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## The Questions of Sāgaramati

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*Sāgaramatiparipṛcchā*

Translated into Tibetan by  
Jinamitra · Dānaśīla · Buddhaprabha · ye shes sde

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*'phags pa blo gros rgya mtshos zhus pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo*

The Noble Great Vehicle Sūtra “The Questions of Sāgaramati”

*Āryasāgaramatipariṇcchānāmamahāyānasūtra*



Toh 152  
Toh 152, Degé Kangyur, vol. 58, (mdo sde, pha), folios 1.b–115.b

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co.

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## SUMMARY

- s.1 Heralded by a miraculous flood, the celestial bodhisattva Sāgaramati arrives in Rājagṛha to engage in a Dharma discussion with Buddha Śākyamuni. He discusses an absorption called “The Pristine and Immaculate Seal” and many other subjects relevant to bodhisattvas who are in the process of developing the mind of awakening and practicing the bodhisattva path. The sūtra strongly advises that bodhisattvas not shy away from the afflictive emotions of beings—no matter how unpleasant they may be—and that insight into these emotions is critical for a bodhisattva’s compassionate activity. The sūtra deals with the preeminence of wisdom and non-grasping on the path. In the end, as a teaching on how to deal with māras, the sūtra illuminates the many pitfalls possible on the path of the Great Vehicle.

ac.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ac.1 Translated by the Dharmachakra Translation Committee under the supervision of Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche. The translation was produced by Timothy Hinkle, who also wrote the introduction. Andreas Doctor checked the translation against the Tibetan and edited the text.

The translation was completed under the patronage and supervision of 84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha.

ac.2 The generous sponsorship of Zhou Tian Yu, Chen Yi Qin, Zhou Xun, and Zhao Xuan, which helped make the work on this translation possible, is most gratefully acknowledged.

i.

## INTRODUCTION

i.1

*The Questions of Sāgaramati* begins in a courtyard in the city of Rājagṛha, where the Buddha Śākyamuni, a celestial bodhisattva named Sāgaramati, and many other gods and bodhisattvas converse on a wide variety of subjects relevant to the Great Vehicle. Sāgaramati's arrival in our world is preceded by a great miracle in which the world is flooded like a vast ocean, a miracle prompted by Sāgaramati's departure from a distant realm for our world, where he can receive the Buddha's teachings in person. The conversation between the Buddha Śākyamuni and Sāgaramati in Rājagṛha touches on many issues of the bodhisattva path. They converse about the adversities that bodhisattvas must face, the preeminence of wisdom, how māras are to be defeated, the necessity of understanding the afflictive emotions of sentient beings, the importance of diligence, the commonalities between all phenomena and buddhahood, the nature of the Dharma, and the importance of dedication. Much of the dialogue presupposes a duality between agents and objects, but at times Mañjuśrī and other exalted beings challenge this and articulate the teachings in the light of the wisdom of nonduality.

i.2

The sūtra enjoyed considerable popularity in India, as we find it quoted in such prominent scriptures as the *Sūtrasamuccaya* attributed to Nāgārjuna (ca. second century CE) and Asaṅga's (ca. fourth century CE) commentary (*vyākya*) on the *Ratnagoṭravibhāga*, and extensively in Śāntideva's (ca. eighth century) *Śikṣāsamuccaya*.<sup>1</sup> Given these testimonies to a wide circulation of *The Questions of Sāgaramati* in India, it seems fair to conclude that the sūtra occupied a significant position within the otherwise extensive corpus of the Great Vehicle tradition in India. Unfortunately, apart from the above-mentioned shorter quotations, the sūtra is no longer extant in Sanskrit.

i.3

This sūtra is one of four listed contiguously in the Degé Kangyur (Toh. 152-155) that contain some form of the name Sāgara in their title. In this sūtra, the interlocutor is Sāgaramati, a celestial bodhisattva, whereas in the three that follow, it is a nāga king named Sāgara. Despite their similarity in name



and their proximity within the Degé Kangyur, the only connection between these four texts is that two of the three texts called *The Questions of the Nāga King Sāgara*, Toh 153 and 154, appear to have the same provenance.<sup>2</sup>

i.4 Outside India, this sūtra was first translated into Chinese sometime between 414 and 426 by the Indian monk Dharmakṣema (385–433) as the fifth text in the *Mahāsaṃnipāta* (*Daji*, 大集) collection, Taishō 397; another Chinese translation made centuries later, Taishō 400 produced between 1024–1027, testifies to the longevity of the sūtra’s popularity in East Asia.<sup>3</sup> The sūtra is also quoted in inscriptions found as far as the Kedah province in Malaysia dated to the fifth to seventh centuries CE.<sup>4</sup>

i.5 In Tibet, the sūtra was translated by the Indian preceptors Jinamitra, Dānaśīla, and Buddhaprabha, together with the Tibetan translator Yeshé Dé. It is included in the *Denkarma* (*Idan dkar ma*), confirming that it was translated into Tibetan by the early ninth century.<sup>5</sup> Over the following centuries Tibetan commentators sustained the interest shown in this scripture by their Indian predecessors, frequently citing the sūtra in support of their various positions.<sup>6</sup>

i.6 Because the sūtra is quoted (as mentioned above) in the *Ratnagotravibhāga-vyākhyā* (RGVV), it is sometimes included in lists of scriptures that are sources for—or otherwise connected with—the *Ratnagotravibhāga* and the buddha-nature literature in general. The passages quoted (10.5–10.9) are used in the RGVV to explain how the afflictions that obscured the buddha-nature during the impure phase of ordinary sentient beings have, in the intermediate phase of bodhisattvas, been understood for what they really are and thus instead of causing involuntary rebirth in saṃsāra as before, now assume a more positive form as the compassionate motivation for taking voluntary rebirth in order to help beings. Although the sūtra makes no mention of the buddha-nature as such, the analogy included in this quoted passage of the jewel that has been in the mud for a thousand years (10.6) is strikingly similar to the famous analogies in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* and the *Ratnagotravibhāga*.

i.7 The sūtra is also occasionally included in lists or anthologies of “sūtras of definitive meaning” (*nītārtha*, *nges don*) compiled by Tibetan authors, although with far less frequency than the texts most often found in such lists.

i.8 As for translations into English, in 1955 Edward Conze was the first to translate a brief excerpt of the sūtra,<sup>7</sup> and numerous short sections of *The Questions of Sāgaramati* have appeared in translations of the works of Asaṅga and various Tibetan commentators.<sup>8</sup> However, apart from such brief translated excerpts, the sūtra has not, to our knowledge, received sustained

attention in modern publications. This translation was prepared from the Degé (*sde dge*) block print in consultation with the Comparative Kangyur (*dpe bsdur ma*) and the Stok Palace manuscript.

The Translation

**The Noble Great Vehicle Sūtra  
The Questions of Sāgaramati**

# 1. CHAPTER ONE: REFINING THE PRECIOUS MIND OF OMNISCIENCE

[B1] [F.1.b]

1.1 Homage to all buddhas and bodhisattvas!

1.2 Thus did I hear at one time. The Blessed One was staying at Rājagṛha, domain of the thus-gone ones, in a jeweled pavilion. It is the home of the thus-gone ones, adorned with accumulations of great merit, produced by great deeds, the result of the ripening of all qualities of buddhahood; the home of great bodhisattvas; an infinite display; a place blessed with the thus-gone ones' magic; an entry point to wisdom's unobstructed domain; a source of great joy; a gateway to mindfulness, intelligence, and realization; a place without blame; [F.2.a] a place formed with wisdom; a gateway to unobstructed wisdom; a place that has been praised for limitless eons; and a place that embodies an immeasurable accumulation of positive qualities.

1.3 The Blessed One had perfectly realized the sameness of all phenomena. He had set the wheel of Dharma in motion. He led a limitless assembly of highly disciplined disciples. He had achieved dominion over all phenomena. He knew how to fulfill the intentions of all beings. He had achieved the sublime perfection of faculties. He was skilled in destroying the binding force of habitual patterns. His awakened activities were spontaneous and unceasing.

1.4 With him was a great monastic saṅgha of six million monks. All of them had minds of great refinement. They were diligently destroying the binding force of the habitual patterns of the afflictive emotions. They were the progeny of the thus-gone Dharma kings. They were immersed in the profound Dharma. They had found release through the Dharma of no apprehension. They had perfectly gracious behavior. They were worthy of offerings. They were careful in following the word of the Thus-Gone One.

- 1.5 There was also a great bodhisattva saṅgha there, which was composed of bodhisattva great beings who had attained the bodhisattva acceptance that nothing is apprehended. They were on the bodhisattva levels where they received empowerment. They played in the unconditioned super-knowledge of bodhisattvas. They had received the casket containing inexhaustible [F.2.b] bodhisattva dhāraṇīs. They had attained mastery of the bodhisattva absorption of the heroic gait. They had acquired the ability to satisfy all beings with the correct discriminations of the bodhisattva. Because their bodhisattva activity was spontaneous, they were steady in the pure motivation that is beautifully adorned with emancipation.
- 1.6 There were limitless, countless, inconceivable, unmatchable, immeasurable, and unfathomable bodhisattva great beings present, including the bodhisattva great being Inexhaustible Treasury, the bodhisattva great being Limitless Intelligence, the bodhisattva great being Infinite Eloquence, the bodhisattva great being Non-referential Concentration, the bodhisattva great being Unsurpassed Diligence, the bodhisattva great being Diligent Intelligence, the bodhisattva great being Continuous Intelligence, the bodhisattva great being Pinnacle of Nonattached Fearlessness, the bodhisattva great being Discerning Vision, as well as other limitless, countless, inconceivable, unmatchable, immeasurable, and unfathomable bodhisattva great beings.
- 1.7 At that time the Blessed One gave a teaching on how to engage in bodhisattva conduct and thereby focus on liberation, the unobscured gateway, and the bodhisattva path. That teaching is the source of the wisdom that manifests all the strengths, fearlessnesses, and qualities of buddhahood. It is a gateway to the seal of dhāraṇī that masters all phenomena. It is a gateway to gaining certainty through the correct discriminations. [F.3.a] It leads to the wisdom of great super-knowledge. It teaches the irreversibility of the irreversible wheel. It subsumes all vehicles within sameness. It shows how the realm of phenomena is unadulterated and a single principle. It shows how to know the thoughts and faculties of all beings. It is that which is essential. It leads to no doubt about the Dharma. It defeats all the regions of Māra. It shows how to appropriately enter and penetrate the Dharma way. It tames all afflictive emotions and views. It realizes unobstructed wisdom. It teaches knowledge of the skillful method of dedication. It realizes the wisdom of the sameness of all the buddhas. It shows the gateway of the blessings of nonattachment. It resolves all doubts about phenomena as they are. It realizes sameness without thought or conceptuality. It gives rise to understanding of profound dependent origination. It gathers the accumulations of merit and wisdom. It possesses the ornaments of sameness, which are the body, speech, and mind of the

buddhas. It accomplishes inexhaustible mindfulness, intelligence, understanding, aspiration, and insight. To guide through the vehicle of the hearers it shows the truths of the noble ones. To guide through the vehicle of the solitary buddhas it teaches knowledge of physical and mental solitude. To guide through the Great Vehicle it shows how to attain consecration into omniscience. It shows how to gain mastery over all phenomena.

1.8 Such was the Dharma teaching that the Blessed One taught in order to express the qualities of the thus-gone ones. Thus he spoke it, taught it, explained it, encouraged memorization of it, encouraged recitation of it, made it understood, made it well understood, made it very well understood, set it forth, defined it, proclaimed it, clarified it, and revealed it. [F.3.b]

1.9 As the Blessed One extensively and genuinely delivered this Dharma teaching, which is a section of *The Great Compilation*, and that thoroughly ascertains what is true,<sup>9</sup> the entire trichiliocosm, from the earth below up to the ground of the jeweled pavilion, became filled with water, as if it had become a single ocean. The entire trichiliocosm was flooded with water, just as happens during the eon of formation, which follows the eon of burning, when everything is covered by a mass of water. However, although all the worlds in the trichiliocosm appeared to be filled with water as in a single ocean, still all the villages, cities, towns, lands, regions, and palaces could be seen without obstruction. Additionally, all the Jambudvīpas, four-continent worlds, great oceans, Mount Merus, and gods of the desire realm were clearly visible, just as they normally are.

1.10 Lotusess sprang from this mass of water. Their branches were made of beryl, their stalks of sapphire, their leaves of gold from the Jambu River, their stamens of śrīgarbha gems, and their hearts of emerald. They were draped with nets of pearls. They had many trillions of petals. In terms of their size, they were many trillions of miles wide. They rose from the base of the jeweled pavilion up to the height of a palm tree. The entire assembly then appeared arranged on those lotuses. A light issued forth from the lotuses such that limitless, countless buddha realms throughout the ten directions were pervaded by a tremendous brightness. [F.4.a]

1.11 The entire assembly was amazed at this, and said to themselves about the revelation of these omens, “This means an important teaching is coming!”

1.12 Upon seeing this great magical display, the bodhisattva great being Maitreya stood up from his lotus seat, draped his shawl over one shoulder, and knelt on his right knee. With his palms together he bowed toward the Blessed One and asked, “Blessed One, whose prophecy is represented by the worlds of the trichiliocosm being filled with water like a single ocean, the manifestation of these trillions of lotuses, and this vast magical display like none we have ever heard of or seen before?”

- 1.13 The Blessed One answered the bodhisattva great being Maitreya, saying, “Maitreya, below this buddha realm, beyond as many buddha realms as there are atoms in all the worlds of the trichiliocosm, is the world Adorned with Immaculate and Countless Precious Qualities. There dwells the thus-gone, worthy, perfect buddha Master of the Ocean with Noble and Playful Super-knowledge. He lives there and is teaching the Dharma. In that buddha realm, the bodhisattva great being Sāgaramati and countless other bodhisattva great beings are gazing at me, venerating me, and honoring me. They are coming to the Sahā world to ask questions about the present Dharma teaching. [F.4.b] This is what the omen symbolized.”
- 1.14 Venerable Śāriputra asked the Blessed One, “Blessed One, how can this be? If the bodhisattva Sāgaramati is so far away, how is he listening to this teaching?”
- “Śāriputra,” answered the Blessed One, “the bodhisattva Sāgaramati is listening to this Dharma teaching from that world in the same way that you are listening to it in my presence. Śāriputra, the bodhisattva Sāgaramati can see me and the entire assembly just like you can.”
- 1.15 “Blessed One, how amazing! The power of the wisdom of bodhisattva great beings’ super-knowledge is unfathomable. It is incredible that even from such a distance his eyes can see such forms and his ears can hear such sounds without obscuration. Blessed One, how could anyone who hears of the unfathomable greatness of the qualities of bodhisattva great beings not develop the mind directed toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening?”
- 1.16 When the elder Śāriputra made this observation, forty-two thousand gods developed the mind directed toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening.
- 1.17 At this point, the bodhisattva great being Sāgaramati, accompanied and attended on by countless other bodhisattva great beings, requested permission to take leave from the thus-gone Master of the Ocean with Noble and Playful Super-knowledge, which that blessed one granted him. Then, in the blink of an eye, through the Buddha’s playfully engaging in the bases of miracles, his unconditioned miracles, [F.5.a] and the mindfulness attained by a one-pointed mind, they disappeared from the world Adorned with Immaculate and Countless Precious Qualities and arrived at the Sahā world.
- 1.18 He appeared in the heart of a lotus elevated to the height of seven palm trees above the base of the jeweled pavilion. The other bodhisattva great beings also appeared arrayed in the hearts of the lotuses. More and more countless and immeasurable numbers of bodhisattva great beings followed the bodhisattva great being Sāgaramati from other countless buddha realms in the lower direction to hear the Dharma. These bodhisattva great beings gathered from worlds throughout the ten directions and arrayed themselves on the lotuses. They beautified the jeweled pavilion to a great degree as they

shimmered, glimmered, and glittered. The entire assembly was astonished. They joined their palms together in joy, faith, and happiness and prostrated to these bodhisattvas.

1.19 Then, in an act of veneration, the bodhisattva great being Sāgaramati caused a great rain of flowers to fall in front of the Blessed One. The flowers, which were from the world Adorned with Immaculate and Countless Precious Qualities, were known as “delightful, pleasing, and lovely to behold.” They were replete with trillions of petals, a full mile across, and worthy of offering to a thus-gone one. The rain was the product of the bodhisattva’s pure intentions and purified by previous roots of virtue. The flowers were brilliant, beautiful, luminous, and had the most incredibly pleasing aroma, satisfying the entire assembly. [F.5.b] The rain of flowers filled the jeweled pavilion to the depth of seven body lengths. The cymbals called “sustenance of isolated concentration” also resounded, causing the entire assembly to experience a satisfying bliss while resting in concentration.

1.20 Once the bodhisattva great being Sāgaramati had venerated the Blessed One in this way, he bowed his head to the feet of the Blessed One and circumambulated him seven times. Joining his palms before the Blessed One, he expressed well-wishes to the Blessed One, saying, “Blessed One, the Thus-Gone Master of the Ocean with Noble and Playful Super-knowledge hopes that you are healthy, and that you are experiencing no adversity, intimidation, or agitation, and that you are strong and happy.” Then, the other bodhisattva great beings as well bowed their heads to the feet of the Blessed One. After circumambulating him seven times they returned to their seats.

1.21 At that point, the Brahmā of the trichiliocosm, known as Great Compassionate One, was residing in the Brahmā world, a peaceful place free from any trouble. From there he saw the worlds of the trichiliocosm being filled with water like a single ocean, the manifestation of the trillions of brilliant and pleasing lotuses, and the jeweled pavilion filled with bodhisattvas. Seeing this, he pondered, “The eon of burning has not yet occurred, yet this flood has manifested. What could have caused the appearance of this magical display? [F.6.a] I think I will go before the Blessed One and ask him what the cause and condition of these incredible and miraculous appearances in the world could be.”

1.22 Accordingly, Brahmā Great Compassionate One disappeared from the Brahmā realm, accompanied by a host of 6,800,000 Brahmā gods, and instantly appeared in the sky before the Blessed One in the jeweled pavilion. He bowed with joined palms and prostrated to the Blessed One. Then he asked, “Blessed One, what is happening? The worlds of the trichiliocosm are



filled with water like an ocean, and trillions of lotuses are floating here and there with sublime beings seated on each of them. Yet, Blessed One, still all the villages, cities, towns, lands, regions, and palaces can be seen clearly. Additionally, all the Jambudvīpas, four-continent worlds, oceans, Mount Merus, and gods of the desire realm are clearly visible, just as they normally are. Blessed One, I am wondering whose blessings this represents? I am amazed. Whose omen is this?"

1.23 The Blessed One answered Brahmā Great Compassionate One, saying, "Brahmā, the bodhisattva great being Sāgaramati and countless other bodhisattva great beings have arrived from the blessed thus-gone Master of the Ocean with Noble and Playful Super-knowledge's [F.6.b] buddha realm Adorned with Immaculate and Countless Precious Qualities here to the Sahā world to behold, venerate, and honor me, and to ask questions about the present Dharma teaching, which is a section of the *Great Compilation*. The fact that the worlds of the trichiliocosm appear to be filled with water like an ocean is the manifestation of his blessings."

1.24 "Blessed One, is that Dharma teaching, which is a section of the *Great Compilation*, still being taught?"

"Brahmā, the Thus-Gone One's eloquence is without any interruption. Even when you perceive that the Blessed One is not saying anything, I am still authentically delivering Dharma teachings to bodhisattvas gathered from throughout the worlds of the ten directions. Brahmā, the Buddha's domain is as unfathomable as this."

1.25 "Blessed One, which one is this emanated bodhisattva great being called Sāgaramati?"

"Brahmā," answered the Blessed One, "do you see the billions of beings prostrating to the jeweled lion throne the height of seven palm trees on the central heart of that lotus, which is ten miles wide?"

"Blessed One, I do."

1.26 The Blessed One then asked, "Brahmā, do you see the bodhisattva with the golden complexion [F.7.a] on the lion throne—the one whose body is adorned with the major and minor marks of perfection, the one whose body outshines all the other bodhisattvas except for the body of the Thus-Gone One, the one who is being prostrated to by many bodhisattvas?"

"Blessed One, I do."

1.27 "Brahmā," said the Blessed One, "he is called the bodhisattva great being Sāgaramati. All of this is his manifestation."

1.28 Brahmā Great Compassionate One then prostrated to the bodhisattva great being Sāgaramati and exclaimed, "Blessed One, may all beings witness such miraculous wonders! Any being who hears Bodhisattva Sāgaramati's name definitely gains a great boon! Blessed One, even I have received a

great boon in hearing the name of this sublime being and seeing his form. Blessed One, how long will that Dharma teaching, which is a section of the *Great Compilation*, be taught?"

1.29 "Brahmā," responded the Blessed One, "for as long as the lifespan of the Thus-Gone One lasts, and even after the Thus-Gone One has passed into parinirvāṇa, for as long as these bodhisattvas uphold, recite, teach, and spread this Dharma teaching. Why is this? Because, Brahmā, the awakening of all the blessed buddhas of the past, present, and future is subsumed within this teaching."

1.30 The bodhisattva great being Sāgaramati then rose into the sky the height of seven palm trees upon his lotus and lion throne and spoke the following verses in order to bring extensive and genuine joy to the entire assembly, to arouse the interest of Brahmā Great Compassionate One, to ornament this Dharma teaching, and to demonstrate the power of his insight [F.7.b] and eloquence:

1.31 "Below, past as many realms as there are atoms in a billion buddha realms,  
Lives a perfected bodhisattva, replete with all qualities and beauty.  
In his unequaled mind is found the ocean of the guides' teachings.  
From him I heard the Dharma of the sages and took it to heart.

1.32 "We have come here to see the one with ten strengths,  
To venerate him, and to converse with the foremost bodhisattvas."  
By venerating you, Protector, I prostrate to you, unequaled Dharma king,  
And offer to you effulgent and extensive veneration fit for a buddha.

1.33 "You do not conceptualize form as form, and for you, feeling is  
unconditioned.  
Even consciousness is eternally pure during the three types of feeling.  
You understand that being a leader is not about reputation, birth, or caste.  
Insightful Dharma king, you see what is immaculate and authentic.

1.34 "You neither take up nor avoid either extreme of self or nonself.  
You are inwardly peaceful, your mind is at peace, and you are not drawn  
outwardly.  
The Sage's mind is like space: without thought, conceptuality, or mental  
processes.  
I honor those who hoist the Dharma banner of the well-gone ones in the ten  
directions.

1.35 "For you gifts are emptiness, like receiving an illusion.  
With an unmoving mind, you give away treasures with no hope of return.

- For the sake of awakening your view is certain; you entertain no uncertain concepts.  
You are the donor free of stinginess who grants beings deliverance from their faults.
- 1.36 “Having found peace, you are free from the torments of speech, mind, and body.  
Having no torments, you are freed from vast bondage and gentle, with peaceful faculties. [F.8.a]  
With the knowledge<sup>10</sup> of selflessness, you do not apprehend awakening, yet do not lose it.  
With discipline and insight, you wish to put an end to faulty discipline and remain pure in discipline.
- 1.37 “Realizing the fleeting nature of things, there is nothing to say about objects of knowledge.  
With your space-like mind you see all beings as illusions.  
Even if your body were to be chopped into bits, it would arouse no anger.  
Learned one, maintaining the disciplined conduct of awakening, you advocate patience.
- 1.38 “Realizing that phenomena are like water-moons, bubbles, illusions, and optical distortions,  
You see there is no person, life-force, or son of Manu.  
Without apprehending awakening or groups of beings you still seek awakening for others’ sake,  
And in this way you are fearless and take diligence to its farthest reaches.
- 1.39 “Your mind is not attached to objects and harbors no doubt.  
It knows the thoughts of other beings throughout the three times.  
Your mind is unknown by the demon of the thinking mind.  
Your intelligence is firmly grounded in the perfections, concentration, and super-knowledges.
- 1.40 “The eloquence of one who hears the buddhas’ speech and correctly upholds it  
Remains uninterrupted even if one speaks for fathomless eons.  
The one who attains buddha qualities without becoming a sentient being exists nowhere.  
With that insight—a treasure of the blessed sages’ wisdom—one is heroic in the three worlds.
- 1.41 “Whoever has gone to the other shore of the perfections has neither gone nor not gone.

- Perfecting beings' conduct, one is neither static nor moving.  
 Perfecting all qualities, one harbors no arrogance about such qualities.  
 One will bow to the foremost buddha of the Śākya, the Lord of Sages.
- 1.42 “The pure radiance of the sun overwhelms the light cast by fireflies.  
 The tall flames at the end of an eon consume the entire earth.  
 Mount Meru, the king of mountains, puts all other earthly mountains to  
 shame. [F.8.b]  
 A single hair of the leader of the Śākya outshines any other light in the  
 three worlds.
- 1.43 “Every bodhisattva leader who has come here from many different realms  
 Is satisfied by your complexion and radiance, Lord.  
 Their perception accords with the aspirations they have made.  
 We knew you were here in your field before we ever left our own.
- 1.44 “Wherever beings perceive, there your speech reaches,  
 Manifesting in all languages present throughout the three realms of  
 existence.  
 Atomic particles and the thoughts of humans could be counted,  
 Yet the infinite utterances of the Sage's voice, like space itself, defy  
 quantification.
- 1.45 “The reaches of space and the extent of humans cannot be reckoned,  
 And the extent of saṃsāra's past is absolutely unfathomable.  
 Even if it were possible for somebody to quantify space or saṃsāra's extent,  
 They could never grasp the domain of the buddhas' wisdom, absorption,  
 and discipline.
- 1.46 “Your praises would be difficult to express even in the course of countless  
 eons.  
 Guide, Lord of Dharma, immeasurable leader, to you we prostrate.  
 Beings realize the eminence of buddhas according to their understanding  
 and inclinations.  
 They will see the Guide as unfathomably intelligent, astonishing, and utterly  
 superior.”
- 1.47 When he had spoken these verses, the bodhisattva great being Sāgaramati  
 descended from the sky. With his palms joined together, he bowed toward  
 the Blessed One and said, “If I were to request a teaching, would the Blessed  
 One honor my request? I have a few questions for the blessed, thus-gone,  
 worthy, perfect buddha.”

- 1.48 The Blessed One replied to the bodhisattva great being Sāgaramati, [F.9.a] “Noble son, you may ask the blessed, thus-gone, worthy, perfect Buddha whatever you like. Then I will answer your questions and gladden your mind.”
- 1.49 So, the bodhisattva great being Sāgaramati said to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, there is an absorption of the bodhisattva great beings called *the pristine and immaculate seal*. I have heard that if bodhisattva great beings rest in this absorption, they will fully awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood. How is this absorption of the pristine and immaculate seal of the bodhisattva great beings attained? Why is it said to be pristine and immaculate? Blessed Thus-Gone One, please elucidate this! Once bodhisattva great beings have been introduced to the means by which one enters this absorption, they will attain it and fully awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood in a swift manner. Blessed Thus-Gone One, please elucidate this!”
- 1.50 The Blessed One then responded to the bodhisattva great being Sāgaramati, saying, “Excellent, excellent, sublime being. Yes, this question is excellent and your concern is appropriate. Thus, noble son, listen well and bear what I say in mind. I will elucidate how bodhisattva great beings can attain this absorption of the pristine and immaculate seal and swiftly and fully awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood.” [F.9.b]
- “Wonderful, Blessed One!”
- 1.51 The bodhisattva great being Sāgaramati then listened as the Blessed One had instructed, while the Blessed One spoke.
- 1.52 “Sāgaramati, bodhisattva great beings attain stability<sup>11</sup> due to their roots of virtue. They possess virtuous thoughts, keep to gentle<sup>12</sup> aggregates, gather accumulations, have sharp faculties, are accepted by spiritual friends, are blessed by buddhas, and are skilled in debate. They please, serve, honor, respect, and venerate blessed buddhas. They behold the perfect appearance of the blessed buddhas and hear their speech. They also behold perfect assemblies and listen to their unobstructed wisdom. They witness how beings are guided through miraculous displays, miraculous discourses, and miraculous teachings, and they develop great compassion for beings. Having developed the mind directed toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening, they are diligent. They engage in the pursuit of virtuous qualities and practice to purify the mind by not forgetting the wisdom of omniscience. As their minds are purified, they attain pure absorption.
- 1.53 “Sāgaramati, I will draw an analogy. When a precious gem of the finest class comes into the possession of a skilled jeweler, he will refine it so that it becomes perfectly pure, pristine, polished, and flawless. At that point, learned people with knowledge of precious gems will assemble. Sāgaramati,

likewise, once bodhisattvas develop the precious gem of the finest class, which is the mind directed toward omniscience, [F.10.a] they fully awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood. Bodhisattva great beings will then purify their roots of virtue and their learning to the degree that they have eliminated stains, including the stain of arrogance. At that point, once they have refined the precious gem of the mind directed toward omniscience, they attract the blessed buddhas of the ten directions and attain this pristine and immaculate absorption seal.

1.54 “Sāgaramati, I will draw another analogy: There is a precious gem of the finest class that surpasses the nine types of precious substances—gold, silver, crystal, beryl, emerald, coral, red pearl, kesara, and śrīgarbha. Surpassing these nine types of precious substances, this great jewel, which is known as “stainless and immaculate light,” is more precious than any other gem. It is only found in the possession of a universal monarch, and not with any other ordinary being. The luster of this precious gem eclipses the luster of any other precious gem. Sāgaramati, likewise the jewel of developing the mind directed toward omniscience surpasses nine other types of jewels—the jewel of ordinary beings’ virtue, the jewel of faithful followers, the jewel of Dharma followers, the jewel of those who maintain signlessness, the jewel of stream-enterers, the jewel of once-returners, [F.10.b] the jewel of non-returners, the jewel of worthy ones, and the jewel of solitary buddhas. It surpasses these nine types of jewels. This jewel of developing the mind directed toward omniscience is born from a tenth class of jewel, the outlook of great compassion blessed by the buddhas. Once purified, this jewel will outshine all hearers and solitary buddhas, and illuminate the minds of all beings.

1.55 “Sāgaramati, I will draw another analogy: That great precious gem can withstand both refinement and harm without its core being impaired. As such it can benefit beings who have created merit and developed roots of virtue. Sāgaramati, likewise, the jewel of developing the mind directed toward omniscience can withstand both refinement and harm without its core being impaired. As such, this faultless jewel of developing the mind directed toward omniscience can benefit all beings.

1.56 “How is the jewel that develops the mind directed toward omniscience refined, Sāgaramati? Through the three vows, one purifies the path of the ten virtuous actions. Through training in love, one develops love and appreciation for all beings. Through training in compassion, one becomes diligent in considering beings’ affairs. Through training in joy, one brings all beings to the Dharma. Through training in equanimity, one will keep an honest mind and never harm beings.

- 1.57        “By eliminating hypocrisy and pretense, one will turn to what is of benefit and one will be motivated to endeavor in all roots of virtue. By being intelligent, one will come to possess mindfulness and awareness. [F.11.a] By taming the mind, the mind becomes pliant. By being easily content, one comes to adopt ascetic qualities and the ways of living with fewer things. By being easily sustained, one acquires the contentment of the noble family and bows before teachers and those who are worthy of offerings.
- 1.58        “By eliminating pride, one discards all arrogance and dispute. By coming to certainty, one discards all forms of pride. By eliminating all turbidity, the mind is clarified. Through not praising oneself, one comes to understand oneself. Through never slandering others, one protects beings.
- 1.59        “By seeing the Dharma as medicine, one is respectful of it. Through experiencing the meaning of the Dharma, one will pursue it. By becoming immersed in it, one yearns for the Dharma. By living without afflictive emotions, one delights in the Dharma. By discarding everything that is not Dharma, one seeks the Dharma. By being constantly conscientious, one’s faith in the Three Jewels is never broken. By trusting in the ripening of karma, one will contemplate all virtues to be performed. By honesty, one can keep one’s conduct hidden. By eliminating arrogance, one becomes mild. By seeking tranquility, one is freed from agitation. Through being resolute, one eliminates sloth.
- 1.60        “By being unmoved, one’s mind becomes like a mountain. By removing attachment and anger, one’s mind becomes like the earth. By purifying one’s thoughts, one’s mind becomes like water. By eliminating conceitedness, one’s mind becomes like fire. Being baseless, one’s mind becomes like wind. By becoming immaculate, one’s mind becomes like space.
- 1.61        “Because the way of the buddhas lies in being undisturbed, one applies oneself to the monastic way of life. Because one is physically isolated, one enjoys remote areas. Because one is mentally isolated, one practices the Dharma. Because one practices correctly, one’s words ring true. Because one maintains bodily cleanliness, one practices what one preaches. [F.11.b] Because one is not trampled by the afflictive emotions, one’s mind is heroic. Because one does not allow any corruption, one’s trainings are authentically upheld. Because one is wary of even subtle negative actions, one’s discipline is never lax. Because one does not hope for a further birth, one’s discipline is faultless. Because one only does what is positive, one’s discipline is uninterrupted. Because one trains in the branches of awakening, one relies on a spiritual friend.
- 1.62        “Because one’s eyes are purified, light is unimpeded. Because one’s ears are purified, sound is unimpeded. Because one’s nose is purified, smells are unimpeded. Because one’s tongue is purified, tastes are unimpeded. Because

- one's body is purified, tactile sensations are unimpeded. Because one's mind is purified, mental phenomena are unimpeded.
- 1.63 "Moreover, Sāgaramati, because bodhisattvas cultivate a perception of ugliness, they are free of the pain of attachment. Because bodhisattvas cultivate love, they are free of the pain of aggression. Because bodhisattvas investigate dependent origination, they are free of the pain of delusion.
- 1.64 "Because they investigate the faculties, they are free of obscurations. Because their powers are purified, they dispel obscurations. Because the elements that will come into being are purified, they dispel further emergence. Because they practice genuinely, they are freed from desire, aggression, dullness, fear, and pride. They are without stinginess in giving the Dharma and have no mental grasping to the material things they give away.
- 1.65 "Because they have no desire for the Lesser Vehicle, their thoughts are about awakening. Because they hide their faculties, they are at peace within. Because they see their own faults, they are externally peaceful. Because they dread saṃsāra, they engage in no evil deeds. [F.12.a] Because they are never satisfied by their accumulation of roots of virtue, their minds are indefatigable. Because they are liberated from the four floods, they make good use of the great ship of Dharma. Because they have crossed, they are like stairs and bridges. Because they have passed through bogs and trenches, they live on level ground.
- 1.66 "Sāgaramati, when bodhisattva great beings engage in such cleansing, purification, elevated generosity, and pure discipline through such practices, they refine the jewel that develops the mind directed toward omniscience."
- 1.67 The Buddha then spoke these verses:
- "Bind the body, speech, and mind.  
Train in the ten paths of pure action.  
Consider beings with love.  
Thus you refine the mind of omniscience.
- 1.68 "Endowed with compassion, energetically act for others.  
Endowed with joy, come to the far shore of the Dharma.  
Endowed with equanimity, your highest practice is non-harm.  
Thus you refine the mind of omniscience.
- 1.69 "Always be honest and discard all hypocrisy.  
Help others and discard evil deeds.  
With pure motivation, train in every virtue.  
Thus you refine the mind of omniscience.
- 1.70 "Develop insight, and be mindful and introspective.



- Tame the mind and make it pliant.  
Engage in ascetic practices and be easily satisfied.  
Thus you refine the mind of omniscience.
- 1.71 “With the contentment of the noble family and kind words,  
Always honor your spiritual teachers.  
Abandon dispute, falsity, and pride; possess the strengths.  
Do not be contemptuous or make mistakes.
- 1.72 “The mind should be resolute, with no excessive pride.  
Be without turbidity and utterly limpid.  
Gradually enter into self-knowledge.  
Do not disparage others; protect beings.
- 1.73 “Be happy to respect the Dharma—just be respectful. [F.12.b]  
Be focused; discard all afflictive emotions.  
Be passionate about the Dharma, and rely on it.  
Always come to a decisive conclusion about the Dharma.
- 1.74 “Strive in the Dharma and train in the absence of afflictions.  
Abandon what is not Dharma, and seek out the teachings.  
Have steadfast faith in the Three Jewels.  
Thus you refine the mind of omniscience.
- 1.75 “Always shun what you must, and stop negative actions.  
Restrain yourself with conscience before the thus-gone ones.  
Have shame and control your faculties.  
Thus you refine the mind of omniscience.
- 1.76 “Apply yourself and engage in right actions.  
Be cautious and hold neither extreme.  
Realize the lessons gained by attending to the learned.  
Thus you refine the mind of omniscience.
- 1.77 “Become honest with your conduct.  
Without arrogance, be ever friendly.  
With the practice of tranquility, eliminate agitation.  
Thus you refine the mind of omniscience.
- 1.78 “With a resolute mind, do not degenerate.  
Let your insight be like the king of mountains.  
Hold to your promises and do not let up for their duration.  
Thus you refine the mind of omniscience.
- 1.79 “Be unshaken by pleasure or pain, like earth.

- With a pure intention, cleanse stains, like water.  
Eliminate conceitedness for good, like fire.  
Always be on the move without a fixed abode, like wind.
- 1.80 “Let your mind be immaculate, like space.  
Go forth and discover the Buddha’s teachings.  
Enjoy solitude where you are peaceful and physically aloof.  
Practice the supreme Dharma by being mentally aloof.
- 1.81 “Speak truthfully of virtue and speak genuinely.  
Practice exactly what you preach.  
Be heroic in virtue, untrammled by afflictions.  
Train thoroughly and hold to the genuine trainings.
- 1.82 “Never allow any laxity in this pursuit.  
Be ever wary of even trifling negativities.  
Do not let your discipline deteriorate—it is the cause of supreme awakening.  
Let your discipline be unadulterated; act for positive qualities. [F.13.a]
- 1.83 “Rely on a spiritual friend and do no evil.  
Be firm so that you may become a perfect bodhisattva.<sup>13</sup>  
In this manner, your eyes will become immaculate,  
And you will see the whole world in the same light.
- 1.84 “Such learned ones can hear many different messages  
And do not get excited, joyful, or discouraged.  
Such intelligent people come to understand the significance of sound.  
Their ears thus become totally pure.
- 1.85 “When your nose meets scents, your tongue meets tastes,  
Your body meets sensations, and your mind meets mental phenomena,  
Do not be arrogant, do not be cowardly, and do not be discouraged.  
In this manner, your faculties become pure.
- 1.86 “Unsnared by attachment and unperturbed by anger,  
Not stupefied by delusion and sustaining the perception of ugliness,  
Take joy in love and utilize circumstances to contemplate Dharma.  
Thus you refine the mind of omniscience.
- 1.87 “Eliminate obscuration through purifying the five obscurations.  
In this fashion also cultivate the five faculties,  
And experience no obscuration or bondage whatsoever.  
Immerse yourselves in all five strengths.
- 1.88 “Understand the workings of karma, and emerge from it.

- Discard the inappropriate and maintain what is right.  
Rely on the four applications of mindfulness.  
Possess right abandonment and the bases of miracles.
- 1.89 “Always keep to the branches of awakening;  
Become steady and accomplished in the eight branches.  
Do not be driven by desire, anger, or fear.  
Free yourselves from delusion, and restrain your faculties.
- 1.90 “Do not be stingy with the gift of Dharma.  
Conceal nothing from your teachers.  
Teach Dharma without expecting wealth.  
Thereby, the mind of awakening will become pure.
- 1.91 “Lose all grasping to material things.  
Harbor no hope for karmic ripening and abandon all desires.  
Practicing generosity, speak kindly, act meaningfully, and practice what you  
preach.  
Thus hundreds of beings will gather before you.
- 1.92 “Never forget the mind of awakening.  
Have no hope whatsoever for the Lesser Vehicle.  
See buddha qualities completely as they are.  
And in this manner<sup>14</sup> be like mountains.
- 1.93 “Pacify all affliction<sup>15</sup> and see the faults of cyclic existence.  
Do not dwell on others’ confusion.  
Be highly cognizant of the faults of conditioned things. [F.13.b]  
Be wary of saṃsāra, and do no evil deeds.
- 1.94 “Carry a supply of positive deeds and you will have no sadness.  
Aim to purify realms, and allow no degeneration.  
Embrace all phenomena, and be bold.  
Be fearless about what liberates beings.
- 1.95 “Utilize the ship of Dharma  
To liberate beings from the four floods.  
Act like stairs and bridges.  
That lead embodied beings on the path to nirvāṇa,
- 1.96 “Pass through marsh and trench,  
And you will live fearlessly, on level ground.  
Show your fearlessness to those who are dazed and struck by fear.  
Transcend the self and liberate others.

- 1.97 “Those who are pure in these Dharma ways  
Firmly navigate the perfect mind of awakening.  
With the pure, supreme mind of awakening,  
They will never again be sullied by the stains of afflictive emotions.
- 1.98 “Were it possible to make the sky defiled,  
Then it would be possible for this to be demonstrated afterward.  
But this natural luminosity that is the perfect mind of awakening  
Can never be defiled.” [B2]

## 2. CHAPTER TWO: ACCEPTING HARM AND GAINING CERTAINTY

- 2.1 “Sāgaramati, how does one accept challenges to the jewel of developing the mind directed toward omniscience? What are the challenges to the jewel of developing the mind directed toward omniscience?”
- 2.2 “Sāgaramati, once bodhisattva great beings have engendered the jewel of developing the mind directed toward omniscience in the aforementioned manner, they will not lose their development of the intention to awaken in the face of ignoble beings who have corrupt discipline, māras, gods of the echelon of māra, those blessed by māras, threats from Māra’s messengers, menaces, disturbances, violent disturbances, agitation, violent agitation, threats, or abuse. [F.14.a] They will not lose their compassionate diligence that seeks to free all beings. They will not lose the effort needed to keep the lineage of the Three Jewels unbroken. They will not lose their training in the roots of virtue that manifest the qualities of buddhahood. They will not lose their accumulation of merit that manifests the major and minor marks of perfection. They will not lose the effort needed to actualize the purification of buddha realms. They will not lose their effort to give up concern for body and life and uphold the sublime Dharma. They will not lose the effort to ripen all beings nor will they lose their lack of attachment to their personal happiness.
- 2.3 “Because they have such abundant motivation, even if all beings were to belittle, blame, slander, or curse them, they will accept it. They will accept any ridicule, threats, bad words, or cruel words spoken by beings. They will accept all harm caused by beings. They will accept the burden of all beings. Since they are liberated, they reveal their strength by not becoming sad, discouraged, depressed, disheartened, or doubtful. They will arouse their strength, develop their diligence, bring forth their effort, inspire enthusiasm, and not engage in any deluded states of mind. Though mocked, they will not return it with ridicule. Though struck, they will not strike back. Though

shown anger, they will not be angry in return. Though others may fight with them, they will not fight back. In this manner they don the armor that is considerate of beings.

2.4 “The point is that the Great Vehicle is a vehicle that does not conform to the world. Why is this? Beings always go along with the stream. I wish to deliberately go against the stream. Beings cannot manage to be harmonious with one another. [F.14.b] I wear the armor that allows me to discard whatever would cause disharmony with beings. Beings act like heroes when it comes to malice. I seek out acceptance and gentleness. Beings are always fed up with one another. I seek to appease them by means of insight.

2.5 “If all the beings from every point throughout the ten directions were to brandish swords, clubs, and arrows, and hound me wherever I stood, sat, walked, or lay, still the mind of awakening would arise. The mind of generosity, the mind of discipline, the mind of patience, the mind of diligence, the mind of concentration, the mind of insight, and the mind of the roots of virtue that come from study would arise. In such places, then even if beings were to chop my body up into a hundred pieces, and crush and scatter it like juniper leaves—even if those beings were to do nothing but scold me, slander me, belittle me, complain about me, and speak nothing but nasty things about me—still I would not allow my mind to become disturbed. Why is this?

2.6 “Since the beginning, countless time has passed in saṃsāra. Wherever I have taken a body—in the realms of hell, animals, the Lord of Death, or that of humans—I have been stained by the enjoyment of desire. I lacked the study of Dharma and sustained myself on dangerous forms of livelihood that ended up being fruitless. Even though my limbs and digits were shredded, cut, divided, and torn into small pieces, I continued pursuing my own ends, and not the ends of others. So now, if all these beings henceforth [F.15.a] shred, cut, scatter, and crush my<sup>16</sup> body, I will not give up on omniscience. I will not give up on sentient beings. I will not give up our pursuit of virtuous phenomena. Why is this?

2.7 “All the harm of having one’s body cut apart does not represent even one percent of the suffering endured by beings in hell; no comparison would suffice. Yet I am delighted to stay in the hell realms, and I will not give up on the qualities of buddhahood. I will not give up on great compassion that aims to free all beings. Why is this?

2.8 “The Blessed One has said that there are many obstacles to virtue. There are many who would accompany me to nonvirtue, and few who would accompany me to virtue. So, I will not be a companion for the journey to nonvirtue. I will be a companion for the journey to virtue. I will accept all beings. I will not allow malice to crop up in the mind. I will give away

everything that I have, even though others may not give me anything. Even though beings who are filled with malice, rage, and spite cannot give their things away, I will give what I have with patience and gentleness. I intend to teach the power of patience, not malice.

2.9 “Sāgaramati, unsurpassed and perfect awakening is not difficult to attain for bodhisattvas who are ready to give up their bodies and life. They intend to eliminate any phenomena that support the development of malice. What are these phenomena? They are taking joy in the body, being settled in the body, and being attached to the body. If one gives up the body, malice is also given up.

2.10 “Sāgaramati, bodhisattva great beings [F.15.b] who share this outlook accept the harm of beings and do not become depressed or angry. They accept three forms of harm. What are these three? Physical, verbal, and mental harm.

2.11 “What is the bodhisattvas’ acceptance of physical harm, Sāgaramati? When their limbs or digits are cut, they rely on reality and look into the identity of the being who is cutting their body. Sāgaramati, when the bodies of bodhisattvas who are skilled in means are cut, they complete their cultivation of the six perfections. Sāgaramati, when the bodies of bodhisattvas who are skilled in means are cut, how do they complete their cultivation of the six perfections?

2.12 “Abandoning the body, giving away the body, and ignoring the body is their perfection of generosity. Filling themselves with love for all beings and not getting overwhelmed by the physical sensation when the body is cut is their perfection of discipline. Accepting the cutting of the body for the sake of becoming free, not letting their minds be marred, and displaying their power of acceptance is their perfection of patience. Utilizing diligence to not lose their passion for omniscience, holding to the strengthening of mind, embracing saṃsāra, and engaging in roots of virtue is their perfection of diligence. As their bodies are cast aside, not forgetting the jewel of developing the mind of omniscience, focusing on awakening itself, and contemplating peace and utter peace is their perfection of concentration. When the body is cut, contemplating how the body is like grass, a wall, wood, stone, or a visual distortion; engaging with the body as having the nature of an illusion; and contemplating how the body is actually impermanent, [F.16.a] suffering, devoid of self, and peace is their perfection of insight.

2.13 “Thus, Sāgaramati, when the bodies of bodhisattvas who are skilled in means are cut, they complete their cultivation of the six perfections and do not fall away from the Great Vehicle. This is the bodhisattvas’ acceptance of physical harm.

- 2.14 “What is the bodhisattvas’ acceptance of verbal harm, Sāgaramati? It is inviting all meanly spoken words. It is accepting being scolded, slandered, belittled, complained about, and intimidated. It is not getting angry when somebody says something negative about them, whether true or false. It is casting aside all forms of holding a grudge, including the habitual tendencies for doing so.
- 2.15 “Sāgaramati, when bodhisattva great beings who are skilled in means hear mean utterances, mean words, scolding, and words of intimidation spoken by someone else, they perfect their cultivation of the six perfections. How do bodhisattva great beings who are skilled in means perfect their cultivation of the six perfections as they hear mean utterances, mean words, scolding, and words of intimidation spoken by someone else, Sāgaramati?
- 2.16 “Sāgaramati, when bodhisattva great beings hear mean utterances, mean words, scolding, and words of intimidation spoken by someone else they bring the following to mind: ‘This person has long been stingy and miserly. His life revolves around this stain of stinginess, such that he has now also developed malice. As such, he does not follow spiritual friends who can teach him the Dharma, nor does he respect or serve them. As for myself, I must remain inspired to give and not be stingy. [F.16.b] I must continue to rely on, honor, and serve spiritual friends.’ Thus they are cautious and discard their malice, and this is their perfection of generosity.
- 2.17 “They also have the following thought: ‘This person has nothing but perverse morality and yet he is scolding and intimidating me. But I will not retreat from how I keep to my trainings of discipline and asceticism. I will not become malicious. I will uphold the mind of awakening. I will trust in the ripening of karma.’ This is their perfection of discipline.
- 2.18 “They also have the following thought: ‘This person is aggressive and has so much malice, so he scolds and intimidates me. Yet I will develop the strength of my patience. I will keep to love.’ This is their perfection of patience.
- 2.19 “They also have the following thought: ‘This person is lazy and devoid of virtuous qualities, so he scolds and intimidates me. Yet I will remain diligent. I will never be satisfied in my pursuit of roots of virtue. Sooner or later, I wish to make this person arrive at the seat of awakening, and thus make him fully awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood.’ This manner of donning armor is their perfection of diligence.
- 2.20 “They also have the following thought: ‘This person is forgetful and not introspective. He does not consider his afflictive emotions, so he scolds and intimidates me. Yet I can consider my afflictive emotions. I can be mindful



and introspective. I will one-pointedly remember the mind of awakening. I will don strong armor for the sake of this untamed, aggressive, uncontrolled, and wild person.' [F.17.a] This is their perfection of concentration.

2.21 "They also have the following thought: 'This person has faulty insight. He advocates the existence of a self and believes in the existence of a sentient being. So, he scolds and intimidates me. Yet I will base myself on reality.' Thus, examining who is scolding or being aggressive, they fail to find anyone. This acceptance that is free of any apprehension of self and other is their perfection of insight.

2.22 "Thus, Sāgaramati, when bodhisattvas who are skilled in means hear mean utterances, mean words, scolding, and words of intimidation spoken by someone else, they complete their cultivation of the six perfections and do not fall away from the Great Vehicle. This is the bodhisattvas' acceptance of verbal harm.

