

## VEṢṬHILA

- 29.1 Then Sudhana went to the town of Śubhapāraṃgama [F.66.a] and approached the householder Veṣṭhila. He bowed his head to his feet, stood before him, and, with his hands placed together in homage, said, “Ārya, I have developed the aspiration for the highest, complete enlightenment, but I do not know how bodhisattvas should train in bodhisattva conduct and in what way they should practice it.
- 29.2 “Ārya, I have heard that you give instruction and teachings to bodhisattvas! Explain to me how bodhisattvas should train in bodhisattva conduct and how they should practice it!”
- 29.3 Veṣṭhila said, “Noble one, I have attained the bodhisattva liberation called *the attainment of the summit of inexhaustibility*.
- 29.4 “Noble one, from my mind’s viewpoint, a tathāgata has not passed into nirvāṇa, does not pass into nirvāṇa, and will not pass into nirvāṇa in any world other than as a way to bring beings who are to be guided under his control, not as a way to enter truly complete nirvāṇa.
- 29.5 “Noble one, in that way, when I opened the door of the sandalwood-throne shrine of the Tathāgata, I attained, by opening the door of the shrine, the bodhisattva samādhi called *the display of the unceasing family of the buddhas*.  
“Noble one, in each instant of mind I rest in this samādhi, and I attain many special features.”
- 29.6 Sudhana asked, “Ārya, what is the scope of that samādhi?”  
Veṣṭhila replied, “Noble one, when I am resting in this samādhi, [F.66.b] there appear to me all the tathāgatas, such as Kāśyapa, in a continuous succession of one buddha after another within the lineage of this world: all the tathāgatas such as Kanakamuni, Krakucchanda, Viśvabhuk, Śikhin, Vipāśyin, Tiṣya, Puṣya, Yaśottara, and Padmottara. I see in the consecutive appearances of the buddhas the unceasing succession of one buddha after another, a hundred buddhas in one instant of mind. In the next instant of

mind I perceive a thousand buddhas. In the next instant of mind I perceive a hundred thousand buddhas. In the same way I see ten million buddhas, a thousand million<sup>1224</sup> buddhas, ten thousand million<sup>1225</sup> buddhas, a million million buddhas,<sup>1226</sup> ten million billion buddhas,<sup>1227</sup> ten million million billion<sup>1228</sup> buddhas, a hundred thousand million billion<sup>1229</sup> buddhas, and ten million million billion<sup>1230</sup> buddhas, and so on, until in a subsequent moment of mind I perceive an inexpressible number of inexpressible numbers of buddhas appearing in succession. In the next instant of mind I see tathāgatas as numerous as the atoms in Jambudvīpa. In the next instant of mind I see tathāgatas as numerous as the atoms in an inexpressible number of inexpressible numbers of buddha realms.

29.7 “I also perceive the successive accumulations for the first development of the aspiration to enlightenment by those tathāgatas. I perceive the miraculous powers they attain through their first development of the aspiration to enlightenment. I perceive their pure fulfillment of their different prayers. I perceive their pure conduct. I perceive their complete accomplishment of the perfections. I perceive their attainment of all the bodhisattva bhūmis. I perceive their pure attainment of patience. I perceive their roaring<sup>1231</sup> that disperses the disturbances of the māras. I perceive the display of the miracles of their complete buddhahood. I perceive the purification of their different buddha realms. I perceive their different ripening of beings. I perceive their different gatherings of followers. I perceive their different halos of light. I perceive their supremacy in turning the wheel of the Dharma. I perceive their attainment of the miraculous powers, miracles, and miraculous manifestations of buddhahood.

29.8 “I remember and keep the Dharma teachings of these tathāgatas clearly and distinctly. Through my memory I possess them. With my intelligence<sup>1232</sup> I understand them. With reverence<sup>1233</sup> I distinguish among them. With my intellect I comprehend them. With my wisdom I illuminate them.

29.9 “I also see and know the future succession of buddhas, such as Maitreya. I see a hundred buddhas in one instant of mind. In the next instant of mind I perceive a thousand buddhas, and so on, up to the instant of mind in which I see tathāgatas as numerous as the atoms in an inexpressible number of inexpressible numbers of buddha realms.

