



25. The Universal Gateway of the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World

AT THAT TIME the Bodhisattva Inexhaustible Mind got up from his seat, bared his right shoulder, put his palms together facing the Buddha, and said: "World-Honored One, for what reason does the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World have the name Regarder of the Cries of the World?"

The Buddha answered Inexhaustible Mind Bodhisattva: "Good son! If there were countless hundreds of thousands of billions of living beings experiencing suffering and agony who heard of this Regarder of the Cries of the World Bodhisattva, and wholeheartedly called his name, Regarder of the Cries of the World Bodhisattva would immediately hear their cries, and all of them would be freed.

"If anyone who embraces the name of Regarder of the Cries of the World Bodhisattva falls into a great fire, the fire will not burn that person, due to the divine authority and power of that bodhisattva. If anyone, carried away by a flood, calls his name, that person will immediately reach some shallows. If there are hundreds of thousands of billions of beings who, in search of gold, silver, lapis lazuli, seashell, agate, coral, amber, pearls, and other treasures, go out to sea and have their ships blown off course by a fierce wind to the land of the ogre demons, and if among them there is even a single person who calls the name of Regarder of the Cries of the World Bodhisattva, all those people will be saved from difficulties caused by the ogres. This is why the bodhisattva is named Regarder of the Cries of the World.

"Or if someone faced with immediate attack calls the name of Regarder of the Cries of the World Bodhisattva, the swords and clubs of the attackers will instantly break into pieces and they will be freed from the danger.

"Even if the three-thousand great thousandfold world were full of satyrs and ogres seeking to torment people, these evil spirits, hearing the people call the name of Regarder of the Cries of the World Bodhisattva, with their wicked eyes they would not even be able to see them, much less hurt them.

"If, moreover, someone, guilty or not guilty, is captured and put in stocks or manacles and chains, and they call the name of Regarder of the Cries of the World Bodhisattva, their bonds will be broken and they will be freed.

"Suppose a three-thousand great thousandfold world were full of vengeful thieves, and a caravan leader was guiding a group of merchants carrying costly treasures over a dangerous road. If just one among the merchants speaks out, saying: 'Good sons, do not be afraid. Wholeheartedly call the name of Regarder of the Cries of the World Bodhisattva, for this bodhisattva is able to give courage to all the living. If you invoke this bodhisattva's name, you will be freed from these vengeful thieves.' Hearing this, if all the traders together with one voice cry out, 'Praise to Regarder of the Cries of the World Bodhisattva,' by calling that name they will be freed from the danger.

"Inexhaustible Mind, such are the awesome divine powers of the great one, Regarder of the Cries of the World Bodhisattva.

"If any living beings are afflicted with a great deal of lust, let them keep in mind and revere Regarder of the Cries of the World Bodhisattva and they will be freed from their desire. If they have a great deal of anger and rage, let them keep in mind and revere Regarder of the Cries of the World Bodhisattva and they will be freed from their anger. If they are deluded by great folly, let them keep in mind and revere Regarder of the Cries of the World Bodhisattva and they will be freed from their stupidity.

"Inexhaustible Mind, Regarder of the Cries of the World Bodhisattva has such great divine powers and can abundantly benefit the living. Therefore all the living should constantly keep this bodhisattva in mind.

"Even if a woman wants to have a son and worships and makes offerings to Regarder of the Cries of the World Bodhisattva, she will bear a

son blessed with merit, virtue, and wisdom. If she wants a daughter, she will bear one marked with beauty, one who had long before planted roots of virtue and will come to be cherished and respected by all.

"Inexhaustible Mind, such is the power of Regarder of the Cries of the World Bodhisattva. If anyone reveres and worships this bodhisattva, their happiness will not be neglected. Therefore, let all the living cherish the name of Regarder of the Cries of the World Bodhisattva.

"Inexhaustible Mind, suppose someone receives and embraces the names of as many bodhisattvas as there are sands in over six billion Ganges, and throughout their lives makes offerings to them of food, drink, clothing, bedding, and medicines. What do you think? Would such a good son or good daughter have abundant blessings or not?"

Inexhaustible Mind replied: "Extremely abundant, World-Honored One."

The Buddha said: "Suppose someone receives and embraces the name of Regarder of the Cries of the World Bodhisattva and just once worships and makes offerings to him. The blessings of these two people will be exactly the same, without any difference. They could never be exhausted in hundreds of thousands of billions of eons. Inexhaustible Mind, such is the immeasurable, unlimited merit and virtue one will obtain who receives and embraces the name of Regarder of the Cries of the World Bodhisattva."