2.23 "What is the bodhisattvas' acceptance of mental harm, Sāgaramati? All māras, who unwaveringly try to separate others from the mind of awakening, and all obstructers, who are attached to ideologies, will continually attempt to undermine those who have set forth with a genuine intention to gain omniscience. Nevertheless, such bodhisattvas do not forget their goal and even if they were to meet the Buddha in person, he would not be able to diminish their unequalled attitude. Such māras of incredible magical power will say, 'You cannot authentically accomplish the Great Vehicle! You should give up cherishing this goal! Give up your diligence! Awakening is difficult to attain. The qualities of buddhahood are difficult to find. You will continue to experience the suffering of saṃsāra. The state of nirvāṇa is blissful. Sublime being, you should hasten to nirvāṇa.' Thus they try to influence and sway the bodhisattva.

2.24 "Sāgaramati, if bodhisattva great beings [F.17.b] do not relinquish their armor, or let themselves become disturbed, when the māras attempt to destroy and undermine their intention, they will think, 'I must reach the seat of awakening! I must defeat the māras and their hordes and fully awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood! I will definitely turn the wheel of Dharma! I will explain the great message of the Dharma to the trichiliocosm. I will regale all beings and satisfy them with the gift of Dharma! All buddhas and bodhisattvas, as well as the gods who are cognizant of their own and others' minds, realize my intention to awaken. I will accept all challenges to the mind of omniscience. No buddha, god, or any other being will cheat me of this!'

2.25 "Sāgaramati, such is the bodhisattvas' acceptance of mental harm; thus they cannot be separated from the Great Vehicle. Sāgaramati, this is how they accept all challenges to the jewel of developing the mind directed

toward omniscience. It is by perfecting the armor of the perfection of patience and the unsurpassable perfection of diligence that bodhisattvas accept mental harm.”

2.26 The Blessed One then expressed these verses:

“Not letting our intention drift from the path of awakening,  
Nor from compassion,  
We must protect the Three Jewels  
And manifest the qualities of buddhahood.

2.27 “The exalted thirty-two major marks, and the minor marks of excellence,  
And bodies beautified by the ten strengths—  
In search of these, we make countless [F.18.a] offerings.  
We accept myriad types of adversity and become rich with qualities.

2.28 “We will refine countless thousands of fields.  
We will uphold the supreme Dharma jewel.  
We will liberate countless thousands of beings.  
Thus, we accept adversity and do not let our intention drift away.

2.29 “Even if the beings of the countless realms in the ten directions  
Were to gather together, brandishing weapons,  
And threaten, insult, and intimidate us,  
We shall bear such intimidation and jeers for the sake of qualities.

2.30 “Even though they have been verbally abused  
Continuously for countless eons in the past,  
Great beings will accept this, allowing no anger or rebukes.  
Those who realize this fact will purify adversity.

2.31 “Beings could band together and, bearing weapons,  
Chop our bodies into many tiny pieces.  
Yet our minds will not become angry.  
When the mind has turned to awakening, such adversity is purified.

2.32 “Wherever we are standing, sitting, walking, or lying down,  
We always maintain this supreme mind of awakening.  
We do not give up our generosity, or our disciplined and virtuous mind,  
Even if our bodies are ripped to pieces.

2.33 “While the mind is in the realms of hell, animals, hungry ghosts, or humans,  
The body is slain meaninglessly for countless eons.  
Yet the message ‘discard the body if you yearn for buddha wisdom’  
Brings true satisfaction to such beings.

- 2.34 “There are myriad causes of human suffering,  
But they are not even a hundredth of the suffering in the hell of immediate  
retribution.  
Still, the victors would delight to spend a hundred eons in the hells,  
And will never give up on beings or the Dharma.
- 2.35 “It is said that our bodies are impermanent, short-lived, and like illusions,  
And that the four elements are like malevolent serpents.  
When we discard the body, they are deprived of their poison; [F.18.b]  
The poison of the afflictive emotions is pacified, and buddhahood naturally  
occurs.
- 2.36 “The three realms of existence are the basis for all bodily pleasure,  
Yet all its causes of desire are embedded in anxiety.  
We must achieve fearlessness by giving up the body.  
With this understanding, we come to accept adversity.
- 2.37 “Those who would accompany you to evil are legion,  
And in any positive direction, you will likely be your sole companion.  
We pledge to not fight or do anything nonvirtuous.  
The buddhas speak of patience, so patience will be our companion.
- 2.38 “We take the buddhas of the ten directions as our witness.  
Since our minds have not parted from the buddha body,  
Our companions are the buddhas and great divine beings.  
We shall accept adversity and not become upset.
- 2.39 “Harm is said to come physically, verbally, and mentally.  
Heroes who can accept anything never lose their patience.  
Physical suffering can come in infinite varieties,  
But if you accept what happens to the body, physical harm is purified.
- 2.40 “When the bodies of great beings are cut into tiny pieces and scattered  
about,  
Such skillful beings complete the perfections.  
Generosity, discipline, patience, diligence, concentration, and insight:  
High and noble beings can uphold them all in a moment.
- 2.41 “Casting aside the body and those afflictions that crave the body,  
Is to acquire the perfection of generosity.  
When love pervades the world, discipline cannot deteriorate.  
By then proceeding toward awakening, discipline is pure.
- 2.42 “Arousing the strength of patience when one’s limbs and digits are cut off

- Is to train in the perfection of patience.  
Cherishing diligence, avoiding discouragement, and giving self-deprecation  
no chance  
Allows you to scatter bodily concern and perfect diligence.
- 2.43 “Do not lose mindfulness of the mind of awakening.  
Be very diligent to clear away the obscuring dust of the afflictions.  
When the body is destroyed, you will attain the power of concentration and  
freedom. [F.19.a]  
Then you will train in the stainless perfection of concentration.
- 2.44 “Our bodies lack intrinsic nature, and are like dreams or flashes of lightning.  
There is no real agent in there, nor one who feels.  
We liberate beings who are bound by bodily ties.  
This insight is the noble supreme perfection.
- 2.45 “Whoever can keep to this training and regard the Dharma appropriately,  
Will be able to accept physical harm and avoid becoming furious.  
Even upon hearing blame, insults, and slander,  
One will not become angry, but remain gentle, with a loving mind.
- 2.46 “Eliminating rigidity and aggression purifies generosity.  
Making the mind more loving purifies discipline.  
Strengthening one’s capacity for acceptance purifies patience.  
When you desire buddha wisdom, diligence is developed.
- 2.47 “Bringing peace to all facets of mind purifies concentration.  
Seeing that sound and language are unidentifiable is the purification of  
insight.  
When one hears human speech, it will cause one to reflect on the Dharma.  
Thus they accept harm and have no attachment to the defects of speech.
- 2.48 “Through the myriad views held by māras and non-Buddhists,  
This point is hard to realize and so, no matter what such beings prescribe,  
Learned beings remain unafraid, unyielding, and increase their strength.  
Thus they bear with endless mental challenges.
- 2.49 “Those whose patience and diligence are stable like Mount Meru,  
Are the greatest heroes among all beings and will be able to accept adversity.  
They train in the ten strengths and come to understand adversity.  
Approaching awakening, they will receive their prophecy.

- 2.50 “Sāgaramati, how does one internalize the jewel that develops the mind directed toward omniscience? Sāgaramati, bodhisattva great beings avoid becoming conceited through the jewel that develops the mind directed toward omniscience. They do not depend on, settle in, take up, discard, ponder, think about, or conceptualize the mind directed toward omniscience. They sustain the pacification of conceptuality. They mentally investigate profound subjects. [F.19.b] What are these profound subjects?
- 2.51 “They are; the occurrences of dependent origination, the understanding of causes, what is not eternal, what is not disrupted, what is free from extreme views, what is naturally without a self, and the fact that all phenomena are unreal, primordially unborn, and nonarising because the self is unreal. They are: devotion to emptiness, trust in signlessness, confidence in wishlessness, the mind exclusively absorbed in the unconditioned, and utter impermanence. They are: the contemplations on how form is similar to bubbles, how feeling is similar to bubbles, how perception is nondual and similar to visual distortions, how formations are like the plantain tree, how consciousness is illusory, how the elements are unmoving, how the sense faculties are without mutual knowing, and how the mind has no basis.
- 2.52 “They are: not engaging in pride, not thinking oneself superior, realizing sameness to be sameness, the absence of multiplicity, one taste, staying on the path with a single destination, seeking knowledge of the accumulations on the path, relying on the truth of the definitive meaning, the mind that follows the truth, engaging without language in all languages, knowing that no sound relates to the past or the future, and realizing the inexpressible meaning with the knowledge of how meaning and expression are beyond duality.
- 2.53 “They are: knowledge of suffering—being without self-clinging; knowledge of origin—bringing it to complete exhaustion; knowledge of cessation—being without conceptual impositions; and knowledge of the path—penetrating the sameness of the conditioned and the unconditioned. [F.20.a]
- 2.54 “They are: mindfulness that considers the body and how it does not transfer from the past to the future, mindfulness that considers sensations and how they do not exist in terms of birth and destruction, mindfulness that considers the mind and how it fabricates reference points, and mindfulness that considers phenomena and how they are not the realm of phenomena.
- 2.55 “They are: right abandonment and utter sameness, and the bases of miracles and how one gains power over the mind.
- 2.56 “They are: the faculty of faith and how all desire is transcended, the faculty of diligence and how one escapes through isolation, the faculty of mindfulness and how it is without mindfulness, the faculty of absorption

- and how it refrains from mental engagement, and the faculty of insight and how it transcends conceptual elaborations.
- 2.57 “They are: the strength of faith and how it is not led along by others, the strength of diligence and how it does not conceive a narrow focus, the strength of mindfulness and how it does not decline, the strength of absorption and how it contemplates with certainty, and the strength of insight and how it accords with an unshakable cause.
- 2.58 “They are: the branch of awakening of mindfulness and how it neither recalls nor forgets, the branch of awakening of discrimination and how it understands the sameness of all phenomena, the branch of awakening of diligence and how it neither takes up nor avoids anything, the branch of awakening of joy and how it does not vacillate, the branch of awakening of pliancy and how it is present in body and mind, the branch of awakening of absorption and how it masters sameness, and the branch of awakening of equanimity and how it is nondual.
- 2.59 “They are: right view and how it relinquishes all views; right thought and how it is beyond thought, concepts, and reasoning; right speech and how it realizes the sameness of all language and sound; right action and how it is beyond all physical and mental action; right livelihood and how it puts an end to all striving; [F.20.b] right effort and how it neither undertakes nor abstains from anything; right mindfulness and how it does not conceive of virtue or nonvirtue; and right absorption and how it realizes the sameness of all mental reference points.
- 2.60 “They are: reaching the culmination of peaceful tranquility and purifying the view of special insight.
- 2.61 “They are: the meaning of the unborn, the meaning of impermanence, the meaning of the primordially unborn, the meaning of suffering, the meaning of stillness, the meaning of selflessness, the meaning of pacification, and the meaning of peace.
- 2.62 “They are: generosity that is gentle, discipline that cools, patience that has the property of exhaustion, diligence that fully discriminates, concentration that pacifies affliction, and insight that accurately knows the nature of things.
- 2.63 “They are: love that is primordially pure toward all beings, compassion that is vast as space, joy that is beyond joy, and equanimity that ends all strife.
- 2.64 “They are: how all phenomena are pure of the three spheres, the emptiness of the past, the isolation of the future, and the lack of self in the present.

- 2.65 “Sāgaramati, these profound subjects are discontinuous, beyond linguistic description, and like space. To realize, understand, engage, investigate, contemplate, assess, quantify, reflect upon, and diligently inquire into these phenomena is to internalize the jewel that develops the mind directed toward omniscience. When one internalizes the jewel that develops the mind directed toward omniscience in this manner, one will spontaneously gain dominion over all phenomena.
- 2.66 “Sāgaramati, I will draw an analogy. The celestial mansions of the sun and the moon move naturally and thus illuminate all of Jambudvīpa. However, these gods—the sun and the moon—do not conceptualize that ‘we would like to proceed [F.21.a] or recede.’ Rather, they proceed solely due to the ripening of beings’ merit. Likewise, Sāgaramati, bodhisattva great beings who have internalized this knowledge enact the benefit of beings naturally in immeasurable buddha realms. However, these bodhisattva great beings display these acts without performing any conditioned action.
- 2.67 “In this manner, Sāgaramati, the internalized knowledge of bodhisattva great beings seeks out the perfections of concentration and insight. Why is this? When bodhisattvas rest in equipoise, they see the phenomena of special insight, yet when they are not resting in equipoise they do not. This type of vision is insight, and insight functions to make it evident. What does it make evident? It makes the true character of all phenomena evident. What is the true character of all phenomena? It is devoid of any engagement with the basis of the character. What is the basis of the character of all phenomena? Cognizance is the basis of the character of all phenomena. The true character of this cognizance is said to be the true character of all phenomena.
- 2.68 “When the continuity of all feeling is cut, there is no experience nor nonexperience. In this context, what are experience and nonexperience? What we are calling *experience* is birth. What we are calling *nonexperience* is cessation. When one undergoes neither experience nor nonexperience, one also undergoes neither birth nor cessation. When one undergoes neither birth nor cessation, one settles in reality, does not disturb the realm of phenomena, does not vacillate from suchness, and does not destroy the limit of reality. What we are calling *the realm of phenomena* [F.21.b] is realized as dependent origination. *Suchness* is to understand thusness. *The limit of reality* is to realize true nonduality.
- 2.69 “Sāgaramati, bodhisattva great beings who cognize this knowledge directly are said to have reached full internalization of knowledge.”
- 2.70 When the Blessed One gave this teaching on training, adversity, and internalization, one trillion two hundred billion gods and humans developed the mind directed toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening, while six

- hundred thousand beings gained acceptance.
- 2.71 The Blessed One then spoke these verses:
- “The mind of awakening  
That realizes all phenomena is proclaimed.  
At that point the wisdom of realization  
Finds no attachment to any phenomena.
- 2.72 “When the learned ones master profound subjects  
They lose all their anxiety.  
With no anxiety or fear,  
They proceed to greater nobility.
- 2.73 “With the manner of focusing on causes,  
One understands dependent phenomena.  
The knowledgeable are then in agreement  
In that extreme views are not to be held.
- 2.74 “The mind will not get caught in  
Either eternalism or nihilism.  
The unfathomable limit of reality,  
The middle limit, will be realized.
- 2.75 According to me, the nature of this limit entails  
That all phenomena are of the essence of selflessness.  
The nature of all phenomena  
Is primordially unborn and unceasing—
- 2.76 “Unborn, non-arising,  
Empty, ungraspable, immaculate,  
Signless, nonconceptual,  
Alike and akin to space.
- 2.77 “When the mind does not hope for any of these,  
Desire and attachment are relinquished.  
The nature of form is directly understood  
As being like a bubble.
- 2.78 “Feeling is like bubbles and  
Perception has the quality of a visual distortion.  
Formations are like the core of a plantain tree,  
And consciousness is like an illusion.
- 2.79 “The four elements undergo no motion, [F.22.a]  
Like the element of space.



- The sense sources  
Are material substances and are each other's referents.
- 2.80 "Mind is not within  
And cannot be observed without.  
For the mind there is no 'mine.'  
Consciousness does not exist anywhere.
- 2.81 "When phenomena are not mentally engaged,  
Self-aggrandizement is eliminated.  
Everything is truly mastered as sameness  
And as truth itself.
- 2.82 "It is not various, but a single taste,  
Singular, and traversing a path of sameness.  
Thus the path consciousness is realized,  
And the significance of the true meaning is seen.
- 2.83 "Mind realizes the meaning,  
And masters the fact that language lacks language.  
Sounds do not continue,  
From the past to the future.
- 2.84 "Those who are learned in both meaning and words  
Realize all phenomena to be nondual.  
This inexpressible meaning  
Is realized authentically.
- 2.85 "Suffering is known to be unborn;  
Origin is the mind of sameness;  
Cessation is taught to be the cessation of consciousness;  
And the path is unconditioned knowledge.
- 2.86 "Body, feeling, mind,  
And phenomena are realized as Dharma.  
The foundation of mindfulness is shown  
To be without mindfulness and nonconceptual.
- 2.87 "The realm of phenomena is not a realm.  
Truth is equalized through sameness.  
Abandonment does not abandon anything—  
Thus is true abandonment taught.
- 2.88 "The attainment of the power of mind  
Is shown to be the bases of miracles.

- The complete transcendence of attachment  
Is the faculty of faith.
- 2.89 “Isolation from all phenomena  
Is the faculty of diligence.  
Utilizing mindfulness and non-mindfulness  
Is the faculty of mindfulness.
- 2.90 “Not mentally considering phenomena  
Is the faculty of absorption.  
Transcending all conceptual thought  
Is the faculty of insight.
- 2.91 “Realization of reality  
Is not approached through the faith of others.  
The absence of movement in the mind—  
That is what the power of faith is like.
- 2.92 “Authentic knowing unwaning—  
That is what the power of mindfulness is like.  
The treasury of the power of absorption [F.22.b]  
Is taking joy in the gentle mind.
- 2.93 “Non-thought and non-conception—  
That is what the power of insight is like.  
The branches of awakening are revealed  
In order to realize all phenomena.
- 2.94 “The authentic view is claimed to be  
The Dharma of sameness beyond difference.  
The cultivation of nondual phenomena  
Is the cultivation of the unborn path.
- 2.95 “*Unborn* entails impermanence;  
*Unarisen*—suffering;  
*Unmoving*—selflessness;  
*Peace*—the abode of peace.
- 2.96 “Generosity is a gentle mind.  
Discipline is a peaceful mind.  
Patience is the realization of the exhaustion of phenomena.  
Diligence is discriminating realization.
- 2.97 “Concentration is absolute peace.  
Insight is to know reality.

Love is described as the fact  
That all beings are primordially pure.

2.98 "Compassion is like space.  
Joy is to delight in action.  
Equanimity is described as  
Bringing an end to all endeavors.

2.99 "The knowledge that all phenomena  
Are stripped of the three spheres  
Is the genuine certainty of phenomena  
That cuts the knot of views.

2.100 "Genuine certainty is revealed  
In concentration and insight.  
Dharma knowledge is described  
As the experience of the immeasurable."

3.                    **CHAPTER THREE: THE TEACHING ON THE  
                          ABSORPTION**

3.1            The Blessed One then spoke to the bodhisattva great being Sāgaramati:  
“Along these lines, Sāgaramati, when bodhisattva great beings become completely pure, they have a genuinely good motivation and, even if all beings were to rise up to challenge them, they would not be angered. They develop the wisdom of deep certainty and the insight free from doubt. At that time, they sustain the fundamental state of the pristine and immaculate absorption seal. What is the fundamental state of this absorption? [F.23.a] It is great compassion that knows no anger toward any being.

3.2            “Even if they were honored by all beings, they would not be elated. Even if all beings were to fail to honor them, they would not be depressed. That they would neither become elated nor depressed is due to their knowledge, not pride. That they would neither become elated nor depressed means they possess the Dharma, not dullness.

3.3            “Because all phenomena arise from consciousness, the wisdom of the bodhisattvas precedes all their physical actions. Wisdom precedes all their verbal actions. Wisdom precedes all their mental actions. Any action they engage in—whether physical, verbal, or mental—is preceded by wisdom and inspired by wisdom.

3.4            “*What are those physical actions of bodhisattvas that are preceded by wisdom? They are those bodily actions that are displayed, which ripen and guide beings. They are any such activities that guide others; these activities are spontaneously enacted and require no mental imputation. Such bodhisattvas overcome all physical flaws, attachments to the body, physical changes, physical posturing, physical disturbances, and concepts about the body. Like slicing up a palm tree from the canopy on down to the root, such a body will possess unborn qualities in the future.*

- 3.5        “Such a body is pure. It is well adorned with appropriate defining qualities. Its hands and feet are soft and pliant. It is a powerful body that accords with the cause of merit. It lacks no faculties. All limbs and digits are complete. It is satisfied with its form but not puffed up; it is not proud of its greatness. [F.23.b] Bearing all such qualities, it still bows to and pays respect to all beings no matter how inferior and flawed their forms may be. Through the nature of their own bodies, bodhisattvas develop knowledge of the identical nature of all beings’ bodies. With regard to the body, knowing its nature it is a Dharma body, not a material body.
- 3.6        “What is the nature of that body? It is a body that consumes the food of concentration rather than material food. It consumes food in order to accord with the world and out of heartfelt care for beings, not because it feels physically weak. Because it is a Dharma body, it is sustained by the Dharma, not by material substances.
- 3.7        “What does it mean to be sustained by the Dharma? It means to refrain from doing anything unsuitable for the sake of survival and not to violate the way of the noble ones. What is the way of the noble ones? It is to be without attachment, anger, stupidity, or any afflictive emotions. It is to uphold, care for, and be stable in one’s training. This is the noble way.
- 3.8        “In this manner, because the physical actions of bodhisattvas are preceded by wisdom, they have all the strengths of super-knowledge and miracles. These bodhisattvas spontaneously illuminate all buddha realms. There, spontaneously and without imputation, they possess the same body, marks, splendor, and ornaments that the beings in those buddha realms possess.
- 3.9        “They have bodies that shine. When their bodies emit light, its radiance fills countless and fathomless buddha realms. This light engenders joy. It brings pleasure to beings who have gone to the lower realms of the hells. It makes them blissful. It brings relief to beings who are tormented by the afflictions. [F.24.a] This light satisfies beings and brings them physical and mental joy. With their bodies they demonstrate buddha activity for others. This is how the physical actions of bodhisattvas are preceded by wisdom.
- 3.10       “Sāgaramati, what are the bodhisattvas’ verbal actions that are preceded by wisdom? Sāgaramati, for bodhisattvas their speech occurs while having eliminated all faults of delusory language. Sāgaramati, what are these faults of delusory language? Sāgaramati, bodhisattvas are free from sixty-four faults of delusory language and their speech occurs having eliminated them. What are these sixty-four faults?
- 3.11       “Sāgaramati, bodhisattvas’ use of language is not harsh, not sullied, not gritty, not gravelly, not too loud, not too soft, not too forceful, not foul, not rushed,<sup>17</sup> not blabbering, not sudden, not mumbling, not unclear, not

pointed, not discouraging, not annoying, not childish, not vacillating, not inflaming, not injurious, not untimely, not unmeasured, not covetous due to attachment, not spiteful due to aggression, not dull and stupid due to delusion, not base, not disharmonious and abusive, not divisive, not deceptive, not puffed up, not condescending, [F.24.b] not possessive,<sup>18</sup> not displeasing, not hostile, not untrue, not misleading, not scornful, not disingenuous, not suddenly being false, not slanderous, not rude, not gossipy, not divisive among friends, not too sharp, not too gentle, not ordinary, not unguarded, not inappropriate, not inciting malice, not instigating conflict or debate or dispute, not attempting to take over others property, not malleable, not unstable, not secretive, not concerned with entertainment, not contrary to the Dharma, not advertising secrets, not harmful to beings, not praising of oneself, not condemning others, not ridiculing or rebuking others, not contradictory to the Buddha, Dharma, or Saṅgha, not denigrating the noble ones, and not indecisive. These are the sixty-four faults of delusory language, of which they are entirely free.

3.12 “Sāgaramati, bodhisattvas’ verbal actions are free of and are pure of these sixty-four faults of delusive language. Their speech teaches continuously, genuinely, and truly. It teaches by presenting the truth, being in accord with the truth, using the languages of all beings, and teaching in accord with the outlook of all beings. It satisfies all beings, [F.25.a] inspires the faculties of beings, pacifies all afflictive emotions, is blessed by the buddhas, does not contradict the Dharma, accords with the cause of merit, is distinct, is famous and immaculate like the moon, does not arouse attachment, defeats opposition, expresses qualities, does not arouse aggression, is profound and hard to fathom, does not arouse dullness, fills the ten directions and stimulates understanding, is never pointless, engages all topics, and is unconditioned. Sāgaramati, this is how the verbal actions of bodhisattvas are preceded by wisdom.

3.13 “Sāgaramati, how are the mental actions of bodhisattvas preceded by wisdom? Sāgaramati, bodhisattva great beings can understand the mental processes and movements of all beings’ minds through a single mental act of their own. While resting in equipoise, they display all forms of conduct, yet do not arise from absorption. Their mental actions are not known by māras. Their mental acts are not comprehensible to hearers or solitary buddhas. Such bodhisattvas do not conceive of anything that would be injurious to themselves, to others, or to both. Their mind, cognition, and consciousness are not obstructed by any phenomenon. They see with a wisdom that is cognizant of all phenomena. Their mind, cognition, and consciousness experience feelings free from knowing and they do not manifest the

cessation of feelings until the qualities of buddhahood are brought to perfection.<sup>19</sup> Sāgaramati, this is how the mental actions of bodhisattvas are preceded by wisdom.

3.14 “Sāgaramati, this is the fundamental point of the pristine and immaculate absorption seal: [F.25.b] their physical actions are preceded by wisdom, their verbal actions are preceded by wisdom, and their mental actions are preceded by wisdom. Sāgaramati, when bodhisattva great beings engage in physical, verbal, and mental actions that are preceded by wisdom, they attain the pristine and immaculate absorption seal.

3.15 “Sāgaramati, because ten qualities are pristine, this absorption is said to be pristine. What are these ten qualities?

“(1) The actions that they engage in are pristine because their intentions and motivation are pure. (2) Their bodhisattva conduct is pristine because their six perfections are pure. (3) Their conduct aimed at goodness is pristine because all their virtuous qualities are pure. (4) Their actions that bring the major and minor marks of perfection to completion are pristine because their unstinting offerings are pure. (5) Their actions that assure recollection and eloquence are pristine because their skill in accomplishing the teachings just as they hear them, and helping others to understand them, is pure. (6) Their mindfulness, absorption, and undistracted consciousness are pristine because of the way in which they are free from all confusion, obscuration, discontinuity, and ebullience. (7) Their knowledge of the phenomena related to awakening is pristine because their conscientiousness is pure. (8) Their knowledge of tranquility and special insight is pristine because their mind, cognition, and consciousness are pure. (9) Their wisdom that arrives at the ten levels is pristine because their transcendence of inappropriate directions, discontinuities, and desire is pure. (10) Their wisdom that is the ornament of the seat of awakening is pristine because their virtuous qualities are pure through having eliminated all nonvirtuous qualities. Sāgaramati, because these ten qualities are pristine, this absorption is said to be pristine. [F.26.a] [B3]

3.16 “Sāgaramati, why is it called an immaculate seal? These twenty factors are the gateway to this immaculate seal. It is because of these twenty factors that this absorption is called an immaculate seal. What are these twenty factors?

3.17 “(1) It is the immaculate seal that is inwardly pure because it is purified of self-clinging. (2) It is the immaculate seal that is outwardly pure because it is purified of clinging to ‘mine.’ (3) It is the immaculate seal that is purified of the essential nature of the transitory collection because it is purified of all views. (4) It is the pure and immaculate seal of the selflessness of all beings because it is primordially pure. (5) It is the pure and immaculate seal that realizes all phenomena as the same because it is of one taste. (6) It is the pure

and immaculate seal of emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness because all forms of liberation are pure. (7) It is the pure and immaculate seal of space because it is completely pure. (8) It is the pure and immaculate seal of the dispositions of beings and the realm of phenomena because it is nothing that can be separated. (9) It is the pure and immaculate seal of clear vision because its super-knowledge is pure. (10) It is the pure and immaculate seal that shines like the sun because its eternal light is pure. (11) It is the pure and immaculate seal of wisdom that sees the three times without attachment because it is pure in being free of all attachment. (12) It is the pure and immaculate seal of the gateway to understanding because neither consciousness nor wisdom exists. (13) It is the pure and immaculate seal of the unconditioned because it purifies the essential nature of conditioned phenomena. (14) It is the pure and immaculate seal that realizes dependent origination because it analyzes conditions. [F.26.b] (15) It is the pure and immaculate seal that follows the strengths, fearlessnesses, and qualities of buddhahood because it is pure, untrammelled knowledge. (16) It is the pure and immaculate seal that is characterized by the realization of buddha qualities because it is pure in terms of former training. (17) It is the pure and immaculate seal of great love and compassion because it never gives up on anyone. (18) It is the pure and immaculate seal that defeats māras and opposing forces because it is pure in being free from all extremes. (19) It is the pure and immaculate seal that defeats all the binding forces of habitual afflictions because the nature of phenomena is pure. (20) It is the pure and immaculate seal that realizes the gateway to all buddha qualities in a single moment of mind because the effort to complete all that is to be taken up has been purified. Sāgaramati, it is because of these twenty factors of the immaculate seal that this absorption is called the immaculate seal.

3.18 “Sāgaramati, when bodhisattvas sit at the seat of awakening, the absorption that they acquire is called the pristine and immaculate seal. As soon as they acquire this absorption, they evince eight unique forms of great strength. What are these eight? The first unique great strength is that all the worlds of the trichiliocosm turn into diamond. Second, every tree grows various leaves, flowers, and fruits and then leans, bows, and prostrates in the direction of the tree of awakening. Third, for that moment, no being is harmed by any affliction. Fourth, all beings in the lower realms behold the bodhisattva at the seat of awakening [F.27.a] and, seeing him, they are filled with every kind of pleasure. Fifth, the space between all the world systems is pervaded with a golden-colored light. Sixth, the earth shakes violently, yet no being whatsoever is harmed. Seventh, the blessed buddhas throughout the ten directions show themselves and provide fearless encouragement, saying, ‘Great Captain, may you be victorious! May you be victorious!’



Eighth, all buddha qualities are realized in a single moment of mind. Sāgaramati, as soon as they acquire this pristine and immaculate absorption seal, they evince these eight unique forms of great strength. Thus, through the power of this absorption, fathomless causes of positive qualities manifest.”

3.19 The Blessed One then spoke these verses:

“This Dharma is immaculate, pure, virtuous, and naturally luminous.  
It is space-like and primordially unmanifest.  
It is unborn, non-arising, baseless, and unceasing.  
Thus is the unwavering and immaculate seal of the victors.

3.20 “This fundamental point is the indivisible dhāraṇī—  
The unified cultivation of love and compassion.  
Even if one were served by all beings, there would be no elation.  
And when not honored, there is no loss—it is a mind of sameness.

3.21 “Wisdom arises from this quality of sameness.  
It defeats the darkness of dullness and eliminates stupidity.  
Because one possesses wisdom, there is no pride.  
Knowing the quality of sameness with certainty, one is pure.

3.22 “Whatever actions of body, speech, or mind the learned perform,  
They bring happiness to beings with their comprehensive knowledge.  
Many beings perceive their pure forms  
And aspire to the unsurpassed and flawless wisdom of the victors.

3.23 “Their conduct is always restrained and undeluded. [F.27.b]  
It is spontaneous and ultimately involves no thought or concept.  
Every physical fault that one could speak of  
Has for them ended and is primordially unborn.

3.24 “Their bodies are powerful and adorned with marks.  
The soles of their feet are smooth, having arisen from merit.  
Though their bodies are gorgeous, complete in all faculties,  
The learned do not get puffed up about their appearance and have no  
arrogance.

3.25 “They respect, serve, and bow to many beings,  
Who suffer due to deprivation and poverty.  
They have no pride, wishing that they may uphold the Dharma.  
These students of the Dharma will attain sublime awakening.

3.26 “Knowing the nature of their own bodies,

- They realize the same in the bodies of all beings.  
They attain the flawless Dharma body, which is not physical,  
And thus they are freed from all afflictive emotions.
- 3.27 “Eternally possessed of absorption, they are sustained by concentration.  
For these resplendent ones, physical embodiment is an impossibility.  
They consume food for beings’ sake, not to maintain their strength.  
They sustain their lives with Dharma for the sake of deathlessness.
- 3.28 “Always maintaining the noble way, they are at utter peace.  
They separate themselves from attachment, aggression, and dullness.  
They keep their trainings hidden, and are calm and harmonious.  
The learned ones give themselves away and do no evil.
- 3.29 “Through miraculous power, they travel to trillions of realms.  
There they teach the Dharma, acting in accord with beings’ bodies.  
Their bodies take on the appearance  
Of the forms, marks, and characteristics that beings possess.
- 3.30 “From their bodies, a very pure light springs forth.  
It pervades infinite fields throughout the ten directions.  
This light carries the splendor of merit, and is pleasing on contact,  
Pacifying the torture of beings’ afflictions.
- 3.31 “The suffering of thousands of beings in hell  
Is alleviated immediately upon contact with this light.  
They achieve joy in body and mind,  
And this causes their liberation from the hells.
- 3.32 “In these and other ways their physical actions are refined. [F.28.a]  
These limitless bodies are empowered by wisdom.  
These gentle and wise beings enact buddha activities.  
Their flawless physical actions are like this.
- 3.33 “Their words are pure and their voices pleasing to hear,  
Satisfying all beings—divine and otherwise.  
When they speak, their explanations always carry meaning,  
And the unconditioned nectar of this vehicle emerges.
- 3.34 “All the many faults related to the voice  
Are disrupted by their pure merit.  
Because for them all languages and sounds are the same,  
They satisfy beings with all their verbal statements.
- 3.35 “Their speech is constant, even, and true.<sup>20</sup>

- Their proclamations are unobscured, and they rest in equipoise.  
 Everything that they say later comes to pass.  
 With their knowledge that accords with truth they are pure.
- 3.36 “They have no afflictions and they have pacified desire.  
 Having eliminated this, their voice conveys qualities and they are free of  
 faults.  
 Vast, hard to fathom, and utterly terminated,  
 They benefit others and pervade thousands of buddha realms.
- 3.37 “They speak words that are not based in concepts.  
 As a natural expression, they declare how freedom can be found.  
 Like the earth itself, they always satisfy the faculties of beings.  
 Their supreme statements they make are informed by knowledge.
- 3.38 “Obscurations have been permanently removed from their minds.  
 They know all the minds of beings in a single moment of mind.  
 They do not regress from undistracted absorption.  
 The minds of these perfect leaders are unknown to māras.
- 3.39 “Their minds, cognitions, and thoughts are deeply profound  
 Such that solitary buddhas and hearers would find them difficult to fathom.  
 They neither harm themselves nor others, and inspire no attachment.  
 They have even minds free of anger or arrogance.
- 3.40 “These wise ones engage with others in harmony with their class.  
 Yet they do so without feeling, intention, or thought.  
 While reaching the abode of awakening for the sake of deathlessness,  
 They do not block feelings nor do they dwell conceptually on pleasure.
- 3.41 “Wherever these ten qualities have been permanently purified, [F.28.b]  
 A perfect leader manifests this absorption.  
 When the conduct of engagement is practiced,  
 All are ennobled and purified by the paths of goodness.
- 3.42 “The perfections are accomplished on their corresponding levels,  
 Leaving one ennobled by the vastness of virtue.  
 Merit results in the purification of the major marks.  
 With eloquence the dhāraṇīs become endless.
- 3.43 “The learned always accomplish the teachings they have heard.  
 The mindful equipoise of learned beings is never confused.  
 In them no subtle karmic ripening or confusion can be seen.  
 Instead, all obscurations are purified.

- 3.44 “All the vast and infinite factors of awakening  
Are present in these conscientious ones.  
With perfect tranquility, they always understand due to special insight.  
Thus they reach the ten levels and eliminate attachment.
- 3.45 “They speak perfectly because they experience the heart of awakening.  
Eliminating all nonvirtue, they will achieve victory over the enemy.  
Due to their virtuous qualities, they are elevated like Mount Meru,  
And attain this unfathomable and immaculate light.
- 3.46 “Attaining this absorption, these learned ones act meritoriously,  
And attain the twenty supreme qualities of purification.  
Like the sun, they brighten the lives of all beings,  
And reach the victor’s wisdom—unsurpassed awakening.
- 3.47 “Before the tree, they achieve the inconceivable eight strengths  
And act for the welfare of beings in thousands of realms.  
They bestow the fearlessness of the buddhas and are the heroes of beings.  
Taming the māras, they reach supreme awakening.
- 3.48 “Having completed their training<sup>21</sup> in the victors’ seal,  
All of these qualities reach an unfathomable extent.  
Thus, those who yearn for such a garland of qualities  
Should quickly become diligent in maintaining the mind of awakening.”
- 3.49 Then the Blessed One spoke to the bodhisattva great being Sāgaramati:  
[F.29.a] “Therefore, Sāgaramati, bodhisattva great beings who yearn to attain  
this pristine and immaculate absorption seal should ensure their minds are  
pristine and immaculate through maintaining a limpid and undisturbed  
mind. A limpid mind is the mind that has a luminous nature, wherein there is  
no opportunity for adventitious afflictive emotions to occur. Its quality of  
luminosity is unchanging. It is completely free from mental engagement. It is  
free of attachment and thus unpolluted. It is free of aggression and  
nonconceptual. It is free of dullness and free of darkness. It arises from a  
state that is pure, pristine, immaculate, and liberated.
- 3.50 “In the same way it is liberated, so are all phenomena—they are the same  
as suchness. In the same way it is liberated, so are all phenomena—they are  
the same as the realm of phenomena. In the same way it is liberated, so are  
all phenomena—they are the same as the limit of reality. In the same way it is  
liberated, so are all phenomena—they are the same as emptiness,  
signlessness, wishlessness, the unconditioned, the non-arising, the unborn,

and the unceasing. In the same way it is liberated, so are all conditioned phenomena—they are the same as the sameness of unconditioned phenomena.

- 3.51 “This wisdom that accords with sameness, and that does not pick up or put down anything, is called the limpid mind. Even when this teaching is introduced to other beings and people, there is no disturbance in terms of either self or other. Such is the limpid mind. When bodhisattvas’ minds are limpid and undisturbed, they will attain the pristine and immaculate absorption seal.” [F.29.b]
- 3.52 “Blessed One, this absorption is profound!” exclaimed Sāgaramati.  
“Yes, Sāgaramati,” answered the Blessed One, “because its depths cannot be seen.”
- 3.53 “Blessed One, this absorption is hard to see!”  
“Yes, because it is free from duality.”
- 3.54 “Blessed One, this absorption is difficult to realize!”  
“Yes, because it cannot be approached through pride and self-aggrandizing.”
- 3.55 “Blessed One, this absorption is difficult to understand!”  
“Yes, because it is realized as the sameness of consciousness and wisdom.”
- 3.56 “Blessed One, this absorption is lucid!”  
“Yes, because it is the attainment of unobscured liberation.”
- 3.57 “Blessed One, this absorption is so subtle!”  
“Yes, because it cannot be analogized.”
- 3.58 “Blessed One, this absorption is essential!”  
“Yes, because it attains the vajra-like wisdom.”
- 3.59 “Blessed One, this absorption is indivisible!”  
“Yes, because the past and the future are indivisible.”
- 3.60 “Blessed One, this absorption is unobstructed!”  
“Yes, because it transcends all the paths of attachment.”
- 3.61 “Blessed One, this absorption is so illuminating!”  
“Yes, because it is free of the darkness of dullness.”
- 3.62 “Blessed One, this absorption is so pure!” [F.30.a]  
“Yes, because it is devoid of affliction.”
- 3.63 “Blessed One, this absorption is so immaculate!”  
“Yes, because it is free of the dust of attachment.”
- 3.64 “Blessed One, this absorption is unmoving!”  
“Yes, because it does not move within the three realms.”
- 3.65 “Blessed One, this absorption is conceptually unstructured!”  
“Yes, because it is free from all conceptual structuring.”
- 3.66 “Blessed One, this absorption does not fluctuate!”

- “Yes, because it is final.”
- 3.67 “Blessed One, this absorption reaches everywhere!”
- “Yes, because it is alike and akin to space.”
- 3.68 “Blessed One, what types of diligent actions will lead one to the attainment of this pristine and immaculate absorption seal?”
- 3.69 “To draw an analogy, Sāgaramati, if someone wanted to wage war on the sky, they should don the armor of the sky. Sāgaramati, when one desires to attain the pristine and immaculate absorption seal, one should don the armor of the sameness of all phenomena. Why is this? Sāgaramati, attainment is determined by one’s preparations.
- 3.70 “Sāgaramati, consciousness is the seed of the conditioned. Non-cognition is the seed of the unconditioned, and this absorption is the seed of non-cognition. This absorption cannot be perceived by the eye consciousness, nor by the consciousness of the ear, nose, tongue, body, or mind. [F.30.b] This absorption cannot be realized by cognizing or feeling it; this absorption has the characteristic of being without feeling and cognition. Because it realizes all phenomena to be sameness, it is called perfect buddhahood.
- 3.71 “Sāgaramati, I did not understand pollution through some other characteristic. Nor did I understand purification through some other characteristic. Why is this? The basic characteristic of pollution is the same as purification. Their basic characteristic is that they are naturally pure. The basic characteristic of being naturally pure is to be without characteristics. Being without characteristics is signlessness. There is nothing in signlessness that can be discerned.
- 3.72 “Sāgaramati, no phenomenon can be cognized nor is to be cognized. Language does not occur where no phenomenon can be cognized nor is to be cognized. Where no language occurs, things are just as they are. How are things just as they are? As it was before, so will it be after. Thus, all phenomena are said to be empty throughout the three times. Why are they described as emptiness? They have not been made, will not be made, are not being made, and are not in a process of making. Thus, they are called emptiness.
- 3.73 “What does *not being made* refer to? It refers to being unconditioned. Because they are not being made, there are no phenomena that have been made. That is why it is said there is nothing that will be made. What does *being unconditioned* refer to? It refers to being without any physical, verbal, or mental formations. [F.31.a] That is what is meant by being unconditioned. What is not made is unconditioned: it is unborn, indestructible, baseless. What is unborn, indestructible, and baseless has no basis. In what way is it baseless? It is not based on anything that has been formed. Thus, it is said to be without a base. In this regard, a consciousness that gravitates toward

form is baseless. A consciousness that moves toward feeling, perception, formation, or consciousness is likewise baseless. A baseless consciousness is replete with wisdom. One who is replete with wisdom is prevented by wisdom from becoming conceited. One who is prevented from becoming conceited cannot become arrogant. One who cannot become arrogant does not debate. One who does not debate does not become inflamed. One who does not become inflamed is not pained. One who is not pained does not smolder. One who does not smolder is at peace. One who is at peace is utterly peaceful. One who is utterly peaceful is deeply at peace. One who is deeply at peace is called a sage—who is called a teacher.

3.74 “Sāgaramati, these points are so profound, so difficult to see, and so difficult to realize. Anyone who hears these teachings and is inspired by them will be liberated from error, and the perpetuation of affliction, grasping, and bondage. They will uphold the Dharma treasury of the blessed buddhas of the past, present, and future. They will be great captains who teach limitless paths to beings. They will be the foremost physicians who heal the formless disease of afflictive emotions. [F.31.b] They will venerate the thus-gone ones with the finest offerings. Before long, they will attain the pristine and immaculate absorption seal. They will find certainty in the Great Vehicle. They will make good use of the great raft of Dharma. They will free limitless beings from the great river of saṃsāra. They will not be said to be under the influence of māras. These sublime beings will defeat all māras and opposing forces.”

## 4. CHAPTER FOUR: TEACHING THROUGH ANALOGIES

4.1 The bodhisattva great being Sāgaramati then asked the Blessed One, “Blessed One, how do bodhisattvas defeat māras and obstructers?”

“Sāgaramati,” answered the Blessed One, “when bodhisattva great beings are no longer interested in any clinging, they defeat māras and obstructers. When they are no longer interested in marks and reference points, they defeat māras and obstructers. Sāgaramati, there are four māras: the māra of the aggregates, the māra of the afflictions, the māra of the Lord of Death, and the māra of the gods.

4.2 “Regarding this, the māra of the aggregates is defeated by contemplating how phenomena are illusory. The māra of the afflictions is defeated by reflection on emptiness. The māra of the Lord of Death is defeated by contemplating the unborn and non-arising. The māra of the gods is defeated by the path that halts all imputations made out of pride.

4.3 “Moreover, the māra of the aggregates is defeated by understanding suffering. The māra of the afflictions is defeated by abandoning the origin. The māra of the Lord of Death is defeated by actualizing cessation. The māra of the gods is defeated by cultivating the path. [F.32.a]

4.4 “Moreover, the māra of the aggregates is defeated by realizing formations to be suffering. The māra of the afflictions is defeated by realizing formations to be impermanent. The māra of the Lord of Death is defeated by realizing phenomena to be selfless. The māra of the gods is defeated by realizing that nirvāṇa is peace.

4.5 “Moreover, Sāgaramati, when bodhisattvas discard the stains of their inner afflictions, practice giving without forgetting the mind of awakening, and dedicate this toward omniscience, they destroy the māra of the aggregates. When bodhisattvas practice giving without consideration for, or attachment to, the body and dedicate this to omniscience, they destroy the māra of the afflictions. When bodhisattvas practice giving with the thought,



'Ah, I shall make good use of these possessions of mine that are otherwise impermanent and ordinary,' and dedicate this to omniscience, they destroy the māra of the Lord of Death. When bodhisattvas develop great compassion for all beings, practice giving in order to attract all beings and liberate them, and dedicate this to omniscience, they destroy the māra of the gods.

4.6 "Moreover, Sāgaramati, bodhisattvas destroy the māra of the aggregates by maintaining discipline without any desire to prolong their rebirths in saṃsāra. Bodhisattvas destroy the māra of the afflictions by maintaining discipline within the view of selflessness. Bodhisattvas destroy the māra of the Lord of Death by maintaining discipline in order to undermine aging and death with pure discipline. Bodhisattvas destroy the māra of the gods by maintaining discipline with the intention that they will establish all beings that have corrupt discipline in the discipline of noble beings. [F.32.b]

4.7 "Moreover, Sāgaramati, bodhisattvas destroy the māra of the aggregates by cultivating patience without apprehending a self. Bodhisattvas destroy the māra of the afflictions by cultivating patience without apprehending beings. Bodhisattva destroy the māra of the Lord of Death by cultivating patience without apprehending saṃsāra. Bodhisattvas destroy the māra of the gods by cultivating patience without apprehending nirvāṇa.

4.8 "Moreover, Sāgaramati, bodhisattvas transcend the māra of the aggregates by practicing diligence while disengaging from the body. Bodhisattvas transcend the māra of the afflictions by practicing diligence while disengaging from the mind. Bodhisattvas transcend the māra of the Lord of Death by practicing diligence in the midst of the unborn and non-arising. Bodhisattvas transcend the māra of the gods by practicing diligence for the sake of ripening beings and upholding the Dharma without being saddened by saṃsāra.

4.9 "Moreover, Sāgaramati, bodhisattvas transcend the māra of the aggregates by practicing concentration without sustaining the aggregates. Bodhisattvas transcend the māra of the afflictions by practicing concentration without sustaining the elements. Bodhisattvas transcend the māra of the Lord of Death by practicing concentration without sustaining the sense sources. Bodhisattvas transcend the māra of the gods by dedicating these aspects of practicing concentration to awakening.

4.10 "Moreover, Sāgaramati, bodhisattvas find victory over the māra of the aggregates by utilizing insight to become learned in the aggregates. Bodhisattvas find victory over the māra of the afflictions by utilizing insight to become learned in the elements. Bodhisattvas find victory over the māra of the Lord of Death by utilizing insight to become learned in the sense sources.

Bodhisattvas find victory over the māra of the gods by utilizing insight to become learned in dependent origination and thus not actualizing the limit of reality.

4.11 “Moreover, Sāgaramati, the māra of the aggregates has no chance when bodhisattvas aspire to the emptiness of all phenomena. The māra of the afflictions has no chance when bodhisattvas trust that all phenomena are signless. [F.33.a] The māra of the Lord of Death has no chance when bodhisattvas have no doubt that all phenomena are the wishless state. The māra of the gods has no chance when bodhisattvas have no doubt that phenomena are unconditioned, and do not become arrogant even if they gather roots of virtue.

4.12 “Moreover, Sāgaramati, when bodhisattvas cultivate the application of mindfulness of body to the body and do not form the concepts that go along with the body, they defeat the māra of the aggregates. When bodhisattvas cultivate the application of mindfulness of feelings to feelings and do not form the concepts that go along with feelings, they defeat the māra of the afflictions. When bodhisattvas cultivate the application of mindfulness of mind to the mind and do not form the concepts that go along with the mind, they defeat the māra of the Lord of Death. When bodhisattvas cultivate the application of mindfulness of mental phenomena to mental phenomena and do not form the concepts that go along with mental phenomena, protecting their intention to awaken, they defeat the māra of the gods.

4.13 “Sāgaramati, all of the māras’ activities are motivated by the workings of the self. Thus, bodhisattvas do not motivate themselves by the workings of the self. The self is not a self, but is selfless, so there is no phenomenon that can generate the self. Cognizing this with discriminating wisdom, bodhisattvas don the armor of the Great Vehicle for the sake of ignorant beings, not because they impute self or other. When wearing this armor, they will ask themselves how to make this armor meaningful. They think the following: [F.33.b] ‘I am not wearing this armor so that I may dismantle the self, nor am I wearing it so that I may dismantle a being, a life force, sustenance, a person, or personhood. Instead, I will abandon the entire basis for beings to sustain the view of self, beings, life force, sustenance, people, or personhood. What is this basis? The basis is being mistaken. The aggregates, elements, and sense sources are the basis. As their minds are mistaken in this regard, beings perceive what is impermanent to be permanent, what is suffering to be happiness, what is not a self to be a self, and what is ugly to be attractive. Now, so that they may come to understand perception, I will teach them the Dharma.’

4.14 “What does it mean to understand perception? It is to be without grasping or clinging. When one does not grasp, one does not cling. When one does not cling, there is no delusion. When there is no delusion, one understands perception.”

4.15 “Does one then understand past, present, or future perceptions?” asked Sāgaramati.

“Neither past, nor present, nor future perceptions! Why is this? Past perceptions are exhausted. Present perceptions do not remain. Future perceptions have not yet come. One understands perception when one no longer observes perceptions in any of the three times. Then, having this understanding of perception, the conduct of bodhisattvas is pure. They completely understand the conduct of all beings.

4.16 “Sāgaramati, bodhisattvas’ conduct will be impure to the degree that they fail to understand the conduct of beings. [F.34.a] When they understand the conduct of beings, their bodhisattva conduct will be pure. They will teach the Dharma in accord with their understanding of these modes of conduct. They will teach in order to reverse the different kinds of beings’ conduct.

