

III. Explication

1) Demonstrating the right meaning: The gateway of the originating and ceasing mind

The characteristics of originating and ceasing:

How dharma of defilement and dharma of purity originate and cease

The characteristics of originating and ceasing can be differentiated into two categories: First: are the coarse characteristics because they correspond with the mind. Second: are the refined characteristics because they do not correspond with the mind.

Further, the coarsest among the coarse characteristics constitutes the realm of the uninitiated. The more refined among the coarse and the coarser among the refined constitute the realm of the bodhisattvas. The most refined among the refined is the realm of the Buddha.

These two categories of originating and ceasing both arise from perfuming by ignorance that is, following cause and circumstance. Cause refers

to the non-enlightened perspective [of the originating and ceasing mind]; and circumstance refers to the delusory creation of phenomena. If cause ceases, then circumstance ceases. It follows that when cause ceases, non-corresponding [defiled] states of mind cease. When circumstance ceases, corresponding [defiled] states of mind cease.

This paragraph explains the characteristics of the originating and ceasing state of mind [from cause and circumstance] as stated in the Section II Theme. It means that the mind is fundamentally without characteristics. Its characteristics appear because of the originating and ceasing of the coarse and refined defilements due to ignorance and delusion. These characteristics of originating and ceasing are just the six defiled states of mind explained in the previous text [v.3, p.60]. Here they are differentiated into two categories: coarse and refined. [Although in the *Discourse* the notions of “refined” and “coarse” characteristics are first introduced at this point, Master Chi Hoi has referred to these definitions of “three refined” and “six coarse” in explanation of previous text.]

First are the coarse characteristics because they correspond with the mind. This pertains to the first

three [v.3, p.60] defilements which correspond with the mind. This refers to when the mind kings and mental objects follow each other, and when the mind and phenomenon encounter and interact. Consequently, the characteristic [“characteristic” here is used to distinguish between pure or defiled phenomenon, not between coarse or refined defiled mental states] of the encountered phenomenon and the interpretation of this characteristic will be the same [v.3, p.71-3]. In this respect, the characteristic [of the originating and ceasing of the defiled states of mind] is coarse and apparent. Thus, in the sutras, this is called the “characteristic-originating-ceasing.”

Second are the refined characteristics because they do not correspond with the mind. This pertains to the latter three defilements [v.3, p.60] which do not correspond with the mind. This refers to when there is no differentiation between the mind and the phenomenon, namely, when there is neither subjective perceiving function within, nor phenomenon without as the object of perception. Consequently, there is no correspondence [v.3, p.73-5]. In this respect, the characteristic [of the originating and ceasing of the defiled states of mind] is subtle, refined, and flowing continuously without break. Thus, in the sutras, this is called the “continuous-flow-originating-ceasing.”

Further, the coarsest among the coarse characteristics constitutes the realm of the uninitiated. The more refined among the coarse and the coarser among the refined constitute the realm of the bodhisattvas. The most refined among the refined is the realm of the Buddha. This division into three levels [of practice] is to illustrate the extent of coarseness or refinement of the various delusions for the practitioner:

1. The corresponding Defilement of Grasping: this consists of both defilements of Grasping and of Assigning Names and Words to Grasping. This is the coarsest of the coarse characteristics [of originating and ceasing], belonging to the mental state of grasping the self. This is the realm that can be realized and eradicated by the practitioners who newly join the Buddhist rank from the uninitiated, and the bodhisattvas who practice at various positions of the three sagacities [the ten abodes, the ten practices and the ten dedications]. This is incorporated in the realization of the characteristic of differentiation [one of the four sequential characteristics of subjective thought eradicated by beginning enlightenment [v.2, p.29-39].

2. The corresponding Defilement of Clinging Without Stop and the corresponding Defilement of Initial

Awareness for Discernment: these are the more refined among the coarse [characteristics of originating and ceasing]. The non-corresponding Defilement of Manifesting Forms (or the Characteristic of Manifesting) and the non-corresponding Defilement of Perceiving Mind (or the Characteristic of Evolving): these are the coarser among the refined. These four defilements constitute the realm realized and eradicated by the bodhisattvas practicing on the ten grounds. This is incorporated in the realization of the characteristic of abiding [v.2, p.29-39].

3. The non-corresponding Defilement of Fundamental Act [of Ignorance]: this is just the Characteristic of an Act of Ignorance [the first of the three refined characteristics of non-enlightenment], namely, the most refined [characteristic of originating and ceasing]. This realm is only reached by the bodhisattvas who have fulfilled their mind with the ten grounds, and who can become Buddha at the moment of complete eradication. Thus it is called *the realm of the Buddha*.

These two categories of originating and ceasing both arise from the perfuming by ignorance, that is, following cause and circumstance: cause refers to the non-enlightened perspective [of the

originating and ceasing mind]; and *circumstance refers to the delusory creation of phenomena*. This means that these two categories of coarse and refined originating and ceasing both arise from the perfuming by ignorance. This demonstrates that these defiled states of mind originate from cause and circumstance, and also cease from cause and circumstance. Speaking of the cause and circumstance, the “cause” refers to the ignorance from non-enlightenment as the cause, which gives rise to the three refined non-corresponding defilements. This is when the mind and phenomenon are not yet differentiated, and consequently, there is no correspondence between the subjective perceiving function and the object of perception. The “circumstance” refers to the delusory creation of phenomenon outside of the mind as the circumstance, which gives rise to the six coarse corresponding defilements. Consequently, the mind becomes capable of grasping, and the phenomenon becomes the object of grasping. This is the meaning of corresponding.

If the cause ceases, then the circumstance ceases. It follows that when the cause ceases, the non-corresponding [defiled] states of mind cease. When the circumstance ceases, the corresponding [defiled] states of mind cease. This indicates that

while the defiled states of mind originate from cause and circumstance, they likewise cease from cause and circumstance. *The cause ceases* means ignorance ceases, then the three refined non-corresponding defiled states of mind cease. This is because the non-corresponding states of mind originate due to ignorance as the cause. *The circumstance ceases* means the phenomenon manifested by the manifesting consciousness ceases as the circumstance. Then, the six coarse corresponding defiled states of mind cease. This is because the corresponding states of mind originate due to the phenomenon as the circumstance. Therefore, if the cause ceases, then the three refined characteristics cease; if the circumstance ceases, then the six coarse characteristics cease.

Question: if the mind ceases, how does it continue on? If it continues on, how can it be called completely ceasing?

Reply: the so-called ceasing is only ceasing the characteristics of the mind, not ceasing the embodiment of the mind.

For example: By interacting with water wind gives rise to the characteristic of motion. If the water

disappeared, then that characteristic of wind will discontinue because it will be without the means [to manifest]. As the water does not cease, the characteristic of wind will continue on. Only when the wind ceases, the characteristic of motion ceases accordingly, it is not the water that ceases.

The same holds for ignorance, by means of the mind's embodiment it acts. If the embodiment of the mind ceases, then sentient beings will extinguish for they will be without means [to manifest]. Since the mind's embodiment does not cease, the mind is able to continue on. Only when delusion ceases, the characteristics of the mind cease accordingly, it is not the wisdom of the true mind that ceases.

The purpose of this paragraph is to demonstrate that though the characteristics of the mind cease, the mind's embodiment does not cease. Those who question may have mistaken the deluded mind for the embodiment of the true mind. Consequently, they suspect that when the characteristics cease, the mind also ceases. They might ask: *if the mind ceases, how does it continue on?* They question that if the corresponding defiled states of mind cease, how can the non-corresponding defilements of the mind

continue on? They ask: *if it continues on, how can it be called completely ceasing?* They question that if the non-corresponding states of mind do not cease, thus meaning the more refined defilements of ignorance will continue on without ceasing, how can it be called completely ceasing?

Given that ignorance arises from the mind, the question here is: then if the mind does not cease, how is it that the continuation of ignorance will not cease. The answer explains that only the deluded, defiled characteristics of the mind will cease; the embodiment of the mind will not cease. If the mind's embodiment is to cease as well, then everything will be extinguished. Who is to realize Buddhahood?

For example: By means of water wind gives rise to the characteristic of motion. If water disappeared, then the characteristic of wind will discontinue for it will be without means [to manifest]. As the water does not cease, the characteristic of wind will continue on. Only when the wind ceases, the characteristic of motion ceases accordingly, it is not the water that ceases. This paragraph is an analogy. Wind symbolizes ignorance, water symbolizes mind's embodiment. The characteristic of motion refers to the water's waves which symbolize the

characteristics of originating and ceasing of the coarse and refined defiled states of mind.

By means of water, the wind gives rise to the characteristic of motion is analogous to by means of mind's embodiment, ignorance gives rise to the characteristics of the coarse and refined defiled states of mind. Separated from the embodiment of mind, ignorance, on its own, cannot manifest the characteristics of mind. *If water ceases, then the characteristic of wind will discontinue for it will be without means* is analogous to if the mind's embodiment ceases then, like the wind, ignorance will be without means to manifest. *As the water does not cease, the characteristic of wind will continue on* is analogous to since the mind's embodiment does not cease, ignorance has means for its action -- that is, the characteristics of the coarse and refined defiled states of mind are able to continue on. *Only when the wind ceases, the characteristic of motion ceases accordingly, it is not the water that ceases* is analogous to only when ignorance ceases, then the characteristics of the coarse and refined defiled states of mind cease accordingly, but the embodiment of the mind does not cease with it.

The same holds for ignorance, by means of the mind's embodiment it acts. If the embodiment

of the mind ceases, then sentient beings will extinguish for they will be without means [to manifest]. Since the mind's embodiment does not cease, the mind is able to continue on. Only when delusion ceases, the characteristics of the mind cease accordingly, it is not the wisdom of the true mind that ceases. This paragraph is a direct explanation of the above analogy.

If the embodiment of the mind ceases, then sentient beings will extinguish for they will be without means [to manifest]. Previously the text states that sentient beings evolve due to their mind, their sense faculty of mind and their mental consciousness (v.3, p.28). Therefore, it says here that if the embodiment of mind ceases, then sentient beings will have to extinguish for they will have nothing to evolve from. *Since the mind's embodiment does not cease, the mind is able to continue on.* This means when phenomenon as the circumstance ceases, only the corresponding defiled states of mind cease, not the embodiment of the mind. Therefore, the three refined non-corresponding defiled states of mind can still continue. *Only when delusion ceases, the characteristics of the mind cease accordingly, it is not the wisdom of the true mind that ceases.* Delusion refers to ignorance. This means only when ignorance as the cause ceases then phenomenon as the circumstance ceases. Therefore,

all the coarse and refined characteristics of the defiled mind likewise cease accordingly: it is not the wisdom embodied by the true mind that ceases.

With respect to the characteristics of the originating and ceasing state of mind due to cause and circumstance, there are two parts. Thus far, the first part has been explained, namely, how dharma of defilement and dharma of purity originate and. Now, the second part will be explained, namely, the mutual facilitation of defiled and pure dharmas through reciprocal perfuming.

The characteristics of originating and ceasing:

Mutual facilitation of defiled and pure dharmas

through reciprocal perfuming

Further, due to four prospects of perfuming, the defiled dharma and the pure dharma continue to rise without stop.

What are the four prospects? The first is the dharma of purity, which is called true thusness. The second is the cause of all defilements, which is called ignorance. The third is the deluded mind, which is called the Consciousness of Act. The fourth is the delusory phenomenon, namely the objects of the six sense faculties.

With respect to the meaning of perfuming, for example, clothing of the secular world is fundamentally without fragrance, but if people perfume it with fragrance, then it will smell of that fragrance.

Similarly, the pure dharma of true thusness is fundamentally without defilement, but if perfumed with ignorance, it will then acquire characteristics of defilement. The defiled dharma of ignorance is fundamentally without the act of purity, but if perfumed with true thusness, it will then acquire pure application.

This paragraph demonstrates the reciprocal perfuming by dharma of defilement and dharma of purity. With respect to the various dharmas of defilement and of purity, though they do not reciprocally act as the cause and thus give rise to each other, they nevertheless can be enhancing circumstances for, and mutually perfume, each other. For instance, while sentient beings, due to their suffering, drift through cycles of life and death, they perfume their ignorance with true thusness, diligently seeking liberation. This is the case when defiled dharma can be the enhancing circumstance for pure dharma. On the other hand, without the embodiment of true thusness to rely on, all dharmas of defilement cannot be established. Therefore, pure dharma also serves as the enhancing circumstance for defiled dharma. There are four prospects of such perfuming which prompt various dharmas of defilement and purity continuing to rise without stop:

1. *The first is the dharma of purity, which is called true thusness.* Here true thusness represents one of the two constituents of the gateway of the originating and ceasing mind; it also represents the perfuming by pure dharma. There are two perspectives: 1) perfuming by true thusness, and 2) perfuming by

deluded mind.

Perfuming by true thusness comes from the dharma of true thusness, inherent in sentient beings, which is capable of subtly perfuming ignorance. The cause and circumstance of such subtle perfuming makes the deluded mind loathe the suffering from cycles of life and death, and seek the bliss of nirvana. This is so called perfuming by true thusness. Perfuming by deluded mind comes exactly from the loathing and seeking of this deluded mind, which is capable of perfuming true thusness in return, thereby reinforcing its power. It initiates various skillful, expedient, accommodating Buddhist practices to eradicate ignorance. By the eradication of ignorance, all characteristics of the mind will cease, nirvana will be attained, and a natural act of purity will be accomplished. Because of such perfuming the dharma of purity will continue without stop.

2. *The second is the cause of all defilements, which is called ignorance.* This refers to the dharmas of defilement, namely the three refined and the six coarse defiled states of mind, all having ignorance as their cause. This is the so called perfuming by ignorance. From beginning-less beginning, ignorance has perfumed sentient beings' true thusness mind. It is due to this perfuming that the deluded

mind originates.

3. *The third is the deluded mind, which is called the Consciousness of Act.* This is the so called perfuming by the deluded mind. This deluded mind perfumes ignorance in return, reinforcing the ever continuing subjective thoughts. It further evolves [through Consciousness of Evolving] and then manifests [through Consciousness of Manifesting] the delusory phenomenal world.

