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The Questions of Brahmaviśeṣacintin

Brahmaviśeṣacintiparipṛcchā

འཕགས་པ་ཚངས་པ་ལྷན་པར་སེམས་ཀྱིས་ལྷུས་པ་ཞེས་བྱ་བྱེད་པ་ཆེན་པོའི་མདོ།

'phags pa tshangs pa khyad par sems kyis zhus pa zhes bya theg pa chen po'i mdo

The Noble Great Vehicle Sūtra “The Questions of Brahmaviśeṣacintin”

Āryabrahmaviśeṣacintiparipṛcchānāmamahāyānasūtra

· Toh 160 ·

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TRANSLATED INTO TIBETAN BY

Śākyaprabha · Dharmapāla · Jinamitra · Dharmatāśīla · Devendrarakṣita · Kumārarakṣita



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co.

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SUMMARY

- s.1 In this sūtra, the Buddha Śākyamuni and a number of the bodhisattvas, elders, and gods in his assembly engage in a lively exchange clarifying many key points of the Dharma from the perspective of the Mahāyāna, including the four truths, the origin of saṃsāra, and the identity of the buddhas, while praising the qualities of the paragons of the Mahāyāna, the bodhisattvas.

ac.

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- ac.1 This text was translated by the Dharmachakra Translation Committee under the supervision of Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche. Gyurmé Avertin translated the text from Tibetan into English. Andreas Doctor compared the translation against the original Tibetan and edited the translation. The Dharmachakra Translation Committee would like to thank Khenchen Pema Sherab for his generous assistance with the resolution of several difficult passages.
- 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 Brahmaviśeṣacintin is an important Mahāyāna sūtra that enjoyed significant popularity in Buddhist India, China, and Tibet over the centuries. The setting for this teaching is the Veṇuvana on the outskirts of Rājagṛha, the capital city in the kingdom of Magadha. The teaching itself takes the form of a lively discussion between the Buddha and several bodhisattvas, such as Brahmaviśeṣacintin, Jālinīprabha, and Mañjuśrī, as well as elders, such as Śāriputra and Mahākāśyapa, and even various gods who attend the teaching. This sūtra blends practical and theoretical strands of Mahāyāna and emphasizes how bodhisattvas should practice the Dharma—a training that transcends both the mundane and the supramundane. Indeed, although this sūtra stresses the importance of “donning the armor of diligence,” this practice must unfold within the context of the view of emptiness. The bodhisattva is therefore directed to make every effort to help all beings, while realizing that ultimately there is no action, no actor, and no beneficiary. As with many Mahāyāna sūtras, this text does not aim at a systematic presentation of doctrine,¹ but rather at evoking the nature and scope of awakening by means of pertinent conversations and illustrations. The text presents many well-known Dharma topics, including the four truths, the six perfections, and the Three Jewels, all from a Mahāyāna perspective that emphasizes the view of emptiness.

i.2

No Sanskrit manuscript of *The Questions of Brahmaviśeṣacintin* appears to have survived. In addition to the Tibetan translation, the text is also extant in three Chinese translations by Dharmarakṣa (Taishō 585), Kumārajīva (Taishō 586), and Bodhiruci (Taishō 587). The oldest Chinese translation is that by Dharmarakṣa, which is dated as early as 286 CE. This suggests that this scripture is a fairly early example of Indian Mahāyāna literature. The fact that the three Chinese translations of this scripture were made over several

centuries indicates that the sūtra enjoyed a sustained popularity in China. Kumārajīva's translation was also translated into Korean (K. 143), and a manuscript in Sogdian has been found.²

i.3

The Tibetan translation, which we have rendered into English here, was completed several centuries later during the early translation period of the ninth century, when most Mahāyāna sūtras were translated in Tibet. This dating may be inferred from the text's inclusion in the *Denkarma* (*Idan dkar ma*) imperial inventory of early Tibetan translations, which is dated to c. 812 CE.³ In the colophon of the Tibetan translation, we find no less than three Tibetan translators listed (Dharmatāśīla, Devendrarakṣita, and Kumārarakṣita) as well as three Indian preceptors (Śākyaprabha, Dharmapāla, and Jinamitra). Among the Tibetan translators, Dharmatāśīla is the best known, as he was a senior editor of several sūtra translations and one of the main editors involved in the compilation of the first authoritative Sanskrit–Tibetan dictionary, the *Mahāvvyutpatti*.⁴ This English translation was prepared based on the Tibetan translation in the Degé Kangyur in consultation with the Comparative Edition (Tib. *dpe bsdur ma*) and the Stok Palace manuscript.

The Noble Great Vehicle Sūtra
The Questions of Brahmaviśeṣacintin

1.

The Translation

[F.23.a] [B1]

1.1 Homage to all buddhas and bodhisattvas!

1.2 Thus did I hear at one time. The Blessed One was dwelling in Veṇuvana, at the Kalandakanivāpa, near Rājagṛha, together with a large saṅgha of sixty-four thousand monks and seventy-two thousand bodhisattvas. They were all clairvoyant, having the superknowledges. All of them had attained recollection, had unflinching confidence, had mastered absorption, enjoyed the superknowledges, were endowed with fearless eloquence, were proficient in the teachings on the essence of all things, and had attained acceptance that phenomena are unborn. Among them were youthful Mañjuśrī, youthful Ratnapāṇi, youthful Ratnamudrāhastā, youthful Ratnaśrī, youthful Gaganagaṇja, youthful Sahacittotpādadharmacakrapravartin, youthful Jālinīprabha, youthful Vijṛmbhita, youthful Śrīgarbha, youthful Sarvasvaparityāgin, youthful Padmavyūha, youthful Siṃha, youthful Candraprabha, youthful Candrarāśmiprabha, youthful Agramati, and youthful Svālaṃkāravvyūha. Present also were the sixteen⁵ holy beings Bhadrāpāla, Ratnākara, Susārthavāha, Naradatta, Guhagupta, Varuṇadatta, Indradatta, Uttaramati, Viśeṣamati, Vardhamānamati, Amoghadarśin, [F.23.b] Susaṃprasthita, Suvikrāntavikrāmin, Anantamati, Anikṣiptadhura, Sūryagarbha, and Dharaṇīṃdhara, along with other such beings among seventy-two thousand bodhisattvas. There were also the Four Great Kings, the gods of the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, such as Śakra, lord of the gods, and the gods of the Heaven Free from Strife,⁶ the Heaven of Joy, the Heaven of Delighting in Emanations, and the Heaven of Making Use of Others' Emanations, as well as a hundred thousand gods of the Brahmā realm, including Brahmā. There were also other humans and nonhuman beings, including various fantastic gods, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, asuras,

garuḍas, kinnaras, and mahoragas, who had all gathered together. Amid this assembly of hundreds of thousands of different disciples, the Blessed One was teaching the Dharma.

1.3 The bodhisattva youthful Jālinīrabha draped his shawl over one shoulder and knelt on his right knee. With his palms together, he bowed toward the Blessed One. He then shook the worlds in the trichiliocosm and, considering all the beings there, asked the Blessed One, “If I were to ask a question, would the Blessed One offer me an explanation? Could I ask a small question of the blessed, thus-gone, worthy, and perfect Buddha?”

1.4 “Jālinīrabha,” replied the Blessed One, “You may ask the Thus-Gone One whatever you please. Then I shall delight your mind by answering your question.” [F.24.a]

1.5 The bodhisattva Jālinīrabha then addressed the Blessed One, “When I observe the captivating body of the Blessed One, I see that it is brighter than one septillion suns. Blessed One, to be able to observe or examine the Thus-Gone One’s body is extraordinary. Furthermore, Blessed One, does the ability to observe the body of the Thus-Gone One or to examine it come from the power of the buddhas?”

1.6 “Jālinīrabha,” the Blessed One replied, “it is just as you have said. Beings are able to observe or examine the Thus-Gone One’s body only when the Thus-Gone One allows it. You may ask why, Jālinīrabha, thus-gone ones emanate rays of light called *unfolding of peace*. Sentient beings touched by these light rays are able to observe and examine the body of thus-gone ones with no impairment to their eye faculty. Jālinīrabha, thus-gone ones have rays of light called *fearless eloquence*. Sentient beings touched by these light rays ask questions of the thus-gone ones, and reply to questions with questions. Jālinīrabha, thus-gone ones have rays of light called *accumulation of virtuous roots*. Sentient beings touched by these light rays question the thus-gone ones in order to obtain the kingdom of a universal monarch. Likewise, thus-gone ones have rays of light called *unfolding of virtue*. Sentient beings touched by these light rays question the thus-gone ones in order to become like Śakra. Thus-gone ones have rays of light called *boon of sovereignty*. Sentient beings touched by these light rays question the thus-gone ones in order to be reborn in the world of Brahmā. Thus-gone ones have rays of light called *free of emotional defilements*. Sentient beings touched by these light rays question the thus-gone ones about the hearers’ vehicle. Thus-gone ones have rays of light called *one-pointed in solitude*. [F.24.b] Sentient beings touched by these light rays question the thus-gone ones about the solitary buddhas’ vehicle. Thus-gone ones have rays of light called *bestowal of empowerment into the wisdom of omniscience*. Sentient beings touched by these light rays question the thus-gone ones about the Great Vehicle of

buddhahood. Thus-gone ones have rays of light called *special conveyance*. Sentient beings touched by these light rays are able to touch the soles of a thus-gone one's feet as he comes and goes. All such beings will have happy rebirths in higher realms as soon as they die. They have rays of light called *array of all ornaments*. When thus-gone ones go to a town, they emanate these light rays, and all sentient beings touched by this light of the thus-gone ones gain supreme happiness. And a display of all types of ornaments also adorns the town.