29.10 “I also perceive the successive accumulations for the first development of the aspiration to enlightenment by those tathāgatas. I perceive the miraculous powers they attain through their first development of the aspiration to enlightenment. I perceive their pure fulfillment of their different prayers. I perceive their pure conduct. I perceive their complete accomplishment of the perfections. [F.67.a] I perceive their attainment of all the bodhisattva bhūmis. I perceive their pure attainment of patience. I

- perceive their roaring<sup>1234</sup> that disperses the disturbances of the māras. I perceive the display of the miracles of their complete buddhahood. I perceive the purification of their different buddha realms. I perceive their different ripening of beings. I perceive their different gatherings of followers. I perceive their different halos of light. I perceive their supremacy in turning the wheel of the Dharma. I perceive their attainment of the miraculous powers, miracles, and miraculous manifestations of buddhahood.
- 29.11 “I remember and keep the Dharma teachings of these tathāgatas clearly and distinctly. [F.67.b] Through my memory I possess them. With my intelligence<sup>1235</sup> I understand them. With reverence<sup>1236</sup> I distinguish among them. With my intellect I comprehend them. With my wisdom I illuminate them.
- 29.12 “Just as I see and know the succession of buddhas in the past and in the future in the lineage of this world realm, I see and know in the lineage of world realms in the ten directions as numerous as the atoms in an inexpressible number of inexpressible numbers of buddha realms the succession of tathāgatas in the past and in the future.
- 29.13 “I also perceive the successive accumulations for the first development of the aspiration to enlightenment by those tathāgatas, and so on.
- 29.14 “I know and comprehend the unbroken, unceasing succession of the buddhas. It is unequaled;<sup>1237</sup> it is known through faith, is known through the diligence and resolve of bodhisattvas, augments the power of the diligence of bodhisattvas, and cannot be overcome by the entire world, by all śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, or by bodhisattvas who have not entered its scope.
- 29.15 “I see and know the succession of the present tathāgatas that reside in world realms in the ten directions, such as Vairocana.
- 29.16 “I see a hundred buddhas in one instant of mind. In the next instant of mind I perceive a thousand buddhas, and so on, up to the instant of mind in which I see tathāgatas as numerous as the atoms in an inexpressible number of inexpressible numbers of buddha realms.
- 29.17 “When I wish to see a certain tathāgata, I see him. [F.68.a] I hear all that has been taught, is being taught, and will be taught by those buddhas, those bhagavats. When I have heard them, I retain them. Through my memory I possess them. With my intelligence<sup>1238</sup> I understand them. With reverence<sup>1239</sup> I distinguish among them. With my intellect I comprehend them. With my wisdom I illuminate them.
- 29.18 “Noble one, I know this bodhisattva liberation called *the attainment of the summit of inexhaustibility*, but how could I know the conduct or describe the qualities of the bodhisattvas who know the three times in a single instant; who in one fraction of an instant of their practice dwell in an array of samādhis; who have entered into the sunlight of the tathāgatas;<sup>1240</sup> who

understand the equality of all concepts and misconceptions; who have realized the samādhi that is equal to that of all the buddhas; who act in the nonduality of self, beings, and buddhas; who are in the domain of the display of the Dharma of natural luminosity; who have cut through the net of the world with the device of wisdom; who act without disturbing the seal<sup>1241</sup> of the Dharma of the tathāgatas; who have the scope of wisdom that understands the entire realm of phenomena; who have the scope of wisdom that understands the Dharma teaching of all the tathāgatas?

29.19 “Depart, noble one. In this southern region, there is the mountain named Potalaka. There dwells the bodhisattva by the name of Avalokiteśvara. Go to him and ask him, ‘How should a bodhisattva train in bodhisattva conduct? How should a bodhisattva practice it?’ ” [F.68.b]

29.20 Then he spoke these two verses:

“Depart, Sudhana! In the center of the glorious king of the waters<sup>1242</sup>  
Is beautiful Potalaka, king of mountains, the residence of heroes.  
It has excellent trees made of jewels, is covered with flowers,  
And is endowed with parks, lotus ponds, and flowing streams.

29.21 “Wise Avalokiteśvara who benefits beings—  
That resolute one<sup>1243</sup> dwells on that supreme mountain.  
Go to him, Sudhana, and you will be taught  
The qualities of<sup>1244</sup> the Guides, the entry into the way of vast goodness.”

29.22 Then Sudhana, the head merchant’s son, bowed his head to the feet of the householder Veṣṭhila, circumambulated the householder Veṣṭhila many hundreds of thousands of times, keeping him to his right, and, looking back again and again, departed from the householder Veṣṭhila. [B5]