4. *The fourth is the delusory phenomenon, namely the objects of the six sense faculties.* This is the phenomenal world of the objects of the six sense faculties that the Consciousness of Distinguishing Experiences [the mental consciousness] encounters and associates as external circumstance. This is the so called perfuming by delusory phenomenon. Such delusory phenomenon in turn perfumes and motivates the deluded mind, thus giving rise to various sense consciousness like waves in the ocean; the deluded mind then commits various karmic deeds and ends up with various physical and mental sufferings. By means of the above prospects of perfuming, the dharma of defilement will continue without stop.

With respect to the meaning of perfuming, for example, clothing of the secular world is fundamentally without

fragrance, but if people perfume it with fragrance, then it will smell of that fragrance. This analogy should be easily understood without further explanation.

Similarly, the pure dharma of true thusness is fundamentally without defilement, but if perfumed with ignorance, it will then acquire characteristics of defilement. The defiled dharma of ignorance is fundamentally without the act of purity, but if perfumed with true thusness, then it will acquire pure application. This demonstrates that due to such mutual perfuming by the true and the deluded, the cause and fruit will follow each other continuing for long kalpas without stop.

Now, how ignorance perfumes true thusness will be explained first. The text states: *the pure dharma of true thusness is fundamentally without defilement, but if perfumed with ignorance, it will then acquire characteristics of defilement.* This is the case when true thusness constitutes the cause, and ignorance constitutes the circumstance. In other words, the cause, true thusness, is perfumed by the circumstance, ignorance, and is thus transformed into the *alaya* consciousness. The *alaya* consciousness and the Characteristic of Perception etc. within this consciousness, become the three refined characteristics

of defilement.

Further, when the Consciousness of Act within the *alaya* consciousness which constitutes the cause, and phenomenon which constitutes the circumstance, together perfume reciprocally the embodiment of the mind, namely the *alaya*, then the six coarse characteristics of defilement will rise. From these, cycles of life and death will drift and flow without stop. The sutra states: “because the treasure of Tathagata is perfumed by unwholesome habitual inclinations, it drifts and flows through cycles of life and death.” This clearly shows that although true thusness is without characteristic, the characteristic of defilement will manifest in delusion through perfuming. This also shows that defiled dharma is without embodiment, and consequently, does not provide the application for return [to purity]. Therefore, only the characteristic of defilement is mentioned, but not its embodiment nor its application. This is in line with the forward flow within the gateway of originating and ceasing.

How true thusness perfumes ignorance will now be explained. The text states: *The defiled dharma of ignorance is fundamentally without the act of purity, but if perfumed with true thusness, it will then acquire pure application.* This indicates that

dharma of defilement from ignorance fundamentally provides no pure action. When it is perfumed from within by true thusness, namely, perfumed from within by fundamental enlightenment, then the wisdom of beginning enlightenment will be initiated. It follows that the four characteristics of originating, abiding, differentiating and ceasing [the four sequential characteristics of subjective thought eradicated by beginning enlightenment [v.2, p.29-39]] will be realized. Various causes of defilement will thus be eradicated, and the two fruits of nirvana and Bodhi will be accomplished. This is how defiled dharma of ignorance may attain pure application.

This is in line with the return flow from ignorance to true thusness, within the gateway of originating and ceasing. The sutra states: “because one is endowed with the treasure of Tathagata, he is able to loath the suffering of cycles of life and death, and to seek the blessing of nirvana.” Master Han Shan of Ming dynasty said: “This inconceivable power of perfuming and transforming is great indeed!” Therefore, it is specifically noted here.

Given the present focus is on the gateway of the originating and ceasing mind, the following detailed discussion will begin with how ignorance perfumes true thusness.

How does perfuming continue to give rise to defiled dharma without stop? Due to the dharma of true thusness, there is ignorance. Because ignorance becomes the cause for defiled dharma, it thus perfumes true thusness.

Because of this perfuming there is the deluded mind. Because the deluded mind rises, it thus perfumes ignorance. As a result, the dharma of true thusness is not truthfully understood. Consequently, subjective thought of non-enlightenment rises and initiates the manifestation of delusory phenomenon.

Because delusory phenomenon becomes the circumstance for [originating] defiled dharma, it thus perfumes the deluded mind. It leads the deluded mind to subjective thought and attachment, which in turn leads to various karmic deeds been committed and various physical and mental sufferings being endured.

How does perfuming continue to give rise to defiled dharma without stop? This shall be illustrated from two meanings of perfuming:

1. True thusness perfuming ignorance, and ignorance perfuming true thusness: this is called habitual perfuming, or constant perfuming, which is fundamentally without sequence. However, this is not as obvious as the words imply. Therefore, first it is questioned here how does ignorance perfume true thusness? One should not grasp the notion that first come true thusness, then ignorance. For if one grasps this order then he faces the dilemma that after becoming Buddha there could be the likelihood of becoming sentient being again! Similarly, one should not grasp that ignorance come before true thusness. For if one grasps this order, then he faces the dilemma that true thusness has a beginning! Fundamentally, there is no order for true thusness and ignorance; both are from beginning-less beginning. It is exactly because the true and the deluded are never separated that the so called delusion could be returned to purity.

2. The Consciousness of Act perfumes ignorance in reciprocation, enhancing its continuance without stop, and is called facilitating perfuming. In addition, the immediate interaction between mind and phenomenon, and the mutual facilitation of various delusions, are also called facilitating perfuming.

Due to dharma of true thusness there is ignorance. Because ignorance becomes the cause for defiled dharma, it thus perfumes true thusness: Here true thusness is the dharma embodiment that ignorance depends on; ignorance is the cause of defilement that is capable of perfuming. In other words, “that which is able to perfume” takes “the embodiment that it relies on” as “the object of perfuming” – this is how fundamental ignorance perfumes true thusness, hence it is said *it thus perfumes true thusness. It thus perfumes* because ignorance is not separated from true thusness while it perfumes. Another way to view this is: since from beginning-less beginning, there are both true thusness and ignorance, therefore when true thusness associates with circumstance [which is ignorance], it becomes the cause of defiled dharma.

Because of this perfuming there is the deluded mind. Because the deluded mind rises, it thus perfumes ignorance. As the result, the dharma of true thusness is not truthfully understood and consequently, subjective thought of non-enlightenment rises and initiates the manifestation of delusory phenomenon. This demonstrates how ignorance is the cause that gives rise to the three refined characteristics of non-enlightenment. Due to the perfuming of true thusness by ignorance, the deluded mind of the Consciousness of Act rises: *Because of*

this perfuming there is the deluded mind. This is followed by: *Because the deluded mind rises, it thus perfumes ignorance.* This indicates that this deluded mind from the Consciousness of Act perfumes ignorance in return as facilitating perfuming. Thus it follows: *As the result, the dharma of true thusness is not truthfully understood and consequently, subjective thought of non-enlightenment rises and initiates the manifestation of delusory phenomenon.* This means that there reciprocal perfuming facilitated by the deluded mind, which enhances the continuance of ignorance without stop, is contrary to the dharma of true thusness. Consequently this results in the Consciousness of Evolving and the Consciousness of Manifesting. Subjective thought rising refers to the Consciousness of Evolving, namely evolving to the subjective part of the eighth consciousness. Manifestation of delusory phenomenon refers to the Consciousness of Manifesting, namely the characteristic of manifesting temporary, delusory phenomenon. Thus far it is shown how ignorance perfumes true thusness giving rise to the Consciousness of Act, and how the Consciousness of Act facilitates the perfuming of ignorance in return, giving rise to the Consciousness of Evolving and the Consciousness of Manifesting. This is the interworking of how ignorance becomes the cause for originating the three refined characteristics of

non-enlightenment.

Because delusory phenomenon becomes the circumstance for [originating] defiled dharma, it thus perfumes the deluded mind. It leads the deluded mind to subjective thought and attachment, which, in turn, lead to committing various karmic deeds, and enduring various physical and mental sufferings. This demonstrates how the phenomenon, as the circumstance, perfumes the deluded mind and gives rise to the six coarse characteristics of non-enlightenment. In other words, the phenomenon facilitates the perfuming of the eighth consciousness, which is like the ocean of mind, initiating the first seven consciousness, which represent waves in the ocean of mind, and ending with the formation of the six coarse characteristics. The first two of the six coarse characteristics, the Characteristic of Initial Awareness and the Characteristic of Continuous Clinging to Preference, constitute subjective thought. The next two coarse characteristics, The Characteristic of Grasping and the Characteristic of Assigning Names and Words to Grasping, constitute attachment. These subjective thought and attachment lead to the commitment of karmic deeds, and consequently, the endurance of various physical and mental sufferings [the last two coarse characteristics]. This is so called phenomenon, as

the circumstance, giving rise to the six coarse characteristics of non-enlightenment.

Perfuming by delusory phenomenon consists of two perspectives. What are the two? The first is the perfuming which enhances subjective thought. The second is the perfuming which intensifies grasping.

This paragraph further clarifies perfuming by phenomenon. Previously, it is explained that the deluded mind of the Consciousness of Act reciprocally facilitates perfuming of ignorance and, consequently, gives rise to the manifestation of phenomenon. Now, this delusory phenomenon facilitates perfuming of the deluded mind of the Consciousness of Act and initiates the first four coarse characteristics, which are like waves propagated by the Consciousness of Manifesting in the ocean of mind.

Perfuming which enhances subjective thought refers to how the Consciousness of Act, whose power strengthened by the facilitating perfuming by phenomenon, enhances the refined part of the Consciousness of Distinguishing Experiences (the

mental consciousness), namely the Characteristic of Initial Awareness and the Characteristic of Continuous Clinging to Preference. These constitute subjective thoughts of grasping dharma through discernment. *Perfuming which intensifies grasping* refers to how the perfuming intensifies the coarse part of the Consciousness of Distinguishing Experiences, namely the Characteristic of Grasping and the Characteristic of Assigning Names and Words to Grasping. These constitute distressing passions from attachment to views and preferences towards self and others.

Perfuming by the deluded mind consists of two perspectives. What are the two? The first is the fundamental perfuming by the Consciousness of Act. This can lead to suffering of originating and ceasing for the *arhat*, the *pratyeka* Buddha, and all the bodhisattvas. The second is the perfuming by the intensified Consciousness of Distinguishing Experiences. This can lead to suffering due to karma for the uninitiated.

This paragraph clarifies how the deluded mind facilitates perfuming of ignorance. First, the Consciousness of Act facilitates reciprocal perfuming of the fundamental ignorance. In other words, this

deluded mind, rising from ignorance, unable to relinquish subjective thought, in turn, further perfumes fundamental ignorance, strengthening its ever continuance without stop. This facilitates and helps the power of ignorance, leading the practitioners of all three vehicles to yet suffer through originating and ceasing as change and conditioned arising.

Second, the deluded mind of the Consciousness of Initial Awareness and the Consciousness of Continuous Clinging to Preference, which intensifies the Consciousness of Distinguishing Experiences, reciprocally perfumes the branch ignorance. This increases the delusions of view and preference [so called branch ignorance] within the deluded mind of Consciousness of Initial Awareness and Consciousness of Continuous Clinging to Preference. Without understanding the unreality of phenomenon, this results in discernment and grasping, and consequently, delusion and committing of karma. Therefore, this can lead the uninitiated to suffer through cycles of life and death due to karma.

Perfuming by ignorance consists of two perspectives. What are the two? The first is the fundamental perfuming; this can establish the Consciousness of Act. The second is the

perfuming by resulting view and preference; this can establish the Consciousness of Distinguishing Experiences.

This paragraph illustrates the two perspectives of how ignorance perfumes true thusness. First, fundamental ignorance perfumes true thusness. Due to non-enlightenment, the mind sways; that which neither originates nor ceases and that which originates and ceases come together and join to become the *alaya* consciousness, and in particular, the Consciousness of Act. In other words, when true thusness associates with the circumstance of ignorance, it can establish the three refined defiled states of mind, namely, the Consciousness of Act, etc.

Second, branch ignorance perfumes true thusness. This refers to the branch ignorance of view and preference which arise from the encounter with phenomenon by both the Characteristic of Initial Awareness and the Characteristic of Continuous Clinging to Preference. This branch ignorance, in turn, perfumes true thusness. As the result, the distressing passions of view and preference increase and induce the Consciousness of Initial Awareness and the Consciousness of Continuous Clinging to Preference to evolve and transform into the

Consciousness of Distinguishing Experiences [the mental consciousness] of the uninitiated. This consciousness follows and distinguishes between the objects of the sense faculties, deludingly giving rise to attachment, and pervasively grasping of the self as well as of objects outside of the self.

How does perfuming continue to give rise to pure dharma without stop? Because there is the dharma of true thusness, it can perfume ignorance. Due to the strengthened power from the cause and circumstance of this perfuming, it leads the deluded mind to loathe the sufferings of life and death, and to thus joyfully seek the bliss of nirvana. Because the deluded mind is subject to the cause and circumstance of such loathing and seeking, it thus perfumes true thusness.

In the previous section the question and response of how ignorance perfumes true thusness have been explained. Now the explanation will focus on the question and response of how true thusness perfumes ignorance and provides the return from the deluded to the true. The following demonstrates the cause and circumstance of perfuming by dharma of purity.

How does perfuming continue to give rise to pure dharma without stop? Because there is the dharma of true thusness, it can perfume ignorance. Due to the strengthened power from the cause and circumstance of this perfuming, it leads the deluded mind to loathe the sufferings of life and death, and to thus joyfully seek the bliss of nirvana. This is called fundamental perfuming, indicating the dharma of true thusness perfumes ignorance. Here true thusness constitutes the cause, and the three jewels [the Buddha, the dharma, and the sangha] constitute the circumstance; the cause initiates perfuming from within, and the circumstance initiates perfuming from without. Such mutual facilitation by the cause within and the circumstance without together obtain power. This then induces the deluded mind of the six consciousness, through the perfuming by the cause within and the circumstance without, to know to loathe and be liberated from, the suffering of life and death; to thus joyfully seek the bliss of nirvana.

Because the deluded mind is subject to the cause and circumstance of such loathing and seeking, it thus perfumes true thusness. This is called new perfuming, indicating another set of cause and circumstance. Since the deluded mind of the six consciousness is subject to the cause and circumstance of loathing and seeking, with faith in true thusness, it can initiate the

wisdom of beginning enlightenment. With the wisdom of beginning enlightenment as the cause and the three jewels as the circumstance, this set of cause and circumstance further perfumes true thusness in return. In this manner, fundamental perfuming and new perfuming mutually help and facilitate each other, and consequently, the dharma of purity continues without stop. This inspires aspiration and vow to practice, and thus leads to the accomplishment of pure deed.