1.7 “The thus-gone ones’ rays of light called *shaker* move infinite, limitless world systems. The rays of light called *revealer of happiness* eliminate the suffering that hell beings normally endure. The rays of light called *sublime love* guard beings born in the animal realm from eating one another. The rays of light called *refreshment* remove the suffering that beings normally endure in the world of Yama. The rays of light called *stainless* give sight to blind beings. The rays of light called *hearing* give hearing to deaf beings. The rays of light called *abandonment* lead beings who follow the path of the ten types of negative actions onto the path of the ten positive actions. The rays of light called *modesty* grant mindfulness to intoxicated beings. [F.25.a] The rays of light called *disappearance* bring beings with wrong views to acquire the right view. The rays of light called *giving* make stingy beings generous. The rays of light called *absence of torment* lead ill-natured beings to discipline. The rays of light called *beneficial* grant forbearance and gentleness to beings with harmful intentions. The rays of light called *blazing* inspire lazy beings with diligence. The rays of light called *focus* give concentration to beings with weak mindfulness. The rays of light called *wisdom* give insight to beings with faulty insight. The rays of light called *immaculate* inspire faith in beings bereft of it. The rays of light called *retention* expose uneducated beings to the teachings. The rays of light called *politeness* instill modesty and propriety in shameless and reckless beings. The rays of light called *weariness* lead beings who act out of desire to overcome their desire. The rays of light called *joy* make beings who act out of aversion overcome their aversion. The rays of light called *clarity* lead ignorant beings to understand dependent origination. The rays of light called *ubiquitous* make beings who act out of an equal measure of the three poisons abandon this way of acting.

1.8 “Jālinīrabha, the thus-gone ones also have rays of light called *revealing all forms*. Beings touched by these light rays can clearly see the thus-gone ones’ bodies in many hundreds of thousands of colors. [F.25.b] Jālinīrabha, if I began to speak about the light rays of the thus-gone ones, I could not complete an explanation about the features of the light rays of the thus-gone

ones even if I were to speak for an eon, or even longer. In this way, the thus-gone, worthy, and perfect buddhas have rays of light with infinite and limitless qualities.”

1.9 The bodhisattva Jālinīprabha replied to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, it is wonderful that you explain in this way the immeasurable array of the thus-gone ones’ physical features, and that you grant such Dharma teachings with inconceivable skillful means. Blessed One, we have never before heard about these light rays of the buddhas. By my understanding of what the Blessed One has taught, any bodhisattva who acquires faith upon hearing the names of these light rays will gain the power to illuminate with such light rays of the perfect buddhas. Now, Blessed One, please send forth those rays of light by which the Thus-Gone One invites bodhisattvas from other buddha realms to come at once to this Enduring world system. In that way, those bodhisattvas who have reached the culmination of the process of question, answer, and further explanation may come here to confer with the Thus-Gone One, pay their respects to him, and receive further clarification. Please send the light called *invitation to the bodhisattvas*.”

1.10 The Blessed One then issued from his body light rays that illuminate inconceivable, limitless world systems. As soon as the light had invoked the bodhisattvas, [F.26.a] they flocked into this Enduring world system.

1.11 To the east of this buddha realm, past as many hundreds of thousands of buddha realms as there are grains of sand in seventy-two Ganges rivers, there lies a buddha realm called Pariśuddha. There at present resides the thus-gone, worthy, and perfect Buddha Candraprabha, alive and well. In that buddha realm he also explains the Dharma, teaching exclusively to bodhisattvas. One of them is a bodhisattva great being irreversible from the path to awakening called Brahmaviśeṣacintin who, as soon as the light touched him, went before the blessed Thus-Gone One Candraprabha. He prostrated to the feet of that blessed one before asking, “Blessed One, what is the cause and what is the condition for such great light to appear in the world?”

1.12 That blessed one replied, “Brahmā, to the west of this buddha realm, past as many hundreds of thousands of buddha realms as there are grains of sand in seventy-two Ganges rivers, there is a realm called Enduring, where the thus-gone, worthy, and perfect Buddha Śākyamuni at present resides. Alive and well, he is teaching the Dharma. That thus-gone one has emanated this light from his body to invite the bodhisattvas of the ten directions.”

1.13 Then Brahmaviśeṣacintin said to the Blessed One, “Since that blessed, thus-gone one wants to see me, I shall go to the world system called Enduring and see the Blessed One Śākyamuni, prostrate to him, pay homage to him, question him, [F.26.b] and seek clarification from him.”

- 1.14 The Blessed One said, “Brahmā, now millions of bodhisattvas in great number are converging in the Enduring world system. So you should go if you think this is the right time. Brahmā, when you are in this buddha realm, you should abide by ten resolves, which are:
- 1.15
1. Harbor no anger, whether you hear pleasant or negative words.
 2. Be loving, whether you hear pleasant or negative words.
 3. Have compassion for beings at all times.
 4. Care for good and middling as well as lesser beings.
 5. Make no distinction when people worship you or disrespect you.
 6. Do not look down on others who have faults and are confused.
 7. Consider the various vehicles to be of one taste.
 8. Do not be afraid when hearing about the suffering in the lower realms.
 9. Consider all bodhisattvas as your teachers.
 10. Understand the rarity of seeing a thus-gone one in a realm afflicted by the five degenerations.
- 1.16 “Brahmā, as you stay in that buddha realm, abide by these ten resolves.”
Brahmaviśeṣacintin said to the Blessed One, “I am not suitable to speak with a lion’s roar in front of you, Blessed One. Still, the Blessed One clearly knows what I do. Therefore, Blessed One, I will stay in that buddha realm, training and abiding by those ten resolves.”
- 1.17 Other bodhisattvas of the buddha realm of the blessed, thus-gone Candraprabha said to the Thus-Gone One, “Blessed One, it is fortunate that we were not born in that buddha realm, where uncouth beings congregate.”
[F.27.a]
- 1.18 The Blessed One replied, “Noble sons, do not say that. Why not? Noble sons, compared to practicing pure conduct for one hundred thousand eons here in this buddha realm, it is much better to remain without anger for one morning in that Enduring world system. This is because, in that world system, there are so many more emotional defilements, so much more harm, and so much more defilement.”
- 1.19 At that point, twelve thousand bodhisattvas from that buddha realm departed with Brahmaviśeṣacintin. They said, “Brahmā, we are also going to the Enduring world system to train in these resolves, to see the Blessed One Śākyamuni, to prostrate before him, and to pay homage to him. Through the different states of equipoise, we shall abide in that buddha realm.”
- 1.20 Brahmaviśeṣacintin and the twelve thousand bodhisattvas prostrated to the feet of the blessed, thus-gone Candraprabha, and then disappeared from their buddha realm and went to the buddha realm of the blessed, thus-gone, worthy, and perfect Buddha Śākyamuni, in the time it takes a strong man to bend a straightened arm or to straighten a bent arm.

