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Jeanne Tsai
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 INTRODUCTION

By Venerable Master Hsing Yun

The Original Vows of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva Sutra (地藏菩薩本願經), is variously known as the Original Vows of Ksitigarbha Sutra (地藏本願經), the Original Practices of Ksitigarbha Sutra (地藏本行經), the Power of the Original Vows of Ksitigarbha Sutra (地藏本誓力經), or simply the Ksitigarbha Sutra (地藏經). During the Tang dynasty, the Chinese translation of the sutra was completed in two fascicles by Master Siksananda (652-710) of Khotan, a kingdom located today in Hetian, Xinjiang, China. Master Siksananda was adept in both the Mahayana and the Theravada traditions of Buddhism and an expert in many other fields of study. He passed away in the tenth month of the first year of the Jingyun era. Other well-known sutras he translated include the eighty-fascicle version of the Flower Adornment Sutra, the seven-fascicle version of the Lankavatara Sutra, and the Prediction of Manjusri Attaining Buddhahood Sutra.

Among the Buddhist community, the Ksitigarbha Sutra is lauded as the Buddhist sutra of filial piety. This sutra consists of the discourses delivered by the Buddha to his mother in the Trayastrimsa Heaven. The sutra discusses the filial practices of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva during his “causal practice,” the time when he was planting the causes for liberating sentient beings in the future, as well as the profound vows he made during previous lives: “Only after all beings have been guided to awakening will I
myself attain bodhi; as long as the hells are not empty, I shall not become a Buddha,” and “If I don’t enter the hells, who will?”

The sutra also discusses cause and effect, the consequences of our actions, as well as the reality of suffering in the hells. In addition, it emphasizes that those who listen to, read, recite, and practice according to the sutra will attain inconceivable merits and benefits and dissolve measureless negative karma.

This sutra consists of thirteen chapters. Below is a brief summary of each chapter.

I. Spiritual Penetration in Trayastrimsa Heaven
Sakyamuni Buddha travels to Trayastrimsa Heaven to expound the Dharma for his mother. He discusses the two extraordinary vows Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva made during his causal practice, swearing to bring measureless living beings to attain Buddhahood and guide them toward liberation.

In one such previous life, Ksitigarbha was the son of a great elder. At that time he encountered a Buddha named Lion’s Swift Rousing Perfect in Ten Thousand Practices Tathagata. The Buddha’s body was adorned with many majestic signs of excellence, and Ksitigarbha felt profound reverence for him. Wishing to attain the same remarkable features as the Buddha, Ksitigarbha vowed that, throughout incalculable future kalpas, he would guide all wrongdoing suffering beings to liberation.

In another previous life, Ksitigarbha was born as a Brahman woman who sought to relieve and rescue her mother from suffering in hell. Through making offerings and cultivating merit, Ksitigarbha was able to free her from hell. Ksitigarbha further vowed that, throughout the future kalpas, she would guide all wrongdoing suffering beings to liberation.

II. The Assembly of the Emanations
The innumerable emanations of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva who reside in the incalculably many hells all assemble in the palace of the Trayastrimsa Heaven. Sakyamuni Buddha then earnestly entrusts all these emanations with a task: until the arrival of Maitreya Buddha, Ksitigarbha is to guide all beings who suffer due to their wrongdoing to liberation. The many emanations of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva come together, forming one being, and vow:

...My emanations fill worlds as numerous as the sand grains in hundreds of thousands of myriads of millions of Ganges Rivers. In each of these worlds, I transform into hundreds of thousands of myriads of millions of emanations. Each emanation guides hundreds of thousands of myriads of millions of people across, causing them to revere and take refuge in the Triple Gem, leave samsara forever, and reach the bliss of nirvana. As long as they do good deeds in Buddhadharma, even if such deeds are as little as a strand of hair, a drop of water, a grain of sand, a speck of dust, or a bit of a minute down hair, I will gradually guide them across to liberation, causing them to gain great benefits.
III. Observing the Karmic Conditions of Living Beings

Ksitigarbha answers questions from Queen Maya, the Buddha’s mother, explaining the law of cause and effect. He describes how living beings of Jambudvipa are subject to the results of their karma, and the conditions of the Incessant Hell

IV. The Karmic Consequences of Living Beings of Jambudvipa

The Buddha describes the vows Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva made during his causal practice. During the life of the Buddha named All Wisdom Accomplished Tathagata, when Ksitigarbha was the king of a small country, he vowed:

If I do not first guide all wrongdoing suffering beings across, causing them to attain peace and happiness and enabling them to achieve bodhi, I shall not become a Buddha.

During the Age of Semblance Dharma of Pure Lotus Eyes Tathagata, Ksitigarbha was a woman named Bright Eyes. Bright Eyes wished she could free her mother from the lower realms forever, and that she be free from the difficulty of being reborn lowly or as a woman. Bright Eyes made offerings to an arhat, who taught her how to recollect Pure Lotus Eyes Tathagata and sculpt and paint images of this Buddha. By cultivating merit in this way, Bright Eyes was able to free her mother from the lower realms. Bright Eyes then made the following vow:

...in front of the image of Pure Lotus Eyes Tathagata, I vow that from this day forth, throughout hundreds of thousands of myriads of millions of future kalpas in all worlds where there are hells, where there are the three lower realms, I will rescue all wrongdoing suffering beings, causing them to leave the lower realms of hells, animals, and hungry ghosts. Only when the beings who undergo the ripened effects of wrongdoing have all become Buddhas will I myself attain perfect awakening.

For the benefit of living beings, Sakyamuni Buddha encourages all beings to revere and take refuge in Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva, and to reverently gaze and pay obeisance to his image. The Buddha then entrusts the Bodhisattvas to expound and propagate this sutra far and wide.

Finally, the Buddha speaks in general terms about the various effects brought about by karma maturing.

V. The Names of the Hells

Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva answers the questions of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva, enumerating and naming the various hells where wrongdoing suffering beings in the saha world undergo the ripened effects of their negative karma. The chapter depicts all living beings as subject to the law of cause and effect: that one reaps what one sows. Even our closest relatives cannot take our place. Thus living beings should be weary of wrongdoing, give up what is unwholesome, and be virtuous and good.
VI. The Praise of the Tathagata

The Buddha explains that offerings to Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva can lead to various virtues for both human and heavenly beings, listing the causes and conditions of these actions and the resulting benefits they produce. The Buddha also explains the names of the sutra.

VII. Benefiting the Living and the Deceased

Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva describes how the mental stirrings and thoughts of living beings of Jambudvipa invariably generate karma. Therefore, when beings depart this life, their parents and relatives should make merit on their behalf by making offerings in veneration to Buddha images, reciting the Buddhas’ names, and paying obeisance to the Buddhas. They should also avoid killing other living beings so as to not generate additional negative karma. During the forty-nine day period after death, relatives should perform many good deeds and make offerings to the Buddha and sangha on behalf of the departed. The deceased will then receive one-seventh of the resulting merit and the living relatives will receive the other six-sevenths. In this way such acts benefit both the living and the deceased.

VIII. The Praise of King Yama and His Retinue

The Buddha explains to King Yama and measureless other ghost kings how living beings of Jambudvipa are obstinate and difficult to control. That is why, though Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva works tirelessly to guide such beings to liberation, he has yet to lead them all to attain Buddhahood and fulfill his vows.

Afterwards, both Ghost King Evil Poison and Ghost King Presiding Over Life vow to support and protect people who read and recite the sutras and recite the names of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

IX. Reciting the Names of Buddhas

For the benefit of living beings in the future, Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva explains how living beings who recite and meditate on the names of Buddhas can gain inconceivable merits and benefits.

X. Comparing the Conditions and Virtues of Giving

The Buddha explains for Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva the effects of giving: how differences in the giver, the recipient, and the gift result in different merits and benefits.

XI. The Dharma Protection of the Earth Spirit

An Earth Spirit named Firm and Solid states that, among the many Bodhisattvas that have affinities with living beings living in Jambudvipa, only Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva has made deeply profound vows. The spirit describes how those who sing praises, make offerings, reverently gaze upon, and pay obeisance to Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva can gain the following benefits:

First, their lands will be fertile.
Second, their families and homes will ever be in peace.
Third, their deceased relatives will be reborn in the heavens.
Fourth, the living will enjoy ever greater longevity.
Fifth, they will obtain what they seek with ease.
Sixth, they will not suffer disasters of flood or fire.
Seventh, events that cause depletion will be eliminated.
Eighth, they will not have nightmares.
Ninth, they will be protected by spirits in their daily
comings and goings.
Tenth, they will come across many causes of holiness.

In addition, the Earth Spirit, along with devas from different
heavens and their retinues vow to support and protect those who
venerate Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva.

XII. The Benefits from Seeing and Hearing

Sakyamuni Buddha describes to Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva the
power of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva’s awesome spiritual penetration
and the various virtues gained by living beings who see his image
and hear his name. The Buddha also entrusts Avalokitesvara
Bodhisattva to expound and propagate this sutra far and wide.

XIII. Entrusting Humans and Devas

Sakyamuni Buddha once again entrusts Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva
to rescue and guide Jambudvipa’s living beings who have not
yet left the threefold world, who are obstinate and difficult-to-teach, to liberation. At the request of Akasagarbha Bodhisattva,
Sakyamuni Buddha describes the twenty-eight kinds of benefits
that can be received by good men and women who give gifts, make
offerings, gaze reverently at, and make obeisance to Ksitigarbha
Bodhisattva:

First, devas and nagas will protect them.
Second, their wholesome results will increase daily.
Third, they will accumulate superior causes for holiness.
Fourth, they will not retreat from bodhi.
Fifth, their food and clothing will be abundant.
Sixth, they will not be infected by diseases or pestilence.
Seventh, they will not be in disasters of flood or fire.
Eighth, they will not fall victim to robbery or theft.
Ninth, people who see them will admire and respect
them.
Tenth, spirits and ghosts will aid and support them.
Eleventh, women [who wish to] will be reborn as men.
Twelfth, [if reborn as women] they will be daughters of
kings and ministers.
Thirteenth, they will be good looking and with perfect
features.
Fourteenth, they will frequently be reborn in the
heavens.
Fifteenth, they may be emperors or kings.
Sixteenth, they will have the wisdom to know past lives.
Seventeenth, they will fulfill their wishes.
Eighteenth, their family members will be happy.
Nineteenth, untoward dire occurrences will be eliminated.
Twentieth, they will forever leave the karmic paths.
Twenty-first, they will pass through safely wherever they go.
Twenty-second, their dreams at night will be peaceful and happy.
Twenty-third, their deceased relatives will leave suffering behind.
Twenty-fourth, they will be reborn on the strength of their past merit.
Twenty-fifth, holy ones will praise them.
Twenty-sixth, they will be intelligent and have keen faculties.
Twenty-seventh, their hearts will be replete with kindness and compassion.
Twenty-eighth, they will ultimately become Buddhas.

Sakyamuni Buddha then describes the seven kinds of benefits received by devas, nagas, ghosts, and spirits who see Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva’s image, hear his name, gaze reverently at, or make obeisance to him:

First, they will quickly ascend the stages of holiness.
Second, their unwholesome karma will dissolve.
Third, Buddhas will protect and be near them.
Fourth, they will not retreat from bodhi.
Fifth, their inherent powers will increase.
Sixth, they will know past lives.
Seventh, they will ultimately become Buddhas.

The sutra is easy to read and is frequently recited for the benefit of the deceased. The description of hells and the character of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva easily integrate with Chinese folk beliefs. This sutra has been broadly circulated among the people, especially during the Ming and Qing dynasties, and Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva himself is widely honored by the Chinese.

According to the Biographies of Mystical Monastics (神僧傳) and the Song Dynasty Compiled Biographies of Eminent Monastics (宋高僧傳), during the Tang dynasty Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva manifested as a Silla Korean prince named Jin Qiaojue (Kr. kim kyogak). At age twenty-four Jin Qiaojue renounced the household life and traveled to China by sea with his white canine companion Shanting (“Listen Well”). Once in China he cultivated at Mount Jiuhua, passing away at age of ninety-nine. During his seventy-five years living and meditating on Mount Jiuhua, he once entered uninterrupted meditative concentration for twenty years.

Several miracles are attributed to Jin Qiaojue during his time living on Mount Jiuhua. Once a rich village elder named Min offered to donate some of his property on Mount Jiuhua to the monastic. Elder Min asked Jin Qiaojue how much would be necessary, to which he replied he would only need as much land as his robe could cover. After agreeing to such a modest donation, Jin Qiaojue miraculously unfurled his robe to such a size that it was able to cover all nine peaks of Mount Jiuhua. Impressed by the monastic’s
display of supernatural power, Elder Min agreed to donate all of his land. Jin Qiaojue lived amidst Mount Jiuhua thereafter.

As time went on, Jin Qiaojue garnered a following of many disciples, such that food and resources became scarce. Jin Qiaojue instructed his disciples to add some of the fine, white soil from the mountains to their rice as it cooked. Miraculously, the food was able to support the entire monastic community. On another occasion, the mountain spirit’s son took the form of a scorpion and stung Jin Qiaojue. Afterwards, the mountain spirit herself sent forth a flowing spring to apologize for her son’s offense. Because of Jin Qiaojue’s presence on the mountain and his association with Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva, Mount Jiuhua has become known as the teaching place of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva and is regarded as one of the four great sacred mountains of Chinese Buddhism.

Devotion to Ksitigarbha has not only become a major part of lay Buddhist practice, but many great patriarchs and eminent monastics throughout the ages have dedicated their lives to practices associated with this Bodhisattva. For example, during the Sui dynasty, Venerable Xinxing founded the Three Phases School (三階教), which made devotion to Ksitigarbha its core practice. During the Song dynasty, Venerable Changjin compiled thirty-two miracles associated with Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva into the Record of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva’s Responses (地藏菩薩靈驗記), which made Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva devotional practices even more widespread.

During the Ming dynasty, Venerable Master Ouyi spent his whole life practicing devotion to Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva. More recently Venerable Master Hongyi copied by hand one fascicle of the Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva Repentance Liturgy (讚禮地藏菩薩懺願儀) and dedicated the merit to his late mother. He himself also vowed to practice according to Ksitigarbha’s repentance.

This sutra is listed in volume one of the Jiaxing Buddhist Canon, volume sixty of the Qianlong Buddhist Canon, volume twenty-nine of the Manji edition of the Buddhist Canon, and volume thirteen of the Taisho Buddhist Canon.
Incense Praise

Incense burning in the censer,
All space permeated with fragrance.

The Buddhas perceive it from every direction,
Auspicious clouds gather everywhere.

With our sincerity,
The Buddhas manifest themselves in their entirety.

We take refuge in the Bodhisattvas-Mahasattvas.
Sutra Opening Verse

The unexcelled, most profound, and exquisitely wondrous Dharma,

Is difficult to encounter throughout hundreds of thousands of millions of kalpas.

Since we are now able to see, hear, receive and retain it,

May we comprehend the true meaning of the Tathagata.
Chapter One

Spiritual Penetration in the Trayastrimsha Heaven

Thus have I heard. At one time, the Buddha was in the Trayastrimsha Heaven expounding Dharma for his mother. At that time, from measureless worlds of the ten directions, all Buddhas and great Bodhisattva-Mahasattvas, inexpressibly-inexpressibly [many], all came and assembled there. They praised how Sakyamuni Buddha was able to manifest inconceivable, great wisdom and supernatural powers to regulate and train obstinate living beings in the evil age of the five degenerations, so that beings would come to understand suffering and happiness. Each of them sent his attendant to inquire after the World-Honored One.
At that time, the Tathagata smiled and emitted hundreds of thousands of myriads of millions of clouds of great light. There were clouds of light of great perfect completeness, clouds of light of great kindness and compassion, clouds of light of great wisdom, clouds of light of great prajna, clouds of light of great samadhi, clouds of light of great auspiciousness, clouds of light of great merit, clouds of light of great virtue, clouds of light of great refuge, and clouds of light of great praise.

After emitting an inexpressible [number of] clouds of light such as these, he furthermore gave forth various sublime, wonderful sounds. There was the sound of perfection of giving, […]
After he had given forth an inexpressibly-inexpressible [number of] sounds such as these, from the saha world and other lands, measureless millions of devas, nagas, ghosts, and spirits also assembled in the palace of the Trayāṣṭrimsa Heaven. [...]
 [...] They were from the Heaven of the Four Deva Kings, the Trayastrimsa Heaven, the Suyama Heaven, the Tusita Heaven, the Heaven of Delight in Transformations, the Heaven of Mastery over Others’ Transformations, the Heaven of Brahma’s Assembly, the Heaven of Brahma’s Ministers, the Great Brahma Heaven, the Heaven of Limited Light, the Heaven of Measureless Light, the Light-Sound Heaven, the Heaven of Limited Purity, the Heaven of Measureless Purity, the Heaven of Universal Purity, the Heaven of Birth of Merit, the Heaven of Love of Merit, the Heaven of Abundant Results, the Heaven of No Perception, the Heaven of No Affliction, the Heaven of No Heat [from affliction], the Heaven of Good Sight, the Heaven of Good Manifestation, the Ultimate Form Heaven, the Mahesvara Heaven, and so forth, up to the Heaven of the State of Neither-Perception-nor-Non-Perception. All the multitudes of devas, nagas, ghosts, and spirits came and assembled there.
Furthermore, from other lands and the saha world, sea spirits, river spirits, stream spirits, tree spirits, mountain spirits, earth spirits, brook-and-marsh spirits, seedling-and-crop spirits, day spirits, night spirits, space spirits, heaven spirits, food-and-drink spirits, grass-and-wood spirits—spirits such as these all came and assembled there.

Furthermore, from other lands and the saha world, great ghost kings known as Ghost King Evil Eyes, Ghost King Consuming Blood, Ghost King Consuming Vital Energy, Ghost King Consuming Fetuses and Eggs, Ghost King Spreading Diseases, Ghost King Controlling Poisons, [...]
Ghost King Kindhearted, Ghost King Merit and Benefit, Ghost King Great Love and Respect—ghost kings such as these all came and assembled there.

At that time, Sakyamuni Buddha said to Manjusri, Dharma Prince, Bodhisattva-Mahasattva, “Look at all the Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, devas, nagas, ghosts, and spirits from this and other worlds, from this and other lands—those who come and assemble in the Trayastrimsa Heaven now. Do you know their number?”

Manjusri said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, even if I were to measure and fathom with the power of my spiritual penetration for a thousand kalpas, I would not be able to know it.”
The Buddha told Manjusri, “As I see them through the Buddha eye, their number still cannot be counted fully. All these are beings who have been guided across, are being guided across, will be guided across [to the other shore], have been brought to attainment, are being brought to attainment, or will be brought to attainment by Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva throughout many long kalpas.”

Manjusri said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, in the past I have long cultivated roots of goodness and have attained unobstructed wisdom; therefore, when I hear what the Buddha says, I immediately believe and accept it. However, sravakas of small attainment, devas and nagas and others of the eight classes of beings, as well as living beings in the future—although hearing the sincere, truthful words of the Tathagata, will certainly harbor doubts. Even if they receive these words most respectfully, they may still be unable to avoid slandering them. O World-Honored One, please speak
in detail about what practices Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva-Mahasattva cultivated and what vows he made during his causal states [of cultivation] that have enabled him to accomplish such inconceivable deeds.”

The Buddha told Manjusri, “As an analogy, suppose all the grasses, trees, thickets, forests, rice, sesame, bamboo, reeds, mountains, stones, and dust particles in the three thousandfold world system were each counted as a unit, and [for each unit] there would be a Ganges River; for each grain of sand in each of these Ganges Rivers, there would be a world; for each speck of dust in each of these worlds, there would be a kalpa; and for every speck of dust accumulated during each of these kalpas, there would be a kalpa. [...]
The time since Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva attained the Tenth Ground of Fruition [of Bodhisattva Development] is thousands of times greater than that of the above analogy. How much greater yet [is the time] since Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva was at the stages of sravaka and pratyekabuddha!

“Manjusri, inconceivable are the awesome spiritual penetration and vows of this Bodhisattva. In the future if there are good men and good women who hear this Bodhisattva’s name, and they sing his praises, reverently gaze, pay obeisance, recite his name, make offerings, or if they paint, carve, sculpt, or use lacquer to make his image, these people will be reborn a hundred times in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three Devas and will never fall into the lower realms.
“Manjusri, in the distant past, an inexpressibly-inexpressible [number of] kalpas ago, Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva-Mahasattva was once the son of a great elder. At that time in the world there was a Buddha named Lion’s Swift Rousing Perfect in Ten Thousand Practices Tathagata. The elder’s son saw the Buddha’s signs and characteristics of excellence, how he was adorned with thousands of merits. He therefore inquired of that Buddha what practices he had cultivated and what vows he had made to achieve these signs of excellence.

“Lion’s Swift Rousing Perfect in Ten Thousand Practices Tathagata told the elder’s son that if he wished to attain this [Buddha] body, he would have to guide all suffering beings across to liberation throughout a very long time.
Manjusri, the elder’s son hence made a vow, saying ‘From now on, throughout incalculable kalpas in the future, I will employ many skillful means for the sake of wrongdoing suffering beings in the six realms of existence, causing all of them to attain liberation; only after that will I myself attain Buddhahood.’ He made such a great vow in front of that Buddha. Now, hundreds of thousands of myriads of millions of nayutas of inexpressible kalpas later, he is still a Bodhisattva.

“Moreover, in the past, inconceivable asamkhyeya kalpas ago, in the world there was a Buddha named Awakening-Blossom Concentration Mastery King Tathagata. [...]
彼佛寿命四百千萬億

阿僧祇劫。像法之中有

一婆羅門女。宿福深厚

眾所欽敬。行住坐臥諸天衛護。

其母信邪常輕三寶。是時。聖女廣設方便

便勸誘其母令生正見。

而此女母未全生信。不

久命終魂神墮在無間

地獄。

時。婆羅門女知母在

時。婆羅門女。知母在

世不信因果。計當隨業

[...] The lifespan of that Buddha was four hundred thousand myriad million asamkhyeya kalpas. During the Age of Semblance Dharma, there was a Brahman woman who had ample, profound merits from previous lives. She was admired and respected by people. Whether she was walking, standing, sitting, or lying down, devas guarded and protected her. Her mother, however, believed in false doctrines and often slighted the Triple Gem. The holy woman used many skillful means to persuade and encourage her mother to give rise to right view, but her mother did not fully believe. Before long, the mother’s life ended and her consciousness fell into the Incessant Hell.²

“The Brahman woman knew that when her mother was alive, she had not believed in cause and effect. [...]
Realizing that her mother would certainly be reborn in the lower realms in accordance with her karma, the woman sold the family house and searched far and wide for incense, flowers, and various objects worthy to be offered. She then made many great offerings to that past Buddha’s stupas and monasteries. In one of the monasteries, she saw Awakening-Blossom Concentration Mastery King Tathagata’s image: his awe-inspiring appearance was sculpted and painted, replete with splendor and dignity. As the Brahman woman gazed up at and made obeisance to his honored countenance, her reverence multiplied. She thought to herself, ‘The Buddha is called the great awakened one, replete with all wisdom. If [it were] during the time that this Buddha is in the world, and I were to inquire of him after my mother’s death, he would certainly know where she is.’

“The Brahman woman wept for a long time as she gazed up longingly at the Tathagata. Suddenly she heard a voice in the sky saying [...]
ʻWeeping holy woman, do not be so sorrowful. I will show you where your mother has gone.ʼ

ʻThe Brahman woman joined her palms, faced skyward, and answered by saying, ‘Who is the divine virtuous one relieving me of my worry? Ever since I lost my mother, I have held her in memory day and night. There is nowhere that I can ask about the realm of her rebirth.’

ʻA voice again resounded in the sky, telling the woman, ‘I am the one to whom you gaze reverently and pay obeisance, the past Awakening-Blossom Concentration Mastery King Tathagata. I have seen that you think of your mother many times more than ordinary beings do theirs. Therefore, I have come to show you [where she is].ʼ
“Upon hearing these words, the Brahman woman cast her entire body [skyward] to prostrate herself, injuring her limbs and joints. Her attendants supported and attended her for quite a while before she finally came to. Then she said toward the sky, ‘I implore the Buddha to take kind pity upon me and quickly tell me in what realm my mother has been reborn, now that I am near death myself.’

“Awakening-Blossom Concentration Mastery King Tathagata told the holy woman, ‘After your offering is complete, go home quickly. Sit upright and meditate on my name. You will soon know where your mother has been reborn.’

“After the Brahman woman made obeisance to the Buddha, […]

Upon hearing these words, the Brahman woman cast her entire body [skyward] to prostrate herself, injuring her limbs and joints. Her attendants supported and attended her for quite a while before she finally came to. Then she said toward the sky, ‘I implore the Buddha to take kind pity upon me and quickly tell me in what realm my mother has been reborn, now that I am near death myself.’

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“After the Brahman woman made obeisance to the Buddha, […]
已，即歸其舍。以憶母故，

端坐念覺華定自在王

經一日一夜，忽見自己

身到一海邊。其水涌沸，

諸惡獸盡復鐵身，飛行

海中，被諸惡獸爭取

食啜。又見夜叉其形各

異，或多手多眼多足多

頭，口牙外出利刃如劍，

[...] she returned home immediately, and because she thought of her mother, she sat upright meditating on Awakening-Blossom Concentration Mastery King Tathagata.

