country of the Buddha Wisdom of Pure Flower Constellation King and now possesses these spiritual powers.”

“Flower Virtue, what do you think? Could the Bodhisattva Wondrous Sound who made offerings of music and jeweled vessels to the Buddha Clouds and Thunder Sound King have been anyone else? He was just this Bodhisattva Mahasattva Wondrous Sound.”

“Flower Virtue! The Bodhisattva Wondrous Sound has in the past made offerings and drawn near to limitless Buddhas, for a long time planting the roots of virtue and encountering hundreds of thousands of myriads of kotis of nayutas of Buddhas equal in number to the sands of the Ganges.”

“Flower Virtue, you see merely the body of the Bodhisattva Wondrous Sound as it appears here. However, this Bodhisattva manifests all kinds of bodies and speaks this Sutra in many places for living beings.”

“He may manifest in the body of a Brahma King; he may manifest in the body of Shakra; he may manifest in the body of the God of Sovereignty; he may manifest in the body of the God of Great Sovereignty; he may manifest in the body of a great heavenly general; he may manifest in the body of the heavenly king Vaishravana; he may manifest in the body of a wheel-turning sage king; he may manifest in the body of a minor king; he may manifest in the body of an elder; he may manifest in the body of a layperson; he may manifest in the body of a minister of state; he may manifest in the body of a Brahman; he may manifest in the body of a

Bhikshu, Bhikshuni, Upasaka, or Upasika; he may manifest in the body of an elder's wife or a layperson's wife; he may manifest in the body of a minister's wife; he may manifest in the body of a Brahman's wife; he may manifest in the body of a young boy or a young girl. He may manifest in the body of a god, dragon, yaksha, gandharva, asura, garuda, kinnara, mahoraga, a human, or a non-human and speak this Sutra."

"He can rescue all in the hells, the hungry ghosts, and the animals, as well as those in difficulty. He can even transform himself into a woman of the king's inner court and speak this Sutra."

"Flower Virtue, the Bodhisattva Wondrous Sound can rescue all living beings in the Saha world. The Bodhisattva Wondrous Sound can, in this way, transform into all these different kinds of bodies and speak this Sutra for living beings in the Saha world and still lose nothing of his spiritual penetrations, transformations, and wisdom."

"This Bodhisattva's wisdom shines brightly upon the Saha world, causing living beings to each gain understanding. In worlds like Ganges' sands throughout the ten directions, he does the same."

"To those who must be crossed over by the form of a Hearer, he manifests in the form of a Hearer and speaks the Dharma for them."

"To those who must be crossed over by the form of a Pratyekabuddha, he manifests in the form of a Pratyekabuddha and speaks the Dharma for them."

"To those who must be crossed over by the form of a Bodhisattva, he manifests in the form of a Bodhisattva and speaks the Dharma for them."

"To those who must be crossed over by the form of Buddha, he manifests in the form of a Buddha and speaks the Dharma for them. In this way he manifests in all manner of forms to cross them over in the appropriate manner, even to the point of manifesting entering stillness to those who must be crossed over by manifesting entering stillness."

"Flower Virtue, such is the great power of the spiritual penetrations and wisdom of the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Wondrous Sound."

At that time the Bodhisattva Flower Virtue said to the Buddha, “World Honored One, the Bodhisattva Wondrous Sound has deeply planted the roots of goodness. World Honored One, in what samadhi does this Bodhisattva dwell that he is able in this way to transform himself and save living beings?”

The Buddha told the Bodhisattva Flower Virtue, “Good man, this samadhi is called the Manifestation of All Physical Forms. The Bodhisattva Wondrous Sound, dwelling in this samadhi, can in this way benefit limitless living beings.”

When this chapter on the Bodhisattva Wondrous Sound had been spoken, those who had accompanied the Bodhisattva Wondrous Sound, eighty-four thousand in all, all obtained the samadhi of the Manifestation of All Physical Forms. Limitless Bodhisattvas in the Saha world also gained this samadhi, as well as the dharani.

At that time the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Wondrous Sound, having made offerings to Shakyamuni Buddha and to the Stupa of the Buddha Many Jewels, returned to his own country. The countries he passed through quaked in six ways, precious lotus flowers rained down, and hundreds of thousands of myriads of kotis of kinds of music played.

When he arrived at his own country, surrounded by the eighty-four thousand Bodhisattvas, he went before the Buddha Wisdom of Pure Flower Constellation King and said, “World Honored One, I have been to the Saha world where I benefited living beings. I saw Shakyamuni Buddha and the Stupa of Many Jewels Buddha, bowed, and made offerings to them. I also saw the Bodhisattva Manjushri, the Dharma Prince, as well as the Bodhisattva Medicine King, the Bodhisattva Who Has Gained the Power of Diligent Vigor, the Bodhisattva Courageous Giving, and others, and enabled eighty-four thousand Bodhisattvas to obtain the samadhi of the Manifestation of All Physical Forms.”

When this chapter on the comings and goings of the Bodhisattva Wondrous Sound had been spoken, forty-two thousand gods obtained the patience with the non-production of Dharmas. The Bodhisattva Flower Virtue obtained the Dharma Flower Samadhi.