4.17 “Sāgaramati, there are those who have desirous thoughts who also are involved in aggression. There are those who have aggressive thoughts who also are involved in desire. There are those who have aggressive thoughts who also are involved in stupidity. There are those who have stupid thoughts who also are involved in aggression. There are those who have stupid thoughts who also are involved in desire. There are those who have desirous thoughts who also are involved in stupidity. There are those who have desirous and aggressive thoughts who also are involved in stupidity. There are those who have aggressive and stupid thoughts who also are involved in desire. There are those who have stupid and desirous thoughts who also are involved in aggression.

4.18 “Sāgaramati, there are some who engage in desire who should eliminate aggression. There are some who engage in aggression who should eliminate desire. There are some who engage in aggression who should eliminate stupidity. There are some who engage in stupidity who should eliminate aggression. There are some who engage in stupidity who should eliminate desire. There are some who engage in desire who should eliminate stupidity. There are some who engage in desire or aggression who should eliminate stupidity. There are some who engage in aggression or stupidity who should eliminate desire. There are some who engage in stupidity or desire who should eliminate aggression.

4.19 “Sāgaramati, there are those who are first desirous and then aggressive. There are beings who are first aggressive and then desirous. There are beings who are first aggressive [F.34.b] and then stupid. There are beings

who are first stupid and then aggressive. There are beings who are first stupid and then desirous. There are beings who are first desirous and then stupid. There are beings who are first desirous and aggressive and then stupid. There are beings who are first aggressive and stupid and then desirous. There are beings who are first stupid and desirous and then aggressive.

4.20 “Sāgaramati, there are those who are desirous of form and averse to sound. There are those who are desirous of sound and averse to form. There are those who are desirous of smell and averse to taste. There are those who are desirous of taste and averse to smell. There are those who are desirous of touch and averse to mental phenomena. There are those who are desirous of mental phenomena and averse to touch.

4.21 “Sāgaramati, there are beings who can be guided by disengaging from form, but not from sound. There are beings who can be guided by disengaging from sound, but not from form. There are beings who can be guided by disengaging from smell, but not from taste. There are beings who can be guided by disengaging from taste, but not from smell. There are beings who can be guided by disengaging from touch, but not from mental phenomena. There are beings who can be guided by disengaging from mental phenomena, but not from touch.

4.22 “Sāgaramati, there are beings who can be guided by disengaging from body, but not from mind. There are beings who can be guided by disengaging from mind, but not from body. There are beings who can be guided by disengaging from body and mind, and there are those who cannot be guided by disengaging from body or mind.

4.23 “Sāgaramati, there are beings who can be guided by the message of impermanence, but not by the messages of suffering, selflessness, or peace. There are beings who can be guided by the message of suffering, [F.35.a] but not by the messages of impermanence, selflessness, or peace. There are beings who can be guided by the message of selflessness, but not by the messages of impermanence, suffering, or peace. There are beings who can be guided by the message of peace, but not by the messages of impermanence, suffering, or selflessness.

4.24 “Sāgaramati, there are beings who can be guided by miracles based on speech, but not by miracles based on instruction. There are beings who can be guided by miracles based on instruction, but not by miracles based on speech. There are beings who can be guided by miracles based on miraculous powers, but not by miracles based on speech or instruction. There are beings who can be liberated by miracles based on speech. There are beings who can be liberated by miracles based on instruction. There are beings who can be liberated by miracles based on miraculous powers.

- 4.25 “Sāgaramati, there are beings for whom practice will come swiftly but liberation slowly. There are beings for whom practice will come slowly but liberation swiftly. There are beings for whom both practice and liberation will come slowly. There are beings for whom both practice and liberation will come swiftly.
- 4.26 “Sāgaramati, there are beings who can be liberated by causes, but not by conditions. There are beings who can be liberated by conditions but not by causes. There are beings who can be liberated by both causes and conditions. There are also beings who cannot be liberated by either causes or conditions.
- 4.27 “Sāgaramati, there are beings who can be liberated by seeing inner flaws, but not by seeing outer flaws. There are beings who can be liberated by seeing outer flaws, but not by seeing inner flaws. There are beings who can be liberated by seeing both inner and outer flaws. [F.35.b] There are beings who cannot be liberated by seeing either inner or outer flaws.
- 4.28 “Sāgaramati, some beings can attain liberation through the path of ease, but not through the path of hardship. Yet, for some it will occur through the path of hardship, and not of ease. For some a combination of hardship and ease will bring it about. Still, there are some who cannot attain freedom through either the path of ease or hardship.
- 4.29 “Sāgaramati, some beings can be guided through directives, and others through support, being cut down, being accepted, beauty, ugliness, aggression, love, cursing, and dependent origination. Some beings can be guided by pleasant destinies, others by hellish destinies, and still others by transverse destinies.
- 4.30 “There are also some beings who can be guided by teachings on the applications of mindfulness, teachings on the right abandonments, teachings on the bases of miracles, teachings on the faculties, teachings on the strengths, teachings on the branches of awakening, teachings on the path, teachings on tranquility, or teachings on special insight. Some beings, Sāgaramati, can also be guided by teachings that describe the truths of the noble ones.
- 4.31 “In this way, Sāgaramati, the conduct of beings is unfathomable. The thoughts of beings are unfathomable. The experience of beings is unfathomable. [F.36.a] Thus, when bodhisattvas enter into unfathomable penetrating knowing, they are able to penetrate the unfathomable forms of conduct of unfathomable beings.
- 4.32 “Sāgaramati, to draw an analogy, suppose a person was caught in a net called ‘completely lassoed.’ Were that person to draw on the power of the spell called ‘deliverer from all lassoes,’ then as soon as they became ensnared, they could utilize that spell to instantly cut through all the fetters.

They would then be free to go where they pleased. Likewise, Sāgaramati, penetrating the thoughts of all beings, bodhisattvas who are skilled in means can cut all the binding afflictive emotions of beings with the power of the spell of the perfection of insight. Though they have not yet reached the wisdom of a buddha, they enact buddha activity, and thus remain close to beings.”

4.33 Venerable Śāradvatīputra then remarked to the Buddha, “Blessed One, the extent of beings’ limitless modes of conduct and the unfathomable wisdom of the buddhas is incredible. Blessed One, it truly amazes me that when novice bodhisattvas first hear of the extent of beings’ limitless modes of conduct and the unfathomable wisdom of the buddhas, they are not intimidated, scared, or unnerved.”

4.34 The Blessed One responded to the Venerable Śāradvatīputra, “Tell me, Śāradvatīputra, when lion cubs hear a lion’s roar, are they intimidated, scared, or unnerved?”

“Blessed One, they are not.”

4.35 The Blessed One continued, “Likewise, Śāradvatīputra, when novice bodhisattvas hear the Thus-Gone One’s lion’s roar, [F.36.b] they are not intimidated, scared, or unnerved. They are not frightened by hearing of beings’ limitless modes of conduct.

4.36 “Śāradvatīputra, to draw another analogy, even though a fire may be small, it will not be intimidated by any amount of trees and grass. It will never think that it is unable to burn them. Likewise, Śāradvatīputra, even the feeble light of a novice bodhisattva’s insight is not intimidated by beings’ afflictive emotions. They do not worry that they lack the power to pacify afflictive emotions. Accurately investigating beings’ afflictive emotions only becomes a cause of deeper insight.

4.37 “Śāradvatīputra, to draw another analogy, imagine a scene in which fire becomes opposed to all trees, leaves, and branches. They might all prepare to fight and have a great dispute, thinking, ‘We will start a war in seven days.’ The grass and trees would then gather other grasses and trees, commanding them to support and join rank. Together they might then amass to a pile the size of Mount Meru. Now, someone might then go before the fire and ask, ‘Why have you not assembled an army? Do you think you alone can be victorious over all these grasses and trees?’ The fire would then reply, ‘I do not have to assemble an army. And why not? Because these opposing forces of grass and trees are my support—the more they are, the stronger I become. If they were not there, I would also swiftly perish.’

4.38 “Likewise, Śāradvatīputra, the more bodhisattvas send their limitless fire of insight toward the limitless afflictions of all beings, the stronger these bodhisattvas become. [F.37.a] Accurately investigating the afflictions of all

beings becomes a cause of deeper insight. If bodhisattvas were to become concerned only with eliminating their own afflictions and shied away from eliminating the afflictions of all beings, they would swiftly fall to the level of either a hearer or a solitary buddha. Śāradvatīputra, from this teaching you should understand that the more bodhisattvas examine beings' afflictive emotions through appropriate mental engagement, the stronger they become. If someone can hear this without being intimidated, that person must be recognized as a bodhisattva who is skilled in means.

4.39 “Śāradvatīputra, to draw another analogy, a young poisonous snake can hunt without any assistance. Likewise, Śāradvatīputra, novice bodhisattvas can amass the branches of awakening without any assistance. Even on their own, they can themselves amass the branches of awakening.

4.40 “Śāradvatīputra, to draw another analogy, even a hundred thousand fireflies cannot outshine the light of the sun. Likewise, Śāradvatīputra, the entirety of afflictions cannot outshine the light of a bodhisattva's insight.

4.41 “Śāradvatīputra, to draw another analogy, even a small amount of a healing antidote to poison can ameliorate a wide variety of poisons. Likewise, Śāradvatīputra, even a small amount of a bodhisattva's healing insight can ameliorate a wide variety of poisonous afflictive emotions.

4.42 “Śāradvatīputra, to draw another analogy, water falling from the sky has a consistent taste but will end up taking on a great variety of tastes in different containers. Likewise, Śāradvatīputra, bodhisattvas accomplish the consistent taste of liberated wisdom but give diverse Dharma teachings according to the diverse faculties of beings.

4.43 “Śāradvatīputra, to draw another analogy, [F.37.b] wherever the gold of the Jambu River is found, all other precious jewels appear dull. Likewise, Śāradvatīputra, anywhere the precious bodhisattvas are, all hearers and solitary buddhas appear dull.

4.44 “Śāradvatīputra, to draw another analogy, when a universal monarch is present, all lesser kings will pay obeisance to him. Likewise, Śāradvatīputra, when the children of the Dharma King develop the mind of awakening, the entire world of gods, humans, and asuras will pay them homage.

4.45 “Śāradvatīputra, to draw another analogy, wealth does not come to beings who have not created the merit for it. Likewise, Śāradvatīputra, the mind of awakening will not arise in those who have not developed roots of virtue.  
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4.46 “Śāradvatīputra, to draw another analogy, molasses does not come about without sugarcane seeds. Likewise, Śāradvatīputra, bodhisattvas will not accomplish unsurpassed and perfect awakening without the seed of the mind of awakening.

- 4.47 “Śāradvatīputra, to draw another analogy, given the healing skill of the king of physicians, there is nothing that does not appear as medicine. Likewise, Śāradvatīputra, for bodhisattvas who experience the perfection of insight there is no phenomenon that is not seen in terms of awakening.
- 4.48 “Śāradvatīputra, to draw another analogy, Rāhu, lord of the asuras, cannot permanently interrupt the progression of the chariots of the sun and moon. Likewise, Śāradvatīputra, not even all the māras could completely interrupt a bodhisattva’s diligent progression along the path of awakening.
- 4.49 “Śāradvatīputra, to draw another analogy, gods who play around in the form realm live in celestial mansions in the sky. Likewise, Śāradvatīputra, for bodhisattvas who play around in the profound, all phenomena are equivalent to space [F.38.a] and are like unsurpassed and perfect awakening.
- 4.50 “Śāradvatīputra, to draw another analogy, even though space can enter into anything that functions as a container, space neither grows nor shrinks. Likewise, Śāradvatīputra, the extent of a bodhisattva’s strength of dedication determines the extent to which they take hold of the qualities of buddhahood. Yet the qualities of buddhahood neither increase nor decrease.
- 4.51 “Śāradvatīputra, to draw another analogy, an archer’s strength will determine how far an arrow travels when shot into space. Yet in space the arrow meets no end. Likewise, Śāradvatīputra, the extent of a bodhisattva’s strength of faith determines the extent to which they aspire to the qualities of buddhahood. Yet, they will not reach any end of the qualities of buddhahood.
- 4.52 “Śāradvatīputra, to draw another analogy, vessels not fashioned by a potter cannot rightly be called vessels. Likewise, Śāradvatīputra, roots of virtue not dedicated toward awakening cannot rightly be called perfections.
- 4.53 “Śāradvatīputra, to draw another analogy, anyone who beholds a universal monarch will no longer put their hopes in lesser kings. Likewise, Śāradvatīputra, anyone who beholds the Thus-Gone One, the Dharma King, will no longer put their hopes in any hearer or solitary buddha.
- 4.54 “Śāradvatīputra, to draw another analogy, no jewels come from the water in an ox’s hoof print. Likewise, Śāradvatīputra, the Three Jewels do not arise from the hearers’ discipline.
- 4.55 “Śāradvatīputra, to draw another analogy, all jewels come from the great ocean. Likewise, Śāradvatīputra, the Three Jewels of Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha all come from the bodhisattvas’ oceanic discipline and learning.
- 4.56 “Śāradvatīputra, to draw another analogy, in the time following a prince’s birth, he is not called either the king or not the king. [F.38.b] Likewise, Śāradvatīputra, a novice bodhisattva is not called the buddha or not the buddha.



- 4.57 “Śāradvatīputra, to draw another analogy, a precious jewel cannot perform its function without being polished. Likewise, Śāradvatīputra, novice bodhisattvas are not without fear of the Dharma teachings.
- 4.58 “Śāradvatīputra, to draw another analogy, when a precious jewel has been polished, its luster arouses delight. Likewise, Śāradvatīputra, bodhisattvas who have undergone lengthy training and have no fear of the Dharma teachings arouse the delight of all beings.
- 4.59 “Śāradvatīputra, to draw another analogy, even a tiny precious gem should not be disregarded. Why is this? Even though it is tiny, if it is placed in any dwelling, house, or home, it will completely illuminate it. Likewise, Śāradvatīputra, even novice bodhisattvas should not be denigrated. Why is this? Once they attain awakening, the brilliance of their buddhahood will expand to fill all buddha realms.
- 4.60 “Śāradvatīputra, to draw another analogy, priceless precious jewels cannot be assessed. Likewise, Śāradvatīputra, bodhisattvas who are irreversibly destined for awakening cannot be proud.
- 4.61 “Śāradvatīputra, to draw another analogy, when the fruit of a tree are ripe, the branches will bend under their weight. Likewise, Śāradvatīputra, bodhisattvas who have perfected all positive qualities bow before all beings.
- 4.62 “Śāradvatīputra, to draw another analogy, the fire that burns this great earth at the end of an eon does not come from anywhere. Likewise, Śāradvatīputra, the bodhisattva’s wisdom fire that consumes all afflictions, which arise through the force of habit [F.39.a] and then leads to fully awakening to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood, does not come from anywhere.
- 4.63 “Śāradvatīputra, to draw another analogy, space is the essence of the worlds of the trichiliocosm, whether they are burnt or not. Likewise, Śāradvatīputra, the essence of all phenomena is awakening, whether a bodhisattva fully awakens to perfect buddhahood or not.
- 4.64 “Śāradvatīputra, bodhisattvas who hear this presentation of analogies taught by the Thus-Gone One for the sake of gathering bodhisattvas, and are inspired by it, will all become exactly what has been analogized here.”
- 4.65 When the Blessed One had taught this garland of analogies, twenty-four thousand beings developed the mind directed toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening. The Blessed One then spoke the following verses:
- 4.66 “A buddha’s awakening is supremely difficult to see.  
It is profound, subtle, immaculate, and not even slightly real.  
Thus, when someone wishes for awakening,  
They should not be obstructed by phenomena.
- 4.67 “Wisdom is pure and uncontrived,

- Totally illuminating and lucid.  
 Sublime awakening can be reached  
 By maintainig this immaculate seal.
- 4.68 “Across the limits of both past and future,  
 The mind is pure and its nature luminous.  
 Any afflictive emotion causes the mind to be disturbed,  
 So they should be properly abandoned.
- 4.69 “There is no agent or one who feels.  
 Phenomena are unreal and leave no trace.  
 There is no individual and the self is shown to be selfless—  
 In essence it is like a dream, or like space.
- 4.70 “Phenomena are not determined by physical actions,  
 Nor imputed by the speech or the mind.  
 Truly they are uncreated and not due to anything extraneous.  
 They cannot be described in any way.
- 4.71 “They are like space, an immaculate essence—  
 Formless, indescribable, [F.39.b]  
 Not cognizable by the eye, the ear, the nose,  
 The tongue, the body, or the mind.
- 4.72 “They have no characteristics; all characteristics miss the mark.  
 They are peaceful and not really there, like a reflection of the moon.  
 Neither mind nor thoughts can move toward them.  
 They cannot be conceived or perceived.
- 4.73 “They cannot be known by the action of wisdom,  
 Nor by the action of consciousness.  
 This Dharma cannot be explained through language.  
 The Buddha’s compassion is unsurpassable.
- 4.74 “When beings who have made preparations  
 And been accepted by a spiritual friend  
 Hear this Dharma,  
 Vast and pure is their joy.
- 4.75 “Māras, who can create no troubles for such beings, wonder,  
 ‘What is he thinking? What is he doing?’  
 When one has transcended conceptual mind and its domain,  
 How can the māras ever create obstacles?
- 4.76 “When the four māras have been transcended,

- One's family, intellect, and merit  
Will be firmly based in the domain of buddhahood,  
And one will engage in awakened conduct.
- 4.77 "One who is aware of all beings' conduct  
Will engage in supreme awakened action.  
When hearing of these many kinds of conduct,  
One can teach the Dharma of their characteristics.
- 4.78 "Beings' conduct is diverse  
And they are always basing it on one another.  
Understanding the different types of conduct,  
Great beings always deliver definitive teachings.
- 4.79 "Some beings are predominantly desirous,  
And many have a potential for aggression.  
They are tormented by their aggression  
And harmed by their great stupidity.
- 4.80 "When beings' diverse conduct has been understood,  
And its marks, conditions,  
And reference points have been mastered,  
One can then teach their characteristics.
- 4.81 "Wise beings who are learned and lucid  
Can slice through the ropes  
That tie others down in strong nets,  
Thus freeing them to proceed to better states as they wish. [F.40.a]
- 4.82 "Thus, bodhisattvas are heroic and learned.  
Knowing the thoughts of all beings,  
They destroy all their afflictions  
And help them to remove their obscurations.
- 4.83 "The sun's light needs no assistance,  
Nor does a poisonous snake.  
A lion's roar does not need to be helped.  
Bodhisattvas likewise require no accompaniment.
- 4.84 "With no companion, alone, and by themselves,  
They accomplish many buddha qualities;  
Come to possess diligence, power, and strength;  
And defeat beings' afflictions.
- 4.85 "Just as the strength of a fire will grow

The more grass is added to it,  
Likewise, the more bodhisattvas experience afflictions,  
The stronger the fire of their insight blazes.”

## 5. CHAPTER FIVE: PRACTICING DILIGENCE

- 5.1 The Blessed One then spoke to the bodhisattva great being Sāgaramati: “Sāgaramati, bodhisattvas must practice diligence. Bodhisattvas must always persevere and show great determination. They should not give up their dedication. Sāgaramati, unsurpassed and perfect awakening is not difficult to discover for bodhisattvas who practice diligence. And why not? Sāgaramati, where there is diligence there is awakening. Awakening is far and distant from those who are lazy. Those who are lazy have no generosity, discipline, patience, diligence, concentration, insight, personal benefit, or benefit for others. Sāgaramati, one should understand from this lesson that unsurpassed and perfect awakening is not difficult for bodhisattvas who practice diligence.
- 5.2 “Sāgaramati, at one point in the past, [F.40.b] seven immeasurable eons ago, there was an eon called Flower Origin. At that time there was a world called Astounding Sight in which the blessed buddha Dīptavīrya appeared. He was a thus-gone, worthy, perfect buddha, someone learned and virtuous, a well-gone one, a knower of the world, a charioteer who guides beings, an unsurpassed being, and a teacher of gods and humans.
- 5.3 “Why was that eon called Flower Origin? Sāgaramati, when the worlds of that trichiliocosm burned and were subsequently destroyed by water, eighty-four thousand radiant and beautiful lotuses with tens of trillions of petals appeared and filled that mass of water. When the gods of the pure realms saw those lotuses, they were satisfied, happy, delighted, joyful, and at ease. Experiencing such joy and pleasure, they saw these flowers to be indicative of the extent of the perfect buddhas to appear in the world. Thus, they exclaimed, ‘Amazing! This eon Flower Origin will not be empty of blessed buddhas.’ And that is how Flower Origin came to be called Flower Origin.

- 5.4 “Why was that world called Astounding Sight, Sāgaramati? When countless and fathomless numbers of bodhisattvas came from the buddha realms of the ten directions to behold this universe, they immediately achieved an absorption called ‘joyful appearance’ and were satisfied with every kind of pleasure. This world was that pure. Thus, this world was called Astounding Sight. [F.41.a] Sāgaramati, in this world the seven precious materials existed by the thousands. The jeweled trees and jeweled mansions were luminous. This world was free from female lust and pregnancy. Instead, everyone there was born miraculously, seated cross-legged in lotuses. Nobody in this world practiced any other vehicle than the Great Vehicle. The gods and humans subsisted by enjoying food and drink at their wish, like the gods of the Heaven of Joy. They sported with super-knowledge and flew through space.
- 5.5 “The blessed thus-gone Dīptavīrya’s bodhisattva saṅgha was composed of 360 million ordained bodhisattva great beings. The limitless lay and ordained practitioners were all engaged in the Great Vehicle.
- 5.6 “Sāgaramati, the blessed thus-gone Dīptavīrya gave extensive teachings on diligence, encouraging these bodhisattvas, saying, ‘Sublime beings, you must practice diligence. You must persevere and show fierce determination. You must not lose your dedication.’
- 5.7 “At that point, Sāgaramati, the bodhisattva great being Solid Armor was among the bodhisattva assembly. He asked the Blessed One, ‘Blessed One, how should a bodhisattva practice diligence? Please describe the diligence that the Thus-Gone One has encouraged in the bodhisattvas.’
- 5.8 “Sāgaramati, the blessed thus-gone Dīptavīrya answered the bodhisattva [F.41.b] Solid Armor, saying, ‘Noble son, there are four types of diligence that assemble the virtuous qualities of bodhisattvas. What are these four? They are endeavor, commitment, contemplation, and accomplishment. Noble son, these four types of diligence assemble the virtuous qualities of bodhisattvas. What then are endeavor, commitment, contemplation, and accomplishment?’
- 5.9 “ ‘Noble son, endeavor is developing the mind directed toward awakening. Commitment is cultivating all roots of virtue. Contemplation is the means of benefiting all beings. Accomplishment is accepting that which brings this about.
- 5.10 “ ‘Also, endeavor is seeking out study. Commitment is displaying learnedness. Contemplation is appropriate mental engagement. Accomplishment is the right view of noble beings.
- 5.11 “ ‘Also, endeavor is eliminating the mind of stinginess. Commitment is giving up all one’s things. Contemplation is dedicating everything to awakening alongside all beings. Accomplishment is not hoping for ripening.

- 5.12 “ ‘Also, endeavor is professing great charity. Commitment is perceiving all beggars as spiritual friends. Contemplation is weariness with one’s impermanent possessions. Accomplishment is not regretting giving.
- 5.13 “ ‘Also, endeavor is seeking out the wealth of Dharma. Commitment is having a pure livelihood. Contemplation is having the sense that one is living meaningfully. Accomplishment is not becoming proud about being generous.
- 5.14 “ ‘Also, endeavor is eliminating the stain of corrupt discipline. Commitment is not letting up on discipline and asceticism. Contemplation is ripening beings who have corrupt discipline. [F.42.a] Accomplishment is not becoming proud about the qualities of discipline.
- 5.15 “ ‘Also, endeavor is purifying the body. Commitment is purifying the speech. Contemplation is purifying the mind. Accomplishment is purifying phenomena.
- 5.16 “ ‘Also, endeavor is giving malice no chance. Commitment is understanding the power of patience. Contemplation is protecting self and other. Accomplishment is not becoming proud about patience.
- 5.17 “ ‘Also, endeavor is maintaining faith in the face of criticism and aggression. Commitment is not becoming familiar with criticism and aggression. Contemplation is eliminating inner pain. Accomplishment is not apprehending self or other.
- 5.18 “ ‘Also, endeavor is eliminating the stain of laziness. Commitment is disengaging from the stain of diligence. Contemplation is ripening lazy beings. Accomplishment is engaging in these actions.
- 5.19 “ ‘Also, endeavor is accomplishing one’s tasks. Commitment is mastering one’s tasks. Contemplation is not putting one’s hopes in other vehicles. Accomplishment is not losing faith in karmic ripening.
- 5.20 “ ‘Also, endeavor is mindfulness. Commitment is understanding. Contemplation is intelligence. Accomplishment is aspiration.
- 5.21 “ ‘Also, endeavor is knowledge. Commitment is a way. Contemplation is a gateway. Accomplishment is the occurrence of those.
- 5.22 “ ‘Also, endeavor is mastering language. Commitment is using language. Contemplation is eliminating language. Accomplishment is realizing the Dharma to be indescribable.
- 5.23 “ ‘Also, endeavor is relying on a spiritual friend. Commitment is abandoning evil companions. Contemplation is equanimity toward friends and enemies. Accomplishment is not acting contrary to what one espouses.
- 5.24 “ ‘Also, endeavor is the mind that goes forth. Commitment is to disregard joy and displeasure. [F.42.b] Contemplation is investigating what virtue is. Accomplishment is attaining wisdom without relying on anything else.

- 5.25 “ ‘Also, endeavor is staying in seclusion. Commitment is disliking distractions. Contemplation is delighting in solitude. Accomplishment is living without afflictions.
- 5.26 “ ‘Also, endeavor is having few desires. Commitment is being content. Contemplation is being easily sated. Accomplishment is knowing the right measures.
- 5.27 “ ‘Also, endeavor is training in higher discipline. Commitment is not relaxing one’s discipline. Contemplation is training in higher motivation. Accomplishment is training in higher insight.
- 5.28 “ ‘Also, endeavor denotes the perfections of generosity and discipline. Commitment denotes the perfections of patience and diligence. Contemplation denotes the perfections of concentration and insight. Accomplishment denotes the perfections of wisdom and skill in means.
- 5.29 “ ‘Also, endeavor is giving. Commitment is speaking pleasantly. Contemplation is acting meaningfully. Accomplishment is being in tune with the truth.
- 5.30 “ ‘Also, endeavor is great love. Commitment is great compassion. Contemplation is great joy. Accomplishment is great equanimity.
- 5.31 “ ‘Also, endeavor is purifying realms. Commitment is perfecting the major and minor marks of perfection. Contemplation is upholding the sublime Dharma. Accomplishment is ripening beings.
- 5.32 “ ‘Also, endeavor is understanding the māra of the aggregates. Commitment is transcending the māra of the afflictions. Contemplation is abandoning the māra of the Lord of Death. Accomplishment is defeating the māra of the gods.
- 5.33 “ ‘Also, endeavor is understanding suffering. Commitment is abandoning its origin. Contemplation is cultivating the path. [F.43.a] Accomplishment is actualizing cessation.
- 5.34 “ ‘Also, endeavor is the application of mindfulness to the body. Commitment is the application of mindfulness to sensations. Contemplation is the application of mindfulness to mind. Accomplishment is the application of mindfulness to phenomena.
- 5.35 “ ‘Also, endeavor is faith. Commitment is diligence. Contemplation is mindfulness and concentration. Accomplishment is insight.
- 5.36 “ ‘Also, endeavor is abandoning nonvirtuous phenomena. Commitment is perfecting virtuous phenomena. Contemplation is making the body and mind pliant. Accomplishment is attaining unconditioned miracles.
- 5.37 “ ‘Also, endeavor is the branches of awakening. Commitment is the path. Contemplation is tranquility and special insight. Accomplishment is knowledge and liberation.



- 5.38 “ ‘Also, endeavor is engaged conduct. Commitment is the conduct aimed at the good. Contemplation is a refined mind. Accomplishment is irreversible wisdom.’
- 5.39 “Moreover, Sāgaramati, the blessed thus-gone Dīptavīrya said to the bodhisattva Solid Armor, ‘Noble son, diligence purifies body and mind. Diligence understands name and form. Diligence ends self-grasping and grasping to what is “mine.” Diligence casts aside grasping and bondage. Diligence eliminates obscurations and upheavals. Diligence abandons regret and doubt. Diligence eliminates knots and pain. Diligence transcends reference points and discontinuity. Diligence discards both ordinary pride and excessive pride. [F.43.b] Diligence transcends ground and location. Diligence discards attachment and aggression. Diligence purifies ignorance and the craving for existence. Diligence is not motivated by attachment and aggression. Diligence is free of stupidity and lack of discrimination. Diligence understands inner and outer sense sources. Diligence sees that the aggregates and elements are primordially unborn. Diligence pacifies, quells, and calms the mind. Diligence does not observe any phenomena when it contemplates them. Diligence is nondual and inseparable. Diligence fully understands reality. Diligence is without proliferation or inactivity. Diligence is without acquisition or abandonment. Diligence does nothing, yet neither is it without action. Diligence is without raising up or setting down. Diligence is without taking up or discarding. Diligence is without bondage or liberation. Diligence is untrammled and does not trammel upon others. Diligence is neither arrogant nor careless. Diligence neither views nor beholds. Diligence neither pacifies nor blazes. Diligence neither guards nor does not guard. Diligence does not arrive, nor does it not arrive.’
- 5.40 “Sāgaramati, when the blessed thus-gone Dīptavīrya gave extensive teachings on diligence, ten thousand beings attained the acceptance that phenomena are unborn. [F.44.a] Having heard this teaching on diligence, the bodhisattva Solid Armor pursued virtuous qualities and practiced diligence. Practicing diligence, ten million years passed without him giving up his dedication, whereupon he attained the lesser level of acceptance. Practicing diligence, he exerted himself in the pursuit of virtue, and while doing so, he passed away. Dying and transmigrating, he was miraculously born in the presence of that very Thus-Gone One and heard this condensed Dharma teaching from him. Thus, he diligently sought the Dharma and while doing so, he passed away. Sāgaramati, this bodhisattva pleased eighty-four thousand buddhas with this teaching and used everything that occurred in the Flower Origin eon to practice diligence. Thus, he diligently sought virtuous qualities and while doing so, he passed away.

- 5.41 “Sāgaramati, you should not think that the bodhisattva Solid Armor is someone unknown to you. If you are uncertain, vacillating, or doubtful, do not think that way. Why not? Sāgaramati, it was I who was at that time the bodhisattva Solid Armor. Sāgaramati, by putting forth this quality of effort, I distinguished myself from hundreds of thousands of other bodhisattvas. Sāgaramati, if it took me such effort and that much hardship to awaken to buddhahood, what can be said about those who are lazy and have weak diligence? How could they gain awakening? They are far, very far from it. [F.44.b] Sāgaramati, the point of this anecdote is that practicing diligence brings purification, being lazy does not. Sāgaramati, one should understand from this anecdote that where there is diligence and carefulness, there will be awakening.”
- 5.42 When the Blessed One had related this story from the past, expressing the meaning of diligence, five thousand bodhisattvas gained acceptance that phenomena are unborn. Seven thousand gods and human beings developed the mind directed toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening. The Blessed One then expressed this in verse:
- 5.43 “I recall that in the past,  
In the Flower Source eon—a time beautiful to behold—  
In the supreme world, Astounding Sight,  
There was the blissful Dīptavīrya.
- 5.44 “He was the last of eighty-four thousand  
Victors to appear in that eon.  
His world was like the Heaven of Joy,  
Replete with food and drink at one’s wish.
- 5.45 “There were no women, nor time spent in the womb.  
All the beings there were born miraculously.  
The Lesser Vehicle was unheard of.  
Everyone entered the Great Vehicle of superior beings.
- 5.46 “Bodhisattvas came from all directions  
To behold Astounding Sight.  
They all received the absorption of joyful appearance,  
Experiencing a novel form of bliss.
- 5.47 “This famous assembly  
Comprised 360 million humans  
And many other humans and gods,  
Who had entered the supreme buddha vehicle.
- 5.48 “The great sage who was an ocean of wisdom qualities

- Repeatedly sang the praises of diligence.  
Then he, learned and steeped in diligence,  
Arose and asked of the Victor this question:
- 5.49 “ ‘How do bodhisattvas practicing diligence  
Come to maintain the power of diligence?  
Explain this point to me, O Blessed One,  
And I will earnestly apply it.’ [F.45.a]
- 5.50 “The Dharma Lord understood his intention,  
And taught the qualities that come through diligence:  
Endeavor, commitment,  
Contemplation, and accomplishment.
- 5.51 “ ‘Endeavor,’ he said, ‘is the mind of awakening.  
Commitment, accomplishing thousands of virtues.  
Contemplation, the means of benefiting beings.  
Accomplishment, accepting the Dharma that brings this about.
- 5.52 “ ‘Endeavor is respectfully seeking learning.  
Commitment, to teach properly.  
Contemplation, speaking appropriately.  
Accomplishment, the correct view.
- 5.53 “ ‘Endeavor is eliminating the stain of stinginess.  
Commitment, giving up all possessions.  
Contemplation, the mind of perfect awakening.  
Accomplishment, not hoping for ripening.
- 5.54 “ ‘Endeavor is accomplishing great giving.  
Commitment, being loving toward beggars.  
Contemplation, considering the impermanence of possessions.  
Accomplishment, being without regret after giving.
- 5.55 “ ‘Endeavor is seeking out the wealth of Dharma.  
Commitment, having pure livelihood.  
Contemplation, knowing that one is living meaningfully.  
Accomplishment, not becoming proud about being generous.
- 5.56 “ ‘Endeavor is eliminating the stain of corrupt discipline.  
Commitment, not letting up on discipline and asceticism.  
Contemplation, being generous with those with corrupted discipline.  
Accomplishment, to be disciplined but without pride.
- 5.57 “ ‘Endeavor is purity.

- Commitment, purifying the body.  
 Contemplation, purifying the mind.  
 Accomplishment, purifying phenomena.
- 5.58 “ ‘Endeavor is giving malice no chance.  
 Commitment, showing the power of patience.  
 Contemplation, protecting self and other.  
 Accomplishment, never being proud.
- 5.59 “ ‘Endeavor is keeping the faith when criticized.  
 Commitment, completely disregarding criticism.  
 Contemplation, inner peace.  
 Accomplishment, apprehending neither self nor other.
- 5.60 “ ‘Endeavor is eliminating the stain of laziness.  
 Commitment, having the strength and might of diligence.  
 Contemplation, ripening lazy beings.  
 Accomplishment, accepting the things they do. [F.45.b]
- 5.61 “ ‘Endeavor is accomplishing one’s tasks.  
 Commitment, mastering one’s tasks.  
 Contemplation, not putting hope in other vehicles.  
 Accomplishment, not wasting actions.
- 5.62 “ ‘Endeavor is being mindful and aware.  
 Commitment, penetrating the realization of the Dharma.  
 Contemplation, protecting one’s intelligence.  
 Accomplishment, constantly being motivated toward that.
- 5.63 “ ‘Endeavor is understanding; commitment, the way of discipline;  
 Contemplation, the gateway to the Dharma;  
 Accomplishment, understanding their occurrence.  
 These are the applications of diligence.
- 5.64 “ ‘Endeavor is mastering language.  
 Commitment, giving teachings.  
 Contemplation, eliminating sound.  
 Accomplishment, the ineffability of phenomena.
- 5.65 “ ‘Endeavor is relying on a spiritual friend.  
 Commitment, abandoning evil companions.  
 Contemplation, studying reality.  
 Accomplishment, being free from contradictions in one’s qualities.
- 5.66 “ ‘Endeavor is to go forth into the Buddha’s teachings.

- Commitment, discarding all joys.  
 Contemplation, living a life of virtue.  
 Accomplishment, not contradicting the teachings.
- 5.67 “ ‘Endeavor is achieving joy in remote areas.  
 Commitment, discarding distractions.  
 Contemplation, delighting in solitude.  
 Accomplishment, living without afflictions.
- 5.68 “ ‘Endeavor is having few desires and accepting advice.  
 Commitment, being content.  
 Contemplation, being gentle.  
 Accomplishment, knowing appropriate limits.
- 5.69 “ ‘Endeavor is training in higher discipline.  
 Commitment, not relaxing one’s discipline.  
 Contemplation, training in higher motivation.  
 Supreme accomplishment, training in higher insight.
- 5.70 “ ‘Endeavor is generosity and discipline.  
 Commitment, patience and diligence.  
 Contemplation, concentration and insight.  
 Accomplishment, wisdom and means.
- 5.71 “ ‘Endeavor is giving material things and Dharma.  
 Commitment, speaking pleasantly.  
 Contemplation, acting meaningfully.  
 The heart of accomplishment, being consistent with the meaning.
- 5.72 “ ‘Endeavor is pure love. [F.46.a]  
 Commitment, having compassion.  
 Contemplation is having joy for the Dharma.  
 Accomplishment of wisdom is equanimity.
- 5.73 “ ‘Endeavor is purification.  
 Commitment, perfecting the major marks of excellence.  
 Contemplation, upholding the sublime Dharma.  
 Accomplishment, ripening beings.
- 5.74 “ ‘Endeavor is eliminating the māra of the aggregates.  
 Commitment, destroying the māra of the afflictions.  
 Contemplation, destroying the māra of the Lord of Death.  
 With the essential accomplishment, what can the māras do?
- 5.75 “ ‘Endeavor is understanding suffering.

- Commitment, eliminating the basis of saṃsāra.  
 Contemplation, cultivating the path.  
 Accomplishment, experiencing cessation.
- 5.76 “ ‘Endeavor is mindfulness of the body, free from ties.  
 Commitment, not having views about sensations.  
 Contemplation, mindfulness of mind.  
 Sublime accomplishment, mindfulness of phenomena.
- 5.77 “ ‘Endeavor is the strength and faculty of faith.  
 Commitment, the strength and might of diligence.  
 Contemplation, the faculties of mindfulness and absorption.  
 Accomplishment, the faculty of insight.
- 5.78 “ ‘Endeavor is abandoning nonvirtues.  
 Commitment, not wasting virtues.  
 Contemplation, refers to body and mind.  
 Accomplishment, manifesting miracles.
- 5.79 “ ‘Endeavor is being learned and cultivating the branches of awakening.  
 Commitment, realizing the path.  
 Contemplation, tranquility and special insight.  
 The essential accomplishment, insight and liberation.
- 5.80 “ ‘Endeavor is engagement; commitment, conduct.  
 Contemplation is purifying the mind.  
 Reversing all experience related to signs  
 Is described as the way of accomplishment.
- 5.81 “ ‘The noble ones praise supreme diligence as  
 Achieving pliancy of body and mind,  
 Transcending causation and views,  
 And understanding name and form.
- 5.82 “ ‘When “I” and “mine” are put to a stop,  
 Then one is liberated from all bondage,  
 Origination is eliminated, and one is free from the five obscurations.  
 The learned will discard all doubt and regret.
- 5.83 “ ‘When all knots and pain are lost, [F.46.b]  
 When there are no obscurations or upheavals,  
 When pride and manifest pride are discarded,  
 This is a function of diligence’s power.
- 5.84 “ ‘The learned praise diligence as being

The elimination of all signs,  
Disengaging from all elaborations,  
And discarding all afflictions.'

- 5.85 "When they heard the qualities of diligence  
As extolled by Dīptavīrya,  
Ten thousand glorious ones  
Achieved acceptance of the unborn.
- 5.86 "Having heard this teaching, five thousand beings  
Trained in patience in that buddha realm.  
Seven thousand humans, gods, asuras, and kinnaras  
Set forth toward supreme awakening.
- 5.87 "Back then, it was I who was that monk of stable diligence,  
The one who had reached supreme diligence.  
Practicing diligence, I relinquished my body,  
And thus, I passed away from that existence.
- 5.88 "More than eighty-four thousand times  
I let this body wither.  
For an eon, I pleased a guide  
And distinguished myself from other bodhisattvas."

## 6. CHAPTER SIX: TEACHING ON THE QUALITIES OF BUDDHAHOOD

6.1 Then, Mahābrahmā Great Compassionate One asked the bodhisattva great being Sāgaramati, “Noble son, what does the term *qualities of buddhahood* refer to?”

Bodhisattva Sāgaramati responded, “Brahmā, ‘the qualities of buddhahood’ refers to all phenomena.<sup>22</sup> Why is this? Brahmā, a thus-gone one does not awaken to perfect buddhahood in a restricted and limited manner. Rather, a thus-gone one awakens to perfect buddhahood in an unrestricted and unlimited manner [F.47.a] due to realizing the sameness of all phenomena. Brahmā, realizing all phenomena to be sameness is awakening. Therefore, Brahmā, all phenomena are qualities of buddhahood. Brahmā, all phenomena are precisely the qualities of buddhahood. The essence of all phenomena is the essence of all the qualities of buddhahood. The qualities of buddhahood are realized to be disengaged because all phenomena are disengaged. Because all phenomena are empty, the qualities of buddhahood are realized as emptiness. Brahmā, because all phenomena are dependently originated, realizing dependent origination is awakening. The qualities of buddhahood are seen by a thus-gone one in the same way that all phenomena are seen.”

6.2 “Noble son,” asked Mahābrahma Great Compassionate One, “do the qualities of buddhahood not transcend the three realms?”

“Brahmā,” replied Sāgaramati, “the essential quality of the three realms is to possess the qualities of buddhahood. Why is this? Brahmā, in the sameness of the qualities of buddhahood, there is no better or worse. Analogously, Brahmā, in space there is no better or worse. Likewise, Brahmā, the qualities of buddhahood are equal to space, wherein there is nothing better or worse. Brahmā, the nature of all phenomena is that they are empty by their very nature, meaning there is nothing better or worse. Brahmā, a noble son or daughter who wishes to realize the qualities of buddhahood



should realize the qualities of buddhahood in a nonconceptual manner. Furthermore, Brahmā, the qualities of buddhahood do not persist in objects, nor in any direction. They are unborn and unceasing. They are not like the colors blue, [F.47.b] yellow, red, white, green, crystal, or silver; in fact, they have no color, shape, or characteristics. They are signless. Brahmā, the meaning of *signlessness* is the meaning of the qualities<sup>23</sup> of buddhahood. The meaning of *the qualities of buddhahood* is the meaning of the words 'without death or transmigration.' The meaning of the words *without death or transmigration* is the meaning of peace. The meaning of *peace* is the meaning of disengaged. The meaning of *disengaged* is the meaning of empty. The meaning of *empty* is the meaning of unenduring. The meaning of *unenduring* is the meaning of thatness. The meaning of *thatness* is the meaning of unborn. The meaning of *unborn* is the meaning of unceasing. The meaning of *unceasing* is the meaning of unenduring.

6.3 "Of this we can say:

"To express the meaning of *signlessness*  
Is to refer to the sublime qualities of buddhahood.  
To express the meaning of *the qualities of buddhahood*  
Is to refer to 'no death or transmigration.'

6.4 "The meaning of *no death or transmigration* is peace,  
And that was proclaimed to be the meaning of disengagement.  
The meaning of *disengagement* is the meaning of empty,  
And that is the meaning of unenduring.

6.5 "The meaning of *unenduring* is thatness,  
And the meaning of that is suchness,  
Which was proclaimed to be the meaning of  
Being without birth or cessation.

6.6 "The meaning of *unceasing* is the meaning of unenduring.  
The meaning of this quality of being unenduring  
Is that all phenomena endure in the same manner  
As the realm of phenomena.

6.7 "The qualities of buddhahood endure  
In the same way as all phenomena.

6.8 "The qualities of training also endure  
In the same way as the qualities of buddhahood.  
The qualities of nonattachment have the same meaning  
As they do not endure in any other way.

- 6.9 “The qualities of the solitary buddhas  
Endure likewise in sameness.  
Yet among the phenomena that endure in this way,  
The qualities of buddhahood are unsurpassed.
- 6.10 “For the qualities of buddhahood  
Endure neither in objects nor directions.  
They cannot be divided  
In terms of birth and destruction. [F.48.a]
- 6.11 “Shape and color will never be found  
Anywhere in these qualities.  
The qualities of buddhahood are revealed as being  
Without signs or identifying marks.
- 6.12 “The nature of all phenomena  
Is the very mode of the qualities of buddhahood.  
Thus, they are revealed as sameness,  
Without distinction or characteristics.
- 6.13 “Those who yearn to realize the qualities of buddhahood  
Must look to all phenomena.  
When one is free of the slightest apprehension,  
That is truly seeing.
- 6.14 “Both buddhahood and its qualities  
Are realized at the seat of awakening  
By the great sage  
To be equal with all phenomena.
- 6.15 “The qualities of buddhahood are precisely what are seen  
By a buddha at the seat of awakening.  
The qualities of buddhahood that are taught  
Are forever the same due to their sameness.
- 6.16 “Phenomena are the same, with no dissimilarity.  
They are immaculate and like space.  
This is realized through a buddha’s wisdom.  
Thus, he says, ‘This is the nature of awakening.’
- 6.17 “Whatever is dependently originated  
Is without any inherent nature.  
What lacks an essential nature  
Never actually arises.

- 6.18 “The one who knows the limit  
In which the world is sameness without limit,  
Is someone whose wisdom has reached the limit,  
And so knows all phenomena.
- 6.19 “Any phenomena from the past,  
Any phenomena in the future,  
And any phenomena of the present  
Are asserted to be the qualities of buddhahood.
- 6.20 “In this way, the wisdom of buddhahood  
Is without attachment within the three times.  
The Dharma of the sages is taught  
Where there is no attachment to syllables.
- 6.21 “The ten strengths,  
The four fearlessnesses,  
The unique qualities of buddhahood—  
All eighteen of these—
- 6.22 “And any other qualities  
Are all contained within this.  
Thus, all phenomena can be claimed  
To be the qualities of buddhahood.” [B5] [F.48.b]
- 6.23 Mahābrahma Great Compassionate One further asked the bodhisattva great being Sāgaramati, “Noble son, do you directly perceive these qualities?”  
“Brahmā, do you think that the qualities of buddhahood can be counted among form?”  
“No, they cannot.”
- 6.24 “Brahmā, can phenomena that are formless, unidentifiable, unobstructing, and uncognizable be directly perceived?”  
“Noble son, they cannot.”
- 6.25 “In this way, Brahmā, the qualities of buddhahood are imperceptible. Why is this? Because there is not even the slightest duality. Brahmā, all phenomena are nondual. All that is perceptible is of that very characteristic. Brahmā, what is perceptible and the qualities of buddhahood are not different. Whatever is perceptible is also whatever is a quality of buddhahood. Whatever is a quality of buddhahood is also whatever is perceptible.”
- 6.26 “Noble son, are the qualities of buddhahood not perceptible to the thus-gone ones?”

- “Brahmā, if there were any quality of buddhahood, which would be established as a quality of the thus-gone ones or the buddhas, it would also be perceptible to the thus-gone ones.”
- 6.27 “Noble son, are the qualities of buddhahood totally nonexistent?”
- “Brahmā, any phenomenon that is not established cannot be asserted as being existent or nonexistent. Any phenomenon that cannot be asserted as being existent or nonexistent is not perceptible.”
- 6.28 “Well then, what do we mean by the term *qualities of buddhahood*?”
- “Brahmā, I will draw an analogy. Even though we still use the term *space* to refer to space, it is not established in any way. Likewise, Brahmā, even though we use the term *qualities of buddhahood* to refer to the qualities of buddhahood, they are not established in any way.” [F.49.a]
- 6.29 “Noble son, it is incredible that novice bodhisattvas are not intimidated when they hear this teaching, for they don armor for the sake of attaining these very qualities of buddhahood.”
- 6.30 “Brahmā, beings who have been blessed by the buddhas develop the mind of awakening and are not intimidated when they hear of the profound qualities of buddhahood. Brahmā, if one grasps and clings, then one will be intimidated. If one does not grasp or cling, then one will not be intimidated. If one exists or desires, then one will be intimidated. If one does not exist or desire, then one will not be intimidated. If one clings to ‘I’ or ‘mine,’ then one will be intimidated. If one does not cling to ‘I’ or ‘mine,’ then one will not be intimidated.”
- 6.31 “What power do bodhisattvas possess such that they are not intimidated by the profound qualities of buddhahood? What is this bodhisattva power?”
- “Brahmā, this bodhisattva power, which prevents bodhisattvas from being intimidated by the profound qualities of buddhahood, is eightfold. What are these eight? (1) Aspiring to the qualities of buddhahood, they have the power of unobstructed faith. (2) Recognizing their similarity with the teacher, they have the power of the spiritual friend that comes from respect. (3) Perfecting transcendental qualities, they have the power of insight that comes from study. (4) Perfecting immeasurable merit, they have the power of service that comes from merit. (5) Having defeated all māras, they have the power of wisdom that comes from approaching reality. (6) Without any apprehension about the fact that all phenomena are selfless, they have the power of great compassion that comes from great love. (7) Never forgetting the mind of awakening, they have the power of mind that comes from certainty. (8) Attaining the acceptance that phenomena are unborn, they have the power of acceptance that comes from not being led around by

others. Brahmā, if bodhisattvas have this power that is replete with these eight qualities, [F.49.b] then they will not be intimidated by the profound qualities of buddhahood.”

6.32 Then the Blessed One expressed his approval of Sāgaramati: “Sāgaramati, you have explained well these bodhisattva powers. Excellent, excellent! There are no qualities of buddhahood that could intimidate a bodhisattva who has this kind of power. All the sounds of this teaching by Sāgaramati are terrifying. Ultimate awakening is inexpressible. Why is this? What is inexpressible cannot be explained and does not conform with letters. If the mind and mental phenomena themselves cannot be formed, how could they possibly conform to letters? This profound teaching is beyond language, unexplainable, inexpressible, and unspeakable. However, even though this is understood, it can still be taught to other beings and people through knowledge of language. Just consider how the great compassion of the blessed buddhas can be introduced to an unfathomable number of beings. Sāgaramati, to draw an analogy, imagine that somebody painted an image with various colors on space, which is formless, inexpressible, unobstructing, and uncognizable. Imagine that this person painted horses, elephants, chariots, infantrymen, and mounts, or that they painted an image of gods, nāgas, yakṣas, and gandharvas. Sāgaramati, do you think that being would have done something difficult?”

6.33 “Blessed One, that person would definitely have done something difficult. Well-Gone One, he or she would have done something extraordinarily difficult!”

