

45. Chapter 45

SURENDRABHA

45. 1 Sudhana went to the paradise of the lord of Trayastrimsha and approached the deva maiden Surendrabha, the daughter of the deva Smritimat. He bowed his head to the feet of the deva maiden Surendrabha, circumambulated the deva maiden Surendrabha many hundreds of thousands of times, keeping her to his right, and then stood before the deva maiden Surendrabha with his palms together in homage and said, "Arya, goddess, 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. Arya, I have heard that you give instruction and teachings to Bodhisattvas! I pray that you explain to me how Bodhisattvas should train in Bodhisattva conduct and how they should practice it!?"

45. 2 When he had said that, the deva maiden Surendrabha said to Sudhana, the head merchant's son, "Noble one, I have attained the Bodhisattva liberation called the display of pure, unimpeded memory.

45. 3 "Noble one, I remember a kalpa called Utpala in which I served as many Tathagatas as there are grains of sand in the Ganges River. [F.272.a] When they set forth, I protected them, made offerings to them, and gave them parks to enjoy.

45. 4 "I know when those Buddha bhagavats were Bodhisattvas, were within the bodies of their mothers, were born, took their first seven steps, roared the lion's roar, were youths, were within their harems, set forth into homelessness, attained the enlightenment of buddhahood, turned the wheel of the Dharma, and displayed all the miraculous manifestations of a Buddha, and when they ripened and guided beings, throughout all those times, from

their first development of the aspiration for enlightenment until their final Dharma teaching. I remember that, recollect that, grasp that, retain that, reflect upon that, and follow that.

45. 5 ?There was a kalpa called Subhuti, in which I served as many Tathagatas as there are grains of sand in ten Ganges Rivers.

45. 6 ?There was a kalpa called Subhaga, in which I served as many Tathagatas as there are atoms in a Buda realm.

?There was a kalpa called Anilambha, in which I served eighty-four hundred thousand quintillion Tathagatas.

45. 7 ?There was a kalpa called Suprabha, in which I served as many Tathagatas as there are atoms in Jambudvipa.

?There was a kalpa called Atulaprabha, in which I served as many Tathagatas as there are grains of sand in twenty Ganges Rivers.

45. 8 ?There was a kalpa called Uttaptashri, in which I served as many Tathagatas as there are grains of sand in one Ganges River. [F.272.b]

?There was a kalpa called Suryodaya, in which I served as many Tathagatas as there are grains of sand in eighty Ganges Rivers.

45. 9 ?There was a kalpa called Jayamgama, in which I served as many Tathagatas as there are grains of sand in sixty Ganges Rivers.

?There was a kalpa called Sucandra, in which I served as many Tathagatas as there are grains of sand in seventy Ganges Rivers.

45. 10 ?Noble one, in that way, I remember never being apart from the Tathagata arhat samyak sambuddhas throughout kalpas as numerous as the grains of sand in the Ganges River. I heard from all those Tathagatas this Bodhisattva liberation called the display of pure, unimpeded memory. I heard it and retained it. I comprehended whatever they said. I have constantly, always remained

within this liberation. Through this Bodhisattva liberation called the display of pure, unimpeded memory, I remember those Tathagatas from the time they attained the level of a Bodhisattva until the time their Dharma ceased to exist.

I recollect that, grasp that, retain that, reflect upon that, and follow that.

45. 11 ?Noble one, I know only this Bodhisattva liberation called the display of pure, unimpeded memory. How could I know or describe the qualities of the Bodhisattvas who are free from the blindness of darkness, who have risen out of samsara, who are free of obscurations, who aspire not to be asleep, who are free of apathy and idleness, whose body formations are purified, who continuously understand the nature of all phenomena, [F.273.a] and who have realized the pure ten strengths?

45. 12 ?Depart, noble one. In the great city of Kapilavastu resides a teacher of children by the name of Vishvamitra. Go to him and ask him, ?How should a Bodhisattva train in and practice Bodhisattva conduct?? ?

45. 13 Then Sudhana, the head merchant?s son, filled with joy, delighted, elated, pleased, and happy, bowed his head to the feet of the deva maiden Surendrabha. He circumambulated the deva maiden Surendrabha many hundreds of thousands of times, keeping her to his right, and, looking back at her again and again, departed from the deva maiden Surendrabha.