One can have faith in his inherent nature; understand that the mind acts in delusion, and that there is no manifested phenomenal world presently. Then he can practice the dharma for liberation [from self and dharma].

Because one understands truthfully that there is no manifested phenomenon at present, he can aspire to practice through various skillful means in accordance with [true thusness], but with no grasping and no subjective thoughts. Due to such power of perfuming through long kalpas, ignorance will then cease.

Because ignorance ceases, deluded mind does not rise. Because it does not rise, phenomenon ceases accordingly. Due to the ceasing of both cause and

circumstance, the various characteristics of the mind all extinguish. This is called the attainment of nirvana, and the accomplishment of natural karmic deed.

This paragraph demonstrates the efficacy of perfuming by dharma of purity, and the order of extinguishment and realization of causes and fruits. *One can have faith in his inherent nature:* with the efficacy of the previously discussed fundamental perfuming and new perfuming, one can aspire to right faith in the Mahayana. One can confidently believe that the dharma of truth thusness is within his inherent nature. This corresponds to the practice of ten-faiths [along the path of Mahayana practice before the practice of the three sagacity].

Understand that the mind acts in delusion, and that there is no manifested phenomenal world presently: this refers to the practice in pursuit of the ten understandings. This begins with the ten abodes. With the wisdom from contemplating emptiness, the practitioner understands and knows that the deluded mind of the Consciousness of Act and the Consciousness of Evolving are but delusory actions. He also understands and knows that there is no phenomenon world manifested by the Consciousness

of Manifesting.

Then he can practice the dharma for liberation [from self and dharma]: this refers to the next positions of the ten practices and the ten dedications [along the Mahayana path]. For the ten practices, with understandings, one employs the wisdom from contemplating temporariness to practices the dharma of liberation. In accordance with true thusness one practices the six paramitas. One liberates oneself from the grasping of both self and dharma: for instance, in practicing the first paramita, generosity, one realizes the emptiness of the “three spheres” of giver, recipient, and gift. For the next positions of the ten dedications, one practices with the wisdom of contemplating the middle way in order to interpenetrate both emptiness and temporariness.

Because one understands truthfully that there is no manifested phenomenon at present: this is at the first position of the ten grounds of bodhisattva practice. The practitioner sees the true principle of true thusness, and is therefore able to understand truthfully that there is no presently manifested phenomenon to be obtained. This is to realize the wisdom of direct perception, different from the previously mentioned wisdom of inferred perception, such as perception inferred through contemplation of emptiness or

temporariness [v.2, p.35].

He can aspire to practice with various skillful means in accordance with [true thusness]: this means to carry out extensively millions of practices on the ten grounds. *With nograsping* indicates that any attainment is without characteristics. *With no subjective thoughts* indicates that the capacity for subjective thought does not rise. *Due to such power of perfuming through long kalpas:* This indicates that perfuming and practicing may take three immeasurable eons. After true thusness perfuming ignorance in this manner through long kalpas, *ignorance will then cease* -- This perfects the cause. Next the explanation will focus on the fulfillment of the fruit.

Because ignorance ceases: this refers to fundamental ignorance, namely the Consciousness of Act and the Consciousness of Evolving, thus it is said *deluded mind does not rise. Because it does not rise*, there is no capacity to perfume by these two defiled states of mind. Thus, *phenomenon ceases accordingly*.

Due to the ceasing of both cause and circumstance, the various characteristics of the mind all extinguish. Cause refers to ignorance, circumstance refers to phenomenon, and the characteristics of the mind refer to the six defiled states of mind. Because

ignorance ceases, the first three non-corresponding defilements extinguish; because phenomenon ceases, the latter three corresponding defilements extinguish. All characteristics of the mind do not go beyond these six defilements, thus it is said *all extinguish. This is called the attainment of nirvana, and the accomplishment of natural karmic deed:* Turning over the previously deluded mind and delusory phenomenon to regain the fundamental source of the mind – this is *the attainment of nirvana*. Turning over the previous ignorance to accomplish *natural karmic deed* – this means initiating the application [of true thusness] with karmic deed beyond any thought or expression. Now, true thusness is liberated from the fetters of distressing passions and the fetters of wisdom.

Perfuming by ignorance consists of two perspectives. What are the two?

First is the perfuming by the Consciousness of Distinguishing Experiences [the mental consciousness]. Because the uninitiated people and the practitioners of the two vehicles loathe the suffering of life and death, each with the power [from contemplation] according to their capacity, they gradually proceed toward the unsurpassed

path [to Buddhahood].

The second is the perfuming by the sense faculty of mind [the five-sense faculty of mind]. This refers to the various bodhisattvas, who aspire [to Buddhahood]unhesitatingly and vigorously, and proceed quickly to nirvana.

This paragraph explains the perfuming by the deluded mind. It should be noted that the meaning of the diction “deluded mind” here refers directly to the previous paragraph. In the previous context, the true thusness is able to perfume ignorance first, enabling the deluded mind to loathe the suffering of life and death, to seek the bliss of nirvana. Therefore this deluded mind has already been perfumed through the power of internal perfuming by true thusness; this is so called fundamental perfuming. Thereafter, because this deluded mind is subject to the cause and circumstance of loathing and seeking, it thus perfumes true thusness; this is so called new perfuming. So, the perfuming by deluded mind here refers to the deluded mind which has been perfumed by true thusness already, and consequently is able to reciprocally perfume true thusness. This is not the deluded mind from the defiled circumstance of ignorance perfuming true thusness; indeed one should

not misunderstand this point.

Now, this already perfumed deluded mind will perfume true thusness reciprocally. Naturally, this deluded mind, which is capable of perfuming, has the coarse and refined perspectives [of perfuming]. The differences between these two perspectives are illustrated by the practitioners with their respective gradual and quick enlightenments.

First is the coarse perspective, namely, true thusness is perfumed by the deluded mind of the Consciousness of Distinguishing Experiences [the mental consciousness]. This consciousness first receives subtle perfuming from true thusness, and thus initiates the wisdom of approximating wondrous observation to contemplate true thusness in return. This is what is meant by perfuming true thusness to inspire [Buddhist] practice. This is for uninitiated people and the practitioners of the two vehicles, who employ this mental consciousness for discernment to inspire the mind to loathe [suffering] and seek [liberation]; and each according to their capacity from the power of contemplation to liberate themselves from the suffering of life and death, to gradually proceed toward the unsurpassed Buddhist path.

Second is the refined perspective, namely

true thusness is perfumed by the deluded mind of the five-sense faculty of mind leading to aspiration. This five-sense faculty of mind, generally called the sense faculty of mind, comprises the Consciousness of Act, Consciousness of Evolving, Consciousness of Manifesting, Consciousness of Initial Awareness, and the Consciousness of Continuous Clinging to Preference. All the bodhisattvas, by means of the five-sense faculty of mind, that is, the sense faculty of mind already being perfumed, aspire unhesitatingly and vigorously to perfume true thusness, to carry out various contemplations and practices. They will then be able to proceed quickly to nirvana.

Perfuming by true thusness consist of two perspectives. What are the two? The first is the perfuming by the inherent embodiment and characteristic. The second is the perfuming by application.

The perfuming by the inherent embodiment and characteristic: [sentient beings] from beginning-less beginning, are fully endowed with the dharma without attachment, to be thus provided with application of inconceivable deed, and to be the nature of phenomenon.

From these two perspectives the constant, continual perfuming builds up power, and thus enable sentient beings to loathe the sufferings of life and death, then joyfully seek nirvana. Having faith that the dharma of true thusness is inherent in them, they aspire and resolve to practice.

The previous paragraph demonstrates that the reciprocal perfuming of true thusness by the deluded mind, differ in two perspectives, in its return to purity. These are the coarse and the refined. This paragraph illustrates that when true thusness perfumes ignorance, there are also two perspectives: by embodiment and characteristics, and by application.

Regarding *the inherent embodiment and characteristic*, embodiment refers to sentient beings' inherent embodiment of Dharma-body without attachment, in other words, the Buddha nature which is the proper cause of Dharma-body. The inherent characteristic refers to the merits without attachment within the inherent embodiment, in other words, the merits matching the nature [of sentient beings], like sands of the Ganges River. Namely, from beginning-less beginning, sentient beings inherently possess embodiment of Dharma-body without attachment, and characteristic of merits without

attachment. Since the dharma of both the embodiment and characteristic are without attachment, it is said *they are fully endowed with the dharma without attachment.*

To be thus provided with application of inconceivable deed, and to be the nature of phenomenon: This states that with respect to the embodiment and characteristic, both are inherently endowed with dharma without attachment, and thus provide the application of inconceivable deed. 1. The dharma of embodiment and characteristic can perfume subtly the deluded mind of sentient beings. This has the function of initiating the wisdom of beginning enlightenment. 2. After the dharma of embodiment and characteristic subtly perfumes and initiates wisdom, it can serve as the nature of phenomenon for contemplation, that is, the object contemplated by the wisdom of beginning enlightenment. *Nature* means principle. Here it means to contemplate the natural essential principle [of phenomenon] by the mind of wisdom.

From these two perspectives the constant, continual perfuming builds up power, and thus enables sentient beings to loathe the sufferings of life and death, then joyfully seek nirvana. Having faith that the dharma of true thusness is inherent in them, they aspire and

resolve to practice. This follows from the perfuming of the mind by the inherent embodiment and characteristic which initiates the beginning enlightenment and its application of wisdom. This wisdom in turn encounters embodiment and characteristic as phenomenon. This is how it perfumes this phenomenon. Thus, from the two aspects of mind and phenomenon, the constant and continual perfuming reinforces the power of both, and aptly shows the efficacy of perfuming – it enables loathing suffering and seeking bliss. It further gives one faith to believe that within his body of the five aggregates there is dharma of true thusness, and thus aspire and resolve to practice.

Question: In this context, all sentient beings should uniformly have true thusness and should all be equally perfumed by it. Then why do some have faith and some have no faith, that there are measureless differences [in their belief] and different timing [in their accomplishing practice and attaining nirvana]?

They should all know at the same time that they inherently have the dharma of true thusness in themselves, should all practice diligently with skillful means, and should all be equalized in

attaining nirvana.

This paragraph expresses doubt of the previous:*In this context, all sentient beings should uniformly have true thusness and should all be equally perfumed by it. Then why do some have faith and some have no faith, that there are measureless differences [in their belief] and different timing [in their accomplishing practice and attaining nirvana]?* From the previous paragraph, the perfuming by the embodiment and characteristic of true thusness can enable sentient beings to have faith in their inherent true thusness and thus aspire to practice. If all are equally endowed with true thusness, then naturally all should be equally perfumed. Why should some have faith and some do not? Why should there be measureless differences in their faith? And differences in the timing [whether sooner or later in practicing and reaching enlightenment], due to their advantageous or less favorable capacities?

They should all know at the same time that they inherently have the dharma of true thusness in themselves, should all practice diligently with skillful means, and should all be equalized in attaining nirvana: All sentient beings should simultaneously recognize their inherent true thusness, aspire faith and

initiate understanding, diligently practice with skillful means, and all be equalized in entering nirvana! Why is it not so?

Reply: True thusness is fundamentally one and the same [for everyone]. But there is measureless and boundless ignorance such that fundamentally there is difference in nature, that the defilement [by ignorance], whether deep or shallow, is not the same.

The distressing passions surpassing the sands of the Ganges River differ depending on ignorance. The distressing passions due to defiled view and preference differ depending on ignorance. Thus, all distressing passions rise due to ignorance, resulting in measureless differences [in faith] and different timing [in attaining nirvana]. Only the Buddha is able to understand.

This is the reply to the previous question. *True thusness is fundamentally one and the same [for everyone]:* This refers to the doubt brought up previously that since sentient beings are endowed with true thusness which is fundamentally equal of one nature, and they all together rely on true

thusness to perfume from within for aspiration, then why should there be differences between those with faith and those without; and differences in timing, whether sooner or later, for practicing and attaining nirvana? In this paragraph the reply begins with: true thusness is the cause, and this cause is equal for everyone.

But there is measureless and boundless ignorance such that fundamentally there is difference in nature, that the defilement [by ignorance], whether deep or shallow, is not the same. This indicates that fundamental ignorance is the circumstance, and there is difference in this circumstance such that the perfuming by ignorance from within, whether deep or shallow, are not equal. This results in difference in nature, and consequently there is difference between capacities, whether advantageous or less favorable, and faith, whether with or without.

The distressing passions surpassing the sands of the Ganges River differ depending on ignorance. This refers to the so called hindrance due to incorrect knowledge within the branch ignorance. This is because knowledge too numerous, surpassing the sands of the Ganges River, can become hindrances. The difference in this hindrance rises from the fundamental ignorance.

The distressing passions due to defiled view and preference differ depending on ignorance. This refers to the so called hindrance due to distressing passions within the branch ignorance. This is the grasping of self and others caused by view and preference. The difference in view and preference rises from the branch ignorance, namely the grasping of self and dharma.

Thus, all distressing passions rise due to ignorance, resulting in measureless differences [in faith] and different timing [in attaining nirvana]. Only the Buddha is able to understand. Here it ties up both hindrances. All distressing passions rise because of the difference in fundamental ignorance in sentient beings' nature. Therefore the two branch ignorance that follow have measureless differences regarding timing and regarding coarse-ness or refined-ness. Consequently there are differences in practice and enlightenment, whether sooner or later. This is all caused by the delusion and defilement due to ignorance. It is not because of any difference in true thusness. Therefore only the Buddha is able to understand.

Further, all Buddhist dharma comprise cause and

circumstance. Only when both cause and circumstance are fulfilled then the dharma may be achieved. For example, the natural potential for fire inherent in the wood constitutes the proper cause for starting a fire. However, if no one knows this, and employs skillful means to naturally burn the wood, then such deed may not be achieved.

The same goes for sentient beings. Though endowed with the power of perfuming by the proper cause, if they do not have the circumstance of meeting various Buddha, bodhisattva, or Buddhist sage to enable them extinguish distressing passions and enter nirvana, then such deed may not be achieved.