Inexhaustible Mind Bodhisattva said to the Buddha: "World-Honored One, why does Regarder of the Cries of the World Bodhisattva travel around in this world? How does he teach the Dharma for the sake of the living? What sort of power of skillful means does he have?"

The Buddha replied to Inexhaustible Mind Bodhisattva: "Good son, if living beings in any land need someone in the body of a buddha in order to be saved, Regarder of the Cries of the World Bodhisattva appears as a buddha and teaches the Dharma for them.

"For those who need someone in the body of a pratyekabuddha in order to be saved, he appears as a pratyekabuddha and teaches the Dharma for them.

"For those who need someone in the body of a shravaka in order to be saved, he appears as a shravaka and teaches the Dharma for them.

"For those who need someone in the body of a Brahma king in order to be saved, he appears as a Brahma king and teaches the Dharma for them.

"For those who need someone in the body of Indra in order to be saved, he appears as Indra and teaches the Dharma for them.

"For those who need someone in the body of Ishvara in order to be saved, he appears as Ishvara and teaches the Dharma for them.

"For those who need someone in the body of Maha-Ishvara in order to be saved, he appears as Maha-Ishvara and teaches the Dharma for them.

"For those who need someone in the body of a great general of heaven in order to be saved, he appears as a great general of heaven and teaches the Dharma for them.

"For those who need someone in the body of Vaishravana in order to be saved, he appears as Vaishravana and teaches the Dharma for them.

"For those who need someone in the body of a lesser king in order to be saved, he appears as a lesser king and teaches the Dharma for them.

"For those who need someone in the body of an elder in order to be saved, he appears as an elder and teaches the Dharma for them.

"For those who need someone in the body of an ordinary citizen in order to be saved, he appears as an ordinary citizen and teaches the Dharma for them.

"For those who need someone in the body of a high official in order to be saved, he appears as a high official and teaches the Dharma for them.

"For those who need someone in the body of a brahman in order to be saved, he appears as a brahman and teaches the Dharma for them.

"For those who need someone in the body of a monk, nun, layman, or laywoman in order to be saved, he appears as a monk, nun, layman, or laywoman and teaches the Dharma for them.

"For those who need someone in the body of the wife of an elder, ordinary citizen, high official, or brahman in order to be saved, he appears as a wife and teaches the Dharma for them.

"For those who need someone in the body of a boy or girl in order to be saved, he appears as a boy or girl and teaches the Dharma for them.

"For those who need someone in the body of a heavenly being, dragon, satyr, centaur, asura, griffin, chimera, python, human, or non-human in order to be saved, he appears in such a body and teaches the Dharma for them.

"For those who need someone such as the god Diamond-Holder in order to be saved, he appears as the god Diamond-Holder and teaches the Dharma for them.

"Inexhaustible Mind, such are the blessings attained by this Regarder of the Cries of the World Bodhisattva and the various forms in which he travels around in many lands to save the living. This is why all of you should wholeheartedly make offerings to Regarder of the Cries of the World Bodhisattva. This Regarder of the Cries of the World Bodhisattva, this great one, is able to bestow freedom from fear on those who are faced with a frightening, urgent, or difficult situation. This is why in this world everyone gives him the name Bestower of Freedom from Fear."

Inexhaustible Mind Bodhisattva said to the Buddha: "World-Honored One, now I should make an offering to Regarder of the Cries of the World Bodhisattva." Then he took from his neck a necklace of many valuable gems worth a hundred thousand pieces of gold and presented it to him, saying: "Benevolent One, accept this necklace of valuable gems as a Dharma gift." But Regarder of the Cries of the World Bodhisattva would not accept it then. Again Inexhaustible Mind Bodhisattva said to Regarder of the Cries of the World Bodhisattva: "Benevolent One, out of sympathy for us, accept this necklace."

Then the Buddha said to Regarder of the Cries of the World Bodhisattva: "Out of sympathy for this Inexhaustible Mind Bodhisattva, for the four groups, and for the gods, dragons, satyrs, centaurs, asuras, griffins, chimeras, pythons, humans, nonhumans, and others, you should accept this necklace."

Then Regarder of the Cries of the World Bodhisattva, out of sympathy for the four groups, and for the gods, dragons, humans, nonhumans, and others, accepted the necklace, and dividing it into two parts, offered one part to Shakyamuni Buddha and the other to the stupa of Abundant Treasures Buddha.