6.34 “Sāgaramati,” said the Blessed One, “that the blessed buddhas express the inexpressible to other beings and people once they have understood the inexpressible qualities of buddhahood, [F.50.a] and thus bring forth a recognition and understanding in them, is even more difficult than that. It is even harder than *that* to not be intimidated, apprehensive, or fearful about these profound qualities of buddhahood. Sāgaramati, beings who are not intimidated by these profound qualities of buddhahood have already developed roots of virtue and served the victors of the past. Sāgaramati, those who understand these profound sūtras that do not conform to the world, and then carry, uphold, and widely teach them to others, uphold the Dharma treasury of the Thus-Gone One. They uphold the side of virtue of all beings.

6.35 “Sāgaramati, if a bodhisattva were to fill the limitless buddha realms that can be seen with a buddha’s eyes with all manner of jewels and offer them to the thus-gone ones as an act of veneration, do you think, Sāgaramati, that they would develop a lot of merit on that basis?”

6.36 “Blessed One, it would be a lot. Well-Gone One, it would be limitless. That mass of merit would be so limitless that it could hardly be described.”

6.37 “Sāgaramati,” said the Blessed One, “you should trust and realize this: If bodhisattvas, who arouse great compassion for beings and who seek to preserve the teachings of the thus-gone ones and maintain the lineage of the Three Jewels, understand that this profound sūtra accomplishes the wisdom of the thus-gone ones, and then uphold, carry, and master it, they will develop even more merit than that. [F.50.b] That being the case, what can be said of accomplishing it in actuality? Why is this? Sāgaramati, all material giving depends on the world. Giving Dharma, on the other hand, transcends the world entirely.

6.38 “Sāgaramati, upholding the sublime Dharma means that one will acquire four kinds of care. What are these four? One will acquire the care of the buddhas, the care of the gods, the care of merit, and the care of wisdom.

6.39 “Sāgaramati, there are four things that distinguish bodhisattvas who are sustained by the buddhas. What are these four? (1) They will never cease seeing the thus-gone ones, (2) no māra will ever affect them, (3) they will achieve recollection and become inexhaustible, and (4) they will attain super-knowledge and the irreversible level. Sāgaramati, these are the four things that distinguish bodhisattvas who are being cared for by the buddhas.

6.40 “Sāgaramati, there are four ways in which bodhisattvas who are sustained by the gods will be purified. What are these four? (1) The gods will purify their assembly, (2) inspire them to study the Dharma with a one-pointed mind, (3) ensure that no external adversity occurs, and (4) create faith in all who do not have faith in them. Sāgaramati, these are the four ways in which bodhisattvas who are being cared for by the gods will be purified.

6.41 “Sāgaramati, there are four ways in which bodhisattvas who are sustained by merit will be adorned. What are these four? (1) Their bodies will be adorned by accomplishing the major and minor marks of perfection. (2) Their speech will be adorned by pleasing all beings. (3) Their realms will be adorned by displaying all kinds of actions. [F.51.a] (4) Their rebirths will be adorned by attaining rebirth as Śakra, Brahmā, and the world protectors. Sāgaramati, these are the four ways in which bodhisattvas who are being cared for by merit will be adorned.

6.42 “Sāgaramati, there are four ways in which bodhisattvas who are sustained by wisdom will illuminate. What are these four? (1) By teaching the Dharma that is appropriate for each individual, they will illuminate the faculties of beings. (2) By preparing the medicine of Dharma, they will illuminate the diseases of the afflictions. (3) By traveling to other buddha realms, they will illuminate super-knowledge. (4) By knowing all phenomena just as they are,

they will illuminate the realm of phenomena. Sāgaramati, these are the four ways in which bodhisattvas who are being cared for by wisdom will illuminate.

6.43 “Sāgaramati, thus a bodhisattva great being who yearns to possess these beneficial qualities should strive to uphold the sublime Dharma. Sāgaramati, the distinct qualities of a bodhisattva who strives to uphold the sublime Dharma are limitless.”

6.44 The Blessed One then expressed this in verse:

“Upholding the sublime Dharma of the Thus-Gone One  
Brings multifaceted benefits.  
Here I will state just a fraction of them,  
Like plucking a single drop of water from the ocean.

6.45 “Those who uphold the sublime Dharma of the Thus-Gone One  
Show their gratitude for thus-gone ones.  
These reliable guards of the victors’ treasury  
Venerate the buddhas of the ten directions.

6.46 “One may fill the many realms seen with buddha eyes  
With jewels and offer them to the Thus-Gone One,  
Yet that merit will eventually be exhausted and not increase,  
Unlike the mass of merit that comes from upholding the Dharma.

6.47 “Material generosity, honoring the victors,  
And other mundane actions will never bring liberation. [F.51.b]  
Yet, in seeking out the transcendental Dharma,  
The learned transcend worldly phenomena.

6.48 “Those who uphold the sublime Dharma of the Thus-Gone One  
Are cared for by the victors,  
Just as they are cared for by the gods, nāgas, kinnaras,  
Merit, and wisdom.

6.49 “Those who uphold the sublime Dharma of the Thus-Gone One  
Become mindful, intelligent, and wise.  
Their insight expands, and they possess all-embracing wisdom.  
The learned discard afflictions and their habitual patterns.

6.50 “Those who uphold the sublime Dharma of the Thus-Gone One  
Are free from faults in the eyes of the māras.  
They have no regret or worry,  
And eliminate all bondage and even the slightest obscuration.

- 6.51 “Those who uphold the sublime Dharma of the Thus-Gone One  
Do not take rebirth in the many thousands of realms.  
They will behold the victors in all their lifetimes,  
And in seeing them, achieve faith.
- 6.52 “Those who uphold the sublime Dharma of the Thus-Gone One  
Are great Dharma personages who recall previous lifetimes.  
They go forth lifetime after lifetime.  
With their pure conduct they make their lives meaningful.
- 6.53 “Those who uphold the sublime Dharma of the Thus-Gone One  
Study discipline and then practice the Dharma of the noble ones.  
The learned swiftly achieve the five super-knowledges,  
And attain excellent concentration and freedom.
- 6.54 “Those who uphold the sublime Dharma of the Thus-Gone One  
Master the realization of the profound Dharma.  
They have no doubt about emptiness—the buddhas’ experience.  
They aspire to the selflessness of beings.
- 6.55 “Those who uphold the sublime Dharma of the Thus-Gone One  
Achieve the correct discriminations.  
They are fearless, have sharp insight, and no attachment.  
They resolve the doubt of all beings.
- 6.56 “Those who uphold the sublime Dharma of the Thus-Gone One  
Are learned beings who achieve recollection.  
They do not forget what they have heard even over a thousand eons.  
They lose all attachment and come to possess eloquence.
- 6.57 “Those who uphold the sublime Dharma of the Thus-Gone One  
Always delight the learned.  
They are pleasing to gods, nāgas, and kinnaras.  
They are praised by the buddhas as if they were their only child. [F.52.a]
- 6.58 “Those who uphold the sublime Dharma of the Thus-Gone One  
Become Śakra, Brahmā, world protectors,  
Universal monarchs, and the lords of humanity.  
They awaken to buddhahood in bliss and joy.
- 6.59 “Those who uphold the sublime Dharma of the Thus-Gone One  
Will possess a body with the thirty-two marks.  
Even the limbs of these learned beings will be faultless.  
One will never tire of gazing upon them.



- 6.60 “Those who uphold the sublime Dharma of the Thus-Gone One  
Will find no scarcity of spiritual friends  
To show them the Dharma seal.  
They will listen, never knowing the exhaustion of the Dharma treasury.
- 6.61 “Those who uphold the sublime Dharma of the Thus-Gone One  
Will have pure body, speech, and mind.  
Their discipline, absorption, and insight will be refined,  
And their liberation and wisdom will be pure.
- 6.62 “Those who uphold the sublime Dharma of the Thus-Gone One  
Will never forget the mind of awakening.  
Their conduct will not contradict the perfections.  
They will embrace hundreds of virtues.
- 6.63 “Even if the beneficial qualities of these bodhisattvas  
Were continuously described for an eon,  
The benefits of upholding the Dharma  
Could never be fully described.”

7.

## CHAPTER SEVEN: ENTRUSTMENT

7.1

Then, the bodhisattva great being Light King of Qualities, who was seated amongst the assembly, addressed the Blessed One: “Blessed One, you have said that all phenomena that you understand are indescribable. In that case, Blessed One, since all phenomena are indescribable, how is the Dharma to be upheld?”

7.2

“Noble son,” answered the Blessed One, “that is true. You have described it accurately. Any phenomenon that I understand is indescribable. However, noble son, while all phenomena are indescribable and unconditioned, [F.52.b] using linguistic definitions to apprehend, perceive, teach, demonstrate, define, elucidate, distinguish, clarify, or teach such phenomena is what is meant by upholding the Dharma. Moreover, noble son, when Dharma teachers uphold, teach, or practice a sūtra such as this, that is also upholding the Dharma. Likewise, when others attend such Dharma teachers and rely upon them while extending them honor, reverence, service, respect, praise, care, protection, shielding, and shelter, that is also upholding the Dharma. Likewise, so is providing them with clothing, food, bedding, medicine, or provisions; as is offering them approval, protection, preservation of their virtues, praise, or concealment of their unflattering sides. Moreover, noble son, having faith in emptiness, trusting signlessness, believing in wishlessness, and gaining certainty that suchness is the unconditioned state is also upholding the sublime Dharma. Moreover, noble son, seeking to avoid debate, yet using proper Dharma arguments to defeat those who argue against the Dharma, is also upholding the sublime Dharma. Moreover, noble son, giving Dharma to others with a mind free of anger, an intention to gather and free beings, and a mind free of concern for material things, is also upholding the sublime Dharma. Moreover, noble son, disregarding one’s body and life and staying in solitude to preserve, conceal, and practice sūtras such as this is also upholding the sublime Dharma. Moreover, noble son, even a single step or a single inhalation or exhalation

of the breath that comes from the cause of having either studied or taught the Dharma [F.53.a] is also upholding the sublime Dharma. Moreover, noble son, not grasping to or appropriating any phenomena is also upholding the sublime Dharma. Light King of Qualities, based on this explanation, you should understand this point.

7.3 “Noble son, countless eons ago in the past, in the eon called Noble Bliss, in the world Pure Light there was a thus-gone, worthy, perfect buddha named Teacher of the Power of Great Wisdom. He was learned and virtuous, a well-gone one, a knower of the world, a charioteer who guides beings, an unsurpassed being, a teacher of gods and humans, and a blessed buddha. Noble son, the world Pure Light was made of beryl and was incredibly pure. A light filled the ten directions. The bodhisattva great beings there played in the great power of super-knowledge. It was a place where everyone was freed within the profound Dharma. Their enjoyments were like those of the god Sunirmita, and in their divine bodies they listened to the Dharma of that Blessed One. In that realm, householders and monastics were not involved in distinct activities. The blessed thus-gone Teacher of the Power of Great Wisdom advised everyone to strive to uphold the sublime Dharma without any concern for body or life. In this way he gave extensive advice for upholding the sublime Dharma.

7.4 “At that point the bodhisattva great being Dharma Teacher was present in the assembly. [F.53.b] He asked the blessed thus-gone Teacher of the Power of Great Wisdom, ‘Blessed One, how should bodhisattvas uphold the sublime Dharma? Which Dharma should bodhisattvas uphold?’

7.5 “The blessed thus-gone Teacher of the Power of Great Wisdom then said to the bodhisattva Dharma Teacher, ‘Alas, noble son, this mind leaps at objects. So, to reverse and guard against this, focusing the mind and becoming disciplined, peaceful, tranquil, and gentle is to uphold the sublime Dharma. Why is this? The eye, forms, and visual consciousness are not the Dharma. The ear, sounds, and auditory consciousness; the nose, smells, and olfactory consciousness; the body, objects of touch, and tactile consciousness; and the mind, mental phenomena, and mental consciousness are not the Dharma. So, upholding the sublime Dharma is recognizing the eye and form to be empty, and neither thinking about the eye or form, nor maintaining visual consciousness. Skillfully using pure wisdom to help others understand this is to uphold the sublime Dharma. Likewise, upholding the sublime Dharma is recognizing the ear and sounds, nose and smells, tongue and tastes, body and objects of touch, and mind and mental phenomena to be empty, and neither thinking about them, nor maintaining their corresponding consciousnesses. Skillfully using pure wisdom to help others understand this is upholding the sublime Dharma. Moreover, not

- grasping at [F.54.a] or appropriating any phenomena that occur is upholding the sublime Dharma. Not grasping or appropriating any views that cause one to persist in mistaken views is to uphold the sublime Dharma. Not grasping at or appropriating the veils of unknowing or stupidity that stain the mind is upholding the sublime Dharma.
- 7.6 “ ‘Moreover, noble son, needing to establish or abandon something is not the Dharma or the Vinaya. Not establishing or abandoning anything is the Dharma and the Vinaya. Any Dharma that involves establishing or abandoning something is the conditioned path, and accomplishing and abandoning are not the Dharma or the Vinaya.
- 7.7 “ ‘What is it that neither needs to be established nor abandoned? It is that which is indescribable, unborn, and non-arising—*that* neither needs to be established nor abandoned. What does not need to be established or abandoned is the Dharma and the Vinaya.
- 7.8 “ ‘Why is this the Dharma? Why is this the Vinaya? It is the Dharma and the Vinaya because it prevents afflictions that are naturally unborn from arising. The Dharma and the Vinaya are unborn and unceasing. What is unborn and unceasing is inexhaustible. Likewise the inexhaustible and unborn Dharma and Vinaya are ungraspable insofar as they are non-arising. Not grasping is upholding the sublime Dharma.’
- 7.9 “ ‘Noble son, once the blessed thus-gone Teacher of the Power of Great Wisdom had given this teaching, thirty-two thousand bodhisattva great beings attained the acceptance that phenomena are unborn. When the bodhisattva Dharma Teacher heard this teaching, it left him satisfied, happy, delighted, and joyful. [F.54.b]
- 7.10 “ ‘In such a happy and joyful state of mind he said, ‘Blessed One, what the Thus-Gone One has said about the way in which bodhisattvas uphold the sublime Dharma is amazing. Yet, if I were to offer my understanding of what was expressed by the Blessed One, then I think that phenomena are not the Dharma. Dharma is whatever is beyond phenomena. Why is this? Blessed One, when there is clinging to any phenomenon, that is not the Dharma. When there is no clinging, that is the Dharma.
- 7.11 “ ‘Blessed One, anything that involves a dualistic perception of Dharma and non-Dharma is not the Dharma. Blessed One, anything that involves knowledge of perceptions is the Dharma. When described ultimately, Dharma and non-Dharma cannot be observed. Where there is no perception of Dharma or non-Dharma, nothing can be counted as Dharma. Where there is nothing that can be counted as Dharma, there are no limits. Where there are no limits, that is the limit of reality. Why is this? ‘The limit of space is the limit of reality. For space, there is no limit of destruction. As there is no limit of destruction for space, there is likewise no limit of destruction for any

phenomenon. For this reason, all phenomena can be called *the limit of space*. Blessed One, any bodhisattva who hears this teaching on the limit of reality and claims it to be true will not take the position that phenomena are divisible. Blessed One, I do not see any perceived phenomenon that can be said to be upholding the sublime Dharma. [F.55.a] However, Blessed One, when I say this, am I in accord with the teachings of the Thus-Gone One, and those who teach the Dharma, and the Dharma itself? Is my explanation a true teaching?’

7.12 “ ‘Noble son,’ answered the Blessed One, ‘it is true. That is an explanation that accords with the teachings of the Thus-Gone One, and those who teach the Dharma, and the Dharma itself. What you have taught is a true teaching.’

7.13 “Noble son, when the bodhisattva Dharma Teacher gave this teaching, ten thousand gods from the divine assembly gained acceptance of phenomena concurring with reality. Light King of Qualities, if you are wondering, doubting, or of two minds about whether he who at that time was the bodhisattva Dharma Teacher is somebody unknown to you, do not think any further. Why so? Because, Light King of Qualities, you were at that time the bodhisattva Dharma Teacher! Therefore, Light King of Qualities, I entrust my unsurpassed and perfect awakening accomplished through countless billions of eons to you. I entrust it to you before this assembly so that you may uphold it, keep it, realize it, and teach it widely to others.”

7.14 As soon as the Blessed One made this announcement, six hundred million bodhisattvas rose from their seats and proclaimed with one voice, “We will also uphold the Thus-Gone One’s awakening!”

7.15 The Blessed One then asked of all of them, “Noble children, what Dharma will you live by, such that you will uphold this awakening that I have gained through countless billions of eons of practice?”

7.16 Then, a bodhisattva present in the assembly named Lord of Mountains promised the Blessed One, [F.55.b] “Blessed One, given that no one could uphold the sublime Dharma while being concerned with their body or life, I will uphold the Blessed One’s sublime Dharma while ignoring my body and life.”

7.17 The bodhisattva King of Splendors promised, “Blessed One, given that no one could uphold the sublime Dharma while hoping for gain, praise, or accolades, I will uphold the Thus-Gone One’s sublime Dharma while casting aside gain, praise, and accolades, and avoiding relying on those who are not noble ones.”

7.18 The bodhisattva Great Crest promised, “Blessed One, given that no one could uphold the sublime Dharma while holding the notion of Dharma and non-Dharma, Blessed One, I will uphold the sublime Dharma while mastering the nondual sameness of all phenomena.”

- 7.19 The bodhisattva Śrīgupta promised, “Blessed One, given that no one could uphold the sublime Dharma if they were outdone by the afflictions, Blessed One, I will uphold the sublime Dharma by outdoing the afflictions with the insight and wisdom of the noble ones.”
- 7.20 The bodhisattva Lamp Holder promised, “Blessed One, given that no one could uphold the sublime Dharma while enmeshed in the darkness of stupidity, Blessed One, I will uphold the sublime Dharma while attaining the light of the wisdom of nonattachment, and escape the darkness of stupidity with regard to all phenomena.”
- 7.21 The bodhisattva Lightning Gaze promised, “Blessed One, given that no one could uphold the sublime Dharma with wisdom that relies on others, Blessed One, I will uphold the sublime Dharma by mastering the wisdom [F.56.a] that directly perceives all phenomena, without relying on anything else.”
- 7.22 The bodhisattva Hidden promised, “Blessed One, given that no one could uphold the sublime Dharma with ordinary faculties and a confused mind, Blessed One, I will uphold the sublime Dharma while hiding and taming all faculties, sense doors, and sense sources.”
- 7.23 The bodhisattva Vimalaprabhā promised, “Blessed One, given that no one could uphold the sublime Dharma with a notion of discrete beings and phenomena, Blessed One, I will uphold the sublime Dharma while mastering an unbiased attitude toward all beings and the sameness of all phenomena.”
- 7.24 The bodhisattva Viśeṣagāmin promised, “Blessed One, given that no one could uphold the sublime Dharma with a mind that is distracted and not settled in equipoise, Blessed One, I will uphold the sublime Dharma with a mind that is undistracted from equipoise.”
- 7.25 The bodhisattva Sārthavāha promised, “Blessed One, given that no one could uphold the sublime Dharma while following wrong paths and without understanding the rites that bring proper knowledge of the path, Blessed One, I will uphold the sublime Dharma with understanding of the rites that bring proper knowledge of the path and while delivering beings from wrong paths onto the true path.”
- 7.26 The bodhisattva Excellent Intelligence promised, “Blessed One, given that no one could uphold the sublime Dharma while lost in the anxious mind of doubt, Blessed One, I will uphold the sublime Dharma by eliminating all anxiety, abandoning all doubt, and scattering the pain of fear.”
- 7.27 The bodhisattva Vairocana promised, “Blessed One, given that no one could uphold the sublime Dharma if they did not live by the Dharma and if they let their practice decline, [F.56.b] Blessed One, I will uphold the sublime Dharma while living by the Dharma, making my practice meaningful, and establishing all beings in right endeavor.”

- 7.28 The bodhisattva Seer of Light promised, “Blessed One, given that no one could uphold the sublime Dharma with misguided insight and without the light of Dharma, Blessed One, I will uphold the sublime Dharma with the light of Dharma and with skill in definitive wisdom gained through insight.”
- 7.29 The bodhisattva Non-aggressive Intellect promised, “Blessed One, given that no one could uphold the sublime Dharma with an aggressive mind and without the intention to protect beings, Blessed One, I will uphold the sublime Dharma with a mind that has no aggression and consistently protects beings.”
- 7.30 The bodhisattva Intellect of Pure Conduct promised, “Blessed One, given that no one could uphold the sublime Dharma without becoming skilled in the faculties of beings and understanding the types of beings’ conduct, Blessed One, I will uphold the sublime Dharma by seeking knowledge of the faculties and conduct of beings.”
- 7.31 The bodhisattva Vyūharāja promised, “Blessed One, given that no one could uphold the sublime Dharma while entertaining notions of a self, or beings, or phenomena, due to having conceptual notions about phenomena, Blessed One, I will uphold the Thus-Gone One’s sublime Dharma by eliminating all thought, concept, and conceptuality; purifying the three spheres; and not entertaining notions of a self, or beings, or phenomena.”
- 7.32 The bodhisattva Siṃhaketu promised, “Blessed One, the world is terrified of the thought that all phenomena are unborn and non-arising. [F.57.a] Blessed One, as I understand that all phenomena are unborn and non-arising, I will uphold the Blessed One’s sublime Dharma while being free from fear or anxiety and without entertaining any notions of ‘near’ or ‘far’ about any phenomenon.”
- 7.33 The bodhisattva Maitreya promised, “Blessed One, those who perceive awakening to be something far off cannot uphold the sublime Dharma. Blessed One, bodhisattvas who intend to attain unsurpassed and perfect awakening and then see that awakening is neither devoid of, nor involved in, body and mind, will be able to uphold the Thus-Gone One’s sublime Dharma.”
- 7.34 The bodhisattva Guṇarājaprabhāsa promised, “Blessed One, one cannot uphold the sublime Dharma while not maintaining qualities, or while lacking qualities, or while lacking passion for the qualities of the Thus-Gone One. Thus, Blessed One, I will uphold the sublime Dharma by never lacking qualities, and by maintaining authentic bodhisattva qualities, and seeking out the qualities of the Thus-Gone One.”
- 7.35 The bodhisattva Youthful Mañjuśrī promised, “Blessed One, whenever a worldly person says, ‘I will uphold the sublime Dharma,’ that is wonderful. Why is this, Blessed One? When the Blessed One sat at the seat of

awakening, he neither attained nor realized any Dharma. So in this regard there is nothing to uphold. Blessed One, I will uphold the nature of compassion so that I may abandon apprehending any beings and avoid grasping at any phenomena. I do not conceptualize any phenomena and I do not avoid conceptualizing any phenomena.”

7.36 The Blessed One then expressed his approval of Youthful Mañjuśrī, saying, “Excellent, Mañjuśrī, excellent. [F.57.b] That is correct. It is exactly as you have described it. I did not attain anything when I sat at the seat of awakening. I arose from the seat of awakening without having attained anything.”

7.37 Mañjuśrī then said, “Blessed One, you say that you sat at the seat of awakening and arose from the seat of awakening without having attained anything. However, if you sat there, then awakening becomes twofold: the Blessed One on one hand, and the seat of awakening on the other. Blessed One, awakening is not divisible into two!”

7.38 “Mañjuśrī,” responded the Blessed One, “because I am immersed in the essential nature of the seat of awakening, I sat at the seat of awakening. My nature is also the nature of the seat of awakening, the nature of awakening itself, the nature of all beings, and the nature of all phenomena. Mañjuśrī, that which I realized at the seat of awakening is also of that same nature. It is of one taste. Even as I fully awakened, the Thus-Gone One saw no phenomena of liberation apart from the seat of awakening. Because awakening is sameness, I realized the sameness of all phenomena. Sameness cannot be reckoned in any way. It is uncountable and immeasurable. Therefore, the thus-gone ones are said to be unconditioned. Mañjuśrī, the thus-gone ones attain the unconditioned and transcend all conditioned things. All who trust this teaching, Mañjuśrī, will be liberated by the Thus-Gone One’s liberation. Yet being liberated, they do not transcend this reality.”

7.39 Upon hearing this teaching, Sāgaramati and the other bodhisattvas who had come together to the Sahā world were satisfied, [F.58.a] happy, delighted, and joyful. In their happiness and delight, they wondered aloud, “We have gained a marvelous boon by coming to this buddha realm; by seeing the Blessed One, Youthful Mañjuśrī, and these sublime beings; and by hearing this profound Dharma teaching. Where this Dharma teaching is present, people will behold the buddhas. Where this Dharma teaching is practiced, we will see the wheel of Dharma turned. Whether now or when the Thus-Gone One has entered parinirvāṇa, anyone who hears this Dharma teaching and is inspired by it, upholds it, keeps it, reads it, masters it, or teaches it extensively to others will gain a marvelous boon.”



7.40 “Noble children,” asked the Blessed One, “what kind of marvelous boon do you think these bodhisattvas will gain?”

They answered, “The marvelous boon to be gained by such bodhisattvas is tenfold. It is an inconceivably great boon. What are these ten boons? (1) Gaining an opportunity to serve the manifestation of the buddhas. (2) Beyond just seeing them, achieving faith in them with pure motivation. (3) Beyond just being faithful, receiving the opportunity to hear Dharma. (4) Beyond just hearing, achieving a state beyond doubt. (5) Beyond eliminating doubt, going forth. (6) Beyond just going forth, achieving pure livelihood. (7) Beyond just having pure livelihood, achieving skill in teaching the Dharma. (8) Achieving the mind of awakening lifetime after lifetime. (9) Beyond simply not forgetting the mind of awakening, receiving the opportunity to hear the bodhisattva section of the Dharma. [F.58.b] (10) Beyond just hearing the bodhisattva section, gaining accomplishment. Blessed One, these ten boons are inconceivably great boons. Bodhisattvas who attend to these can be said to have gained a great boon.”

7.41 The Blessed One said, “Sublime beings, you have expressed well these boons of bodhisattva great beings. Excellent, excellent.”

7.42 When this teaching was given, thirty-six thousand beings developed the mind directed toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening. [B6]

8.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

8.1 The bodhisattva Sāgaramati then asked the Blessed One, “Blessed One, it is incredible how much the Great Vehicle is able to benefit beings so that they experience the pleasures of gods and humans and attain the unsurpassed pleasure of nirvāṇa. Blessed One, what are the teachings that summarize the Great Vehicle? What are the teachings that are held in high regard in the Great Vehicle? What are the teachings that are challenging in the Great Vehicle? What are the teachings that reveal the Great Vehicle? Blessed One, what are the ways the Great Vehicle is obstructed? Blessed One, why is the Great Vehicle called the Great Vehicle?”

8.2 The Blessed One replied to the bodhisattva Sāgaramati, “Listen, Sāgaramati, and I will teach. Sāgaramati, there is one teaching that summarizes the Great Vehicle. What is this one teaching? It is being careful and not forgetting the mind of awakening. Sāgaramati, this is the teaching that summarizes the Great Vehicle. [F.59.a]

8.3 “Sāgaramati, there is another teaching that summarizes the Great Vehicle. What is this teaching? It is doing what is good and trusting in karmic ripening. There is another teaching: right view that does not contradict the Dharma that has been taught. There is another teaching: getting rid of notions of beauty and ugliness so that one has an equal attitude toward all beings. There is another teaching: great love that seeks to protect everyone. There is another teaching: great compassion that is not attached to one’s own happiness. There is another teaching: recollection of the Buddha that yearns for the body of a buddha. There is another teaching: recollection of the essential qualities that accomplish the Dharma. There is another teaching: recollection of the Saṅgha that is the Saṅgha of those who have reached the irreversible level. There is another teaching: recollection of giving that eradicates all afflictions. There is another teaching: recollection of discipline that is not forgetting the mind of awakening. There is another teaching: recollection of the deity that has the pure Dharma. There is another

teaching: altruism that brings help and happiness. There is another teaching: stable contemplation and strong devotion. There is another teaching: supreme delight in bringing all beings to freedom. There is another teaching: seeking the sublime Dharma that liberates through the profound Dharma. There is another teaching: giving the Dharma with a mind that is unconcerned with material things. There is another teaching: perceiving those who have come to receive the teachings as sick patients. There is another teaching: perceiving the Dharma as medicine. There is another teaching: perceiving oneself as a physician. [F.59.b]

8.4 “There is another teaching: protecting the sublime Dharma so that it remains a long time. There is another teaching: preserving the lineage of the Three Jewels. There is another teaching: being satisfied with the least and not craving. There is another teaching: being courageous enough to give away all one’s possessions. There is another teaching: ripening those with corrupt discipline using one’s own discipline. There is another teaching: being patient without being angered by negative actions. There is another teaching: wishing to repay positive actions. There is another teaching: being compassionate toward those who are ungrateful. There is another teaching: being respectful toward those who are grateful. There is another teaching: not being proud around those who know little. There is another teaching: being a student of the learned. There is another teaching: not giving up the motivation to gather roots of virtue. There is another teaching: not perpetuating nonvirtuous mental states. There is another teaching: keeping the three vows pure by not putting on airs of being a Dharma practitioner and being overly talkative. There is another teaching: serving those who teach the Dharma and esteeming them as teachers and spiritual masters. There is another teaching: studying the Dharma without mixing it up with what the Lokāyata followers teach. There is another teaching: being undiscouraged by saṃsāra, having refined and purified one’s roots of virtue. There is another teaching: being insatiable in venerating the living thus-gone ones as well as those who have passed into parinirvāṇa. There is another teaching: acting as a spiritual friend, whether beings request it or not. [F.60.a] There is another teaching: not observing, clinging to, or being attached to any objects. There is another teaching: constantly practicing the monastic life with an awareness of the flaws of the household life.

8.5 “There is another teaching: undertaking the activities of sublime beings. There is another teaching: gathering the accumulations of the path of awakening, which produces certainty. There is another teaching: never being angry with those who have entered the same vehicle. There is another teaching: never being disheartened in the pursuit of upholding the mind of awakening. There is another teaching: guarding secret mantras so they do

not proliferate. There is another teaching: seeking knowledge of the Dharma and craftsmanship. There is another teaching: seeing the Dharma by upholding true speech. There is another teaching: exceeding expectations. There is another teaching: giving without any regret. There is another teaching: understanding the function of māras and abandoning them. There is another teaching: acting with wisdom devoid of pride.

8.6 “There is another teaching: staying in remote areas with no worldly ambition. There is another teaching: eliminating excessive pride, praise for oneself, and the slander of others. There is another teaching: acting in accord with the world without afflictions. There is another teaching: having a pure livelihood and delighting in solitude. There is another teaching: settling internally by applying appropriate effort. There is another teaching: becoming certain through abundant learning. There is another teaching: the level of genuine and diligent practice. [F.60.b] There is another teaching: perceiving the phenomena of the experience of emptiness. There is another teaching: neither being inflated nor pained by gain or loss. There is another teaching: delighting in being alone by fearing and worrying about distraction. There is another teaching: distributing the wealth of the Dharma to others. There is another teaching: being learned in the truths of the noble ones. There is another teaching: generously teaching any topic of knowledge. There is another teaching: gently bringing those who have not trained much to the trainings. There is another teaching: trusting that gain and loss are both karmic ripening and not being tormented by either of them.

8.7 “There is another teaching: respectfully teaching the Dharma to those who wish to hear it. There is another teaching: abandoning attachment for one’s friends and having an unbiased mind toward every being. There is another teaching: expressing one’s approval of Dharma teachers without any duplicity. There is another teaching: shouldering the burden of all beings with a noble mind. There is another teaching: seeking out the perfections. There is another teaching: diligently gathering the accumulations of the path of awakening. There is another teaching: having firm and unmoving roots of faith. There is another teaching: purposefully going on alms rounds in one’s vicinity. There is another teaching: eliminating poverty by gathering the seven riches. There is another teaching: living a life that is meaningful.

8.8 “There is another teaching: ripening beings through skill in means. There is another teaching: attracting disciples through performing Dharma offering ceremonies. There is another teaching: engaging in lively Dharma discussions without argument. [F.61.a] There is another teaching: listening to Dharma without an intention to dispute it. There is another teaching: being a spiritual practitioner without having any of the faults of spiritual practitioners. There is another teaching: entering towns, villages, and cities

without getting mixed up with their business. There is another teaching: protecting all beings by having understood one's own confusion. There is another teaching: having equanimity about all the world's variety. There is another teaching: not deceiving spiritual friends.

8.9 "There is another teaching: knowing the purity of the minds of all beings by purifying one's own mind. There is another teaching: purifying one's thoughts without contrivance. There is another teaching: purifying one's motivation with intention. There is another teaching: purifying one's conduct with positive actions. There is another teaching: purifying the marks of perfection through purifying one's merit. There is another teaching: purifying one's afflictions through purifying one's knowledge. There is another teaching: purifying buddha realms by purifying beings.

8.10 "There is another teaching: becoming skilled in dedication while analyzing signlessness. There is another teaching: attaining the acceptance that concurs with reality. There is another teaching: gaining certainty and understanding through cultivating the three gateways of liberation. There is another teaching: being an elder by living nowhere. There is another teaching: enjoying super-knowledge and knowing the exhaustion of defilement. There is another teaching: gaining understanding and liberation through having mastered tranquility and special insight. There is another teaching: cultivating insight that is embraced by skillful means. [F.61.b] There is another teaching: attaining the essence of the three realms as an ornament of the seat of awakening. There is another teaching: fully awakening to buddhahood by knowing the sameness of all phenomena.

8.11 "Sāgaramati, there is another teaching that summarizes the Great Vehicle. What is this teaching? It is attaining the acceptance that phenomena are unborn through realizing that all phenomena are unborn and non-arising by nature. Sāgaramati, that is a teaching that summarizes the Great Vehicle.

"Sāgaramati, these teachings summarize, uphold, and maintain the Great Vehicle.

8.12 "Sāgaramati, there are two teachings that are held in high regard in the Great Vehicle. What are they? They are aspiring to the qualities of buddhahood and not desiring the qualities of the hearers or solitary buddhas. Sāgaramati, these two teachings are held in high regard in the Great Vehicle.

8.13 "Sāgaramati, there are two teachings that are challenging in the Great Vehicle. What are they? They are protecting one's liberation through aspiration, and teaching the Dharma for the sake of liberation. Sāgaramati, these two teachings are challenging in the Great Vehicle.

- 8.14 “Sāgaramati, there are two teachings that are held in high regard in the Great Vehicle. What are they? They are not straying from the mind of awakening and being stable in observing one’s mind. There are two teachings that are challenging: realizing the mind of awakening to be illusory and realizing all beings to be selfless.
- 8.15 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: not giving up one’s motivation and not contriving one’s conduct. There are two teachings that are challenging: having thoughts with pure roots, and gathering merit while being neither active, nor inactive. [F.62.a]
- 8.16 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: applying oneself to roots of virtue and immersing oneself in this endeavor. There are two teachings that are challenging: practicing without conceptual elaborations and disengaging by bringing one’s practice into experience.
- 8.17 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: excelling in pure motivation and observing what is uniquely special. There are two teachings that are challenging: not engaging in negativities oneself and delivering others from negativities.
- 8.18 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: giving away all one’s possessions and not hoping for karmic ripening. There are two teachings that are challenging: giving with an even mind and being skilled in dedication.
- 8.19 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: not letting one’s trainings decline and not hoping for rebirth. There are two teachings that are challenging: being especially compassionate to those whose discipline is corrupt and not praising oneself.
- 8.20 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: being patient and gentle, and dedicating merit toward awakening. There are two teachings that are challenging: giving up attachment and cultivating patience for rulers.
- 8.21 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: having diligence that pursues all forms of virtue, and delighting in virtue. There are two teachings that are challenging: keeping body and mind in solitude, and freeing the fixated mind.
- 8.22 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: gathering the requisites for concentration and gaining pliancy of mind. There are two teachings that are challenging: knowing how to undo concentration and disparaging the desire realm.
- 8.23 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: being passionate and eager for the Dharma. There are two teachings that are challenging: [F.62.b] contemplating and gaining certainty in Dharma.

- 8.24 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: relying on a spiritual friend and respectfully relying on a spiritual master. There are two teachings that are challenging: being respectful and accepting advice.
- 8.25 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: examining what is timely and untimely, and bringing the meaning into experience. There are two teachings that are challenging: understanding the meaning and being content.
- 8.26 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: not being satisfied with the wealth of hearing and not being satisfied with the insight of hearing. There are two teachings that are challenging: accurately analyzing the Dharma and abandoning inaccurate teachings.
- 8.27 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: teaching Dharma and being compassionate to those who are listening to it. There are two teachings that are challenging: being a generous spiritual teacher and teaching the Dharma without any material aims.
- 8.28 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: listening carefully and being highly motivated. There are two teachings that are challenging: eliminating obscurations and cultivating the branches of awakening.
- 8.29 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: achieving supreme joy and experiencing joy. There are two teachings that are challenging: knowing the extent of what is permissible and obtaining self-knowledge.
- 8.30 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: trusting the ripening of karma and engaging in positive actions. There are two teachings that are challenging: longing for no karma and no karmic ripening, and teaching virtuous teachings.
- 8.31 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: speaking truthfully and not deceiving noble beings. There are two teachings that are challenging: practicing exactly what one preaches and not disrupting the buddha way.
- 8.32 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: [F.63.a] purifying the body and abandoning the three nonvirtues. There are two teachings that are challenging: understanding that the body is like a reflection, and understanding that it is like grass, a wall, or wood.
- 8.33 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: purifying the speech and abandoning the four faults of speech. There are two teachings that are challenging: mastering the inexpressible Dharma and understanding all sound to be like echoes.
- 8.34 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: purifying the mind, and abandoning covetousness, malice, and wrong views. There are two teachings that are challenging: being internally peaceful and externally still.

- 8.35 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: cultivating love and having an equal attitude toward all beings. There are two teachings that are challenging: gaining love that is immaculate and pure like space and making dedications that protect all beings.
- 8.36 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: not losing great compassion and never being discouraged in the pursuit of roots of virtue. There are two teachings that are challenging: understanding the unborn and sustaining one’s certainty.
- 8.37 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: being inspired and eager because of one’s delight with the Dharma, and abandoning being uninspired. There are two teachings that are challenging: perfecting the ascetic discipline of silence and only engaging in ascetic disciplines.
- 8.38 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: letting go of attachments and abandoning anger. There are two teachings that are challenging: cultivating equanimity and abandoning views regarding beings.
- 8.39 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: cultivating the recollection of the Buddha and developing the mind of awakening and sustaining that recollection. There are two teachings that are challenging: cultivating the Dharma body and manifesting the body of marks. [F.63.b]
- 8.40 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: cultivating the recollection of the Dharma and bringing beings to the Dharma. There are two teachings that are challenging: realizing reality free of desire and generating extra compassion for beings who indulge in desire.
- 8.41 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: recollecting the bodhisattva saṅgha and teaching to the saṅgha of those who have reached the irreversible level. There are two teachings that are challenging: realizing the unconditioned and maintaining one’s attainment of the result.
- 8.42 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: recollecting discipline and not forgetting the mind of awakening. There are two teachings that are challenging: realizing unconditioned discipline, and attracting and ripening those beings with corrupt discipline.
- 8.43 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: recollecting giving, and giving without regret. There are two teachings that are challenging: giving up one’s own afflictions and teaching beings to discard their afflictions.
- 8.44 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: recollecting divinity and not aspiring to be reborn. There are two teachings that are challenging: being mindful and aware, and establishing all who are distracted in mindfulness.



- 8.45 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: gathering the accumulation of merit and the accumulation of wisdom. There are two teachings that are challenging: obtaining unconditioned wisdom and not disparaging the accumulation of merit.
- 8.46 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: transcending desire and explaining what it is to cling because of desire. There are two teachings that are challenging: having strong resolve and being without pretense or deceit.
- 8.47 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: showing gratitude and being grateful. There are two teachings that are challenging: eliminating passionate attachment and not giving up one’s passion for virtuous qualities. [F.64.a]
- 8.48 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: confessing all one’s misdeeds and not engaging in any misdeeds. There are two teachings that are challenging: having no regret or complacency.
- 8.49 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: rejoicing in others’ merit and not being satisfied with one’s own merit. There are two teachings that are challenging: understanding the exhaustion of misdeeds and understanding the accumulation of merit.
- 8.50 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: supplicating all the buddhas and upholding all of the Dharma. There are two teachings that are challenging: knowing the unadulterated realm of phenomena and understanding how to teach all linguistic categories.
- 8.51 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: skill in dedication and dedicating to all beings equally. There are two teachings that are challenging: becoming familiar with signlessness and destroying all signs.
- 8.52 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: understanding emptiness and observing beings. There are two teachings that are challenging: eliminating views with insight and skillfully utilizing views.
- 8.53 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: yearning for roots of virtue and bringing all beings to all forms of roots of virtue. There are two teachings that are challenging: cultivating wishlessness and knowing how to take rebirth intentionally.
- 8.54 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: not being attached or moved. There are two teachings that are challenging: being without pride and being gentle.
- 8.55 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: staying in solitude and experiencing the positive qualities of solitude. There are two teachings that are challenging: maintaining an absence of afflictions and protecting all beings.

- 8.56 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: having few desires and being content. There are two teachings that are challenging: [F.64.b] seeking out one’s afflictions and seeking the elimination of all beings’ afflictions.
- 8.57 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: certainty and understanding. There are two teachings that are challenging: recognizing one’s own confusion and not seeing others’ confusion as a fault.
- 8.58 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: not praising oneself or condemning others. There are two teachings that are challenging: seeing the lack of self in oneself and the lack of beings in beings.
- 8.59 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: Acting on one’s own and not relying on others. There are two teachings that are challenging: reversing saṃsāra and freeing beings from saṃsāra.
- 8.60 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: pursuing the perfections, and living according to what one teaches to those who are pursuing the perfections. There are two teachings that are challenging: attaining insight that does not depend on anyone else and bringing others to knowledge.
- 8.61 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: being disinterested in gain, honor, and praise, and being interested in pursuing the Dharma. There are two teachings that are challenging: benefiting those who do not benefit oneself, and not overly liking those who do.
- 8.62 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: practicing great love that knows no limit and practicing uninterrupted great compassion. There are two teachings that are challenging: engaging with saṃsāra once one has crossed over, and liberating those who have not crossed over.
- 8.63 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: encouraging all beings to develop qualities and being especially compassionate to beings who have no qualities. There are two teachings that are challenging: helping those who do not reciprocate favors, and being free from concepts about those who do reciprocate.
- 8.64 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: [F.65.a] maintaining mindfulness applied to the body, and maintaining the purity of the body. There are two teachings that are challenging: applying a view of the body onto the body, and not conceptualizing thoughts that come along with a body.
- 8.65 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: maintaining mindfulness applied to feelings, and not being pierced by the feelings of pleasure or pain. There are two teachings that are challenging: applying a view of feelings onto feelings, and not thinking in terms of thoughts that go along with feelings.

- 8.66 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: maintaining mindfulness applied to mind, and maintaining the purity of mind. There are two teachings that are challenging: applying a view of mind onto mind, and not thinking in terms of thoughts that go along with mind.
- 8.67 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: maintaining mindfulness applied to phenomena, and distinguishing phenomena. There are two teachings that are challenging: applying a view of mental phenomena onto phenomena, and not thinking in terms of thoughts that go along with phenomena.
- 8.68 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: abandoning those nonvirtuous negative qualities that have arisen, and producing virtuous qualities that have not yet arisen. There are two teachings that are challenging: preventing nonvirtuous negative qualities that have not already developed, and protecting those virtuous qualities that have developed.
- 8.69 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: cultivating the bases of miracles—interest, diligence, conscientiousness, and investigation—and guiding beings who can be guided by miraculous powers. There are two teachings that are challenging: attaining unconditioned miraculous powers, and traveling to all buddha realms without wavering from the realm of phenomena.
- 8.70 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: [F.65.b] not wavering from one’s faith, and bringing faith to the faithless. There are two teachings that are challenging: bringing appreciation to those whose minds are lucid and to those whose minds are not.
- 8.71 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: developing the faculty of diligence and not being distracted from the faculty of mindfulness. There are two teachings that are challenging: discerning powerful diligence, and mindfulness that accomplishes emptiness.
- 8.72 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: pursuing the accumulation of the faculties of absorption and insight, and never being discouraged in the pursuit of the accumulations. There are two teachings that are challenging: knowing how to be unmoving, and moving when necessary for the sake of ripening beings.
- 8.73 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: correctly understanding all the afflictions, and seeking what comes from both the occurrence and non-occurrence of afflictions. There are two teachings that are challenging: not mixing with any phenomenon due to the absence of afflictions, and mixing with the three realms in order to cause the abandonment of beings’ afflictions.

- 8.74 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: diligence that cultivates the branches of awakening and the motivation to teach the branches of awakening. There are two teachings that are challenging: not falling into the knowledge of exhaustion and accepting the knowledge of the unborn.
- 8.75 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: skillfully traversing the path and skillfully not traversing the path. There are two teachings that are challenging: understanding how to progress through the path and understanding that the path is uninterrupted.
- 8.76 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: being in accord with dependent origination and discarding the two extreme views. There are two teachings that are challenging: understanding what causes and conditions bring about pollution, and understanding what causes and conditions bring about purification. [F.66.a]
- 8.77 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: realizing the acts of māras and discarding the acts of māras. There are two teachings that are challenging: transcending all māras and not seeing any māras.
- 8.78 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: not upsetting those who are not upset and being patient and gentle with those who are upset. There are two teachings that are challenging: never getting upset and understanding that anything can be instantly destroyed.
- 8.79 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: keeping the seat of awakening in view once one has initially developed the mind of awakening, and having no desire for the Lesser Vehicle while keeping the seat of awakening in view. There are two teachings that are challenging: being free from clinging to the initial mind of awakening that functions as the cause of the seat of awakening, and being free from clinging to engendering the virtuous mind states that emerge from that cause.
- 8.80 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: severing the ties that sustain the continuity of saṃsāra, and not losing the mind of awakening that sustains the continuity of roots of virtue. There are two teachings that are challenging: dedicating roots of virtue that rely neither on places or directions to awakening, and knowing the illusory nature of the development of the mind of awakening that is dedicated to awakening.
- 8.81 “There are two teachings that are held in high regard: seeing awakening as something sentient beings should accomplish, and seeing the liberation of beings as something that awakening should accomplish. There are two teachings that are challenging: understanding beings as sameness because awakening is sameness, and not giving up one’s diligence such that one may ripen beings.

- 8.82       “Sāgaramati, there are two teachings that are held in high regard in the Great Vehicle. What are they? Developing the intention to accumulate all virtuous qualities, and arousing compassion to establish all beings on the path to nirvāṇa. [F.66.b] Sāgaramati, these are two teachings that are held in high regard in the Great Vehicle. Sāgaramati, there are two teachings that are challenging in the Great Vehicle. What are they? Taking birth from the unborn and arising from the unarisen. Sāgaramati, these are two teachings that are challenging in the Great Vehicle.
- 8.83       “Sāgaramati, moreover, there are three teachings that reveal the Great Vehicle. What are they? They are: developing the mind of awakening through stable roots of virtue, being impossible to discourage because of being accepted by a spiritual friend, and being irreversible by maintaining great compassion. Sāgaramati, these are three teachings that reveal the Great Vehicle.
- 8.84       “Sāgaramati, there are three other teachings that reveal the Great Vehicle. What are they? Seeking the accumulations, realizing the accumulations, and bringing beings to the accumulations.
- 8.85       “There are another three. What are they? Destroying stinginess, increasing giving, and dedicating this to awakening.
- 8.86       “There are another three: authentically upholding discipline, ripening beings with corrupt discipline, and dedicating this to awakening.
- 8.87       “There are another three: having a mind devoid of anger, causing faith in angry beings, and dedicating this to awakening.
- 8.88       “There are another three: not losing one’s diligence, ripening lazy beings, and dedicating this to awakening.
- 8.89       “There are another three: developing concentration, not being attached to that concentration, and dedicating this to awakening.
- 8.90       “There are another three: seeking out opportunities to listen, realizing what one has heard, and dedicating this to awakening.
- 8.91       “There are another three: love with reference to beings, love with reference to phenomena, and non-referential love. [F.67.a]
- 8.92       “There are another three: compassion developed by oneself, compassion directed towards the actions of others, and great compassion that eradicates the two extremes.
- 8.93       “There are another three: seeking knowledge to benefit oneself, seeking knowledge to benefit others, and practicing diligence so that one may perfect the benefit of both.
- 8.94       “There are another three: knowledge of the exhaustion of the past, knowledge of the non-arrival of the future, and knowledge of how phenomena do not exist in the present.

- 8.95 “There are another three: love that liberates beings who have certainty, love that liberates beings who have no certainty, and great love that protects beings who have developed perverse certainty.
- 8.96 “There are another three: pliancy of body through being pleasant to be with, pleasant speech through protecting others, and pliancy of mind through being honest.
- 8.97 “There are another three: not criticizing those who maintain their awareness of unpleasantness while keeping company with beings who indulge in desire; not criticizing those who maintain love while keeping company with beings who indulge in aggression; and not criticizing those who are aware of dependent origination while keeping company with beings who indulge in stupidity.
- 8.98 “There are another three: being helpful because one acts well, being balanced because one is content, and being patient because one will not later feel regret.
- 8.99 “There are another three: retaining what one studies, retaining words and letters, and understanding the discontinuous nature of sound from the past to the future.
- 8.100 “There are another three: eliminating poverty through manifesting the seven riches, great giving through offering the gift of the Dharma, and increasing wealth through sharing material things.
- 8.101 “There are another three: being truthful in terms of the ultimate truth, being genuine through non-deception, [F.67.b] and understanding reality through suchness.
- 8.102 “There are another three: knowing oneself by understanding the self, knowing others in terms of what to say, and knowing time by being timely.
- 8.103 “There are another three: realizing the sameness of the aggregates and the Dharma collection, realizing the sameness of the elements and the realm of phenomena, and realizing the similarity of the sense sources to an empty village.
- 8.104 “There are another three: knowing that causes always produce their effects, being skilled in using conditions to bring increase, and mutually reinforcing by assembling conditions.
- 8.105 “There are another three: not contradicting the Buddha, not abandoning the Dharma, and humbly and respectfully serving the Saṅgha.
- 8.106 “There are another three: pacifying attachment, eliminating aggression, and defeating stupidity.
- 8.107 “There are another three: engaging with relative truth, teaching the truth of characteristics, and sustaining ultimate truth.
- 8.108 “There are another three: not abusing beings, being respectful of those worthy of offerings, and not falling into afflictions.