“After a day and a night, she suddenly saw herself beside a sea whose waters seethed. Many evil beasts with iron bodies flew and ran on the sea, rushing here and there in pursuit. She saw hundreds of thousands of myriads of men and women, rising and sinking in the sea, snatched up and devoured by vying evil beasts. She also saw yaksas whose appearances were each different—some had many hands, some many eyes, some many legs, some many heads—and protruding from their mouths were teeth as sharp as swords. [...]
They drove the wrongdoers on toward the evil beasts; moreover, they themselves hit and seized those people; they forced their heads and feet together—the forms [of torment] were myriad in variety, a sight at which one would not dare look for long. During that time, the Brahman woman was naturally without fear because of the power of recollecting the Buddha.

“There was a ghost king named Poisonless who prostrated himself to welcome her. He said to the holy woman, ‘Excellent, Bodhisattva! For what reason have you come here?’

“The Brahman woman asked the ghost king, ‘What is this place?’

“Poisonless replied, ‘This is the first of the seas west of the Great Iron Encircling Mountains.’
The holy woman asked, ‘I have heard that hells are within the Iron Encircling [Mountains]. Is this really so?’

Poisonless replied, ‘There really are hells.’

The holy woman asked, ‘Now, how have I come to the hells?’

Poisonless replied, ‘If it were not by [the power of] awesome spiritual penetration, then it would have been by the force of karma. Without either, one cannot come here at all.’

The holy woman asked further, ‘Why is this water seething, and why are there so many wrongdoers and evil beasts?’
Poisonless replied, “These are recently deceased beings of Jambudvipa who had done evil. They have passed through forty-nine days without any descendants doing virtuous deeds on their behalf to rescue them from suffering. Besides that, during their lifetime they did not plant any good causes. Therefore, their own karma will accordingly bring about the hells, and naturally they are to cross this sea first. A hundred thousand yojanas east of this sea, there is another sea where the suffering is many times greater than this one. To the east of that sea, there is yet another sea where the suffering is multiplied again. Brought on by the evil causes in the karma of body, speech, and mind, these seas are called the seas of karma. This is that place.’
曰：地獄何在？無毒答曰：三海之內。是大地獄，其數百千各。各差別。所謂大者具有十八，次有五百苦毒無量；次有千百亦無量苦。

聖女又問大鬼王曰：菩薩之母在生習何行業？聖女答曰：我母邪見。[...] ‘Where are the hells?’

“Poisonless replied, 'Within the three seas are great hells. They number in the hundreds of thousands, and each one is different. There are eighteen specifically known as the great hells. Second [to them] there are five hundred, where the agonizing suffering is measureless; and next, there are hundreds of thousands, also with measureless suffering.'

“The holy woman again asked the great ghost king, ‘My mother passed away not long ago. I wonder, to what realm has her consciousness gone?’

“The ghost king asked the holy woman, ‘What actions did the Bodhisattva’s mother do habitually while she was alive?’

“The holy woman replied, ‘My mother held false views, [...]”
 [...] and she ridiculed and slandered the Triple Gem. Even when she temporarily believed, she would quickly become disrespectful again. She passed away recently. I do not know where she has been reborn.'

“Poisonless asked, ‘What was the name and clan of the Bodhisattva’s mother?’

“The holy woman replied, ‘My parents were both Brahmans. My father’s name was Silou Shanxian, and my mother’s name was Yue Dili.’

“Poisonless joined his palms and informed the Bodhisattva, ‘Holy One, please return to your home. Do not be worried or sorrowful in remembering, for the woman wrongdoer Yue Dili was reborn in heaven three days ago. [...]”
承 孝 順 之 子 為 母 設 供
修 福，布 施 覺 華 定 自 在
之 母 得 脫 地 獄，應 是 無
間 罪 人，此 日 悉 得 受 樂
俱 同 生 訥。鬼 王 言 畢 合
拿 而 退。
婆 羅 門 女 尋 如 夢 歸。
悟 此 事 已，便 於 覺 華 定
自 在 王 如 來 塔 像 之 前，
立 弘 誓 願；願 我 盡 未 來
劫，應 有 罪 苦 罪 生，廣 設

 [...] It is said that by virtue of her filial child’s making offerings to cultivate merit in the mother’s behalf by practicing giving to the stupas and monasteries of Awakening-Blossom Concentration Mastery King Tathagata, not only was the Bodhisattva’s mother released from the hells, the other wrongdoers in the Incessant Hell, too, experienced happiness and were reborn on that day.’ After the ghost king had finished speaking, he joined his palms and withdrew.

“The Brahman woman quickly returned as if from a dream. Upon realizing this event, she made an immense vow before the image and stupa of Awakening-Blossom Concentration Mastery King Tathagata, ‘I vow that throughout the future kalpas, I will employ many skillful means for all wrongdoing suffering beings, causing them all to attain liberation.’”
The Buddha told Manjusri, “Ghost King Poisonless then is now Leader In Wealth Bodhisattva, and the Brahman woman is now Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva.”
Chapter Two

THE ASSEMBLY OF THE EMANATIONS

At that time, emanation Ksitigarbha Bodhisattvas from all the hells in hundreds of thousands of myriads of myriads of immeasurably unthinkables, ineffables, inexpressibles, measureless asamkhyeyas of worlds all came and assembled in the palace of the Trayastrimsa Heaven. Because of the spiritual power of the Tathagata, each came from his direction with beings—also numbering in the thousands of myriads of millions of nayutas—who had obtained liberation from the karmic paths, and all came holding incense and flowers to make offering to the Buddha. Those groups of beings who came were irreversibly [on the path] to unexcelled perfect complete awakening […]
because they had been taught and transformed by Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva. For many long kalpas these beings had been wandering in samsara, undergoing suffering in the six realms of existence with never a momentary rest. Due to the great kindness and compassion and profound vows of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva, they each had realized attainments. When they came to the Trayastrimsa Heaven, their hearts danced joyously. They gazed up in reverence at the Tathagata, their eyes never leaving him for a moment.

At that time, the World-Honored One stretched forth his golden arm and placed his hand on the crowns of the heads of all the emanation Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva-Mahasattvas from hundreds of thousands of myriads of millions of unthinkable, ineffable, immeasurable, inexpressible, [...]

地藏菩萨教化，永不退
转於阿耨多罗三藐三菩提。是诸眾等，久遠劫
来流流浪生死，六道受苦
暫無休息。以地藏菩萨
廣大慈悲，深誓願故，各
獲果證。既至忉利心懷
踊躍，瞻仰如來目不暫
舍。
爾時，世尊舒金色臂，摩百千萬億不可思、不可量、不可說無
measureless asamkhyeyas of worlds and spoke these words, “I teach and transform obstinate living beings like these in the evil age of the five degenerations, causing their minds to be regulated and tamed so that they abandon the false and return to the true. However, there are one or two out of every ten who still have evil habits. I too transform into hundreds of thousands of millions of emanations and employ many skillful means [for living beings]. Some beings are of keen capacity: they immediately believe and accept upon hearing [the Dharma]. Some are reaping the results of wholesome [deeds]: they achieve accomplishments through energetic encouragement. Some are ignorant and dull: they return [to the true] only after long being instructed. Some have karma that is heavy: they do not give rise to respect [for the Dharma].

“Living beings like these types are each different. [...]

量阿僧祇世界諸分身
地藏菩薩摩訶薩頂，而
作是言：吾於五濁惡世，
教化如是剛強眾生，令
心調伏非邪歸正，十有
一二者尚惡習在。吾亦分
身千百億，廣設方便。或
有利根聞即信受，或有
善果勤勸成就，或有暗
鈍久化方歸，或有業重
不生敬仰。
如是等輩眾生，各各
I therefore transform into emanations to guide them across to liberation. The emanations are manifested in the forms of a man, a woman, a deva, a naga, a spirit, a ghost, or a mountain, a forest, a stream, a plain, a river, a pond, a spring, or a well to benefit people, so that they all may be guided across to liberation. The emanations are also manifested in the forms of Sakra, Brahma, a wheel-turning king, a householder, a king, a high minister, a government official, or a bhiksu, a bhiksuni, an upasaka, an upasika, or a sravaka, an arhat, a pratyekabuddha, a Bodhisattva, or others to teach and guide living beings across. [...]
It is not only in the form of a Buddha that I have manifested before them.

“You see how, kalpa after kalpa, diligently and arduously I guide difficult-to-teach, obstinate, wrongdoing, suffering beings such as these across to liberation. Those not yet regulated and tamed experience ripened effects according to their karma. If they fall into the lower realms and undergo great suffering, you should remember what I am earnestly entrusting to you now in the Trayastrimsa Heaven: Help all living beings in the saha world from now until Maitreya [Buddha] arises in the world—cause them to attain liberation, to leave all suffering forever, and to meet [Maitreya] Buddha and be given prediction.”

At that time, emanation Ksitigarbha Bodhisattvas from the various worlds […]
 [... returned together to one form, and weeping from
pity and great love, he said to the Buddha, “Throughout
many long kalpas Buddhas have guided me, so that I
am able to attain inconceivable spiritual power and be
replete with great wisdom. My emanations fill worlds
as numerous as the sand grains in hundreds of thou-
sands of myriads of millions of Ganges Rivers. In each
of these worlds, I transform into hundreds of thousands
of myriads of millions of emanations. Each emanation
guides hundreds of thousands of myriads of millions
of people across, causing them to revere and take ref-
uge in the Triple Gem, leave samsara forever, and reach
the bliss of nirvana. As long as they do good deeds in
Buddhadharma, even if such deeds are as little as a
strand of hair, a drop of water, a grain of sand, a speck of
dust, or a bit of a minute down hair, [...]

zang pu sa gong fu yi xing ti lei
藏 菩 薩 共 復 一 形 涕 淚
ai lian bai qi fo yan wo cong jiu
哀 戀 白 其 佛 言: 我 從 久
yuan jie lai meng fo jie yin shi huo
遠 劫 來 蒙 佛 接 引 使 獲
bu ke si yi shen li ju da zhi
不 可 思 議 神 力 具 大 智
hui wo suo fen shen bian man bai qian
慧。我 所 分 身 遍 滿 百 千
wan yi heng he sha shi jie mei yi
萬 億 恒 河 沙 世 界 每 一
shi jie hua bai qian wan yi shen mei
世 界 化 百 千 億 身 每
yi shen du bai qian wan yi ren ling
一 身 度 百 千 億 人 令
gui jing san bao yong li sheng si zhi
歸 敬 三 寶 永 離 生 死 至
nie pan le dan yu fo fa zhong suo
涅 楓 樂。但 於 佛 法 中 所
wei shan shi yi mao yi ti yi sha
為 善 事 一 毛 一 滯 一 沙
yi chen huo hao fa xu wo jian du
一 塵 或 毫 髮 許 我 漸 度
 [...] I will gradually guide them across to liberation, causing them to gain great benefits. O World-Honored One, please do not be concerned about future living beings who have unwholesome karma.”

Thus he said three times to the Buddha, “O World-Honored One, please do not be concerned about future living beings who have unwholesome karma.”

At that time, the Buddha praised Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva, saying, “Excellent, excellent! I will help in your aspirations. You will be able to fulfill the profound vows taken throughout many long kalpas, finish guiding [beings] far and wide [to the other shore], and immediately attain bodhi.”
At that time, the Buddha’s mother, Queen Maya, respectfully joined her palms and asked Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva, “Holy One, living beings of Jambudvipa generate different karma. What ripened effects do they experience?”

Ksitigarbha replied, “There are thousands of myriads of worlds and lands: some have hells, others do not have hells; some have women, others do not have women; some have Buddhadharma, others do not have Buddhadharma; this is also the case for [the presence or absence of] sravakas, pratyekabuddhas, and so forth. There is not only the category of ripened effects of wrongdoing as occur in the hells.”
Queen Maya again said to the Bodhisattva, “I wish to hear about the lower realms brought on by the ripened effects of wrongdoing in Jambudvipa.”

Ksitigarbha replied, “Holy Mother, please listen and I will briefly speak about that.”

The Buddha’s mother answered, “Holy One, please tell me.”

At that time, Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva said to the Holy Mother, “The offenses in Jambudvipa and the ripened effects are like these: If there are living beings who are not filial toward their parents, who even kill them, they will fall into the Incessant Hell, and for thousands of myriads of millions of kalpas, be without a time of release despite their wishes.
“If there are living beings who shed a Buddha’s blood, who slander the Triple Gem, who disrespect the sacred sutras, they too will fall into the Incessant Hell, and for thousands of myriads of millions of kalpas, be without a time of release despite their wishes.

“If there are living beings who usurp or damage the property of the sangha, who defile monks or nuns, who commit sexual acts in the monastery, or who kill or harm beings there—living beings like these will fall into the Incessant Hell, and for thousands of myriads of millions of kalpas, be without a time of release despite their wishes.

“If there are living beings who pretend to be monastics but whose hearts are not those of monastics—they abuse the property of the sangha, [...]

wu qi
無期。

ruo you zhong sheng chu fo shen xie
若有眾生出佛身血,

hui bang san bao bu jing zun jing yi
毀谤三寶不敬尊經, 亦

dang duo yu wu jian di yu qian wan
當墮於無間地獄, 千萬

yi jie qiu chu wu qi
億劫求出無期。

ruo you zhong sheng qin sun chang zhu
若有眾生侵損常住,

dian wu seng ni huo qie lan nei zi
玷污僧尼, 或伽藍內恣

xing yin yu huo sha huo hai ru shi
行淫欲, 或殺或害, 如是

deng bei dang duo wu jian di yu qian
等輩當墮無間地獄, 千

wan yi jie qiu chu wu qi
萬億劫求出無期。

ruo you zhong sheng wei zuo sha men
若有眾生偽作沙門,

xin fei sha men po yong chang zhu qi
心非沙門破用常住, 欺
[...] deceive lay devotees, go against the precepts, do various evil acts—living beings like these will fall into the Incessant Hell, and for thousands of myriads of millions of kalpas, be without a time of release despite their wishes.

"If there are living beings who steal the wealth, goods, grains, food, drink, clothing from the property of the sangha, who take anything at all [from the sangha] that is not given to them, they will fall into the Incessant Hell, and for thousands of myriads of millions of kalpas, be without a time of release despite their wishes."

Ksitigarbha continued, saying, "Holy Mother, if there are living beings who commit such offenses, they will fall into the hell with fivefold incessancy. Although they seek for their suffering to stop temporarily, that will not happen, not even for a thought-moment."
Queen Maya again asked Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva, “Why is that hell named Incessant Hell?”

Ksitigarbha replied, “Holy Mother, the hells are within the Great Iron Encircling Mountains. There are eighteen of the great hells; second [to them] there are five hundred, each with a different name; and next, there are hundreds of thousands, each also with a distinct name.

“In regard to the Incessant Hell, this city of hells is more than eighty thousand li in perimeter. The city walls are made entirely of iron, ten thousand li in height. Atop these walls the mass of fire [...]

念不得。摩耶夫人重白地藏菩萨言：云何名为无间地狱？

地藏白言：圣母！诸有
地狱在大铁围山之内，其大地狱有一十八所，次有五百名号各别，次
有千百名字亦别。

无间狱者，其狱城周匝八万馀里，其城纯铁
高一万里，城上火聚少
leaves hardly a gap. Within this city of hells, the various hells are interconnected, each with a different name. There is just one hell named Incessant. It is eighteen thousand li in perimeter. Its hell walls are a thousand li in height, all made of iron, and with flames at the top reaching to the bottom and flames at the bottom reaching to the top. Iron snakes and iron dogs spew fire and rush here and there in pursuit atop these hell walls.

“... In this hell there is a bed that extends for ten thousand li. When one person undergoes torment there, that person sees his own body filling the bed. When thousands of myriads of people undergo torment there, each of them sees his own body filling the bed, too. Such are the ripened effects brought on by the many [kinds of] karma.
Moreover, the wrongdoers undergo all manner of suffering. There are hundreds of thousands of yaksas and evil ghosts with teeth like swords and eyes like lightning who pull and drag the wrongdoers with copper-clawed hands. There are also yaksas wielding large iron halberds who pierce the wrongdoers’ bodies, into their mouths and noses or into their abdomens and backs. They toss them into the air, catch them again, or else place them on the bed. There are also iron eagles that peck at the wrongdoers’ eyes. There are also iron snakes that strangle the wrongdoers’ necks. Long nails are driven into all their hundreds of joints. Their tongues are pulled out and plowed through. Their bowels are drawn out and chopped up. Molten copper is poured into their mouths. Their bodies are bound in hot iron. [...]

所感，獲報如是。
又諸罪人備受眾苦，
千百夜叉及以惡鬼，口
牙如劍眼如電光，手復
銅爪拖拽罪人。復有夜
叉執大鐵戟中罪人身，
或中口鼻，或中腹背拋
空翻接，或置床上。復有鐵
鐵厲咤罪人目。復有鐵
蛇繊罪人頸。百肢節內
悉下長釘，拔舌耕犁抽
腸剝斬，烊銅灌口熱鐵
They undergo myriads of deaths and as many births. Such are the consequences brought about by their karma.

“They pass through millions of kalpas without a time of release despite their wishes. When this world undergoes destruction, they will be transferred to live [and suffer] in another world. When that world undergoes destruction, they will be transferred to another one. When that other world, too, undergoes destruction, they will pass in turn through others. After this world is formed, they will return here once again. Such are the ripened effects of wrongdoing as occur in the Incessant Hell.

Moreover, this hell is called Incessant because of five qualities of such karmic consequences. What are the five?

“First, torment is undergone day and night throughout many kalpas with never any break. Therefore, it is called Incessant.
“Second, one person fills this hell; many people fill it, too. Therefore, it is called Incessant.

“Third, there are instruments of torment such as forks, clubs, eagles, snakes, wolves, dogs, pestles, grinders, saws, chisels, files, axes, cauldrons of boiling liquid, iron nets, iron ropes, iron donkeys, and iron horses. The wrongdoers are flayed alive. Their heads are bound in their own skin. Hot iron is poured over their bodies. They swallow iron balls when hungry and drink molten iron when thirsty. The wretched suffering continues nonstop throughout nayutas of kalpas. Therefore, it is called Incessant.

“Fourth, be they men, women, of any race, young or old, of upper or lower class, [...]

jian
間。

er zhe yi ren yi man duo ren
二者，一人亦满多人

yi man gu cheng wu jian
亦满，故称无间。

san zhe zui qi cha bang ying she
三者，罪器叉棒鹰蛇

lang quan dui mo ju zao cuo zhuo huo
狼犬，碓磨锯钸劁剖锼鍱

tang tie wang tie sheng tie lu tie ma
湯，鐵網鐵繩鐵驢鐵馬，

sheng ge luo shou re tie jiao shen ji
生革絡首熱鐵澆身，飢

tun tie wan ke yin tie zhi cong nian
吞鐵丸渴飲鐵汁，從年

jing jie shu na you ta ku chu xiang
竟劫數那由他，苦楚相

lian geng wu jian duan gu cheng wu jian
連更無間斷，故稱無間。

si zhe bu wen nan zi nü ren
四者，不問男子女人，

qiang hu yi di lao you gui jian huo
羌胡夷狄老幼貴賤，或
or nagas, spirits, devas, or ghosts, they all undergo such karmic consequences based on the offenses they committed. Therefore, it is called Incessant.

“Fifth, if beings fall into this hell, they will undergo myriads of deaths and myriads of births each day and night from the time of entry and on through hundreds of thousands of kalpas. Although they seek to pause, even in a thought-moment, that will not happen. Only when their karma is exhausted can they be reborn. Because of this continuity, it is called Incessant.”

Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva said to the Holy Mother, “This is a brief description of the Incessant Hell. If I were to speak in detail about the names of the hells and the instruments of torment and also about all the sufferings there, I could not finish even in a kalpa.”
After hearing this, Queen Maya sorrowfully joined her palms, prostrated herself, and withdrew.
Chapter Four

The Karmic Consequences of Living Beings of Jambudvipa

At that time, Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva-Mahasattva said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, it is through the power of awesome spiritual penetration of the Buddha Tathagata that I transform into emanation-forms throughout hundreds of thousands of myriads of millions of worlds to rescue all beings who undergo the ripened effects of karma. If it were not for the power of the Tathagata’s great kindness, I would not be able to perform such transformations. Now, I have further been entrusted by the Buddha to guide all beings in the six realms of existence across to liberation until Ajita becomes a Buddha. I will do so, World-Honored One. Please do not be concerned.”
Then the Buddha told Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva, “All beings who have not yet attained liberation are without fixity in their nature and consciousness: Through evil habits they form [unwholesome] karma, and through good habits they form [wholesome] results. Depending on situations, they give rise to good and evil doings. Revolving wheel-like through the five realms of existence with never a momentary rest, they pass through kalpas as numerous as dust particles, confused, deluded, hindered, and [afflicted] with difficulties. They are like a fish that swims in nets while following a long flowing current; now and then it would get free temporarily, only to be caught in the nets again. I would think with concern about these beings. However, because you will fulfill your past vows, the profound oaths taken kalpa after kalpa to guide wrongdoing beings far and wide [to the other shore], what further cause of worry need I have?”

As these words were spoken, in the assembly [...]

爾時，佛告地藏菩薩：
爾時，佛告地藏菩薩：

Then the Buddha told Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva, 

when the Buddha spoke, in the assembly [...]

爾時，佛告地藏菩薩：
When the Buddha spoke, in the assembly [...]

El tiempo, el Buddha dijo a Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva:

Cuando el Buddha habló, en el asamblea [...]

el tiempo, el Buddha dijo a Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva:

Then the Buddha told Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva: 

when the Buddha spoke, in the assembly [...]

er shi fo gao di zang pu sa

Then the Buddha told Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva, “All beings who have not yet attained liberation are without fixity in their nature and consciousness: Through evil habits they form [unwholesome] karma, and through good habits they form [wholesome] results. Depending on situations, they give rise to good and evil doings. Revolving wheel-like through the five realms of existence with never a momentary rest, they pass through kalpas as numerous as dust particles, confused, deluded, hindered, and [afflicted] with difficulties. They are like a fish that swims in nets while following a long flowing current; now and then it would get free temporarily, only to be caught in the nets again. I would think with concern about these beings. However, because you will fulfill your past vows, the profound oaths taken kalpa after kalpa to guide wrongdoing beings far and wide [to the other shore], what further cause of worry need I have?”

As these words were spoken, in the assembly [...]

er shi fo gao di zang pu sa

Then the Buddha told Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva, “All beings who have not yet attained liberation are without fixity in their nature and consciousness: Through evil habits they form [unwholesome] karma, and through good habits they form [wholesome] results. Depending on situations, they give rise to good and evil doings. Revolving wheel-like through the five realms of existence with never a momentary rest, they pass through kalpas as numerous as dust particles, confused, deluded, hindered, and [afflicted] with difficulties. They are like a fish that swims in nets while following a long flowing current; now and then it would get free temporarily, only to be caught in the nets again. I would think with concern about these beings. However, because you will fulfill your past vows, the profound oaths taken kalpa after kalpa to guide wrongdoing beings far and wide [to the other shore], what further cause of worry need I have?”

As these words were spoken, in the assembly [...]

el tiempo, el Buddha dijo a Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva:

Cuando el Buddha habló, en el asamblea [...]

The Karmic Consequences of Living Beings of Jambudvipa 89
 [...] there was a Bodhisattva-Mahasattva named Concentration Mastery King who said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, what vows has Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva made during the many kalpas past that he now receives profuse praise from the World-Honored One? O World-Honored One, please briefly speak about this.”

Then the World-Honored One told Concentration Mastery King Bodhisattva, “Listen attentively, listen attentively. Ponder and remember this well. I will explain them separately for you.

“At a time immeasurable asamkhyeyas of nayutas of inexpressible kalpas ago, there was a Buddha named All Wisdom Accomplished Tathagata, [...]

pu sa mo he sa ming ding zi zai
菩 薩 摩 該 薩·名 定 自 在

wang bai fo yan shi zun di zang pu
王 白 佛 言： 世 尊！ 地 藏 菩

sa lei jie yi lai ge fa he yuan
薩 累 劫 已 來 各 發 何 願？

jin meng shi zun yin qin zan tan wei
今 蒙 世 尊 殷 勤 試 歎。 唯

yuan shi zun lüe er shuo zhi
願 世 尊 略 而 說 之。

er shi shi zun gao ding zi zai
爾 時， 世 尊 告 定 自 在

wang pu sa di ting di ting shan si
王 菩 薩； 諦 聽！ 諦 聽！ 善 思

nian zhi wu dang wei ru fen bie jie
念 之！ 吾 當 為 汝 分 別 解

shuo
說。

nai wang guo qu wu liang a seng
乃 往 過 去 無 量 阿 僧

qi na you ta bu ke shuo jie er
祗 那 由 他 不 可 說 劫·爾

shi you fo hao yi qie zhi cheng jiu
時， 有 佛 號 一 切 智 成 就
Worthy of Offering, Truly All Knowing, Perfect in Knowledge and Conduct, Well Gone, Knower of the World, Unsurpassed, Tamer, Teacher of Devas and Humans, Buddha, World-Honored One. The lifespan of that Buddha was sixty thousand kalpas. Before he renounced the household life, he was the king of a small country and friends with the king of a neighboring country. They both practiced the ten wholesome actions and benefited living beings. However, in the neighboring country most people did many evil acts. The two kings conferred with each other and planned to employ many skillful means for them. One king vowed, ‘I will attain Buddhahood early and guide all these people across without exception.’

“The other king vowed, ‘If I do not first guide all wrongdoing suffering beings across, [...]
... causing them to attain peace and happiness and enabling them to achieve bodhi, I shall not become a Buddha.”