- 1.21 At that point, the Blessed One asked the bodhisattva Jālinīrabha,
“Jālinīrabha, did you witness the arrival of Brahmaviśeṣacintin?”
“I saw him, Blessed One.”
- 1.22 The Blessed One then said, “Jālinīrabha, Brahmaviśeṣacintin is foremost among the bodhisattvas skilled [F.27.b] in asking questions correctly and thoroughly. He is foremost among those who use appropriate words. He is foremost in terms of speaking the truth. He is foremost among those who speak kindly. He is the foremost in sincere speech. He is foremost among respectful speakers. He is foremost among those whose use of words is unconstrained. He is foremost in formulating the indirect teachings. He is foremost among those who are free of anger. He is foremost among those who are loving. He is foremost among the compassionate. He is foremost among the joyful. He is foremost among those who have equanimity. He is also foremost among all bodhisattvas who have eliminated every doubt and know how to pose questions.”
- 1.23 Brahmaviśeṣacintin, together with the twelve thousand bodhisattvas, now went before the Blessed One. They paid homage by prostrating to the feet of the Blessed One and circumambulated him three times. Then they bowed to the Blessed One with palms joined and praised the Blessed One in many respects through these verses:
- 1.24 “In words heard in the three worlds of existence,
The garlands of your praises reach all worlds;
In buddha realms we have seen supreme beings,
And all have been singing of your qualities.
- 1.25 “Here in this pure buddha field,
Untainted, you have abandoned the three lower realms.
You have turned away from such realms,
Yet your compassion cares for all evil doers.
- 1.26 “Protector of the world, you have great wisdom,
And all well-gone ones are equal to you;
You act with very pure intention,
Embracing buddha realms such as this one.
- 1.27 “Compared to maintaining all the rules of discipline and abandoning desire,
And practicing like this for eons, [F.28.a]
Whoever practices here with love
Becomes exceptionally exalted in just an instant of practice.
- 1.28 “Body and speech, along with the mind,
Produce negativity in three ways,

- And lead to the experiences of the three lower realms,
Which, in this case, are purified in this very life.
- 1.29 “Whatever the bodhisattvas do in this realm
Is never a cause of torment.
Even when their actions are negative and faulty,
A mere headache purifies them here.
- 1.30 “It seems that the bodhisattvas here are free of faults.
They uphold the supreme Dharma as it is taught,
And thenceforth, their thoughts
Are never errant and their minds do not decline.
- 1.31 “For those who seek to sever the chains of the māras
And purify emotional defilements and karma too,
You have taught the truth here in this buddha field,
So that they may become supreme and endowed with wisdom.
- 1.32 “The realization a sensible person gains by upholding the Dharma
For ten million eons in other buddha realms
Is attained in just one morning or afternoon in Enduring—
The wise understand that this is superior.
- 1.33 “In the world of Manifest Joy,
And likewise in Amitāyus’s supreme Heaven of Bliss,
Even the word *suffering* does not exist,
Yet the qualities here are far superior.
- 1.34 “This faulty world is the source of emotional defilements.
All efforts to bear with the negative behavior of the angry
And to lead others to the Dharma
Are even harder to accomplish in this realm.
- 1.35 “Yet your mind is suffused with compassion, and you liberate beings from
great suffering.
Unsurpassable master, we pay homage to you.
O Lord, the Dharma that you explain to savage beings
Is very hard to come by in the world.
- 1.36 “This extremely vast assembly
Consists of the Buddha’s heirs, everywhere renowned.
This ocean-like assembly is never satiated with the Dharma.
To them, the Victor’s awakening is taught.
- 1.37 “To Brahmā, Śakra, and the guardians of the world,

- And gods, nāgas, asuras, [F.28.b] and kinnaras
Who seek the Dharma, all gathered in great number,
You teach the truth, in accordance with their aspirations.
- 1.38 “The members of the gathering of the fourfold assembly—
Laymen, laywomen, monks, and nuns—
Who seek teachings as if they were pursuing wealth,
Request the teaching of this Dharma.
- 1.39 “To those who are always inspired by the buddha vehicle,
As well as the vehicles of the solitary buddhas and the hearers,
You teach vehicles attuned to their minds and thoughts,
In order to assist them.
- 1.40 “For all those who are in the buddha family,
Who have irrevocably aroused the mind of awakening
That springs from the Three Jewels,
I beseech you, King of Dharma, to assist them.
- 1.41 “Hearing your praises ringing out,
These beings with vast wisdom have joyfully arrived.
Best of beings, since you know them well,
Please tell them about the unsurpassable conduct.
- 1.42 “As the wisdom of the well-gone ones is inconceivable,
It is beyond the level of the great worthy ones,
And not the domain of solitary buddhas.
I too follow you with faith, O Guide.
- 1.43 “I ask you about these most important points.
Guide of the world, please be patient with me.
Since your mind never grows discouraged,
Please teach the supreme path to awakening!”
- 1.44 Having addressed these verses to the Blessed One, Brahmaviśeṣacintin then asked him, “Blessed One, how do bodhisattvas firmly maintain their resolve without becoming disheartened? Blessed One, how do bodhisattvas speak with certainty while never hurting others with their words? How do they increase their roots of virtue? How are they not corrupted, and how is their conduct not errant? How do they increase virtuous qualities? [F.29.a] How do they progress from level to level? How do they skillfully mature beings? How do they master being of service to beings? How do they guard the mind of awakening? How do they focus their minds one-pointedly and not become distracted? How is it that they are skilled in searching for the

Dharma? How is it that they are skilled at escaping downfalls? How is it that they are skilled at taming emotional defilements? How is it that they are skilled at being surrounded by an assembly? How is it that they are skilled at presenting the Dharma? How is it that they have the strength of past causes, and therefore do not exhaust their roots of virtue? How is it that they can practice the perfections, from generosity to insight, without being taught? How is it that they are skilled in turning away from the blissful states of concentration? How is it that they will never be deprived of buddha qualities? How is it that they will never sever the buddhas' lineage?"

1.45 The Blessed One replied to Brahmaviśeṣacintin, "Excellent! Excellent, Brahmā! Brahmā, your motivation for asking the Thus-Gone One about such topics is excellent. Therefore, Brahmā, listen with the greatest care, and keep this in mind. I shall explain."

1.46 "Very well, Blessed One" replied Brahmaviśeṣacintin, and he listened to the Blessed One with full attention.

1.47 The Blessed One then said, "Brahmā, when bodhisattva great beings are endowed with these four qualities, they have a firm resolve and do not become disheartened. The four qualities are compassion for others [F.29.b], indefatigable diligence, seeing saṃsāra as a dream, and considering the buddhas' wisdom to be unparalleled. So, Brahmā, bodhisattva great beings endowed with these four qualities have a firm resolve and do not become disheartened.

1.48 "Brahmā, when bodhisattva great beings are endowed with these four qualities, they speak with certainty and never hurt others with their words. The four qualities are that bodhisattvas declare with certainty that no phenomenon has an individual self, bodhisattvas declare with certainty that all places of birth are bereft of joy, bodhisattvas declare with certainty their praise of the Great Vehicle, and bodhisattvas declare with certainty that the effects of positive and negative actions are never lost. Brahmā, these are the four declarations of certainty of bodhisattva great beings.

1.49 "Brahmā, when bodhisattva great beings are endowed with these four qualities, they increase their roots of virtue. The four qualities are discipline, learning, generosity, and renunciation.

1.50 "Brahmā, bodhisattva great beings are not corrupted and avoid errant conduct when they are unaffected by these four circumstances: loss, criticism, anonymity, and suffering. Brahmā, when bodhisattva great beings are impervious to these four circumstances, they are not corrupted and avoid errant conduct.

1.51 "Brahmā, when bodhisattva great beings are endowed with these four qualities, they increase their roots of virtue. The four qualities are leading beings to awakening, giving without expectations of any reward, upholding

- the sacred Dharma, [F.30.a] and teaching insight to bodhisattvas.
- 1.52 “Brahmā, when bodhisattva great beings are endowed with these four qualities, they progress from level to level. The four qualities are that they accumulate roots of virtue, they avoid all negativities, they are skilled at dedication, and they have intense diligence.
- 1.53 “Brahmā, when bodhisattva great beings are endowed with these four qualities, they skillfully mature beings. The four qualities are that they act in accordance with beings, they rejoice in the merit of others, they confess negativity, and they supplicate all the buddhas.
- 1.54 “Brahmā, when bodhisattva great beings are endowed with these four qualities, they know how to be of service to others. The four qualities are assisting all beings, being unconcerned with their own happiness, being patient and gentle, and having eliminated pride.
- 1.55 “Brahmā, when bodhisattva great beings are endowed with these four qualities, they do not squander the mind of awakening. The four qualities are remembering the buddhas, preceding all roots of virtue with the mind of awakening, relying on spiritual friends, and praising the Great Vehicle.
- 1.56 “Brahmā, when bodhisattva great beings are endowed with these four qualities, their minds are focused one-pointedly, and they do not get carried away. The four qualities are that they have abandoned the motivation of the hearers, they have renounced the mindset of solitary buddhas, they search for the Dharma insatiably, and they teach the Dharma as they have heard it.
- 1.57 “Brahmā, [F.30.b] when bodhisattva great beings are endowed with these four qualities, they search for the Dharma. The four qualities are that they consider the Dharma as a jewel because it is so difficult to find, they consider the Dharma as a medicine because it cures all ailments, they consider the Dharma as a boon because it cannot be lost, and they consider the Dharma as the pacification of all suffering because it takes beings beyond suffering.
- 1.58 “Brahmā, when bodhisattva great beings are endowed with these four qualities, they are skilled at escaping downfalls. The four qualities are an inner acceptance that phenomena are not born, an inner acceptance that phenomena do not cease because they are not transferred, an inner acceptance of dependent arising by analyzing causes, and an inner acceptance of the changing nature of the mind from one moment to the next.
- 1.59 “Brahmā, when bodhisattva great beings are endowed with these four qualities, they purify emotional defilements. The four qualities are that they analyze things correctly, they pledge to maintain discipline in the future, they generate the power of virtuous qualities, and they dwell in solitude.
- 1.60 “Brahmā, when bodhisattva great beings are endowed with these four qualities, they are skilled at being surrounded by an assembly. The four qualities are that they do not think about seeking conflict since they are only

concerned with the Dharma; they are not proud or haughty since they are respectful; they are not ostentatious since they seek all that is virtuous; and they do not act for gain, respect, or praise since their aim is to engage others in roots of virtue.