- 8.109 “There are another three: not being stained by the desire realm, not becoming affected by the form realm, and not being attached to the formless realm.
- 8.110 “There are another three: not being disheartened by poverty, obscurity, scorn, or suffering; not becoming arrogant because of gain, renown, praise, or pleasure; and being like a mountain in not being affected by the eight worldly concerns.
- 8.111 “There are another three: keeping the faculties under control, liberating oneself from all the māras, and taming the mind.
- 8.112 “There are another three: knowing how to maintain the qualities of the levels, knowing how to undo the flaws of each level, and knowing how to ascend from level to level.
- 8.113 “There are another three: maintaining excellent contemplation, maintaining an especially pure motivation, [F.68.a] and maintaining continual application.
- 8.114 “There are another three: training in higher discipline in order to purify absorption, training in higher mind in order to perfect insight, and training in higher insight in order to perfect liberation.
- 8.115 “There are another three: abandoning attachment to pleasant feelings, abandoning aversion toward painful feelings, and abandoning a lack of perceptions of feelings that are neither pleasant nor painful.
- 8.116 “There are another three: turning away from causes through the unconditioned; turning away from afflictions through nonconceptuality; and turning away from the three realms through wishlessness.
- 8.117 “There are another three: gaining familiarity with emptiness and eliminating views, gaining familiarity with signlessness and pacifying concepts, gaining familiarity with wishlessness and stopping the three realms.
- 8.118 “There are another three: the eye’s emptiness, form’s separateness, and visual consciousness’s lack of basis.
- 8.119 “There are another three: the ear’s emptiness, sound’s separateness, and auditory consciousness’s lack of basis.
- 8.120 “There are another three: the nose’s emptiness, smell’s separateness, and olfactory consciousness’s lack of basis.
- 8.121 “There are another three: the tongue’s emptiness, taste’s separateness, and gustatory consciousness’s lack of basis.
- 8.122 “There are another three: the body’s emptiness, texture’s separateness, and tactile consciousness’s lack of basis.
- 8.123 “There are another three: the mind’s emptiness, mental phenomena’s separateness, and mental consciousness’s lack of basis.

- 8.124 “There are another three: guarding discipline, preserving absorption, and maintaining discriminating knowledge through insight.
- 8.125 “There are another three: using mindfulness to uphold the Dharma, using intelligence to gain appropriate understanding, [F.68.b] and using realization to master the meaning.
- 8.126 “There are another three: demonstrating the manner of liberation to hearers by speaking the words of the truths of the noble ones, demonstrating the manner of liberation to solitary buddhas through being one-pointedly focused on dependent origination, and demonstrating the manner of liberation to bodhisattvas through engaging in the six perfections.
- 8.127 “There are another three: giving, great giving, and extraordinary giving. In this case, *giving* means giving valuables; *great giving* means giving one’s wife, son, or daughter; and *extraordinary giving* means giving one’s hands, feet, head, or eyes.
- 8.128 “There are another three: upholding the sacred Dharma, upholding the position of a Dharma teacher, and upholding the Great Vehicle.
- 8.129 “There are another three: understanding the unbroken continuity of saṃsāra, realizing saṃsāra’s faults, and abandoning saṃsāra’s faults.
- 8.130 “There are another three: listening to the Dharma with an unobscured mind, meditating alone with a settled mind, and reaching mastery with an active mind.
- 8.131 “There are another three: hearing based on the meaning, thinking based on wisdom, and liberation based on the Dharma.
- 8.132 “There are another three: staying in seclusion with ample opportunities to study, keeping a correct outlook while staying in seclusion, and endeavoring in the correct outlook to understand all phenomena.
- 8.133 “There are another three: serving the learned, asking questions of the educated, and protecting meditators.
- 8.134 “There are another three: giving the Dharma without any concern for wealth, loving those who are studying Dharma, and manifesting the mind of omniscience. [F.69.a]
- 8.135 “There are another three: the equality of the mind reveals the equality of beings; the absence of difference reveals the equality of phenomena; the equality of wisdom reveals the equality of the buddhas.
- 8.136 “There are another three: wisdom reveals the equality of the three times; the intellect reveals the equality of the three liberations; understanding reveals the equality of the three realms.
- 8.137 “There are another three: conceiving of all formations as impermanent and dissatisfying, realizing all phenomena to be selfless, and realizing nirvāṇa to be peace.



- 8.138 “There are another three: the essence of commitment come through experience; the essence of learning comes through persistence; the essence of absorption comes through insight.
- 8.139 “There are another three: not concealing one’s downfalls, identifying harmful actions, and making vows about the future.
- 8.140 “There are another three: being without regret, being free of upheaval, and being without doubt.
- 8.141 “There are another three: staying in seclusion, delighting in solitude, and desiring virtuous qualities.
- 8.142 “There are another three: accepting the profound Dharma, giving various Dharma teachings, and exercising eloquence.
- 8.143 “There are another three: clear recollection of what one has heard, eloquence that is blessed by the Buddha, and Dharma discourse that is upheld by the gods.
- 8.144 “There are another three: having the initial development of the earth-like mind of awakening, applying experiential analysis to all one’s activities, and reaching the irreversible level where one reverses all concepts.
- 8.145 “There are another three: perfecting the patience that conforms with sound, attaining the patience that comes from contemplation and is without proliferations, and attaining the patience regarding the unborn nature of phenomena.
- 8.146 “Sāgaramati, there are three other teachings that reveal the Great Vehicle. [F.69.b] What are they? Cultivating the path that is endowed with skillful means and insight, ripening beings while possessing great love and compassion, and upholding the sublime Dharma while possessing diligence and carefulness. Sāgaramati, these three teachings reveal the Great Vehicle. [B7]
- 8.147 “Sāgaramati, moreover, there are four ways the Great Vehicle is obstructed. What are they? Obtaining misguided learning and seeking advice from worldly materialists; not listening to the Dharma teachings on the six perfections and the bodhisattva section; proudly undertaking the work of Māra; and abandoning the Dharma due to the arising of obscurations concerning the Dharma. Sāgaramati, these are four ways that obstruct the Great Vehicle.
- 8.148 “There are another four: attachment, aggression, stupidity, and failing to be interested in the qualities of the Dharma because one is full of afflictions.
- 8.149 “There are another four: being jealous of others’ gain, acting deceitfully toward Dharma teachers, being scattered and pretentious, and being unreliable and deceptive.

- 8.150 “There are another four: conceiving of spiritual friends as destructive companions, conceiving of destructive companions as spiritual friends, conceiving of what is not Dharma as Dharma, and conceiving of what is Dharma as not Dharma.
- 8.151 “There are another four: a mind stained by stinginess, a mind that is malicious and unaccommodating of beggars, a mind that regrets giving, and not orienting one’s mind toward omniscience.
- 8.152 “There are another four: giving out of ulterior motive, aggression, stupidity, [F.70.a] or fear.
- 8.153 “There are another four: giving because of seeking acclaim, reputation, renown, or praise.  
“There are another four: giving in public view, giving for a minor purpose, giving with a scornful attitude, and giving the belongings of others.
- 8.154 “There are another four: negative giving, impatient giving, disrespectful giving, and proud giving.
- 8.155 “There are another four: giving weapons, giving poison, giving inappropriate things, and giving illegal things.
- 8.156 “There are another four: being aggressive toward those who are disciplined, being malicious and unaccommodating toward those who have corrupt discipline, personally relaxing one’s vows, and thinking that discussions of discipline and vows are useless.
- 8.157 “There are another four: pursuing shallow gains, not sharing the wealth of the Dharma, preventing others’ success, and not being satisfied with one’s own successes.
- 8.158 “There are another four: being physically hypocritical, being verbally hypocritical through wrong speech, being mentally hypocritical by taking pleasure in evil deeds, and acting hypocritically in every way due to an impure livelihood.
- 8.159 “There are another four: being aggressive toward those who have entered the same vehicle, criticizing them, being displeased by their praise and qualities, and having manifest pride because one fails to understand the workings of Māra.
- 8.160 “There are another four: swelling with pride and failing to honor one’s religious commitments; failing to respect Dharma teachers; not bowing to one’s parents, instructors, or preceptors; and always acting contrary because of one’s physical and mental abrasiveness.
- 8.161 “There are another four: praising oneself, [F.70.b] disputing the qualities of others, letting the pride of one’s self-centeredness blaze, and being mean.
- 8.162 “There are another four: laziness, sloth, failing to heed advice, and being disagreeable.

- “There are another four: being unruly, unsettled, uninhibited, and untamed.
- 8.163 “There are another four: going to towns, villages, and cities while being insufficiently learned; living without observing discipline and yet desiring gain, honor, and praise; looking at women while failing to guard one’s senses; and engaging the faculties of beings while one’s mind is not in equipoise.
- 8.164 “There are another four: not putting energy into the means of attracting students, straying from ripening beings, giving up the Dharma and failing to guard one’s actions, and harming people who teach the Dharma.
- 8.165 “There are another four: increasing one’s attachment because of stupidity, desiring evil deeds because of aggression, being discontent because of attachment, and being insatiable because of desire.
- 8.166 “There are another four: being uninspired because of lacking faith, failing to scorn evil deeds because of one’s reliance on evil companions, letting virtuous qualities diminish due to laziness, and destroying roots of virtue due to carelessness.
- 8.167 “There are another four: lacking shame due to insufficient reflection, lacking conscience due to not thinking about the Buddha, being ungrateful by acting in accord with the acts with immediate consequence, and not being appropriately fearful due to blind hope.
- 8.168 “There are another four: malice, anger, spite, and harmfulness.  
“There are another four: deceiving noble beings, failing to protect those that are not noble, scorning donors, and disparaging those worthy of offerings.
- 8.169 “There are another four: failing to purify one’s physical deeds, failing to guard one’s verbal deeds, getting discouraged about one’s mental deeds, and being discouraged concerning the Great Vehicle. [F.71.a]
- 8.170 “There are another four: splitting up reconciled parties, criticizing one’s instructors and preceptors, gossiping with those who are truly interested in what is essential, and deceiving gods or humans.
- 8.171 “There are another four: failing to maintain abundant discipline, denying rebirth, destroying roots of virtue, and preventing the gathering of accumulations.
- 8.172 “There are another four: keeping rude company, being arrogant and attracted to gatherings, straying into error by speaking falsely, and employing mistaken statements to cast worldly spells.
- 8.173 “There are another four: living in seclusion without doing anything, spending time with those who are very aggressive, thinking one has merit without developing roots of virtue, and living to attain the reputation of being a bodhisattva.

- 8.174 “There are another four: an ignoble mind, an uncivilized mind, an untamed mind, and being biased towards beings.
- 8.175 “There are another four: being arrogant because of one’s discipline, being arrogant because of one’s learning, being arrogant because of living in seclusion, and being arrogant because of one’s austere lifestyle and asceticism.
- 8.176 “There are another four: disparaging oneself, disparaging the Dharma, being contemptuous of lesser roots of virtue and failing to dedicate them to awakening, and feeling an occasional fondness for the vehicles of the hearers and solitary buddhas.
- 8.177 “There are another four: attachment to the body, attachment to the mind, attachment to discipline and learning, and failing to excel.
- 8.178 “There are another four: clinging to the homes of one’s relatives and those who give alms, clinging to erroneous discipline in order to pursue gain and praise, clinging to one’s place, and perpetuating negative actions because of aversion toward the disciplined life. [F.71.b]
- 8.179 “There are another four: excessive activity, excessive wealth, excessive conversation, and excessive acquaintances.
- 8.180 “There are another four: the view of self because of clinging to the self, the view of beings because of clinging to beings, the view of nihilism because of clinging to inappropriate actions, and the view of eternalism because of clinging to the body and life force.
- 8.181 “There are another four: discontinuing one’s efforts, failing to uphold any efforts after having discontinued them, getting discouraged by failing to embrace one’s efforts, and reversing and destroying one’s progress by becoming discouraged.
- 8.182 “There are another four: disparaging the progress from level to level, being unskilled in exiting concentration, having insight without consideration for beings, and claiming to have skillful means while observing reference points.
- 8.183 “Sāgaramati, there are four more ways the Great Vehicle is obstructed. What are they? They are: being base due to the manifestation of phenomenal obscurations, not pursuing roots of virtue due to the manifestation of karmic obscurations, not engaging with the three virtuous factors due to the manifestation of afflictive obscurations, and forgetting the mind of awakening due to the manifestation of the māras’ activities. Sāgaramati, those four ways obstruct the Great Vehicle.”
- 8.184 When the Blessed One spoke of the Great Vehicle, forty-four thousand gods and humans developed the mind directed toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening, and twenty-eight thousand bodhisattvas attained the acceptance that phenomena are unborn. The great trichiliocosm trembled six

times and a great light illuminated the world. Eight thousand gods in the space above called out in wonder, laughter, and joy, and they cast a rain of flowers, played instruments, and sang. [F.72.a]

8.185 They remarked, “Hark! This is a great treasure of Dharma, which has been opened by the Thus-Gone One and revealed to all beings out of great compassion. Blessed One, anyone who even slightly tries to uphold this great treasure of the precious Dharma will be freed from the fear of falling into the lower realms. Gradually they will begin to turn the unsurpassed and precious wheel of Dharma.

8.186 “To draw an analogy, let us imagine, Blessed One, that a person who lived near a town, village, or city happened upon a hitherto undiscovered, immense treasure of all types of jewels, and that this person was someone who was very helpful to others. Having discovered that treasure, he then went to the town, village, or city with the intention to inform the public and said, ‘Everyone, come here! I will show this inexhaustible deposit to whoever needs jewels!’ Blessed One, some trusted him and some did not. The ones who trusted him went to the deposit. For some, there were as many jewels as they had strength to carry. For some, there were as many jewels as they could imagine. Yet the deposit itself had no concepts as to bestowing or not bestowing, or that it was appropriate to give to some and not to others. Why is this? Because, Blessed One, this deposit held no concepts.

8.187 “Likewise, the Blessed One accomplished the immense treasure of the precious Dharma over countless trillions of eons, whereupon he awakened to perfect buddhahood at the seat of awakening. [F.72.b] He then turned the immense and precious wheel of Dharma in the city of Vārāṇasī at the Hill of Fallen Sages. In the same manner the Blessed One opened the unsurpassed and precious treasure of this collection of Dharma teachings. The Blessed One developed great compassion for all beings with no distinction. Arousing beneficial means, he spoke to the world of gods, humans, and asuras with the voice of Brahmā that engenders understanding, saying, ‘Come! Take possession of this unsurpassed and immense treasure of the precious Dharma that is inexhaustible, bestows all forms of happiness, and transports one to the end of birth, aging, sickness, and death.’ Responding to your attempt to engender understanding, Blessed One, some beings who were stupid and had no faith were not inspired, interested, thoughtful, or trusting. Those whose nature was capable of faith were inspired, interested, thoughtful, and trusting. They partook what they could of the Thus-Gone One’s immense treasure of the precious Dharma. He explained the vehicle that inspired them. Some entered seeking the state of hearers, solitary

buddhas, or unsurpassed and perfect awakening. Yet, the Thus-Gone One's unsurpassed and immense treasure of the precious Dharma had no concepts about anyone.

8.188 "Blessed One, those who give up the Thus-Gone One's immense treasure of the precious Dharma or do not uphold this revelation even slightly will lose these jewels and find themselves bereft of them. They will find themselves in the three lower realms for a long time. Blessed One, if anyone who upholds even a single four-line verse of this immense treasure of the precious Dharma will become wealthy and receive the seven riches of noble beings, then what need have we to speak of those who uphold a complete chapter of this collection of Dharma teachings—or two, three, [F.73.a] four, five, ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty, or seventy chapters, or the entire teaching? The extent of those sublime beings' merit could not be fathomed. Blessed One, anyone who has not lost the mind of awakening and is moved by great compassion for beings, and who then upholds, retains, reads, understands, and teaches it extensively to others, will be prophesied to awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood. They will defeat the māras and gain attainment of super-knowledge within this Great Vehicle."

8.189 The Blessed One then expressed his approval to the gods, saying, "Gods, these words have been well said. Excellent, excellent. You see how any sublime being who hears this gateway to the Dharma, becomes inspired, and subsequently takes it up, upholds it, reads it, masters it, and accomplishes it will alight upon the seat of awakening. You see how they possess all qualities. You see how they reach the peak of omniscience and act as a lamp of insight for those blinded in the world. Before long, they will fully awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood. Why is this so? Because they ride the vehicle that is the Great Vehicle."

8.190 The Blessed One then expressed this in verse:

"The buddhas' vehicle of the Great Vehicle is extraordinarily noble.  
Like the sphere of space, it transcends the world.  
Those who transcend the three realms of existence, go to the seat of  
awakening.  
They eliminate desire—indeed, they transcend all desire.

8.191 "It's said that over billions of eons [F.73.b]  
They amass generosity, discipline, peace, and contemplation.  
They dispel evil with discipline and with body, speech, and mind,  
Cast aside existence to arriving at the seat of awakening.

8.192 "They discern beings' situations with an unbiased mind  
And outshine all other lesser vehicles.  
With their standards held high, and the mountain-like bases of miracles,

- They progress through the Great Vehicle and bring satisfaction to beings.
- 8.193 “Possessing hearing and training, concentration and discipline,  
They acquire the power of patience and master insight.  
Defeating their opponents, and leaving behind the hordes of Māra,  
Their nonattachment is elevated and they travel to the seat of awakening.
- 8.194 “Their armor of love makes it difficult for the enemies of the Dharma to  
conquer them.  
They gradually arrive at great compassion armed with the Dharma,  
Riding concentration, the bases of miracles, and the immeasurables.  
These captains of the mind of awakening shall never give up this path.
- 8.195 “All beings in all the limitless worlds of the ten directions  
Shall be mounted on the Great Vehicle,  
And experience no harm, decrease, or increase—  
This is the miracle of the well-gone ones’ vehicle.
- 8.196 “All who walk the path—practicing mindfulness, proper application,  
The four abandonments, the four bases of miracles, the faculties, the  
strengths,  
And the seven precious branches of awakening praised by the victors—  
Will travel to the seat of awakening.
- 8.197 “Tranquility pacifies the afflictions and illuminates the Dharma.  
Grit and darkness dispelled, the three realms of existence are beautiful.  
Śakra and Brahmā bow their heads, expressing their approval,  
And they all enter the unequalled vehicle.
- 8.198 “Those who have the perfections—generosity, discipline, patience,  
Diligence, concentration, insight, wisdom, super-knowledge,  
And also skillful means and the essential means of attracting—  
Cannot be defeated by even hundreds of thousands of māras.
- 8.199 “Those who let the mind of awakening develop—  
Whether a being diligent in evil ways,  
Or a bodhisattva ennobled by thousands of virtues—  
Shall be considered equals when they enter the supreme vehicle. [F.74.a]
- 8.200 “Anyone at all—those who use different mantras with worldly aims,  
Those trying to transcend the world with virtuous qualities  
Or even solitary buddhas, whether they train or not—  
Can enter into the greatness of the buddhas’ vehicle through this door.
- 8.201 “Even those whose minds are rife with afflictions,

- Beings mired in suffering, cycling in conditioned existence,  
 Can be brought to absolute peace.  
 The bodhisattvas teach them while living by the supreme vehicle.
- 8.202 “Lazy folk who never arouse the wish to exhaust the suffering  
 Of beings tired and weak,  
 Who seek their own pleasure at the cost of the welfare of beings,  
 Will be terrified when they hear the supreme vehicle’s approach.
- 8.203 “Bodhisattvas—great beings of skill and clarity,  
 Strong in diligence and always seeking the benefit of beings,  
 Compassionate and contemplative—  
 They will ride the supreme vehicle with absolute joy.
- 8.204 “In a single moment all bodhisattvas  
 Who uphold the supreme vehicle, primary and sublime,  
 Can fathom the infinite actions found in every world,  
 And every thought and deeds of those with lowest, middling, and highest  
 faculties.
- 8.205 “Those who live by this supreme and powerful vehicle  
 Will have bodies ornamented with the major marks.  
 Their words will be sonorous and pleasing—satisfying the whole world.  
 They will achieve purity of mind, concentration, and super-knowledge.
- 8.206 “One doesn’t discuss a way to buddhahood of the victors apart from this.  
 From this, the sublime way of the Dharma also blazes forth.  
 From this comes the Saṅgha—worthy recipients of beings’ offerings.  
 Thus, this buddha vehicle is renowned throughout the three worlds.
- 8.207 “The victors do not go to any realm where this vehicle is lacking.  
 They can vanish in an instant.  
 Though they appear throughout the ten directions, they are not saddened or  
 obscured.  
 Consider how miraculous this unequalled vehicle is!
- 8.208 “Though you may circle the entire world,  
 You will never find a being greater than they. [F.74.b]  
 An eminent and heroic bodhisattva  
 Lives by the supreme vehicle and terrifies Māra’s hordes.
- 8.209 “One who lives by the supreme vehicle will gain physical strength and  
 power,  
 Wealth and riches, and the status of Śakra, Brahmā,



Universal monarchs, and the guardians of the world.

While in the three realms of existence, they will have the joys of the gods and humans.

- 8.210 “It rarely happens that followers of the supreme vehicle are discouraged. They are free from restraint and relinquish all valuables. They are undiscouraged in giving, and when giving even their heads or eyes Their minds are joyful and loving, and so they proceed toward awakening.
- 8.211 “Those who live by the supreme vehicle obtain protection. They are disciplined and their chaste conduct is pure. They could stop the sun and moon with their discipline, asceticism, and hardships. They will not yearn for existence, physical forms, or wealth.
- 8.212 “When they hear unpleasant words, it neither disturbs nor angers them. Even if their bodies are broken apart, still they protect beings. They feel that a body is easily acquired compared to the dominion of Dharma. Such is the patience of those who live by the supreme vehicle.
- 8.213 “For as long as the many infinite eons that beings spend in saṃsāra, They voluntarily circle through the lower realms. They arouse the strength of diligence in order to liberate beings. Such is the power of diligence of those who live by the supreme vehicle.
- 8.214 “Absolutely peaceful, friendly, gentle, and masters of the systems of concentration, They concentrate on love for the sake of beings. Never attached to the bliss of concentration, These mindful beings yearn to see the guides.
- 8.215 “Knowing that all phenomena arise from causes and are empty, They do not observe either themselves, other beings, or phenomena. Their view is pure, they are insightful, and their minds are tame. Such is the pure insight of those who live by the supreme vehicle.
- 8.216 “The four truths, the four immeasurables, and the four concentrations, The five super-knowledges, the knowledge of the buddhas, The four reliances, and the sublime gift of the Dharma— All of these come from the buddhas’ sublime vehicle.
- 8.217 “Uttering the lion’s roar of the lord buddhas, [F.75.a]

- And possessing the infinite qualities of buddhahood, such as the ten strengths,  
And the hair coil between the eyebrows, and the invisible crown—  
All this is easily gained by the person who lives by the supreme vehicle.
- 8.218 “Guiding beings and satisfying their wishes,  
And attaining the three noble miracles of the victors,  
And always putting the teachings of the Sage to good use—  
All this is swiftly gained by the person who lives by the supreme vehicle.
- 8.219 “With the ten strengths of speech, such a person has no confusion  
About any of the languages in the world.  
Speaking in a manner that is friendly, gentle, pleasing, meaningful, and  
virtuous,  
Their speech satisfies like the voice of Brahmā and the kinnaras.
- 8.220 “In this manner they will soon attain buddha speech,  
And cause understanding to grow in buddha realms throughout space.  
Whoever hears their meaningful Dharma words  
Will discard their afflictions and find happiness.
- 8.221 “Through the strength of miracles, one can measure the ends of space,  
And fathom the depths of the oceans in the ten directions.  
In a single moment of mind, the infinite conduct of beings can be known.  
Yet the qualities of the buddha vehicle cannot be fully expressed.”

9.

## CHAPTER NINE: DEDICATION

9.1

The Blessed One then addressed the bodhisattva Sāgaramati: “Sāgaramati, thus a bodhisattva should retain the following entrance words, seal words, and vajra statements in order to protect, guard, and preserve this Dharma teaching; so that they may delight their own minds; and so that they may understand the faculties—supreme and otherwise—of other beings and people. Beyond retaining them, they should also examine them. They should carefully reflect on them with insightful engagement.

9.2

“Sāgaramati, what are the entrance words?<sup>24</sup> *Cognition* is an entrance word for all phenomena, for it demonstrates that phenomena are void. *A* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates that phenomena are unborn. [F.75.b] *Pa* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates that phenomena are ultimate. *Na* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates knowledge of the name and form of phenomena. *Da* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates that phenomena are tame and peaceful. *Sa* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates that phenomena transcend desire. *Tā* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates that phenomena accord with suchness. *Ka* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates that phenomena are devoid of karmic ripening. *Ṣa* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates that phenomena are the same and undifferentiated. *Ma* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates the great compassion of phenomena. *Ga* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates that phenomena are subtle and difficult to fathom. *Ja* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates that phenomena transcend aging and death. *Dha* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates the undifferentiated nature of the realm of phenomena in which phenomena are found. *Śa* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates that tranquility can be perfected with regard to phenomena. *Kha* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates that phenomena are like space. *Kṣa* is an entrance for all

phenomena, for it demonstrates the exhaustion and non-arising of phenomena. *Jñā* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates that wisdom is not attached to phenomena. *Sthā* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates skill in what is correct and incorrect about phenomena. *Ska* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates understanding of the aggregation of phenomena. *Ṭha* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates what is ultimate about phenomena.

9.3        “*Physical isolation* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates the limit [F.76.a] in which phenomena are free from attachment. *Mental isolation* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates the taming of phenomena’s aggression and stupidity. *Peace* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates how phenomena are based on non-desire. *Accuracy* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates the limit of phenomena’s emergence. *Presence* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates the presence of the realm of phenomena in relation to phenomena. *Non-acquisition* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates phenomena’s characteristic of liberation. *Non-grasping* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates giving up struggle and debate about phenomena. *Absence of pollution* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates phenomena’s characteristic of purity. *Nature* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates phenomena as luminosity. *Appearance* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates phenomena as lucidity. *Familiarity* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates relationships between phenomena. *Groundlessness* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates that phenomena are undifferentiated. *Awakening* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates phenomena as sameness. *Nirvāṇa* is an entrance for all phenomena, for it demonstrates individual relinquishing of all phenomenal aggregations. Sāgaramati, these entrance words purify one’s mind. They bring knowledge of other beings’ and peoples’ faculties—supreme and otherwise.

9.4        “What are the seal words, Sāgaramati? All phenomena are sealed by liberation, Sāgaramati, for they are nondual and free from duality. Sāgaramati, all phenomena are sealed by freedom from being limited, infinite, and unlimited, for they are beyond eternalism and nihilism. Sāgaramati, all phenomena are sealed by freedom [F.76.b] from exhaustion and attachment, for they reach the entrance, limit, and end of exhaustion. Sāgaramati, all phenomena are sealed by the absence of lifting up or putting down, for their limit of sameness is pure. Sāgaramati, all phenomena are sealed by space, for they transcend what can be seen with the five eyes.

- 9.5        “Sāgaramati, all phenomena are sealed by space because of the realm of phenomena and the expanse of space. Sāgaramati, all phenomena are sealed by being undifferentiated, because they are contained within the realm of phenomena. Sāgaramati, all phenomena are sealed by the realm of phenomena because of the characteristic that phenomena are undifferentiated. Sāgaramati, all phenomena are sealed by suchness because of the suchness of the past and future. Sāgaramati, all phenomena are sealed by the limit of reality because they are primordially pure.
- 9.6        “Sāgaramati, all phenomena are sealed by emptiness because conditioned and unconditioned phenomena are equal and alike. Sāgaramati, all phenomena are sealed by signlessness because they are free of discrete reference points. Sāgaramati, all phenomena are sealed by wishlessness because they are devoid of any aspirations.
- 9.7        “Sāgaramati, all phenomena are sealed by impermanence because of their quality of lacking an essential nature. Sāgaramati, all phenomena are sealed by suffering because of their quality of being subsumed within the five aggregates. Sāgaramati, all phenomena are sealed by selflessness because they are naturally devoid of self. Sāgaramati, all phenomena are sealed by peace because they are absolutely still.
- 9.8        “Sāgaramati, all phenomena are sealed by truth because they are all subsumed within ultimate truth. [F.77.a] Sāgaramati, all phenomena are sealed by immaculateness because their seeds do not remain. Sāgaramati, all phenomena are sealed by being undisturbed because they come into contact. Sāgaramati, all phenomena are sealed by the natural state because they are free from past and future. Sāgaramati, all phenomena are sealed by the sameness of the three times because of the single taste of the three realms. Sāgaramati, all phenomena are sealed by being non-arising because it is their nature not to arise. Sāgaramati, all phenomena are sealed by being unceasing because they are unborn by their very nature. Sāgaramati, all phenomena are sealed by a lack of exaggeration because they are not affected by arrogant assumptions. Sāgaramati, all phenomena are sealed by the absence of conceptual elaboration because they are free of any motion of thoughts. Sāgaramati, all phenomena are sealed by the inapplicability of names because they are without form or anything that can be pointed out. Sāgaramati, all phenomena are sealed by being unstained because the ground is absolutely discontinuous. Sāgaramati, all phenomena are sealed by a lack of faults because no antidotes are apprehended. Sāgaramati, all phenomena are sealed by a lack of karma and its ripening because there are no formations. Sāgaramati, all phenomena are sealed by the unconditioned

because they are free from being born or enduring. Sāgaramati, all phenomena are sealed by the sameness of all phenomena because they are indistinguishable from the sphere of space.

9.9 “Sāgaramati, these seal words represent the seal of the awakening of the blessed buddhas of the past, present, and future, and the eighty-four thousand sections of the Dharma. [F.77.b] Sāgaramati, if bodhisattvas apply this type of seal, they will be sealed by the thus-gone ones’ wisdom and swiftly attain the acceptance that phenomena are unborn. Sāgaramati, beings who have not developed roots of virtue will not hear these seal words. They defeat all the works of the māras. Sāgaramati, even the *Dhāraṇī of the Inexhaustible Casket*<sup>25</sup> that contains all Dharmas is contained within and accords with these seal words. Sāgaramati, eighty-four thousand absorptions and eighty-four thousand perfections that influence beings’ conduct are all contained within and accord with these seal words.

9.10 “Sāgaramati, what then are the vajra statements? *Transitory collection* is a vajra statement because it is undifferentiated by its very nature. This vajra statement realizes all views with certainty. *Unknowing* is a vajra statement because it creates knowing. This vajra statement brings understanding of observed objects. *Unbounded limit* is a vajra statement because it is noncomposite and sameness. This vajra statement brings understanding of all conditioned things. *Limit of attachment* is a vajra statement because it is equal to the limit of the absence of attachment. This vajra statement removes attachment. *Limit of aggression* is a vajra statement because it is equal to the limit of love. This vajra statement defeats all aggression. *Limit of stupidity* is a vajra statement because it is equal to the light of insight. This vajra statement clears away darkness and illuminates. *All beings are the same being* is a vajra statement because it relates to the sameness of all beings. [F.78.a] This vajra statement realizes the essential nature of all beings. *The minds of all beings are the same mind* is a vajra statement because it shows the sameness of the minds of all beings. This vajra statement realizes that the mind is luminous by nature. *All buddhas are the same buddha* is a vajra statement because it relates to suchness and sameness. This vajra statement realizes the wisdom of sameness. *All buddha realms are a single realm* is a vajra statement because it relates to the inexhaustibility of realms. This vajra statement realizes their sameness of space. *All phenomena are the same* is a vajra statement because it relates to the sameness of all phenomena. This vajra statement realizes the entryway of the nondual Dharma. *All phenomena are qualities of buddhahood* is a vajra statement because it relates to the wisdom that engages everything. This vajra statement realizes the vajra-like absorption. *All actions are buddha activity* is a vajra statement because it creates an understanding of the activity of the māras. This vajra statement transcends all the māras’ activity.

*All words are the speech of the thus-gone ones* is a vajra statement because it creates an understanding of all language. This vajra statement realizes the inexpressible Dharma. *All phenomena are unborn* is a vajra statement because it shows the deathless state. This vajra statement transcends the way of birth, aging, sickness, and death. *All phenomena are nonarising* is a vajra statement because it relates to the unceasing state. This vajra statement shows the lack of arising and ceasing of all phenomena.

9.11 “Sāgaramati, these vajra statements are steadfast words, essential words, equal words, true words, [F.78.b] stable words, undifferentiated words, according words, continuous words, peaceful words, soothing words, calming words, unproblematic words, words free from superimposition, words that realize non-movement, words without movement, words of suchness, authentic words, words that do not contradict the Buddha, words that do not discard the Dharma, words that gather the Saṅgha, accurate words, words of the purity of the three spheres, courageous words, Brahmā words, words without fluctuation, space-like words, words that accord with awakening, signless words, words that lack any characteristics of phenomena, words that do not depend on mind, words that do not depend on conceptual mind, words that do not depend on consciousness, words that defeat māras and obstructers, pure words, immaculate words, luminous words, words that behold awakening, words of the light of insight, words that eliminate and dispel darkness, unborn and unceasing words, words that purify their own objects, words that penetrate buddhas’ objects, words that are free from thoughts and concepts, words of the undifferentiated realm of phenomena, and words that enter into the stateless state.

9.12 “Sāgaramati, I declare that any bodhisattva who attains a realization of these vajra statements will come to reside at the seat of awakening and sit upon the lion throne.”

9.13 Once the Blessed One had spoken these entrance words, seal words, and vajra statements, eight thousand bodhisattvas attained the dhāraṇī that enters the gateway of the seal of all phenomena. They also attained the absorption called “experiencing the sameness of all beings’ thoughts.” As the bodhisattva great beings, who had assembled from worlds throughout the ten directions, heard this teaching, they were satisfied, happy, and delighted. [F.79.a] In order to venerate the Blessed One and ensure the longevity of this Dharma teaching, these beings, who had arrived through the miraculous power of their super-knowledge, now brought down a rain of flowers, incense, garlands, and ointments that was just like the flowers, incense, garlands, and ointments found in their respective buddha realms. Once they had venerated the Blessed One in this way, they praised him in a single voice and in a single roar:

- 9.14 “You see that the characteristics of form are without basis.  
With a single characteristic you teach the lack of basis for characteristics.  
For you, there is no basis for any designations; all such bases are equal.  
Homage to you who uphold the true characteristic!
- 9.15 “You know the languages and sounds of all beings,  
And you know the wisdom that realizes language.  
You are liberated from all sounds, language, and voices.  
Homage to you, whose mind of sameness is liberated!
- 9.16 “Amidst all the extensive movements of mind  
You realize the illusory mind and sameness:  
Unmoving, motionless, and still.  
Homage to you, whose mind is like space!
- 9.17 “All your thoughts and concepts about being, non-being,  
Extremes, no extremes, Dharma, non-Dharma, have become sameness.  
All thoughts and mind states are at peace.  
Homage to you, whose thoughts and mind are at peace!
- 9.18 “You know cause, condition, and action,  
And describe the stages that occur from causes.  
For you, causes and conditions are infinitely liberated,  
And your knowledge is equal to the limit of reality.
- 9.19 “This is the realization of the sameness of all forms,  
And seeing that the body of the Thus-Gone One is not in fact a body.  
Your mind does not conceptualize,  
And you display vast forms that are not forms.
- 9.20 “Even if all the victors’ realms  
Were inserted into this realm,  
This realm would not need to grow;  
It would not move or transfer anywhere. [F.79.b]
- 9.21 “Since minds are not minds, mind is the same.  
Mind is illusory and nonconceptual.  
The mind of awakening is the understanding of sameness.  
Thus, it resides in the quality that is the same as the Buddha.
- 9.22 “You reside in the realm that is equal to the realm of phenomena.  
You do not consider phenomena to be actual things,  
And you have no attachment to things or non-things; all attachment is  
equalized.



Homage to you who benefits beings!

- 9.23 “It is possible that the sun and moon could fall into a gorge.  
It could also happen that the wind is caught with a lasso.  
Likewise, the king of mountains could be toppled with a breath.  
Yet, the victors could never speak falsely.
- 9.24 “Possessing the true speech of thatness, absolutely pure,  
And a mind that is pure, like space,  
You dispel worldly concerns, hopes for gain, and craving.  
Like a lotus, you are unattached to the three realms of existence.
- 9.25 “Hearing effulgent praise, you are not gladdened.  
Hearing blame, you are not angered.  
You are freed from concept, like Mount Meru.  
Homage to you who brings happiness to beings!”
- 9.26 After praising the Blessed One with these verses, the bodhisattva great beings said to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, the appearance of a buddha is like the appearance of a gem. Blessed One, the appearance of a buddha is the manifestation of truth, mindfulness, intelligence, realization, conscience, aspiration, generosity, discipline, patience, diligence, concentration, and insight. Blessed One, the appearance of a buddha is the manifestation of love, compassion, joy, equanimity, meaning, happiness, and the Dharma. Blessed One, the appearance of a buddha is the manifestation of Dharma that brings joy, the applications of mindfulness, [F.80.a] the right abandonments, the bases of miracles, the faculties, the strengths, the branches of awakening, the path, tranquility, special insight, super-knowledge, knowledge, and liberation. Blessed One, the appearance of a buddha is the manifestation of all virtuous qualities and the abandonment of all nonvirtuous qualities.”
- 9.27 Then the bodhisattva great being Prajñākūṭa, who was among the retinue, said to the Blessed One, “As I understand what the Blessed One has just said, then, Blessed One, the appearance of a buddha is the manifestation of the view of the transitory collection. Blessed One, the appearance of a buddha is the manifestation of ignorance, craving, and becoming. Blessed One, the appearance of a buddha is the manifestation of attachment, aggression, and stupidity. Blessed One, the appearance of a buddha is the manifestation of the four errors. Blessed One, the appearance of a buddha is the manifestation of the five obscurations. Blessed One, the appearance of a buddha is the manifestation of the six sense sources. Blessed One, the appearance of a buddha is the manifestation of the seven bases of consciousness, the eight wrong modes, and the nine things that harm. Blessed One, the appearance of a buddha is the manifestation of the ten

nonvirtuous deeds. Why is this? Blessed One, a buddha manifests in order to remove these nonvirtuous, evil phenomena. However, Blessed One, the appearance of a buddha is not characterized by antidotes. Blessed One, the appearance of a buddha does not involve any antidotes and is void of antidotes. Blessed One, bodhisattvas who follow the appearance of a buddha do so in the manner of not following. That is how they follow the appearance of a buddha.” [F.80.b]

9.28 “Noble son,” responded the Blessed One, “thus it is. You have described it accurately. One should follow the appearance of a buddha in the manner of not following. Just as one follows the appearance of a buddha, one should follow the appearance of any phenomena.”

9.29 Then Sāgaramati asked the Blessed One, “Blessed One, if novice bodhisattvas do not understand this fact about the appearance of a buddha, do they even perceive the appearance of any buddhas, Blessed One?”

9.30 “Sāgaramati, buddhas occur to the degree that one’s mind is pure,” answered the Blessed One. “Why is this? Sāgaramati, there are four types of bodhisattvas. What are they? They are: bodhisattvas who are just giving rise to the mind of awakening, those engaged in conduct, those who are irreversibly destined for awakening, and bodhisattvas in their last life. Sāgaramati, those are the four types of bodhisattvas.

9.31 “Sāgaramati, bodhisattvas who are just giving rise to the mind of awakening see the Thus-Gone One in terms of form and physical marks. Bodhisattvas who are engaged in conduct see the Thus-Gone One as the manifestation of qualities. Bodhisattvas who are irreversibly destined for awakening see the Thus-Gone One as characterized by the Dharma body. Sāgaramati, bodhisattvas in their last life do not assert the Thus-Gone One to be a manifestation of form, physical marks, qualities, class, caste, family lineage, or reality. Why is this? Their eyes see with insight. They are grounded in insight. They have merged with insight. Their insight is unmoving and nonconceptual. It is neither seeing nor non-seeing. Why is this? [F.81.a] Both seeing and non-seeing are extremes. Being free from the two extremes of seeing and non-seeing is to see the Buddha. Seeing the Buddha is to see the self. With pure vision of the self, one attains pure vision of the Buddha. With pure vision of the Buddha, one must gain pure vision of all phenomena. When whatever is seen is pure, that is wisdom vision. That is called seeing the Buddha.

9.32 “Sāgaramati, this is how I saw the Thus-Gone Dīpaṃkara. As soon as I saw him, I attained the acceptance that phenomena are unborn in the manner of non-attainment and non-observation. As soon as I attained that acceptance, I floated upwards to the height of seven palm trees. While present in the midst of space, I considered the endowment of omniscient

wisdom. All views ended. I transcended all thoughts, concepts, and notions, and my consciousness no longer dwelled on any objects. I actualized sixty thousand absorptions. The blessed thus-gone Dīpaṃkara then gave the following prophecy: ‘Young brahmin, in the future you will become the thus-gone, worthy, perfect buddha Śākyamuni.’ My ear faculty did not hear this prophecy, nor did I cognize it through some wisdom. But I was also not deluded, and nor did I maintain any view of reference points. I had no notion of buddhas as buddhas. I had no notion of myself as myself. I had no notion of the prophecy as prophecy. Sāgaramati, such is a bodhisattva’s prophecy in terms of the purity of the three spheres. The lack of notions of a buddha, oneself, and a prophecy is called the purity of the three spheres. [F.81.b]

9.33 “Moreover, Sāgaramati, the purity of the three spheres refers to no clinging to self, to beings, or to phenomena. Moreover, the purity of the three spheres refers to no clinging to names, forms, or reference points. Moreover, the purity of the three spheres is knowing the exhaustion of the past, the non-arrival of the future, and the non-existence of the present. Moreover, the purity of the three spheres is knowing the body to be like a reflection, speech to be like an echo, and mind to be like an illusion. Moreover, the purity of the three spheres is the realization that the aggregates are the same as the Dharma aggregate, that the elements are the same as the realm of phenomena, and that the sense sources are like an empty village. Moreover, the purity of the three spheres is trust in emptiness, confidence in signlessness, and certainty in wishlessness. Sāgaramati, the purity of the three spheres will purify all phenomena. Thus, Sāgaramati, bodhisattvas must become skilled in the wisdom of the purity of the three spheres.” [B8]

9.34 Then the bodhisattva Sāgaramati urged the Blessed One, “Blessed One, the understanding of the profound Dharma held by bodhisattvas who are irreversibly destined for awakening is astounding. Blessed One, please describe the skill in dedication of such bodhisattvas who have this kind of understanding of the Dharma.”

9.35 “Sāgaramati,” answered the Blessed One, “bodhisattvas who live by this, act based on their past momentum. [F.82.a] Even when they are not resting in equipoise, the dedication that they formed in the past continues to have an effect. For that, Sāgaramati, here are some analogies for you to consider, since it is through analogies that some learned people understand what is meant.

9.36 “In this regard, Sāgaramati, consider the following analogy. Suppose that a farmer digs irrigation ditches in all his fields of sugarcane, rice, or grapes. If he directs water along the irrigation channels, then, even when he is resting, the water will flow along the channels that he has dug. The fields will be irrigated with water without him needing to exert himself or focus on the

task. Sāgaramati, likewise, even when bodhisattvas are not resting in equipoise, they dedicate their roots of virtue to the mindstreams of all beings. Then, in accordance with how things are, those roots of virtue are also skillfully dedicated toward the qualities of buddhahood. Moreover, as they rest in equipoise in order to purify their minds and guard their discipline, they again dedicate their roots of virtue toward the qualities of buddhahood. It is because they have previously made such excellent aspirations that they are now able to moisten the mindstreams of beings.

9.37 “Sāgaramati, from this analogy you should understand that because bodhisattvas are propelled by their past roots of virtue, have pliant minds, have undistracted mindfulness, are free from the Lesser Vehicle, and have made aspirations toward the Great Vehicle, they can arise from equilibrium and they will in all cases dedicate their roots of virtue to omniscience.

9.38 “Sāgaramati, to draw another analogy, if a person were to uproot a tree that had been growing in a steep mountain valley, then it would fall in whichever direction it had been leaning or bending toward. [F.82.b] Likewise, Sāgaramati, by inclining and leaning toward omniscience over a long period of time, bodhisattvas dedicate all the merit that they gather to omniscience. They dedicate it to protect all beings. They dedicate it so that the lineage of the Three Jewels may remain uninterrupted. They dedicate it so their physical manifestation and the major and minor marks may be perfected. They dedicate it so their verbal manifestation and Dharma teachings may be meaningful. They dedicate it so their mental manifestation and the absorption that recollects the Buddha will not get distracted. They dedicate all roots of virtue to omniscience spontaneously and without effort. By dedicating, those who have become skilled in means do not fall prey to other vehicles and it makes no difference whether they are in equipoise or not. It is impossible for them not to complete their cultivation of the factors of awakening.

9.39 “Sāgaramati, to draw another analogy, consider a monk who rests in equipoise within cessation. He may observe the sound of the *gaṇḍī*, but the sound of the *gaṇḍī* of course does not exist within the monk’s cessation and it is also not connected to that state. Still, the sound of the *gaṇḍī* does cause him to emerge from the state of cessation. Likewise, Sāgaramati, bodhisattvas also maintain great compassion in order to free all beings. Thinking, ‘I will protect and liberate all beings!’ they extend a profound love to all beings, that manifests from the aspects of awakening. Then, later, though they rest in a profoundly illuminating absorption that is unmoved by mind, mentation, or consciousness, they will not regress to the level of a hearer or a solitary buddha, because they have previously experienced the great compassion that seeks to free all beings. When they arise from that absorption with

mindfulness and awareness, [F.83.a] they accomplish the factors of awakening and ripen beings. Sāgaramati, even though they rest in equipoise in the absorption of peace in this manner, they will not fall into the liberation of the hearers or solitary buddhas. Such is the unique training of the bodhisattvas!

9.40 “Sāgaramati, to draw another analogy, there are two people. One of them jumps into a roaring fire while wearing indestructible armor. Another jumps into a roaring fire while wearing armor made of grass and husks. What do you think happens, Sāgaramati? Which one of them will get burned? Which one will not get burned?”

9.41 “Blessed One, the one who jumps into the roaring fire with the indestructible armor will be protected by the indestructible armor. Though he is within the fire, he won’t burn. Blessed One, the one who jumps into the roaring fire with armor made of grass and husks will be immediately burnt. Why is this? Blessed One, because grass and husks are flammable. They cannot offer protection from a roaring fire.”

9.42 “Sāgaramati, just as the person wearing indestructible armor is not burned as he jumps into that fire, bodhisattvas wearing the armor of great love and compassion, and the sturdy indestructible armor of intention, focus on freeing beings. They generate a realization of phenomena’s emptiness, signlessness, wishlessness, and their unconditioned, unborn, and non-arising quality. Although they rest in equipoise in the absorption of peace, they do not enter into the fixed states of the hearers or solitary buddhas, or try to achieve their results. They experience their absorption, and overcome it and arise from it without detriment or injury, whereupon they purify buddha realms and perfect the wisdom of buddhahood. [F.83.b]

9.43 “Sāgaramati, just as the person is burned by the fire as soon as he jumps in wearing armor made of grass and husks, likewise, Sāgaramati, a person on the vehicle of the hearers is terrified of saṃsāra and considers existence as if it is aflame. Thus, they ignore beings and are without great compassion. Reaching peace and a peaceful absorption, they get stuck and have no chance for further progress. Without attaining the result of the eighth-lowest stage, it is impossible for them to arise from their absorption. Why is this? It is because hearers do not gather the accumulations of merit and wisdom. On the other hand, bodhisattvas gather immeasurable accumulations of merit and wisdom. Thus, in the interim before they perfect the qualities of buddhahood, they do not actualize the limit of reality. Sāgaramati, in this way bodhisattvas perceive all phenomena—which are emptiness, signlessness, wishlessness, unconditioned, unborn, and non-arising—as a

blazing fire and they investigate them. Even though they perceive such phenomena, they must examine them and thus avoid actualizing the limit of reality.

9.44 “For this reason, Sāgaramati, bodhisattvas must be skilled in dedication. Sāgaramati, bodhisattvas who are skilled in dedication perceive profound phenomena, yet for the time being they do not actualize the limit of reality. What does *dedication* refer to, Sāgaramati? It means to be diligent in, interested in, oriented toward, and directed toward the Great Vehicle and no other vehicle. That is the reason it is called ‘dedication.’

9.45 “Sāgaramati, to draw an analogy, if a potter places a lump of clay upon his wheel but does not throw it, it cannot rightly be called a pot. It is still considered just a lump of clay. If it is thrown, then it can be called a pot. [F.84.a] Sāgaramati, likewise, even though bodhisattvas accumulate myriad roots of virtue, if they do not dedicate them to omniscience, they cannot rightly be called perfections. If they are dedicated to omniscience, then they can be called perfections.

9.46 “Sāgaramati, to draw another analogy, if a lump of gold ore is not processed, it cannot rightly be called jewelry. It is still considered a lump of gold. When it has been transformed, then it can be called jewelry. Sāgaramati, likewise, if a bodhisattva’s roots of virtue are not dedicated, they cannot rightly be called perfections. If they are dedicated, then they can be called perfections.

9.47 “Thus, Sāgaramati, bodhisattvas must always gather roots of virtue with an undivided mind and dedicate them to omniscience. Bodhisattvas who dedicate to omniscience engage with profound phenomena and for the time being do not actualize the limit of reality.”

10.                    **CHAPTER TEN: A TALE OF WHAT CAME  
   BEFORE**

10.1        Then the bodhisattva Sāgaramati said to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, even though bodhisattvas guard against confusion to this extent, they must work hard to be free from confusion. Blessed One, for that reason bodhisattvas are continuously skilled in dedication and skilled in means. Why is this? Blessed One, through skillful means, when bodhisattvas practice concentration, freedom, absorption, and equipoise, they are not disturbed by the concentration, freedom, absorption, and equipoise. Through skill in means, they demonstrate all these deeds but do not fall prey to doing things. [F.84.b] They sustain the sameness of phenomena and teach the Dharma in order to bring beings who have gone astray to the fixed state of reality. Until they complete their intention, they do not themselves fall into that state.”