The Buddha told Concentration Mastery King Bodhisattva, “The king who vowed to become a Buddha early is All Wisdom Accomplished Tathagata. The king who vowed to always guide wrongdoing suffering beings across and not to become a Buddha yet is Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva.

“Moreover, in the past, measureless asamkhyeya kalpas ago, there arose in the world a Buddha named Pure Lotus Eyes Tathagata. The lifespan of that Buddha was forty kalpas. During the Age of Semblance Dharma, there was [...]

...
He came upon a woman named Bright Eyes who made a food offering to him. The arhat asked her, ‘What is your wish?’

“Bright Eyes replied, ‘In the days after my mother’s death, I performed meritorious deeds for her rescue, but I do not know in what realm my mother has been reborn.’

“Out of compassion for her, the arhat entered into meditative concentration to make observation and saw that Bright Eyes’ mother had fallen into a lower realm and was undergoing extremely great suffering. The arhat asked Bright Eyes, ‘What actions did your mother do while she was alive? She is now undergoing extremely great suffering in a lower realm.’
“Bright Eyes replied, ‘My mother had a habit of only liking to eat fish, turtles, and the like. Of the fish and turtles that she had eaten, she had most often consumed their eggs, fried or boiled, and she would indulge in eating them. I would reckon the number of all these lives to be thousands of myriads and many times over. O Venerable One, please take pity. How can she be saved?’

“Out of compassion for them, the arhat used a skillful means. He advised Bright Eyes, ‘You may, with sincere resolve, recollect Pure Lotus Eyes Tathagata. Also, sculpt and paint his image. Both the living and the deceased will reap the results.’

“After hearing this, Bright Eyes immediately gave up everything she loved to have an image of that Buddha painted right away. She then made offerings to his image, [...]

光目答言：我母所習，
唯好食嘗魚鱉之屬。所食魚鱉多食其子，或炒或煮恣情食嘗，計其命數千萬復倍。尊者慈愍如何哀救？

羅漢愍之為作方便，勸光目言：汝可志誠念清淨蓮華目如來，兼塑畫像存亡獲報。

尋畫佛像而供養之。復
 [...] and furthermore, with a reverent mind, she wept sorrowfully, gazed up at, and made obeisance to him. That night, in her dream, she suddenly saw that Buddha—his body a dazzling golden hue, [majestic] like Mount Sumeru, and emitting great light. He said to Bright Eyes, ‘Before long your mother will be reborn in your household. She will speak as soon as she can feel hunger and cold.’

“Shortly thereafter, a maidservant in her household bore a child who spoke within three days of birth. The infant, prostrating and weeping sorrowfully, told Bright Eyes, ‘In the cycle of birth and death through karmic conditions, one undergoes the results [of one’s actions] oneself. I am your mother. I have long dwelled in darkness. Since parting from you, again and again I agonized in the great hells. It was through the strength of your merit [...]

[gong jing xin bei qi zhan li hu yu
恭 敬 心 悲 泣 瞻 礼 忽 於

ye hou meng jian fo shen jin se huang
夜 後 夢 見 佛 身 金 色 晃

yao ru xu mi shan fang da guang ming
耀 如須彌山 放大光明

er gao guang mu ru mu bu jiu dang
而 告 光 目: 汝 母 不 久 當

sheng ru jia cai jue ji han ji dang
生 汝 家, 纔 覺 飢 寒 即 當

yan shuo
言 說。

qi hou jia nei bi sheng yi zi
其 後 家 內 嬰 生 一 子,

wei man san ri er nai yan shuo qi
未 滿 三 日 而 乃 言 說 稽

shou bei qi gao yu guang mu sheng si
首 悲 泣 告 於 光 目: 生 死

ye yuan guo bao zi shou wu shi ru
業 緣 果 報 自 受。吾 是 汝

mu jiu chu an ming zi bie ru lai
母 久 處 暗 冥。自 別 汝 來

lei duo da di yu meng ru fu li
累 墮 大 地 獄, 蒙 汝 福 力,
[...] that I was finally able to be reborn as a person of the lower class, and my lifespan will be short. At the end of thirteen years, I am to fall into a lower realm. Do you have any way to help relieve me [of these sufferings]?'

“When Bright Eyes heard what was said, she knew without a doubt that this infant was her mother. Sobbing and crying sadly, she said to the maidservant’s child, ‘Since you are my mother, you should know your own past wrongdoing. What actions did you do that caused you to fall into a lower realm?’

“The maidservant’s child replied, ‘Killing and reviling. I was undergoing the ripened effects of these two actions. If it were not for the merit [that you have cultivated] to deliver me from difficulties, my karma would be such that I still could not have been released.’
“Bright Eyes asked, ‘What took place during the ripened effects of wrongdoing in the hells?’

“The maidservant’s child replied, ‘I cannot bear to speak of those torments of wrongdoing. Even in a hundred thousand years I would not be able to describe them all.’

“Upon hearing this, Bright Eyes cried and wailed. She said toward the sky, ‘May my mother be forever released from the hells. At the end of thirteen years, may she be finished with her heavy offenses and not go through the lower realms again. O Buddhas of the ten directions, kindly take pity upon me. Please hear the far-reaching vow that I am making for the sake of my mother. If she can forever leave the three lower realms, the low and mean, […]’
乃至女人之身永劫不
受者，愿我自今日後，對
清净蓮華目如來像前,
卻後百千萬億劫中，應
有世界所有地獄及三
e道諸罪苦眾生，誓願
救拔，令離地獄惡趣、畜
生、餓鬼等，如是罪報等
人盡成佛竟，我然後方
成正覺。

發誓願已，具聞清净
莲華目如來而告之曰：

[...] and never again be reborn as a woman, then, in front of the image of Pure Lotus Eyes Tathagata, I vow that from this day forth, throughout hundreds of thousands of myriads of millions of future kalpas in all worlds where there are hells, where there are the three lower realms, I will rescue all wrongdoing suffering beings, causing them to leave the lower realms of hells, animals, and hungry ghosts. Only when the beings who undergo the ripened effects of wrongdoing have all become Buddhas will I myself attain perfect awakening.'

“After making this vow, she clearly heard Pure Lotus Eyes Tathagata saying to her, [...]
…‘Bright Eyes, you have great kindness and compassion. It is excellent that you can make such a great vow for your mother. I see that after your mother passes on from the present ripened effect at thirteen years of age, she will be reborn as a Brahman with a lifespan of a hundred years. After that ripened effect is over, she will be reborn in the Land of No Sorrow with a lifespan of incalculable kalpas. Later she will attain Buddhahood, and far and wide she will guide humans and devas as numerous as the sand grains in the Ganges River [to the other shore].’”

The Buddha told Concentration Mastery King, “The arhat who guided Bright Eyes across by [means of] merit then is now Inexhaustible Intention Bodhisattva; Bright Eyes’ mother is now Liberation Bodhisattva; and the woman Bright Eyes is now Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva.
Throughout many long kalpas past, [Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva] has been so kind and compassionate that he has made as many vows as there are grains of sand in the Ganges River to guide living beings far and wide [to the other shore].

“In the future, if there are men and women who do not practice good deeds but do evil, who do not believe in cause and effect, and who engage in sexual misconduct, who speak falsehood, who engage in divisive talebearing, who use harsh speech, who slander the Mahayana—beings with karma like these will certainly fall into the lower realms. However, if they meet a virtuous friend who encourages them so that they take refuge in Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva within the time of a finger-snap, […]
they will obtain release from the ripened effects [to be experienced] in the three lower realms. If people are able to revere and take refuge in him with a resolute mind, as well as reverently gaze, pay obeisance, sing his praises, and make offerings of incense, flowers, clothing, jewels of all sorts, or also food and drink to him, they will be reborn in the various heavens to experience excellent, wonderful happiness during hundreds of thousands of myriads of millions of kalpas in the future. When their heavenly merit is exhausted and they are reborn below in the world of humans, they will frequently be emperors or kings throughout hundreds of thousands of kalpas and will be able to remember the cause and effect of the sequence of events of their previous lives.

“Concentration Mastery King, Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva has such power of inconceivable, great awesome spiritual penetration to widely benefit living beings thus. [...]

得 解 脫 三 惡 道 報。若 能
志 心 歸 敬 及 瞻 禮 讚 歎，
復 飲 食，如 是 奉 事 者，未
來 百 千 萬 億 劫 中，常 在
諸 天 受 勝 妙 樂。若 天 福
盡 下 生 人 間，猶 百 千 劫
常 為 帝 王，能 憤 宿 命 因
[...]
All of you Bodhisattvas should remember this sutra. Expound and propagate it far and wide.”

Concentration Mastery King said to the Buddha, “O World-Honored One, please do not be concerned. Through [the power of] the Buddha’s awesome spiritual penetration, we, thousands of myriads of millions of Bodhisattva-Mahasattvas, will certainly be able to expound this sutra widely throughout Jambudvipa to benefit living beings.”

Having spoken thus to the Buddha, Concentration Mastery King Bodhisattva joined his palms in respect, made obeisance, and withdrew.

At that time, the Deva Kings of the four directions all rose from their seats, joined their palms in respect, and said to the Buddha, [...]
World-Honored One, Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva has made such great vows throughout many long kalpas past. As of now, living beings have not all been guided across. How is it that he makes further immense vows again? O World-Honored One, please explain this for us.”

The Buddha told the Four Deva Kings, “Excellent, excellent! Now for the broad benefit of you as well as of devas and humans in the present and future, I will speak of what Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva does in the paths of birth and death in Jambudvipa in the saha world: How he kindly and compassionately rescues and liberates all wrongdoing suffering beings by way of skillful means.”
The Four Deva Kings replied, “Yes, World-Honored One, we joyfully wish to listen.”

The Buddha told the Four Deva Kings, “For many long kalpas past and up to the present, Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva has been guiding living beings across to liberation; nevertheless, he has not yet completed his vows. He has [great] kindness and compassion for wrongdoing suffering beings in this world, and he further sees that, during measureless kalpas in the future, their causes [of suffering] are endless like vines. Hence, he makes profound vows again. In Jambudvipa in the saha world, this Bodhisattva teaches and transforms living beings by way of hundreds of thousands of myriads of millions of skillful means thus:

“Four Deva Kings, to those who kill, Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva would say [...]”
遇殺生者說宿殃短命報。若遇竊盗者說貧窮苦楚報。若遇邪婬者說雀鴿鴛鴦報。

若遇惡口者說眷屬鬥諍報。若遇毀謗者說無舌瘡口報。

若遇瞋恚者說醜陋癃殘報。若遇悭吝者說

若遇所求違願報。若遇飲食

若遇無度者，說飢渴咽病報。

若遇畋獵恣情者，說

[...] that [such action] would lead to misfortune and short lifespan. To those who steal or rob, he would say that [such action] would lead to poverty and wretched suffering. To those who engage in sexual misconduct, he would say that [such action] would lead to rebirth as peacocks, pigeons, and mandarin ducks.

“To those who use harsh speech, he would say that [such action] would lead to quarrels and fights in one’s family. To those who utter slander, he would say that [such action] would lead to being tongueless and having a cankerous mouth.

“To those who are angry and hateful, he would say that [such action] would lead to being ugly, deformed, and crippled. To those who are miserly, he would say that [such action] would lead to not obtaining what one seeks. To those who are immoderate in consuming food and drink, he would say that [such action] would lead to hunger, thirst, and throat diseases.

“To those who indulge in hunting, he would say [...]
To those who are contrary and perverse to their own parents, he would say that [such action] would lead to being killed by natural disasters.\(^8\)

To those who set fire to mountains or forests, he would say that [such action] would lead to death from derangement and confusion. To those who are cruel parents or stepparents, he would say that [such action] would lead to being likewise abused in the present life. To those who net or trap young animals, he would say that [such action] would lead to separation of parents and children.

“To those who slander the Triple Gem, he would say that [such action] would lead to being blind, deaf, and mute. To those who slight the Dharma or look down on instruction, he would say that [such action] would lead one to remain in the lower realms for an interminably long time. To those who abuse the property of the sangha, he would say that [such action] would lead one to revolve through the hells for millions of kalpas. […]
[...] To those who defile those living the holy life, or who make malicious accusations against the monastics, he would say that [such action] would lead one to remain in the animal realm for an interminably long time.

“To those who scald, burn, behead, chop, or otherwise harm living beings, he would say that [such action] would lead to repayment in kind in samsara. To those who violate the precepts and rules of eating, he would say that [such action] would lead to rebirth as fowls and beasts suffering from hunger and thirst. To those who unreasonably destroy things and deplete resources, he would say that [such action] would lead to insufficiency and lack in what one seeks.

“To those who are conceited and arrogant, he would say that [such action] would lead to being lowly and servile. To those whose divisive talebearing causes dissen- sion and disorder, he would say that [such action] would lead to having no tongue or being ‘a hundred tongues.’

To those who hold false views, he would say that [such action] would lead to rebirth in borderlands.
Living beings of Jambudvipa such as these—the evil habits in their karma of body, speech, and mind bear fruits, giving rise to hundreds of thousands of effects, of which I have now spoken in general terms. What the karma of such beings of Jambudvipa brings forth is different; accordingly Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva uses hundreds of thousands of skillful means to teach and transform them. These living beings are to undergo ripened effects like the ones mentioned first, and then fall into the hells, where they pass through many kalpas without a time of release. Therefore, you should protect people and protect their countries. Do not allow living beings to be deluded by these many [kinds of] karma.

After hearing this, the Four Deva Kings wept and sighed sorrowfully, joined their palms and withdrew.
Thus ends the first fascicle of the Original Vows of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva Sutra.

[The following is the Seven Buddhas’ Negative Karma Purification Mantra, preserved in Sanskrit through Chinese transliteration. Traditionally, mantras are not translated. The mantra is recited at the end of a sutra chanting section, followed by the triple refuge and dedication of merit, which begin on p. 373.]
Chapter Five

THE NAMES OF THE HELLs

At that time, Samantabhadra Bodhisattva-Mahasattva said to Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva, “Benevolent One, for the sake of devas, nagas, the fourfold assembly, as well as for all living beings in the present and future, please speak about the names of the hells, where wrongdoing suffering beings of Jambudvipa in the saha world undergo ripened effects, and bad consequences [that they experience], so that living beings of the Age of Declining Dharma in the future may know of such results.”

Ksitigarbha replied, “Benevolent One, now through [the power of] the Buddha’s awesome spiritual penetration and through your strength, that of the Mahasattva, [...]

Original Vows of Ksitigarbha Sutra
略說地獄名號及罪報

惡報之事。

仁者，閻浮提東方有山號曰鐵圍，其山黑邃，無日月光。有大地獄號極無間，又有地獄名大阿鼻，復有地獄名曰四角，復有地獄名曰飛刀，復有地獄名曰火箭，復有地獄名曰夾山，復有地獄名曰通槍，復有地獄...

 [...] I will speak in brief about the names of the hells and the ripened effects of wrongdoing, the bad consequences.

“Benevolent One, to the east of Jambudvipa there are mountains named Iron Encircling. Dark and abysmal are these mountains, without the light of the sun and moon. There is a great hell there called Extreme Incessant, and a hell named Great Avici.

“Furthermore, there is also a hell named Four Corners, a hell named Flying Knives, a hell named Flaming Arrows, a hell named Squeezing Mountains, a hell named Piercing Spears, [...]

倫者，閻浮提東方有山號曰鐵圍，其山黑邃，無日月光。有大地獄號極無間，又有地獄名大阿鼻，復有地獄名曰四角，復有地獄名曰飛刀，復有地獄名曰火箭，復有地獄名曰夾山，復有地獄名曰通槍，復有地獄...
[... a hell named Iron Carts, a hell named Iron Beds, a
hell named Iron Oxen, a hell named Iron Clothing, a hell
named Thousand Blades, a hell named Iron Donkeys,
a hell named Molten Copper, a hell named Pillar
Embracing, a hell named Flowing Blazes, a hell named
Tongue Plowing, a hell named Head Chopping, a hell
named Feet Ablaze, a hell named Eye Pecking, a hell
named Iron Balls, [...]

ming yue tie che fu you di yu ming
名 曰 鐵 車，復 有 地 獄 名

yue tie chuang fu you di yu ming yue
曰 鐵 床，復 有 地 獄 名 曰

tie niu fu you di yu ming yue tie
鐵 牛，復 有 地 獄 名 曰 鐵

yi fu you di yu ming yue qian ren
衣，復 有 地 獄 名 曰 千 刃，

fu you di yu ming yue tie lü fu
復 有 地 獄 名 曰 鐵 驢，復

you di yu ming yue yang tong fu you
有 地 獄 名 曰 洋 銅，復 有
di yu ming yue bao zhu fu you di
地 獄 名 曰 抱 柱，復 有 地

yu ming yue liu huo fu you di yu
獄 名 曰 流 火，復 有 地 獄

ming yue geng she fu you di yu ming
名 曰 耕 舌，復 有 地 獄 名

yue cuo shou fu you di yu ming yue
曰 剃 首，復 有 地 獄 名 曰

shao jiao fu you di yu ming yue dan
燒 腳，復 有 地 獄 名 曰 啖

yan fu you di yu ming yue tie wan
眼，復 有 地 獄 名 曰 鐵 球，
復有地獄名曰諍論，復有地獄名曰鐵錐，復有地獄名曰多瞋。

地藏白言：仁者！鐵圍之內有如是等地獄，其數無限。更有叫喚地獄、拔舌地獄、糞尿地獄、銅鎖地獄、火象地獄、火狗地獄、火馬地獄、火牛地獄、火山地獄、火石地獄、火床地獄、火梁地獄、火鷹地獄、鋸牙地獄、剝皮地獄。

Ksitigarbha said, “Benevolent One, within the Iron Encircling there are hells such as these, which are limitless in number. In addition, there is the Hell of Crying Out, the Hell of Tongue Plucking, the Hell of Excrement and Urine, the Hell of Copper Locks, the Hell of Flaming Elephants, the Hell of Flaming Dogs, the Hell of Flaming Horses, the Hell of Flaming Oxen, the Hell of Flaming Mountains, the Hell of Flaming Rocks, the Hell of Flaming Beds, the Hell of Flaming Beams, the Hell of Flaming Eagles, the Hell of Teeth Sawing, the Hell of Skin Flaying, […]
The Hell of Blood Drinking, the Hell of Hands Burning, the Hell of Feet Burning, the Hell of Thorns Reversing, the Hell of Flaming Houses, the Hell of Iron Houses, and the Hell of Flaming Wolves.

“There are hells such as these, and within each there are one, two, three, four, or even as many as hundreds of thousands of smaller hells, each with a different name.”

Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva told Samantabhadra Bodhisattva, “Benevolent One, such are the karmic consequences of beings of Jambudvipa who do evil. The force of karma is so great that it can rival Mount Sumeru [in height], surpass the immense oceans in depth, and hinder [one’s cultivation of] the noble path. [...]
Therefore, living beings must not underestimate small wrongs and consider them harmless, for after death there will be ripened effects to be experienced to the most exact detail. Beings as closely related as fathers and sons will part their respective ways. Even if they should meet, neither would consent to undergo the consequences in the other’s place. Now, through the Buddha’s awesome [spiritual] power, I will speak in brief about the ripened effects of wrongdoing as occur in the hells. O Benevolent One, please take a moment to hear these words.”

Samantabhadra replied, “I have long known of the ripened effects [experienced] in the three lower realms. I hope the Benevolent One will speak about them so that at a later time, in the Age of Declining Dharma, all beings who do evil may hear your words and be moved to take refuge in the Buddha.”

Ksitigarbha said, “Benevolent One, […]"
zui bao qi shi ru shi huo you di
罪 報 其 事 如 是：或 有 地
yu qu zui ren she shi niu geng zhi
獄，取 罪 人 舌 使 牛 耕 之；
huo you di yu qu zui ren xin ye
或 有 地 獄，取 罪 人 心 夜
cha shi zhi huo you di yu huo tang
又 食 之：或 有 地 獄，饑 湯
sheng fei zhu zui ren shen huo you di
盛 沸 煮 罪 人 身；或 有 地
yu chi shao tong zhu shi zui ren bao
獄，赤 燒 銅 柱 使 罪 人 抱；
huo you di yu shi zhu huo shao chen
或 有 地 獄，使 諸 火 燒 趁
ji zui ren huo you di yu yi xiang
及 罪 人；或 有 地 獄 一 向
han bing huo you di yu wu xian fen
寒 冰；或 有 地 獄 無 限 食
niao huo you di yu chun fei sa li
尿；或 有 地 獄 純 飛 鉛 錓；
huo you di yu duo zuan huo qiang huo
或 有 地 獄 多 攢 火 槍；或
you di yu wei zhuang xiong bei huo you
有 地 獄 唯 撞 胸 背；或 有

The ripened effects of wrongdoing as occur in the hells are like these: In some hells the wrongdoers’ tongues are taken out and then plowed over by oxen. In some hells the wrongdoers’ hearts are taken out and eaten by yaksas. In some hells the wrongdoers’ bodies are cooked in cauldrons full of boiling liquid. In some hells the wrongdoers are compelled to embrace red-hot, burning copper pillars. In some hells fires burn and overtake the wrongdoers. In some hells there is cold and ice at all times. In some hells there is limitless excrement and urine. In some hells there are solely flying caltrops. In some hells there are many flaming spears. In some hells the wrongdoers are struck solely on the chests and backs. [...]
地獄但燒手足；或有地獄盤絞鐵蛇；或有地獄驅逐鐵狗；或有地獄盡駕鐵騾。

仁者！如是等報，各各獄中百千種業道之器，無非是銅是鐵，是石是火。此四種物眾業行感。若廣說地獄罪報等事，一一獄中更有百千種苦楚，何況多獄。我今承佛威神及仁者問，略

In some hells their hands and feet are burned specifically. In some hells iron snakes twine around and strangle them. In some hells iron dogs pursue them. In some hells they all ride on [flaming] iron mules.

“Benevolent One, there are ripened effects such as these. In each hell, there are hundreds of thousands of kinds of instruments [of torment] of this karmic path, all made of copper, iron, stone, and fire—these four materials are brought on by the many [kinds of] karma. Suppose I were to speak in detail about the ripened effects of wrongdoing as occur in the hells: In any one hell there are furthermore hundreds of thousands of kinds of wretched suffering. How much more numerous [are the torments] in the many hells! Now through the Buddha’s awesome spiritual penetration and at the Benevolent One’s request, [...]

仁者！如是等報，各各獄中百千種業道之器，無非是銅是鐵，是石是火。此四種物眾業行感。若廣說地獄罪報等事，一一獄中更有百千種苦楚，何況多獄。我今承佛威神及仁者問，略
I have briefly described this matter in this way, for if I were to explain in detail, I could not finish even when a kalpa is over.”
Chapter Six

THE PRAISE OF THE TATHAGATA

At that time, the World-Honored One emitted great light from his entire body, illuminating Buddha Worlds as numerous as the sand grains in hundreds of thousands of myriads of millions of Ganges Rivers. He gave forth a great voice, telling all the Bodhisattva-Mahasattvas as well as devas, nagas, ghosts, spirits, humans, non-humans, and others in the various Buddha Worlds, “Listen as I now praise and extol Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva-Mahasattva for how he manifests powers of great, inconceivable awesome spiritual penetration, kindness and compassion in the worlds of the ten directions to rescue and care for all wrongdoing suffering beings. [...]"
[...] After I enter parinirvana, all of you Bodhisattvas, Great Beings, and all you devas, nagas, ghosts, spirits, and others should employ many skillful means to guard and protect this sutra, causing all living beings to attain the bliss of nirvana.”

After these words were spoken, in the assembly there was a Bodhisattva named Universally Vast who joined his palms in respect and said to the Buddha, “We now see the World-Honored One commending Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva that he has such virtue of inconceivable, great awesome spiritual penetration. O World-Honored One, for the sake of living beings of the Age of Declining Dharma in the future, please speak about the cause and effect of how Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva benefits humans and devas, […]
“Listen attentively, listen attentively. I will describe in brief for you the meritorious and virtuous matters of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva’s benefiting humans and devas.”

Universally Vast replied, “Yes, World-Honored One, we joyfully wish to listen.”

The Buddha told Universally Vast Bodhisattva, “In the future if there are good men and good women who hear Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva-Mahasattva’s name and join their palms, sing his praises, [...]

...so that devas, nagas, others of the eight classes of beings and living beings of the future may receive the Buddha’s words most respectfully.”
者、作礼者、恋慕者，是人超越三劫罪。

普广！若有善男子善女人，或彩画形像，或土石胶漆金银铜铁作此菩萨，一瞻一礼者，是人百返生於三十三天，永不堕於恶道。假如天福尽故下生人间，犹为国王不失大利。

若有多女厌女人身，尽心供养地藏菩萨画，[...]

[...] make obeisance, or feel great love and admiration for him, these people will transcend thirty kalpas of torments [of offenses].

“Universally Vast, if there are good men and good women who paint this Bodhisattva’s image or make his image with clay, stone, resin, lacquer, gold, silver, copper, or iron, and then reverently gaze at and make obeisance to his image but once, these people will be reborn a hundred times in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three Devas and will never fall into the lower realms. If their heavenly merit is exhausted and they are reborn below in the world of humans, they will still be kings and will not lose great benefits.