On the other hand, if there is the power from external circumstance, but there is no power from the perfuming by the pure dharma within, then likewise, it is not possible to ultimately loathe the sufferings of life and death, thus joyfully seek nirvana.

This continues the reply to the previous question. It has been responded that due to the difference in the perfuming by fundamental ignorance,

sentient beings will have different, coarse or refined, distressing passions leading to differences in timing, whether sooner or later, of aspiring practice and reaching enlightenment. Now it will be illustrated that different circumstances also contribute to these differences.

Further, all Buddhist dharma comprise cause and circumstance. Only when both cause and circumstance are fulfilled, then the dharma may be achieved. For example, the natural potential for fire inherent in the wood constitutes the proper cause for starting a fire. However, if no one knows this, and employs skillful means to naturally burn the wood, then such deed may not be achieved. This shows that to achieve Buddhist dharma requires the fulfillment of both cause and circumstance. This is because Buddhist dharma originates from both cause and circumstance. If there is only the power of perfuming from internal cause, but there is no helping function from external circumstance, it is still not possible to attain the fruit of Buddhist dharma.

The causes and circumstances are generally referred to as the three potentialities of Buddhahood: 1. the Buddha nature or true thusness which is the proper cause of Dharma-body, 2. various meritorious acts which contribute to the development

of Buddha nature and enable one to reach enlightenment, and 3. the wisdom of discerning the true principle which accomplishes the transcendental wisdom. In other words, the fundamental inherent true thusness is the Buddha nature constituting the proper cause; Buddhist sutras, teachings and sages, which can help enforce the proper cause, is the wholesome nature constituting the circumstantial cause; the fulfillment of both cause and circumstance, which can achieve the fruit of Buddhist dharma, and cultivate the rightful wisdom of prajna, is the wisdom nature constituting the perceptive cause.

In the example of starting a fire with wood, the cause and circumstance are: the natural potential for fire inherent in the wood is analogous to the inherently contained proper cause. People having this knowledge and working with skillful means in order to start a fire is analogous to the helping and enhancing circumstantial cause. Fire being started and wood burning is analogous to the wisdom enlightening perceptive cause. Referring to the example in the text, the wood has the natural potential for fire which is the proper cause. However, if people do not know this, and not use skillful means to burn the wood with fire, the deed is not done. Rather, it is not possible to achieve. The text states at the beginning of this paragraph that in order to achieve Buddhist dharma

both the cause and circumstance must be fulfilled, but in the example, only the cause is fulfilled while the circumstance is lacking.

The same goes for sentient beings. Though endowed with the power of perfuming by the proper cause, if they do not have the circumstance of meeting various Buddha, bodhisattva, or Buddhist sage to enable them extinguish distressing passions and enter nirvana, then such deed may not be achieved. This paragraph draws an analogy between dharma and the above example where there is no achievement due to the lack of circumstance.

The meaning is quite apparent. Given that sentient beings have perfuming from the proper cause of true thusness. Yet, in their past they may lack the circumstance of cultivating and acquiring merits and virtues from the three jewels, or lack the circumstance of aspiring for karmic affinity with the three jewels, or lack the circumstance of listening broadly to Buddhist dharmas and teachings. Even up to this lifetime they may still be unwilling to initiate karmic affinity with the three jewels, but rather prefer to rely on themselves. Continuing on in this way, from lacking circumstance of karmic affinity with Buddhist dharma to finally having no circumstance of karmic affinity with Buddhist dharma, then their wholesome root

may be extinguished. It is unimaginable when they will ever have aspiration [toward Buddhist dharma]. For them, there may be no end in sight through cycles of life and death. Would that not be suffering?

On the other hand, if there is the power from external circumstance, but there is no power from the perfuming by the pure dharma within, then likewise, it is not possible to ultimately loathe the sufferings of life and death, thus joyfully seek nirvana. This paragraph, on the other hand, addresses the case when the circumstance is fulfilled but not the cause. This indicates that although there may be powerful facilitating perfuming from external circumstance, but if the hindrance of distressing passions due to ignorance from within is heavy, and thus renders the inherently contained pure dharma of true thusness having no perfuming power, then, likewise, it is not possible to ultimately loathe suffering, and seek joy [of nirvana].

If cause and circumstance are both fulfilled, namely, one has power of perfuming within oneself, and is protected and endowed by the compassion and mercy of all the Buddhas and bodhisattvas; then one is able to initiate a mind loathing sufferings, to have faith in nirvana, and to

practice for wholesome karmic root.

When the practice for wholesome karmic root has matured, then one will encounter all Buddha and bodhisattvas demonstrating, teaching, showing benefit and joy. Consequently one will be able to enter and proceed forward to the path to nirvana.

This paragraph illustrates the case when both cause and circumstance are fulfilled. *One has power of perfuming within oneself:* this refers to the cause, namely the perfuming power of true thusness inherent within everyone. *One is protected and endowed by the compassion and mercy of all the Buddhas and bodhisattvas:* this refers to the circumstance, namely the superior circumstance of the helping and enticing power endowed by the Buddhas and bodhisattvas. This is because with their great compassion, great mercy and great vow they subtly protect all the sentient beings.

Then one is able to initiate a mind loathing sufferings, to have faith in nirvana, and to practice for wholesome karmic root. This shows the function of perfuming from the above cause and circumstance. This perfuming enables sentient beings to loathe the suffering of life and death, thus have faith in nirvana.

From this point they may initiate the wisdom of beginning enlightenment, and cultivate a mind loathing suffering and seeking bliss. This should be at the positions of ten-faith [along the Buddhist path] where one learns and practices the wholesome karmic root to transcend the secular world.

When the practice for wholesome karmic root has matured, then one will encounter all Buddhas and bodhisattvas demonstrating, teaching, showing benefit and joy. This is the position where faith has been completely fulfilled, and one is able to make excellent entrance [to the Buddhist path proper]. Here the maturing of the previous practice for wholesome karmic root constitutes the cause for excellent entrance and proceeding toward the Buddhist path. Meeting Buddhas and bodhisattvas and receiving their endowment constitutes the circumstance for excellent pursuit on the way.

In other words, because the practice for wholesome karmic root has matured, one will have clearly completed the ten-faith, and will encounter Buddhas and bodhisattvas demonstrating, teaching, showing benefit and joy. This means to see Buddha and bodhisattvas, manifesting in person, to preach the dharma to give sentient beings endowment, to demonstrate true doctrine to ensure their

understanding, and to teach ways of practice to promote their practice. Then people will receive great benefit and experience great joy.

Consequently one will be able to enter and proceed forward to the path to nirvana. This refers to practices directly associated with the superior entrance to the Buddhist path. “Enter” indicates the positions of the ten abodes, “proceed” indicates the positions of the ten practices, and “forward to” indicates the positions of the ten dedications. The “path to nirvana” means to embark on the positions of the ten grounds to attain enlightenment, namely to reach nirvana step by step. Eventually, the practice of all ten grounds will be fulfilled and the fruit of enlightenment will be attained.

Perfuming by application: this refers to the power of external circumstance applied to the sentient beings [to help their Buddhist practice]. Such external circumstance encompasses measureless aspects. Briefly speaking, there are two categories. What are the two? First is the differentiated circumstance, and second is the equal circumstance.

Regarding perfuming by pure dharma, the text has already explained the perfuming by the inherent embodiment and characteristic. Now the perfuming by application will be explained. This pertains to all the Buddhas and bodhisattvas, who have already reached enlightenment, and whose Dharma-body can naturally have application of inconceivable karmic merits. According to the mind of sentient beings they manifest in response. With power from their compassionate vows they appear to sentient beings and preach the dharma to them. They act as the helping external circumstance for sentient beings – the perfuming by application. In other words, they become the superior enhancing circumstance for sentient beings' practice.

Such powers from external circumstance are measureless. This is because there are measureless internal capacities reacting to the circumstance, and consequently there are measureless external circumstances responding to them. Briefly speaking these can be categorized into two groups: For those sentient beings who aspire to Buddhist practice from their Consciousness of Distinguishing Experiences, they will encounter and see the Accommodating-Transformation-body of Buddhas and bodhisattvas. This is the response and manifestation from differentiated circumstance. For those sentient

beings who aspire to Buddhist practice from their Consciousness of Act, they will encounter and see the Enjoyment-Reward-body of Buddhas and bodhisattvas. This is the response and manifestation from equal circumstance. Further, if the response is in accordance with those who have not yet attained the power of Samadhi, then it belongs to differentiated circumstance; and if the response is in accordance with those who have already attained the power of Samadhi, then it belongs to equal circumstance. In any event, the manifestation always responds in accordance with the mind of sentient beings.

The differentiated circumstance refers to an individual's reliance on the Buddhas and bodhisattvas. From this person's initial aspiration to begin seeking the Buddhist path until his attainment of Buddhahood, he may encounter or become mindful of [the Buddhas and the bodhisattvas] throughout this time.

[As differentiated circumstance, the Buddhas and bodhisattvas] could be his family, like father, mother, or other close relatives; could be people who serve him; could be his best friend; could be his enemy; or could be those who win him over by the "four methods which the bodhisattvas employ in

order to approach and save people [generosity, kind loving words, conduct beneficial to others, and working together and cooperating with others].”

This paragraph briefly demonstrates the differentiated circumstance. *An individual* refers to the individual capacity that reacts to the circumstance. *The Buddhas and bodhisattvas* refer to the circumstance responding to the individual. *From this person’s initial aspiration* indicates when an individual, with the capacity to react to external circumstance, initiates Buddhist practice. *Begin seeking the Buddhist path* indicates the time of cause [referring to cause and fruit for achieving Buddhist dharma]; *and until his attainment of Buddhahood* indicates the time of fruit. *Throughout this time:* this could extend to three innumerable kalpas [eons]. *He may encounter the Buddhas and bodhisattvas in person or become mindful of their virtues and merits.*

From [as differentiated circumstance, the Buddhas and bodhisattvas] could be his family ..., is a brief demonstration of the characteristics of the differentiated circumstance responding to an individual who reacts to them. These characteristics can be summarized by the following five types: 1. The

Buddhas and bodhisattvas could be the family for this individual, they could be his father, mother or other relatives who embrace him with loving kindness; 2. Could be people who serve him, like staff or servants working under his command; 3. Could be his best friend who appeals to him as people of the same mindset; 4. Could be his enemy who attacks or subdues him; 5. Could be those who win him over by the “four methods which bodhisattvas employ in order to approach and save people,” -- generosity, kind loving words, conduct beneficial to others, and working together and cooperating with others.

These five are the general characteristics of the differentiated circumstance that an individual may encounter or become mindful of while aspiring to and embarking on the Buddhist path.

These deeds, extending to immeasurable activities, are all performed as the external circumstance [for sentient beings]. This propels the power of perfuming by great compassion and thus enables sentient beings increase their wholesome karmic roots. Either encountering with [the Buddhas and bodhisattvas], or hearing of [them], [the sentient beings] receive great benefits as the consequence.

Continuing from the previous paragraph, this further elaborates that the Buddhas and bodhisattvas, for the sake of sentient beings seeking the Buddhist path, act as the external differentiated circumstance not only in the five ways mentioned above. Thus the text states that all the karmic deeds they perform will include immeasurable activities such that all of them will be external differentiated circumstance for sentient beings. Namely, they perform immeasurable acts, in order to provide immeasurable circumstances. Moreover, they do all of this with great compassion in order to be the great perfuming power of external circumstance for the sentient beings. This is because such perfuming power can enable sentient beings to increase their wholesome karmic roots – all branches, leaves, flowers, fruits, to bloom in abundance; whatever not yet planted to be planted, whatever already planted to blossom, whatever already blossomed to ripen, whatever already ripe to be relinquished. All this can motivate sentient beings to pay reverence whenever encountering the Buddhas and bodhisattvas in person or in image, and to praise their virtues and merits whenever hearing their respective names, and in both instances, receive great benefits.

This circumstance [the differentiated circumstance] consists of two types. What are the two? The first is the near circumstance because it helps [sentient beings] to be enlightened quickly. The second is the distant circumstance because it helps [sentient beings] to be enlightened in the distant future.

These two near and distant circumstances can each be further subdivided into two types. What are the two? First is the increasing practice circumstance. Second is the attaining realization circumstance.

This paragraph subdivides the differentiated circumstance into the two near and distant types according to the maturity of [sentient beings'] karmic roots. *This circumstance* refers to the differentiated circumstance. There are two types: 1. The near circumstance: this pertains to those sentient beings whose karmic roots have already matured and who can be enlightened in the very near future with help from the near circumstance. For example, when the Buddha was at the Vulture Peak, all those who saw Him there became enlightened. 2. The distant circumstance: this pertains to those sentient beings whose karmic roots have not yet matured and who can

beenlightened in the distant future with help from the distant circumstance. For example, those, who were disciples at the time of the Great Magic Buddha, have only nowmatured their karmic roots and thus received prediction for future attainment of Buddhahood.

These two near and distant circumstances can each be further subdivided into two types:

1. The increasing practice circumstance – this is the helping circumstance for accomplishing the cause, namely the virtue of Buddhist practice either in the near or in the distant future. For example, the Buddha appears in the world to preach the dharma, enabling those without faith to have faith, and those already with faith to increase their faith.

2. The attaining realization circumstance – this is the helping circumstance for accomplishing the fruit, namely the virtue of realization either in the near or in the distant future. For example, the Buddha preaches the dharma, further enabling sentient beings to increase their practice as mentioned above with expedient means and with corresponding rightful contemplation. Consequently, they can proceed excellently and attain the fruit of realization. For instance, they proceed to the forty-two positions of the sage (thirty positions of the three sagacity) and the saint (ten positions of the ten grounds, equal

enlightenment, and wondrous enlightenment), pursuing diligently one by one, practicing through with each previous position as the cause, and each following position as the fruit. In this manner sentient beings are provided with immeasurable differentiated circumstances from the Buddhas and bodhisattvas. This concludes the explanation of the differentiated circumstance.

The equal circumstance pertains to the fundamental vow common to all the Buddhas and bodhisattvas to liberate and enlighten all sentient beings. They naturally perfume [sentient beings] constantly and continuously without ever taking leave.

This is because they share [with sentient beings] the same embodiment of wisdom-power, and thus naturally respond to the seeing [by sentient beings] and hearing [by sentient beings], and thus manifest to perform karmic deeds.