10.2        The Blessed One responded to bodhisattva Sāgaramati, “That is how it is, Sāgaramati. You have described it accurately. Bodhisattvas must desire to be completely skilled in means. Why is this? Sāgaramati, awakening is possible for bodhisattvas who are skilled in means but not for those who are not.

10.3        “Sāgaramati, to draw an analogy, imagine that a single container is used to dye three pieces of cloth three different colors (blue, red, and golden yellow). One full measure of cloth is dyed blue, one half measure of cloth is dyed red, and one piece of exquisite and priceless cloth is dyed golden yellow. As they are put into the container and worked over, the cloth will assume the color of the dye that is applied. The cloth that is dyed blue becomes blue, the one that is dyed red becomes red, and the piece that is dyed golden yellow becomes golden yellow. However, the container entertains no concepts about this whatsoever.

10.4        “Similarly, Sāgaramati, one could insert three types of people in the container of emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness: a person of the hearer vehicle, a person of the solitary buddha vehicle, and someone who

has entered the Great Vehicle. The 'color' of wisdom will then adhere to them according to the 'color' of their intentions and minds; yet the container of emptiness, signlessness, [F.85.a] and wishlessness entertains no concepts about this whatsoever. In this regard, the full measure of cloth represents the person of the hearer vehicle, the half measure of cloth represents the person of the solitary buddha vehicle, and the piece of exquisite and priceless cloth represents the person who has entered the Great Vehicle.

10.5 "Sāgaramati,<sup>26</sup> look how phenomena, being without an essence, a creator, a self, a being, a life force, a person, or an owner, may therefore be deployed as whatever might be wished for, yet their being so deployed does not involve intention or deliberation. Sāgaramati, bodhisattvas who are sure about phenomena being deployed in that way<sup>27</sup> do not become weary with any phenomenon. In this manner their wisdom vision is entirely purified, and so there is nothing that can either benefit or harm them. Knowing thus the nature of phenomena as it really is, they will not abandon the armor of great compassion.

10.6 "Sāgaramati, to draw an analogy, imagine that a priceless, refined, pure, and immaculate beryl stone is cast into the mud and remains there for a thousand years. If after a thousand years it is removed from the mud and washed, cleansed, and wiped down, its pure and immaculate nature will not have been lost. Sāgaramati, likewise, while bodhisattvas know that the nature of all beings' minds are luminosity, they can see that they are disturbed by adventitious afflictions. Bodhisattvas will think, 'These afflictions do not affect the luminosity that is the nature of beings' minds. The afflictions are not themselves genuine; they merely arise from conceptual superimpositions. I will develop the capacity to teach the Dharma so that I may eliminate these adventitious afflictions of beings!' [F.85.b] They cannot be discouraged from this attitude and, much further than that, they develop the mind that seeks to free all beings. They will also think, 'The afflictions do not even have much power or strength. The afflictions are weak and feeble. These afflictions that do not have even the slightest truth are false conceptual superimpositions. They cannot disturb as long as one investigates them with accurate mental engagement. So, I must by all means avoid associating with them. I will investigate them in this manner. Dissociating from the afflictions is excellent. Associating with them is not. If I associate with the afflictions, how could I teach the Dharma in order to eliminate the afflictions of beings who are bound by them? I will dissociate from the afflictions so that I can teach the Dharma to beings such that they may eliminate the afflictions that bind them. In order to ripen beings I will associate with those afflictions that are connected with roots of virtue regarding the continuation of saṃsāra.'<sup>28</sup>



- 10.7 “What afflictions are connected with roots of virtue yet perpetuate saṃsāra?<sup>29</sup> They are: being insatiable in the pursuit of roots of virtue, being willing to take rebirth in existence voluntarily, aspiring to encounter buddhas, not getting discouraged about ripening beings, being diligent about upholding the sublime Dharma, enthusiasm about considering beings’ actions, not discarding one’s tendency to yearn for the Dharma, and not discarding the trainings in the perfections. Sāgaramati, even if bodhisattvas [F.86.a] associate with these afflictions that are connected with roots of virtue, they are not marred by any faults of the afflictions.”
- 10.8 “Blessed One,” asked Sāgaramati, “if these are roots of virtue, why do you say they are afflictions?”
- “Sāgaramati,” responded the Blessed One, “these afflictions associate a bodhisattva with the three realms. However, although the three realms arise from the afflictions, a bodhisattva who is skilled in means and has developed roots of virtue can voluntarily associate with the three realms. Therefore, it is because they cause association with the three realms that they are called the afflictions that are connected with roots of virtue; it is not because they afflict the mind.
- 10.9 “Sāgaramati, to draw an analogy, imagine that a merchant or a householder has a single son—a beloved, esteemed, pleasing, and agreeable son. Given that he is a child, while he is prancing about he might fall into a pit full of filth. When the child’s mother, friends, and relatives find him having fallen into the pit full of filth, they will scream and lament and cry out, yet they cannot rescue him from that pit. Then, the boy’s father arrives and sees his son in the pit full of filth. He would immediately feel deep love and care, and without blaming the boy, he would swiftly and without delay plunge into that pit full of filth to free his only son. Sāgaramati, I am relating this analogy just so that the point it illustrates can be understood, so what are the meanings to be seen in it? Sāgaramati, the pit full of filth represents the three realms. The only son represents all beings, whom bodhisattvas regard as their only child. The mother, friends, and relatives [F.86.b] represent people on the vehicles of the hearers and solitary buddhas. When they see that beings fall into saṃsāra, they cry out and lament, but they cannot free them. The merchant or householder represents bodhisattvas, whose minds are pure, immaculate, and stainless. They intentionally take birth in the three realms in order to ripen beings even though they directly experience the unconditioned Dharma. Sāgaramati, this is the great compassion of the bodhisattvas: even though they themselves are absolutely free from the bonds of the afflictions, they elect to be reborn in existence

through their skill in means. Because they master insight, they are not harmed by their own afflictions and they teach the Dharma to beings in order to eliminate all binds of the afflictions.”<sup>30</sup>

10.10 “Blessed One, bodhisattvas have stainless and immaculate minds,” remarked the bodhisattva Sāgaramati. “Even though they accurately realize profound phenomena without denigrating saṃsāra, it must be challenging to avoid attaining the fruition and falling into the unconditioned.”

10.11 “Sāgaramati,” replied the Blessed One, “in this regard, the two aspects of the path of the bodhisattvas are the perfection of insight and skill in means. When bodhisattvas have a pure, immaculate, and stainless mind, Sāgaramati, they have the perfection of insight. Sāgaramati, when bodhisattvas do not blame saṃsāra and elect to take rebirth in order to ripen beings, they have skill in means. Additionally, Sāgaramati, when bodhisattvas realize that all conditioned phenomena are emptiness, signlessness, wishlessness, unconditioned, [F.87.a] unborn, and non-arising, they have the perfection of insight. When their minds are moved by great compassion, such that they avoid attaining the fruition and falling into the unconditioned, they have skill in means.

10.12 “Moreover, Sāgaramati, when bodhisattvas, not seeing, because of the sameness of the three times, any phenomena whatsoever to differentiate, enter sameness by entering the realm of phenomena—that sameness of the realm of phenomena being the same as the realm of beings, that sameness of the realm of beings being the same as the realm of nirvāṇa, and that sameness of the realm of nirvāṇa being the same as the realm of phenomena—that is their perfection of insight. When they do not manifest the realm of nirvāṇa despite knowing it to be one with the realm of beings, and when they look to the realm of beings yet do not lose sight of the realm of phenomena, that is their skill in means.

10.13 “Moreover, noble son, pure generosity is insight, and pure dedication is means. Pure discipline, patience, diligence, and concentration are insight, and their dedication is means. Basically, all their roots of virtue are insight, and dedication is means.”

10.14 “Blessed One, what are bodhisattvas’ pure roots of virtue?” asked Sāgaramati. “What is pure dedication? What is pure insight? What is pure means?”

“Sāgaramati,” answered the Blessed One, “pure roots of virtue are roots of virtue that are gathered free from viewing in terms of a self, a being, a life principle, an individual, a human, or a person. Pure dedication is dedicating roots of virtue to awakening while experiencing emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness. [F.87.b] Pure insight is the wisdom that knows the

faculties of beings, whether supreme or otherwise. Pure means is skill in teaching Dharma to beings according to what is appropriate for them individually.

10.15 “Moreover, Sāgaramati, pure roots of virtue are those roots of virtue that are gathered without being based in any birth that perpetuates existence. Pure dedication is to pursue all vehicles while being free from the mental engagement of hearers and solitary buddhas, and dedicate the roots of virtue to the Great Vehicle. Pure insight is to defeat the afflictions that manifest due to habitual tendencies. Pure means is to ripen beings and encourage them to uphold the Great Vehicle by showing a good example.

10.16 “Moreover, pure roots of virtue are like inexhaustible resources and jewels in one’s hand. Pure dedication is to remember and embrace the roots of virtue of all beings, practitioners, non-practitioners, solitary buddhas, bodhisattvas, and buddhas through dedication. Pure insight is to remember and retain that which is taught by the buddhas by sealing it with recollection. Pure means is to satisfy all beings with excellent speech consisting of unceasing eloquence, unobstructed eloquence, and meaningful Dharma teachings.

10.17 “Moreover, Sāgaramati, pure roots of virtue consist of not forgetting the mind of awakening throughout all one’s lifetimes. Pure dedication is dedicating all one’s roots of virtue, gathered without forgetting the mind of awakening, to omniscience. [F.88.a] Pure insight is knowing groundless roots of virtue as the mind of awakening. Pure means is causing others to uphold the sameness of the mind of awakening in order to make others understand it.”

10.18 Then, the bodhisattva Sāgaramati said to the Blessed One, “If I were to explain what I understood of what the Blessed One just expressed, then, Blessed One, I think that the awakening of those bodhisattvas who have pure skill in means and pure perfection of insight is comprehensive. Blessed One, for them there are no phenomena that are not awakening. Why is this? Blessed One, realizing all phenomena as sameness is awakening. Blessed One, for this reason bodhisattvas do not conceive of awakening as being something distant. Awakening is the accurate understanding of any phenomenon that appears among the six sense objects. Blessed One, bodhisattvas who confident in this way will attain pure skill in means and pure perfection of insight.”

10.19 Then the Blessed One expressed his approval of Sāgaramati: “Excellent, Sāgaramati, excellent. It is like that. You have described it accurately. Awakening is the accurate understanding of any phenomenon that appears

among the six sense objects to bodhisattvas who have pure skill in means and pure perfection of insight. Sāgaramati, that is how you should understand this teaching.

10.20 “Sāgaramati, countless, limitless, unfathomable, innumerable eons ago there was an eon called Star-Color. At that time, in a world called Emanation, the blessed buddha Infinite Light appeared. He was a thus-gone, worthy, perfect buddha, [F.88.b] someone learned and virtuous, a well-gone one, a knower of the world, a charioteer who guides beings, an unsurpassed being, and a teacher of gods and humans. Why was he called Infinite Light? Before that blessed one attained omniscience and was still a bodhisattva, he sat at the seat of awakening and light issued forth from his body. The light illuminated immeasurable, countless, and incalculable buddha realms throughout the ten directions with a brilliant glow. All the bodhisattvas who are irreversibly destined for awakening, as well as the bodhisattvas in their last lives, in those buddha realms beheld the bodhisattva seated at the seat of awakening and threw flowers in his direction. Through the power of the buddhas, when they threw those flowers, they landed on the bodhisattva’s body. The flowers formed a single pile of flowers the height of seven men in the world Emanation. The gods renowned for their power and the bodhisattvas in that world saw the light. Upon seeing this pure light, they exclaimed, ‘He will become the Thus-Gone Infinite Light!’ Thus this thus-gone one’s name became known as Infinite Light.

10.21 “Why was the world called Emanation? The wealth and enjoyments possessed by the people in this world were like those of the gods in the Heaven of Making Use of Others’ Emanations. Thus this world was called Emanation.

10.22 “Why was the eon called Star-Color? [F.89.a] Ten thousand eons earlier, Sāgaramati, a thus-gone one called Lover of the Stars had appeared. Since the blessed thus-gone Infinite Light attained awakening following that thus-gone one, the eon was called Star-Color after his name. Sāgaramati, one hundred forty million thus-gone ones appeared in that eon.

10.23 “Sāgaramati, the world called Emanation was well-off, peaceful, had abundant harvests, was filled with gods and humans, was vast and open, and consisted of 960 trillion continents, each of which measured 8,400,000 leagues. In each of these continents that measured 8,400,000 leagues were eighty-four thousand cities. Eighty-four thousand villages, markets, and outlying settlements surrounded each city. In each city were ten trillion people. In each village, market, and outlying settlement were eighty million people. There is of course no need to mention that they were powerful people. The world was formed of gold, silver, crystal, beryl, and four types of jewels. Food, drink, clothing, jewelry, and enjoyments were available at

one's wish. The gods and humans were free from grasping and had no thoughts of personal possession. The lifespan of the blessed thus-gone Infinite Light was ten intermediate eons. There were 300 trillion hearers in his great saṅgha of hearers. There were one billion and two hundred million bodhisattvas in his great assembly of bodhisattvas. [F.89.b] The birthplace of the Blessed One was the royal palace known as Pure City. Having left the palace, the Blessed One now lived in the city called Source of Happiness.

10.24      “*At that time, Sāgaramati, there was a universal monarch named Pure Domain in that city, who ruled over the worlds of the trichiliocosm and controlled the seven precious possessions. His seven precious possessions were: the precious wheel, the precious elephant, the precious horse, the precious queen, the precious jewel, the precious steward, and the precious minister. King Pure Domain had set forth toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening. He was without aggression toward any being because of the abundance of his altruism. There were forty million women in King Pure Domain's assembly of queens. Every single one of them had an excellent body; was gorgeous, beautiful, and looked like a goddess; and had also set forth toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening. The king had one thousand sons, each of whom was brave and courageous, had a fine body with excellent features, was capable of defeating his adversaries, had the strength of Nārāyaṇa, was adorned with the twenty-eight marks of a great individual, and had set forth toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening. He had eight hundred thousand daughters, each of whom had an excellent body; was gorgeous, beautiful, and looked like a goddess; and had set forth toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening.*

10.25      “*Sāgaramati, King Pure Domain invited the blessed thus-gone Infinite Light and his assemblies by offering clothing, food, bedding, healing medicine, and provisions to last for two intermediate eons. The offerings were of virtuous origin, fit for mendicants, and pleasing. [F.90.a] As an act of veneration of the Blessed One, the king prepared a courtyard, which was vast and open, measured five hundred thousand leagues square, had a patio that was made of precious jewels and set with beryl, and was surrounded with a perimeter fence made of the seven precious substances. He prepared arrangements of red sandalwood and uruga sandalwood. It was beautiful and like a celestial palace. He also built millions of homes for the use of the monastic saṅgha. Sāgaramati, in this manner King Pure Domain was fully committed to pure conduct with no exceptions. He upheld the five trainings. He and his queens, children, and servants served the Blessed One for two intermediate eons.*

- 10.26 “At that point he approached the blessed thus-gone Infinite Light. He bowed to the Blessed One’s feet, circumambulated him seven times, and sat off to one side. King Pure Domain then asked the blessed thus-gone Infinite Light, ‘Blessed One, how do bodhisattvas come to be free of others’ influence regarding the Great Vehicle? Blessed One, how are bodhisattvas unique such that they do not get attached? Blessed One, how are the minds of bodhisattvas unmoving, unchanging, and stable? Blessed One, how are the means and insight of bodhisattvas pure? [F.90.b] Blessed One, how do bodhisattvas take the long-term perspective without losing their roots? Blessed One, how do bodhisattvas enjoy sense objects without losing their vigilance? Blessed One, how are bodhisattvas not afraid of the meaning of the profound Dharma? Blessed One, how are bodhisattvas called true bodhisattvas?’
- 10.27 “Once he had spoken, the thus-gone, worthy, perfect buddha Infinite Light responded to King Pure Domain, ‘Great King, listen well and bear what I say in mind, and I will answer this.
- 10.28 “ ‘Great King, if bodhisattva great beings have four qualities, they come to be free of others’ influence regarding the Great Vehicle. What are these four? (1) A transcendent and noble faith that is born from trust; (2) persistence in ripening beings through a blazing, unswerving diligence; (3) sporting in clairvoyant wisdom through a highly analytical mind; and (4) realizing all phenomena through insight replete with discriminating cognition. Great King, if bodhisattva great beings have these four qualities, they come to be free of others’ influence regarding the Great Vehicle.
- 10.29 “ ‘Great King, if bodhisattva great beings have four qualities, they will be distinguished such that they do not get attached. What are these four? (1) Skill in leaving the states of concentration through mental pliancy; (2) being unattached to their own happiness through giving happiness to others; (3) maintaining great compassion and great love; and (4) aspiring to the vast by wishing to continuously excel. Great King, if bodhisattva great beings have these four qualities, [F.91.a] they will be distinguished such that they do not get attached.
- 10.30 “ ‘Great King, if bodhisattva great beings have four qualities, their minds will be unmoving, unchanging, and stable. What are these four? (1) A mind free from hypocrisy or pretense, (2) actions based on a pure mind, (3) altruism that manifests in unswerving endeavor, and (4) practicing without ever losing that altruism. Great King, if bodhisattva great beings have these four qualities, their minds will be unmoving, unchanging, and stable.
- 10.31 “ ‘Great King, if bodhisattva great beings have four qualities, their means and insight are pure. What are these four? (1) Ripening beings with the four means of attraction while seeing all beings to be without a self; (2) teaching

beings the sublime Dharma and upholding it using letters and words, while knowing the inexpressibility of all phenomena; (3) having an unrelenting diligence in order to achieve the major and minor marks of perfection while trusting that all buddhas consist of the Dharma body; and (4) applying continuous effort to purify buddha realms while realizing that all buddha realms have the essence of space. Great King, if bodhisattva great beings have these four qualities, their means and insight are pure.

10.32 “ ‘Great King, if bodhisattva great beings have four qualities, they take the long-term perspective without losing their roots. What are they? (1) Not giving up the mind of awakening while keeping sight of the seat of awakening; (2) never letting their minds become discouraged while keeping sight of the wisdom of buddhahood; [F.91.b] (3) being tireless in teaching the Dharma according to how they heard it, while keeping sight of the turning of the wheel of Dharma; and (4) not disparaging life, death, or rebirth while keeping sight of the great parinirvāṇa. Great King, if bodhisattva great beings have these four qualities, they take the long-term perspective without losing their roots.

10.33 “ ‘Great King, if bodhisattva great beings have four qualities, they enjoy sense objects without losing their vigilance. What are these four? (1) They enjoy sense objects without losing their vigilance by realizing conditioned things to be impermanent, while acting as a universal monarch to ripen human beings; (2) they enjoy sense objects without losing their vigilance by realizing conditioned things to be dissatisfying, while taking the role of Śakra, lord of the gods, to ripen gods; (3) they enjoy sense objects without losing their vigilance by realizing phenomena to be without a self, while displaying themselves as Māra in order to ripen gods of the class of the māras; and (4) they enjoy sense objects without losing their vigilance by realizing nirvāṇa to be peace, while receiving coronation as Brahmā in order to ripen gods of the brahmā classes. Great King, if bodhisattva great beings have these four qualities, they enjoy sense objects without losing their vigilance.

10.34 “ ‘Great King, if bodhisattva great beings have four qualities, they need not be afraid of the meaning of the profound Dharma. What are these four? (1) Always following the teaching of the profound awakening of buddhahood without disregarding authentic spiritual teachers, (2) being willing to walk a hundred leagues to hear these profound sūtras, (3) properly examining the meaning of the Dharma teachings that they have heard, and (4) relying on the meaning rather than on the words. Great King, if bodhisattva great beings have these four qualities, [F.92.a] they need not be afraid of the meaning of the profound Dharma.

- 10.35 “ ‘Great King, if bodhisattva great beings have four qualities, they are called true bodhisattvas. What are these four? (1) Diligence that strives in the pursuit of the perfections, (2) great compassion that strives to ripen all beings, (3) being humbled by the power of striving to perfect all buddha qualities, and (4) gathering the accumulations of merit and wisdom without tiring in their embrace of limitless saṃsāra. Great King, if bodhisattva great beings have these four qualities, they are called true bodhisattvas.’
- 10.36 “Sāgaramati, when the blessed thus-gone Infinite Light gave this teaching on the fourfold achievements, eight hundred billion beings developed the mind directed toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening, and the minds of eighty million monks were liberated from defilement with no further grasping. The princes, princesses, and queens developed the lesser acceptance of phenomena concurring with reality. The great king Pure Domain himself developed the sharper acceptance of phenomena concurring with reality. The king was satisfied, happy, delighted, and joyful. With such joy and happiness, he offered the entirety of his dominion to the Blessed One for his use. [B9]
- 10.37 “Then, Sāgaramati, the blessed thus-gone Infinite Light commanded King Pure Domain, ‘Great King, given that you have now offered your entire dominion to the Thus-Gone One for his use, [F.92.b] you should leave your home and faithfully go forth in the well-spoken Dharma-Vinaya. Why so? Great King, going forth in the well-spoken Dharma-Vinaya is more meaningful and beneficial. Great King, there are twenty great achievements of bodhisattvas who have gone forth that perfect the unsurpassed attainment of omniscience. What are they? (1) The achievement of giving up one’s dominion, wealth, servants, and power so that they are not thought of as “mine” or grasped for. (2) The achievement of escaping the afflictions due to the leaving the household life. (3) The achievement of a limpid mind through donning the saffron robes. (4) The achievement of being easily satisfied and having few requirements out of the contentment of belonging to the noble lineage. (5) The achievement of abandoning great desire, and desire for evil deeds, due to taking up the ascetic practices and a having few possessions. (6) The achievement of rebirth as a human or god due to maintaining pure discipline. (7) The achievement of the six perfections due to not giving up the mind of awakening. (8) The achievement of independence from distractions due to living in remote wilderness. (9) The achievement of the happiness of a religious mind that comes from doing no harm. (10) The achievement of mental pliancy that comes from accomplishing the branches of concentration. (11) The achievement of great insight through the pursuit of learning. (12) The achievement of great wisdom due to giving up pride. (13) The achievement of discriminating



among phenomena due to having few aims and activities. (14) The achievement of great love due to having an unbiased mind toward all beings. (15) The achievement of great compassion due to the intention to free all beings. (16) The achievement of upholding the sublime Dharma without regard for one's life and limb. (17) The achievement of great super-knowledge by thoroughly training the mind. (18) The achievement of seeing the buddhas through the recollection of the buddhas. (19) The achievement of the acceptance that phenomena are unborn due to accurately discerning phenomena. [F.93.a] (20) The achievement of swift omniscience due to the conduct that upholds all qualities. Great King, these twenty achievements are not difficult to gain for bodhisattvas among the ordained. Great King, for these reasons you should go forth into the well-spoken Dharma-Vinaya.'

10.38 "Then, Sāgaramati, as the Blessed One had caused King Pure Domain go forth, the king abandoned his dominion and the glories of his domain. He turned his mind from the household life, shaved his head and facial hair, and donned the saffron-colored robes. Leaving his home, he faithfully went forth in the teachings of that blessed one. Seeing that he had done so, his queens, princes, and princesses also went forth. Seeing that he had done so, ninety-nine trillion beings who lived in the king's land also went forth. Once they all had gone forth, they applied great effort in diligently pursuing virtuous qualities.

10.39 "Sāgaramati, consider what a credit to that blessed one's teachings these beings were as they became firmly grounded in the pursuit of merit. After the great king Pure Domain went forth, Sāgaramati, he went before the blessed thus-gone Infinite Light and requested of him, 'Blessed One, please grant me an instruction and a teaching that will be meaningful and applicable as I go to collect alms in the countryside.' [F.93.b] The Blessed One answered the monk Pure Domain, 'Monk, your name is Pure Domain. You should go forth and seek to purify your domain. Realize your domain correctly. By all means, out of the six sense objects, you must completely master any phenomenon that appears to you, exactly as it is. By doing so you will see awakening. You must understand it in this way. Do not conceive of awakening as something far away or as something nearby.'

10.40 "Sāgaramati, with this practical instruction given by that blessed one to the monk Pure Domain, he diligently went into solitude and with awareness and carefulness correctly understood his domain. What was his correct discrimination?

10.41 "The domain of the eye is the domain of emptiness. The domain of emptiness is the domain of all beings. The domain of all beings and the domain of emptiness are the domain of buddhahood. The domain of the ear is the domain of emptiness. The domain of emptiness is the domain of all

beings. The domain of all beings and the domain of emptiness are the domain of buddhahood. Similarly, the domains of the nose, tongue, body, and mind are the domain of emptiness. The domain of emptiness is the domain of all beings. The domain of all beings and the domain of emptiness are the domain of buddhahood. The domain of the eye is the domain of signlessness. The domain of signlessness is the domain of all beings. The domain of all beings and the domain of signlessness are the domain of buddhahood. The domains of the sense faculties up to and including the mind are the domain of signlessness. The domain of signlessness is the domain of all beings. The domain of all beings and the domain of signlessness are the domain of buddhahood. [F.94.a] Likewise, the domain of the eye is the domain of wishlessness, the unconditioned, the unborn, and non-arising. The domain of non-arising is the domain of all beings. The domain of all beings and the domain of non-arising are the domain of buddhahood. The same should be applied to the domains up to and including that of the mind.

10.42 “By understanding his domains in this way, Sāgaramati, the monk Pure Domain achieved physical and mental pliancy. Thus he cultivated the bases of miracles concerning motivation, diligence, conscientiousness, and analysis, and before long he developed the five super-knowledges. Through such careful conduct, he attained the dhāraṇī called ‘amassing the meaning and all manifest words.’ Sāgaramati, if you are wondering, doubting, or of two minds about whether he, who was then the monk called Pure Domain, who renounced the wealth and dominion of a universal monarch and went forth in the teachings of the Blessed One, is somebody unknown to you, do not think any further. Why so? Because, Sāgaramati, you were at that time the monk Pure Domain! Sāgaramati, if you are thinking that the many trillions of beings who followed him into going forth might be someone else, think no further. They are these bodhisattvas who have followed you to hear the Dharma.”

10.43 After the Blessed One had told this tale from the past, eighty million beings developed the mind directed toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening, and eight thousand bodhisattvas attained the acceptance that phenomena are unborn.

## 11. CHAPTER ELEVEN: THE REVELATION OF BUDDHA REALMS

- 11.1 Then the Blessed One said to Sāgaramati, [F.94.b] “Therefore, Sāgaramati, bodhisattva great beings who wish to swiftly and fully awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood should follow your training, sublime being. Bodhisattvas should not be verbose and obsessed with the use of words; rather, they should practice what they preach. How do bodhisattvas practice what they preach, you ask? Sāgaramati, they do so by appreciating how easy it is to say, ‘I am going to become a buddha,’ yet how hard it is to actually accomplish the virtues of the factors of awakening. Sāgaramati, any bodhisattva who regales beings with the gift of Dharma, announcing to them, ‘You will be satisfied by my gift of Dharma,’ and then teaches them extensively, but himself acts otherwise, failing to strive toward the virtues of the factors of awakening, has let those beings down. He has not practiced what he preached. However, Sāgaramati, when he regales everyone with the gift of the factors of awakening, announcing to them, ‘You will be satisfied by my gift of Dharma,’ and then teaches them extensively and himself strives toward the virtues of the factors of awakening, then he has practiced what he preached.
- 11.2 “Sāgaramati, to draw an analogy, if a king or a royal minister were to announce to all the people of a city that he will distribute supplies to them the following day, and then abandons them, giving them no food or drink, then he has let that group of people down. Because they did not receive any food or drink, they will in turn deride him. Analogously, Sāgaramati, if a bodhisattva teaches extensively about finding relief in order to emancipate all beings who have not yet gone beyond, liberate those who have not yet been liberated, offer relief to those who have not found relief, and bring to parinirvāṇa those who have not yet reached parinirvāṇa, [F.95.a] yet himself fails to strive toward the virtues of the factors of awakening, then that bodhisattva has not practiced what he preached. He has let the world and its

gods down. If the gods who have previously beheld buddhas see him, they will deride, disparage, and belittle him. Those who pledge to perform offerings and actually go on to perform such offerings are rare. Still, compared to them, those who begin with the great offerings and remain undiscouraged by the unsurpassed Great Vehicle are even more rare. Sāgaramati, a bodhisattva must not make any claims that will let the world and its gods, humans, and asuras down.

11.3 “Moreover, Sāgaramati, if someone requests religious wealth from a bodhisattva, and that bodhisattva claims, ‘You will receive your religious wealth from me,’ then that bodhisattva must not let the other person down, even at the cost of his life. Sāgaramati, that is how you should understand this lesson.

11.4 “Sāgaramati, countless, unfathomable, innumerable eons ago lived a lion king named Silky White Mane and Perfect Limbs. He was steeped in love for all beings, and only cared to eat roots, leaves, flowers, and fruits. He lived in an inaccessible mountain hollow, where a male and female monkey couple also lived. Then one time, two children were born to the female monkey. The monkey parents brought their two infants before the lion, king of beasts, to speak with him. At that point, the vulture king Razor swept down out of the sky and carried the two monkey babies back up into the sky. [F.95.b] The lion, king of beasts, saw the vulture king Razor carrying off the two monkey cubs. Upon seeing this, he exclaimed in verse,

11.5 “ ‘Vulture King, I implore you:  
Release my monkeys’ babies!  
I live to keep them from fear.  
I have protected them and will not kill them, so release them!’

11.6 “Then the vulture king spoke the following verse to the lion, king of beasts:

“ ‘King of beasts, if you give up your life,  
I will release these two alive.  
I could eat these two while hovering in the sky.  
You could get angry, but what could you do?’

11.7 “The king of beasts responded,

“ ‘I’ll give myself up so you can eat me,  
So I implore you to release this pair of monkey babies.  
I stand by my pledge to pursue awakening.  
The learned ones never speak falsely.

11.8 “ ‘Lest my words prove false, with altruistic resolve  
The great sage offered his life.

With great joy fueled by good motivation,  
I will give my life for beings.'

11.9 "When the vulture king witnessed this marvel he called out while hovering in the sky,

" 'Whoever would give their life for another  
Deserves to live happily in this world.  
I will release the two monkey babies.  
May you live long and practice the Dharma!'

11.10 "Sāgaramati, if you think the lion, king of beasts, is someone unknown to you, do not think that way. Why is this? Because, Sāgaramati, it was I who was then the lion, king of beasts. Mahākāśyapa was the father monkey and Kapilabhadrā was the mother monkey. Rāhula and Ānanda were the monkey twins. The monk Excellent Garland was the vulture king called Razor. Given this story, Sāgaramati, bodhisattvas should offer up their bodies [F.96.a] and never abandon those who seek refuge. In this way, one must practice what one preaches.

11.11 "In this regard, what does it mean to practice what one preaches? Sāgaramati, when bodhisattvas teach generosity and explain about giving away all possessions, they should practice accordingly. In this manner they must practice what they preach. When bodhisattvas teach discipline and explain about upholding discipline, trainings, and ascetic practices, they should practice accordingly. When bodhisattvas teach patience and explain about giving up malice, strife, and aggression, they should practice accordingly. When bodhisattvas teach diligence and explain about diligently pursuing all virtuous qualities, they should practice accordingly. When bodhisattvas teach concentration and explain about being engaged in concentration, freedom, absorption, and equipoise, they should practice accordingly. Likewise, when bodhisattvas teach insight and explain about mastering the definitive wisdom that eloquently expresses itself, they should practice accordingly.

11.12 "Likewise, when bodhisattvas teach about abandoning all nonvirtuous qualities and perfecting all positive qualities, and explain about being diligent in abandoning all nonvirtuous qualities and pursuing all positive qualities, they should practice accordingly. Moreover, when they explain about contemplation, they should be without pretense or hypocrisy. When they explain about practice, they should gain experience with the practices. [F.96.b] When they explain about engagement, they should be dauntless in their engagement. When they explain about pure intention, they should be without attachment. When they explain about commitments, they should live by their commitments. When they explain about mastering the art of

learning, they should be learned themselves. When they explain about making commitments, they should be committed in body and mind. When they explain about lack of pride, they should perfect their wisdom. When they explain about taking up the trainings, they should not let their trainings falter. When they explain about initially developing the mind of awakening, they should engage in the conduct of bodhisattvas. When they explain about the acceptance that phenomena are unborn, they should practice the irreversible level. When they explain about being impeded by one more birth only, they should sit at the seat of awakening. When they explain about firm commitments, they should practice awakening fully to omniscience. When they explain about the turning of the wheel of Dharma, they should preserve the continuity of the family of the Three Jewels. Sāgaramati, bodhisattva great beings who preach these things should practice them accordingly.”

11.13 When the Blessed One gave this teaching on practicing what one preaches, five thousand bodhisattvas attained acceptance that phenomena are unborn. Then the bodhisattva great being Padmavyūhā said to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, this teaching by the Thus-Gone One on practicing what one preaches, which reveals all these buddha qualities, is incredible. Blessed One, the accomplishment of the Thus-Gone One’s speech is to practice what one preaches.” [F.97.a]

11.14 “Noble son,” asked the Blessed One, “do you understand this accomplishment?”

“Blessed One, I do.”

11.15 The Blessed One then instructed him, “Noble son, please elucidate the subject of accomplishment!”

11.16 “Blessed One, ‘accomplishment’ refers to the understanding that all phenomena are the same in terms of their sameness. Knowing this, one comes to certainty in this truth. Nevertheless, the authentic accomplishment of bodhisattvas is not to flaunt this.”

11.17 The bodhisattva Lord of Mountains then said to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, I would also like to elucidate the subject of accomplishment.”

“Noble son, please speak,” responded the Blessed One.

11.18 “Blessed One, accomplishment is no accomplishment. Why is this? Blessed One, a bodhisattva who does not observe any phenomena will not see anything to accomplish or any basis for accomplishment. This is authentic accomplishment.”

11.19 The bodhisattva Guṇarājaprabhāsa said, “Blessed One, how could any application of consciousness that involves the mind be accomplishment? Blessed One, when bodhisattvas do not let their consciousness rest on any phenomenon, that is called ‘not resting on any phenomenon.’ This very ‘not resting on any phenomenon’ is authentic accomplishment.”

- 11.20 The bodhisattva King of the Immense Lamp said, "Blessed One, accomplishment is having no view. Having a view is not accomplishment. Blessed One, bodhisattvas who do not form views about any phenomenon because they do not take up [F.97.b] or put down any phenomenon have authentic accomplishment."
- 11.21 The bodhisattva Suryagarbha said, "Blessed One, to exist is to move, and to not exist is to not move. Blessed One, a bodhisattva who does not exist, does not move. No phenomenon can disturb one who is unmoving. This is authentic accomplishment."
- 11.22 The bodhisattva Vira said, "Blessed One, the mind acts upon the world. Blessed One, the mind hastens after the world. It chases after it. Blessed One, a bodhisattva for whom all facets of mind involve no mind does not think or conceptualize. This is authentic accomplishment."
- 11.23 The bodhisattva Priyadarśana said, "Blessed One, all feelings have been described by the Thus-Gone One as suffering. Blessed One, any bodhisattva who ends the flow of all feelings, and thus has no feeling or acquisition, does not cognize a cessation of feeling, and out of great compassion does not abandon all beings, has authentic accomplishment."
- 11.24 The bodhisattva Incense Elephant said, "Blessed One, ordinary childish beings observe and involve themselves with the five aggregates, and are thereby burdened by them. Blessed One, bodhisattvas who have an understanding of the five aggregates will quickly cast them aside. They will teach the Dharma so that ordinary childish beings may relinquish the weight that burdens them due to observing and involving themselves with the five aggregates. Because all phenomena are unborn and unmanifest, they do not even form correct notions about any phenomena. This is authentic accomplishment." [F.98.a]
- 11.25 The bodhisattva Caretaker of Beings said, "Blessed One, it is an accomplishment based on authentic practice, not mistaken practice. Blessed One, bodhisattvas exert themselves in authentic practice. What does authentic practice mean in this case? It is the understanding that all phenomena are sameness since they are the same as space. This is authentic accomplishment."
- 11.26 The bodhisattva Steadfast Intelligence said, "Blessed One, bodhisattvas who allow for birth despite the unborn, and arising despite non-arising through their wisdom of skillful means and insight, are not involved in birth, destruction, or abiding. This is authentic accomplishment."
- 11.27 The bodhisattva King of Splendors said, "Blessed One, when bodhisattvas see all beings as being inherently beyond suffering, yet do not lose their armor of great compassion and still see effort as worthwhile, that is authentic accomplishment."

- 11.28 The bodhisattva Unimpeded Light said, “Blessed One, māras are active to the degree that one vacillates. When the māras are active, there is no accomplishment. Blessed One, being consistent in not vacillating gives māras no chance. Such a bodhisattva who has transcended the paths of māras is said to have authentic accomplishment.”
- 11.29 The bodhisattva Dīptavīrya said, “Blessed One, the efforts of those who think that any phenomenon is truly real are pointless. Blessed One, understanding the fact that no phenomenon is truly real prevents conceptual mind. [F.98.b] This is authentic accomplishment.”
- 11.30 The bodhisattva Bhṛgu said, “Blessed One, how could indulging in change and concepts be accomplishment? Blessed One, accomplishment is unchanging and nonconceptual. The nature of mind of beings is unchanging and nonconceptual. Understanding the nature of mind is said to be authentic accomplishment.”
- 11.31 The bodhisattva Thinker of Good Thoughts said, “Blessed One, bodhisattvas know the minds of all beings. They understand that the minds of all beings are not mind. That understanding of mind is authentic accomplishment.”
- 11.32 The bodhisattva Śāntamati said, “Blessed One, peace is accomplishment. What is not peace is not accomplishment. Blessed One, bodhisattvas should pacify, calm down, and eliminate all mental apprehension, and not conceptualize or abandon anything. That realization—that the absence of concepts and abandonment is the same—is authentic accomplishment.”
- 11.33 The bodhisattva Susārvhāvāha said, “Blessed One, when bodhisattvas are grounded in roots of virtue they gain accomplishment, but not when they are not grounded in roots of virtue. Blessed One, bodhisattvas should be grounded in the accumulation of merit and grounded in the accumulation of wisdom. Through the sameness of merit they understand the sameness of wisdom. Through the sameness of wisdom they understand the sameness of merit. Through the sameness of merit and wisdom they understand the sameness of awakening. [F.99.a] Through the sameness of awakening they understand the sameness of all phenomena. That is authentic accomplishment.”
- 11.34 The bodhisattva King of Seers said, “Blessed One, the inseparability of all phenomena is authentic accomplishment. Blessed One, when bodhisattvas know that all phenomena are subsumed within the realm of phenomena, they should neither attempt to divide them, nor join them together. That is authentic accomplishment.”
- 11.35 The bodhisattva Meaningful Contemplative said, “Blessed One, one should rely on the meaning rather than the words. Blessed One, bodhisattvas should retain and teach the 84,000 sections of the Dharma with



- a mind that knows the meaning and thus does not diverge from the inexpressible true meaning. That is authentic accomplishment.”
- 11.36 The bodhisattva Pure Intellect said, “Blessed One, altruism is accomplishment. Blessed One, when bodhisattvas develop altruism, they do not obsess over language, words, and expression. That is seeking authentic accomplishment. Such effort that does not observe any coming or going is authentic accomplishment.”
- 11.37 The bodhisattva Perfectly Immaculate Being said, “Blessed One, to draw an analogy, stains do not remain when they have been washed from dirty cloth. Blessed One, likewise, the impurity of mind is refined by accurate analysis. Blessed One, purification is when a bodhisattva does not get involved in the primary and secondary afflictions of mind and cognition. Purity is said to be present in authentic accomplishment.” [F.99.b]
- 11.38 The bodhisattva Sāgaramati said, “Blessed One, bodhisattvas who have been accepted by a virtuous spiritual friend gain authentic and noble accomplishment with little difficulty. Why is this? Blessed One, if bodhisattvas have not escaped the hooks of Māra, they have been accepted by an evil spiritual friend. Anyone who has escaped the hooks of Māra has been accepted by a virtuous spiritual friend. Thus, Blessed One, bodhisattvas escape the hooks of Māra by attending to, relying upon, and serving spiritual friends. Bodhisattvas who have been accepted by a spiritual friend gain authentic and noble accomplishment with little difficulty.”
- 11.39 Then the Blessed One asked the bodhisattva Sāgaramati, “Sāgaramati, do you know the hooks of Māra?”
- “Blessed One,” replied Sāgaramati, “I know the hooks of Māra.”
- 11.40 The Blessed One said, “Sāgaramati, it is through hearing that bodhisattvas go beyond, defeat māras and obstructers, and swiftly and fully awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood. Therefore, please teach, starting with a teaching on the hooks of Māra.”
- 11.41 “Blessed One,” replied Sāgaramati, “through the power of the Buddha, I will explain the hooks of Māra. What are the hooks of Māra? Blessed One, there are twelve hooks of Māra. What are these twelve?”
- 11.42 “Blessed One, for those who are practicing the bodhisattva’s perfection [F.100.a] of generosity, there are some who apply the intention to give things that are easy to give, but do not apply it to giving things that are hard to give. They give to beings that they like, but avoid giving to beings that they do not like, and they make distinctions about things and beings. That, Blessed One, is the first hook of Māra, related to a bodhisattva’s generosity.
- 11.43 “Blessed One, for bodhisattvas who have discipline and possess the quality of virtue, hold to the prātimokṣa vows, maintain perfect rituals and activities, look at even subtle evils with fear, maintain a pure livelihood, and

attend to the bases of training, there are some who attend to, rely upon, and serve disciplined monks and priests while being angry; who are resentful, and aggressive with poorly disciplined beings; and who praise themselves for their discipline and slander others. That, Blessed One, is the second hook of Māra, related to a bodhisattva's discipline.

11.44 "Blessed One, for bodhisattvas practicing patience, there are some who practice patience physically and verbally, yet engender malice in their minds. They are patient toward powerful beings but not toward the weak. They show their strength of patience to powerful beings and show their strength of malice to the weak. They are patient sometimes but not on other occasions. They are patient with some but not with others. When they are patient, they get puffed up and arrogant, and when impatient, they do not swiftly confess it. That, Blessed One, is the third hook of Māra, related to a bodhisattva's patience. [F.100.b]

11.45 "Blessed One, for bodhisattvas engaged in diligence, there are some who, even though they are personally engaged in diligence, only ripen beings for the vehicles of the hearers and solitary buddhas but not for the Great Vehicle. They consistently tell stories about the hearers and solitary buddhas while withholding Great Vehicle stories. They endeavor in enjoying the world while failing to endeavor in the transcendental Dharma. Out of a sense of pleasure derived from venerating the thus-gone ones, they are assiduous in offering flowers, incense, garlands, perfume, lotions, powders, clothing, parasols, banners, and pennants, and show such inclinations, yet they fail to be diligent in the pursuit of study, in teaching what they have studied, in analyzing what they have studied, and in becoming learned. That, Blessed One, is the fourth hook of Māra, related to a bodhisattva's diligence.

11.46 "Blessed One, for bodhisattvas who develop the four concentrations and develop and accomplish the four formless absorptions, there are some who remain long in those states. While remaining in such states of peaceful equipoise, they disparage the ripening of beings, the teaching of the Dharma, and associating with beings. They disparage the formations of merit and savor the taste of unwavering formations. They are happy in their preference for solitude and put forth very little effort. They do not seek to reverse the course of concentration. They perceive the desire and form realms as if they were death, and instead prefer to savor the taste of the formless realm. [F.101.a] Looking down upon the body, they take birth in the formless realms, and arouse karmic fortune similar to the long-lived gods. Having been born there, they fail to please many buddhas, many hundreds of buddhas, many thousands of buddhas. They lack the opportunity to behold the Buddha, study the Dharma, and serve the Saṅgha. They fail to ripen beings, uphold the Dharma, and accumulate merit. Their faculties

become dull and stupid, and after they die, wherever they are born, their minds are dense, gloomy, and sleepy. Blessed One, this is the fifth hook of Māra, related to a bodhisattva's concentration.

11.47 “Blessed One, regarding bodhisattvas who have insight, there are some who know causes on account of seeing conditions. For them there are no causes, there is an absence of causes, and there are no conditioned things. They disparage the formations of merit and lack skillful means. They do not strive in the perfection of generosity, nor in the perfections of discipline, patience, diligence, or concentration. They think, ‘The perfection of insight is the best and most noble—the other perfections pale in comparison.’ They do not ripen their faculties, and fall into a state of indifference. They do not gather beings through the four means of attracting disciples. They are without enthusiasm and they savor the taste of the unconditioned. Blessed One, this is the sixth hook of Māra, related to a bodhisattva's insight. [F.101.b]

11.48 “Blessed One, regarding bodhisattvas who live in the wilderness, who enjoy living in remote places with contentment and few desires, there are some who stay in solitude and do not associate with householders or the ordained. They live happily with few pursuits and activities. Without moving, they do not seek learnedness, ripening beings, or studying the Dharma. They have no interest in offering Dharma discourses or advice. They are not of an inquisitive nature. They do not seek to understand what virtue is. They still their afflictions through living in the wilderness and with the joys of solitude. Thus they experience happiness by simply quelling upheavals, but they do not cultivate the path in order to truly defeat their latent potential. They do not strive in order to better either themselves or others. Blessed One, this is the seventh hook of Māra, related to a bodhisattva's life in the wilderness.

11.49 “Blessed One, regarding learned bodhisattvas who deliver Dharma discourses, there are some whose words are worthy of being studied and grasped, who possess all manner of flowery language and impeccable eloquence, yet who teach the Dharma for material gain and who do not abandon materialistic intentions. They will teach the Dharma where there is food, a place to sleep, healing medicine, and supplies available—yet they will not teach the Dharma to those who have faith, inspiration, and the capacity and power to understand the well-spoken meaning, unless these students supply them with material goods. They will teach Dharma to those who give to them, even if they are vile, base, stupid, and unsuited to hear the vastness of Dharma. [F.102.a] As they hanker after worldly wealth, they do

not teach the Dharma to just anyone. Rather, they teach those who are not fitting vessels while disregarding those who should be taught. Blessed One, this is the eighth hook of Māra, related to a bodhisattva's Dharma teachings.

11.50 "Blessed One, there are some bodhisattvas who take up the Lokāyata tradition. They will stop giving profound teachings to others and instead offer them various Lokāyata advice. As they do so, the world will be pleased with their Lokāyata advice. Being skilled in offering such advice, they delight others and receive their accolades. However, they will upset and sadden all otherwise cheerful bodhisattvas, as well as those gods who have beheld past buddhas, those who aspire toward the profound Dharma, and those who assemble to study the Dharma. Displeasing them, they will interrupt the continuity of profound advice to beings who enjoy worldly pleasures, and instead offer them a variety of Lokāyata teachings. Such noble sons cause the Dharma to end and do not uphold the sublime Dharma. Why is this? Because blessed buddhas manifest due to the profound meaning—not due to Lokāyata teachings." He continued his address, "Blessed One, therefore bodhisattvas who conceal the profound teachings while giving Lokāyata teachings are acting in such a way that they will prevent the arising of buddhas. Blessed One, this is the ninth hook of Māra, related to a bodhisattva's concealment of the profound teachings and pursuit of the Lokāyata tradition.

11.51 "Blessed One, [F.102.b] there are some bodhisattvas who follow an unwholesome companion who pretends to be a spiritual friend. Following such a one, they will lose interest in the means of attracting disciples, ripening beings, upholding the sublime Dharma, and the accumulation of merit. They will train in solitude with few pursuits and voluntary poverty. They will attend to, follow, and serve those who usually teach the doctrines of the hearers and solitary buddhas rather than those of the Great Vehicle. When such bodhisattvas stay in solitude, they may give up the Great Vehicle. The bodhisattva may then think, 'I should surely offer advice.' Yet they proffer corrupt advice. When bodhisattvas proffer corrupt advice, they will advise others to live in solitude and adopt patience that makes use of signs and characteristics. They do not prescribe genuine and perfect bodhisattva work. What then is genuine and perfect bodhisattva work? Blessed One, genuine and perfect bodhisattva work consists of these ten things: (1) Basing oneself on the roots of faith and attending to, relying upon, and serving spiritual friends. (2) Seeking the virtuous Dharma as if one's head and clothes were on fire. (3) Firm interest in the virtuous Dharma and not giving up right effort. (4) Acting carefully and not wasting what one does. (5) Seeking to constantly ripen beings without being attached to one's own happiness. (6) Upholding the Dharma without consideration for life or

limb. (7) Being insatiable in seeking out accumulations of merit in order to purify buddha realms [F.103.a] and obtain the major and minor marks of excellence. (8) Seeking the accumulation of wisdom in order to attain recollection and eloquence. (9) Cultivating the perfection of insight so that one is not stained by the state of all ordinary beings. (10) Seeking skill in means so that one may transcend the deeds of hearers and solitary buddhas. Blessed One, these ten constitute genuine and perfect bodhisattva work. However, they will not teach these things that bodhisattvas are to train in. In this regard it is said that awakening is for bodhisattvas who strive with diligence, but not for the lazy. If after eight or ten eons one still has not fully awakened to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood, one might think that one is unable to fully awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood. However, Blessed One, if a bodhisattva is hoping to attain the fruition through procrastination, then this is the tenth hook of Māra, related to bodhisattvas pretending to be spiritual friends.

11.52 “Blessed One, moreover, bodhisattvas who are hardened and inflated by pride will, because of their pride, fail to bow before, prostrate to, or show respect to their masters, honorable ones, parents, teachers, preceptors, or other people in such positions. They will not care to stay near to, attend to, rely upon, serve, discuss with, or inquire of those who are learned in the practices of bodhisattvas, who have reached distinction, who have perfect recollection and eloquence, or who have perfected all bodhisattva deeds. [F.103.b] As such, they will of course not hear the teachings that they do not listen to, but they will even be disinterested in those teachings that they do hear. In other ways as well, such people of the bodhisattva vehicle are caught by the hook of Māra. They are fond of those who engage in negative qualities and they even follow in their footsteps. They follow the lowly and lose any distinction. Thus they become weak, stupid, deaf, dumb, and inferior.