1.61 “Brahmā, when bodhisattva great beings are endowed with these four qualities, they share the gift of the Dharma. The four qualities are to uphold the sacred Dharma, to increase their own insight, to carry out holy beings’ activities, and to teach the factors of defilement [F.31.a] and purification.

1.62 “Brahmā, when bodhisattva great beings are endowed with these four qualities, they have the strength of past causes, and therefore do not exhaust their roots of virtue. The four qualities are to see the confusion of others without condemning them, to maintain love toward those who are angry, to show the causality in phenomena, and to never part from the mind of awakening.

1.63 “Brahmā, when bodhisattva great beings are endowed with these four qualities, they know the six perfections without having been taught. The four qualities are that they start with generosity, they do not quarrel over transgressions, they master the ways of attracting students in order to mature beings, and they have interest in the profound Dharma.

1.64 “Brahmā, when bodhisattva great beings are endowed with these four qualities, they turn away from resting in concentration, and they take birth in the desire realm. The four qualities are that their minds are capable, they generate the strength of the roots of virtue, they do not abandon beings, and they cultivate skillful means and insight.

1.65 “Brahmā, when bodhisattva great beings are endowed with these four qualities, they will never lose the buddhas’ qualities. The four qualities are embracing limitless saṃsāra, making offerings to and worshiping a limitless number of buddhas, cultivating infinite loving kindness, and cultivating infinite compassion.

1.66 “Brahmā, when bodhisattva great beings are endowed with these four qualities, they do not sever the buddhas’ lineage. The four qualities are that they do not break promises they have made, they practice what they preach, they have a strong inclination toward roots of virtue, and they abide by persevering effort. Brahmā, when bodhisattva [F.31.b] great beings are endowed with these four qualities, they do not sever the lineage of the buddhas.”

1.67 Once the Blessed One had explained these accomplishments of sets of four qualities, thirty-two thousand beings including gods and humans aroused the mind turned toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening. Five thousand bodhisattvas gained acceptance that phenomena are unborn.

Furthermore, the bodhisattvas who had gathered from many buddha realms caused divine flowers to fall, covering the worlds of the trichiliocosm to knee height, as an offering to the Blessed One.

- 1.68 Then the youthful Jālinīprabha inquired of Brahmaviśeṣacintin, “Brahmā, the Blessed One said that you are the foremost among those skilled at asking questions. What is the bodhisattvas’ correct way of asking questions?”
- 1.69 Viśeṣacintin replied, “Noble son, queries that reify a self are improperly asked questions. Queries that reify another are improperly asked questions. Queries that reify phenomena are improperly asked questions. Jālinīprabha, queries that do not reify the self, something other, or phenomena are properly asked questions. Furthermore, Jālinīprabha, inquiries with a view of origination are incorrect. Inquiries with a view of cessation are incorrect. Incorrect is any inquiry posed with a view of what is tenable and what is not. Jālinīprabha, the correct way to ask is to question without any view of production, cessation, or what is tenable and what is not.
- 1.70 “Jālinīprabha, furthermore, inquiries with a view of defilement are incorrect. Inquiries with a view of purification are incorrect. Inquiries with a view of saṃsāra [F.32.a] are incorrect. Inquiries with a view of transcending saṃsāra are incorrect. Inquiries with a view of passing beyond suffering are incorrect. Jālinīprabha, to ask questions with no view of defilement, purification, saṃsāra, transcending saṃsāra, or passing beyond suffering is the correct way of asking. Why? This is because phenomena are unchanging; so there are no emotional defilements and there is no purification, no circling in saṃsāra, and no passing beyond suffering.
- 1.71 “Jālinīprabha, furthermore, an inquiry for the sake of gain is incorrect. An inquiry for the sake of reward is incorrect. An inquiry aimed at superknowledge is incorrect. An inquiry for the sake of realization and meditation is incorrect. An inquiry for the sake of being freed from something is incorrect. Jālinīprabha, to ask questions with no limitations, no grasping, no fabrication, no understanding, no superknowledge, no abiding, no meditation, and no view of meditation is the correct way of asking.
- 1.72 “Jālinīprabha, furthermore, an inquiry based on thoughts such as, ‘this is positive,’ ‘this is negative,’ ‘this is defiled,’ ‘this is undefiled,’ ‘this is unwholesome,’ ‘this is not unwholesome,’ ‘this is conditioned,’ ‘this is unconditioned,’ ‘this is worldly,’ or ‘this transcends the world’ is not the proper way to ask questions. Jālinīprabha, as long as questions are formulated with duality in mind, the interrogation is improper. Jālinīprabha, correct questions are asked with no duality, no nonduality, no notion, no name, and no idea in mind.

- 1.73 “Jālinīrabha, furthermore, a question asked by differentiating buddhas, [F.32.b] Dharma teachings, saṅghas, buddha realms, beings, or vehicles is an incorrect way to investigate. Jālinīrabha, questions asked without separating or uniting any phenomena are correct interrogations. Furthermore, Jālinīrabha, all phenomena are proper; all phenomena are improper.”
- 1.74 Jālinīrabha asked, “Brahmā, how is it that all phenomena are proper? How is that all phenomena are improper?”
- 1.75 Brahmā replied, “All phenomena are inconceivable. This is why all phenomena are proper. When those engaged in thought relate to inconceivable phenomena, they become improper. The void characteristic of all phenomena is proper. Those who are not interested in the void become involved in exaggeration. When one exaggerates, one becomes involved in exaggeration; and the greater one’s involvement in exaggeration, the more improper one becomes.”
- 1.76 Jālinīrabha asked, “Brahmā, what is the nature of phenomena?”
Brahmā replied, “Noble son, phenomena are devoid of a domain of their own, which is the ultimate absence of desire.”
- 1.77 Jālinīrabha asked, “Tell me Brahmā, is it not true that very few can understand this: the way all things are?”
- 1.78 Brahmā replied, “Noble son, the ultimate absence of desire is not a singular entity, nor is it a multiplicity. Jālinīrabha, whenever a son or daughter of noble family understands the way things are, he or she does not realize anything. This is how it has always been, and it will always be this way. Why? Because the blessed ones teach that nonunderstanding is knowing all.
- 1.79 “When beings hear this teaching properly and gain trust in it, they are practicing just as it has been taught; they do not conceptually elaborate on any phenomenon. [F.33.a] Whoever does not conceptually elaborate on any phenomenon does not understand anything. Whoever does not understand anything does not wander in saṃsāra, and neither do they have the qualities of nirvāṇa. You may wonder why this is. This is because the blessed ones do not apprehend either saṃsāra or nirvāṇa.”
- 1.80 Jālinīrabha asked, “But do the blessed ones not teach the Dharma so that beings may pass beyond saṃsāra?”
- 1.81 Brahmā responded, “Do the blessed ones teach any Dharma to pass beyond saṃsāra?”
Jālinīrabha replied, “No, they do not.”
- 1.82 Brahmā continued, “Noble son, therefore the blessed ones do not eliminate saṃsāra, and do not lead beings to nirvāṇa. Nevertheless, they teach that nirvāṇa is attained by going beyond dualistic notions. In this, they