This is how in this case, the sentient beings, by relying on [the achievement of] Samadhi, are able to be equalized in seeing all the Buddhas.

This paragraph explains the equal circumstance. Previously, in the context of the differentiated circumstance, the text relates various different ways the Buddhas and bodhisattvas respond individually according to the minds of sentient beings. Here, the equal circumstance refers to the fundamental vow of all the Buddhas and bodhisattvas to enlighten all sentient beings. Therefore it is not the case when they respond only when interacting individually with and according to sentient beings' actions. In the case here they regard sentient beings as the sentient beings inherently contained in the mind of all the Buddhas. Therefore, the Buddhas and bodhisattvas can naturally and universally perfume, and continuously and constantly perfume sentient beings. This is so called *without ever taking leave*.

If questioned, why is this so? The answer will be: *This is because they share [with sentient beings] the same embodiment of wisdom power*. In other words the wisdom power of all the Buddhas and that of the sentient beings comes from the same embodiment. The Flower Ornament Scripture (*Avatamsaka Sutra*) states: "All the sentient beings of the vast universe possess the characteristic of Tathagata's wisdom and virtue." This shows that the wisdom of all the sentient beings and the wisdom of the Tathagata share the same embodiment. Since

they are from the one and the same embodiment, then they have equal mind. If there is equal mind, then there is equal circumstance, and naturally the perfuming continues forever without stop. Also, according to sentient beings' capacities and convenience, whichever body should they see, whichever dharma should they hear, the Buddhas will manifest to perform, whether in form or in voice, the application of inconceivable karmic deeds.

This is how in this case, the sentient beings, by relying on [the achievement of] Samadhi, are able to be equalized in seeing all the Buddhas. This accounts for the equality further – the equality is founded on the equality in capacity. When the sentient beings achieve equality in capacity, then they will be equal in receiving the great application of seeing all the Buddhas. This is what is meant by sentient beings, relying on the achievement of Samadhi, are able to be equalized in seeing all the Buddhas. The sentient beings here refer to those bodhisattvas practicing above the positions of the ten abodes along the bodhisattva path. When they attain Samadhi, relying on such power, they can be equalized in seeing the Reward-body of all the Buddhas, which has immeasurable superior characteristics. If they have not yet achieved such concentration of mind, they do not have this equal circumstance from all the

Buddhas.

Perfuming by embodiment and application consists of two further aspects. What are the two? The first aspect is perfuming not yet in correspondence [with embodiment and application]: The uninitiated, the practitioners of the two vehicles, and the bodhisattvas who have just aspired to the bodhisattva path, perfume [true thusness] by their sense faculty of mind and their mental consciousness. Their Buddhist practice relies on the power of their faith.

They have not yet attained the non-discerning mind in order to be in correspondence with embodiment. Likewise, they have not yet attained the practice of spontaneous karmic deeds [action, speech and intention] without attachment in order to be in correspondence with application.

This paragraph joins together the two prospects of perfuming by true thusness. The potential to perfume by true thusness, namely, the embodiment and application, are equal in all sentient beings. However, the object of this perfuming, namely, sentient beings' capacity to be receptive to this

perfuming, can be differentiated into two aspects [in accordance with their Buddhist practice].

First, the aspect of perfuming not yet in correspondence [to embodiment and application] will be explained first, with respect to the practitioners' positions on the Buddhist path. This refers to the uninitiated and the practitioners of the two vehicles who perfume true thusness by their mental consciousness; and the bodhisattvas just aspiring to the Buddhist path and practicing along the positions of the three sagacities [the ten abodes, the ten practices and the ten dedications] who perfume true thusness by their five-sense faculty of mind. All these practitioners rely on consciousness, not wisdom, to practice.

The practice of the uninitiated and those of the two vehicles are based on the power of faith, therefore positioned in relatively less efficient ranks on the Buddhist path. For the bodhisattvas who have just aspired to the Buddhist path, because their practice has not reached the ten grounds, they too have not attained the non-discerning mind. Therefore, the practices of all these practitioners have not yet matched to true thusness. This is because they have not attained the fundamental wisdom inherent in the proper embodiment, and thus unable to be in

correspondence with the embodiment of Dharma-body.

Likewise, because they have not attained the practice for spontaneous, free, karmic deeds without attachment, that is, they have not attained the distinctive wisdom initiated after reaching enlightenment, and thus unable to be in correspondence with the great application of the three deeds [action, speech and intention] by all Buddhas.

Therefore, the perfuming of all these practitioners are called “not yet in correspondence” with the embodiment and application, because they are still practicing at less efficient positions on the Buddhist path.

The second aspect is perfuming already in correspondence [with embodiment and application]: The bodhisattvas, who have already realized the Dharma-body, have attained the non-discerning mind and thus in correspondence with the application of the wisdom of all Buddhas.

This is because they rely solely on the power of dharma to practice naturally and spontaneously. Perfuming true thusness in this way, they thus

extinguish all ignorance.

This paragraph explains the second aspect of perfuming true thusness by embodiment and application. With reference to positions along the Buddhist path, this perfuming is already in correspondence with embodiment and application. *The bodhisattvas, who have already realized the Dharma-body* refers to bodhisattvas, practicing on the ten grounds, who are already enlightened to the all-equal principle of true thusness. *They have attained the non-discerning mind* indicates that they have realized the fundamental non-discerning wisdom which is able to correspond to the embodiment of true thusness. *Thus in correspondence with the application of the wisdom of all Buddhas* means to have attained the experiential wisdom (wisdom matching the phenomenal world, in other words, expedient wisdom, the wisdom with discernment illuminating the phenomenal world) and thus corresponds to the great application of the characteristic wisdom of all Buddhas.

They rely solely on the power of dharma refers to practice matching to the principle of true thusness, thus called power of dharma. This is not like the previous position on the Buddhist path where the

practice relies only on the power of faith. Starting from the eighth ground, [the bodhisattvas] practice by means of non-doing, practice effortlessly and spontaneously -- so called "naturally." They naturally perfume the true thusness and naturally extinguish delusion – this is what is meant *to practice naturally and spontaneously*. Also, from the first ground to the seventh ground the practice is in correspondence with the embodiment. From the eighth ground onward the practice is in correspondence with application.

Further, from beginning-less beginning the defiled dharma continues to perfume without stop. Only until the attaining of Buddhahood, then it ceases. The perfuming of pure dharma, however, continues without stop, even till endless future it never ceases.

Why is that? Since the dharma of true thusness perfumes constantly, the deluded mind will then cease. The Dharma-body will be revealed and manifest, and thus initiates the perfuming by application. This is how the pure dharma goes on without ceasing.

Regarding the discussion of the mutual facilitation of pure and defiled dharmas, the perfuming by pure and defiled dharmas has been explained in the previous paragraphs. This paragraph will focus on the meaning of whether the perfuming by the pure or defiled dharma will cease. The text indicates that while the defiled dharma will cease, the pure dharma does not cease. The reason is because the defiled dharma is contrary to true thusness. Therefore, though it has beginning-less beginning, it does cease. On the other hand, the pure dharma is in accordance with the principle of true thusness and therefore, it has neither beginning nor ending.

Why is that? This questions the reason. It is because *the dharma of true thusness perfumes constantly*, it initiates wisdom, extinguishes delusion, and thus turns defilement back to purity. Until the mind attains the diamond-like state, the fundamental ignorance of primary origination will be eradicated, and *the deluded mind will then cease*. Therefore the defiled dharma does cease. Where the deluded mind ceases, then true thusness, that is *the Dharma-body will be revealed and manifest*. This is how the application [of true thusness] with inconceivable karmic deeds will be initiated from the embodiment and carries out the perfuming as external circumstance for sentient beings. This will continue

forever without end, thus the pure dharma goes on without stop.

This is why the defiled dharma ceases, but the pure dharma does not cease. This concludes the explanation of all the dharmas relating to the originating and ceasing mind.

The meaning of Mahayana:the three greats

The greatness of embodiment
The greatness of characteristic

Further, for the inherent embodiment and characteristic of true thusness, there is no more or no less within all beings, be they the uninitiated, the arhat, the prytaka Buddha, the bodhisattva or the Buddhas. It is neither originated from the boundless past, nor ceasing in the boundless future, but ultimately forever constant. From the beginning-less beginning the fundamental nature [of true thusness] is naturally fulfilled with

allvirtues and merits.

The previous paragraph concludes the explanation of the mind's characteristic of originating and ceasing given cause and circumstance as stated in Section II. Theme. Starting from this paragraph the explanation will focus on what follows in the Theme, namely, how this reveals the inherent embodiment, characteristic and application of Mahayana.

This is to show that the ten dharma realms unitedly and uniformly share true thusness as the inherent embodiment and characteristic. Previously the text refers to true thusness as "the embodiment of the essential characteristic of the entire phenomenal world in its totality."(vol.2, p.4) The embodiment is equally endowed for both the saint and the uninitiated. It pertains to neither enlightenment nor delusion. It does not increase for the saint; it does not decrease for the uninitiated. It has no beginning in the boundless past; it has no ending in the boundless future. Therefore, it ultimately stays constant, continuing forever without end. This is the meaning of the greatness of embodiment [of true thusness].

From the beginning-less beginning, the fundamental nature is naturally fulfilled with all virtue and

merits. This explains the meaning of the greatness of characteristic in general. *All* refers to generally, and *virtue and merits* refers to characteristic. This means that, regarding the uninitiated and the saints of the ten dharma realms, from the beginning-less beginning, their inherent embodiment of true thusness naturally fulfills the characteristic of all virtue and merits. This is stated in the previous text (Section II. Theme) in reference to the meaning of Mahayana pertaining to the three greatness of embodiment, characteristic, and application: *2. the greatness of characteristic – because the Buddha nature (Tathagata-garbha) stores fully immeasurable aspects of merits.*

This means the inherent embodiment contains the meaning of brilliantly shining great wisdom; the meaning of illumination over the entire dharma realm; the meaning of real, true perception and understanding; the meaning of inherently pure and clear nature of one's mind; the meaning of eternity, bliss, free manifestation of self and purity; and the meaning of pure, serene, unchanging and liberated.

[The inherent embodiment] contains fully such [meanings], surpassing the sands of the Ganges River -- un-separated, non-ceasing, no-different,

inconceivable dharma of the Buddha, until the containment [of such meanings] is perfectly, completely fulfilled without any lacking. This is so called the Treasure of Tathagata (*Tathagata-garbha*) and also, the Dharma-body of the Buddha.

This paragraph specifically demonstrates the virtue and merits contained in the fundamental nature. Namely, it demonstrates the greatness of characteristic of the inherent embodiment by showing that embodiment is what the characteristic relies on, and the characteristic is what the embodiment contains. This is why the text states: *the inherent embodiment contains the meaning of.* This phrase leads to the next six phrases which all describe the characteristic contained in the embodiment.

From *this inherent embodiment contains the meaning of brilliantly shining great wisdom* to *the meaning of pure, serene, unchanging and liberated* there are together six phrases which illustrate the characteristic of meaning. The characteristic of meaning refers to characteristic of form which is not visible to the sense faculty of eye. These six characteristic of meaning demonstrate the greatness of characteristic; though in the narrow sense they do not go beyond virtues,

merits and wisdom, in the broad sense both merits and wisdoms have infinitely many varieties. Thus the text follows with *surpassing the sands of the Ganges River*.

The meaning of brilliantly shining great wisdom: This refers to the brilliance of the wisdom of fundamental enlightenment, whose constant bright light clearly, brilliantly shines. Ignorance, with its delusion and defilement, is comparatively dark, unable to confuse. Thus, it is stated that the inherent embodiment contains brilliantly shining great wisdom.

The meaning of illumination over the entire dharma realm: This means the reality wisdom illuminates the true principle such that there is no principle that is not penetrated; the expedient (conventional, skillful means) wisdom illuminates the phenomenal world such that there is no phenomenon that is not reached.

The meaning of real, true perception and understanding: This refers to the wisdom of rightful discernment attained after practice. This means truthful understanding of the characteristic of all differences in karmic causality among dharmas of purity or defilement whether of this world or transcending this world -- completely separated from

inverted views. It means to truly understand that all dharmas are but the one mind.

The meaning of inherently pure and clear nature of one's mind: This means that the inherent nature of the treasure of Tathagata is forever separated from delusion and defilement. *Inherently pure and clear nature* is equivalent to pure and clear mind because the mind is the embodiment of all dharmas.

The meaning of eternity, bliss, free manifestation of self and purity: This refers to the four virtues of nirvana, the fruit of Buddhahood. The dharma body is truly constant, not changed through the three time frames: the past, the present or the future. This is the characteristic of the virtue of *eternity*. The joy of calm and ceasing of nirvana is beyond the pressure of measureless myriads of sufferings. This is the characteristic of the virtue of *bliss*. The embodiment and characteristic of the Dharma-body of true thusness is fundamentally free, not tied by the two death of body or mind. This is the characteristic of the virtue of *free manifestation of self*. Nirvana is truly pure, not defiled even going through the nine characteristics (the nine characteristics of defilement). This is the characteristic of the virtue of *purity*.

The meaning of pure, serene, unchanging, and

liberated: This means that [the inherent embodiment] is *pure* and *serene* because it is forever away from heat and disturbance; is *unchanging* because it is not moved by the four characteristics (originating, abiding, transforming, and ceasing); is *liberated* because it is not tied by karmic causality. Alternately it could mean that *pure* and *serene* refers to prajna, *unchanging* refers to Dharma-body, and *liberated* refers to freedom or emancipation, the meaning of the three virtues [of one who has attained nirvana].

[The inherent embodiment] contains fully such [meanings], surpassing the sands of the Ganges River – *un-separated, non-ceasing, no-different, inconceivable dharma of the Buddha*: This indicates that the containment of such characteristic of virtues surpassing the sands of the Ganges River is not different from the true embodiment. The embodiment and characteristic correspond mutually and thus said to be *un-separated*. Namely, the characteristic is directly from the embodiment, the characteristic is not separated from the embodiment. It is *non-ceasing* because it continues forever from beginning-less beginning. *No-different* means it is all equal of one flavor, not different from true thusness because characteristic is just embodiment. It is *inconceivable* because the nature and characteristic interpenetrate such that purity and

defilement become one not two. *Dharma of the Buddha* indicates only the Buddha can thoroughly realize this meaning. It is because the Buddha is away from all subjective thoughts. Virtually enlightened bodhisattvas, who have not extinguished the fundamental ignorance of primary origination, have not yet completely relinquished subjective thoughts. Therefore, Buddha and only the Buddha can reach the ultimate.