“If there are women who are weary of being women and who wholeheartedly make offerings in veneration to Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva’s image, [...]

zhe zuo li zhe lian mu zhe shi ren
者、作礼者、恋慕者，是人

chao yue san shi jie zui
超越三劫罪。

pu guang ro you shan nan zi shan
普广！若有善男子善

nü ren huo cai hua xing xiang huo tu
女人，或彩畫形像，或土

shi jiao qi jin yin tong tie zuo ci
石膠漆金銀銅鐵作此

pu sa yi zhan yi li zhe shi ren
菩萨，一瞻一禮者，是人

bai fan sheng yu san shi san tian yong
百返生於三十三天，永

bu duo yu e dao jia ru tian fu
不堕於惡道。假如天福

jia gu xia sheng ren jian you wei guo
盡故下生人間，猶為國

wang bu shi da li
王不失大利。

ruo you nü ren yan nü ren shen
若有女人厭女人身，

jin xin gong yang di zang pu sa hua
盡心供养地藏菩薩畫
像，及土石胶漆铜铁等
像，如是日日不退，常以
華香、飲食、衣服、繡綵、幢
扇、錢、寶物等供養。是善
女人盡此一報女身，百
千萬劫更不生有女人
世界，何況復受。除非慈
願力故，要受女身度脫
眾生。承斯供養地藏力
故及功德力，百千萬劫
不受女身。
復次，普廣！若有女人
 [...] whether the image be a painting or made of clay, stone, resin, lacquer, copper, iron, or other materials, and if they do so day after day without fail, making offerings to him with flowers, incense, food, drink, clothing, colored silk, banners, money, jewels, and the like, then after the present ripened effect to be a woman comes to an end, throughout hundreds of thousands of myriads of kalpas these good women will never again be reborn in worlds where there are women, much less be one—unless that, through the power of their compassionate vows, they wish to be women in order to liberate living beings. Through the strength of their making offerings to Ksitigarbha and the power of this virtue, they will not be reborn as women throughout hundreds of thousands of myriads of kalpas.
厭是醜陋多疾病者，但於地藏像前志心瞻禮，食頃之間是人千萬劫中，所受生身相貌圓滿。

是醜陋女人如不厭女身，即百千萬億生中，常為王女乃至王妃、宰輔大姓、大長者女，端正受生諸相圓滿。由志心故，瞻禮地藏菩薩獲福如是。

復次，普廣若有所善男子

“Furthermore, Universally Vast, if there are women who are weary of being ugly and frequently ill and, with a resolute mind before Ksitigarbha’s image, they reverently gaze at and make obeisance to him for even just the time of a meal, then throughout thousands of myriads of kalpas they will be reborn with perfect looks and features. If these ugly women are not weary of being women, then for hundreds of thousands of myriads of millions of lives they will always be princesses, queens, or daughters of high ministers, prominent families, or great elders and be born beautiful and with perfect features. They gain such merit because they reverently gaze at and make obeisance to Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva with a resolute mind.
Furthermore, Universally Vast, if there are good men and good women who are able to make offerings to him by playing music, singing songs of praise, and presenting incense and flowers before this Bodhisattva’s image, or who are also able to encourage others, one or many, to do likewise, both now and in the future they will be protected day and night by hundreds of thousands of ghosts and spirits who will even prevent evil matters from reaching their ears, much less allow them to meet with disasters personally.

Furthermore, Universally Vast, in the future if there are evil people, evil spirits, and evil ghosts who see good men and good women venerating and taking refuge [in this Bodhisattva], making offerings, singing his praises, reverently gazing at, and making obeisance to Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva’s image, [...]

子善女人，能對菩薩像
前作諸伎樂，及歌詠讚
歎香華供養，乃至勸於
一人多人。如是等輩，現
在世中及未來世，常得
百千鬼神日夜衛護，不
令惡事軋聞其耳，何況
親受諸橫。
復次，普廣！未來世中，
若有惡人及惡神、惡鬼，
見有善男子善女人，歸
敬供養讚歎瞻禮地藏
and if those beings then wrongly express ridicule and slander, maligning that such deeds are without virtue or benefit, or they laugh at these people, or they utter slander behind their backs, or they urge others to slander likewise, whether one person or many, or they bear a mere thought of ridicule and slander, such beings will fall into and remain in the Avici Hell, undergoing extremely severe torments as the consequence for their ridiculing and slandering, even after all the thousand Buddhas of the present kalpa have entered parinirvana. Only after the [present] kalpa has passed will they be reborn in the company of hungry ghosts, where they will pass a thousand more kalpas before being reborn as animals. Then they will pass another thousand kalpas before they may finally be reborn as humans. Even when they are reborn as humans, they will be poor, lowly, and with incomplete faculties. [...]

菩薩形像，或妄生讒毁

無功德及利益事，或露齒笑，或背面非，或勸人共非，或一人非，或多

人非，乃至一念生讒毀

者。如是之人賢劫千佛滅度，讒毀之報尚在阿鼻地獄，受極重罪。過是劫已方受餓鬼，又經千劫

受畜生，又經千劫

方得人身。縱受人身，貧窮下賤諸根不具，多被
Their minds will frequently be fettered by their un-wholesome karma. Before long, they will again fall into the lower realms. Universally Vast, those who ridicule and slander others’ making offerings in veneration will reap such ripened effects. How much worse [the consequences will be] if beings have evil views and do destructive things!

“Furthermore, Universally Vast, in the future if there are men and women who are bedridden with a long [illness] and unable to get well or die despite their wishes, and at night they dream of evil ghosts, of family and relatives, of wandering in dangerous paths, or they have many nightmares of wandering in the company of ghosts and spirits; and as days, months, and years go by, their illnesses worsen and they waste away; they cry out in their sleep; they are miserable and melancholy—all these represent cases of karma and [the ensuing] realm of existence under judgment, [...]

| 恶業來結其心，不久之間復墮惡道。是故，普廣！ | Their minds will frequently be fettered by their un-wholesome karma. Before long, they will again fall into the lower realms. Universally Vast, those who ridicule and slander others’ making offerings in veneration will reap such ripened effects. How much worse [the consequences will be] if beings have evil views and do destructive things!
“Furthermore, Universally Vast, in the future if there are men and women who are bedridden with a long [illness] and unable to get well or die despite their wishes, and at night they dream of evil ghosts, of family and relatives, of wandering in dangerous paths, or they have many nightmares of wandering in the company of ghosts and spirits; and as days, months, and years go by, their illnesses worsen and they waste away; they cry out in their sleep; they are miserable and melancholy—all these represent cases of karma and [the ensuing] realm of existence under judgment, [...]

| 譏毁他人供養尚獲此報，何況別生惡見毀滅？ | 譬如金玉珠寶者，此皆是業道論對未 |
[...] with the degrees of seriousness still undetermined, making it difficult for these people to die or recover.\textsuperscript{12}

The ordinary eyes of men and women cannot discern such matters.

“In this instance, this sutra should be recited aloud once before the images of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, and possessions that the sick person loves, such as clothing, jewels, manors, gardens, or houses, should be offered by someone saying clearly in front of the sick person, ‘In the presence of the sutras and images of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, I, so-and-so, give these items on behalf of this sick person to make offerings to the sutras and images, to make the images of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, to construct stupas and monasteries, to light oil lamps, or to give gifts to the sangha.’
In such way the sick person should be told three times so that he may hear and know of the offerings being made.

“If his various consciousnesses are dispersed and his breathing ceases, then for one day, two days, three days, four days, or onto seven days, [such offerings] should be stated clearly and this sutra should be read aloud. After this person’s life ends, he will gain release from misfortunes and severe torments that result from past offenses, even the five great violations that lead to incessant torments. Wherever he is reborn, he will know his previous lives.

“[Consider how a sick person can be benefited,] how much greater [the results will be] when good men and good women personally copy this sutra in writing, teach others to copy it, personally sculpt or paint the Bodhisattva’s image, […]

常 住。
如 是 三 白 病 人 遣 令
聞 知。假 令 諸 識 分 散 至
氣 盡 者，乃 至 一 日、二 日、
三 日、四 日，至 七 日 已 來，
但 高 聲 白 高 聲 讀 經。 是
人 命 終 之 後，宿 殃 重 罪
至 于 五 無 間 罪，永 得 解
脱。所 受 生 處 常 知 宿 命。
何 況 善 男 子 善 女 人
自 書 此 經，或 教 人 書，或
自 塑 畫 菩 薩 形 像，乃 至
教人塑造畫，所受果報必獲大利。

是故，普廣！若見有人讀誦是經，乃至一念讚歎是經或恭敬者。汝須百千方便，勸是等人勤心莫退，能得未來現今千萬億，不可思議功德。

復次，普廣！若未來世諸眾生等，或夢或寐見諸鬼神乃及諸形，或悲或啼，或愁或歎，或恐或
這些生前之親屬，盡皆是十生百生千生，過去父母、男女親屬，在於惡趣未得出離，無處希望福力救拔，當告宿世骨肉，使作方便願離惡道。

普廣！汝以神力遣是眷屬，令對諸佛菩薩像前，志心自讀此經或請人讀，其數三遍或七遍。如是惡道眷屬，經聲畢是遍數當得解脫。乃至

[...] these are the living beings’ fathers, mothers, sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, husbands, wives, or other relatives from one, ten, a hundred, or a thousand lives past who are in the lower realms and unable to leave. They have no place from which to hope for the strength of merit to rescue them, and so they plead with their family from their previous lives to use skillful means, hoping that they may thereby leave the lower realms.

“Universally Vast, use your spiritual power to cause these living kin to personally read this sutra aloud with a resolute mind before the images of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, or request others to read it aloud, three or seven times. When the sutra has been read aloud for such a number of times, the relatives in the lower realms will gain release, and these kin will never see them again when dreaming.
Furthermore, Universally Vast, in the future if there are various persons of the lower classes, slaves, maid-servants, and other people without freedom, who realize [that they are undergoing the ripened effect of] their past karma and wish to repent, they should, with a resolute mind, reverently gaze at and make obeisance to Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva’s image for seven days and recite the Bodhisattva’s name a full ten thousand times. When their present ripened effect is over, for thousands of myriads of lives they will always be reborn among the respected and wealthy, and they will not undergo the suffering of the three lower realms again.
Furthermore, Universally Vast, in the future in Jambudvipa, if Ksatriyas, Brahmans, elders, householders, and others of various names and clans have newborn infants, boys or girls, they should read and recite this inconceivable sutra and recite the Bodhisattva’s name a full ten thousand times early on within seven days of birth for the sake of their children. If these newborn children, boys or girls, are due to have misfortunes as a result of their past, they will gain release and be well, happy, and easily raised, and their lifespans will increase. If they had been reborn by virtue of their [past] merit, their well-being and happiness will increase and so will their lifespans.
眾生於月一日至三十日，是諸日等，諸罪結集定其輕重。南閻浮提眾生舉止動念，無不是業無不是罪，何況恣情殺害、竊盜、邪婬、妄語，百千罪狀。能於是十齋日，對佛菩薩諸賢聖像前讀是經一遍，東西南北百由旬

“Furthermore, Universally Vast, in the future on the first, eighth, fourteenth, fifteenth, eighteenth, twenty-third, twenty-fourth, twenty-eighth, twenty-ninth, and thirtieth days of the [lunar] month, the offenses of living beings will be compiled and the degrees of seriousness assessed. The acts and thoughts of the beings of Jambudvipa are invariably karma and wrongdoing. How much more so when they give themselves over to killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, false speech—hundreds of thousands of offenses! If they are able to read this sutra aloud once in front of the images of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, holy ones, and worthies on these ten observance days, there will not be disaster or calamity for a hundred yojanas to the north, south, east, and west. [...]

zhong sheng yu yue yi ri ba ri shi
眾 生 於 月 一 日、八 日、十
si ri shi wu ri shi ba ri er
四 日、十五日、十八日、二
shi san er shi si er shi ba er
十三、二十四、十八、二
shi jiu ri nai zhi san shi ri shi
十九日乃至三十日，是
zhu ri deng zhu zui jie ji ding qi
諸日等，諸罪結集定其
qing zhong nan yan fu ti zhong sheng ju
輕重。南閻浮提眾生舉止
zhi dong nian wu bu shi ye wu bu
止動念，無不是業無不是罪
shi zui he kuang zi qing sha hai qie
是罪，何況恣情殺害、竊
dao xie yin wang yu bai qian zui zhuang
盜、邪婬、妄語，百千罪狀。
neng yu shi shi zhai ri dui fo pu
能於是十齋日，對佛菩
sa zhu xian sheng xiang qian du shi jing
薩諸賢聖像前讀是經
yi bian dong xi nan bei bai you xun
一 遍，東西南北百由旬
Those in their families, both young and old, will be apart from the lower realms now and throughout hundreds of thousands of years in the future. If they can recite this sutra once on each of the ten observance days, in the present life there will not be untoward dire events and illnesses in the family, and there will be food and clothing in abundance.

"Therefore, Universally Vast, you should know that through the power of his great awesome spiritual penetration, Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva has inexpressible hundreds of thousands of myriads of millions of instances of benefiting [beings] such as these. Living beings of Jambudvipa have great cause and condition with this Great Being. If these living beings hear this Bodhisattva’s name, see this Bodhisattva’s image,..."
or hear but three words, five words, a verse, or a sentence of this sutra, they will have superbly wonderful peace and happiness in the present life. For hundreds of thousands of myriads of lives in the future, they will always be good looking and be reborn in respected and wealthy families.”

At that time, after Universally Vast Bodhisattva had heard the Buddha Tathagata praise and extol Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva, he knelt on his knees, joined his palms, and said to the Buddha once more, “World-Honored One, I have long known that this Great Being has such power of inconceivable spiritual penetration as well as power of great vows. For living beings in the future I make the request to the Tathagata, so that they may know such benefits. […]
Wei ran ding shou shi zun dang he ming
唯然頂受世尊當何名

此經？使我云何流布？

Fo gao pu guang ci jing you san
佛告普廣：此經有三

Ming yi ming di zang ben yuan yi ming
名：一名地藏本願，亦名

Di zang ben xing yi ming di zang ben
地藏本行，亦名地藏本

Shi li jing yuan ci pu sa jiu yuan
誓力經。緣此菩薩久遠

Jie lai fa da zhong yuan li yi zhong
劫來，發大重願利益眾

Sheng shi gu ru deng yi yuan liu bu
生。是故汝等依願流布。

Pu guang wen yi he zhang gong jing zuo
普廣聞已，合掌恭敬作

Li er tui
禮而退。

[...] Yes, we receive [this Dharma teaching] most respectfully. World-Honored One, how should this sutra be named, and how should we propagate it?"

The Buddha told Universally Vast, “This sutra has three names: the first is called the Original Vows of Ksitigarbha; it is also called the Original Practices of Ksitigarbha; and it is also called the Power of the Original Vows of Ksitigarbha. Because this Bodhisattva has made such profound vows throughout many long kalpas to benefit living beings, all of you should propagate it in accordance with these vows.”

After hearing this, Universally Vast joined his palms in respect, made obeisance, and withdrew.
Chapter Seven

Benefiting the Living
and the Deceased

At that time, Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva-Mahasattva said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, I observe that the mental stirring and thoughts of living beings of Jambudvipa are [almost] always wrongdoings. Although now and then they [may generate virtuous thoughts and] gain good benefits, they mostly retreat from their initial resolve. If they encounter evil conditions, in every thought they increase and add to [the unwholesome]. These people are as if walking in the mire and carrying heavy rocks. They would become more trapped and weighted down as their feet would sink deeper with each step. If such a person can meet a virtuous friend, this person’s burden will be lightened or even completely removed, because such a virtuous friend has great
strength. Furthermore, the virtuous friend will lend him support, advise him to keep his steps firm and steady, and point out that once he reaches the level ground, he should beware of the bad road and not walk on it again.

“World-Honored One, living beings who are accustomed to evil begin with a minute amount then quickly escalate into measureless [evil]. Because these beings have such a habit, when they are about to depart this life, their parents and relatives should make merit in their behalf to assist them on the road ahead. This may be done by hanging banners and canopies and lighting oil lamps, by reciting the sacred sutras, by making offerings in veneration to the images of Buddhas and holy ones, as well as by reciting the names of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and pratyekabuddhas in such a way that the recitation of each name reaches the ear of the dying one and may be heard in his fundamental consciousness.
These dying beings, should the results brought about by the unwholesome karma they generated be reckoned, would certainly fall into the lower realms. However, by virtue of their relatives’ cultivating these noble causes in their behalf, their manifold [torments of] offenses can be dissolved. If relatives can furthermore widely perform many good deeds during the seven seven-day periods after the death of such beings, then the deceased will be able to leave the lower realms forever, be reborn as humans and devas, and experience excellent, wonderful happiness. The living relatives will themselves receive measureless benefits.

“Therefore, in the presence of the Buddha, World-Honored One, as well as devas, nagas, and others of the eight classes of beings, humans, non-humans, and others, I now exhort living beings of Jambudvipa to be careful— [...]”
do not kill, harm [beings], generate evil conditions, or worship and offer sacrifices to ghosts and spirits, or seek the help of goblins on the days when someone is nearing death. Why? Your killing, harming, worshipping, offering sacrifices, and so forth are not the least bit helpful to the deceased, but bind up conditions of wrongdoing so that they become deeper and more severe. If in this life or in the future the departed one gains elements of holiness and is to be reborn among humans or devas, but because his relatives commit these evil causes [for his sake] when he is on the verge of death, he will become involved in dispute and be delayed from being reborn in an upper realm. How much worse the situation will be for the dying persons who never had even a few roots of goodness from their lifetime! Each of them will undergo the lower realms in accordance with his own karma; [...]
 [...] how can he bear to have relatives add to that karma? It is as if there was a person who had traveled from afar. He had been out of food for three days and carrying a load that weighed more than a hundred kilogram. Suddenly he came upon a neighbor who attached a few more things to it. He would be even more burdened then.

“World-Honored One, I see that as long as living beings of Jambudvipa are able to follow the teachings of the Buddhas, or even just do good deeds as little as a strand of hair, a drop of water, a grain of sand, or a speck of dust, they themselves will gain all the benefits.”

As these words were spoken, in the assembly there was an elder named Great Eloquence. [...]
This elder had long since attained nonarising; he taught and guided living beings of the ten directions [to the other shore]. Manifesting in the form of an elder, he joined his palms in respect and inquired of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva, “Mahasattva, after beings of Jambudvipa die, and their family and relatives cultivate virtues for their sake, make vegetarian meal offerings and so forth, planting many good causes, will these departed ones gain great benefits and release?”

Ksitigarbha replied, “Elder, now through the Buddha’s awesome [spiritual] power, I will explain this in general terms for the sake of all living beings in the present and future. Elder, beings in the present and future [..]"
yi pu sa ming yi pi zhi fo ming 一 菩 薩 名、一 辟 支 佛 名，
bu wen you zui wu zui xi de jie 不 問 有 罪 無 罪 悉 得 解
tuo 脫。
ruo you nan zi nü ren zai sheng 若 有 男 子 女 人 在 生
bu xiu shan yin duo zao zhong zui ming 不 修 善 因，多 造 眾 罪。命
zhong zhi hou juan shu xiao da wei zao 終 之 後，眷 屬 小 大 為 造
fu li yi qie sheng shi qi fen zhi 福 利，一 切 聖 事。七 分 之
zhong er nai huo yi liu fen gong de 中 乃 獲 一，六 分 功 德
sheng zhe zi li yi shi zhi gu wei 生 者 自 利。以 是 之 故，未
lai xian zai shan nan nü deng wen jian 來 現 在 善 男女 等，聞 健
zi xiu fen fen ji huo 自 修 分 分 己 獲。
wu chang da gui bu qi er dao 無 常 大 鬼 不 期 而 到。

[...] who hear a Buddha’s name, a Bodhisattva’s name, or a pratyekabuddha’s name on the days when they are nearing death will gain release regardless of whether they have offenses or not.

“If there are men and women who did not cultivate good causes but committed many offenses while they were alive, and after their death their family and relatives make merit and benefit in their behalf, they will receive one-seventh of the virtues of the holy deeds, and the other six-sevenths will benefit the living relatives themselves. Therefore, good men and good women in the present and future should themselves cultivate [virtue] when they are healthy and hearing well. They will receive every part [of the benefit].
“The great ghost of impermanence can come to one at any time. The consciousness [of the departed one] then wanders in darkness, not knowing how his offenses and merits [will turn out overall]. During the ensuing seven seven-day periods, he is as if stunned and deaf, or he is at various authorities being examined and questioned regarding his karma and the effects. Once the result is determined, he undergoes rebirth in accordance with his karma. In the time before [his rebirth] is determined, he is tormented by thousands of myriads of worries. How much more anguished will he be if he falls into the lower realms! Throughout the seven seven-day periods, in every thought the departed one who has not yet undergone rebirth hopes that his parents, children, and relatives will engender the strength of merit to rescue him. After these [periods of] days, he will undergo the ripened effects according to his karma. If he is a wrongdoer, he will pass through hundreds of thousands of years without a day of release. [...]"
狱，千劫万劫永受眾苦。

復次，長者！如是罪業
眾生，命終之後眷屬骨肉為修齋，資助業道。

未齋食竟及營齋之次，米泔菜葉不棄於地。乃至諸食未獻佛僧，勿得先食。如有違食及不精勤，是命終人了不得力。如精勤護淨奉獻佛僧，是命終人七分獲一。

[...] If his offenses include [any of] the five great violations that lead to incessant torments, he will fall into that great hell and for thousands of kalpas, for an interminably long time, undergo manifold sufferings.

“Furthermore, Elder, after the death of such a being with wrongdoing karma, his parents, children, and relatives may make vegetarian meal offerings to help him in his karmic path. In the process of preparing such a meal and before that offering is completed, rice rinsings and vegetable leaves should not be thrown onto the ground, and before the food has been offered to the Buddha and sangha, no one should eat it. If there is any transgression or laxness in this matter, the departed one will gain no strength from it. If purity is diligently maintained in making the offering to the Buddha and sangha, the departed one will receive one-seventh of the benefit.
Benefiting the Living and the Deceased

“Therefore, Elder, if after the death of parents and relatives, living beings of Jambudvipa are able to make vegetarian meal offerings in their behalf with diligence, sincerity, and a resolute mind, they will benefit both the living and the deceased.”

As these words were spoken, thousands of myriads of millions of nayutas of ghosts and spirits of Jambudvipa who were in the Trayastrimsa Heaven all gave rise to the immeasurable bodhi mind. Elder Great Eloquence made obeisance and withdrew.
Chapter Eight

The Praise of King Yama and His Retinue

At that time, from within the Iron Encircling Mountains, King Yama and measureless ghost kings all arrived at the Trayastrimsa Heaven and came to where the Buddha was. They were Ghost King Evil Poison, Ghost King Many Evils, Ghost King Great Quarrels, Ghost King White Tiger, Ghost King Blood Tiger, Ghost King Red Tiger, Ghost King Disseminating Disasters, Ghost King Flying Body, Ghost King Lightning Flash, Ghost King Wolf Teeth, Ghost King Thousand Eyes, Ghost King Beast Devouring, Ghost King Rock Carrying, Ghost King Presiding Over Depletion, Ghost King Presiding Over Calamities, Ghost King Presiding Over Food, [...]

閻羅王眾讚歎品第八

爾時，鐵圍山內有無量鬼王與閻羅天天子，俱詣忉利來到佛所。所謂惡毒鬼王、多惡鬼王、大讒鬼王、白虎鬼王、血虎鬼王、赤虎鬼王、散殃鬼王、飛身鬼王、電光鬼王、狼牙鬼王、千眼鬼王、嘯獸鬼王、負石鬼王、主耗鬼王、主禍鬼王、主食鬼王、
Ghost King Presiding Over Wealth, Ghost King Presiding Over Domestic Animals, Ghost King Presiding Over Fowls, Ghost King Presiding Over Beasts, Ghost King Presiding Over Goblins, Ghost King Presiding Over Birth, Ghost King Presiding Over Life, Ghost King Presiding Over Illnesses, Ghost King Presiding Over Danger, Ghost King Three Eyes, Ghost King Four Eyes, Ghost King Five Eyes, King Qi Lishi, King Daqi Lishi, King Qi Licha, King Daqi Licha, King A Nuozha, and King Da’a Nuozha.16

There were great ghost kings such as these, each with hundreds of thousands of minor ghost kings. They all reside in Jambudvipa, and each of them has duties to carry out and preside over. [...]
Through the awesome spiritual penetration of the Buddha and the strength of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva-Mahasattva, these ghost kings and King Yama all came to the Trayāstrimsa Heaven and stood to one side.

At that time, King Yama knelt on his knees, joined his palms, and said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, it is through the awesome spiritual penetration of the Buddha and the strength of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva-Mahasattva that the ghost kings and I are now able to come to this great assembly in the Trayāstrimsa Heaven. We can therefore gain wholesome benefits, too. Now, there is a little question that I dare to ask the World-Honored One. O World-Honored One, with your kindness and compassion, please expound on it.”
The Buddha told King Yama, “Ask whatever you wish. I will explain it for you.”

At that time, King Yama reverently gazed at and made obeisance to the World-Honored One, turned to behold Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva, and then said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, I see that Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva uses hundreds of thousands of skillful means in the six realms of existence to guide wrongdoing suffering beings across [to liberation], and he does so indefatigably. This great Bodhisattva has deeds of such inconceivable supernatural power. Yet, the multitudes of beings—after they gain release from the ripened effects of wrongdoing, before long they again fall into the lower realms. World-Honored One, since Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva has such inconceivable spiritual power, [...]

The Praise of King Yama and His Retinue

The Original Vows of Ksitigarbha Sutra
why do living beings not dwell relying on the virtuous path and attain eternal liberation? O World-Honored One, please explain this for me.”