- do not cause anyone to go beyond saṃsāra, nor do they lead beings to nirvāṇa. Why not? This is because in equality, there is no circling in a saṃsāra, no attainment of a nirvāṇa, no defilement, and no purification.”
- 1.83 The Blessed One applauded Brahmaviśeṣacintin, saying, “Excellent, Brahmā, excellent! Brahmā, this point should be explained just as you have done.”
- 1.84 As he correctly delivered this Dharma teaching, two thousand monks freed their minds from contaminations, beyond further grasping.
- 1.85 Then the Blessed One said to Brahmā, “Brahmā, I do not apprehend saṃsāra or nirvāṇa. Why not? Even though the thus-gone ones speak of saṃsāra, there is no saṃsāra to circle in; they teach nirvāṇa, although there is no nirvāṇa to attain. Brahmā, those who understand the meaning of this explanation are neither in saṃsāra nor in nirvāṇa.”
- 1.86 Then [F.33.b] five hundred of the monks in the assembly who had heard this teaching arose to leave and said, “If there is no saṃsāra in which we circle, and if there is no nirvāṇa to attain, then our observation of pure conduct is also pointless. So why then do we need meditation, concentration, absorption, and attainment on the path?”
- 1.87 Youthful Jālinīprabha responded to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, those who pursue the birth or the cessation of anything will not become buddhas. Blessed One, those who try to attain a reified nirvāṇa will not pass beyond saṃsāra. Why not? Blessed One, *passing beyond suffering* is the quelling of all signs and the end of all movements of thought. But, Blessed One, these foolish people who have gone forth as monks within the well-spoken Dharma-Vinaya now fall into the views of the non-Buddhists as they seek a reified nirvāṇa. Blessed One, when people try to reach a reified nirvāṇa within a total transcendence of all phenomena, like oil pressed out of sesame seeds or butter extracted from milk, they are but proud hearers and non-Buddhists. Blessed One, those who practice correctly do not see any birth or cessation in any phenomenon, do not have anything to attain, and do not seek any realization.”
- 1.88 Then youthful Jālinīprabha said to Brahmaviśeṣacintin, “Brahmā, please give a teaching to these five hundred monks who arose to leave, to inspire them with the Dharma-Vinaya, make them regain their trust, and free them from their unwholesome views.”
- 1.89 “Noble son, they cannot avoid it—they cannot avoid it,” he responded.⁷ [F.34.a] “Even if one were to travel through as many buddha realms as there are grains of sand in the river Ganges, one could not escape this teaching. Noble son, it is like childish beings who are afraid of space and try to escape

it; yet everywhere they run, they still see it. Likewise, these monks may go as far as they can, but they cannot escape the characteristics of emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness.

1.90 “Now, imagine someone else who says he wants to find space and searches for it. No matter where he goes, and no matter how much he talks about it, he will not find space. Though he moves within space, he cannot see it. Why? Because *space* is just a name. Noble son, it is the same with these monks who search for a reified nirvāṇa. Even though they function within nirvāṇa, they cannot see it, cannot understand it. Why not? Noble son, because *nirvāṇa* is just a name. Just as we can utter the word “space,” and yet there is nothing to take hold of, so can we can utter “nirvāṇa, nirvāṇa,” and yet there is nothing to take hold of.”

1.91 Upon hearing these explanations, the five hundred monks freed their minds from contaminations beyond further grasping and attained the superknowledges. They said, “Blessed One, beings who search for a real nirvāṇa in a total transcendence of all phenomena cannot reach buddhahood. Blessed One, we are not ordinary beings, nor are we on the path of training, and we are also not worthy ones. We have neither saṃsāric features nor those of nirvāṇa. Why not? Blessed One, to become a buddha, there should be no action, thought, movement of mind, or elaboration.”

1.92 Then venerable [F.34.b] Śāriputra said to these monks, “Venerable ones, you understand the spiritual practice. You have accomplished your own benefit.”

1.93 The monks replied, “Reverend Śāriputra, we understand defilement. We have accomplished nonaction.”

1.94 Śāriputra inquired, “Venerable ones, why do you say this?”

The monks replied, “Reverend Śāriputra, it is because we understand defilement that we are spiritual practitioners. Reverend Śāriputra, nonaction is nirvāṇa; reflecting upon this, we have realized the nature of defilement and say, ‘we have accomplished nonaction.’ ”

1.95 Śāriputra assented, “Excellent, excellent, venerable ones! Venerable ones, you are now at the level where you are worthy recipients of offerings.”

1.96 The monks replied, “Reverend Śāriputra, just as the Teacher does not partake of offerings, so should we train.”

1.97 “Why?”

“Reverend Śāriputra, because the Thus-Gone One naturally knows the realm of phenomena.”

1.98 Brahmaviśeṣacintin then inquired of the Blessed One, “Blessed One, who are those who are worthy recipients of offerings?”

The Blessed One replied, “Brahmā, those who are not carried away by worldly concerns.”

- 1.99 "Blessed One, who can partake of offerings?"
"Those who have no grasping to anything."
- 1.100 "Tell us, who are the fields of merit in the world?"
"Those who do not squander the mind of awakening."
- 1.101 "Tell us, who are the spiritual teachers?"
"Those who never relinquish loving kindness toward all beings."
- 1.102 "Tell us, who will repay the thus-gone ones' deeds?"
"Those who do not sever the buddhas' lineage."
- 1.103 "Tell us, who makes offerings to the thus-gone ones?" [F.35.a]
"Those who realize the limit of the absence of birth."
- 1.104 "Tell us, who attends to the thus-gone ones?"
"Those who abide by the training, even at the cost of their lives."
- 1.105 "Tell us, who worships the thus-gone ones?"
"Those who control their faculties."
- 1.106 "Tell us, who is the richest in the world?"
"Those who are endowed with the seven riches."
- 1.107 "Tell us, who pursues the best in the world?"
"Those in the world who have unsurpassable insight."
- 1.108 "Tell us, who is disengaged?"
"Those who yearn for nothing in the three realms."
- 1.109 "Tell us, who in the world is well restrained?"
"Those who have refined away all fetters."
- 1.110 "Tell us, who is happy in the world?"
"Those who have no grasping."
- 1.111 "Tell us, who is free of grasping?"
"Those who know the five aggregates."
- 1.112 "Tell us, who has crossed over?"
"Those who have relinquished the six sense fields."
- 1.113 "Blessed One, who has gone to the other shore?"
"Brahmā, those who have attained equality."
- 1.114 "Blessed One, tell us, when does the bodhisattvas' generosity blossom?"
"When they inspire beings toward the mind of omniscience."
- 1.115 "Tell us, when are bodhisattvas endowed with discipline?"
"When they do not abandon the mind of omniscience."
- 1.116 "Tell us, when are bodhisattvas endowed with patience?"
"When they see that [F.35.b] the mind of omniscience is inexhaustible."
- 1.117 "Tell us, when are bodhisattvas endowed with diligence?"
"When they investigate the mind of omniscience without apprehending it."
- 1.118 "Tell us, when are bodhisattvas in concentration?"
"When they realize the natural peace of the mind of omniscience."

- 1.119 “Tell us, when are bodhisattvas endowed with insight?”
“When they do not conceptually elaborate any phenomenon.”
- 1.120 “Tell us, when do they abide in loving kindness?”
“When they do not conceive of beings.”
- 1.121 “Tell us, when do they abide in compassion?”
“When they do not conceive of any phenomenon.”
- 1.122 “Tell us, when do they abide in joy?”
“When they do not conceive of a self.”
- 1.123 “Tell us, when do they abide in equanimity?”
“When they do not conceive of self and other.”
- 1.124 “Tell us, when do they have faith?”
“When they trust in the inexpressibility of all things.”
- 1.125 “Tell us, when are they learned?”
“When they have abandoned attachment to any sound.”
- 1.126 “Tell us, when do they become dignified?”
“When they understand their inner components.”
- 1.127 “Tell us, when do they have perfect propriety?”
“When they abandon the outer sense fields.”
- 1.128 “Blessed One, when do bodhisattvas have qualities that are always present?”
“When they purify the karmic actions of their bodies, speech, and minds,”
the Blessed One replied.
- 1.129 At that point the Blessed One spoke the following verses:

“Their bodies are pure and do not carry out evil deeds.
Their words are also pure, so that they have forever abandoned lies.
Their minds are clear; their thoughts are always immaculate. [F.36.a]
This is why the victorious ones say that they are always present.
- 1.130 “They meditate on repulsiveness and have no attachment bred by desire.
They abide in loving kindness and do not erupt with anger.
They abide by insight and are not obscured by ignorance.
Thus, the wise declare them always present.
- 1.131 “Whether they are in society or in training,
Whether they are in the wilderness, in town, or with people,
Their behavior remains the same.
This is why the victorious ones say that they are always present.
- 1.132 “They trust in the nature of all victorious ones.
Wise, they also trust that the Dharma itself is without attachment,
And they trust in the unconditioned nature of the Saṅgha.

- This is why the victorious ones say that they are always present.
- 1.133 “They know the conduct of those inclined toward desire,
And the conduct of those who act with anger and ignorance as well.
They master the practices to transform these behaviors.
This is why the victorious ones teach that they are always present.
- 1.134 “They do not abide in the desire realm,
Nor do they dwell in the form realm, and
They are not denizens of the formless realm.
This is why the victorious ones say that they are always present.
- 1.135 “They constantly accumulate merit based on signs and aspirations
And trust that all things are emptiness,
Yet the contaminations are not left partially extinguished.
This is why the victorious ones teach that they are always present.
- 1.136 “They are well-versed in the vehicle of the solitary buddhas.
They know the words of the teachings followed by the hearers.
They have also perfected the vehicle of perfect buddhahood.
This is why the well-gone ones say that they are always present.
- 1.137 “They always have spotless intelligence,
They are clear about right and wrong, and
They regard friends and enemies as equals.
This is why the bodhisattvas are always present.
- 1.138 “They conceptualize neither phenomena of the past,
Nor those of the present or future;
These heroes never conceive of anything.
This is why these pure beings are always present.” [B2]
- 1.139 Then Brahmaviśeṣacintin said to the Blessed One, [F.36.b] “Blessed One, how do bodhisattva great beings transcend worldly concerns? How, even in the midst of worldly concerns, do these not blight them? How do they deal with worldly concerns, and even seek them out, yet not actually engage with them? How do they liberate beings from worldly concerns by taking on these very worldly concerns? How, having realized the equality of worldly concerns, do they function in the world without eliminating worldly concerns?”
- 1.140 The Blessed One again spoke in verse to answer Brahmaviśeṣacintin:

“I have explained the world in terms of the aggregates.
This is where beings of the world abide.