The phrase *until the containment [of such meanings] is perfectly, completely fulfilled without any lacking* indicates that the characteristic of merits, surpassing the sands of the Ganges River, are all fundamentally contained in the inherent embodiment of true thusness. Such containment is so perfectly, completely full without any lacking that there is no dharma not embraced in it.

This is called the Treasure of Tathagata (Tathagata-garbha) and also, the Dharma-body of the Buddha: From the perspective where the characteristics of virtues and merits are fundamentally contained, the uninitiated have been experiencing these in daily application without realization. Though it is called the *Treasure of Tathagata (Tathagata-garbha, the inherent Buddha nature of sentient beings)*, it is but true thusness in binding [by

hindrances]. From the perspective where all the Buddhas have liberated from the hindrances and perfectly fulfilled all the merits and virtues, this is transformed to be named the *Dharma body of the Buddha*. Now, here, from the perspective where the inherent embodiment of true thusness is naturally fulfilled with all characteristics of virtues and merits: the embodiment of true thusness constitutes the dharma-bodyTathagata (dharmakayaTathagata), the characteristic of virtues and merits constitutes the reward-bodyTathagata, and “treasure” (*garbha*) refers to the eighth store consciousness. When the greatness of embodiment and the greatness of characteristic of sentient beings (the first two above), hidden but not yet revealed in the store consciousness (the third), they together are thus named the *Treasure of Tathagata*. These two greatness of embodiment and greatness of characteristic, when turned over from defilement through Buddhist practice, and liberated from the bondage of hindrances, will then be generally named the *Dharma body of the Buddha*.

Question: the text says previously that the embodiment of true thusness is all equal, separated from all characteristics. Then why does it also say that the embodiment contains such various virtues and merits?

Response: Though it is truly meant that there are various many virtues and merits, there is, however, no distinguishing characteristic among them; they are all equal in the same flavor of the one and only true thusness.

What does this mean? This means that when there is no distinguishing [mind], then, there is no distinguishing characteristic, and thus [the embodiment and characteristic] are not two but one.

The question here is motivated by the doubt that, given the greatness of embodiment is without characteristic, how does one account for the greatness of characteristic. The response claims that indeed the characteristic is inherently contained in the embodiment, that characteristic is no different from embodiment. Therefore they are not two but one.

The question begins by referring to the notion of embodiment from the gateway of the true thusness mind which claims no characteristic to speak of. From this perspective it reaches the conclusion that embodiment of true thusness is all equal, separated from all characteristic, not understanding that

separated from all characteristic, here, means separated from all false, delusory characteristic only. It does not mean that the embodiment is without virtues and merits inherent in its nature. This is how the doubt is initiated to question why the embodiment has characteristic of virtues and merits surpassing the sands of the Ganges River. The confusion comes from taking the notion of embodiment from the gateway of the true thusness mind to mistakenly mixing it with, consequently doubting the notion of characteristic from the gateway of the originating and ceasing mind.

The response indicates that the characteristic is from the embodiment, that the characteristic is no different from the embodiment. Though there are many such virtues, there is no distinguishing characteristic among them. They are all equal of the same flavor; all characteristic are true thusness, there is but the one and only dharma flavor of true thusness. Like utensils made of gold, these utensils are all but gold.

From *what does this mean...:* This explains that all distinguishable characteristic come from the discernment by the deluded mind. *No distinguishing [mind]* means without the mind capable of distinguishing. *No distinguishing*

characteristic means that there is no dharma to be the object for distinguishing. Therefore the embodiment and characteristic *are not two but one*.

Then, in what way can one speak of any difference? This may be demonstrated by the characteristic of the originating and ceasing of the Consciousness of Act.

How is this demonstrated? Since all dharmas are fundamentally of mind only, there are really no [subjective] thought. It is when the mind is deluded that non-enlightenment gives rise to [subjective] thought which then perceives the phenomenal world, and is thus called ignorance; when the deluded mind with habitual inclination does not rise, it [the mind] is signified by the meaning of brilliantly shining great wisdom.

If the mind gives rise to perception, then there can be characteristic that is not perceived; when the inherent nature of the mind is separated from perception, then it [the mind] is signified by the meaning of illumination over the entire dharma realm.

If the mind sways, then it [the deluded mind] is not

capable of real, true perception and understanding. It is without the inherent[pure and clear] nature. It pertains to no eternity, no bliss, no free manifestation of self and no purity. It is obsessed by heat, disturbance, the consequent transforming to change, and thus without liberation. This continues until containing such delusory defilement surpassing the sands of the Ganges River. In contrast to this meaning [of defilement], if the mind does not sway, then the meaning of its characteristic containing various pure virtues and merits surpassing the sands of the Ganges River can be demonstrated.

This paragraph shows that though there is no difference, there could be difference. *Then, in what way can one speak of any difference? This may be demonstrated by the characteristic of the originating and ceasing of the Consciousness of Act:* The question here refers to the previous paragraph which states that the embodiment and characteristic of true thusness are not two but one. Then in what context could there be difference? The response explains that the Consciousness of Act, with non-enlightenment as the cause, gives rise to different characteristic of originating and ceasing of defiled dharma surpassing the sands of the Ganges River. It

then follows that when the wisdom of beginning enlightenment counters these defilement, turning the defilement back to purity, there will be different characteristic of virtues of purity surpassing the sands of the Ganges River to be demonstrated.

From *how is this demonstrated* the text widely explores what this demonstration may entail. Since all dharmas of purity or defilement are fundamentally but one true thusness mind only, there is really no different characteristic pertaining to the capability for perception and the object of perception. It is only in contrast to the originating and ceasing of defiled dharmas surpassing the Ganges River that the characteristic of pure virtues and merits surpassing the Ganges River may be revealed in order to demonstrate the meaning of difference. Such contrast and demonstration [of ignorance versus pure virtues in revealing different characteristic] will be sampled in the following:

1. Since all dharmas are fundamentally of mind only, there are really no [subjective] thought. It is when the mind is deluded that non-enlightenment gives rise to [subjective] thought which then perceives the phenomenal world, and is thus called ignorance; when the deluded mind with habitual inclination does not rise, it [the mind] is signified by the meaning of

brilliantly shining great wisdom: This refers to the embodiment of the dharma of true thusness being fundamentally without false, deluded mind or thoughts. It is due to the deluded mind that, non-enlightenment, dependent on true thusness, gives rise to deluded thoughts. These become the Characteristic of Act and Characteristic of Perceiving; and the perception of the phenomenal world in turn gives rise to the Characteristic of Manifesting. These refined characteristics further give rise to the coarse characteristics of defilement. These together constitute the refined and coarse defiled minds, the so called fundamental and branch ignorance. In contrast [to these defilement], the practice of contemplation of emptiness can make the habitual inclinations of the deluded mind not to rise. This is to turn over ignorance, to thus reveal the meaning of brilliantly shining great wisdom of fundamental enlightenment. This is how in the contrast of ignorance versus wisdom, the meaning [of difference] is demonstrated.

2.If the mind gives rise to perception, then there can be characteristic that is not perceived; when the inherent nature of the mind is separated from perception, then it [the mind] is signified by the meaning of illumination over the entire dharma realm. This shows that when the mind gives rise to

deluded perception, then there could be some characteristic perceived while some not. This is because the mind follows and turns with phenomenon; and phenomenon has boundaries and limitations. Thus the perception cannot be all encompassing; so it is said *if the mind gives rise to perception, then there can be characteristic that is not perceived.* In contrast, the mind has inherent nature away from perception, namely, the fundamental enlightenment, which is the true nature of mind, is away from all delusory perception. This demonstrates the *meaning of illumination over the entire dharma realm.* The *Suramgama Sutra* states: “Recognizing perception then establishing such perception is the foundation of ignorance; recognizing perception but acknowledging no perception is indeed nirvana.” This also illustrates the same meaning.

3.If the mind sways, then it [the deluded mind] is not capable of real, true perception and understanding: This shows that unless the mind does not sway; if it does sway, then it is no longer the mind of true thusness, but deluded perception and understanding such that the understanding may pertain to one thing but not the other. In contrast, if the mind does not sway, then it is capable of truthful perception and understanding which match true thusness such that the understanding is all encompassing.

4.It is without the inherently [pure and clear] nature: Previously, the text states that one's mind is of inherently pure and clear nature, and this pure and clear mind is the embodiment of all dharmas. If the mind is swayed by delusion, then this inherent nature will be indeed lost. In other words, there will be no inherently pure and clear mind to be perceived. In contrast, if the mind does not sway by delusion, then the inherent nature will reveal and show. This is indeed the pure and clear fundamental embodiment.

5.It pertains to no eternity, no bliss, no free manifestation of self and no purity: Regarding false, deluded dharmas, this refers to the eight inverted mind relating to the uninitiated and the saint. In contrast, if the mind does not sway, then true thusness is inherently constant; nirvana is calm and blissful; Dharma-body is free without bondage; inherent nature is pure and clear. These constitute the truthful and rightful four virtues [of Buddhahood.]

6.It is obsessed by heat, disturbance, the consequent transforming to change, and thus without liberation: This indicates that because the mind sways, distressing passions burn in flames becoming heat and disturbance. In contrast, if the mind does not sway, it constitutes the pure and serene prajna. Further,

due to the mind's swaying, delusory thoughts moving, flowing, originating, abiding, differentiating, ceasing, inducing birth, old, disease, death, transforming to changes. In contrast, if the mind does not sway, then the inherent embodiment of true thusness is fundamentally without originating, ceasing, transforming to changes. But, instead, it is truly constant, calm and ceasing. Further, because the mind sways, it falls into the five defiled realms, initiating delusions, committing karmic deeds, receiving retribution, being delusively tied up, consequently without liberation. In contrast, if the mind does not sway, then it is liberated, thus attaining great freedom.

This continues until containing such defilements surpassing the sands of the Ganges River. In contrast to this meaning, if the mind does not sway, then the meaning of its characteristics containing various pure virtues and merits surpassing the sands of the Ganges River can be demonstrated. "This continues until" is the brief way to encompass a great range. This refers to true thusness being fundamentally without swaying, thus without differentiating characteristics; but due to swaying of the mind by delusion, there will be characteristic of defilements surpassing the Ganges River. In contrast to such delusory defilements, the inherent mind can

stay without swaying. Then, speaking of reversing the swaying, but returning to purity, there will be characteristic of various pure virtues and merits surpassing the Ganges River to be revealed and demonstrated.

If the deluded mind rises, and further perceives [subjective] thoughts grasping on to previous dharma, then it lacks [the perfection of the pure and clear mind]. Therefore the measureless virtues and merits of pure dharma are but the one mind only. There is absolutely no further [subjective] thought beyond that. This is how it is perfectly fulfilled [by pure dharma], and is called the Dharma Body, also, the treasure of Tathagata.

This paragraph demonstrates the meaning of perfect fulfillment of dharma of purity. The first three phrases explore the meaning by contrasts.

If the mind sways, the deluded mind rises: This is when the mind is swayed by delusion, in which case the dharma of defilement from ignorance has not been completely relinquished. Therefore, the characteristic of karmic deeds has not yet ceased. *Further perceives [subjective] thoughts grasping on*

to previous dharma: This means there is still dharma outside of the mind perceived by the mind and consequently grasped by [subjective] thoughts. This evolves and becomes the characteristic of discerning wisdom. In this case, the capability for perception and the object of perception are neither non-existent. Therefore the pure and clear mind is not yet perfected. *Then it lacks [the perfection of the pure and clear mind].*

Therefore the measureless virtues and merits of pure dharma are but the one mind only. There is absolutely no further [subjective] thought beyond that. This is how it is perfectly fulfilled [by pure dharma], and is called the Dharma Body, also, the treasure of Tathagata. Here the text explains directly that the pure dharma surpassing the sands of the Ganges River, containing characteristic of measureless virtues and merits are but the one mind. When the one mind is perfectly fulfilled, then every delusion is completely purified. Beyond this mind there is no further dharma to be obtained. Then, how could there be [subjective] thought! Thus it is said to be perfectly fulfilled, that is, perfectly fulfilled with pure dharma. It is called the Dharma Body prevailing everywhere. This is the treasure of Tathagata embracing measureless virtues of purity.

This concludes the explanation of the greatness of embodiment and the greatness of characteristic. What follows will explain the greatness of application.

The meaning of Mahayana: the three great

The greatness of application

Further, for the application of true thusness, it pertains to all the Buddhas, Tathagatas, originally at ground of cause, aspiring great compassion and mercy, practicing various paramitas, in order to embrace and enlighten sentient beings.

They make great vows and wishes to liberate and enlighten, equally, all realms of sentient beings, reaching to the utmost realms; not limited to the number of kalpas either, forever extending to the future. It is because [the Buddhas] take all sentient beings as their own bodies, yet not grasping on the characteristic of their being sentient beings either.

What does this mean? This means [all Buddhas] truthfully knowing that all sentient beings and their own selves are equal in true thusness, without any difference.

This paragraph states the cause in view of the fruit in order to illustrate the fundamental source of the greatness of application. It indicates that all Buddhas, fundamentally at the ground of cause, with the suffering sentient beings as the circumstance, make great vow of compassion, widely practice the six paramitas in order to give sentient beings joy while extinguishing their sufferings. In short: by means of the Bodhi mind, practicing the Bodhi way.

They make great vows because they enlighten sentient beings with boundless vows. Wishes to liberate and enlighten, equally, all realms of sentient beings, reaching to the utmost realms: this means their vows and wishes to enlighten sentient beings are general and all encompassing, reaching to the utmost realms of sentient beings. And this is not limited to the number of kalpas either, forever extending to the future: This is because practicing the six paramitas to enlighten sentient beings is without tiredness. It is due to the broad, encompassing mind, the long, enduring mind.

It is because [the Buddhas] take all sentient beings as their own bodies, yet not grasping on the characteristic of their being sentient beings either: This is 1) by means of compassion to embrace sentient beings taking them as oneself, and 2) by means of wisdom to not grasp the characteristic of sentient beings [as separate entity]. With compassion running deep, wisdom running deep, a mind not inverted to these two [compassion and wisdom], and thus being able to share the same embodiment [with sentient beings] in equality, without attachment to the delusory characteristic of self and others.