The Buddha told King Yama, “Living beings of Jambudvipa have obstinate dispositions, difficult to regulate and difficult to tame. This great Bodhisattva rescues such beings everywhere throughout hundreds of thousands of kalpas, causing them to attain liberation early. For people who undergo the ripened effects of wrongdoing, even those who have fallen into the very low realms, the Bodhisattva uses the power of skillful means to extract their fundamental karmic conditions and lead them to realize the events of their previous lives. [...]

不 可 思 議 神 力，云 何 翠
生 而 不 依 止 善 道，永 取
解 脫？唯 願 世 尊 為 我 解

佛 告 閻 羅 天 子：南 閻
浮 提 眾 生，其 性 剛 強 難
調 難 伏，是 大 菩 薩 於 百
千 劫，頭 頭 救 拔 如 是 翠
生 早 令 解 脫。是 罪 報 人
乃 至 墮 大 惡 趣，菩 薩 以
方 便 力 拔 出 根 本 業 緣，
而 遺 悟 宿 世 之 事。自 是
閻浮眾生結惡習重，旋出旋入。勞斯菩薩久經劫數而作度脫。

譬如有入迷失本家，誤入險道。其險道中多諸夜叉，及虎狼師子、蠍蛇蝮蠍。如是昏迷人在險道中，須臾之間即遭諸毒。

有一知識多解大術，善禁是毒乃及夜叉諸毒。忽逢迷人欲進險道，而語之言：咄哉男...

[...] However, because beings of Jambudvipa have heavy habits of forming evil, no sooner have they left [the lower realms] they go back in [again]. This necessitates the Bodhisattva to work hard throughout many kalpas in guiding them across to liberation.

“Suppose there was a person who lost his way home and, by mistake, entered a dangerous path, in which there were many yaksas, tigers, wolves, lions, lizards, snakes, vipers, and scorpions. Such a confused person on that dangerous path would be harmed within a short time. A virtuous friend who was knowledgeable of many great skills and good at stopping and keeping out the injurious and poisonous, including yaksas and other evil fierce beings, would suddenly come upon the confused man about to walk further on that dangerous path and say to him, ‘Hey! Fellow! [...]

yán fú zhòng shēng jié è xí zhòng xuán
閻浮眾生結惡習重，旋出旋入。勞斯菩薩久經劫數而作度脫。

pi ru you ren mi shi ben jia
譬如有人迷失本家，

wu ru xian dao qi xian dao zhong duo
誤入險道。其險道中多

zhu ye cha ji hu lang shi zi yuan
諸夜叉及虎狼師子、蠍蛇蝮蝮。如是昏迷人在險道中，須臾之間即遭諸毒。

e du deng hu feng mi ren yu jin
惡毒等。忽逢迷人欲進

xian dao er yu zhi yan duo zai nan
險道，而語之言：咄哉男
子! 为 何 事故 而 入 此 路?

有 何 異 術 能 制 諸 毒?

是 迷 路 人， 忽 聞 是 語

方 知 險 道， 即 便 退 步 求

出 此 路。 是 善 知 識， 提 携

接 手 引 出 險 道， 免 諸 惡

毒 至 于 好 道， 令 得 安 樂

而 語 之 言： 咄 哉 迷 人！ 自

今 已 後 勿 履 是 道。 此 路

入 者， 卒 難 得 出 復 損 性

是 迷 路 人 亦 生 感 重。

[...] Why are you entering this road? What special means do you have to restrain injurious and poisonous beings?

“Upon hearing these words suddenly, the confused traveler would come to realize that he was on a dangerous path and would immediately turn back, seeking to leave that road. That virtuous friend would then take him by the hand, lead him off the dangerous path so that he would avoid the evils and poisons, and help him reach the good path so that he would gain peace and happiness. Then the virtuous friend would say to him, ‘Well! Confused one! From now on, do not walk on that path again. Those who enter it will have difficulty getting out, and moreover, they will suffer harm to their lives.’
The confused traveler would feel the seriousness [of the dangers on that path], too. As they were about to part, the virtuous friend would further say, 'If you see relatives, friends, as well as other travelers, be they men or women, tell them that, on that dangerous path there are many poisons and evils which will cause people to lose their lives. Do not allow them to [unwittingly] bring about their own deaths.'

“In the same way, Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva, replete with great kindness and compassion, rescues wrongdoing suffering beings and enables them to be reborn among humans and devas, so that they experience wonderful happiness. These wrongdoing beings would come to know the suffering of the [bad] karmic paths. After they obtain release, they would never go [on those paths] again. They are like the confused traveler who by mistake entered the dangerous path but who, having met a virtuous friend who led him out, would never enter it again. […]
Whenever he would come upon others, he would advise them not to enter that path, saying that because he was confused, he took that path before, but now that he has gained release, he would not enter that path again.

“If he should walk on it again, he would still be confused and mistaken, unaware that it is the dangerous path he had fallen into before. He may then lose his life. This is like falling into the lower realms. By virtue of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva’s power of skillful means, beings obtain release and gain rebirth among humans and devas, but shortly thereafter, they go back [to doing evil and fall] into [the lower realms] again. If they form heavy karma, interminably long they will remain in the hells without a time of release.”

At that time, Ghost King Evil Poison joined his palms in respect and said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, [...]

戈婆悉地藏菩萨方便力所，使令解脫生人天中。旋又再入若業結重，永處地獄無解脫時。爾時，惡毒鬼王者合掌恭敬白佛言：世尊！我等
The Praise of King Yama and His Retinue

We measureless number of ghost kings benefit or harm people in Jambudvipa, and we each do so differently. However, the ripened effects of karma cause our retinues and us to travel in the world [doing] much of the unwholesome and little of the wholesome. When we pass people’s homes, cities, villages, manors, or houses where there are men or women who cultivate wholesome deeds as minute as hair fibers, who but hang a banner or a canopy or present a little incense or a few flowers to make offering in veneration to the images of Buddhas or Bodhisattvas, or who recite the sacred sutras or burn incense as an offering to even a sentence or a verse in them, all of us ghost kings respect and revere such people, just as we do for the Buddhas of the past, present, and future. [...]
The Buddha praised the ghost kings, “Excellent, excellent! All you ghost kings and Yama are able to support and protect good men and good women in this way. I will tell Brahma and Sakra to protect all of you as well.”

As these words were spoken, in the assembly there was a ghost king named Presiding Over Life who said to the Buddha, […]
World-Honored One, in accordance with conditions of karma I preside over a human’s lifespan in Jambudvipa; I am in charge of both the time of birth and the time of death. As in my original vows, I wish very much to benefit living beings, but they do not realize my intention. They therefore go through birth and death in distress. Why is this?

"When people of Jambudvipa have just borne children, whether boys or girls, or when they are about to give birth, good deeds should be done to increase the benefits of the household. Then naturally the local earth spirits will be immeasurably joyful and will protect the mother and child so that they obtain great peace and happiness. After the birth, be careful—do not kill or harm [beings] [...]

[...]
取諸鮮味供給產母，及廣聚眷屬飲酒食肉，歌樂絃管，能令子母不得安樂。何以故？是產難時，有無數惡鬼及魍魎魅，欲食腥血。是我早令舍宅土地靈祇荷護子母，使令安樂而得益。如是之人見安樂故，便合設福答諸土地。翻為殺害，集聚眷屬，以是之故，犯殃自受，子母俱損。

[...] in order to offer fresh meat to the mother, nor gather relatives to drink alcohol, eat meat, sing, and play instruments, for these acts can keep the mother and child from peace and happiness. Why? During the difficult time of childbirth, there are countless evil ghosts, goblins, and sprites who want to consume the foul blood. I command the local earth spirits of that household early on to protect the mother and child so that they are peaceful and happy, thereby gaining benefits. When people in such households see that the mother and child are peaceful and happy, they should cultivate merit in thanks to the earth spirits. If instead of doing so, they kill, harm, and gather relatives [for feasting], their violations will bring misfortune to themselves, and the mother and child will also be harmed.
Moreover, for people of Jambudvipa who are on the verge of death, regardless of whether they [have done] good or evil, I wish to keep these dying ones from falling into the lower realms; but how much more [can I do so] when they have cultivated roots of goodness and have increased my ability [to help]! When a practitioner of good deeds is about to depart this life, there too are hundreds of thousands of ghosts and spirits of the lower realms who disguise themselves as his parents or other relatives in an attempt to lead him into the lower realms. How much more is this the case for those who have done evil!

"World-Honored One, when such a man or woman of Jambudvipa is on the verge of death, his consciousness is confused and dim, he is unable to distinguish between good and evil, [...]

Moreover, for people of Jambudvipa who are on the verge of death, regardless of whether they [have done] good or evil, I wish to keep these dying ones from falling into the lower realms; but how much more [can I do so] when they have cultivated roots of goodness and have increased my ability [to help]! When a practitioner of good deeds is about to depart this life, there too are hundreds of thousands of ghosts and spirits of the lower realms who disguise themselves as his parents or other relatives in an attempt to lead him into the lower realms. How much more is this the case for those who have done evil!

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and his eyes and ears are unable to see and hear. His relatives should then make great offerings, recite the sacred sutras, and recite the names of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Such wholesome conditions can cause the departed one to keep away from the lower realms, and the demons, ghosts, and spirits will all withdraw and disperse.

"World-Honored One, all living beings who are nearing the time of death, if they are able to hear a Buddha’s name, a Bodhisattva’s name, or a sentence or a verse from the Mahayana sutras, I observe that such people—excepting those with [any of] the five great violations of killing and harming that lead to incessant torments—those who have small unwholesome karma, which would otherwise cause them to fall into the lower realms, will obtain release quickly.”
The Buddha told Ghost King Presiding Over Life, “Because of your great kindness, you are able to make such great vows and protect all beings amid their births and deaths. In the future when men and women reach their time of birth and death, do not retreat from your vows; be sure to cause all of them to be liberated and gain eternal peace and happiness.”

The ghost king said to the Buddha, “Please do not be concerned. Until the end of my present form, in every thought I will support and protect living beings of Jambudvipa so that they gain peace and happiness both at the time of birth and the time of death. I only wish that at the time of birth and death, these living beings will believe and accept my words, so that they will all be liberated and gain great benefits.”
At that time the Buddha said to Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva, “This great ghost king, Presiding Over Life, has passed through hundreds of thousands of lives as a great ghost king, supporting and protecting living beings amid their births and deaths. It is only because of this Great Being’s compassionate vows that he manifests in the form of a great ghost. In reality, he is not a ghost. After one hundred and seventy kalpas, he will become a Buddha named Signless Tathagata, his kalpa will be called Peace and Happiness, and his world will be named Pure Dwelling. The lifespan of that Buddha will be incalculable kalpas.

“Ksitigarbha, so inconceivable are the matters about this great ghost king. [...]
如是不可思议，所度人
tian yi bu ke xian liang
天亦不可限量。

[... The devas and humans whom he guides across, too, are immeasurable.”]
At that time, Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva-Mahasattva said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, for living beings in the future I will now expound on beneficial matters, so that they may obtain great benefits while in the cycle of birth and death. O World-Honored One, please allow me to speak on this.”

The Buddha told Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva, “You now give rise to vast kindness and compassion to rescue all wrongdoing suffering beings in the six realms of existence, wishing to expound on inconceivable matters. This is the right time. You should speak at once, for I will enter parinirvana before long. [Such matters] will let you fulfill your vows early, [...]”
願，吾亦無憂現在未來
一切眾生。
地藏菩薩白佛言：世尊！過去無量阿僧祇劫，
有佛出世號無邊身如來。
若有男子女人，聞是佛名暫生恭敬，即得超越四
十劫生死重罪。
何況塑畫形像、供養讚歎。
其人獲福無量無邊。
又於過去恒河沙劫，
有佛出世號寶性如來。

 [...] and I too will have no worry about all the beings in the present and future.”

Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, in the past, measureless asamkhyeya kalpas ago, there arose in the world a Buddha named Infinite Forms Tathagata. If there are men and women who hear this Buddha’s name and give rise to reverence momentarily, they will transcend forty kalpas of severe torments of samsara. How much more so when they sculpt and paint his image, make offerings, and sing his praises! These people will gain merit that is measureless and boundless.

“Moreover, in the past, as many kalpas ago as there are grains of sand in the Ganges River, there arose in the world a Buddha named Jewel Nature Tathagata. [...]
若 有 男 子 女 人 聞 是 佛 名，一 弹 指 頃 發 心 歸 依，是 人 於 無 上 道 永 不 退 轉。

又 於 過 去 有 佛 出 世，號 波 頭 摩 勝 如 來。若 有 男 子 女 人， 聞 是 佛 名 歷 于 耳 根，是 人 當 得 千 返 生 於 六 欲 天 中，何 況 志 心 稱 念?

又 於 過 去 不 可 說 不 可 說 阿 僧 祇 劫，有 佛 出 世，
世 號 師 子 吼 如 來。
若 有
男 子 女 人 聞 是 佛 名 一
念 歸 依， 是 人 得 遇 無 量
諸 佛 摩 頂 授 記。

又 於 過 去 有 佛 出 世，
號 拘 留 孫 佛。 若 有 男 子
女 人 聞 是 佛 名， 志 心 瞻
禮 或 復 賞 歎， 是 人 於 賢
劫 千 佛 會 中， 為 大 梵 王
得 授 上 記。

又 於 過 去 有 佛 出 世，
號 毘 婆 尸 佛。 若 有 男 子

[...] there arose in the world a Buddha named Lion’s Roar Tathagata. If there are men and women who hear this Buddha’s name and in a thought take refuge in him, these people will meet measureless Buddhas who will place their hands on the crowns of their heads and give them prediction.

“Moreover, in the past there arose in the world a Buddha named Krakucchanda Buddha. If there are men and women who hear this Buddha’s name, and with a resolute mind, they gaze reverently at and make obeisance to him, or they also sing his praises, these people will be great Brahma kings in the assemblies of the thousand Buddhas of the present kalpa and be given superior prediction.

“Moreover, in the past there arose in the world a Buddha named Vipasyin [Buddha]. If there are men and women [...]
 [...] who hear this Buddha’s name, they will never fall into the lower realms and will always be reborn among humans or devas and experience excellent, wonderful happiness.

“Moreover, in the past, as many kalpas ago as there are grains of sand in measureless, countless Ganges Rivers, there arose in the world a Buddha named Jewel Excellence Tathagata. If there are men and women who hear this Buddha’s name, they will never fall into the lower realms and will frequently be in the heavens and experience excellent, wonderful happiness.

“Moreover, in the past there arose in the world a Buddha named Jewel Sign Tathagata. If there are men and women who hear this Buddha’s name and give rise to a reverent mind, [...]
心，是人不久得阿羅漢

果。

又於過去無量阿僧祇劫，有佛出世號袈裟幢如來。若有多子女人聞是佛名者，超一大百大劫生死之罪。

又於過去有佛出世，號大通山王如來。若有男子女人聞是佛名者，是人得遇恆河沙佛，廣為說法必成菩提。

[...] these people will attain arhatship before long.

“Moreover, in the past, measureless asamkhyeya kalpas ago, there arose in the world a Buddha named Kasaya Banner Tathagata. If there are men and women who hear this Buddha’s name, they will transcend a hundred great kalpas of torments of samsara.

“Moreover, in the past there arose in the world a Buddha named Great Penetration Mountain King Tathagata. If there are men and women who hear this Buddha’s name, these people will meet as many Buddhas as there are grains of sand in the Ganges River, who will extensively expound the Dharma for them, and they will certainly attain bodhi.
“Moreover, in the past, there was Pure Moon Buddha, Mountain King Buddha, Wisdom Excellence Buddha, Pure Name King Buddha, Wisdom Accomplished Buddha, Unsurpassed Buddha, Wonderful Sound Buddha, Full Moon Buddha, and Moon-Countenance Buddha—there were inexpressibly [many] Buddhas such as these.

“World-Honored One, all living beings in the present and future—be they devas or humans, men or women—as long as they remember a Buddha’s name, they will attain measureless virtues. How much more so when they remember many [Buddhas'] names! These beings will gain great benefits at the time of birth and the time of death, and they will never fall into the lower realms.

“If a person is on the verge of death and his family members, [...]
[...] even just one of them, recite a Buddha’s name clearly for the sick one’s sake, with the exception of the five great violations that lead to incessant torments, the ripened effects of the dying person’s other karma will be dissolved. The five great violations that lead to incessant torments are so extremely grave that the offender would pass through millions of kalpas without release. Nevertheless, by virtue of other people reciting and meditating on the names of Buddhas for his sake when he is on the verge of death, [even the torments from] such offenses can be gradually dissolved, too. How much more so when living beings themselves recite and meditate on [the names of Buddhas]? They will gain measureless merit and dissolve measureless [torments of] offenses.”
Thus ends the middle fascicle of the Original Vows of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva Sutra.

[The following is the Seven Buddhas’ Negative Karma Purification Mantra, preserved in Sanskrit through Chinese transliteration. Traditionally, mantras are not translated. The mantra is recited at the end of a sutra chanting section, followed by the triple refuge and dedication of merit, which begin on p. 373.]
Chapter Ten

Comparing the Conditions and Virtues of Giving

At that time, through [the power of] the Buddha’s awesome spiritual penetration, Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva-Mahasattva rose from his seat, knelt on his knees, joined his palms, and said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, I observe living beings in the karmic paths and compare their acts of giving: some [acts] are small and some are great. Some beings then receive merit for one life, some receive merit for ten lives, and some receive great merit and benefit for hundreds of lives, for thousands of lives. Why is this? O World-Honored One, please explain this for me.”
At that time, the Buddha told Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva, “Now, in this assembly in the Trayastrimśa Heaven, I will speak on the giving done by beings of Jambudvipa and compare the virtues therein. You should listen attentively. I will explain for you.”

Ksitigarbha said to the Buddha, “I have doubts about this matter, and I joyfully wish to listen.”

The Buddha told Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva, “In Jambudvipa there are kings, high ministers, ranking officials, great elders, great Kṣatriyas, great Brahmans, and others who encounter those who are the lowest and poorest and those who are hunchbacked, crippled, mute, deaf, mentally deficient, blind—people who are handicapped in various ways such as these. [...]

wu jin yu dao li tian gong yi qie
吾 今 於 切 利 天 宮 一 切
zhong hui shuo yan fu ti bu shi jiao
眾 會， 說 閻 浮 提 布 施， 校
liang gong de qing zhong ru dang di ting
量 功 德 輕 重。 汝 當 諦 聽！
wu wei ru shuo
吾 為 汝 說。

di zang bai fo yan wo yi shi
地 藏 白 佛 言: 我 疑 是
shi yuan yao yu wen
事 願 樂 欲 聞。
fo gao di zang pu sa nan yan
佛 告 地 藏 菩 薩: 南 閣
fu ti you zhu guo wang zai fu da
浮 提 有 諸 國 王、 宰 輔 大
chen da zhang zhe da cha li da po
臣、 大 長 者、 大 剎 利、 大 婆
luo men deng ruo yu zui xia pin qiong
羅 門 等， 若 遇 最 下 貧 窮，
nai zhi long can yin ya long chi wu
乃 至 瘢 殘 瘢 嘴， 聾 瘰 無
mu ru shi zhong zhong bu wan ju zhe
目， 如 是 種 種 不 完 具 者。
At the time these great kings and others wish to give alms, if they are able to do so with great kindness and compassion, a humble mind, and a smile, giving out gifts to all these people personally or through their representatives and comforting them with gentle words, the merit and benefit that these kings and others will obtain will be comparable to the benefit derived from the virtue of giving to as many Buddhas as there are grains of sand in a hundred Ganges Rivers. Why is this? These kings and others will reap such results, receiving merit and benefit, because they give rise to a mind of great kindness toward the poorest, lowest people and those who are handicapped. For hundreds of thousands of lives they will always have an abundance of the seven jewels, not to mention food, clothing, and the necessities of life!
Furthermore, Ksitigarbha, in the future if there are kings, Brahmans, and others who encounter Buddha-stupas, monasteries, or images of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, sravakas, or pratyekabuddhas, and if they then personally prepare and make offerings and give gifts, these kings and others will be Sakras for three kalpas and experience excellent, wonderful happiness. If they are able to dedicate the merit and benefit of that giving to the Dharma Realm, these great kings and others will be great Brahma kings for ten kalpas.

Furthermore, Ksitigarbha, in the future if there are kings, Brahmans, and others who encounter ancient Buddha-stupas, temples, sutras, or images [...]

有諸國王至婆羅門等，遇佛塔寺或佛形像，乃至菩薩、聲聞、辟支佛像，躬自營辦供養布施。是國王等，當得三劫為帝释身，受勝妙樂。若能以此布施福利迴向法界，是大國王等，於十劫中常為大梵天王，復次，地藏！若未來世，有諸國王至婆羅門等，遇先佛塔廟或至經像，
that are damaged or dilapidated, and if they are able to generate the resolve to restore them—these kings and others then do so themselves, or they encourage others, as many as hundreds of thousands of people, to also give and form [wholesome] conditions—these kings and others will always be wheel-turning kings for hundreds of thousands of lives, and those who practice giving along with them will always be kings of smaller countries for hundreds of thousands of lives. Moreover, in front of the stupas or temples, if they can give rise to the mind of [merit]-dedication, then such kings, others, and their helpers will all attain Buddhahood, for such results are measureless and boundless.
Furthermore, Ksitigarbha, in the future if there are kings, Brahmans, and others who see the old, the sick, or women in childbirth and if in a thought-moment, they have the mind of great kindness and provide them with medicine, food, drink, and bedding to make them peaceful and comfortable, the merit and benefit [of their giving] will be very inconceivable. For a hundred kalpas they will always be lords of the pure-abode heavens, for two hundred kalpas they will always be lords of the six heavens of the desire realm, and they will ultimately become Buddhas. They will never fall into the lower realms, and for hundreds of thousands of lives they will not hear the sounds of suffering.

“Furthermore, Ksitigarbha, in the future if there are kings, Brahmans, and others [...]
[...] who are able to give in such ways, they will gain 
measureless merit. Moreover, if they are able to dedi-
cate [the merit of their giving]—be it a lot or a little—
to the Dharma Realm, they will ultimately become 
Buddhas, not to mention reaping the ripened effects to 
be Sakras, Brahmas, and wheel-turning kings. Therefore, 
Ksitigarbha, encourage all living beings to learn [to give] 
thus.

“Furthermore, Ksitigarbha, in the future if good men 
and good women plant in Buddhadharma a few roots of 
goodness, even as little as [a strand of] hair, [a grain of] 
sand, or [a speck of] dust, the merit and benefit that they 
will receive will be beyond compare.

“Furthermore, Ksitigarbha, in the future if there are 
good men and good women [...]
who encounter the images of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, pratyekabuddhas, or wheel-turning kings, and give gifts and make offerings to them, they will gain measureless merit. They will always be reborn in the human and heaven realms and experience excellent, wonderful happiness. If they can dedicate [that merit] to the Dharma Realm, their merit and resulting benefit will be beyond compare.

“Furthermore, Ksitigarbha, in the future if there are good men and good women who encounter the Mahayana sutras or just hear a verse or a sentence and give rise to a sincere, reverent mind, sing praises, venerate, and make offerings, these people will reap great results which are measureless and boundless. [...]

fo xing xiang pu sa xing xiang pi zhi
佛 形 像、菩萨 形 像、辟支

fo xing xiang zhuan lun wang xing xiang bu
佛 形 像、轉 輪 王 形 像、布

shi gong yang de wu liang fu chang zai
施 供 養 得 無 量 福，常 在

ren tian shou sheng miao le ruo neng hui
人 天 受 勝 妙 樂，若 能 復

xiang fa jie shi ren fu li bu ke
向 法 界，是人 福 利 不 可

wei yu
為 喻。

fu ci di zang wei lai shi zhong
復 次，地 藏！未 來 世 中，

ruo you shan nan zi shan nü ren yu
若 有 善 男 子 善 女 人 遇

da cheng jing dian huo ting wen yi ji
大 乘 經 典，或 聽 聞 一 偈

yi ju fa yin zhong xin tan gong
一 句，發 殷 重 心 讚 敬 恭

jing bu shi gong yang shi ren huo da
敬，布 供 養。是 人 獲 大

guo bao wu liang wu bian ruo neng hui
果 報 無 量 無 邊。若 能 復
向法界，其福不可為喻。

復次，地藏！若未來世中，有善男子善女人，遇佛塔寺、大乘經典新者，布施供養，瞻禮讚歎恭敬合掌；若遇故者或毀壞者，修補營理；或獨發心；或勸多人同共發心。如是等輩三十生中，常為諸小國王。檀越之人

[...] If they can dedicate [that merit] to the Dharma Realm, their merit will be beyond compare.