- Once they no longer abide there,
They are liberated from worldly concerns.
- 1.141 “Wise bodhisattvas know precisely
The very nature of the world.
So although they possess the aggregates,
They protect those plagued by worldly concerns.
- 1.142 “They protect the world
From gain and loss,
Fame and anonymity,
Praise and blame, and pleasure and pain.
- 1.143 “With their great and stable wisdom,
They realize the nature of worldly concerns.
Having seen the decay of the world,
They are never attracted toward such concerns.
- 1.144 “Their minds are not exalted by gain;
Nor are they dejected by loss.⁸
Unshakable like Mount Meru,
Gain and loss never harm them.
- 1.145 “So it is with fame and anonymity:
For them, these are forever the same.
They welcome with impartiality
Happiness and pain, praise and blame.
- 1.146 “This world comes from duality;
It arises from misapprehension.
This is why, realizing the ways of the world,
The wise follow them without following them.
- 1.147 “They know how to accommodate
All the ways of this world.
This is why, adapting to the ways of the world,
They liberate beings from unhappiness.
- 1.148 “These heroes act in the world.
Like lotuses, they are free of attachment. [F.37.a]
While abiding in the realm of phenomena,
They are not ruined by worldly things.
- 1.149 “Those who fail to understand the nature of the world
Behave in worldly ways.

But those wise ones who know the characteristic of the world
Conduct themselves accordingly.

- 1.150 “The world has the characteristic of space,
And space is devoid of characteristics.
Those who know this
Are unstained by worldly concerns.
- 1.151 “They explain to living beings
The way they understand the world.
Knowing the nature of phenomena,
They are unharmed by worldly ways.
- 1.152 “The aggregates are devoid of inherent nature:
This is the nature of the world.
Those who do not know this
Will always be in the world.
- 1.153 “Those who know all the aggregates
As unborn and unarisen
May interact with the world,
But are never in the world.
- 1.154 “Those with no understanding of worldly ways,
Who are subject to dualistic conceptions,
Are foolish and dispute this,
Denying its truth.
- 1.155 “The nature of worldly things
I know exactly to be thus.
Hence I never dispute
With the denizens of the world.
- 1.156 “This indisputable Dharma
Is explained by all buddhas.
Once the equality of the world is understood,
There is no truth or falsehood in it.
- 1.157 “If one were to discover in these teachings
Something false or true,
One would be clinging to extremes,
And would be no different from the non-Buddhists.
- 1.158 “Phenomena are not actually real,
So nothing can be true or false.

- This is why I explain that it is beyond duality,
The Dharma that transcends the world.
- 1.159 “The wise, who know the nature of the world
Just the way it is,
Do not cling to a view
Of things being true or false.
- 1.160 “Those who know this world
To be pristine like space
Are as greatly renowned
As the sun in the world.
- 1.161 “Those who see the world
The way I see it [F.37.b]
See the perfect buddhas,
Who live in all directions.
- 1.162 “They know that phenomena devoid of inherent existence
Depend on other things.
To know that phenomena depend on other things
Is to know the nature of phenomena.
- 1.163 “Those who realize the nature of all phenomena
Know emptiness.
To realize emptiness
Is to see the guides.
- 1.164 “Those who hear
This teaching about the world
Are active in the world,
But do not dwell in the world.
- 1.165 “Those who abide in the view
Have not gone somewhere else.
Rather, they act in the world
But are not stuck in the world.
- 1.166 “Even after the Buddha has passed on,
For those who are intent on forbearance,
The thus-gone ones, dharmakāya, and
Perfect buddhas will be present.
- 1.167 “Those who know this way
Uphold my Dharma.

- They will make constant offerings to me.
They are the teachers of the world.
- 1.168 “Those who hear
This teaching on the world
Cannot be harmed,
Even by the attacks of evil māras.
- 1.169 “Those who know this truth
Will be rich and prosper,
Will always like to give,
And will observe the most excellent discipline.
- 1.170 “Those who know this world
Will have the strength of patience,
Know how to be diligent,
And be wise beings who delight in concentration.
- 1.171 “Those who know this truth
Will enjoy the most excellent absorptions,
And take pleasure in complete peace.
Those stable ones will have exalted wisdom.
- 1.172 “Wherever these teachings can be heard,
That place will not be bereft of buddhas;
Great beings will, before long,
Travel to the seat of awakening.
- 1.173 “Whoever hears
This teaching on the world
Overcomes the deceitful māras
And will awaken to unexcelled buddhahood.”
- 1.174 The Blessed One then said to Brahmaviśeṣacintin, “Brahmā, since the thus-gone ones have gone beyond the domain of the world, they [F.38.a] can speak of the world, the origin of the world, the cessation of the world, and the path that leads to the cessation of the world. Brahmā, the *world* refers to the five aggregates. Any attachment to them is the origin of the world. The exhaustion and cessation of the aggregates corresponds to the cessation of the world, while the path is the nonduality of searching and not searching for the aggregates. Furthermore, Brahmā, what we call the *aggregates* are merely different designations. The *world* is these words and verbalized views. To pursue these views is the *origin* of the world. The genuine cessation of these views is the *cessation* of the world. The path through which one stops

grasping on to these views is the *path* that leads to the cessation of the world. Brahmā, having reflected about this, I have designated, in relation to this six-foot-tall body, the world, the origin of the world, the cessation of the world, and the path that leads to the cessation of the world.”

1.175 Brahmaviśeṣacintin inquired of the Blessed One, “Blessed One, the thus-gone ones teach the four truths of the noble ones; but what, Blessed One, are the truths of the noble ones?”

1.176 The Blessed One replied, “Brahmā, *suffering* is not a truth of the noble ones. Brahmā, *the origin of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path that leads to the cessation of suffering* are not the truths of the noble ones. Why not? Brahmā, if *suffering* were a truth of the noble ones, then beasts of burden, like oxen and donkeys, along with all beings in the hell realms, would likewise experience the truth of the noble ones. Why? Because they experience sensations of suffering. Brahmā, if *the origin of suffering* [F.38.b] were a truth of the noble ones, then all beings, who are born in existences that originate in various ways, would also experience the truths of the noble ones. If *the cessation of suffering* were a truth of the noble ones, then all those who are seeking nirvāṇa by annihilating things and all the proponents of nihilistic views, who fall into the view of cessation, would also experience the truth of the noble ones. If *the path* were a truth of the noble ones, then all those who pursue conditioned phenomena, which arise from further conditioned phenomena, and apprehend a conditioned path would also experience the truth of the noble ones. Therefore, Brahmā, through this instruction, you should know that suffering, its origin, its cessation, and the path are not the truths of the noble ones. Rather, Brahmā, it is a truth of the noble ones that suffering is unborn. It is a truth of the noble ones that no origin should be engaged with. It is a truth of the noble ones that in the complete cessation of all phenomena, they neither arise nor cease. It is a truth of the noble ones to train on the path where all phenomena are equality and nondual.

1.177 “Brahmā, what we call *truth* is not the truth, but neither is it falsehood. *Falsehood* refers to apprehending self, sentient being, life, person, annihilation, permanence, origin, decay,⁹ birth, cessation, saṃsāra, or nirvāṇa—these are called “falsehood.” Not grasping on to these and not aggrandizing them—this is called “truth.” *Suffering should be known* is a falsehood, *its origin should be abandoned* is a falsehood, *cessation should be realized* is a falsehood, and *the path should be cultivated* [F.39.a] is a falsehood. Why? These are deviations from remembering the words of the Buddha. That is why they are falsehoods. What does it mean to *remember the words of the Buddha*? To not remember or keep in mind any phenomenon is to remember the words of the Buddha. When you abide by this remembrance, you do not dwell on any characteristic. When you do not dwell on any characteristic,

you dwell on the limit of reality. When you dwell on the limit of reality, the mind does not dwell. When there is no dwelling in this way, there is neither truthful speech nor any deceptive speech. This is why, Brahmā, according to this instruction, you should know that the truths of the noble ones are that which is neither true nor false. Brahmā, these *truths* are never falsehoods. Whether thus-gone ones appear or not, the realm of phenomena prevails. Likewise, saṃsāra and nirvāṇa also are forever the truths of the noble ones. Why? Brahmā, the truths of the noble ones are not there to abandon saṃsāra. The truths of the noble ones are not there to attain nirvāṇa. Brahmā, if someone realizes and actualizes the four truths of the noble ones in this way, then that person expresses the truth.