What does this mean? This means all Buddhas truly understanding, with knowledge matching the real principle of true thusness, that all sentient beings and one's own self are both false [temporary] name and delusory characteristics. The embodiment [of both Buddha and sentient beings] is the Dharma-body, equal in true thusness, without any differentiation of whether high or low, great or small.

Due to such wisdom of great expedience, ignorance will be relinquished and the fundamental Dharma-body will be perceived. Then there will

naturally be application of various inconceivable deeds which indeed being equal to true thusness, encompassing everywhere; but yet without characteristic of application to be obtained.

Why is that? This is because all Buddhas and Tathagatas are the body of characteristic wisdom of the Dharma-body only, which pertains to the first principle truth, without realms of secular principle, without establishing or doing. Just according to, and accommodating, sentient beings, for them to benefit from seeing [the Buddha] and hearing [Buddhist Dharma], so this is said to be the application [of true thusness].

This paragraph relates the cause to show the fruit, namely, illustrating the cause of wisdom in relinquishing ignorance, then demonstrating the double fruits of benefiting self and others. *Due to such wisdom of great expedience* refers to the previously stated cause. The previous paragraph indicates the great expedience of compassion and wisdom. Expedience is but wisdom, specifically, the wisdom of beginning enlightenment in turning defilement back to purity. Until the defiled dharma of fundamental and branch ignorance have both been relinquished, the source of mind had returned to the

origin, and the ultimate [Buddhist path] is completed, the beginning and fundamental enlightenment will join to become one, and the inherent Dharma-body will be realized. This is how *ignorance will be relinquished and the fundamental Dharma-body will be perceived*, and thus accomplishes the fruit of benefiting self.

Then there will naturally be application of various inconceivable deeds which indeed being equal to true thusness, encompassing everywhere; but yet without characteristic of application to be obtained. This clearly illustrates the application, namely as the fruit of benefiting others. Because the embodiment of the Dharma-body is realized, application is initiated from this embodiment. The application arises *naturally* since this does not rely on *establishing or doing*. The application involving *various inconceivable deeds* means the wondrous application is without limit. Since the wondrous application arises from the embodiment, it is therefore *equal* to the embodiment of *true thusness, encompassing everywhere*. And because the application is *inconceivable*, though there is application, yet there is no characteristic of application to be obtained.

Asking *why is that* brings forth the question and

response session in order to clarify doubt. Here the discourse questions that, for application, why should there be no characteristic of application? Namely, if there is no characteristic of application, then by what means [the Buddhas] enlighten the sentient beings? The response is *because all Buddhas and Tathagatas are the body of characteristic wisdom of the Dharma-body only*. This means the Dharma-body of all Buddhas has no characteristic, but only the greatness of embodiment, embodying the principle of true thusness. The characteristic wisdom refers to the Reward-body where the application [of true thusness] is directed to the self, showing the greatness of characteristic of true thusness. This means to adorn the pure and clear Dharma-body with wisdom and virtues. Therefore, *all Buddhas and the Tathagatas are the body of characteristic wisdom of the Dharma-body only*.

Further, this pure and clear Dharma-body, adorned with wisdom and virtues, is the first among all real meanings, all true principles, thus *pertains to the first principle truth*. This first principle truth is inconceivable, therefore without the discriminating realms of secular principle. Its embodiment is non-doing, therefore naturally away from established endeavors. Consequently, there is no characteristic of application.

Just according to, and accommodating sentient beings, for them to benefit from seeing [the Buddha] and hearing [Buddhist Dharma], so this is said to be the application. This means just according to sentient beings' capacity and their responsive circumstances, then accommodating them by their seeing the Buddha and hearing Buddhist dharma, [the Buddhas] thus enable them to receive benefit. This is called the application. In this manner, the mind of sentient beings will be like pure, clear water in which the image of Bodhi will be reflected. This explains the so-called with application but without characteristic of application.

This application [of true thusness] consists of two perspectives. What are the two? The first perspective relies on the Consciousness of Distinguishing Experiences. [The body of Buddha] perceived by this mind of the uninitiated or the practitioners of the two vehicles is called the Accommodating-body [Transformation-body].

Because they do not understand the manifestation by the Consciousness of Evolving, their perception focuses on external phenomenon, grasping the differentiating distinctions in forms, consequently

their understanding is not complete.

From this paragraph on, the text demonstrates the different fruits of this application depending on the perception from the ground of cause. The text here illustrates two perspectives of the application of true thusness. They refer to the perception [of the Buddha] by the mind of the uninitiated or the practitioners of the two vehicles, and the bodhisattvas: the first is called the Accommodating-body [or Transformation-body], and the second is called the Reward-body [or Enjoyment-body]. This all follows from the previous paragraph: *Just according to, and accommodating sentient beings, for them to benefit from seeing [the Buddha] and hearing [Buddhist Dharma], so this is said to be the application.*

Now the perception of the uninitiated or the practitioners of the two vehicles will be explained first. They practice by means of their Consciousness of Distinguishing Experiences only, that is when the six consciousness [corresponding to the six sense faculties] will be specifically discriminated. Therefore, the body of Buddha they perceive will be the Accommodating [Transformation]-body, namely, the Buddha of the Accommodating-body with the

thirty-two marks.

The text continues to reason why the uninitiated and the practitioners of the two vehicles can only perceive the Accommodating-body of the Buddha. *Because they do not understand the manifestation of the Consciousness of Evolving* explains that they do not know that in the eighth-consciousness [the store consciousness] there is no distinction between the subjective [perceptive] part and the objective [phenomenal] part. They grasp phenomenon to be from outside the mind, perceiving forms coming from external realms. Thus they grasp differentiation in forms like the body of the Buddha being over sixteen feet, or the thirty-two marks of the Buddha etc. To have differentiating distinction in forms means to have limiting values, that there is boundary limit. *Consequently their understanding is not complete* means not being able to completely understand the Reward-body of the Buddha which is endowed with boundless adornments, yet without distinction in mind or form.

The second perspective relies on the Consciousness of Act. This refers to [the body of the Buddha] perceived by the mind of the bodhisattvas from their initial aspiration [to the Buddhist path] until

their reaching the ultimate ground of the bodhisattvas practice. This is called the Reward-body.

This body [the Reward-body of the Buddha] has limitless forms; the forms have limitless characteristics; the characteristics have limitless superior qualities. The land where this Reward-body resides [perceived by the bodhisattvas] also have various limitless adornments from secondary reward [circumstantial retribution]. These will manifest as the situations demand following [the need and capacity of the bodhisattvas], which is without bound, no limit to be reached, away from any differential discriminations. Responding and complying in accordance to [the bodhisattvas], [these manifestations] can forever maintain, neither destroyed, nor lost. Such merits and virtues are all accomplished due to the perfuming by practicing the various paramitas without attachment, and due to the inconceivable perfuming. This fully contains measureless characteristics of bliss, and is thus called the Reward-body of the Buddha.

This paragraph demonstrates the second perspective

of the application of true thusness. It refers to the perception [of the Buddha] by the mind of the bodhisattvas and is called the Reward-body. *The second perspective relies on the Consciousness of Act:* this means the bodhisattvas rely on their eighth consciousness. This indicates that the mind of the bodhisattvas, initially starts from the positions in pursuit of the ten understandings (of Buddhist dharma,) that is, from the first of the ten abodes onward, is perfumed internally for their Consciousness of Act by the fundamental enlightenment, and perfumed externally by the power of facilitating perfuming from their pure practice of merits and wisdom. This proceeds through the practice for the three sagacity [ten abodes, ten practices, ten dedications of merit] and the ten grounds, until reaching the ultimate tenth ground of dharma cloud.

This refers to [the body of the Buddha] perceived by the mind of the bodhisattvas: this refers to the perceptions by a mind in Samadhi having practiced the three sagacity, and by a spontaneous natural mind from practicing the ten ground; both have detailed characteristics of the Reward-body of the Buddha. Actually, these perceptions are all manifested by the mind only, not from outside of the mind. Because these bodhisattvas all have mind with superior

aspirations, consequently their perceptions are also superior, that is, superior to, and surpassing the Accommodating-body. Thus this is also called the Reward-body for the Enjoyment of Others.

This body [the Reward-body of the Buddha] has limitless forms; the forms have limitless characteristics; the characteristics have limitless superior qualities: This illustrates the perceived characteristics due to primary karmic reward or direct retribution. It refers to the Buddha's Reward-body, perceived by the various bodhisattvas, having bodily form, characteristic, and superior qualities, each measureless without limit. This differs from the Accommodating-body perceived by the uninitiated and the practitioners of the two vehicles, having bodily form of sixteen feet, characteristic of thirty two marks, superior qualities of eighty categories.

Where this Reward-body resides [perceived by the bodhisattvas] also have various limitless adornments from secondary reward [circumstantial karmic retribution]: This illustrates the perceived characteristic due to secondary karmic reward. This refers to the fruit of secondary karmic reward reflected in the pure and serene land where this Buddha [Reward-body of the Buddha] resides. It also has measureless various glorious adornments to

decorate and glorify, such as glorious fragrance, glorious light, and various adornments from objects of form, and objects of sound etc.

They will manifest as the situation demands following [the need and capacity of the bodhisattvas]: Here the text ties up the illustrations of perception. No matter whether they are adornments due to secondary reward or superior characteristic due to primary reward, they are all manifested and demonstrated according to sentient beings' mind, *without bound, no limit to be reached, away from any differential discrimination.* This differs from the previously discussed Accommodating-body with differentiated forms.

Responding and complying in accordance to [the bodhisattvas], [these manifestations] can forever maintain, neither destroyed, nor lost: This means it is, in response to, accommodating, and according to, what the sentient beings should perceive that the Reward-body and relative reward land of the Tathagata are manifested and demonstrated. Further, these manifestations can constantly abide and maintain, neither be destroyed, nor be lost.

Such merits and virtues are all accomplished due to the perfuming by practicing the various paramitas

without attachment, and due to the inconceivable perfuming: Here the text concludes the fruit via the cause. It indicates that such merits and virtues from the primary and secondary karmic reward are all fruit of the perfuming of the Dharma-body of true thusness by the perfuming power of the practices without attachment as the cause, namely the practice of the six paramitas, or including the four additional paramitas all together ten paramitas, by the bodhisattvas. And further, this is also due to the accomplishment of *the inconceivable perfuming* by the perceived Buddhas: 1. the continuous perfuming from within since beginning-less beginning initiated by the Treasure of Tathagata; 2. the application of the inconceivable deeds by the various Buddhas to the bodhisattvas in their practice, such as the equal circumstance and the differentiated circumstance.

Therefore, the perfuming by the practice without attachment, the inherent perfuming from within, and the perfuming as endowment by the Buddhas, together constitutes the causes and circumstances for the accomplishment of the Buddha and His land with virtues and merits. The body of this Buddha and His pure land, are wondrous, pure, serene and joyful, and thus *fully contains measureless characteristics of bliss.* Because this body of the Buddha is adorned with such measureless blissful

reward it is thus called the Reward-body. And because this Reward-body is perceived by the mind of the bodhisattvas, therefore, is also called the Reward-body for the Enjoyment of Others.

Further, what the uninitiated perceive is the coarse form. This [body of the Buddha] is perceived differently in accordance to each of the six different realms [lower states of existence: hell, hungry spirits, animals, *asuras*, men, and heavenly beings], [manifesting in] various different beings, not with the characteristic of received bliss [from dharma], and thus is called the Accommodating-body [of the Buddha].

This paragraph focuses on the explanation of the Accommodating-body. What the uninitiated perceive follows the type of living beings they belong; therefore they perceive the Accommodating / Transformation-body in accordance to their own kind. For instance, the Accommodating-body perceived by the uninitiated people will resemble the common uninitiated people showing coarse characteristic of form. What the heavenly beings perceiving will be like heavenly beings; what the humans perceiving will be like humans; what the hungry spirits perceiving

will be like hungry spirits. Thus according to the six realms, the perception will be different, with various differences following the different living beings. Consequently, the perceived body of the Buddha will not receive and enjoy characteristic of bliss from dharma through application. This is all because the manifestation, accommodating the need and capacity of the living beings, will be different. Therefore, this is called the Accommodating-body of the Buddha.

Further, regarding the perception of the bodhisattvas, from the positions of initial aspiration etc., due to their deep faith in the dharma of true thusness, they can partially perceive [the Reward-body of the Buddha]. They understand that [the Reward-body] has characteristic of forms and various adornments; that [such manifestation] has no characteristic of coming or going, without any differential discrimination, manifesting only in accordance to the mind, not separated from true thusness.

However, these bodhisattvas still practice with discriminations, due to not yet entering the positions [on the bodhisattva path] for the Dharma-body.

Once they attain the ground of pure mind, then their perception will be wondrous, their application will become superior. Upon completion of the ten grounds of bodhisattva practice, their perception will reach the ultimate.

If the Consciousness of Act is relinquished, then there will be no characteristic of perception. This is because, with respect to the Dharma-body of all Buddhas, reciprocally, there is no characteristic of form to be mutually perceived.

Previously, the discussion of the Reward-body [of the Buddha] relates to the perception by the mind of the bodhisattvas from their initial aspiration until their reaching the ultimate ground [the tenth ground of the bodhisattvas practice]. This paragraph further explains the Reward-body in detail in order to demonstrate how the perceptions differ between those practicing for the three sagacity [positions for ten abodes, ten practice, ten dedications], and those practicing on the ten grounds [the highest positions of bodhisattvas path]. Previously the text states that, relying on the Consciousness of Act, the perceptions of those bodhisattvas, at initial aspiration [to the bodhisattva path] until the ultimate ground, namely, from the practice for three sagacity, to the practice for

ten saints, are all characteristic of the Reward-body. Yet, among these perceptions, depending on whether the positions of practice may be shallow or deep, the respective perceptions may be partial or perfect.