“Furthermore, Ksitigarbha, in the future if there are good men and good women who encounter Buddha-stupas, monasteries, or Mahayana sutras that are new, and they make offerings, gaze reverently, pay obeisance, sing praises, and join their palms in respect; and if they encounter old or damaged ones and they make repairs and restorations—they generate the resolve to do so themselves or they encourage many others to generate the resolve to do so with them—those who help will always be kings of smaller countries for thirty lives. The donors who lead the giving will always be wheel-turning kings and will teach and transform the kings of smaller countries by means of the good Dharma.
Furthermore, Ksitigarbha, in the future if there are good men and good women who plant roots of goodness in Buddhadharma by giving, making offerings, repairing stupas or monasteries, rebinding sutras, or doing deeds as little as a strand of hair, a speck of dust, a grain of sand, or a drop of water—as long as they can dedicate [the merit of] such wholesome deeds to the Dharma Realm, the virtues of these people will lead them to experience superior, wonderful happiness for hundreds of thousands of lives. However, if they dedicate [the merit] only to their family or relatives or to their personal benefit, the result will be to experience happiness for three lives. To give one is to receive ten thousandfold in return. […]
Thus, Ksitigarbha, such are the causes and conditions of giving.
Chapter Eleven

THE DHARMA PROTECTION OF THE EARTH SPIRIT

At that time, Earth Spirit Firm and Solid said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, since long time past, I have reverently gazed at and prostrated to measureless Bodhisattva-Mahasattvas. All of them have great, inconceivable supernatural power and wisdom, and they all guide living beings far and wide across [to the other shore]. Among the Bodhisattvas, Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva-Mahasattva has made particularly profound vows. World-Honored One, Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva-Mahasattva has great cause and condition with Jambudvipa. [The Bodhisattvas] Manjusri, Samantabhadra, Avalokitesvara, and Maitreya also transform into hundreds of thousands of forms to guide those in the six realms of existence, [...]

di shen hu fa pin di shi yi

地 神 護 法 品 第 十 一

er shi jian lao di shen bai fo yan
爾 時, 堅 牢 地 神 白 佛 言:

shi zun wo cong xi lai zhan shi ding
世 尊! 我 從 昔 來 瞻 視 頂

li wu liang pu sa mo he sa jie
禮 無 量 菩 薩 摩 詩 薩，皆

shì da bu ke si yi shen tong zhi
是 大 不 可 思 議 神 通 智

huì guāng du zhòng shèng shì di zàng pu
慧，廣 度 眾 生，是 地 藏 菩

sa mo he sa yu zhu pu sa shi
薩 摩 詩 薩，於 諸 菩 薩 誓

yuán shen zhòng shì zün shì di zàng pu
願 深 重，世 尊，是 地 藏 菩

sa yu yan fù ti you da yin yuan
薩 於 閡 浮 提，有 大 因 緣。

ru wén shù pu xián guān yin mi le
如 文 殊、普 賢、觀 音、彌 勒，

yi hua bǎi qiān shēn xīng du yù liú
亦 化 百 千 身 形，度 於 六
道，其願尚有竟。是地藏菩薩教化六道一切眾生，所發願劫數，如千百億恒河沙。

世尊！我觀未來及現在眾生於所住處，於南方清潔之地，以土石竹木作其龕室。是中能塑畫乃至金銀銅鐵作地藏形像，燒香供養瞻禮，讚歎是人居處即得十種利益。何等為十？
First, their lands will be fertile.

Second, their families and homes will ever be in peace.

Third, their deceased relatives will be reborn in the heavens.

Fourth, the living will enjoy ever greater longevity.

Fifth, they will obtain what they seek with ease.

Sixth, they will not suffer disasters of flood or fire.

Seventh, events that cause depletion will be eliminated.

Eighth, they will not have nightmares.

Ninth, they will be protected by spirits in their daily comings and goings.

Tenth, they will come across many causes of holiness.

“World-Honored One, if living beings in the present and future are able to make offerings in their residences in such way, they will gain such benefits.”
[The Earth Spirit] further said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, in the future if there are good men and good women who have this sutra and this Bodhisattva’s image in their residences, and who furthermore are able to recite this sutra and make offerings to the Bodhisattva, I will always use my spiritual power to protect these people day and night, so that flood, fire, robbery, theft, major calamities, minor misfortunes—all bad occurrences will be eliminated.”

The Buddha told Earth Spirit Firm and Solid, “Your great spiritual power [...]”
The Dharma Protection of the Earth Spirit

...is seldom matched by other spirits. Why is this so? The land of Jambudvipa is entirely protected by you, and the grasses, trees, sand, stones, rice plants, sesame, bamboo, reeds, grains, and jewels all come forth from the earth because of your power. Moreover, you frequently extol the beneficial deeds of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva. Your virtues and spiritual penetration are hundreds of thousands of times greater than those of the ordinary earth spirits. In the future if there are good men and good women who make offerings to the Bodhisattva and recite this sutra, as long as they cultivate and practice according to even one aspect of the Original Vows of Ksitigarbha Sutra, you should use your spiritual power to protect them. [...]

神力諸神少及。何以故？

閻浮土地悉蒙汝護。乃至草木沙石，稻麻竹蔑，穀米寶貝，從地而有皆因汝力。

又常稱揚地藏菩薩利益之事，汝之功德及以神通，百千倍於常分地神。若未來世中善男善女，供養菩薩及轉讀是經，但依地藏本願經一事修行者，汝以本神力而擁護...
之，勿令一切灾害，及不
如愿事辄闻於耳，何況

令受！

非但汝獨護是人故，
亦有釋梵眷屬、諸天眷
屬擁護是人。何故得如
是聖賢擁護？皆由瞻禮

地藏形像及轉讀是本
願經故，自然畢竟出離
苦海，證涅槃樂。以是之
故得大擁護。

[…]. Do not allow any disasters or unwelcome phenomena to even reach their ears, much less happen to them personally.

“Not only will you alone protect these people, but Sakra, Brahma, their retinues as well as other devas and their retinues will also support and protect them. Why will they receive support and protection from holy ones and worthies such as these? It is due to their gazing reverently at and making obeisance to Ksitigarbha’s image and reciting the Original Vows of Ksitigarbha Sutra. Naturally, they will leave the sea of suffering and ultimately attain the bliss of nirvana. Therefore, they receive great support and protection.”
Chapter Twelve

THE BENEFITS FROM SEEING AND HEARING

At that time, the World-Honored One emitted hundreds of thousands of myriads of millions of rays of great urna light from the crown of his head. There were rays of white urna light, great white urna light, auspicious urna light, great auspicious urna light, jade urna light, great jade urna light, purple urna light, great purple urna light, blue urna light, great blue urna light, azure urna light, great azure urna light, red urna light, great red urna light, green urna light, great green urna light,[...]

After emitting rays of urna light such as these from the crown of his head, he issued forth his sublime, wonderful voice, telling the great assembly—devas, nagas, and others of the eight classes of beings, humans, non-humans, and others, [...]

光、金毫相光、大金毫相
guang jin hao xiang guang da jin hao xiang

光、慶雲毫相光、大慶雲
guang qing yun hao xiang guang da qing yun

毫相光、千輪毫光、大千
hao xiang guang qian lun hao guang da qian

輪毫光、寶輪毫光、大寶
lun hao guang bao lun hao guang da bao

輪毫光、日輪毫光、大日
lun hao guang ri lun hao guang da ri

輪毫光、月輪毫光、大月
lun hao guang yue lun hao guang da yue

輪毫光、宮殿毫光、大宮
lun hao guang gong dian hao guang da gong

殿毫光、海雲毫光、大海
dian hao guang hai yun hao guang da hai

雲毫光。
yun hao guang

於頂門上放如是等
yu ding men shang fang ru shi deng

毫相光、出微妙音告
hao xiang guang yi chu wei miao yin gao

諸大眾、天龍八部、人、非
zhu da zhong tian long ba bu ren fei
“Hear me now in the Trayastrimsa Heaven as I praise and extol Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva for how he benefits those in the human and heaven realms and so forth—on inconceivable matters, on the matters of causes for transcending to holiness, on the matters of attainment of the Tenth Ground, and on the matters of ultimately being irreversibly [on course] to unexcelled perfect complete awakening.”

As these words were spoken, in the assembly there was a Bodhisattva-Mahasattva named Avalokitesvara who rose from his seat, knelt on his knees, joined his palms, and said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva-Mahasattva is replete with great kindness and compassion, taking pity on wrong-doing suffering beings. He transforms into thousands of myriads of millions of emanations in thousands of myriads of millions of worlds— […]"
all his virtues as well as the power of his inconceivable, awesome spiritual penetration! I have heard the World-Honored One and measureless Buddhas of the ten directions unanimously praise Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva, saying that even if all Buddhas in the past, present and future were to speak of his virtues, these virtues still could not be described fully, and just now, the World-Honored One has told everyone in the great assembly that he wishes to extol on how Ksitigarbha benefits [beings] and so forth. O World-Honored One, for the sake of all living beings in the present and future, please expound on the inconceivable matters of Ksitigarbha and cause devas, nagas, and others of the eight classes of beings to gaze reverently, make obeisance to him, and gain merits."
The Buddha told Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva, “You have great cause and condition with the saha world. If devas, nagas, men, women, spirits, ghosts, or any wrongdoing suffering beings in the six realms of existence hear your name, see your image, feel great love and admiration for you, or sing your praises, these beings definitely will not fall back or turn away from the Unsurpassed Way. They will ever be reborn as humans or devas and experience excellent, wonderful happiness. When the effects of their causes come to maturity, they will meet Buddhas and be given prediction. Now, replete with great kindness and compassion, you take pity on living beings, on devas, nagas, and others of the eight classes of beings, and listen as I expound on Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva’s inconceivable deeds of benefiting beings. You should listen attentively. I will speak on them now.”
Avalokitesvara replied, “Yes, World-Honored One, I joyfully wish to listen.”

The Buddha told Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva, “In various worlds in the present and future, there are devas who have exhausted their heavenly merit and manifest the five signs of decay; some of them are about to fall into the lower realms. When such devas, whether male or female, manifest these signs, if they see Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva’s image or hear Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva’s name, and they reverently gaze at and make obeisance to him once, these devas […]
增天福，受大快乐永不堕三恶道报。何况见闻菩萨，以诸香、华、衣服、饮食、宝、贝、瓔珞布施供养，所获功德福利无量无边。

复次，观世音！若未来现在诸世界中，六道众生临命终时，得闻地藏菩萨名，一一声历耳根者，是诸众生永不历三恶道苦。何况临命终时父
mu juan shu jiang shi ming zhong ren she
母眷属，将是命终人舍

zhai cai wu bao bei yi fu su hua
宅、财物、宝贝、衣服，塑画

di zang xing xiang huo shi bing ren wei
d地藏形像。或使病人未

zhong zhi shi yan er jian wen zhi dao
终之时，眼耳见闻知道

juan shu jiang she zhai bao bei deng wei
眷属将舍宅宝贝等，为

qi zi shen su hua di zang pu sa
其自身塑画地藏菩萨

xing xiang shi ren ruo shi ye bao he
形象。是人若是业报合

shou zhong bing zhe cheng si gong de xun
受重病者，承斯功德寻

ji chu yu shou ming zeng yi shi ren
即除愈，寿命增益。是人

ruo shi ye bao ming jin ying you yi
若是业报命尽，应有一

qie zui zhang ye zhang he duo e qu
切罪障业障，合堕恶趣

zhe cheng si gong de ming zhong zhi hou
者，承斯功德命终之后，

[...] and parents and other relatives use the dying one’s house, wealth, jewels, and clothing to commission the sculpting or painting of Ksitigarbha’s image; if the sick one has not yet passed away, they can try to help him see, hear, and understand that for his benefit, relatives have used his house, jewels, and so forth for the sculpting or painting of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva’s image. If the ripened effects of this person’s karma are such that he would have to undergo severe illness, through these virtues he will soon recover and his lifespan will be prolonged. If the ripened effects of this person’s karma are such that his life would end and his offense obstacles and karmic obstacles should send him to the lower realms, then through these virtues, [...]

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he will be reborn among humans or devas and experience excellent, wonderful happiness after he departs this life, and all his offense obstacles will dissolve.

“Furthermore, Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva, in the future, if there are men or women who have lost their fathers, mothers, brothers, or sisters during infancy or at the age of three, five, or under ten, and as adults such people think of those deceased parents and relatives and long to know into what realms they have fallen, or in what worlds, or in what heavens they have been reborn, and if these people are able to sculpt or paint Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva’s image, hear his name, reverently gaze at and make obeisance to him [...]

ji sheng ren tian shou sheng miao le yi
即 生 人 天 受 勝 妙 樂，一

qie zu zhang xi jie xiao mie
切 罪 障 悉 皆 銷 滅。

fu ci guan shi yin pu sa ruo
復 次，觀 世 音 菩 薩！若

wei lai shi you nan zi nü ren huo
未 來 世 有 男 子 女 人，或

ru pu shi huo san sui wu sui shi
乳 哺 時，或 三 歲、五 歲、十

sui yi xia wang shi fu mu nai ji
歲 已 下 亡 失 父 母，乃 及

wang shi xiong di jie mei shi ren nian
亡 失 兄 弟 姊 妹，是 人 年

ji zhang da si yi fu mu ji zhu
既 長 大，思 憶 父 母 及 諸

juan shu bu zhi luo zai he qu sheng
眷 屬，不 知 落 在 何 趣？生

he shi jie sheng he tian zhong shi ren
何 世 界？生 何 天 中？是 人

ruo neng su hua di zang pu sa xing
若 能 塑 畫 地 藏 菩 薩 形

xiang nai zhi wen ming yi zhan yi li
像，乃 至 聞 名，一 瞻 一 禮
for one to seven days without retreating from their initial resolve—continuously they hear his name, see his image, reverently gaze, pay obeisance, and make offerings to him: If these people’s relatives had fallen into the lower realms due to their karma and would remain there for many kalpas, through the virtues of their sons’, daughters’, brothers’, or sisters’ sculpting or painting Ksitigarbha’s image, reverently gazing at, and making obeisance to him, they will quickly gain release, be reborn among humans or devas, and experience excellent, wonderful happiness. If the relatives had already been reborn as humans or devas and were already experiencing excellent, wonderful happiness by the strength of their own merit, then through these virtues they will increase their causes for holiness and experience measureless happiness.\(^{23}\)

“If furthermore these people are able to gaze reverently at and make obeisance to Ksitigarbha’s image wholeheartedly for three seven-day periods [...]

yi ri zhi qi ri mo tui chu xin
一日至七日，莫退初心，
wen ming jian xing zhan li gong yang shi
聞名見形瞻禮供養，是
ren juan shu jia yin ye gu duo e
人眷屬，假因業故墮惡
qu zhe ji dang jie shu cheng si nan
趣者，計當劫數，承斯男
nü xiong di jie mei su hua di zang
女兄弟姊妹畫地藏
xing xiang zhan li gong de xun ji jie
形像瞻禮功德尋即解
tuo sheng ren tian zhong shou sheng miao le
脫生人天中受勝妙樂。
shi ren juan shu ru you fu li yi
是人眷屬如有福力，已
sheng ren tian shou sheng miao le zhe ji
生人天受勝妙樂者，即
cheng si gong de zhuan zeng sheng yin shou
承斯功德轉增聖因受
wu liang le
無量樂。
shi ren geng neng san qi ri zhong
是人更能三七日中，
...and recite the Bodhisattva’s name a full ten thousand times, then the Bodhisattva will manifest his infinite forms and describe to them the realms into which their relatives have been reborn, or in their dreams the Bodhisattva will manifest his great spiritual power and personally lead them to those worlds to see their relatives.

“If these people can furthermore recite the Bodhisattva’s name one thousand times a day every day for one thousand days, then the Bodhisattva will send the ghosts and spirits in the vicinity of these people to guard and protect them for their entire lives. Their food and clothing will be abundant in the present life, and they will not have suffering from sickness and other causes. Untoward dire events will not enter the doors [of their homes], much less affect them personally. [...]

yi xin zhan li di zang xing xiang nian
一 心 瞻 礼 地 藏 形 像，念
qi ming zi man yu wan bian dang de
其 名 字 滿 於 萬 遍，當 得
pu sa xian wu bian shen ju gao shi
菩 薩 現 無 邊 身，具 告 是
ren juan shu sheng jie huo yu meng zhong
人 眷 屬 生 界，或 於 夢 中
pu sa xian da shen li qin ling shi
菩 薩 現 大 神 力，親 領 是
geng neng mei ri nian pu sa ming
更 能 每 日 念 菩 薩 名
qian bian zhi yu qian ri shi ren dang
千 遍，至 於 千 日。是 人 當
de pu sa qian suo zai tu di gui
得 菩 薩 遣 所 在 土 地 鬼
shen zhong shen wei hu xian shi yi shi
神 終 身 衛 護，現 世 衣 食
feng yi wu zhu ji ku nai zhi heng
豐 溢 無 諸 疾 苦，乃 至 橫
shi bu ru qi men he kuang ji shen
事 不 入 其 門，何 况 及 身！
是人畢竟得菩薩摩頂

復次，觀世音菩薩！若未來世有善男子善女人，欲發廣大慈心救度一切眾生者，欲修無上菩提者，欲出離三界者。

是諸人等，見地藏形像及聞名者至心歸依，或以香華衣服、寶貝飲食，供養瞻禮。是善男女等，所願速成永無障礙。

[...] The Bodhisattva will ultimately place his hand on the crowns of their heads and give them prediction.

“Furthermore, Avalokitesvvara Bodhisattva, in the future if there are good men and good women who wish to generate the mind of vast, great kindness to rescue and guide all living beings, who wish to cultivate the unsurpassed bodhi, and who wish to leave the threefold world, and if these people see Ksitigarbha’s image, hear his name, and wholeheartedly take refuge in him, or if they also make offerings of incense, flowers, clothing, jewels, food, and drink, reverently gaze at and make obeisance to him, these good men and good women will soon fulfill their vows and will never be hindered by obstacles.
Furthermore, Avalokitesvara, in the future if there
are good men and good women who wish to fulfill hun-
dreds of thousands of myriads of millions of wishes and
succeed in hundreds of thousands of myriads of millions
of undertakings in both the present and future, they
should take refuge [in this Bodhisattva], reverently gaze,
pay obeisance, make offerings, and sing praises [before]
Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva’s image. Then they will achieve
all their aspirations and goals. Should they moreover
implore Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva—who is replete with
great kindness and compassion—to support and protect
them always, then in dreams the Bodhisattva will place
his hand on the crowns of their heads and give them
prediction.

Furthermore, Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva, in the fu-
ture if good men and good women […]
於大乘經典深生珍重，
發不思議心欲讀欲誦。
縱遇明師教視令熟，旋得旋忘動經年月，不能讀誦。是善男子等，有宿業障未得銷除，故於大乘經典無讀誦性。如是之人聞地藏菩薩名，見地藏菩薩像，具以本心恭敬陳白，更以香華、衣服、飲食、一切玩具供養菩薩。以淨水一盞，經一
给 rise to profound reverence for the Mahayana sutras and generate an inconceivable resolve, wishing to read and recite them [from memory], yet, even with the instruction of a wise teacher showing them how to learn the sutras by heart, no sooner have they learned them they forget. Months, even years go by; still they are unable to read and recite them. These good men and [good women] have karmic obstacles from past lives that have not yet been resolved; therefore, they are unable to read and recite the Mahayana sutras. When such people hear Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva’s name, see Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva’s image, they should, with their full original resolve, reverently state their situation to the Bodhisattva. In addition, they should make offerings of incense, flowers, clothing, food, drink, and all material objects they enjoy to the Bodhisattva. They should place a cup of pure water before the Bodhisattva for a day and a night; [...]

 [...]
[...] afterward, they should join their palms, implore reverently, take hold of the cup, turn to face south, and drink the water. When the water is about to enter their mouths, they should be wholeheartedly sincere and earnest. After drinking the water, they should be careful—abstain from the five pungent plants, alcohol, meat, sexual misconduct, false speech, and killing and harming for one or three seven-day periods. Then in dreams these good men and good women will see Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva manifesting his infinite forms to pour water on the crowns of their heads. When they awaken, they will be endowed with keen intelligence. Should these sutras be heard in their ears but once, they will forever remember them and never forget or lose a single sentence or verse.
Furthermore, Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva, in the future if there are various people whose food and clothing are insufficient, who cannot obtain whatever they seek, who have frequent illnesses, who encounter much misfortune and decline, whose families or homes are without peace, whose relatives are scattered, who physically suffer frequent untoward occurrences, or who are often terrified in dreams, if such people hear Ksitigarbha’s name, see Ksitigarbha’s image, and with wholehearted reverence, recite his name a full ten thousand times, these disagreeable circumstances will gradually disappear. They will have peace and happiness thereafter, their food and clothing will be abundant, and even in dreams they will be peaceful and happy.
“Furthermore, Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva, in the future if there are good men and good women who, for the sake of livelihood, public or personal matters, events of birth and death, or other urgent business, need to enter the mountains or forests, cross the rivers, oceans, or other large bodies of water, or travel along dangerous paths, these people should first recite Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva’s name a full ten thousand times. Then the ghosts and spirits on the lands they pass through will guard and protect them. Whether they are walking, standing, sitting, or lying down, their peace and happiness will be safeguarded. Even when they encounter tigers, wolves, lions, or all that are poisonous or injurious, none will be able to harm them.”

The Buddha told Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva, [...]
“Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva has great cause and condition with Jambudvipa. Suppose I were to describe the benefits and so forth derived by living beings who see [his image] and hear of [his name], in hundreds of thousands of kalpas I could not finish describing them. Therefore, Avalokitesvara, you should use your spiritual power to propagate this sutra, thus enabling living beings of the saha world to always have peace and happiness throughout hundreds of thousands of myriads of kalpas.”

At that time, the World-Honored One spoke in verse, saying:

“I observe that Ksitigarbha’s awesome spiritual power

Cannot be told fully even in kalpas as many as grains of sand of Gange River

Seeing, hearing, reverently gazing, or making obeisance to him in a thought-moment

Will benefit humans and devas in measureless ways.
“If men, women, nagas, or spirits who are,
Nearing the end of the present ripened effect, would
fall into lower realms
Wholeheartedly take refuge in this Great Being,
Their lifespans will be lengthened, offense obstacles
dissolved.

“They who when very young have lost their parents’
love—
Wonder to what realm has [their parents’] consciousness
gone—
Brothers, sisters, or other kin, [whose whereabouts]
The grown surviving ones do not know:
If these people sculpt or paint this Great Being’s
image,
Gaze up longingly, make obeisance to him
unceasingly,
And recollect his name for three seven-day periods,
The Bodhisattva will manifest his infinite forms,
Revealing the realms of rebirth of their kin,
Who, even if fallen in lower realms, will soon gain release.
If they do not retreat from their initial resolve,
He will place his hand on the crowns of their heads and give them holy prediction.

“Those wishing to cultivate the unsurpassed bodhi
And to leave behind the threefold world’s suffering,
Having given rise to the mind of great compassion,
Should first gaze up at and make obeisance to this Great Being’s image.
All their vows will soon be fulfilled;
No karmic obstacles can ever hinder or stop them.

“There are people who resolve to remember and recite the sutras,
Wishing to guide confused beings over to the other shore,
Although having made this vow so inconceivable,
What they read they quickly forget—losing much in
their forgetfulness.
Because these people have karmic obstacles deluding
them,
They cannot remember the Mahayana sutras.
They should honor Ksitigarbha with offerings of
incense, flowers
Clothing, food, drink, and objects they enjoy,
Place pure water before this Great Being’s [image]
After a day and a night, implore reverently and
drink the water,
Give rise to a diligent and serious mind, abstain
from the five pungent plants,
Alcohol, meat, sexual misconduct, and false speech,
Not to kill or harm for three seven-day periods,
And wholeheartedly meditate on this Great Being’s
name.
Then soon in dreams they will see his infinite [forms],
And when they awaken they will gain keen hearing.
Once the sutras and teachings pass through their ears,
Never will they forget them throughout thousands of myriads of lives.
Because this Great Being is so inconceivable,
He can enable these people to gain such wisdom.
Beings who are poor or afflicted by illnesses,
Whose households are in misfortune and decline,
Whose relatives are scattered,
Whose sleep and dreams are not peaceful,
Who cannot obtain whatever they seek—having nothing go their way—
Should wholeheartedly gaze up at and make obeisance to Ksitigarbha’s image.
All the bad things will dissolve,
And their dreams will be peaceful, too,
Food and clothing abundant, and spirits and ghosts
will protect them.

“Those wishing to enter mountains or forests or
cross the seas
Where there are ferocious fowls and beasts, evil
people,
Evil spirits, evil ghosts, and evil winds—
All sorts of calamities and various distresses—
Should gaze reverently, pay obeisance, and make
offerings
To the image of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva, the Great
Being.

In the mountains, forests, and on the great seas,
Those evils will all disappear.

“Avalokitesvara, wholeheartedly listen to me.
Endless are the inconceivable [matters] of
Ksitigarbha.
In hundreds of thousands of myriads of kalpas the description is still not complete, To extensively expound on such powers of this Great Being! If people hear the name ‘Ksitigarbha’ And see his image, reverently gaze, pay obeisance, Make offerings of incense, flowers, clothing, food, and drink, They will experience wonderful happiness for hundreds of thousands [of kalpas]. If they can dedicate such merit to the Dharma Realm, They will go beyond the cycle of birth and death, and ultimately become Buddhas. Therefore, Avalokitesvara, you should know this And tell everyone throughout lands as many as Ganges’ sand.”
Chapter Thirteen

ENTRUSTING HUMANS AND DEVAS

At that time, the World-Honored One raised his golden arm, again placed his hand on the crown of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva-Mahasattva’s head, and spoke these words, “Ksitigarbha, Ksitigarbha, inconceivable is your spiritual power, inconceivable your kindness and compassion, inconceivable your wisdom, inconceivable your eloquence. Even if all the Buddhas of the ten directions were to praise and speak on the inconceivable matters about you, they could not be described fully in thousands of myriads of kalpas.
“Ksitigarbha, Ksitigarbha, remember that today in the Trayastriṃśa Heaven, in this great assembly of hundreds of thousands of myriads of millions of inexpressibly-inexpressible [number of] Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, devas, nagas, and others of the eight classes of beings, I once again entrust to you humans, devas, and other beings who have not yet left the threefold world, who are still in this burning house. Do not allow these living beings to fall into the lower realms even for a single day and night, much less fall into the hell with fivefold incessancy or the Avici Hell, where they would pass through thousands of myriads of millions of kalpas without a time of release.
“Ksitigarbha, living beings of Jambudvipa are without fixity in their wills and characters. Most of them are accustomed to evil. Even when they generate a wholesome mind, it fades within a short time. If they encounter evil conditions, [the unwholesome] is increased thought upon thought. For this reason, I transform into hundreds of thousands of millions of emanation-forms to teach beings and guide them across to liberation, all in accord with their capacities and dispositions.