"Inexhaustible Mind, freely using such sovereign divine powers, Regarder of the Cries of the World Bodhisattva travels about in this world."

Then Inexhaustible Mind Bodhisattva asked his question in verse:

World-Honored One of wonderful features,
Let me now ask you again,
Why is this buddha-son named
Regarder of the Cries of the World?

The Honored One with wonderful features answered Inexhaustible Mind in verse:

Listen to the actions of the Cry Regarder.
How well he responds in every region.
His great vow is as deep as the sea,
Unfathomable even after eons.

Serving many hundreds
Of billions of buddhas,
He has made a great pure vow.
Let me tell you briefly about it.

Those who listen to his name,
See his body, and keep him in mind,
Not wasting time,
Will be able to put an end to all their suffering.

If someone intending to harm you
Throws you into a burning pit,
Keep in mind the Cry Regarder's powers
And the pit of fire will become a pond!

Or if you are drifting around in a great ocean,
Threatened by dragons, fish, and various demons,
Keep in mind the Cry Regarder's powers
And you will not drown in the waves!

If you are on the peak of Sumeru
And someone pushes you off,
Keep in mind the Cry Regarder's powers
And you will stay in the sky like the sun!

Or if you are pursued by bad people
And thrown down from Diamond Mountain,
Keep in mind the Cry Regarder's powers
And not a hair will be injured!

If you are surrounded by robbers,
Each with a knife ready to use on you,
Keep in mind the Cry Regarder's powers
And their hearts will become compassionate!

Or if you get into trouble with the king
And are threatened with execution,
Keep in mind the Cry Regarder's powers
And the executioner's sword will break into pieces!

If you are imprisoned, shackled, and chained,
Your arms and legs in stocks,
Keep in mind the Cry Regarder's powers
And you will be freed from your bonds!

Or if someone tries to hurt you
With curses or poisons,
Keep in mind the Cry Regarder's powers
And the harm will revert to its originator.

Or if you meet evil ogres,
Poisonous dragons or various spirits,
Keep in mind the Cry Regarder's powers
And none of them will dare to harm you.

If you are surrounded by evil beasts,
With sharp tusks and frightening claws,
Keep in mind the Cry Regarder's powers
And they will flee in every direction.

If there are lizards, snakes, vipers, or scorpions
With poisonous breath that burns like fire,
Keep in mind the Cry Regarder's powers
And at the sound of your voice they will flee.

Or if clouds bring thunder and lightning flashes,
Hail pelts you, or rain pours down,

Keep in mind the Cry Regarder's powers
And all will instantly disappear.

If living beings suffer adversity
And are oppressed by countless pains,
The power of the wonderful wisdom of the Cry Regarder
Will liberate them from the world's suffering.

Perfect in divine powers,
Practicing wisdom of skillful means everywhere,
Throughout the universe there is no place
Where he does not appear.

All evil circumstances
In the realms of purgatories, hungry spirits, and animals,
In suffering birth, old age, sickness, and death—
Gradually he brings all of them to an end.

Hearing this from the Buddha, Inexhaustible Mind Bodhisattva joyfully said to the Buddha in verse:¹²

True regarder, pure regarder,
Vast wisdom regarder,
Compassionate and kind regarder—
Always called upon, always looked up to!

His pure and spotless radiance
Is a wisdom-sun, destroying all kinds of darkness.
He subdues the storms and fires of disaster.
He illumines the whole world!

Precepts from his compassionate body shake like thunder.
His compassion is like a great cloud
Pouring Dharma rain like nectar,
Quenching the flames of affliction!

If you are brought before a judge in a dispute,
Or terrified in the midst of a battle,
Keep in mind the Cry Regarder's powers
And all vengeance will be driven away.

Wonderful voice, regarder of the cries of the world,
Brahma-voice, voice of the rolling tide,
World-surpassing voice—
He should always be kept in mind.

Never have a moment of doubt about him,
The pure and holy Regarder of the Cries of the World.
By those in suffering and agony, or facing death,
He can be relied on for protection.

Equipped with all blessings,
Viewing all with compassionate eyes,
His ocean of accumulated blessings is immeasurable.
Heads should be bowed to him.

Then the Bodhisattva Earth Holder rose from his seat, went before the Buddha, and said to him: "World-Honored One, if any living being hears this Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World chapter, hears of the freedom of his actions and the divine power of the revelation of the universal gateway, it should be known that this person's blessings are not few."

While the Buddha taught this chapter on the universal gateway, all eighty-four thousand living beings in the assembly became determined to reach the incomparable state of supreme awakening.