1.178 “Furthermore, Brahmā, in the future there will be some monks who fail to cultivate body, mind, and discipline or to develop insight. They will say that due to the birth of suffering, suffering is a truth of the noble ones. They will say that because there is an origin, the origin is a truth of the noble ones. They will say that because things perish, cessation is a truth of the noble ones. They will say that because cessation comes from the path, the path is a truth of the noble ones. Thus, they will speak of the truths in a dualistic way. I say that such foolish people are merely non-Buddhist hearers. [F.39.b] Anyone who says that the truth of cessation of the noble ones is attained through the perishing of anything has set out on the wrong path. I am not their teacher. They are not my hearers. Look, Brahmā! While I sat at the seat of awakening, I comprehended neither truths nor falsehoods. Could something that I do not comprehend be the teaching or explanation held by another thus-gone one?”

“No, Blessed One,” Brahmā replied.

1.179 The Blessed One continued, “Awakening is not apprehended by any thus-gone one. Being ungrasped, it is free of any state of cyclic existence.”

1.180 Then Brahmaviśeṣacintin said to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, if the thus-gone ones do not apprehend any phenomenon while seated at the seat of awakening, why do we use the expression ‘the thus-gone ones have found awakening and become perfect buddhas’?”

1.181 The Blessed One answered in the following manner: “Brahmā, tell me: are the conditioned and unconditioned Dharma teachings that I give real or not?”

1.182 “Blessed One, they are not real. Well-Gone One, they are not real.”

The Blessed One then asked, “Brahmā, do those unreal phenomena exist or not?”

1.183 “Blessed One, nothing exists, in the sense that one cannot speak of *existence or nonexistence*.”

- 1.184 The Blessed One said, “No phenomenon exists, and no phenomenon does not exist. So, is there anyone to attain perfect awakening?”
“Blessed One, there is no one who attains perfect awakening.”
- 1.185 The Blessed One continued, “Brahmā, in this way the thus-gone ones who have reached the seat of awakening know that the essence of the defilements—which arise from mistakenly conceiving of nonexistence—by nature is utterly unborn. It is by not knowing anything [F.40.a] and not apprehending anything that they know. Why? Brahmā, in the same way that I do not see anything that could be complete awakening, neither do I hear it, think about it, realize it, cognize it, apprehend it, unite with it, formulate it verbally, or reach it. It is beyond all objects, inexpressible, utterly inexpressible, beyond investigation, unrealizable, beyond letters, beyond words, and cannot be cognized. Brahmā, is this phenomenon, which is like space, posited as an actual realization?”
- 1.186 “No, Blessed One. Blessed One, the blessed buddhas possess the quality of inconceivable compassion; and thus, as they awaken to the Dharma of complete peace, they lead others to understanding through words and expressions—this is extraordinary! Blessed One, beings with faith in the Dharma taught by the blessed ones do not have trifling roots of virtue. Why not? This is because, Blessed One, this Dharma contradicts the whole world.”
- 1.187 The Blessed One asked, “Tell me Brahmā, how is this Dharma in contradiction with the whole world?”
- 1.188 Brahmā answered, “Blessed One, the world is attached to truth. But this Dharma is not a truth. It is not a falsehood either. Although the world is attached to Dharma, this Dharma is not the Dharma, nor is it not the Dharma. Although the world is attached to nirvāṇa, this Dharma has neither saṃsāra nor nirvāṇa. Although the world is attached to virtue, this Dharma has neither virtue nor nonvirtue. Although the world is attached to happiness, this Dharma brings neither happiness nor suffering. Although the world is attached to the emergence of a buddha, [F.40.b] this Dharma leads neither to the emergence of a buddha nor to any nirvāṇa. Although the Dharma is taught, it is beyond speech. Although the saṅgha is taught, no one is assembled. This is why this Dharma is in contradiction with the whole world. Blessed One, as an analogy, fire cannot coexist with water, nor can water with fire. Likewise, emotional defilements are in contradiction with awakening, and awakening with emotional defilements. Why? In the absence of emotional defilements, the thus-gone ones find buddhahood. Although taught, this Dharma does not appear. Even omniscience cannot fathom it. Although it may be practiced, no duality is produced. Although it may be realized, nothing is attained. Although nirvāṇa may be reached, no peace is found.

1.189 “Blessed One, sons or daughters of noble family who trust this Dharma way are liberated from all myriad views. They have paid respect to the thus-gone ones and served the victorious ones of the past. Spiritual friends will accept them. They will be devoted to¹⁰ what is vast since their roots of virtue multiply. They will find a treasure since they keep the treasury of the thus-gone ones. They will always act properly since they observe wholesome conduct. They will belong to a good family since they uphold the buddhas’ family. They will practice great charity since they let go of all emotional defilements. They will be endowed with the strength of discipline. They will not be disturbed by the force of emotional defilements. They will be endowed with the strength of patience since they are willing to give up their lives. They will be endowed with the strength of diligence since they never grow weary. They will be endowed with the strength of concentration, since they incinerate negative actions. They will be endowed with the strength of insight, since they are free from negative views. [F.41.a]

1.190 “It will be very difficult for māras to overcome them. They will not be overcome by opponents. They will never attempt to deceive the thus-gone ones. They will master correct speech since they are skilled in teaching the nature of things. They will speak the truth since they teach the absolute Dharma. They will be cared for by the thus-gone ones. They will be gentle since they bring happiness to those who associate with them. They will be rich with the wealth of the noble ones. Being part of the noble ones’ family, they will strive in what is supreme. They will be easy to nourish and easy to satisfy. They will receive inspiration to cross to the other shore. They will liberate those who have not already crossed over. They will liberate those who are not free. They will inspire those who are not inspired. They will lead to nirvāṇa those who have not passed into nirvāṇa. They will teach the path. They will teach how to pass beyond suffering. They will be the foremost doctors since they find all remedies. They will be like medicines since they cure all sicknesses. They will acquire the strength of wisdom. They will gain great resolve. They will be powerful since they are not dependent on others. They will be like the lion since their hair is always unruffled by fear. They will be like the bull since they are of good breed. They will be like the elephant since their minds are tamed. They will be like great leaders since they gather great assemblies. They will be heroes since they vanquish all māras and opponents. They will be stable since they are free from fear created by their surroundings. They will be invincible since they have gained fearlessness. [F.41.b] They will not be afraid of those who teach the truth.

1.191 “They will be like the moon since they shine with white virtues. They will be like the sun since they shine the light of insight. They will be like a lamp since they are devoid of any obscurity. They will be like a foundation since they are free of attachment to friends and aversion toward others. They will be like the earth since they nourish all beings. They will be like the wind since they do not fixate on any phenomenon. They will be like water since they clean all the stains of emotional defilements. They will be like fire since they overcome all forms of haughtiness. They will be like Mount Meru since they are unshakable. They will be like the surrounding mountains, which are as hard as a vajra, since their virtuous resolve is firm and unswerving. No opponent will be able to subdue them. No hearer or solitary buddha will understand their depth. They will be like the great ocean since they contain all the jewels of the Dharma. They will be like the ocean depths since they destroy all negative emotions. They will never be satisfied in their search for the Dharma. Insight will fulfill them. They will be like kings since they turn the wheel of Dharma. They will be like Śakra since they have a wonderful physical appearance. They will be like Brahmā since they have acquired sovereignty. They will be like clouds since they thunder the sound of the Dharma. They will be like the rain since they pour down ambrosia.

1.192 “They will increase the faculties, the powers, and the elements of awakening. They will have traversed the mire of saṃsāra. They will experience the buddhas’ wisdom. They will approach the buddhas’ awakening. [F.42.a] They will be unequalled in intellect. In terms of learning, they will be supreme. They will be incomparable, because they are beyond any evaluation. They will have unobstructed eloquence. They will have great memory since they have attained perfect recollection. They will attain realization since they understand the meaning. They will be intelligent since they correctly discern all phenomena. They will know the thoughts of beings. They will be diligent since they work at helping the world. They will transcend the world. They will be like lotuses since they are free from attachment. They will be ungrasped by worldly concerns. They will delight the wise. The learned will hold them in high regard. The erudite will venerate them. Gods and humans will worship them. Worldly beings will prostrate to them. Noble ones will honor them. Hearers and solitary buddhas will admire them. They will not place their hopes in limited activities.¹¹ They will be without hypocrisy since they are without attachment. Their behavior will be delightful. They will have an attractive appearance. Their charisma will enchant others. They will be adorned with the major marks. The excellent minor signs will beautify them. They will uphold the lineage of the Buddha. They will protect the lineage of the Dharma. They will watch over the lineage of the Saṅgha. They will be under the eyes of all buddhas. They

will gain the Dharma eye. Their realization of the buddhas' wisdom will be prophesied. [F.42.b] They will perfect the three types of patience. They will sit at the seat of awakening. They will trounce the factions of māras. They will acquire omniscience. They will turn the wheel of Dharma.