“Ksitigarbha, I now earnestly entrust devas, humans, and the multitudes of beings to you. In the future, if there are devas, good men, and good women who plant a few roots of goodness in Buddhadharma, even as little as a strand of hair, a speck of dust, a grain of sand, or a drop of water, you should use the power of the noble path to support and protect them, [...]

生，志性無定習惡者多，
縱發善心須臾即退，若
遇惡緣念念增長。以是
之故，吾分是形百千億
化度，隨其根性而度脫
地藏！吾今殷勤以天
人眾付囑於汝，未來之
世若有天人，及善男子
善女人，於佛法中種少
善根，一毛一塵一沙一
滴。汝以道力擁護是人，
so that they gradually cultivate the Unsurpassed [Way] and do not retreat from it or lose it.

“Furthermore, Ksitigarbha, in the future, if devas or humans fall into the lower realms to undergo ripened effects according to their karma, and when on the verge of falling into these lower realms or at the front of these entrances, if these beings are able to recollect a Buddha’s name, a Bodhisattva’s name, or a sentence or a verse from the Mahayana sutras, you should use your spiritual power to skillfully rescue these beings. Manifest your infinite forms at the places where they are, shatter the hells for them, and enable them to be reborn in the heavens and experience excellent, wonderful happiness.”

At that time, the World-Honored One spoke in verse, saying:
Devas, humans, multitudes of beings of the present and future
I now earnestly entrust to you:
Use great supernatural power and skillful means guide them across [to liberation].
Do not allow them to fall into the lower realms."

At that time, Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva-Mahasattva knelt on his knees, joined his palms, and said to the Buddha, “O World-Honored One, I implore the World-Honored One not to be concerned. In the future, if there are good men and good women who have a single thought of respect in Buddhadharma, I will use hundreds of thousands of skillful means to guide these people across to liberation, so that they will soon be freed from the cycle of birth and death. How much more so for those who hear the wholesome matters [...]

“Devas, humans, multitudes of beings of the present and future
I now earnestly entrust to you:
Use great supernatural power and skillful means guide them across [to liberation].
Do not allow them to fall into the lower realms.”

At that time, Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva-Mahasattva knelt on his knees, joined his palms, and said to the Buddha, “O World-Honored One, I implore the World-Honored One not to be concerned. In the future, if there are good men and good women who have a single thought of respect in Buddhadharma, I will use hundreds of thousands of skillful means to guide these people across to liberation, so that they will soon be freed from the cycle of birth and death. How much more so for those who hear the wholesome matters [...]
and cultivate their practices, thought upon thought! Naturally they will never fall back or turn away from the Unsurpassed Way.”

As these words were spoken, in the assembly there was a Bodhisattva named Akasagarbha who said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, since I came to the Trayastrimsa Heaven I have heard the Tathagata praise Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva’s inconceivable might of awesome spiritual penetration. In the future, if there are good men, good women, and devas and nagas who hear this sutra and Ksitigarbha’s name or gaze reverently at and make obeisance to his image, how many kinds of merits and benefits will they gain? O World-Honored One, for the sake of all the multitudes of beings in the present and future, please briefly speak about this.”
佛告虚空藏菩萨：谛听谛听！吾当为汝分别說之。若未来世有善男善女人，见地藏形像及闻此经，乃至读诵，香华、饮食、衣服、珍宝布施供養，讚歎瞻礼，得二十八种利益：

一者天龙护念

二者善果日增

三者集聖上因

The Buddha told Akasagarbha Bodhisattva, “Listen attentively, listen attentively. I will describe them separately for you. In the future, if there are good men and good women who see Ksitigarbha’s image and who hear this sutra, who moreover read and recite it, who give gifts and make offering of incense, flowers, food, drink, clothing, or jewels, who sing his praises, gaze reverently at, and make obeisance to him, they will gain twenty-eight kinds of benefits:

First, devas and nagas will protect them.

Second, their wholesome results will increase daily.

Third, they will accumulate superior causes for holiness.
Entrusting Humans and Devas

Fourth, they will not retreat from bodhi.

Fifth, their food and clothing will be abundant.

Sixth, they will not be infected by diseases or pestilence.

Seventh, they will not be in disasters of flood or fire.

Eighth, they will not fall victim to robbery or theft.

Ninth, people who see them will admire and respect them.

Tenth, spirits and ghosts will aid and support them.

Eleventh, women [who wish to] will be reborn as men.

Twelfth, [if reborn as women] they will be daughters of kings and ministers.

Thirteenth, they will be good looking and with perfect features.

Fourteenth, they will frequently be reborn in the heavens.

Fifteenth, they may be emperors or kings.
Sixteenth, they will have the wisdom to know past lives.
Seventeenth, they will fulfill their wishes.
Eighteenth, their family members will be happy.
Nineteenth, untoward dire occurrences will be eliminated.
Twentieth, they will forever leave the karmic paths.
Twenty-first, they will pass through safely wherever they go.
Twenty-second, their dreams at night will be peaceful and happy.
Twenty-third, their deceased relatives will leave suffering behind.
Twenty-fourth, they will be reborn on the strength of their past merit.
Twenty-fifth, holy ones will praise them.
Twenty-sixth, they will be intelligent and have keen faculties.
Twenty-seventh, their hearts will be replete with kindness and compassion.
Twenty-eighth, they will ultimately become Buddhas.

“Furthermore, Akasagarbha Bodhisattva, if devas, nagas, ghosts, and spirits in the present and future hear Ksitigarbha’s name, make obeisance to Ksitigarbha’s image, or hear of Ksitigarbha’s original vows, deeds, and practices, and they sing his praises, gaze reverently at, and make obeisance to him, they will gain seven kinds of benefits:

First, they will quickly ascend the stages of holiness.
Second, their unwholesome karma will dissolve.
Third, Buddhas will protect and be near them.
Fourth, they will not retreat from bodhi.
Fifth, their inherent powers will increase.
Sixth, they will know past lives.
Seventh, they will ultimately become Buddhas.”

At that time, all the inexpressibly-inexpressible
[number of] Buddhas, Tathagatas, who had come from
the ten directions as well as great Bodhisattvas, devas,
nagas, and others of the eight kinds of beings, on having
heard Sakyamuni Buddha praise and extol Ksitigarbha
Bodhisattva’s power of great awesome spiritual pene-
tration as being inconceivable, exclaimed that there had
never been anything like this.

At that time, measureless incense, flowers, heav-
enly garments, and pearl necklaces rained down in the
Trayastrimsa Heaven as offerings to Sakyamuni Buddha
and Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva. Afterward, the entire as-
sembly again reverently gazed, made obeisance, joined
their palms, and withdrew.
Thus ends the last fascicle of the Original Vows of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva Sutra.

[The following is the Seven Buddhas’ Negative Karma Purification Mantra, preserved in Sanskrit through Chinese transliteration. Traditionally, mantras are not translated. The mantra is recited at the end of a sutra chanting section, followed by the triple refuge and dedication of merit, which begin on p. 373.]
Praise

Ksitigarbha’s original vows,
Examining the causes and effects:
Being hunchbacked, crippled, and mute are results from past lives.
In this life, recite the Mahayana sutras.
Merit and benefits are endless;
Assuring rebirth in the jeweled lotus.

Homage to Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva-Mahasattva.
Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva is wonderful, beyond compare—

Manifesting his golden countenance everywhere.

Beings of the three woeful states and the six realms of existence hear his wonderful Dharma;

Beings of the four kinds of birth and the ten Dharma Realms all receive his benevolent kindness.

His brilliant pearl illuminates the way to the heavens;

His golden staff jolts open the gates of hell.

Relatives of many kalpas all receive his guidance.

By the nine grades of lotus pedestals, we bow to the kind, honored one.
Homage to the great kind and compassionate Ksitigarbha Bodhisatta of the world of darkness in Mount Jiuhua.

Homage to Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva.
TRIPLE REFUGE

I take refuge in the Buddha, wishing that all sentient beings understand the Dharma and make the supreme vow.

I take refuge in the Dharma, wishing that all sentient beings study the sutras diligently and obtain prajna-wisdom.

I take refuge in the Sangha, wishing that all sentient beings lead the masses in harmony without obstruction.
Dedication of Merit

May kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity pervade all Dharma Realms;

May all sentient beings benefit from our blessings and friendship;

May our ethical practice of Chan and Pure Land help us to realize equality and patience;

May we undertake the great vows with humility and gratitude.
Chapter One Notes

1 Sakyamuni Buddha, the historical Buddha, was born in the Ksatriya caste of the Gotama clan as Prince Siddhartha. His father was King Suddhodana and his mother was Queen Maya. She passed away seven days after giving birth and was reborn in the Trayastrimsa Heaven. This sutra takes place while the Buddha has come to Trayastrimsa Heaven to explain the teaching for his mother.

2 The mother was reborn in the Incessant Hell.

3 For up to forty-nine days, a departed being may be in the “intermediate state of existence” before rebirth in one of the six realms of existence. See Chapter Seven and the glossary for a more detailed description of the intermediate state of existence.

Chapter Three Notes

4 According to Buddhist cosmology, every world system undergoes the phases of formation, duration, destruction, and nothingness. The time duration of these four phases, also known as the “four intermediate kalpas,” is a great kalpa. See also glossary entries for kalpa and three thousandfold world system.

Chapter Four Notes

5 These are the epithets of a Buddha.

6 According to the commentaries, “in sequence” is interpreted as not to skip over anyone, meaning that the arhat would teach and transform whomever he encountered.

7 Skt: Akasayamati, which may also be translated as “Inexhaustible Wisdom.”

8 A more literal translation is “...death by calamitous destruction by [the forces of] the sky and the earth.”

9 “Holy life” is a translation of the Chinese term fan hang (梵行), which is a Chinese translation of the Sanskrit term brhamacarya, meaning a pure life, and in particular, the practice of celibacy.

10 Commentaries vary in their interpretation of this passage. One interpretation is that “a hundred tongues” simply refers to trouble speaking. Another interprets “a hundred tongues” as a physical malady in which the tongue is covered in many cankers or small tongue-like growths, also inhibiting speech.

Chapter Six Notes

11 “The time of a meal” is an ancient Indian unit of time. It is longer than a muhurta in duration but shorter than a “time-period.” See the glossary entry units of time.

12 The weights of his various deeds and the overall effects are still undetermined; therefore his future course of existence is also undetermined.
Chapter Seven Notes

13 A departed being may undergo the “intermediate state of existence” for up to seven seven-day periods prior to undergoing the next rebirth. Good deeds performed for the benefit of the departed one during these forty-nine days can have impact on where he or she would be eventually reborn. These good deeds are called “noble causes” because they contribute to the favorable conditions for learning the Dharma, cultivating accordingly, and eventually attaining the unexcelled perfect awakening.

14 Commentaries vary on the meaning of the term “elements of holiness.” Some define it as aspects of the Dharma, such as the seven factors of awakening and the Noble Eightfold Path. Others define it as the wholesome results of cultivating the Dharma. Therefore, this sentence may be interpreted as the departed one had learned aspects of the Dharma and had cultivated accordingly during his or her lifetime and is to gain wholesome results.

15 The instructions highlight how care and respect should be observed in making a food offering. By not discarding potentially usable foodstuff during the preparation, we cherish all the resources and put them to the best uses without littering and polluting our environment. By offering the food to the Buddha and sangha first we show our sincerity and reverence.

Chapter Eight Notes

16 In the Chinese text, the names of the last six ghost kings are transliterations of another language, possibly Sanskrit. Commentaries vary on who these six kings are. Some suggest that “Qi Lishi” may be a being with great strength, "Qi Licha," a fire spirit, and “A Nuozha,” a Dharma protector.

17 “Short time” is a translation of the Chinese term xuyu (須臾), which is a Chinese transliteration of the Sanskrit term muhurta, an ancient Indian unit of time. According to the Abhidharmakosa-bhasyam, there are thirty muhurtas in a day and night. See also the glossary entry units of time.

Chapter Nine Notes

18 Skt: Padmottara.
19 Skt: Ratnasikhin.
20 Skt: Ratnaketu.

Chapter Eleven Notes

21 Skt: Dridha-prthivi-devata.

Chapter Twelve Notes

22 The term “urna light,” also translated as “hair-curl sign light,” usually implies light emitted from urna (Skt.), the curl of soft hair between the Buddha’s eyebrows, one of the thirty-two signs of excellence. However, “the crown of his head,” according to the commentaries, refers to the protuberance on the Buddha’s head (Skt. usnīsa), also one of the thirty-two signs.
The commentaries explain that the Buddha emitted rays of light from the protuberance on his head to show the utmost importance of the teaching about Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva, and that “urna” describes the quality of the light emitted, which is pure and brilliant, like the radiance from urna, the soft hair curl between the Buddha’s eyebrows.

23 The Taisho version differs from the common version in this last sentence: “For those who had been reborn as humans or devas and were experiencing excellent, wonderful happiness, through these virtues, they will increase their causes for holiness and experience measureless happiness.”

24 The pouring of water on the crown of one’s head is an Indian custom of inauguration and consecration. In ancient India, water from the four seas and from the rivers in a new king’s domain is poured on to his head as an act of coronation. Here a person will gain wisdom after Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva pours water on the crown of his or her head.

GLOSSARY

affliction (Skt. klesa) 煩惱. Unwholesome mental quality that defiles and afflicts the mind. Fundamentally there are three afflictions: greed, anger, and ignorance.

Age of Declining Dharma 末法. See three ages of the Dharma.

Age of Semblance Dharma 像法. See three ages of the Dharma.

Ajita (Skt.) 阿逸多. Literally, “invincible.” Another name of Maitreya Bodhisattva. See also Maitreya Bodhisattva.

Akasagarbha Bodhisattva (Skt.) 虚空藏菩薩. A great Bodhisattva whose name literally means “repository of space.”

arhat (Skt.) 阿羅漢. Literally, “deserving, worthy.” A “worthy one” who has eradicated all outflows and has extinguished all afflictions and therefore is not destined for further rebirth in the cycle of birth and death.

asamkhya (Skt.) 阿僧祇. Literally, “incalculable.” A very large number unit. See numerical units.

asamkhya kalpa (Skt.) 阿僧祇劫. An “incalculable” (asamkhya) number of kalpas. See asamkhya and kalpa.

asura (Skt.) 阿修羅. One of the “eight classes of beings.” Asuras are beings with great physical prowess and a tendency toward violence, conflict, and dissension. In the texts they are depicted as constantly seeking to gain control and engaging Sakra and the Trayashtimsa devas in battles. Sometimes asuras are considered as a separate realm of existence in samsara. See also eight classes of beings and six realms of existence.
**Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva** (Skt.) 観世音菩薩. A great Bodhisattva whose name literally means “observing the sounds of the world,” usually interpreted to mean he hears the cries of the world and relieves the suffering of beings. He is particularly associated with great compassion.

**Avici** (Skt.) 阿鼻. Literally, “uninterrupted, incessant.” Name of the worst of the eight hot hells. Beings there endure continuous excruciating torments.

**bhiksu** (Skt.) 比丘. A male member of the sangha who has renounced the household life and has received the full ordination; a fully ordained Buddhist monk.

**bhiksuni** (Skt.) 比丘尼. A female member of the sangha who has renounced the household life and has received the full ordination; a fully ordained Buddhist nun.

**bodhi** (Skt.) 菩提. Literally, “awakening.” Enlightenment, perfect wisdom, having understood, the way, the truth. Bodhi denotes the wisdom for the ending of all delusions and afflictions and the realization of nirvana. At times bodhi may be distinguished into “the bodhi of a sravaka,” “the bodhi of a pratyekabuddha,” and “the bodhi of a Buddha.” The bodhi of a Buddha is the unexcelled, ultimate bodhi. Therefore, it is also called *anuttarasamyak-sambodhi*, the unexcelled perfect awakening. In the *Ksitigarbha Sutra*, “bodhi” most likely refers to the bodhi of a Buddha.

**bodhi mind** (Skt. bodhicitta) 菩提心. Literally, “the awakening mind,” “the mind of enlightenment.” The altruistic aspiration to attain the unexcelled perfect awakening, Buddhahood.

**Bodhisattva** (Skt.) 菩薩. From bodhi, “awakening,” and sattva, “being.” A bodhisattva is an “awakening being,” one who has resolved to attain the unexcelled perfect awakening for himself or herself and for all living beings. See also bodhi.

**borderlands** 邊地. Places where there is no Buddhadharma.

**Brahma** (Skt.) 梵王, 梵. Also known as “Great Brahma” (mahabrahma). The god who was worshiped as the supreme deity of early Brahanism. In Buddhism, Brahma is the ruler of the first dhyana heavens in the realm of form. See also heavens and threefold world.

**Brahman** (Skt. brahmana) 婆羅門. A member of the priestly caste, one of the four castes of Hindu society.

**Buddha** (Skt.) 佛. An “awakened one,” one who has attained unexcelled perfect awakening.

**Buddhadharma** (Skt.) 佛法. The truth, reality, and virtue experienced, practiced, and taught by the Buddha. The teachings of the Buddha. See Dharma.

**Buddha eye** 佛眼. The eye of Buddha that sees the reality of everything and regards all beings with loving-kindness.

**Buddha-stupa** 佛塔. A stupa which enshrine relics of a Buddha. See stupa.

**Buddha World** 佛世界. A world system in which a Buddha arises and guides living beings to liberation through his teaching. See also three thousandfold world system.

**burning house** 火宅. An expression denoting the danger of living in the threefold world: living beings throughout the six realms are subject to myriads of suffering without any true security
anywhere; even devas can fall into the torment of the lower realms when their heavenly merit is exhausted. See also three-fold world, six realms, and samsara.

causal state 因地. Generally refers to the period of practice prior to the attainment of Buddhahood when the causes which lead to Buddhahood are planted. More specifically, it can refer to the period of Bodhisattva practice preceding the ten grounds. See also tenth ground of fruition.

cause and effect 因果. The universal law of how all phenomena interrelate and come into being, the law of causality. With regards to sentient beings, what is experienced in the present is an effect of causes planted through present and past actions of body, speech, and mind. Present actions of body, speech, and mind are causes that will lead to effects experienced in the present and in the future. Wholesome actions lead to happiness, while unwholesome actions lead to suffering. See also karma.

cloud of light 光明雲. A term denoting the great, far-reaching light emanated by a Buddha. Here “cloud” describes the attributes of the light: such as very great in quantity, reaching and filling all space, and nourishing and benefiting. Ten specific kinds of such great light are mentioned in Chapter One of the Ksitigarbha Sutra.

cloud thunder 雲雷. A term designating the preaching of the Dharma, which can awaken beings from delusion and relieve them of suffering, just as thunder can awaken and clouds can provide coolness.

compassion (Skt. karuna) 悲. Sympathy toward beings in distress as well as the intention and capacity to relieve them of suffering.

consciousness (Skt. vijnana) 識. Awareness; that which cognizes. Part of the five aggregates (form, feeling, perception, mental formations, and consciousness), the constituents of sentient existence, from which a sense of self is created. Six classes of consciousness are distinguished corresponding to the six senses: eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, nose-consciousness, tongue-consciousness, body-consciousness, and mind-consciousness. Upon death, the consciousness of the departed one, accompanied by ignorance and craving and driven by karma, experiences a new realm of rebirth.

Additionally, the Vijnanavada ("Consciousness-only") School of Buddhism distinguishes consciousness into eight types: in addition to the five types of sense consciousness, the mind-consciousness is further distinguished into the sixth, mano-vijnana, the thinking consciousness which coordinates the perceptions of the sense organs; the seventh, klista-manas, the afflicted mind that perceives the “storehouse-consciousness” but mistakenly apprehends this as a personal self; and the eighth, alaya-vijnana, “storehouse consciousness,” which contains the impressions of past experience and karmic actions. From the storehouse-consciousness the previous seven consciousnesses arise and produce all present and future modes of experience in samsara. Therefore, the Vijnanavada School considers the alaya-vijnana to be the “fundamental consciousness,” the rebirth consciousness.
**dedicate, dedication** (Skt. *parinamaṇa*) 回向. To redirect and give the merit of one’s wholesome deeds. There are several aspects of dedication, including 1) to turn from oneself toward others; 2) to turn from cause toward fruition; and 3) to turn from practices, phenomena, toward the principle, the absolute truth. Please see Chapter Ten of the *Ksitigarbha Sutra* for a description of the outcomes of merit-dedication.

**deva** (Skt.) 天. Literally, “shining one.” An inhabitant of one of the heavens. *See also heavens.*

**Dharma** (Skt.) 法. A term with multiple meanings, including phenomena, things, law, truth, norm, practice; the all-encompassing principles of all manifestations of things and events; the fundamental principle of truth discovered and taught by the Buddha.

**Dharma Prince** 法王子. A term for a Bodhisattva, because he will become a “Dharma King,” a Buddha.

**Dharma Realm** (Skt. *dharma-dhatu*) 法界. A term with several meanings, including 1) the realm of dharmas (phenomena), the infinite realms, or worlds of reality, the cosmos, the infinite universe; 2) the totality of the infinite universe, infinity; 3) the all-embracing cosmic principle, the underlying reality as the ground of all things, both noumenal and phenomenal.

**eight classes of beings** 八部. These are classes of non-human beings generally regarded as the protectors of the Dharma:

1. **deva** (Skt.).
2. **asura** (Skt.).
3. **naga** (Skt.).
4. **yaksa** (Skt.).
5. **gandharva** (Skt.). Gandharvas feed on fragrance and are a type of heavenly musician.
6. **garuda** (Skt.). Garudas are golden-winged eagles that inhabit and protect the heavens.
7. **kimnara** (Skt.) Kimnaras look like humans but have a horn on the head. They are a type of heavenly musician, excelling in singing and dancing.
8. **mahoraga** (Skt.). Mahoragas have a human-like body and a serpent-like head.

*See also deva, asura, naga, and yaksa.*

**elder** 長者. A layman who is just, truthful, honest, senior, wealthy, and influential; an eminent man.

**emanations** 分身. Manifested forms created by the supernatural power described in the texts as “having been one, he becomes many; having been many, he becomes one.” These transformational forms may be manifested in different forms at different places. See also spiritual penetration.

**epithets of a Buddha.** There are often ten in the list:

1. Tathagata (Skt. *tathagata*) 如来.
2. Worthy of Offering (Skt. *arhat*) 应供.
3. Truly All-Knowing (Skt. *samyak-sambuddha*) 正遍知.
4. Perfect in Knowledge and Conduct (Skt. *vidyacarana-sampanna*) 明行足.
5. Well-Gone (Skt. *sugata*) 善逝.
7. Unsurpassed (Skt. *anuttara*) 無上士.
8. Tamer (Skt. *purusa-damya-sarathi*) 調御丈夫.


equanimitiy (Skt. *upeksa*) 棄: Nonattachment, even-mindedness, impartiality.

false views 邪見. Speculative opinions or views contrary to right view. See right view.

correct views, right view,也就指‘正見’(Skt. *sattva*) 正見: Correct views.

correct views, right view, 佛教里的正見, 就是指善見正見 (Skt. *sattva*) 正見: Correct views.

finger-snap 弹指. A unit of time that is equal to sixty-five thought-moments in duration according to the *Abhidharmakosabhasyam*. See also thought-moment and units of time.

five degenerations (Skt.: *panca kasayah*) 五濁: 1. Degeneration of kalpa (Skt. *kalpa-kasaya*). The living beings’ environment worsens due to various calamities. 2. Degeneration of views (Skt. *drsti-kasaya*). Various false views prevail. 3. Degeneration of afflictions (Skt. *klesa-kasaya*). Afflictions, under the broad categories of greed, anger, and ignorance, dominate the minds of living beings. 4. Degeneration of living beings (Skt. *sattva-kasaya*). Human beings mostly commit unwholesome acts. 5. Degeneration of life span (Skt. *ayu-kasaya*). Human lifespan diminishes.

These are called “degenerations” because they make human life difficult. According to the *Karuna Pundarika Sutra*, they begin to manifest when the small kalpa is in the periods of decrease and the human lifespan has diminished to twenty thousand years. As the human lifespan diminishes further, these degenerations increase in severity. The practice of Dharma becomes much more difficult when these conditions are present. See kalpa and affliction.

five great violations that lead to incessant torments 五無間罪. Also known as the five grave offenses. These are patricide, matricide, killing an arhat, drawing a Buddha’s blood with ill intention, and causing a schism in the sangha. These offenses cause the doer to go immediately to Avici Hell after death. See Chapter Three of the *Ksitigarbha Sutra* for the description of the five great violations of offenses leading to incessant torments.

five pungent plants 五辛. Garlic, scallions, leeks, onions, and chives. According to the *Surangama Sutra*, these five plants make one’s breath foul, which drives away the audience as well as the protectors of the Dharma and attracts evil ghosts and spirits. If consumed raw, they cause irritability of temper; if consumed cooked, they increase one’s sexual desire. Therefore, practitioners are advised to avoid consuming them.

five signs of decay 五衰相. These are signs of the imminent death of devas: 1) their clothing becomes dirty; 2) their flower headdresss wilt; 3) they perspire under their armpits; 4) their bodies give off bad odor; and 5) they do not enjoy their seats. The above are also called the five “major” signs in contrast to the five “minor” signs which, according to the *Abhidharmakosabhasyam*, are as follows: 1) their clothing and adornments give off unpleasant sounds; 2) the luminance of their bodies
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3) water drops attach to their bodies while bathing; 4) in spite of their natural mobility, their minds become attached to objects; and 5) their eyes which are normally steady now flit about. See also deva.

dims; five realms of existence 五道. 1) devas; 2) humans; 3) animals; 4) hungry ghosts; 5) hell-beings.