11.53 “Blessed One, to draw an analogy, if a person plants a magnolia tree in the vicinity of a riverbed, yet fails to channel water to it, the tree will wither among the pebbles and gravel in what otherwise would seem like a place with water. Blessed One, as the magnolia tree is lacking water, it will not grow branches, leaves, or twigs. The branches, leaves, and twigs will dry up and fall to the ground. Blessed One, likewise, bodhisattvas who have developed the mind of awakening but are hardened and inflated by pride will lack spiritual friends and opportunities to study the Dharma. They will of course not hear the teachings that they do not listen to, but they will even be disinterested in those teachings that they do hear.

11.54 “Blessed One, to draw another analogy, the ocean is always in low-lying areas. Because it is low-lying, all rivers, springs, and waterfalls naturally flow there. Blessed One, likewise, humble bodhisattvas will respect their masters and honorable ones, and naturally hear the gateways to the profound Dharma with their ear faculty while maintaining mindfulness. Blessed One, therefore, if a bodhisattva who is hardened and inflated by pride cannot bow before, bend before, prostrate to, or show respect to their masters [F.104.a] and honorable ones, then it should be known that they have been caught by the hook of Māra. Blessed One, this is the eleventh hook of Māra, related to a bodhisattva’s pride.

11.55 “Blessed One, there are some bodhisattvas who are good looking, beautiful, rich, affluent, and prosperous; who have many resources, and abundant treasuries and storehouses; who are secure in terms of their good looks, wealth, bloodline, caste, servants, and accumulations of merit; and who diligently pursue the accumulation of wisdom. Such bodhisattvas could become arrogant and careless due to their good looks, wealth, servants, and power. When they see ordained bodhisattvas who have left the household life; who are diligent in the pursuit of the accumulation of wisdom; whose flesh and blood have withered due to heat and cold; who are emaciated, weak, and skinny; who practice diligently day and night as if their head and clothes were on fire; and who show constant exertion in the pursuit of virtuous qualities, they will think of them as thin, feeble, unattractive, and ugly beings who are worthy of contempt. They are not interested in receiving any advice from them, and they even consider them more lowly and deluded than themselves. Blessed One, this is the twelfth hook of Māra, related to a bodhisattva’s arrogance and carelessness.

11.56 “Blessed One, these twelve are Mara’s hooks reserved for bodhisattvas. If bodhisattvas do not escape them, they will not attain even acceptance conducive to awakening, so forget about fully awakening to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood. [F.104.b] It would be impossible. Therefore, Blessed One, it is by striving to fully awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood that a bodhisattva will escape these hooks of Māra.” [B10]

11.57 The Blessed One then expressed his approval to the bodhisattva Sāgaramati: “Excellent, Sāgaramati, excellent. You have explained well these hooks of Māra reserved for bodhisattvas. Therefore, Sāgaramati, listen well and bear this in mind. I will explain to you the Dharma gateways through which bodhisattvas will always escape and destroy the hooks of Māra. Sāgaramati, what are the Dharma gateways that destroy the hooks of Māra? Sāgaramati, there are the following ten Dharma gateways that destroy the hooks of Māra.

- 11.58 “Sāgaramati, because all phenomena have the nature of emptiness, one can be absorbed in emptiness while still offering protection. So, to have great love for all beings is the first Dharma gateway that destroys the hooks of Māra.
- 11.59 “Sāgaramati, because all phenomena have the nature of signlessness, one can be absorbed in signlessness while bringing freedom. So, to have great compassion for all beings is the second Dharma gateway that destroys the hooks of Māra.
- 11.60 “Sāgaramati, because all phenomena have the nature of wishlessness, one can be absorbed in wishlessness while intentionally taking birth in order to ripen all beings. This is the third Dharma gateway that destroys the hooks of Māra.
- 11.61 “Sāgaramati, because all phenomena are naturally devoid of attachment, one can be absorbed in nonattachment while ripening beings who indulge in attachment. [F.105.a] This is the fourth Dharma gateway that destroys the hooks of Māra.
- 11.62 “Sāgaramati, because all phenomena are naturally devoid of aggression, one can be absorbed in nonaggression while ripening beings who indulge in aggression. This is the fifth Dharma gateway that destroys the hooks of Māra.
- 11.63 “Sāgaramati, because all phenomena are naturally devoid of stupidity, one can be absorbed in non-stupidity while ripening beings who indulge in stupidity. This is the sixth Dharma gateway that destroys the hooks of Māra.
- 11.64 “Sāgaramati, because all phenomena are naturally free of being afflicted, one can be absorbed in not being afflicted while ripening beings who are afflicted. This is the seventh Dharma gateway that destroys the hooks of Māra.
- 11.65 “Sāgaramati, because all phenomena are naturally unborn and non-arising, one can be absorbed in the unborn and non-arising while teaching the Dharma to beings so they may discard birth, aging, sickness, and death. This is the eighth Dharma gateway that destroys the hooks of Māra.
- 11.66 “Sāgaramati, because all phenomena are by nature undifferentiated and of equal status, one can be absorbed in an undifferentiated state of equality while teaching the Dharma in order to establish all beings in the three vehicles, without giving up the Great Vehicle attitude. This is the ninth Dharma gateway that destroys the hooks of Māra.
- 11.67 “Sāgaramati, when a bodhisattva does not perpetuate mind, cognition, or consciousness; does not forget the mind of awakening; is free from all endeavors, yet does not give up the activity that frees beings; and transcends all activity without turning back from bodhisattva activity, this is the tenth Dharma gateway that destroys the hooks of Māra. [F.105.b]

- 11.68 “Sāgaramati, these ten are the Dharma gateways that destroy the hooks of Māra. If bodhisattvas apply themselves to these, they will escape all of Māra’s hooks.”
- 11.69 When this Dharma teaching that destroys the hooks of Māra was expressed, all the realms of Māra were eclipsed and shook in six ways. It was like how, when light streams forth from the *ūrṇa* hair of the Bodhisattva seated at the seat of awakening, all the realms of Māra are eclipsed. Analogously, at this time all the realms of Māra were eclipsed.
- 11.70 Then, when the evil Māra witnessed this spectacle, he quickly, swiftly, and without delay gathered the four divisions of his forces. Just as they gather in formation when they go near the Bodhisattva seated at the seat of awakening, the legions of Māra filled an area thirty-six leagues in diameter as they approached the assembly of the Blessed One. They were forced there by the power of the Buddha. However, even though they were actually there, they were invisible to anyone but the Thus-Gone One and the bodhisattvas who are irreversibly destined for awakening, as well as those worthy ones in the assembly who had tamed their minds, abandoned all ties to existence, and possessed the perfect view.
- 11.71 The Blessed One then asked the bodhisattva Sāgaramati, “Can you see the evil Māra and his display, Sāgaramati?”  
“Blessed One, I see them.”
- 11.72 “Sāgaramati,” asked the Blessed One, “what should be done now that the evil Māra has come here to obstruct this Dharma teaching?”  
“Blessed One, he should be expelled to the world Adorned with Every Pleasure.”
- 11.73 Then the venerable Śāradvatīputra asked the bodhisattva Sāgaramati, [F.106.a] “Noble son, where is the world Adorned with Every Pleasure? What is the name of the thus-gone one who teaches the Dharma there?”
- 11.74 “Venerable Śāradvatīputra,” replied Sāgaramati, “the world system Adorned with Every Pleasure is out beyond buddha realms numbering twelve times the grains of sand in the Ganges to the east of this buddha realm. There the thus-gone, worthy, perfect buddha Mārapramardaka is teaching the Dharma. Why is this world system called Adorned with Every Pleasure? Venerable Śāradvatīputra, even given an eon, I could not fully express the pleasures, qualities, and manifestations in the world system Adorned with Every Pleasure. Therefore, that world system is called Adorned with Every Pleasure.
- 11.75 “When the blessed, thus-gone, worthy, perfect buddha Mārapramardaka attained awakening, he was seated at the seat of awakening. Before he attained omniscience, light rays called ‘summoners of Māra’ issued forth from his body. Summoned by this light, every single one of the billions of



māras in that universe and each of their ten-billionfold retinues came to the seat of awakening and set about trying to obstruct the bodhisattva. However, being unable to dissuade him, they were filled with shame and so touched the feet of that blessed one. As they gave rise to the mind set upon unsurpassed and perfect awakening from the bottom of their hearts, he then taught them the Dharma, after which he attained awakening. Thus, this thus-gone one is called Mārapramardaka. [F.106.b] Moreover, in the supreme and excellent group that attained awakening were also bodhisattvas who had been converted from among the māras. Even those who served him were bodhisattvas who had been converted from among the māras. The blessed thus-gone Mārapramardaka solely taught the bodhisattva teachings. The name of any other vehicle was not even heard of. Venerable Śāradvatīputra, this is what the world Adorned with Every Pleasure is like. So, if they were sent there, these māras could no longer function.”

11.76 The bodhisattvas who had been converted from among the māras simultaneously developed the mind directed toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening and perfected the qualities directed toward awakening. The remaining evil māras became scared and their hair bristled. They wished to escape the gathering but could not. They could not disappear, and so their terror only increased. Touching the Blessed One’s feet, they pleaded, “Blessed One, please protect us so that the bodhisattva Sāgaramati does not send us to that world. Well-Gone One, please protect us!”

11.77 “Evil ones,” said the Blessed One, “do not be afraid. These sublime beings are not out to harm others. Evil ones, beg the bodhisattva Sāgaramati to be patient with you and he will offer you protection.”

11.78 The evil māras then joined their palms together and, prostrating to the bodhisattva Sāgaramati, pleaded, “Sublime being, please be patient with us. Please do not send us to the world Adorned with Every Pleasure. We will not even occasionally make obstacles for the assembly when a sublime being like yourself is teaching Dharma.” [F.107.a]

11.79 “Evil ones,” responded Sāgaramati, “you do not need to ask me to be patient with the likes of you. Bodhisattvas are extremely patient with all beings. Evil ones, go to the world Adorned with Every Pleasure. See the appearances of that world and the blessed thus-gone Mārapramardaka for yourselves. No harm will come to you.”

11.80 The bodhisattva Sāgaramati then extended his golden-colored right hand, placing it upon the heads of the evil ones. He blessed them with such words of truth: “Through the truths and words of truth that enable the bodhisattvas to not be stingy with the Dharma and teachers to not withhold the Dharma, may these evil māras come to possess the bases of miracles in the same way that I do.” As soon as the bodhisattva Sāgaramati pronounced this, the evil

māras were endowed with the supreme strength of miracles. The worlds of this great trichiliocosm shook six times, and the evil māras disappeared from this buddha realm.

11.81 It was through the blessing of the bodhisattva Sāgaramati that they arrived at the world Adorned with Every Pleasure in that very same moment. The evil māras went before the blessed, thus-gone, worthy, perfect buddha Mārapramardaka. They bowed their heads to the Blessed One, circumambulated him seven times, and sat to one side. When all the bodhisattvas who had been converted from among the māras in the buddha realm of the blessed thus-gone Mārapramardaka saw these evil ones, they asked [F.107.b] the blessed thus-gone Mārapramardaka, “Blessed One, where have these pitiful, pallid, and ugly beings come from?”

11.82 “Noble children,” answered the Blessed One, “beyond buddha realms numbering twelve times the grains of sand in the Ganges to the west of this buddha realm is the Sahā world. There is the blessed, thus-gone, worthy, perfect buddha Śākyamuni. There he lives and remains. He gives Dharma teachings on the sections of *The Great Compilation*. He explains truly. Immeasurable, countless, and incalculable bodhisattvas from throughout the ten directions have gathered there to study this Dharma teaching. In that bodhisattva assembly is the bodhisattva great being Sāgaramati, who wears the unfathomable armor. They are there to question that blessed one and to initiate questions. At the end of that Dharma teaching, these evil māras showed up to create confusion. These evil māras were tamed and overpowered by that sublime being and sent to this world.”

11.83 The bodhisattvas who had been converted from among the māras then said to the evil māras, “We are also your friends. Evil ones, develop the mind directed toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening! Why must you do this? We were also māras. Though we had set out to obstruct beings’ roots of virtue, because of the Thus-Gone One, we developed the mind directed toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening. Therefore, you evil ones too: develop the mind directed toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening!”

11.84 Then the evil māras developed the mind directed toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening with an altruistic intention, proclaiming, [F.108.a] “We give rise to the mind directed toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening, and henceforth shall not engage in any actions of māras!”

11.85 The bodhisattvas then placed the evil māras on a jeweled lion throne and implored them, “Noble sons, please elucidate a faithful recounting of the Dharma teachings on the sections of *The Great Compilation*.”

11.86 Then bodhisattva Sāgaramati offered his blessings such that the exact utterance of *The Great Compilation* spoken by the Blessed One Śākyamuni came from the mouths and pores of the māras on the jeweled lion throne. It

was equal in letter, word, and syllable, without anything missing, anything extra, or anything left over. Then, when the bodhisattvas heard the teachings on the sections of *The Great Compilation* from the evil māras, they were amazed, and declared to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, we will visit the Sahā world, the blessed thus-gone Śākyamuni, the bodhisattva Sāgaramati, and the bodhisattvas gathered from throughout the ten directions!”

11.87 The blessed thus-gone Mārapramardaka then emitted light rays called “displaying all form” from his *ūrṇa* hair. The light rays passed through buddha realms numbering twelve times the grains of sand in the Ganges to bathe the Sahā world with a brilliant glow. The bodhisattvas now saw the blessed thus-gone Śākyamuni seated on a lion throne, the praises of which could not be fully sung in a hundred eons, giving detailed Dharma teachings on the sections of *The Great Compilation* to the bodhisattvas who had gathered from throughout the ten directions in the jeweled courtyard. [F.108.b] They also saw the bodhisattva Sāgaramati there. They also saw the Sahā world filled with water as if it were a single ocean. They saw all of this completely clearly. Further, they saw the bodhisattvas gathered from throughout the worlds of the directions arranged on jeweled lotuses, each a league in length, listening to the Dharma. Seeing this, they were satisfied, happy, joyful, and delighted. Being happy and pleased, they cast flowers toward the blessed thus-gone Śākyamuni. Through the power of the Buddha, the flowers instantly formed into a great parasol over the crown of the Blessed One Śākyamuni’s head. The entire assembly was amazed when they saw this flower parasol. “Blessed One,” they asked, “where has the flower parasol made of these kinds of flowers come from?”

11.88 “Friends,” the Blessed One answered, “these flowers have come from the world Adorned with Every Pleasure. The bodhisattvas there threw them as an act of venerating me.”

11.89 “Blessed One, we want to see the world Adorned with Every Pleasure and what the blessed thus-gone Mārapramardaka and the evil māras are doing there.”

11.90 Then, understanding the request made by the assembly, the Blessed One said to the bodhisattva Sāgaramati, “Noble son, show the world Adorned with Every Pleasure, the blessed thus-gone Mārapramardaka, and the evil māras to the assembly!” [F.109.a]

11.91 Then, given the opportunity by the Blessed One, ten thousand light rays sprang from the bodhisattva Sāgaramati’s ten fingers, passing through buddha realms numbering twelve times the grains of sand in the Ganges to bathe the world Adorned with Every Pleasure with a brilliant glow. They beheld the entire assembly, the world Adorned with Every Pleasure, the blessed thus-gone Mārapramardaka, and the evil māras seated on the great

Dharma throne, extensively giving Dharma teachings on the sections of *The Great Compilation*. Seeing this, they were astonished, and arose from their lotus seats to prostrate to the blessed thus-gone Mārapramardaka. They threw pearls and flowers toward the Blessed One and, immediately, through the power of the Buddha, the pearls and flowers appeared as a mansion of flowers at the crown of the Blessed One's head.

11.92 The evil māras then declared to the blessed thus-gone Mārapramardaka, "Blessed One, we will go before the Blessed One Śākyamuni in the Sahā world."

"Noble children," answered the Blessed One, "if you know that the time has come, then go."

11.93 At that point the evil māras prostrated to the feet of the Blessed One and circumambulated him seven times, disappearing from that buddha realm. Through the blessings and miraculous power of the bodhisattva Sāgaramati, in that very same moment, they arrived in this Sahā world. They went before the Blessed One and bowed their heads to his feet. [F.109.b] Then they circumambulated him seven times, prostrated to him, and took their seat off to one side.

11.94 Venerable Śāradvatīputra then asked the evil māras, "Friends, did you see the world Adorned with Every Pleasure?"

"Venerable Śāradvatīputra, we saw that world in all its purity. That realm of bodhisattvas—the most supreme of pure and immaculate beings—is astounding. Seeing it, we also developed the mind directed toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening."

11.95 "Friends, having developed the mind directed toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening, do you plan any māra activity?"

"Venerable Śāradvatīputra, we cannot perform any māra activity against bodhisattvas who have developed pure motivation. Why is this? To the degree that we perform māra activity, the bodhisattvas get stronger and more diligent. Venerable Śāradvatīputra, from this point, you should understand that when māra activity is aimed at bodhisattvas, that very activity is said to be buddha activity. It is not māra activity."

11.96 Once the revelations of the buddha realm and the miracle that happened to the māras were recounted, twenty thousand beings in the assembly developed the mind directed toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening. Ten thousand māras in the māra assembly also developed the mind directed toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening, and proclaimed with one voice, "Blessed One, may we be born in the world Adorned with Every Pleasure!" The Blessed One then prophesied their birth in that buddha realm. [F.110.a]

12.

## CHAPTER TWELVE: BLESSINGS

12.1 The bodhisattva Sāgaramati then requested the Blessed One, “Blessed One, given that the awakening of the thus-gone ones encounters many obstacles and much opposition, please carefully grant your blessings, Blessed One, such that through the blessings of the Thus-Gone One, these sūtras will not fade, but grow; that they will be upheld and read; that their teachers will not have to vie with māras and gods of the class of māras; that this sublime Dharma may long remain; and that these sūtras will be preserved, kept safe, and accepted.”

12.2 The Blessed One said to the bodhisattva Sāgaramati, “Any being who retains such a sūtra as this, Sāgaramati, and teaches it, accepts it, and practices it diligently and develops roots of virtue, will hold the power of discipline and the blessings of this Dharma teaching. Therefore, Sāgaramati, listen well and bear what I say in mind: these words will summon the Four Great Kings. So that this Dharma teaching is protected and so those who teach it are accepted, these words that summon the Four Great Kings who work in earnest must be spoken. Sāgaramati, what are the summoning words? They are:

12.3 *samesamasandhi sarane sarapati dhane dhanavati dhudhume dhudhumati āvarte amale vimale viraje kakare kāruṇe huhu huhuvoati huhusandhi nirghatani avatte vōatte madhumatimarajite viśuddhe viśudhavati misile manorahare.*<sup>31</sup>

Sāgaramati, these are the summoning words. They should be used in earnest, so the Four Great Kings are summoned [F.110.b] and this Dharma teaching is protected and its teachers accepted.

12.4 “When Dharma teachers chant this mantra while spreading love throughout the four directions and bringing the Four Great Kings to mind, the Four Great Kings will be summoned by the mantra.”

12.5 Then the Four Great Kings, who were present in the assembly, rose from their seats. They joined their hands in the direction of the Blessed One and bowed to him, saying, “Blessed One, we, the Four Great Kings, will collectively protect this Dharma teaching and care for its teachers, wherever it is taught with a proper mind, such that they are not obstructed or harmed in any way.”

12.6 The Blessed One said, “Moreover, Sāgaramati, the words that summon Śakra, lord of the gods, must be spoken. These words will summon Śakra, lord of the gods. What are the words that summon Śakra, lord of the gods? They are:

*jaye jayamati attemattamaṅkure siddhamati śubheśāntikare nadane dānte dāntamati  
tadkare kṣaye kṣayamukhe avttanivivattanivaripattani paricchede smṛtismṛtisandhi  
āgacchakauśika nirjitā asura jayantideva samayaste aravadho dharmanijito ramahi  
svāstīyanāmabhutānāṃ arakṣadharmacāriṇāṃ.*

12.7 Sāgaramati, these are the words that summon Śakra, lord of the gods. They will summon Śakra, lord of the gods.

12.8 “Dharma teachers should chant these mantra syllables and then wash themselves with the cleansing and purifying ritual, wear fine clothes, toss flowers to the east, recollect all the buddhas, have great compassion for all beings, [F.111.a] and then take their seat on a lion throne. Then, considering Śakra, lord of the gods, they should say, ‘Kauśika, please come and strengthen the assembly. Enact the fruition of this mantra.’ When they do so, because of the purity of their intention and the purity of their discipline, immediately Śakra will come and enter the assembly and enact the fruition of the mantra.”

12.9 Then Śakra, lord of the gods, who was present in the assembly, pledged to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, I will be present near Dharma teachers in order to uphold and preserve this Dharma teaching. I will strengthen their assembly. I will enact the fruition of this mantra. Blessed One, I will extensively and faithfully relay this Dharma teaching to the gods in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three. Why will I do this? Because it demonstrates the bodhisattva deeds of the blessed buddhas of the past, present, and future. Blessed One, I will honor the Dharma of the blessed buddhas of the past, present, and future; thus, I will teach this Dharma teaching extensively and faithfully.”

12.10 Then the Blessed One offered his approval to Śakra, lord of the gods: “Kauśika, excellent! It is excellent that you utter the lion’s roar in order to uphold the sublime Dharma. That is your task. Lord of the gods, if you contemplate this Dharma teaching, know that the gods will be victorious, and the asuras will be defeated.

12.11 “Moreover, Sāgaramati, the following mantra that destroys the māras and gods of the class of māras [F.111.b] must be chanted. Thereby, this mantra will destroy the māras and gods of the class of māras. What is this mantra? It is:

*śame śamavati śamitaśatru oṅkure maṅkure mārājite karāṭe keyūre tejovati  
ohokamati viśaṭha nirmale malāvanaye okhare okharā grase khayāgrase grasate  
hemukhī parāmukhī amukhī śamitāni sarvagrahavandhanāni nigrāṅhitā sarva-  
parapravādina vimuktāmārapāsā sthāpitābuddhamudrā samudghatitāh sarvamārā  
sucaritapadapariśuddhya gacchantusarvamārakarmaṇi.*

12.12 “Sāgaramati, these syllables destroy māras and eliminate afflictions. Dharma teachers should chant these syllables while seated on a Dharma throne, pervading the entire assembly with a love that is formed by awakening, and while arousing the notion of themselves as physicians, the Dharma as medicine, the Dharma audience as patients, the Thus-Gone One as a sublime being, and the way of the Dharma as something that persists. When they bring forth this mantra and teach the Dharma, no māra or god of the class of māra will be able to come within a hundred leagues to cause confusion. Even if they do come near, they will be unable to cause obstacles.”

12.13 The evil māras then said to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, when the bodhisattva Sāgaramati sent us to the world Adorned with Every Pleasure, the sublime beings there manifested their blessings, magic, and miracles for us. [F.112.a] Blessed One, from this day hence we will spurn all the works of Māra. We will be present wherever this Dharma teaching is given—in any town, village, city, or temple where it is taught. We will be humble, respectful, and deferential to receive it.”

12.14 The Blessed One said, “Excellent, excellent, evil ones. As this respect for the Dharma ripens, you will gradually give up all the works of Māra. You will attain the same Dharma that these sublime beings attain.

12.15 “Moreover, Sāgaramati, the mantra that summons Brahmā, master of the Sahā world, must be spoken. Once Brahmā has been summoned with this summoning mantra, he will come before Dharma teachers. What is this mantra? It is:

*maitrekare karuṅakare muditakare upekṣakare buddhakare dharmakare saṅghakare  
sukrītavijaye mahāvītāne nisphare dāghe ojovati ojogame dharmāna nadane satya-  
pratiṣṭhāne upapati viśuddhe svacitta upaśame vyavalokayabrahmāṇa vyutiṣṭha-  
namaste apekṣa svadharmacaraṇāṃ kurusadharmaparigrāhaṇa kritamanuvālaya  
buddhane trīmamavyavacche vasi smarata dharmacakrapravartānāṃ kurasatva-  
viśodhanā pratigrīhāna dharmānāgaramālānāṃ māvikaupaya.*

- 12.16 “Sāgaramati, Dharma teachers should chant these words that summon Brahmā, master of the Sahā world, live a pure life, and have non-aggressive minds, calm faculties, guarded mindfulness, a pure seal, [F.112.b] pure physical actions, isolated verbal actions, stable minds, good patient deeds, refined discipline, well-applied diligence, reliable learning, cultivated mental pliancy, sharp faculties of insight, and diligent proper engagement. They should retain the mind of awakening, have fully cultivated love, arouse joy in all beings through their stable great compassion, sit on the lion throne in order to liberate all beings from suffering, and deliver Dharma discourses while remembering Brahmā, master of the Sahā world. Then, as soon as they bring him to mind, Brahmā and his Brahmā gods will arrive.
- 12.17 “Sāgaramati, the following things will happen when Brahmā is seen arriving: the entire assembly will change to having a loving mind, their faculties will not decline, they will not harm one another, they will esteem the Dharma and Dharma teachers as teachers and masters, they will join their palms, their minds will be one-pointed, they will be mentally engaged without distraction, they will act with perseverance, they will be mentally engaged, and with their whole minds they will be conscientious and attentively listening. These Dharma teachers will attain the scriptures they had not previously received and the teachings they had not previously heard. Know that it is into their assembly that Brahmā, master of the Sahā world, will come.”
- 12.18 Then Brahmā, master of the Sahā world, who was present there, said to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, I live in the Brahmā world. However, I will give up its concentrations and limitless bliss states to be present in the assemblies where this Dharma teaching is given. [F.113.a] Such Dharma teachers will accomplish eight qualities. What are they? (1) They will accomplish mindfulness in order to not forget the teachings they have heard. (2) They will accomplish intelligence in order to realize the profound Dharma. (3) They will accomplish realization in order to fully comprehend the meaning. (4) They will accomplish eloquence in order to cut through all doubt. (5) They will accomplish perfect teachings in order to satisfy with all manner of languages and explanations. (6) They will accomplish the guarding of the vinaya in order to outshine the entire assembly. (7) They will accomplish the light of Dharma in order to teach inferior beings. (8) They will accomplish the gateway of emancipation in order to engage in all of this and to accomplish the Dharma. Blessed One, such Dharma teachers will accomplish these eight qualities. So that these Dharma teachers may be guarded and protected, and so that the sublime Dharma may remain for a long time, through the blessings of the Thus-Gone One, I will ensure that as this Dharma teaching is spread, all māras and obstructers will be destroyed.”



- 12.19 The bodhisattva Sāgaramati then requested the Blessed One, “Blessed One, please grant your blessings so that in the final age after the Thus-gone One has passed into complete nirvāṇa, this Dharma teaching will reach the hands of beings who have formed roots of virtue, be placed in treasuries, put into writing, and not fade.”
- 12.20 The Blessed One understood the bodhisattva Sāgaramati’s request and sent forth a burst of light from his *ūrṇā* hair that filled the worlds of the great trichiliocosm with a brilliant glow. This caused all the grasses, trees, herbs, [F.113.b] forests, stones, pebbles, and everything else in the worlds of the great trichiliocosm to appear in the form of the Thus-Gone One. In the jeweled pavilion, all the appearances that had been blessed as offerings also appeared in the form of the Thus-Gone One.
- 12.21 All these forms of the Thus-Gone One then proclaimed in unity, “Hark! This Dharma teaching is blessed by the blessed Śākyamuni. Anything that is blessed by a blessed one is blessed by all blessed ones. Anything that is blessed by all blessed ones cannot be obstructed by māras. Even if māras, their supporters, and their servants as numerous as the grains of sand in the Ganges were to try to obstruct it, they could not obstruct this Dharma teaching. Why is this? It is possible that the earth could crack open, that the oceans could evaporate, that the mountains could crumble, that the wind could be captured, that the sun and moon could plummet to the earth, that space could show itself as form, that fire could become water, that water could become fire, that the four elements could transform into other elements, that the minds of all beings could function as one, and that the earth and sky could get stuck together—yet, it is impossible that the blessings of the thus-gone ones could be agitated, shaken, or disturbed by anyone.”
- 12.22 Then the Blessed One placed his hand upon Venerable Ānanda’s crown, saying to him, “Ānanda, you must uphold the sacred Dharma to ensure it will last a long time. You must uphold this Dharma teaching and keep it, recite it, master it, and teach it broadly and genuinely to others!” [F.114.a]
- 12.23 Then the bodhisattva Sāgaramati asked the Blessed One, “When there are bodhisattvas here who have attained the mindfulness and intellect of the truth seen by the Blessed One, which is as difficult to fathom as the ocean or a great sea, why is the monk Ānanda, with his partial understanding, to be entrusted with this Dharma teaching?”
- 12.24 “Sāgaramati,” responded the Blessed One, “the monk Ānanda will not uphold this sūtra by arousing his own strength of intellect. He will uphold it through the Thus-Gone One’s blessings. Sāgaramati, any being who hears this Dharma teaching from the monk Ānanda will be gladdened, and attain

faith and supreme joy. It will occur to them, 'It is through the Thus-Gone One's blessings that this hearer is upholding and teaching this sūtra; such are the unfathomable and incredible blessings of the Thus-Gone One.' "

12.25 Then some of the gods and men in the assembly thought, "How is it that the bodhisattva Sāgaramati is endowed with this degree of mindfulness while Venerable Ānanda, who is the most knowledgeable of all those taught by the Thus-Gone One, is not?"

12.26 Venerable Mahākāśyapa knew the thoughts of the assembly with his own mind. So, while casting his gaze over the assembly, he asked the Blessed One, "The bodhisattva Sāgaramati is endowed with perfect mindfulness. Is Venerable Ānanda not also? He is the most knowledgeable of all the learned taught by the Thus-Gone One."

12.27 "Kāśyapa," answered the Blessed One, "what do you think about the claim that the dispositions of beings contained within buddha realms as numerous as the grains of sand in the river Ganges are myriad—more so than the elements of earth. Kāśyapa, are the dispositions of beings myriad?" [F.114.b]

"Blessed One, they are myriad. Well-Gone One, they are limitless," said Kāśyapa.

12.28 "Kāśyapa," the Blessed One continued, "imagine that all those beings attained a human body all at once and that each of them possessed all the power of mindfulness and recollection that the monk Ānanda possesses. Even then, they still would not equal even a fraction of the power of mindfulness and recollection produced by the bodhisattva Sāgaramati. No analogy could ever describe it. Kāśyapa, the bodhisattva Sāgaramati retains the teachings of all the blessed buddhas of the ten directions. When one thus-gone one teaches the Dharma, it does not lessen or increase the Dharma teaching of a second thus-gone one. Kāśyapa, I will draw an analogy: A rain the depth of a chariot axle could fall upon the great ocean, but one body of water will not lessen or increase a second body of water. Even though the ocean absorbs all the flow of all rivers, it does not grow or shrink. Kāśyapa, likewise, though the bodhisattva Sāgaramati retains the Dharma teaching of all the blessed buddhas, the Dharma teaching of one thus-gone one does not lessen or increase the Dharma teaching of a second thus-gone one. There is no increase or decrease to the strength of recollection he has aroused."

12.29 When this teaching was given, eight thousand beings developed the mind directed toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening, and proclaimed, "May we develop the strength of recollection to the same degree as the bodhisattva Sāgaramati!"

12.30 The entire assembly then tossed earthly and divine flowers toward the Blessed One and the bodhisattva Sāgaramati. [F.115.a]

- 12.31 The bodhisattva Padmavyūha then asked the Blessed One, “Blessed One, how much merit will a noble son or daughter develop when they hear this Dharma gateway and trust it, or when they retain it, keep it, read it, recite it, understand it, or apply it earnestly?”
- 12.32 The Blessed One then spoke these verses in response to the bodhisattva Padmavyūha:
- “The merit of filling the worlds of the great trichiliocosm  
With gold and offering it to the well-gone ones,  
Is exceeded by anyone who hears this Dharma treasure  
And is inspired by it.
- 12.33 “The merit generated by engaging with this sūtra  
Could not be generated by  
Someone filling ten thousand worlds with jewels  
And offering them to the thus-gone ones.
- 12.34 “Not even a fraction of the merit created by  
Someone reciting and teaching this sūtra  
Is present in filling ten thousand worlds  
With jewels and giving them away.
- 12.35 “Filling hundreds of billions of realms  
With jewels and offering them to the buddhas—  
The teachers and protectors of the world—  
Does not equal someone applying themselves to this teaching.
- 12.36 “The merit of applying this teaching cannot be equaled  
By filling worlds as numerous as the grains of sand  
In all the Ganges Rivers throughout the ten directions  
With jewels and offering them to the victors.
- 12.37 “Perfecting the mind of awakening, upholding the Dharma,  
Practicing the Dharma, and having compassion for beings—  
These four qualities bring infinite merit.  
The Well-Gone One cannot describe their limit.
- 12.38 “The domain of space, the dispositions of beings,  
Buddhas’ wisdom, and the mind of awakening—  
These four things are unfathomable.  
The learned ones should not doubt this in their studies.
- 12.39 “When this Dharma jewel is taught,  
A billion realms in the ten directions will shake.

- They will be illuminated and flowers will rain down.  
Thousands of cymbals will resound without being played.
- 12.40 “All learned bodhisattvas will rejoice  
And marvel to one another,  
‘In hearing this teaching, we have discovered  
A truly meaningful way to live!’ [F.115.b]
- 12.41 “Any being that hears this  
Will have discovered something great.  
Anyone who does not forget the mind of awakening  
Will be held dear by the thus-gone ones.”
- 12.42 Billions of buddhas from the ten directions  
Extended their right hands and,  
Placing them upon the crown of the one with ocean-like qualities,  
They spoke an encouragement of the Lion of the Śākya.
- 12.43 Gods, nāgas, asuras, kinnaras,  
Gandharvas, yakṣas, garuḍas, mahoragas,  
Brahmā, Śakra, and the world protectors  
Exclaimed in amazement while floating in the sky,
- 12.44 “May the Lion of the Śākya and the Saṅgha,  
And those who uphold a sūtra like this,  
And the heroic bodhisattvas live long!  
And may this well-spoken Dharma never fade!
- 12.45 “We will serve anyone  
Who upholds this Dharma way.  
We will respectfully protect them,  
And carefully delight them.”
- 12.46 Then the Blessed One said to the bodhisattva Sāgaramati, “Sāgaramati, this  
Dharma way, this Dharma seal, this Dharma compilation, this Dharma  
division has been explained, is being explained, and will be explained by all  
the blessed buddhas of the past, present, and future. Sāgaramati, with  
respect and reverence, you must fully accomplish it.”
- 12.47 Once the Blessed One had spoken, the bodhisattva great being  
Sāgaramati, the entire bodhisattva assembly, the saṅgha of monks, and the  
world of gods, humans, asuras, and gandharvas all rejoiced and praised  
what the Blessed One had taught.

12.48 *This completes "The Questions of Sāgaramati," the fifth section of the Dharma teaching of "The Great Compilation."*

c.

## Colophon

c.1 This was translated, proofed, and finalized according to the new terminological register by the Indian preceptors Jinamitra, Dānaśīla, and Buddhaprabhā, as well as the editor-translator Bandé Yeshé Dé.

n.

## NOTES

- n.1 On these citations, see Skilling 2018, 441–42. Moreover, the *jātaka* tale told in this sūtra, in which the Buddha, in a former life as a lion, saves two baby monkeys from the clutches of a vulture by offering his own flesh and blood as ransom, was also included in the *Mahāprajñāpāramitāsāstra* attributed to Nāgārjuna (Lamotte 2007, pp. 1902–6).
- n.2 See *The Questions of the Nāga King Sāgara* (2) (Toh 154), [i.2](https://read.84000.co/translation/UT22084-058-003.html#UT22084-058-003-4) (<https://read.84000.co/translation/UT22084-058-003.html#UT22084-058-003-4>).
- n.3 On the date of Taishō 397 see Lancaster, [K 56](http://www.acmuller.net/descriptive_catalogue/files/k0056.html) ([http://www.acmuller.net/descriptive\\_catalogue/files/k0056.html](http://www.acmuller.net/descriptive_catalogue/files/k0056.html)); for Taishō 400, see Lancaster, [K 1481](http://www.acmuller.net/descriptive_catalogue/files/k1481.html#note-k1481-2) ([http://www.acmuller.net/descriptive\\_catalogue/files/k1481.html#note-k1481-2](http://www.acmuller.net/descriptive_catalogue/files/k1481.html#note-k1481-2)). Taishō 397, the *Mahāsaṃnipāta*, is 大方等大集經 (*Dafang deng daji jing*); Taishō 400 is 佛說海意菩薩所問淨印法門經 (*Haiyi pusa suowen jing famen jing*).
- n.4 See Griffiths 2015 (p. 994) and Skilling 2018.
- n.5 The Denkarma catalogue is dated to c. 812 CE. In this catalogue, *The Questions of Sāgarāmati* is included among the “Miscellaneous Sūtras” (*mdo sde sna tshogs*) less than ten sections (*bam po*) long. Denkarma, 297.a.3. See also Herrmann-Pfandt 2008, p. 49, no. 86.
- n.6 In Tibet most commentators appear to have classified this sūtra under the rubric of Yogācāra-Mādhyamika (*rnal ’byor spyod pa’i dbu ma*), such as, for example, the sixteenth century scholar Pekar Sangpo (*pad dkar bzang po*) in his survey of the sūtras (Pekar Sangpo 2006, p. 228).
- n.7 Conze 1955, p. 136.

- n.8 See for example Ju Mipham 2004 and Tsongkhapa 2000. Numerous other such brief citations have appeared in translation.
- n.9 This section is very similar to a description of the Dharma teaching found in the *Akṣayamatīnirdeśa* (Toh 175, see Braarvig 2020, *The Teaching of Akṣayamati*, 1.6 (<https://read.84000.co/translation/UT22084-060-004.html#UT22084-060-004-16>)). Notably, however, in that version the miracle that follows is not one of water, but of golden light.
- n.10 *theg pa* read as *shes pa* following the Narthang and Lhasa editions of the Kangyur. Pedurma, p. 17, n. 6.
- n.11 *bstan pa* read as *brtan pa* following the Yongle, Lithang, Narthang, Kangxi, Choné, and Lhasa editions of the Kangyur. Pedurma, p. 21, no. 2.
- n.12 *nges pa* read as *des pa* following the Narthang, Urga, and Lhasa editions of the Kangyur. Pedurma, p. 21, n. 3.
- n.13 *byang chub sems sogs* read as *byang chub sems dpa'* following the Yongle, Lithang, Narthang, Kangxi, Choné, and Lhasa editions of the Kangyur. Pedurma, p. 28, n. 10.
- n.14 *bsam* read as *bas* following the Lithang, Narthang, Choné, and Lhasa editions of the Kangyur. Pedurma, p. 30, n. 1.
- n.15 *nang* read as *nad* following the Kangxi, Narthang, and Lhasa editions of the Kangyur. Pedurma, p. 30, n. 2.
- n.16 *bdag gis* read as *bdag gi* following the Yongle, Kangxi, and Lhasa editions of the Kangyur. Pedurma, p. 33, n. 9.
- n.17 *dib dib po* read as *rib rib po* following the Narthang and Lhasa editions of the Kangyur. Pedurma, p. 55, n. 1.
- n.18 Translation tentative. Tib. *ngo za ring gi tshig med pa*.
- n.19 Translation tentative. Tib. *sems dang yid dang rnam par shes pa des rig pa med par tshor ba yang so sor myong la / sangs rgyas kyī chos rnams yongs su ma dzogs kyī bar du tshor ba 'gog pa mngon sum du yang mi byed de /*.
- n.20 *yang dag min* read as *yang dag nyid* following the Stok Palace manuscript, p. 39.b.
- n.21 *spyangs pa* read as *sbyangs pa* following the Yongle, Lithang, Kangxi, Narthang, Choné, and Lhasa editions of the Kangyur. Pedurma, p. 65, n. 13.



- n.22 Whereas the single word *dharmā* (Tib. *chos*) can be used in both Sanskrit and Tibetan to denote a range of meanings, we have to translate it variably here as “qualities” and “phenomena.”
- n.23 *kyi chos kyi chos* read as *kyi chos* following the Stok Palace manuscript, p. 68.a.
- n.24 The passage that follows makes use of a series of alphabetical correspondences and puns that are lost in translation, not only in translation from Tibetan to English, but also the original act of translation from Sanskrit to Tibetan.
- n.25 A *dhāraṇī* that is included in a number of Great Vehicle *sūtras* and is said to encapsulate and thus give access to the full scope of the Buddha’s teachings.
- n.26 The Sanskrit of the passage starting with this sentence and continuing down to the end of the next paragraph (10.6) survives as a quote (48.19–50.7) in *Asaṅga’s Ratnagotravibhāga-vyākhyā* (RGVV, Toh 4025), in which an important doctrinal point is made about how bodhisattvas take voluntary rebirth in the world (according to some commentaries in the “body of a mental nature,” *manomayakāya*, *yid kyi rang bzhin gyi lus*). The Sanskrit of the passage corresponding to this present paragraph is as follows: *yad āha | paśya sāgaramate dharmāṇām asaratām akāratātām nirātmatām niḥsattvatām nirjīvatām niḥpudgalatām asvāmikatām | tatra hi nāma yathesyaṅte tathā viṭhapyaṅte viṭhapitās ca samānā na cetayanti na prakalpayanti | imāṅ sāgaramate dharmaviṭhapanām adhimucya bodhisattvo na kasmīṅścid dharme parikhedam utpādayati | tasyaiva jñāna-darśanaṅ śuci śuddhaṅ bhavati | nātra kaścid upakāro vāpakāro vā kriyata iti | evaṅ ca dharmāṅ dharmatām yathābhūtaṅ prajānāti | evaṅ ca mahākaruṅāsaṅnāhaṅ na tyajati*. In the RGVV this quote follows after the one mentioned below in n.29. The Tibetan text in the Tengyur (translated by Sajjana and Ngok Lotsāwa Loden Sherab) differs in several respects from the Tibetan rendering here in the *sūtra* itself (translated by Jinamitra, Dānaśīla, Buddhaprabhā, and Yeshé Dé).
- n.27 The Degé Kangyur Tibetan reads *chos rnam par bsgrub pa ’di la*, but the Tibetan of the quote in the RGVV reads *gzhan du mi ’gyur ba’i chos ’di la*.
- n.28 The quoted passage mentioned above in n.26 ends here, although as noted in n.29 below the following passage is also quoted in the same text (but in reverse order).
- n.29 The Sanskrit of the passage starting with this sentence and continuing down to the end of 10.9 survives as a quote (47.6–48.13) in *Asaṅga’s Ratnagotra-*

*vibhāga-mahāyānottaratantrasāstra* (Toh 4025). In that text this quote precedes the one mentioned above in n.26.

n.30 The quoted passage mentioned in n.29 ends here.

n.31 This and the other dhāraṇīs in the English translation represent a transcription of the phonetic Sanskrit provided in the Degé version of the Tibetan translation. No attempt has been made to compare it to other versions of the dhāraṇī, nor has it been edited to conform with normative Sanskrit orthography and syntax.

b.

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## GLOSSARY

## · Types of attestation for Sanskrit names and terms ·

AS	<i>Attested in source text</i> This term is attested in the Sanskrit manuscript used as a source for this translation.
AO	<i>Attested in other text</i> This term is attested in other Sanskrit manuscripts of the Kangyur or Tengyur.
AD	<i>Attested in dictionary</i> This term is attested in Tibetan-Sanskrit dictionaries.
AA	<i>Approximate attestation</i> The attestation of this name is approximate. It is based on other names where Tibetan-Sanskrit relationship is attested in dictionaries or other manuscripts.
RP	<i>Reconstruction from Tibetan phonetic rendering</i> This term is a reconstruction based on the Tibetan phonetic rendering of the term.
RS	<i>Reconstruction from Tibetan semantic rendering</i> This term is a reconstruction based on the semantics of the Tibetan translation.
SU	<i>Source Unspecified</i> This term has been supplied from an unspecified source, which most often is a widely trusted dictionary.

## g.1 absorption

*ting nge 'dzin · ting 'dzin*

ཉིང་ངེ་འཇིན། · ཉིང་འཇིན།

*samādhi*

A synonym for meditation, this refers to the state of deep meditative immersion that results from different modes of Buddhist practice.

g.2 absorption of the heroic gait

*dpa' bar 'gro ba*

དཔལ་བར་འགྲོ་བ།

*śūramgama*

g.3 Acceptance of phenomena concurring with reality

*rjes su 'thun pa'i chos la bzod pa · rjes su 'thun pa'i chos kyi bzod pa*

རྗེས་སུ་འབྲུན་པའི་ཚོས་ལ་བཟོད་པ། · རྗེས་སུ་འབྲུན་པའི་ཚོས་ཀྱི་བཟོད་པ།

*ānulomikadharmakṣānti*

A particular realization attained by a bodhisattva on the sixth bodhisattva level. This realization arises as a result of analysis of the essential nature of phenomena (*dharmas*).

g.4 Adorned with Every Pleasure

*bde ba thams cad kyis brgyan pa*

བདེ་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱིས་བརྒྱན་པ།

—

An eastern buddha realm where the buddha Mārapramardaka resides.

g.5 Adorned with Immaculate and Countless Precious Qualities

*yon tan rin po che dri ma dang bral ba dpag tu med pa bkod pas brgyan pa*

ཡོན་ཏན་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་དྲི་མ་དང་བྲལ་བ་དཔག་ཏུ་མེད་པ་བཀོད་པས་བརྒྱན་པ།

—

A buddha realm below our world where the buddha Master of the Ocean with Noble and Playful Super-knowledge resides.

g.6 aggregate

*phung po*

ཕུང་པོ།

*skandha*

The five psycho-physical components of personal experience: form, feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness.

g.7 Ānanda

*kun dga' bo*

ཀུན་དགའ་བོ།

*ānanda*

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

A major śrāvaka disciple and personal attendant of the Buddha Śākyamuni during the last twenty-five years of his life. He was a cousin of the Buddha (according to the Mahāvastu, he was a son of Śuklodana, one of the brothers of King Śuddhodana, which means he was a brother of Devadatta; other sources say he was a son of Amṛtodana, another brother of King Śuddhodana, which means he would have been a brother of Aniruddha).

Ānanda, having always been in the Buddha's presence, is said to have memorized all the teachings he heard and is celebrated for having recited all the Buddha's teachings by memory at the first council of the Buddhist saṅgha, thus preserving the teachings after the Buddha's parinirvāṇa. The phrase "Thus did I hear at one time," found at the beginning of the sūtras, usually stands for his recitation of the teachings. He became a patriarch after the passing of Mahākāśyapa.

g.8 application of mindfulness

*dran pa nye bar bzhag pa*

སྒྲུབ་པ་ཉེ་བར་བཞག་པ།

*smṛtyupasthāna*

See four applications of mindfulness.

g.9 Asaṅga

*thogs med*

ཐོགས་མེད།

*asaṅga*

Indian commentator from the late fourth– early fifth centuries; closely associated with the works of Maitreya and the Yogācāra philosophical school.

g.10 Astounding Sight

*shin tu rnam par bltas pa*

ཤིན་ཏུ་རྣམ་པར་བཟོས་པ།

—

A past buddha realm where the buddha Dīptavīrya resided.

g.11 asura

*lha ma yin*

ལྷ་མ་ཡིན།

*asura*

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

A type of nonhuman being whose precise status is subject to different views, but is included as one of the six classes of beings in the sixfold classification of realms of rebirth. In the Buddhist context, asuras are powerful beings said to be dominated by envy, ambition, and hostility. They are also known in the pre-Buddhist and pre-Vedic mythologies of India and Iran, and feature prominently in Vedic and post-Vedic Brahmanical mythology, as well as in the Buddhist tradition. In these traditions, asuras are often described as being engaged in interminable conflict with the devas (gods).

g.12 bases of miracles

*rdzu 'phrul gyi rkang pa*

རྩུ་འཕྲུལ་གྱི་རྒྱུ་ལྔ།

*ṛddhipāda*

The four factors that serve as the basis for magical abilities: intention, diligence, attention, and discernment.

g.13 Bhṛgu

*ngan spong*

བཞུ་ལྷོང་།

*bhṛgu*

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.14 Blessed One

*bcom ldan 'das*

བཅོམ་ལྷན་འདས།

*bhagavat*

In Buddhist literature, an epithet applied to buddhas, most often to Śākyamuni. The Sanskrit term generically means “possessing fortune,” but in specifically Buddhist contexts it implies that a buddha is in possession of the virtuous qualities and wisdom associated with complete awakening.

g.15 Brahmā

*tshangs pa*

ཚེངས་པ།

*brahmā*



One of the primary deities of the Brahmanical pantheon, Brahmā occupies an important place as one of two deities (the other being Indra/Śakra) that are said to have first exhorted Śākyamuni to teach the Dharma. The particular heavens over which Brahmā rules are often some of the most sought after realms of higher rebirth in Buddhist literature. Among his epithets is “Lord of Sahā World” (*Sahāmpati*).

g.16 branches of awakening

*byang chub kyi yan lag*

བྱང་ལྡན་གྱི་ཡན་ལག

*bodhyaṅga*

Mindfulness, discrimination, diligence, joy, pliability, absorption, and equanimity.

g.17 buddha realm

*sangs rgyas kyi zhing*

སངས་རྒྱས་གྱི་ཞིང་།

*buddhakṣetra*

A pure realm manifested by a buddha or advanced bodhisattva through the power of their great merit and aspirations.

g.18 Buddhaprabha

*bud dha pra bha*

བྱང་ལྡན་པ་ལྷ།

*buddhaprabha*

One of the Indian preceptors who assisted in translating this text.

g.19 Caretaker of Beings

*gro ba 'dzin*

གྲོ་བ་འཛིན།

—

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.20 consciousness

*rnam par shes pa*

རྣམ་པར་ཤེས་པ།

*vijñāna*

One of the five aggregates; also counted as the sixth of the six elements.

g.21 Continuous Intelligence

*blo gros rgyun mi 'chad pa*

ལྷོ་གྲོ་ས་རྒྱལ་མི་འཆད་པ།

—

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.22 correct discriminations

*so so yang dag par rig pa*

སོ་སོ་ཡང་དག་པར་རིག་པ།

*pratisamvid*

Genuine discrimination with respect to dharmas, meaning, language, and eloquence.

g.23 Dānaśīla

*dA na shI la*

དྲན་ཤི་ལ།

*dānaśīla*

One of the Indian preceptors who assisted in translating this text.

g.24 desire realm

*'dod pa'i kham*s

འདོད་པའི་ཁམས།

*kāmadhātu*

In Buddhist cosmology, our sphere of existence where beings are driven primarily by the urge for sense gratification and attachment to material substance. See also “three realms.”

g.25 dhāraṇī

*gzungs*

གཟུངས།

*dhāraṇī*

An incantation, spell, or mnemonic formula that distills essential points of the Dharma. It is used by practitioners as an aid to memorize and recall detailed teachings, and to attain mundane and supramundane goals.

