

Twenty-Two Similes of Bodhichitta

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The twenty-two similes from earth to cloud refer to the essence of the generation of bodhichitta itself, from the generation of bodhichitta that is concurrent with the initial intention to the bodhichitta concurrent with the dharmakaya. Thus there are twenty-two categories, which can be understood through twenty-two analogous factors, on account of the similarity between the examples and their referents.

- 1) The bodhichitta generated in conjunction with the initial intention ('dun pa) to strive towards unsurpassable complete enlightenment is likened to the **earth**, because it functions as a support for all the virtuous dharmas of enlightenment and its causes.
- 2) The bodhichitta generated in conjunction with the wish (bsam pa) to sustain the continuity of this initial intention is likened to **gold**, because this excellent wish to bring benefit and happiness, which encompasses the six paramitas, does not change until buddhahood.
- 3) The bodhichitta generated in conjunction with a noble intention (lhag bsam) is likened to the **waxing moon**, because all the virtuous dharmas, the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment and so on, develop further and further.
- 4) The bodhichitta generated in conjunction with application (sbyor ba) of the threefold knowledge beyond arising is likened to **fire**, because it burns away the kindling of the obscurations which obstruct an understanding of the object, the threefold knowledge.
- 5) The bodhichitta generated in conjunction with the paramita of generosity is likened to a **great treasure**, because it brings satisfaction to all beings through Dharma and material wealth, and yet it is never exhausted.
- 6) The bodhichitta generated in conjunction with the paramita of moral discipline is likened to a **mine of jewels**, because it provides a basis for the arising of all the precious qualities such as the strengths.
- 7) The bodhichitta generated in conjunction with the paramita of patience is likened to the **great ocean**, because when we have it we remain unperturbed by unwelcome events, such as fires or coming under armed attack.
- 8) The bodhichitta generated in conjunction with the paramita of diligence is likened to a vajra, because when we have it our confident trust in unsurpassed enlightenment is stable and can not be shattered by evil influences.
- 9) The bodhichitta generated in conjunction with the paramita of meditation is likened to the **most majestic of mountains**, because when we have it our samadhi is immovable and we can not become distracted by focusing on concepts.
- 10) The bodhichitta generated in conjunction with the paramita of wisdom through which one realizes the two kinds of selflessness is likened to a **great medicine**, because it thoroughly pacifies all the illnesses of the emotional obscurations such as attachment and thecognitive obscurations such as thoughts of perceived objects.
- 11) The bodhichitta generated in conjunction with the paramita of skilful means is likened to a **virtuous guide**, because with compassion and skilful means, no matter whether we enjoy great wealth or suffer loss, we will not forsake the welfare of all sentient beings.

- 12) The bodhichitta generated in conjunction with the paramita of aspiration is likened to a **wish-fulfilling jewel**, because with it all our prayers of aspiration will be fulfilled just as we desire.
- 13) The bodhichitta generated in conjunction with the paramita of strength is likened to the **sun**, because it ripens completely the crop of virtue within the minds of disciples.
- 14) The bodhichitta generated in conjunction with the paramita of primordial wisdom is likened to the **song of a gandharva**, because when we have it we can teach and inspire the minds of disciples with the sweet melodious sound of the Dharma.
- 15) The bodhichitta generated in conjunction with the supercognitions is likened to a **great king**, because when we have it we can accomplish the welfare of others with unimpeded power.
- 16) The bodhichitta generated in conjunction with the accumulations of merit and wisdom is likened to a **treasury**, because it is the source of an inconceivable gathering.
- 17) The bodhichitta generated in conjunction with the **thirty-seven factors of enlightenment** is likened to a **great highway**, because when we have it we can follow the approach taken by all the noble ones.
- 18) The bodhichitta generated in conjunction with a compassionate concern for others' welfare and the clear insight (*vipashyana*) of realizing how all phenomena lack true reality is likened to an **excellent horse**, because it easily carries us to **non-abiding nirvana**, without straying into the extremes of samsaric existence and quiescence.
- 19) The bodhichitta generated in conjunction with the mnemonic retention (*dharani*) of remembering words and meaning without fail and the confidence of teaching others unimpededly is likened to a **spring of water**, because when we have it we can retain all that we have heard, and teach it so that it does not go to waste.
- 20) The bodhichitta generated in conjunction with the joyful Dharma celebration of teaching the **four summaries** [or seals] of the Dharma is likened to **joyful music**, because when we have it we can proclaim the melodious sound of Dharma to disciples who long for liberation.
- 21) The bodhichitta generated in conjunction with the single path to be traversed is likened to the **flow of a river**, because when we have it we can engage continuously in impartial actions for others' welfare, responding automatically with compassion and wisdom, in the realization of the equality of knowing and what is known.
- 22) The bodhichitta generated in conjunction with the dharmakaya is likened to a **cloud**, because when we have it we can demonstrate completely the twelve deeds, such as residing in Tushita and so on, and in so doing ripen the harvest of beings' benefit and happiness.

These twenty-two categories of bodhichitta, which are explained in this way, represent all types of generation of bodhichitta, both causal and resultant. As regards their parameters, the first three belong to the **path of accumulation**, the next one to the **path of joining**, and the ten types of bodhichitta endowed with generosity to primordial wisdom are present on the **ten bhumis** included within the paths of seeing and meditation. The five categories [of bodhichitta] endowed with the superknowledges and so on belong to the special path of the tenth bhumi. The final three, endowed with a joyful celebration of Dharma and so on, belong to the preparation, main part and subsequent part of the level of **buddhahood**.