Great Being (Skt. mahasattva) 大士. See Mahasattva.

Great Iron Encircling Mountains 大鐵圍山. According to Buddhist cosmology, the outermost ring of mountains encircling a world. See also three thousandfold world system.

guide across, guide...across to the other shore 度, 度...彼岸. To enable beings to go from this shore of samsara, cross over the currents of afflictions, and reach the other shore of nirvana.

hair curl sign (Skt. urna-laksana) 毫相. The curl of soft hair between a Buddha’s eyebrows; one of the thirty-two signs of a Buddha. See also signs and characteristics of excellence.

Heaven of the Thirty-Three Devas 三十三天. See Trayastrimśa Heaven.

heavens 天. These are listed in ascending order, corresponding to the order of appearance in Chapter One of the Ksitigarbha Sutra.

1. Heavens of the realm of desire—the Heaven of the Four Deva Kings, the Trayastrimśa Heaven, the Suyama Heaven, the Tusita Heaven, the Heaven of Delight in Transformations, the Heaven of Mastery over Others’ Transformations.

2. Heavens of the realm of form.
a. First dhyana heavens—the Heaven of Brahma’s Assembly, the Heaven of Brahma’s Ministers, and the Great Brahma Heaven.

b. Second dhyana heavens—the Heaven of Limited Light, the Heaven of Measureless Light, and the Light-Sound Heaven.

c. Third dhyana heavens—the Heaven of Limited Purity, the Heaven of Measureless Purity, the Heaven of Universal Purity.

d. Fourth dhyana heavens—the Heaven of Birth of Merit, the Heaven of Love of Merit, the Heaven of Abundant Results, the Heaven of No Perception, the Heaven of No Affliction, the Heaven of No Heat [from affliction], the Heaven of Good Sight, the Heaven of Good Manifestation, and the Ultimate Form Heaven.

3. Heavens of the formless realm—the Heaven of the State of Infinity of Space, the Heaven of the State of Infinity of Consciousness, the Heaven of the State of Nothingness (these three heavens not specifically mentioned in the *Ksitigarbha Sutra*), and the Heaven of the State of Neither-Perception-nor-Non-Perception.

See also threefold world.

**householder** 居士. A layperson who practices Buddhism.

**hungry ghosts** (Skt. preta) 餓鬼. One of the three lower realms. These beings find no satisfaction for their desires, especially but not exclusively for their hunger or thirst.

**inexpressible** 不可說. A very large number unit in ancient India. See numerical units.

**inexpressibly-inexpressible**, or **inexpressibly-inexpressibly many** 不可說、不可說. A very large number unit in ancient India. See numerical units.

**intermediate state of existence** (Skt. antarabhava) 中有. The intermediate state between death and rebirth. After death, a sentient being in samsara may undergo the intermediate state before undergoing rebirth in the six realms of existence. According to the *Yogacarabhumi Sastra*, if such a being does not encounter the conditions for rebirth by the end of a seven-day period, the being will experience death and then be spontaneously born, starting the next seven-day period. This pattern will continue for up to forty-nine days as the being awaits the conditions for rebirth. At the end of the forty-nine days such a being will undergo rebirth.

**Jambudvipa** (Skt.) 南閻浮提. The southernmost of the four continents according to Buddhist cosmology; it is usually considered to refer to the world in which we live. See also three thousandfold world system.

**joy** (Skt. mudita) 喜. Gladness for beings who have attained success and happiness.

**kalpa** (Skt.) 劫. A very long period of time. When mentioned without specification, a kalpa often refers to a “great kalpa”: the time for a world system to undergo the phases of formation, duration, destruction, and nothingness—the four “intermediate kalpas.” Each intermediate kalpa further consists of twenty “small kalpas.”

During the intermediate kalpa of duration, the world undergoes periods of increase and decrease. During the period
of increase, human lifespan increases by one year every one hundred years until it reaches 84,000 years, and during the period of decrease, human lifespan decreases one year every one hundred years until it reaches ten years. Toward the end of the period of decrease, the “three small catastrophes” occur: 1) “the sword interval,” the killing of one another, occurs when human lifespan reaches ten years, lasting for seven days; 2) diseases, lasting for seven months and seven days, and 3) famine, lasting for seven years and seven months and seven days according to the Abhidharmakosa-bhasyam. The time of one period of increase and one period of decrease added together corresponds to one small kalpa.

At the end of the intermediate kalpa of duration, the world system undergoes destruction due to one of the “three great catastrophes”: 1) destruction by fire, from hells up to the first dhyana heavens; 2) destruction by water, up to the second dhyana heavens; or 3) destruction by wind, up to the third dhyana heavens. See also heavens and threefold world.

karma (Skt.) 業. Literally, “action.” Actions that spring from volitions and are manifested outwardly through physical action and speech and inwardly through the mind as thoughts, plans, desires, and emotions. Once performed, volitional actions, wholesome and unwholesome, are like seeds, with the potential to ripen and bear fruit in this life, in the next life, or in subsequent future lives. The potential to bear result remains unchanged through time, but it is affected by the presence of other wholesome or unwholesome seeds. See also cause and effect, and karmic path.

karmic path (Skt. karma-marga) 業道. An expression denoting the fact that karma, volitional action, leads one to its ripened effects, just like a road leading to places. Living beings are led by their own wholesome and unwholesome karma to be reborn in the six realms of existence in samsara. Wholesome actions are also called good karmic paths while unwholesome actions, bad karmic paths. The ten wholesome actions, therefore, are also called “the ten good karmic paths.” See also karma, cause and effect, and ten wholesome actions.

kasaya (Skt.) 袴裟. Literally, “dyed.” The garment of a Buddhist monastic.

kindness (Skt. maitri) 慈. Good will and benevolence toward beings as well as the intention and capacity to bring them happiness.

Krakucchanda Buddha (Skt.) 拘留孫佛. The fourth of “the seven past Buddhas” and the first of the thousand Buddhas of the present kalpa to arise in this world. See also Vipasyin Buddha, and present kalpa.

Ksatriya (Skt.) 刹利. A member of the “warrior” or ruling caste, one of the four castes of Hindu society.

Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva (Skt.) 地藏菩萨. A great Bodhisattva whose name literally means “Earth-Repository,” “Earth-Store,” or “Earth-Womb.” He is particularly associated with the great vows to rescue all suffering beings and to guide and enable them to attain Buddhahood before he himself attains Buddhahood.
li 里. A traditional Chinese unit of length, now standardized at ½ kilometer.

**liberation** (Skt. mukti) 解脫. To be free from the bondage of afflictions and released from samsara.

**lion’s roar** 師子吼. A term designating the powerful preaching of the Dharma. The Buddha’s preaching can overcome erroneous views and doctrines and subdue demons, just as a lion’s roar can terrify and subdue all animals.

**lower realms of existence** (Skt. durgati) 惡趣. Usually, there are three: 1) animals; 2) hungry ghosts; 3) hell-beings.

**Mahasattva** (Skt.) 摩訶薩, 大士. Literally, a“great being.” A person of great compassion, noble aspiration, and exceptional courage and determination. An epithet used for great Bodhisattvas.

**Mahayana** (Skt.) 大乘. Literally, “great vehicle.” One of the major schools of Buddhism, with special emphasis on helping multitudes of beings to reach liberation.

**Mahesvara** (Skt.) 摩醯首羅. Literally,“great sovereign.” According to some Mahayana texts and commentaries, he is described as the deva king of a great thousandfold world, who resides in the Ultimate Form Heaven on the apex of the realm of form. See also *heavens*, *threelfold world* and *three thousandfold world system*.

**Maitreya Bodhisattva** (Skt.) 彌勒菩薩. A great Bodhisattva whose name literally means “the Kind One,” or “the Loving One.” He is particularly associated with loving-kindness. He was prophesied by Sakyamuni Buddha to be the next Buddha to arise in the world.

**Manjusri Bodhisattva** (Skt.) 文殊師利菩薩. A great Bodhisattva whose name literally means “Wondrous Virtue,” or “Wondrous Auspiciousness.” He is particularly associated with great wisdom.

**merit** (Skt. punya) 福, 福德. That which results from karmically wholesome actions.

**Mount Sumeru** 須彌山. The “world mountain” in the center of a world according to Buddhist cosmology. See also *three thousandfold world system*.

**naga** (Skt.) 龍. One of the“eight classes of beings.” Nagas are dragons, powerful and mysterious serpent-like beings. See also *eight classes of beings*.

**nayuta** (Skt.) 那由他. A large number unit. See *numerical units*.

**nirvana** (Skt.) 涅槃. Literally, “extinguishing.” The unconditioned; complete extinguishing of the fires of greed, anger, and ignorance; liberation from samsara, the cycle of birth and death, and the suffering therein.

**noble path** 聖道. The path to liberation and ultimately to Buddhahood; the Noble Eightfold Path—right view, right thinking, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration.

**nonarising** 無生. The fact that things and events, in the ultimate sense, neither arise nor cease. As they come into existence and cease due to causes and conditions, things and events do not have a real, unchanging self-entity. One who attains non-arising has completely eliminated all afflictions and is no longer subject to rebirth in samsara.
**no-outflow** (Skt. *anasrava*) 無漏. Being free of outflows; without afflictions; pure. *See outflow and affliction.*

**numerical units.** Terms such as “nayuta,” “asamkhyeya,” “inexpressible,” and “inexpressibly-inexpressible” are large numerical units in ancient India. The unit “nayuta,” the smallest among these four, is the twelfth number unit according to the *Abhidharmakosa-bhasyam*. The unit “asamkhyeya” is the sixtieth (or fifty-second according to other interpretations of the *Abhidharmakosa-bhasyam*) number of successively larger numbers with each one ten times greater than the preceding one. The number “asamkhyeya” is also the smallest of the “ten great numbers” described in the *Buddhavatamsaka-mahavaipulya-sutra*, “Flower Ornament Sutra,” while “inexpressible” is the ninth and “inexpressibly-inexpressible” is the tenth, the largest, of the ten great numbers.

**observance day** 齋日. A day for the “cleansing of the mind through proper technique,” the specific days of a month during which lay Buddhists devote themselves to stricter practices to help regulate the body and mind. During an observance day lay practitioners usually observe the eight precepts: 1) not to kill or harm beings; 2) not to take what has not been given; 3) not to engage in sexual conduct; 4) not to speak falsehood; 5) not to take intoxicants; 6) to abstain from cosmetics, personal adornment, dancing, singing, music, and watching shows; 7) not to use high seats or beds; 8) to abstain from food past noon.

**original vow** (Skt. *purva-pranidhana*) 本願. Resolution made while in the causal state of cultivation by a Bodhisattva to liberate all beings from suffering and to attain unsurpassed bodhi. Original vows are the “causes” leading to the eventual “result” of attaining Buddhahood. Such vows are the fundamental cause for the Bodhisattvas to carry out their Bodhisattva deeds.

**outflow** (Skt. *asrava*) 漏. Also may be referred to as “taint,” “canker,” “effluent,” “fermentation,” etc. That which flows out of the mind and creates the torrents of samsara, usually classified into three or four kinds: the outflow of sense desires, the outflow of (wrong) views, the outflow of becoming, and the outflow of ignorance. Outflows are afflictions, unwholesome mental qualities. *See also affliction.*

**parinirvana** (Skt.) 喪度, (般)涅槃. Literally, “complete nirvana.” Perfect extinguishing. This word is frequently used to signify the final passing away of a Buddha or of an arhat. *See also nirvana.*

**perfection** (Skt. *paramita*) 波羅蜜. Literally, “reaching the other shore.” In the *Ksitigarbha Sutra*, the six perfections are given as:

1. perfection of giving (Skt. *dana-paramita*)
2. perfection of morality (Skt. *sila-paramita*)
3. perfection of patience (Skt. *ksanti-paramita*)
4. perfection of diligence (Skt. *virya-paramita*)
5. perfection of meditation (Skt. *dhyana-paramita*)
6. perfection of prajna (Skt. *prajna-paramita*)

**place the hand on the crown of the head** 摩頂. The Buddha may place his hand on the crown of a disciple’s head when affirming
his or her cultivation and realization, imparting teachings, giving prediction, or entrusting him or her with responsibility.

prajña (Skt.) 般若. Literally, “to know,” “to discern,” “to understand,” and “wisdom.” The penetrative wisdom into the reality of all things, the ultimate truth.

pratyekabuddha (Skt.) 佛. Literally, an “independently awakened one.” One who is awakened to dependent origination and becomes an arhat without having heard the Buddha’s teaching from others.

present kalpa (Skt. bhadra kalpa) 贊劫. Literally, the “Fortunate Kalpa, Auspicious Kalpa, Excellent Kalpa.” According to the Mahayana texts, this is the present kalpa during which one thousand Buddhas will arise in this world and guide living beings to liberation through their teachings. Krakucchanda Buddha was the first of the thousand Buddhas to arise in this world, Kanakamuni Buddha was the second, Kasyapa Buddha was the third, Sakyamuni Buddha is the fourth, and the future Maitreya Buddha will be the fifth to arise in this world. The texts differ in exactly how the time span of the present kalpa compares to a great kalpa. See also kalpa.

refuge, take refuge 归依. To turn to and rely on the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha.

right view (Skt. samyag-drsti) 正見. Literally, “right seeing.” Seeing things as they really are. Mundane right view means to know that there is merit in generosity, that there are results borne out of one’s good and bad actions, that there are past, present, and future lives, that there are noble practitioners who cultivate the virtuous ways and can see such matters directly. Supramundane right view is to know and discern directly the Four Noble Truths: suffering, the origin of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path leading to the cessation of suffering.

ripened effect (Skt. vipaka) 報, 果報. Literally, “ripen, fruit.” The result that arises from the ripening of action. See also cause and effect and karma.

roots of goodness (Skt. kusala-mula) 善根. Namely non-greed, non-anger, and non-ignorance. Referred to as “roots” because from them all virtues, all wholesome actions, arise.

saha world (Skt. saha-lokadhatu) 娑婆世界. Literally, “the world of endurance.” The universe of suffering; the great thousand-fold world in which we live. According to the texts, beings in this world endure the sufferings from the afflictions of greed, anger, and ignorance. Sakyamuni Buddha has arisen in this world to teach and guide beings to liberation. See also three thousandfold world system.

Sakra (Skt.) 帝释. The ruler of the Trayastrimsa Heaven and also a follower of the Buddha. See also Trayastrimsa Heaven.

Sakyamuni Buddha (Skt.) 釋迦牟尼佛. The historic Buddha who lived in India more than two thousand years ago, the founder of Buddhism. His name literally means “the sage of the Sakya clan.”

samadhi (Skt.) 三昧. Meditative concentration, collectedness of the mind on a single object.

Samantabhadra Bodhisattva (Skt.) 普賢菩薩. A great Bodhisattva whose name literally means “Universally Good,”
“All-Pervadingly Excellent,” or “Wholly Auspicious.” He is particularly associated with the cultivation of great practices and vows.

samsara (Skt.) 生死, 轮迴. Literally, “wandering on.” The cycle of existence and continuity; repeated birth and death.

sangha (Skt.) 僧. Literally, “a community.” The Buddhist monastic community.

seven jewels 七寶. Seven precious things, of which the list varies from text to text. Some list them as gold, silver, lapis lazuli, crystal, mother of pearl, red pearls, and carnelian.

signs and characteristics of excellence (Skt. laksana-vyanjana) 相好. The thirty-two signs and eighty characteristics of excellence on the physical body of a Buddha. The thirty-two signs are major signs, which are more readily seen by people; these signs are also present on a wheel-turning king. The eighty characteristics are subtle and much harder to see; they are present only on a Buddha or a great Bodhisattva. These signs and characteristics of excellence are the results of the cultivation of wholesome actions of body, speech, and mind.

six realms of existence 六道. 1) devas; 2) humans; 3) asuras; 4) animals; 5) hungry ghosts; 6) hell-beings.

skillful means (Skt. upaya) 方便. Teaching devices and methods suited to the conditions and capacities of living beings to help them practice cultivation and attain liberation.

spiritual penetration (Skt. abhijna) 神通. Also referred to as supernatural knowledges, direct knowledges, etc.; a term denoting the supernatural abilities developed through meditative concentration (categories 1-5) and attained through supramundane penetrative insight (category 6):

1. Teleportation: encompassing supernatural power of various kinds, such as to appear and vanish anywhere at will, to become many, to transform into various forms, etc.
2. Divine ear: the ability to hear human and divine sounds clearly both near and far.
3. Knowledge of the minds of others: the ability to read the minds of others.
5. Divine eye: the ability to see things clearly even in darkness, at great distance, and through obstacles; knowledge of the passing away and reappearance of beings, of how they fare on according to their karma.
6. Knowledge of the extinction of all outflows: by the extinction of all outflows, in this very life one enters and dwells in the “no-outflow” liberation of mind, liberation by wisdom, realizing it for oneself with direct knowledge.

See also no-outflow and outflow.

sravaka (Skt.) 聲聞. Literally, “a hearer, a disciple.” A disciple of the Buddha, especially a “noble disciple,” one who listens to the teachings of the Buddha and attains awakening.

stupa (Skt.) 塔. Originally a tumulus burial mound enshrinking the relics of a holy person such as a Buddha or objects associated with his life. Stupas were later constructed as tall spired monuments as seen in countries like Thailand, Myanmar, and
Sri Lanka. Stupas also evolved into pagodas in countries like China, Japan, and Korea.

**Supernatural power** (Skt. *abhiṣaṇa* 神通). See *spiritual penetration*.

**Sutra** (Skt. 经). A Buddhist scripture, usually a discourse of the Buddha or of his contemporary disciples.

**Tathagata** (Skt. 如来). Literally, “thus come” (Skt. *tathā gata*) and “thus gone” (Skt. *tathā gata*). He who has thus come and thus gone; he who has attained full realization of suchness (Skt. ta-thatha), reality that is beyond all words and description. One of the epithets of a Buddha. See also *epithets of a Buddha*.

**Ten directions** 十方. The eight points of the compass and the nadir and zenith. An expression denoting all directions of space.

**Tenth Ground of Fruition** 十地果位. Also known as “the ground of Dharma-Cloud,” the highest of the ten grounds of Bodhisattva development. After having resolved to attain the unexcelled perfect awakening, a Bodhisattva cultivates and progresses through the different stages of the Bodhisattva path. The list of the stages varies among the different texts. The one most commonly known lists the following: the ten levels of faith, the ten abodes, the ten practices, the ten levels of transference and dedication, and the ten grounds. When a Bodhisattva reaches the tenth ground of fruition, he is very close to attaining Buddhahood.

**Ten wholesome actions** 十善. The ten courses of action in accordance with the Dharma, righteous conduct:

1. To abstain from killing and to act gently and compassionately toward all beings.
2. To abstain from taking what is not given, to take only when given, and to delight in giving.
3. To abstain from sexual misconduct.
4. To abstain from false speech and to speak the truth.
5. To abstain from abusive speech and to speak gently.
6. To abstain from divisive talebearing and to speak words that conduce to harmony.
7. To abstain from idle chatter and to speak what is meaningful on the proper occasion.
8. Not to be covetous.
9. To be free from ill will.
10. To have right, undistorted view.

**Thought-moment** (Skt. *ksana* 念). A small unit of time. See *units of time*.

**Threefold world** 三界. Also known as “the three realms of sentient existence,” the universe of sentient beings in samsara. It consists of three realms listed in ascending order as follows:

1. The desire realm (Skt. *kama-dhatu*). So referred to because sensual desire predominates in this realm. This realm contains the hells, the realm of hungry ghosts, the animal world, the human world, and the six heavens of the desire realm.
2. The realm of form (Skt. rupa-dhatu). In this realm, the gross material form is absent and only the subtler types of form remain. The heavens contained in this realm correspond to the four dhyana states.

3. The formless realm (Skt. arupa-dhatu). This is not a physical place, and the beings in this realm consist solely of the mind without a physical base. The heavens in this realm correspond to the four formless meditative states.

See also heavens.

three ages of the Dharma 三時. After the Buddha’s passing, his teachings undergo three phases of development:

1. The Age of the True Dharma 正法. During this period, the Buddha’s teachings are followed and practiced accordingly. Full results of the teachings are attained, and many practitioners realize the fruits of cultivation.

2. The Age of Semblance Dharma 像法. During this period, the teachings are increasingly ignored or lost. The practices are partly in accord with the teachings and partly not. Full results of the teachings are infrequently attained, and few practitioners realize the fruits of cultivation.

3. The Age of Declining Dharma 末法. During this period, the teachings become inaccessible and disappear. Doctrinal squabbles are many. The practices become little supported by the teachings. It is very difficult for practitioners to realize the fruits of cultivation. Eventually the practices fade away and teaching lines die out.

three thousandfold world system (Skt. tri-sahasra-maha-sahasra lokadhatu) 三千大千世界. A great universe, a “trichiliocosm.” According to Buddhist cosmology, a world consists of Mount Sumeru in the center, the surrounding seas and mountains, the four continents, Jambudvipa to the south, Purva-videha to the east, Apara-godaniya to the west, and Uttara-kuru to the north, encircled by the Great Iron Encircling Mountains, and the sun, the moon, various astral bodies, and up to the first dhyana heavens. One thousand such worlds and up to the second dhyana heavens make up a “small thousandfold world,” a small universe. One thousand “small thousandfold worlds” and up to the third dhyana heavens make up a “medium thousandfold world,” a medium universe. One thousand “medium thousandfold worlds” and up to the fourth dhyana heavens make up a “great thousandfold world,” or commonly referred to as a “three thousandfold world system,” a great universe. In such a great thousandfold world a Buddha arises and guides living beings to liberation. See also Buddha World.

Trayastrimsa Heaven (Skt. trayastrimsa)忉利天. Literally, “the heaven of the thirty-three.” One of the heavens of the realm of sensual desire. This heaven is located on the top of Mount Sumeru according to Buddhist cosmology. The Buddha expounded the Ksitigarbha Sutra in this heaven. See heavens.

Triple Gem (Skt. triratna) 三寶. Literally, “three precious ones.” The Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha. They constitute the focus of faith in Buddhism and are revered as most precious by Buddhists.
unexcelled perfect awakening (Skt. anuttara-samyak-sambodhi) 阿耨多羅三藐三菩提. The awakening of a Buddha. See bodhi.

units of time. The terms “thought-moment” (Skt. ksana), “fingernail-snap,” “short time” (Skt. muhurta), and “the time of a meal” are ancient Indian units of time. According to the Abhidharmakosa-bhasyam, one day and night equals thirty muhurtas; one muhurta equals thirty lavas; one lava equals sixty tat-ksanas; and one tat-ksana equals one hundred twenty ksanas. The expression “the time of a meal” is described by other texts to be longer than a muhurta in duration but shorter than a “time-period” as in the expression “six time-periods of a day and night.” See also kalpa.

Unsurpassed Way 無上道. The path leading to Buddhahood.

upasaka (Skt.) 優婆塞. A Buddhist layman who takes refuge in the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha and upholds the five precepts: 1) not to kill or harm beings; 2) not to take what has not been given; 3) not to engage in sexual misconduct; 4) not to speak falsehood; 5) not to take intoxicants.

upasika (Skt.) 優婆夷. A Buddhist laywoman who takes refuge in the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha and upholds the five precepts.

Vipasyin Buddha (Skt.) 毘婆尸佛. A Buddha of antiquity who arose in the world ninety-one kalpas ago. His name literally means “Clear-Seeing.” He was the first of the seven past Buddhas.” The others were: Sikhi Buddha, Visvabhu Buddha, Krakucchanda Buddha, Kanakamuni Buddha, Kasyapa Buddha, and Sakymuni Buddha. See also present kalpa.

virtuous friend (Skt. kalyana-mitra) 善知識. Literally, “noble friend.” A good spiritual friend who sets a good example and gives wholesome advice, guidance, and encouragement.

wheel-turning king (Skt. cakravartin) 轉輪王. A monarch whose rule is unbound, as in “the wheels of his chariot roll everywhere without hindrance.” A world ruler.

World-Honored One (Skt. bhagavan) 世尊. One of the ten epithets of a Buddha. See also epithets of a Buddha.

yaksa (Skt.) 夜叉. One of the “eight classes of beings.” Yaksas are fierce beings. While many are malevolent and hostile toward humans, some are benign and act as the protectors of the Dharma. See also eight classes of beings.

Yama (Skt.) 閻羅. Lord of the hells. He is often depicted as presiding over the process of assessing and determining the karmic results of sentient beings after their death.

yojana (Skt.) 羽旬. A unit of length described as the distance of a royal day’s march for the army in ancient India, equivalent to about 20, 15, or 8 kilometers based on different calculations.