According to context, this term has also been rendered here as “recollection.”

g.26 Dharma Teacher

*chos smra ba*

ཚོས་སྤྲོ་བ།

—

Name of a bodhisattva great being.

g.27 Diligent Intelligence

*brtson 'grus blo gros*

བརྩོན་འགྲུས་རྒྱོ་གྲོས།

—

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.28 Dīpaṃkara

*mar me mdzad*

མར་མེ་མཛད།

*dīpaṃkara*

A former buddha in front of whom the Buddha Śākyamuni (in a past life) first formed the aspiration to awaken.

g.29 Dīptavīrya

*brtson 'grus 'bar ba*

བརྩོན་འགྲུས་འབར་བ།

*dīptavīrya*

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.30 Dīptavīrya

*brtson 'grus 'bar ba*

བརྩོན་འགྲུས་འབར་བ།

*dīptavīrya*

A buddha in a world called Astounding Sight and an eon in the past called Flower Origin.

g.31 Discerning Vision

*nges par brtags te blta ba*

ངེས་པར་བརྟགས་ཏེ་བལྟ་བ།

—

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.32 eight branches

*yan lag brgyad*

ཡན་ལག་བརྒྱད།

*aṣṭāṅga*

This can refer either to what is also known as the eightfold path (*'phags lam yan lag brgyad*): (1) right view, (2) right intention, (3) right speech, (4) right action, (5) right livelihood, (6) effort, (7) mindfulness, and (8) meditative concentration. Or to what is also known as the eight precepts (*bsnyen gnas yan lag brgyad*): (1) abstaining from killing, (2) stealing, (3) sexual misconduct, (4) lying, (5) intoxication, (6) eating after noon, (7) dancing and singing, and (8) lying on an elevated bed.

g.33 eight wrong modes

*log pa nyid brgyad*

ལོག་པ་ཉིད་བརྒྱད།

*aṣṭamithyātva*

Wrong view, wrong thought, wrong speech, wrong actions, wrong livelihood, wrong effort, wrong recollection, and wrong samādhi.

g.34 eighth-lowest stage

*brgyad pa*

བརྒྱད་པ།

*aṣṭamaka*

A person who is eight steps away in the arc of their development from becoming an arhat (Tib. *dgra bcom pa*). Specifically, this term refers to one who is on the cusp of becoming a stream-enterer (Skt. *śrotāpanna*; Tib. *rgyun du zhugs pa*), and is the first and lowest stage in a list of eight stages or classes of a noble person (Skt. *āryapudgala*). The person at this lowest stage in the sequence is still on the path of seeing (Skt. *darśanamārga*; Tib. *mthong lam*), and then enters the path of cultivation (Skt. *bhāvanāmārga*; Tib. *sgoms lam*) upon attaining the next stage, that of a stream-enterer (stage 7). From there they progress through the remaining stages of the śrāvaka path, becoming in turn a once-returner (stages six and five), a non-returner (stages four and three), and an arhat (stages two and one). This same “eighth stage” also appears in set of ten stages (Skt. *daśabhūmi*; Tib. *sa bcu*) found in Mahāyāna sources, where it is the third step out of the ten. Not to be confused with the ten stages of the bodhisattva’s path, these ten stages mark the progress of one who sequentially follows the paths of a śrāvaka, pratyekabuddha, and then

bodhisattva on their way to complete buddhahood. In this set of ten stages a person “on the eighth stage” is similarly one who is on the cusp of becoming a stream-enterer.

g.35 element

*kham*

ཁམས།

*dhātu*

In the context of epistemology, it is one way of describing experience and the world in terms of eighteen elements (eye, form, and eye consciousness; ear, sound, and ear consciousness; nose, odor, and nose consciousness; tongue, taste, and tongue consciousness; body, touch, and body consciousness; mind, mental phenomena, and mind consciousness).

These also refer to the elements of the physical world, which can be enumerated as four, five, or six elements. The four elements are earth, water, fire, and air. A fifth, space, is often added. The six elements are earth, water, fire, air, space, and consciousness.

g.36 eloquence

*spobs pa*

སྤོབས་པ།

*pratibhāna*

The capacity of realized beings to speak in a confident and inspiring manner.

g.37 Emanation

*shin tu sprul pa*

ཤིན་ཏུ་སྤྱུལ་པ།

—

A past buddha realm where the buddha Infinite Light resided.

g.38 emptiness

*stong pa yid*

སྤོང་པ་ཡིད།

*śūnyatā*

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

Emptiness denotes the ultimate nature of reality, the total absence of inherent existence and self-identity with respect to all phenomena.

According to this view, all things and events are devoid of any independent,

intrinsic reality that constitutes their essence. Nothing can be said to exist independent of the complex network of factors that gives rise to its origination, nor are phenomena independent of the cognitive processes and mental constructs that make up the conventional framework within which their identity and existence are posited. When all levels of conceptualization dissolve and when all forms of dichotomizing tendencies are quelled through deliberate meditative deconstruction of conceptual elaborations, the ultimate nature of reality will finally become manifest. It is the first of the three gateways to liberation.

g.39    **Excellent Garland**

*phreng ba bzang po*

ཕྱེང་བ་བཟང་པོ།

—

A monk disciple of the Buddha.

g.40    **Excellent Intelligence**

*blo gros legs pa*

བློ་གྲོས་ལེགས་པ།

—

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.41    **excessive pride**

*mngon pa'i nga rgyal*

མངོན་པའི་ངར་རྒྱལ།

*abhimāna*

A conceited, false sense of attainment. One of seven types of pride related to the spiritual path.

g.42    **factors of awakening**

*byang chub kyi phyogs kyi chos*

བྱང་ལྷུབ་གྱི་ཕྱོགས་གྱི་ཚོས།

*bodhipakṣadharmā*

The qualities necessary as a method to attain the awakening of a hearer, solitary buddha, or buddha. There are thirty-seven of these: (1–4) the four applications of mindfulness: mindfulness of body, sensations, mind, and phenomena; (5–8) the four right abandonments: the intention to not do bad actions that are not done, to give up bad actions that are being done, to do good actions that have not been done, and increase the good actions that are

being done; (9–12) the bases of miracles: intention, diligence, attention, and discernment; (13–17) five faculties: faith, diligence, mindfulness, absorption, and wisdom; (18–22) five strengths: an even stronger form of faith, diligence, mindfulness, absorption, and wisdom; (23–29) seven branches of awakening: correct mindfulness, correct discrimination of phenomena, correct diligence, correct joy, correct pliability, correct absorption, and correct equanimity; and (30–37) the eightfold noble path: right view, examination, speech, action, livelihood, effort, mindfulness, and absorption.

g.43 faculties

*dbang po*

དབང་པོ།

*indriya*

The term “faculties,” depending on the context, can refer to the five senses (sight, smell, touch, hearing, taste) plus the mental faculty, but also to spiritual “faculties,” see “five faculties.”

g.44 feeling

*tshor ba*

ཚོར་བ།

*vedanā*

One of the five aggregates.

g.45 five faculties

*dbang po lnga*

དབང་པོ་ལྔ།

*pañcendriya*

These are spiritual “faculties” (*indriya*) or capacities to be developed: faith (*śraddhā*), diligence (*vīrya*), mindfulness (*smṛti*), absorption (*samādhi*), and insight (*prajñā*). These are included in the thirty-seven factors of awakening. See also “five strengths.”

g.46 five obscurations

*sgrib pa lnga*

སྒྲིབ་པ་ལྔ།

*pañcanivarāṇa*

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Five impediments to meditation (*bsam gtan, dhyāna*): sensory desire (*'dod pa la 'dun pa, kāmācchanda*), ill will (*gnod sems, vyāpāda*), drowsiness and torpor (*rmugs pa dang gnyid, styānamiddha*), agitation and regret (*rgod pa dang 'gyod pa, auddhatyakaukr̥tya*), and doubt (*the tshom, vicikitsā*).

g.47 Five strengths

*stobs lnga*

སྟོབས་ལྔ།

*pañcabala*

Similar to the five faculties but at a further stage of development and thus cannot be shaken by adverse conditions, these are: faith (*śraddhā*), diligence (*vīrya*), mindfulness (*smṛti*), absorption (*samādhi*), and insight (*prajñā*).

g.48 Flower Source

*me tog 'byung gnas*

མེ་ཏོག་འབྱུང་གནས།

—

Name of a past eon, when the buddha Dīptavīrya resided in the buddha realm Astounding Sight.

g.49 form

*gzugs*

གཟུགས།

*rūpa*

One of the five aggregates.

g.50 form realm

*gzugs kyi kham*

གཟུགས་ཀྱི་ཁབས།

*rūpadhātu*

In Buddhist cosmology, the sphere of existence one level more subtle than our own (the desire realm), where beings, though subtly embodied, are not driven primarily by the urge for sense gratification. See also “three realms.”

g.51 formation

*'du byed*

འདུ་བྱེད།

*saṃskāra*



One of the five aggregates; formative forces concomitant with the production of karmic seeds causing future saṃsāric existence.

g.52 formless realm

*gzugs med pa'i kham*

གཞུགས་མེད་པའི་ཁམས།

*ārūpyadhātu*

In Buddhist cosmology, the sphere of existence two levels more subtle than our own (the desire realm), where beings are no longer physically embodied, and thus not subject to the sufferings that physical embodiment brings. See also “three realms.”

g.53 four applications of mindfulness

*dran pa nye bar bzhag pa bzhi*

དྲན་པ་ཉེ་བར་བཞག་པ་བཞི།

*catuḥsmṛtyupasthāna*

Mindfulness of the (1) body, (2) feelings, (3) mind, and (4) mental phenomena.

g.54 four concentrations

*bsam gtan gzhi*

བསམ་གཏན་གཞི།

*caturdhyāna*

The four levels of meditative absorption of the beings of the form realms.

g.55 four elements

*kham bzhi*

ཁམས་བཞི།

*caturdhātu*

The four “great” outer elements (*mahābhūta*, ‘*byung ba chen po*): earth, water, fire, and air. See also “element.”

g.56 four errors

*phyin ci log bzhi*

ཕྱིན་ཅི་ལོག་བཞི།

*caturviparyāsa*

Taking what is impermanent to be permanent, what is painful to be delightful, what is unclean to be clean, and what is no-self to be a self.

g.57 four fearlessnesses

*mi 'jigs pa rnam pa bzhi*

མི་འཇིགས་པ་རྣམ་པ་བཞི།

*caturvaiśāradya*

The four types of fearlessness possessed by all buddhas: They have full confidence that (1) they are fully awakened; (2) they have removed all defilements; (3) they have taught about the obstacles to liberation; and (4) have shown the path to liberation.

g.58 four floods

*chu bo bzhi*

ཚུ་བོ་བཞི།

*caturrogha*

Sensual desire, desire for cyclic existence, holding views, and ignorance.

g.59 four immeasurables

*tshad med bzhi*

ཚད་མེད་བཞི།

*caturpramāṇa*

These are (1) loving kindness, (2) compassion, (3) joy, and (4) equanimity.

g.60 four means of attracting disciples

*bsdu ba'i dngos po bzhi*

བསྐྱུ་བའི་དངོས་པོ་བཞི།

*catuḥsaṃgrahaḥastu*

Generosity, kind talk, meaningful actions, and practicing what one preaches.

g.61 four reliances

*rton pa bzhi*

རྟོན་པ་བཞི།

*catuspratisaraṇa*

A bodhisattva should (1) rely on the meaning, not the expression; (2) on the teaching, not the person; (3) on wisdom, not on normal consciousness; and (4) on discourses the definitive meaning, not on the interpretable meaning.

g.62 four right abandonments

*spong ba bzhi · yang dag par spong ba bzhi*

སྤོང་བ་བཞི། ་ ཡང་དག་པར་སྤོང་བ་བཞི།

*catuḥprahāṇa · catuḥsamyakprahāṇa*

Four types of right effort consisting in (1) abandoning existing negative mind states, (2) abandoning the production of such states, (3) giving rise to virtuous mind states that are not yet produced, and (4) letting those states continue.

g.63 four truths of the noble ones

*'phags pa'i bden pa bzhi*

འཕགས་པའི་བདེན་པ་བཞི།

*catvāry āryasatyāni · caturāryasatya*

The four truths that the Buddha realized and transmitted in his first teaching: (1) suffering, (2) the origin of suffering, (3) the cessation of suffering, and (4) the path to the cessation of suffering.

g.64 gandharva

*dri za*

དྲི་ཟ།

*gandharva*

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

A class of generally benevolent nonhuman beings who inhabit the skies, sometimes said to inhabit fantastic cities in the clouds, and more specifically to dwell on the eastern slopes of Mount Meru, where they are under the jurisdiction of the Great King Dhṛtarāṣṭra. They are most renowned as celestial musicians who serve the gods. In the Abhidharma, the term is also used to refer to the mental body assumed by any sentient being in the realm of desire (*kāmadhātu*) during the intermediate state between death and rebirth. Gandharvas are said to live on fragrances in the desire realm, hence the Tibetan translation *dri za*, meaning “scent eater.”

g.65 gaṇḍī

*gaN DI*

གཎ་དྲི།

*gaṇḍī*

A wooden gong used to summon monks.

g.66 god

*lha*

ལྷ།

*deva*

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

Cognate with the English term *divine*, the devas are most generally a class of celestial beings who frequently appear in Buddhist texts, often at the head of the assemblies of nonhuman beings who attend and celebrate the teachings of Śākyamuni and other buddhas and bodhisattvas. In Buddhist cosmology the devas occupy the highest of the five or six “destinies” (*gati*) of saṃsāra among which beings take rebirth. The devas reside in the *devalokas*, “heavens” that traditionally number between twenty-six and twenty-eight and are divided between the desire realm (*kāmadhātu*), material realm (*rūpadhātu*), and immaterial realm (*ārūpyadhātu*). A being attains rebirth among the devas either through meritorious deeds (in the desire realm) or the attainment of subtle meditative states (in the material and immaterial realms). While rebirth among the devas is considered favorable, it is ultimately a transitory state from which beings will fall when the conditions that lead to rebirth there are exhausted. Thus, rebirth in the god realms is regarded as a diversion from the spiritual path.

g.67 Great Compassionate One

*snying rje chen po sems pa*

སྤྱིང་རྗེ་ཆེན་པོ་སེམས་པ།

—

A divine being from the Brahmā world.

g.68 Great Compilation

*'dus pa chen po*

འདུས་པ་ཆེན་པོ།

*mahāsannipāta*

An anthology of Great Vehicle Sūtras. A collection of seventeen sūtras under this title is available in Chinese translation, but *The Questions of Sāgaramati* is not included among them. It is thus likely that there were more than one anthology using this title.

g.69 Great Crest

*tog chen po*

ཏོག་ཆེན་པོ།

—

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.70 guardians (of the world)

*skyong ba*

སྐྱོང་བ།

*pāla*

In this case, “guardians” seems to refer to the Four Great Kings of the cardinal directions, namely, Vaiśravaṇa, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Virūdhaka, and Virūpākṣa, who pledged to protect the Dharma and practitioners.

g.71 Guṇarājaprabhāsa

*yon tan gyi rgyal po snang ba*

ཡོན་ཏན་གྱི་རྒྱལ་པོ་སྐྱང་བ།

*guṇarājaprabhāsa*

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.72 hearer

*nyan thos*

ཉན་ཐོས།

*śrāvaka*

Derived from the Sanskrit verb “to hear,” the term is used in reference to followers of the non-Great Vehicle traditions of Buddhism, in contrast to the bodhisattvas who follow the Great Vehicle path.

g.73 Heaven of Joy

*dga' ldan gyi gnas*

དགའ་ལྡན་གྱི་གནས།

*tuṣita*

A divine world located in the Desire Realm; in Great Vehicle Buddhist thought, it is where all future buddhas dwell prior to their awakening.

g.74 Heaven of Making Use of Others' Emanations

*gzhan 'phrul dbang byed pa*

གཞན་འཕྲུལ་དབང་བྱེད་པ།

*paranirmitavaśavartin*

The highest of the six heavens of the desire realm.

g.75 Heaven of the Thirty-Three

*sum cu rtsa gsum*

སུམ་རུ་ཙ་གསུམ།

*trāyastrimśa*

One of the heavens of Buddhist cosmology. Counted among the six heavens of the desire realm, it is traditionally located atop Sumeru, just above the terrace of the Abodes of the Four Great Kings.

g.76 Hidden

*kun tu sbas*

ཀུན་ཏུ་སྐུས།

—

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.77 Hill of Fallen Sages

*drang srong lhung ba*

དང་སྲོང་ལུང་བ།

*ṛṣipatana*

A hill near the deer park at Sarnath where the Buddha first taught the Dharma following his awakening.

g.78 Incense Elephant

*glang chen spos kyi bal glang*

གླང་ཆེན་སྐོས་ཀྱི་བལ་གླང།

—

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.79 Inexhaustible Treasury

*mdzod mi zad pa*

མཛོད་མི་བཟད་པ།

—

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.80 Infinite Eloquence

*spobs pa mtha' yas*

སྐོབ་པ་མཐའ་ཡས།

—

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.81 Infinite Light

*'od zer snang ba mtha' yas*

འོད་ཟེར་སྒྲུང་བ་མཐའ་ཡས།

—

A buddha from a previous eon.

g.82 Intellect of Pure Conduct

*spyod pa rnam dag blo gros*

སྤྱོད་པ་རྣམ་དག་སྒྲོ་བོ་སྤྱོད།

—

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.83 Jambudvīpa

*'dzam bu gling*

འཛམ་བུ་གླིང་།

*jambudvīpa*

The continent to the south of Mount Sumeru, where according to Buddhist cosmology “the world as we know it” is located.

g.84 Jinamitra

*dzi na mi tra*

ཇོ་ན་མི་ཏྲ།

*jinamitra*

An Kashmiri paṇḍita who was resident in Tibet during the late eighth and early ninth centuries.

g.85 Kapilabhadrā

*ser skya bzang mo*

ཤེར་སྐྱེ་བཟང་མོ།

*kapilabhadrā*

A famous nun who was the wife of Mahākāśyapa for twelve years prior to their ordination.

g.86 Kauśika

*kau shi ka*

ཀོ་ཤི་ཀ།

*kauśika*

An epithet of Śakra.

g.87 kesara

*ke sa ra*

ཀེ་ས་ར།

*keśara · kesara*

*Kesara* can be the name of several species of plants.

g.88 King of Seers

*dus dpog rgyal po*

དུས་དཔོག་རྒྱལ་པོ།

—

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.89 King of Splendors

*dpal brtsegs rgyal po*

དཔལ་བརྟེན་རྒྱལ་པོ།

—

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.90 King of the Immense Lamp

*lhun po'i sgron me'i rgyal po*

ལྷན་པོའི་སློན་མའི་རྒྱལ་པོ།

—

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.91 kinnara

*mi'am ci*

མི་འམ་ཅི།

*kinnara · kiṇnara*

A class of semidivine beings depicted as half horse and half human, or half bird and half human.

g.92 Lamp Holder

*sgron ma 'dzin*

སློན་མ་འཛིན།

—



A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.93 Lesser Vehicle

*theg pa dman pa*

ཐེག་པ་དམན་པ།

*hīnayāna*

It is a collective term used by proponents of the Great Vehicle to refer to the Śrāvakayāna (Hearer Vehicle) and Pratyekabuddhayāna (Solitary-Buddha Vehicle). The name stems from their goal—i.e., nirvāṇa and personal liberation—being seen as small or lesser than the goal of the Great Vehicle—i.e., buddhahood and liberation of all sentient beings.

g.94 Light King of Qualities

*yon tan gyi rgyal po snang ba*

ཡོན་ཏན་གྱི་རྒྱལ་པོ་སྤང་བ།

—

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.95 Lightning Gaze

*glog ltas*

གློག་ལྷ་ས།

—

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.96 limit of reality

*yang dag pa'i mtha'*

ཡང་དག་པའི་མཐའ།

*bhūtakoti*

This term has three meanings: (1) a synonym for the ultimate nature, (2) the experience of the ultimate nature, and (3) the quiescent state of a worthy one (*arhat*) to be avoided by bodhisattvas.

g.97 Limitless Intelligence

*blo gros tshad med pa*

བློ་གྲོས་ཚད་མེད་པ།

—

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

- g.98      Lion of the Śākyas  
*shA kya seng ge*  
 ལྷ་ཀྱ་སེང་གེ།  
*śākyasiṃha*  
 An epithet of the Buddha Śākyamuni.
- g.99      Lokāyata  
*'jig rten rgyang 'phen pa*  
 འཇིག་རྟེན་རྒྱང་འཕེན་པ།  
*lokāyata*  
 An ancient school of Indian philosophy whose doctrine, outlined primarily in the Bārhaspatya Sūtras, is characterized by atheism and a strict form of materialism.
- g.100     Lord of Mountains  
*ri dbang rgyal po*  
 རི་དབང་རྒྱལ་པོ།  
 —  
 A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.
- g.101     Lover of the Stars  
*skar ma la dga' ba*  
 སྐར་མ་ལ་དགའ་བ།  
 —  
 Name of a buddha.
- g.102     Mahābrahmā  
*tshangs pa chen po*  
 ཚངས་པ་ཆེན་པོ།  
*mahābrahma*
- g.103     Mahākāśyapa  
*'od srung chen po*  
 འོད་སྤྱང་ཆེན་པོ།  
*mahākāśyapa*  
 A senior student of the Buddha Śākyamuni, famous for his austere lifestyle.

g.104 Maitreya

*byams pa*

བྱམས་པ།

*maitreya*

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

The bodhisattva Maitreya is an important figure in many Buddhist traditions, where he is unanimously regarded as the buddha of the future era. He is said to currently reside in Tuṣita heaven, as Śākyamuni's regent, where he awaits the proper time to take his final rebirth and become the fifth buddha in the Fortunate Eon, reestablishing the Dharma in this world after the teachings of the current buddha have disappeared. Within the Mahāyāna sūtras, Maitreya is elevated to the same status as other central bodhisattvas such as Mañjuśrī and Avalokiteśvara, and his name appears frequently in sūtras, either as the Buddha's interlocutor or as a teacher of the Dharma.

*Maitreya* literally means "Loving One." He is also known as Ajita, meaning "Invincible."

For more information on Maitreya, see, for example, the introduction to *Maitreya's Setting Out* (Toh 198).

g.105 major and minor marks of perfection

*mtshan dang dpe byad bzang po*

མཚན་དང་དཔེ་བྱད་བཟང་པོ།

*lakṣaṇānuvyañjana*

The thirty-two major and the eighty minor distinctive physical attributes of a buddha or a superior being.

g.106 Mañjuśrī

*'jam dpal*

འཇམ་དཔལ།

*mañjuśrī*

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

Mañjuśrī is one of the "eight close sons of the Buddha" and a bodhisattva who embodies wisdom. He is a major figure in the Mahāyāna sūtras, appearing often as an interlocutor of the Buddha. In his most well-known iconographic form, he is portrayed bearing the sword of wisdom in his right hand and a volume of the *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra* in his left. In addition to the epithet Kumārabhūta, which means "having a youthful form," Mañjuśrī is also called Mañjughoṣa, Mañjusvara, and Pañcaśikha.

*In this text:*

In this text, he is one of the main interlocutors of the Buddha.

g.107 Māra

*bdud*

བདུད།

*māra*

The demon who assailed Śākyamuni prior to his awakening. When used in the plural, the term refers to a class of beings who, like Māra himself, are the primary adversaries and tempters of people who vow to take up the religious life. Figuratively, they are the personification of everything that acts as a hindrance to awakening, and are often listed as a set of four: the Māra of the aggregates, the Māra of the afflictions, the Māra of the Lord of Death, and the Māra of the gods.

g.108 Mārapramardaka

*bdud rab tu 'joms pa*

བདུད་རབ་ཏུ་འཇོམས་པ།

*mārapramardaka*

A buddha that resides in an eastern world system called Adorned with Every Pleasure.

g.109 Master of the Ocean with Noble and Playful Super-knowledge

*rgya mtsho'i mchog mnga' ba'i blos rnam par rol pa mngon par 'phags pa'i mgnon par mkhyen pa*

རྒྱ་མཚོའི་མཚོག་མངའ་བའི་སྒོས་རྣམ་པར་རྩལ་བ་མངོན་པར་འཕགས་པའི་མགོན་པར་མཚུན་པ།

—

A buddha that resides in a world system below our world called Adorned with Immaculate and Countless Precious Qualities.

g.110 Meaningful Contemplative

*don legs sems*

དོན་ལེགས་སེམས།

—

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.111 mind of awakening

*byang chub kyi sems*

བྱང་ལྷན་གྱི་སེམས་ལ།

*bodhicitta*

The intent at heart of the Great Vehicle, namely to obtain buddhahood in order to liberate all sentient beings from suffering. In it's relative aspect, it is both this aspiration and the practices towards buddhahood. In it's absolute aspect, it is the realization of emptiness or the awakened mind itself.

g.112 nāga

*klu*

ལྷ།

*nāga*

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

A class of nonhuman beings who live in subterranean aquatic environments, where they guard wealth and sometimes also teachings. Nāgas are associated with serpents and have a snakelike appearance. In Buddhist art and in written accounts, they are regularly portrayed as half human and half snake, and they are also said to have the ability to change into human form. Some nāgas are Dharma protectors, but they can also bring retribution if they are disturbed. They may likewise fight one another, wage war, and destroy the lands of others by causing lightning, hail, and flooding.

g.113 Nāgārjuna

*klu sgrub*

ལྷ་སྐྱུ་བ།

*nāgārjuna*

Second- or third-century Indian master whose writings formed the basis for the Madhyamaka tradition.

g.114 Nārāyaṇa

*sred med kyi bu*

སྲིད་མེད་ཀྱི་བུ།

*nārāyaṇa*

In the ancient Indian tradition, the son of the first man; later seen as a powerful avatar of Viṣṇu, but also as the progenitor of Brahmā. In Buddhist texts, he figures in various ways including as a bodhisattva, while still one of the most powerful gods of the form realm.

g.115 nine things that harm

*gnod pa'i dngos po dgu*

གནོད་པའི་དངོས་པོ་དགུ

*āghātavastu*

Nine points of reference that inflame one's anger and hostility: (1) my enemy has harmed me, (2) is harming me, and (3) will harm me; (4) my enemy has harmed my friend, (5) is harming my friend, and (6) will harm my friend; (7) my enemy has assisted other enemies, (8) is assisting other enemies, and (9) my enemy will assist my other enemy.

g.116 Noble Bliss

*dga' ba 'phags pa'i bskal pa*

དགའ་བ་འཕགས་པའི་བསྐྱལ་པ།

—

Name of an eon (*kalpa*).

g.117 Non-aggressive Intellect

*zhes 'gras pa med pa'i blo gros*

ཞེས་འགས་པ་མེད་པའི་བློ་གྲོས།

—

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.118 Non-referential Concentration

*dmigs pa med pa'i bsam gtan pa*

དམིགས་པ་མེད་པའི་བསམ་གཏན་པ།

—

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.119 Padmavyūha

*pad ma bkod pa*

པད་མ་བཀོད་པ།

*padmavyūha*

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.120 perception

*'du shes*

འདུ་ཤེས།

*saṃjñā*

One of the five aggregates.

g.121 Perfectly Immaculate Being

*shin tu dri med sems pa*

ཤིན་ཏུ་ངྲི་མེད་སེམས་པ།

—

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.122 Pinnacle of Nonattached Fearlessness

*chags pa med pa'i mi 'jigs pa brtsegs pa*

ཚགས་པ་མེད་པའི་མི་འཇིགས་པ་བརྟེན་པ།

—

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.123 Prajñākūṭa

*shes rab brtsegs*

ཤེས་རབ་བརྟེན་པ།

*prajñākūṭa*

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.124 prātimokṣa

*so sor thar pa*

སོ་སོར་ཐར་པ།

*prātimokṣa*

“Prātimokṣa” is the name given to the code of conduct binding on monks and nuns. The term can be used to refer both to the disciplinary rules themselves and to the texts from the Vinaya that contain them. There are multiple recensions of the *Prātimokṣa*, each transmitted by a different monastic fraternity in ancient and medieval India. Three remain living traditions, one of them the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya of Tibetan Buddhism. Though the numbers of rules vary across the different recensions, they are all organized according to the same principles and with the same disciplinary categories. It is customary for monastics to recite the *Prātimokṣa Sūtra* fortnightly. According to some Mahāyana sūtras, a separate set of prātimokṣa rules exists for bodhisattvas, which are based on bodhisattva conduct as taught in that vehicle.

g.125 preceptor

*mkhan po*

མཁན་པོ།

*upādhyāya*

Teacher, (monastic) preceptor; “having approached him, one studies from him” (*upetyādhīyate asmāt*).

g.126 priest

*bram ze*

བླ་མ་ཟེ།

*brāhmaṇa*

A member of the Indian priestly caste, a brahmin.

g.127 Priyadarśana

*mthong dga'*

མཐོང་དགའ།

*priyadarśana*

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.128 Pure City

*grong khyer shin tu rnam par dag pa*

གོང་ཁྱེར་ཤིན་ཏུ་རྣམ་པར་དག་པ།

—

Name of a palace.

g.129 Pure Domain

*yul shin tu rnam par dag pa*

ཡུལ་ཤིན་ཏུ་རྣམ་པར་དག་པ།

—

A universal monarch in the past who ruled over a world called Emanation.

g.130 Pure Intellect

*blo gros rnam par dag pa*

བློ་གྲོས་རྣམ་པར་དག་པ།

—

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.131 Pure Light

*'od rnam par dag pa*

འོད་རྣམ་པར་དག་པ།



—

A past buddha realm where the buddha Teacher of the Power of Great Wisdom resided.

g.132 qualities of buddhahood

*sangs rgyas kyi chos*

སངས་རྒྱལ་གྱི་ཚོས།

*buddhadharma · buddhadharmāḥ*

The specific qualities of a buddha; may sometimes be used as a general term, and sometimes referring to sets such as the ten strengths, the four fearlessnesses, the four correct discriminations, the eighteen unique qualities of buddhahood, and so forth; or, more specifically, to another set of eighteen: the ten strengths; the four fearlessnesses; mindfulness of body, speech, and mind; and great compassion.

Alternatively, in the context of this sūtra, see [Chapter Six](#).

g.133 Rāhu

*sgra gcan*

སྒྲ་གཅན།

*rāhu*

The asura who is said to cause eclipses by seizing the sun and moon.

g.134 Rāhula

*sgra gcan zin*

སྒྲ་གཅན་ཟེན།

*rāhula*

The Buddha's son, who became the first novice monk and a prominent member of his monastic saṅgha.

g.135 Rājagṛha

*rgyal po'i khab*

རྒྱལ་པོའི་ཁབ།

*rājagṛha*

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

The ancient capital of Magadha prior to its relocation to Pāṭaliputra during the Mauryan dynasty, Rājagṛha is one of the most important locations in Buddhist history. The literature tells us that the Buddha and his saṅgha spent a considerable amount of time in residence in and around Rājagṛha—

in nearby places, such as the Vulture Peak Mountain (Gṛdhrakūṭaparvata), a major site of the Mahāyāna sūtras, and the Bamboo Grove (Veṇuvana)—enjoying the patronage of King Bimbisāra and then of his son King Ajātaśatru. Rājagṛha is also remembered as the location where the first Buddhist monastic council was held after the Buddha Śākyamuni passed into parinirvāṇa. Now known as Rajgir and located in the modern Indian state of Bihar.

g.136 Razor

*spu gri ba*

སྤྱ་གྱི་བ།

—

A vulture king.

g.137 reality

*chos nyid*

ཚོས་ཉིད།

*dharmatā*

Lit. the “nature of phenomena” or “phenomena themselves.” The quality or condition of things as they really are, which cannot be conveyed in conceptual, dualistic terms.

(Note that the term “reality” has also been used to render terms of similar meaning such as *yang dag nyid* and others.)

g.138 realm of phenomena

*chos kyi dbyings*

ཚོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས།

*dharmadhātu*

The “sphere of dharmas,” a synonym for the nature of things.

g.139 recollection

*gzungs*

གཟུངས།

*dhāraṇī*

Often paired with “eloquence” (*pratibhāna*), recollection is the capacity to properly retain and recall the teachings.

g.140 Sāgaramati

*blo gros rgya mtsho*

སློབ་གྲོས་རྒྱ་མཚོ།

*sāgaramati*

A bodhisattva from the world Adorned with Immaculate and Countless Precious Qualities. The protagonist of this discourse, his name can be translated as *Oceanic Intelligence*, which is referenced in the omen of the flooding of the trichiliocosm at the beginning of the sūtra.

g.141 sage

*thub pa*

ཐུབ་པ།

*muni*

An ancient title given to ascetics, monks, hermits, and saints, namely, someone who has attained the realization of a truth through their own contemplation and not by divine revelation.

Here also used as a specific epithet of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.142 Sahā world

*mi mjed*

མི་མཇེད།

*sahā*

A name for the world in which we live.

g.143 Śakra

*brgya byin*

བརྒྱ་བྱིན།

*śakra*

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

The lord of the gods. Alternatively known as Indra, the deity that is called “lord of the gods” dwells on the summit of Mount Sumeru and wields the thunderbolt. The Tibetan translation *brgya byin* (meaning “one hundred sacrifices”) is based on an etymology that *śakra* is an abbreviation of *śata-kratu*, one who has performed a hundred sacrifices. Each world with a central Sumeru has a Śakra. Also known by other names such as Kauśika, Devendra, and Śacipati.

g.144 Śākyamuni

*shAkya thub pa*

སྐྱུ་ལྷན་པ།

*śākyamuni*

The buddha of this age; the historical buddha.

g.145 sameness

*mnyam pa nyid*

མཉམ་པ་ཉིད།

*samatā*

(The state of) “equality,” “equal nature,” “equanimity,” or “equalness.”

g.146 Śāntamati

*zhi ba'i blo gros*

ཞི་བའི་བློ་གྲོས།

*śāntamati*

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.147 Śāntideva

*zhi ba'i lha*

ཞི་བའི་ལྷ།

*śāntideva*

Indian commentator from the eighth century renowned for his work *The Way of the Bodhisattva* (*Bodhicaryāvatāra*).

g.148 Śāradvatīputra

*sha ra dwa ti'i bu*

ཤ་ར་དྲ་ཏི་བུ།

*śāradvatīputra*

One of the closest disciples of the Buddha, known for his pure observance of discipline. Also known as Śāriputra.

g.149 Śāriputra

*shA ri'i bu*

ཤ་རི་བུ།

*śāriputra*

See Śāradvatīputra.

g.150 Sārthavāha

*ded dpon*

དེད་དཔོན།

*sārthavāha*

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.151 seat of awakening

*byang chub kyi snying po*

བྱང་ཆུབ་ཀྱི་སྙིང་པོ།

*bodhimāṇḍa*

The seat of awakening, which can mean both the physical location where buddhas sit to become awakened and the state of awakening itself.

g.152 Seer of Light

*snang ba mthong ba*

སྐྱང་བ་མཐོང་བ།

—

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.153 sense source

*skye mched*

སྐྱེ་མཚན།

*āyatana*

These can be listed as twelve or as six sense sources (sometimes also called sense fields, bases of cognition, or simply āyatanas):

In context of epistemology, it is one way of describing experience and the world in terms of twelve sense sources, which can be divided into inner and outer sense sources, namely: (1–2) eye and form, (3–4) ear and sound, (5–6) nose and odor, (7–8) tongue and taste, (9–10) body and touch, (11–12) mind and mental phenomena.

In the context of the twelve links of dependent origination, only six sense sources are mentioned and they are the inner sense sources (similar to the six faculties) of eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind.

g.154 seven bases of consciousness

*rnam par shes pa'i gnas bdun*

རྣམ་པར་ཤེས་པའི་གནས་བདུན།

*sapta-vijñānasthiti*

Seven categories that describe living beings in the higher realms, from humans up to the formless realm: (1) those different in body and different in perception; (2) those different in body and equal in perception; (3) those equal in body but different in perception; (4) those equal in body and equal in perception; (5) those reborn in the sphere of boundless space; (6) those reborn in the sphere of boundless consciousness; and (7) those reborn in the sphere of nothingness.

g.155 seven precious materials

*rin po che sna bdun*

རིན་པོ་ཆེ་སྣ་བདུན།

*saptaratna*

The list of seven precious materials varies. Either they are gold, silver, turquoise, coral, pearl, emerald, and sapphire; or else they are ruby, sapphire, beryl, emerald, diamond, pearls, and coral.

g.156 signlessness

*mtshan ma med pa*

མཚན་མ་མེད་པ།

*animitta*

One of the three gateways to liberation; the ultimate absence of marks and signs in perceived objects.

g.157 Silky White Mane And Perfect Limbs

*dar dkar lta bu'i ral pa can yang lag ma smad pa*

དར་དཀར་ལྷ་བུའི་རལ་པ་ཅན་ཡང་ལག་མ་སྦྲད་པ།

—

A lion king.

g.158 Simhaketu

*seng ge'i tog*

སེང་གེའི་ཏོག

*simhaketu*

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.159 six perfections

*pha rol tu phyin pa drug*

ཕ་རོལ་ཏུ་ཕྱིན་པ་དྲུག

*ṣaṭpāramitā*

The six practices or qualities that a follower of the Great Vehicle perfects in order to transcend cyclic existence. They are generosity (*dāna, byin pa*), discipline (*śīla, tshul khrims*), patience or acceptance (*kṣānti, bzod pa*), diligence (*vīrya, brtson 'grus*), meditative concentration (*dhyāna, bsam gtan*), and insight (*prajñā, shes rab*).

g.160 Solid Armor

*go cha sra ba*

གོ་ཚས་བ།

—

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.161 solitary buddha

*rang sangs rgyas*

རང་སངས་རྒྱལ།

*pratyekabuddha*

Beings who attain buddhahood without relying on a teacher in their final lifetime. They may live alone or with peers, but do not teach the path of liberation to others because of a lack of motivation or the requisite merit.

g.162 son of Manu

*shed bu*

ཤེད་བ།

*mānava*

*Manu* is the archetypal human and the progenitor of humanity in Indian lore. Thus, “son of Manu” is a synonym for humanity in general. Also rendered “born of Manu.”

g.163 Source of Happiness

*dga' ba 'byung ba*

དགའ་བ་འབྱུང་བ།

—

A city in the world called Emanation.

g.164 special insight

*lhag mthong*

ལྷག་མཐོང་།

*vipaśyanā*

An important form of Buddhist meditation focusing on developing insight into the nature of phenomena. Often presented as part of a pair of meditation techniques, the other being “tranquility.”

g.165 śrīgarbha

*dpal gyi snying po*

དཔལ་གྱི་སྙིང་པོ།

*śrīgarbha*

A type of red-colored precious gemstone.

g.166 Śrīgupta

*dpal sbas*

དཔལ་སྐྱམ།

*śrīgupta*

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.167 Star-Color

*skar mdog*

སྐར་མ་དོག།

—

Name of an eon (*kalpa*).

g.168 Steadfast Intelligence

*blo gros brtan pa*

བློ་གྲོས་བརྟན་པ།

—

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.169 suchness

*de bzhin nyid*

དེ་བཞིན་ཉིད།

*tathatā*

The ultimate nature of things, or the way things are in reality, as opposed to the way they appear to non-enlightened beings.

g.170 Sunirmita

*rab 'phrul*



སའ་འཕྲུལ།

*sunirmita*

The principal deity in Nirmāṇarata, the second highest paradise in the desire realm.

g.171 super-knowledge

*mngon par shes pa*

མངོན་པར་ཤེས་པ།

*abhijñā*

Traditionally listed as five: divine sight, divine hearing, the ability to know past and future lives, the ability to know the minds of others, and the ability to produce miracles.

g.172 Suryagarbha

*nyi ma'i snying po*

ཉི་མའི་སྤྱིང་པོ།

*suryagarbha*

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.173 Susārthavāha

*ded dpon bzang po*

དེད་དཔོན་བཟང་པོ།

*susārthavāha*

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.174 Teacher of the Power of Great Wisdom

*ye shes chen po'i stobs kyi bsgrags pa*

ཡེ་ཤེས་ཆེན་པོའི་སྦྲོབས་ཀྱི་བསྐྱུགས་པ།

—

A buddha that resided in a previous world called Pure Light.

g.175 ten levels

*sa bcu*

ས་བརྒྱ།

*daśabhūmi*

The ten levels of a bodhisattva's development into a fully enlightened buddha.

g.176 ten nonvirtuous deeds

*mi dge ba bcu*

མི་དགེ་བ་བརྒྱ

*daśākuśala*

Killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, divisive speech, harsh speech, gossip, covetousness, ill will, and wrong views.

g.177 ten strengths

*stobs pa rnam pa bcu*

སྟོབས་པ་རྣམ་པ་བརྒྱ

*daśabala*

The ten strengths are (1) the knowledge of what is possible and not possible; (2) the knowledge of the ripening of karma; (3) the knowledge of the variety of aspirations; (4) the knowledge of the variety of natures; (5) the knowledge of the different levels of capabilities; (6) the knowledge of the destinations of all paths; (7) the knowledge of various states of meditation (dhyāna, liberation, samādhi, samāpatti, and so on); (8) the knowledge of remembering previous lives; (9) the knowledge of deaths and rebirths; and (10) the knowledge of the cessation of defilements.

g.178 Thinker of Good Thoughts

*bsam pa legs par sems*

བསམ་པ་ལེགས་པར་སེམས།

—

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.179 three gateways of liberation

*rnam thar sgo gsum*

རྣམ་ཐར་སློབ་གསུམ།

*trivimokṣadvāra*

Emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness.

g.180 three realms

*khams gsum*

ཁམས་གསུམ།

*tridhātu · traidhātuka*

The three realms are the desire realm (*kāmadhātu*, 'dod khams), form realm (*rūpadhātu*, *gzugs khams*) and the formless realm (*ārūpyadhātu*, *gzugs med khams*), i.e., the three worlds that make up *saṃsāra*. The first is composed of the six sorts of beings (gods, asuras, humans, animals, hungry ghosts, and hell beings), whereas the latter two are only realms of gods and are thus higher, more ethereal states of *saṃsāra*. See also three realms of existence.

g.181 three realms of existence

*srid pa gsum*

སྤྱིད་པ་གསུམ།

*tribhava · tribhuvana*

This alternatively refers to the underworlds, earth, and heavens, or can be synonymous with the three realms of desire, form, and formlessness (see three realms).

g.182 three spheres

*'khor gsum*

འཁོར་གསུམ།

*triṃṇḍala*

Subject, object, and the various physical and cognitive actions that proliferate based on that duality.

g.183 three vows

*sdom pa gsum*

སྡོམ་པ་གསུམ།

*trisaṃvara*

In Great Vehicle treatises, the vows of a layperson or monk (*prātimokṣa*), the vows of a solitary buddha, and the vows of a bodhisattva.

g.184 thus-gone one

*de bzhin gshegs pa*

དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ།

*tathāgata*

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

A frequently used synonym for *buddha*. According to different explanations, it can be read as *tathā-gata*, literally meaning “one who has thus gone,” or as *tathā-āgata*, “one who has thus come.” *Gata*, though literally meaning “gone,” is a past passive participle used to describe a state or condition of existence.

*Tatha(tā)*, often rendered as “suchness” or “thusness,” is the quality or condition of things as they really are, which cannot be conveyed in conceptual, dualistic terms. Therefore, this epithet is interpreted in different ways, but in general it implies one who has departed in the wake of the buddhas of the past, or one who has manifested the supreme awakening dependent on the reality that does not abide in the two extremes of existence and quiescence. It also often used as a specific epithet of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.185 tranquility

*zhi gnas*

ཞི་གནས།

*śamatha*

One of the basic forms of Buddhist meditation, which focuses on calming the mind. Often presented as part of a pair of meditation techniques, the other being “special insight.”

g.186 transitory collection

*'jig tshogs*

འཇིག་རྫོགས།

*satkāya*

The transitory collection of the five aggregates, the basis for the view of a self or that which belongs to a self.

g.187 trichiliocosm

*stong gsum gyi stong chen po'i 'jig rten gyi kham*

སྟོང་གསུམ་གྱི་སྟོང་ཆེན་པོའི་འཇིག་རྟེན་གྱི་ཁམས།

*trisāhasramahāsāhasralokadhātu*

The largest universe described in Buddhist cosmology. This term, in Abhidharma cosmology, refers to 1,000<sup>3</sup> world systems, i.e., 1,000 “dichiliocosms” or “two thousand great thousand world realms” (*dvisāhasra-mahāsāhasralokadhātu*), which are in turn made up of 1,000 first-order world systems, each with its own Mount Meru, continents, sun, and moon, as well as desire, form and formless realms, heavens of gods, etc.

g.188 Unimpeded Light

*'od zer thogs pa med pa*

འོད་ཟེར་ཐོགས་པ་མེད་པ།

—

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.189 unique qualities of buddhahood

*sangs rgyas rnams kyi ma 'dras chos*

སངས་རྒྱལ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་མ་འདྲས་ཚོས།

*āveṇīkabuddhadharma*

Eighteen qualities that are exclusively possessed by a buddha. These are listed in the *Dharmasaṃgraha* as follows: The tathāgata does not possess (1) confusion; (2) noisiness; (3) forgetfulness; (4) loss of meditative equipoise; (5) cognition of distinctness; or (6) nonanalytical equanimity. A buddha totally lacks (7) degeneration of motivation; (8) degeneration of perseverance; (9) degeneration of mindfulness; (10) degeneration of samādhi; (11) degeneration of prajñā; (12) degeneration of complete liberation; and (13) degeneration of seeing the wisdom of complete liberation. (14) A tathāgata's every action of body is preceded by wisdom and followed through with wisdom; (15) every action of speech is preceded by wisdom and followed through with wisdom; (16) a buddha's every action of mind is preceded by wisdom and followed through with wisdom. (17) A tathāgata engages in seeing the past through wisdom that is unattached and unobstructed and (18) engages in seeing the present through wisdom that is unattached and unobstructed.

g.190 universal monarch

*'khor los sgyur ba'i rgyal po*

འཁོར་ལོས་སྐུར་བའི་རྒྱལ་པོ།

*cakravartin*

The term “universal monarch” denotes a just and pious king who rules over the universe according to the laws of Dharma. Such a monarch is called a *cakravartin* because he wields a disk (*cakra*) that rolls (*varṭana*) over continents, worlds, and world systems, bringing them under his power. A universal monarch is often considered the worldly, political correlate of a buddha.

g.191 Unsurpassed Diligence

*brtson 'grus gong na med*

བརྩོན་འགྲུས་གོང་ན་མེད།

—

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.192 ūrṇa hair

*mdzod spu*

མཛོད་སྟུ།

*ūrṇakeśa*

A hair between the eyebrows of a buddha. One of the marks of an awakened being.

g.193 Vairocana

*rnam par snang byed*

རྣམ་པར་སྣང་བྱེད།

*vairocana*

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.194 Vārāṇasī

*bA rA Na sI*

བ་ར་ཤ་སཱི།

*vārāṇasī*

An ancient city in North India close to which the Buddha first taught the Dharma.

g.195 Vimalaprabhā

*'od dri ma med pa*

འོད་རྩི་མ་མེད་པ།

*vimalaprabha*

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.196 vinaya

*'dul ba*

འདུལ་བ།

*vinaya*

The Buddha's teachings that lay out the rules and disciplines for his followers.

g.197 Vīra

*dpa' bo*

དཔའ་བོ།

*vīra*

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.198 Viśeṣagāmin

*khyad par du 'gro ba*

ལྷན་པར་དུ་འགྲོ་བ།

*viśeṣagāmin*

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.199 Vyūharāja

*bkod pa'i rgyal po*

བཀོད་པའི་རྒྱལ་པོ།

*vyūharāja*

A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.200 wishlessness

*smon pa med pa*

སྲོན་པ་མེད་པ།

*apraṇihita*

One of the three gateways to liberation; the ultimate absence of any wish, desire, or aspiration, even those directed towards buddhahood.

g.201 worthy one

*dgra bcom pa*

དགའ་བཅོམ་པ།

*arhat*

According to Buddhist tradition, one who has conquered the enemies, i.e., mental afflictions or emotions, (*kleśa-ari-hata*) and reached liberation from the cycle of rebirth and suffering. It's the fourth and highest of the four fruits attainable by hearers. Also used as an epithet of the Buddha.

g.202 yakṣa

*gnod sbyin*

གནོད་སྦྱིན།

*yakṣa*

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

A class of nonhuman beings who inhabit forests, mountainous areas, and other natural spaces, or serve as guardians of villages and towns, and may be propitiated for health, wealth, protection, and other boons, or controlled

through magic. According to tradition, their homeland is in the north, where they live under the jurisdiction of the Great King Vaiśravaṇa.

Several members of this class have been deified as gods of wealth (these include the just mentioned Vaiśravaṇa) or as bodhisattva generals of yakṣa armies, and have entered the Buddhist pantheon in a variety of forms, including, in tantric Buddhism, those of wrathful deities.

g.203 Yeshé Dé

*ye shes sde*

ཡེ་ཤེས་སྡེ།

—

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

Yeshé Dé (late eighth to early ninth century) was the most prolific translator of sūtras into Tibetan. Altogether he is credited with the translation of more than one hundred sixty sūtra translations and more than one hundred additional translations, mostly on tantric topics. In spite of Yeshé Dé's great importance for the propagation of Buddhism in Tibet during the imperial era, only a few biographical details about this figure are known. Later sources describe him as a student of the Indian teacher Padmasambhava, and he is also credited with teaching both sūtra and tantra widely to students of his own. He was also known as Nanam Yeshé Dé, from the Nanam (*sna nam*) clan.

g.204 Youthful Mañjuśrī

*'jam dpal gzhon nur gyur pa*

འཇམ་དཔལ་གཞོན་ནུ་རྒྱུ་པ།

*mañjuśrīkumārabhūta*

See "Mañjuśrī."