Further, regarding the perception of the bodhisattvas, from the positions of initial aspiration etc., due to their deep faith in the dharma of true thusness, they can partially perceive [the Reward-body of the Buddha]. Referring to those at the initial aspiration, namely, positions of ten abodes, to those at the positions of the three sagacity, the text compares the perceptions of the Reward-body by these bodhisattvas who have not yet entered the ten grounds [the highest positions of bodhisattva path]. It is due to their very deep faith and understanding of the dharma of all equal true thusness that, though they have not yet reached enlightenment personally, nevertheless they can perceive the Reward-body partially. Though they still rely on their discriminating six sense consciousness such that they practice with wisdom inferred from contemplation, the wisdom with discernment only, however, they do contemplate and practice with deep faith and understanding. Therefore, they attain the semblance enlightenment, semblance perception of the Reward-body of the Buddha, so called "partial perception." When they attain the wisdom through Mahayana practice such

that in their contemplation of the mind, they realize that the Dharma-body is without characteristic, only manifesting according to the mind; then, in their faith and understanding, they will partially perceive the characteristic virtues of the Reward-body. This differs from the uninitiated and the practitioners of the two vehicles who perceive the Buddha being outside the mind.

*They understand that [the Reward-body] has characteristic of forms and various adornments; that [such manifestation] has no characteristic of coming or going, without any differential discrimination, manifesting only in accordance to the mind, not separated from true thusness:*From their perceptions, these bodhisattvas know that the Reward-body has measureless forms, with measureless superior characteristic and various adornments; which only manifest at the present place, at the present moment, without characteristic of coming, without characteristic of going, without mutually differential discriminating characteristic between the perceptions; that the characteristic of forms and adornments, of such body of the Buddha and His Buddha land manifest only in accordance to the mind, not separated from true thusness.

However, these bodhisattvas still practice with

*discriminations, due to not yet entering the positions for the Dharma-body:*Here the text points out that, these bodhisattvas differ from those already in the practice of the ten grounds. Before entering the ten grounds of bodhisattvas path, although capable of partial perception of the Reward-body of the Buddha in semblance, and understanding that the perceived superior characteristic are but mind only, not separated from true thusness, these bodhisattvas have not yet relinquished the sixth consciousness, the mental consciousness, still conscious of discrimination, have not yet attained the wisdom of non-discrimination, have not yet realized true thusness. They are not the same as those bodhisattvas practicing on the ten grounds because they have not yet entered the positions for the Dharma-body.

*Once they attain the ground of pure mind, then their perception will be wondrous, their application will become superior. Upon the completion of the ten grounds of bodhisattva practice, their perception will reach the ultimate:*This shows the perceptions of the Reward-body by those bodhisattvas practicing on the positions of the ten grounds. Because they personally experience the realization of true thusness, and attain the ground of pure mind, their perceptions of the Reward-body have superior characteristic and

adornments, all that is wondrous, pure. And the wondrous application of the inconceivable three deeds manifested by the Buddha, also further evolve toward superior excellence. In this way, moving up the path, ground by ground [the ten grounds of bodhisattva path], further turning toward more wonderful and superior excellence, ground by ground. Until all the grounds of the bodhisattva path is completed, that is, the tenth ground of dharma cloud and the diamond-like mind is attained; the perception by the bodhisattvas will be ultimately perfect.

If the Consciousness of Act is relinquished, then there will be no characteristic of perception. This is because, with respect to the Dharma-body of all Buddhas, reciprocally, there is no characteristic of forms to be mutually perceived. Previously it has been explained that the perception of the Reward-body relies on the Consciousness of Act which in turn leads to the Consciousness of Evolving and the Consciousness of Manifesting. Consequently, on the way from delusion back to enlightenment, the Beginning Enlightenment is still involved in the practice of the exoteric, not yet separated from the capability of perception and the object of perception. Therefore the practitioner still perceives because he has not yet realized the Dharma-body. Now the text focuses on when the

Consciousness of Act is relinquished. This means the Beginning Enlightenment will be returned to the source, that is, there will be no subjective perception from the Consciousness of Evolving and no objective phenomenon from the Consciousness of Manifesting. This is due to the true embodiment of Dharma-body being of one true mind only, completely without [subject] corresponding to [object], belonging to neither delusion nor enlightenment, not arising due to circumstances. In other words, the inherent Dharma-body is equal in Buddhas and sentient beings, without any characteristic of form, without the capability for perception or the object of perception, thus it is said there will be no characteristic of perception. Namely, upon reaching the ultimate position of the Buddha, there will be no perception by the capability to perceive, likewise, there will be no characteristic to be perceived by such perception.

Because once the Consciousness of Act is relinquished, there will be no Consciousness of Evolving or the Consciousness of Manifesting; the practitioner will ultimately understand that for the previous relinquishment of delusion, there is really no delusion to be relinquished. Now, since the Beginning Enlightenment has become the same as Fundamental Enlightenment, there will be no characteristic of the Reward-body; and since there is

no sentient being to be enlightened, there will be no characteristic of the Accommodating-body. These characteristics return back to the Dharma-body, then, application is returned to the embodiment; there will be no characteristic to be obtained. Thus it is said that *with respect to the Dharma-body of all Buddhas, reciprocally, there is no characteristic of form to be mutually perceived.* This means because all Buddhas share one Dharma-body, and the Dharma-body is without characteristic; therefore, among each other, reciprocally, there will be no characteristic of form to be mutually perceived.

Question: If the Dharma-body of all Buddhas is away from characteristic of form, then how can they manifest with characteristic of form?

Response: This is due to the Dharma-body being the embodiment of form, therefore, capable of manifesting in form. This is because from the very beginning, form and mind are not two [but one]. Since the nature of form is that of wisdom, the embodiment of form is without appearance, thus to be called the body of wisdom. Since the nature of wisdom is that of form, thus to be called the Dharma-body, pervasive everywhere.

The manifested form are without differentiation; according to the mind, they can be shown to the worlds in all ten directions, limitless bodhisattvas, limitless Reward-body, limitless adornments, each distinct from the other, yet without differentiation among them, without hindering each other. This is not what the mind with the consciousness of discrimination can understand; this is due to the meaning of great freedom of the application of true thusness.

This paragraph is in the question and response format for clarifying doubt. The question is motivated by not understanding that the Dharma-body is away from characteristic, but yet not hindered from manifesting in characteristic. Thus the question: *If the Dharma-body of all Buddhas is away from characteristic of form, then how can they manifest with characteristic of form?* Namely, questioning: how can they manifest in the characteristic forms of the Reward-body and the Accommodating-body?

The response: *This is due to the Dharma-body being the embodiment of form, therefore, capable of manifesting in form.* Here is the general explanation: it is because the embodiment of Dharma-body is very great; it embodies all dharmas of form. Thus it is

capable of manifesting, that is, capable of manifesting the characteristic form of the Reward-body and the Accommodating-body.

This is because from the very beginning, form and the mind are not two [but one]. Since the nature of form is that of wisdom, the embodiment of form is without appearance, thus to be called the body of wisdom. Since the nature of wisdom is that of form, thus to be called the Dharma-body, pervasive everywhere. This gives more specific, detailed explanation. It indicates that from the very beginning, form and the mind are not two, but one. Form rises from the mind, form is but the mind. Thus it is said that *the nature of form is that of wisdom.* The nature of form is just the nature of wisdom because the embodiment of form is fundamentally empty, without appearance to be obtained, *thus to be called the body of wisdom.* Wisdom refers to the wisdom from the mind of fundamental enlightenment, which is exactly the Dharma-body. Further, the mind is capable of manifesting form, the mind is just form; thus it is said *the nature of wisdom is that of form.* Like water, omnipresent in the waves, such that the nature of water is the nature of waves. Therefore, the nature of wisdom is but that of form, *to be called the Dharma-body, pervasive everywhere.*

The manifested forms are without differentiation; according to the mind, they can be shown to the worlds in all ten directions, limitless bodhisattvas, limitless Reward-body, limitless adornments, each distinct from the other, yet without differentiation among them, without hindering each other. This is not what the mind with the consciousness of discrimination can understand; this demonstrates the meaning of great freedom of the application of true thusness. This elaborates further the form which is manifested. There is no differentiation in the appearance [of such forms], unlike the characteristic of forms perceived by the mind of the uninitiated or the practitioners of the two vehicles. This means the Dharma-body is without divisions or limitations such that the characteristic forms manifested from the Dharma-body are without differentiations. Various Buddhas, by their power of pure wisdom, just in accordance to their mind, are able to manifest and demonstrate the worlds in ten directions. In each world there will be limitless bodhisattvas, limitless Reward-body of the Buddha, limitless adornments from the primary and secondary karmic rewards. For instance, in the world of Pure Land, examples of primary reward will be the countless, billions transformed Buddhas in brilliant light etc.; examples of secondary reward will be the jewel trees and jewel nets emitting wondrous music etc. However, these

manifested primary and secondary rewards, though with characteristics of form distinct from each other, have no differentiation among them, give no hindrance to each other. This is like the perceptual realm stated in the Flower Ornament Sutra: where layers upon layers without limit, interlacing like Indra's net, large and small mutually contain, one or many without hindering. Yet such [perception] is not what the uninitiated mind with the consciousness of discrimination can understand. This pertains to the greatness of the application of true thusness, it can be applied with great freedom. Only those bodhisattvas, who are enlightened to the Dharma-body from the practice of the ten grounds, are able to truly realize and understand.

The originating and ceasing mind and the true

thusness mind: two gateways but one mind

Further, it will be demonstrated that from the gateway of the originating and ceasing mind, one can directly enter the gateway of the true thusness mind: the way is to seek and observe that the five aggregates, the form and the mind, the realms of the six sense objects, ultimately are without [subjective] thoughts. It is because the mind is without appearance or characteristic, nothing can be obtained, even by pursuing in ten directions.

It is like when a person is lost, taking the east direction to be the west, but in reality the directions do not turn. It is the same for sentient beings; because they have been deluded by ignorance, taking the mind to be [subjective] thoughts, but in reality the mind does not move.

If one is able to contemplate and understand that the mind is without [subjective] thoughts, then accordingly, he will be able to enter directly the gateway of the true thusness mind.

Up to this point the text has demonstrated that the

gateway of the originating and ceasing mind, and the gateway of the true thusness mind, while the former in motion, the latter forever calm, are not the same. However in this paragraph, through perceiving the delusory characteristic, thus realizing the nature of true reality, the text shows that the two gateways of the originating and ceasing mind and the true thusness mind, though one in motion, the other forever calm, are not different. The author of this Discourse establishes the gateway of the originating and ceasing mind and the gateway of the true thusness mind in order to illustrate that the originating and ceasing mind and the true thusness mind are fundamentally from one mind. If one understands and attains the one mind, then from the originating and ceasing mind he enters the true thusness mind; if he does not understand the one mind, then from the true thusness mind he enters the originating and ceasing mind. This paragraph focuses on how, from the gateway of the originating and ceasing mind, one enters the gateway of the true thusness mind: *Further, it will be demonstrated that from the gateway of the originating and ceasing mind, one can directly enter the gateway of the true thusness mind.*

The way is to seek and observe that the five aggregates, the forms and the mind, the realms of the six sense objects, ultimately are without

[subjective] thoughts. It is because the mind is without appearance or characteristic, nothing can be obtained even by seeking in ten directions: This explains how to “directly enter.” In other words, there is no need to enter through other means, but just seek, observe, then contemplate the five aggregates, and the six sense objects. This is because various dharmas of originating and ceasing, grasped by the deluded mind, do not go beyond the realms of the five aggregates and the realms of the six sense objects. One should contemplate that, these five aggregates and these six sense objects are all illusory characteristic delusorily manifested by the discrimination of the deluded mind. The deluded mind belongs to the dharma of mind; the illusory characteristic belongs to the dharma of form. Such form and mind are both phenomenon rising from the mind; if the deluded mind is relinquished, then the realm of the six sense objects become ultimately without thoughts. Conversely, contemplate that the deluded mind is fundamentally without appearance or characteristic, nowhere in the inside, the outside, or in between; even pursue in ten directions there is nothing to obtain. Like the way the Patriarch Bodhidharma [first patriarch of Chinese Zen School] teaches the second patriarch: hand over your mind, I will settle it for you. The second patriarch, upon seeking the mind and entirely unable to obtain,

becomes instantly enlightened as they speak, and immediately realizes the principle of non-thought.

It is like when a person is lost, taking the east direction to be the west, but in reality the directions do not turn. These three phases demonstrates an analogy, saying that the person, in confusion, illusorily regarding the east direction as the west direction. Though the directions are mistaken in the person's confusion, in reality, the east has not turned into the west. The east direction, though mistakenly thought [to be the west], still is the rightful direction, there is no west direction to be obtained here.

It is the same for sentient beings; because they have been deluded by ignorance, taking the mind to be [subjective] thoughts, but in reality the mind does not move. Here the [Buddhist] dharma parallels the analogy. Sentient beings is analogous to the lost person, ignorance is analogous to confusion. Due to delusion by one original ignorant thought, the true pure mind becomes deluded, regarding the mind to be various delusory [subjective] thoughts, grasping delusion for real truth; not knowing that the true mind does not really move, just like the right direction does not really turn. For example, though the water may become waves, yet its liquid nature will not change; the undulating wave is but fundamentally water.

If one is able to contemplate and understand that the mind is without [subjective] thoughts, then accordingly, he will be able to directly enter the gateway of the true thusness mind. This indicates that if one is able to initiate contemplative prajna, and thus understand that the mind is fundamentally without delusory thoughts; that the deluded subjective thoughts rise following circumstances, without inherent nature. Then to him, sensation, perception, volition and consciousness [the rest of the five aggregates] will be just the embodiment of emptiness, the real characteristic of true thusness, without characteristic of thought to be obtained at all. Thus, accordingly, he is able to directly enter the gateway of the true thusness mind. This is what meant by perceiving delusory characteristic thus realizing true reality; motion is but no motion.

Now the explanation of Section III.1) Demonstrate the Right Meaning has been completed. This also concludes the fourth volume of the present translation of Dharma Master Chi Hoi's *An Edited Explication of the Discourse on the Awakening of Faith in the Mahayana*. The fifth volume of this translation will begin with Section III.2) Refute False Grasping, then, continue with Section III.3) Distinguish the Aspirations toward and Achievements

along the Buddhist Path. Volume 2 through Volume 5 together will complete the explanation of the entire Section III. This is the major section which elaborates the central theme of the original Discourse by the Bodhisattvas Asvaghosha and, likewise, the central theme of the Edited Explication of the Discourse by Dharma Master Chi Hoi: the meaning and perspective of Mahayana Buddhism.

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