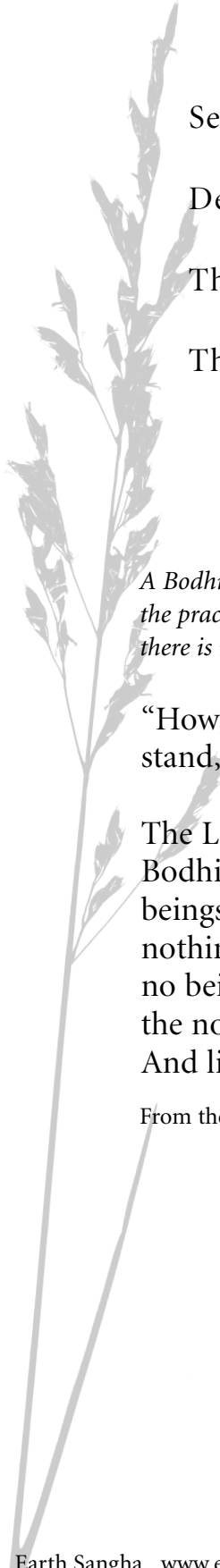


THE BODHISATTVA VOWS



Sentient beings are numberless;
I vow to save them.
Defilements are inexhaustible;
I vow to eradicate them.
The Dharmas are boundless;
I vow to master them.
The path to Buddhahood is unattainable;
I vow to attain it.

A Bodhisattva is someone who strives for “bodhi,” or enlightenment. This striving is the practice of the six perfections or paramitas. But in the practice of the paramitas, there is no room for a practitioner.

“How, O Lord, should one who has set out in the Bodhisattva-vehicle stand, how progress, how control his thoughts?”

The Lord replied, “Here, Subhuti, someone who has set out in the Bodhisattva-vehicle should produce a thought in this manner: ‘All beings I must lead to Nirvana, into that Realm of Nirvana that leaves nothing behind; and yet, after beings have thus been led to Nirvana, no being at all has been led to Nirvana.’ And why? If in a Bodhisattva the notion of a ‘being’ occurs, he could not be called a ‘Bodhi-being.’ And likewise with the notion of a soul, or a person.”

From the *Diamond Sutra*, chapter 17

THE PARAMITAS

Danaparamita (generosity)

Silaparamita (morality)

Ksantiparamita (patience)

Viryaparamita (vigor)

Dhyanaparamita (meditation)

Prajnaparamita (wisdom)