1.193 "Blessed One, they will accomplish the activities of the buddhas. Blessed One, whoever hears this profound Dharma way will become confident, undaunted, and fearless. Those who become inspired when hearing the thus-gone ones speak of such a profound awakening, which is so difficult to know, so difficult to see, and so difficult to comprehend, and who remember these teachings, preserve them, spread them among others, take up this Dharma, and lead others to follow it wholeheartedly are worthy of praise. Their qualities are such that, even if I, Blessed One, were to speak of and praise their qualities for an entire eon or even longer, I could not fully express the extraordinary qualities of these sacred beings."

1.194 The Blessed One asked, "Brahmā, what do you know of the praise or excellence of these sacred beings?"

1.195 Brahmā replied, "The thus-gone ones know all things with untainted buddha wisdom. Yet the qualities of these beings go beyond this knowledge. They realize the profound meaning, words, and syllables of the thus gone ones' explanations, and search for the intent behind the teachings, conform to it with no contradiction, absorb it without corrupting it, and understand the meaning without chasing after the words. These beings know clearly what the thus-gone ones convey with the words they use to teach the Dharma, and the indirect formulations the thus-gone ones use to teach the Dharma, as well as the skillful means, the various ways, and the great compassion the thus-gone ones use to teach the Dharma." [F.43.a]

1.196 The Blessed One stated, "Brahmā, if a bodhisattva knows how to apply the five strengths¹² of the thus-gone ones, that bodhisattva is said to be dear to beings by performing the deeds of a buddha."

1.197 Brahmā asked, "Blessed One, how are the five strengths of the thus-gone ones applied?"

1.198 The Blessed One replied, "They are applied by speaking of the Dharma, teaching using indirect formulations, inspiring others to pursue the skillful Dharma, teaching clearly, and being motivated by great compassion. Brahmā, these are the applications of the five strengths of the thus-gone ones that no one among the hearers and solitary buddhas possesses."

1.199 Brahmā asked, "Blessed One, what are the discourses with which the thus-gone ones teach the Dharma?"

1.200 The Blessed One answered, "Brahmā, we speak of the past, the future, the present, defilement, purification, virtue and nonvirtue, the worldly and the supramundane, the defiled and the undefiled, the reprehensible and the

nonreprehensible, the conditioned and the unconditioned, the self, beings, vitality, life, the individual, the person, realization, saṃsāra, and nirvāṇa. Such statements, Brahmā, are like illusions, in that they are nonexistent. To speak about something—while seeing that there is no such thing—is like a dream. These statements are like echoes since they are voiced in the manner of sounds in space. They are manifested by a gathering of conditions, so they are like mirages. They are statements with no transformation of their causes, so they are like reflections. They are like optical illusions since they are taught through mistaken observation. They are presented without arising or disappearing, so they are like space. They are as if unspoken since they resound without speech. [F.43.b] Brahmā, when bodhisattvas know the way of teaching the Dharma that I have just explained, they can make any statements, yet they are not attached to any phenomena. With no attachment to them, they possess the eloquence of uninhibited wisdom to explain the Dharma, even if they must speak continuously for as many eons as there are grains of sand in the river Ganges. They possess the eloquence of uninhibited wisdom that realizes how all words are never different from the realm of phenomena, without having any attachment to this absence of difference regarding phenomena. Brahmā, this is the way the thus-gone ones teach the Dharma.

1.201 “Brahmā, you may also ask how bodhisattvas penetrate the indirect teachings of the thus-gone ones. Brahmā, the thus-gone ones teach defilement as purification; they teach purification as defilement. Bodhisattvas must ascertain these indirect teachings. Brahmā, why would the thus-gone ones teach that defilement is purification? In order to avoid mistaken conceptions regarding the essence of defilement, defilement is explained in terms of purification. Why would purification be taught as defilement? To avoid mistaken conception regarding the essence of purification, purification is explained in terms of defilement.

1.202 “Brahmā, I teach that giving is nirvāṇa. Immature beings do not understand this, but the bodhisattvas who can relate skillfully to the indirect teachings understand that generosity leads to great happiness in the next life, while nothing is transferred. Since nothing is transferred, it is nirvāṇa. Effortless discipline is nirvāṇa. Instantaneous patience is nirvāṇa. Diligence without adopting or rejecting is nirvāṇa. Nonconceptual concentration is nirvāṇa. [F.44.a] Unimpeded insight is nirvana. Since the realm of phenomena is free from desire, desire is ultimately free from desire. Since the realm of phenomena is free from aggression, aversion is the limit of reality. Since there is no delusion regarding phenomena, ignorance is ultimately without ignorance. Beings circle in saṃsāra without dying, transference, or birth, so saṃsāra is also nirvāṇa. Since nirvāṇa is devoid of attachment,

nirvāṇa is also saṃsāra. Truths are false, because they are based on views imputed conventionally. Yet those who are conceited see truth in falsity. This you should understand.

1.203 “Brahmā, furthermore, in their indirect teachings, the thus-gone ones say that they are teachers of eternalism. They say, ‘I teach defilement. I teach nihilism. I teach nonaction. I teach wrong views. I teach to have no faith and no gratitude, to interrupt effort, to eat vomit, and to give no opportunity to practice.’ Nevertheless, things do not happen or appear in the way the thus-gone ones teach them. The thus-gone ones present such indirect teachings that satisfy beings who are filled with manifest pride. These are indirect teachings of the thus-gone ones.

1.204 “Brahmā, in this way, the thus-gone ones present the Dharma with indirect teachings, which bodhisattvas who master the right conduct are able to determine. With such mastery, they become learned in all the teachings. They have confidence when they think that a buddha has come in a form body to teach beings. They have confidence when they hear that having come from the dharmakāya, a thus-gone one cannot have come. They have confidence when they hear that a thus-gone one teaches the Dharma to beings for whom words are appealing. They have confidence when they hear that having ascertained the inexpressible nature of reality, there is no Dharma to teach. [F.44.b] They have confidence when they hear that there is a nirvāṇa, as beings need to transcend the suffering of emotional defilements that arise from misapprehension. They have confidence when they hear that there is no nirvāṇa since unborn things do not perish. They have confidence when they hear that, from the relative perspective, there are beings. They have confidence when they hear that, in the absolute teachings, there are no beings. Brahmā, in this way the thus-gone ones teach the Dharma using indirect formulations. Bodhisattvas should not be afraid of any teaching.

1.205 “Brahmā, in this regard, what are the means that the thus-gone ones use to teach the Dharma to beings? Wealth is acquired through generosity, a higher rebirth through discipline, a beautiful physical appearance through patience, wisdom through diligence, and detachment through concentration. Abandoning emotional defilements and gaining the knowledge derived from listening are acquired through insight. The excellent qualities of gods and humans come from following the path of the ten virtues. Loving kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity bring rebirth in the Brahmā realms. Tranquility leads to extraordinary insight. The levels of the path of learning lead to the level of no more learning. The level of the solitary

buddhas leads to the practice of generosity, the level of buddhahood grants boundless wisdom, and nirvāṇa offers the complete pacification of all suffering.

1.206 “Brahmā, I skillfully bring beings to this Dharma by explaining these points. The thus-gone ones do not apprehend any self, sentient being, life, or person. Nor do the thus-gone ones apprehend generosity or its result; nor do they apprehend stinginess or its result. They do not apprehend discipline or its result; nor do they apprehend negative ways [F.45.a] or their result. They do not apprehend patience or its result; nor do they apprehend ill-will or its result. They do not apprehend diligence or its result; nor do they apprehend laziness or its result. They do not apprehend concentration or its result; nor do they apprehend distraction or its result. They do not apprehend insight or its result; nor do they apprehend erroneous insight or its result. They do not apprehend happiness or suffering. They do not apprehend the different results on the path, from a stream enterer up to and including awakening. They do not apprehend complete nirvāṇa, either.

1.207 “Brahmā, beings who have received such teachings strive to apply and practice them. Yet what do they have to gain from striving to apply and practice the teachings? No realization or attainment derives from application or effort. They will neither realize nor attain the different levels, from a stream enterer to a worthy one, the level of solitary awakening, and up to unexcelled and perfect awakening and nirvāṇa. Brahmā, these are the skillful means used by the thus-gone ones to teach the Dharma. Therefore, bodhisattvas need to become skilled in means in order to help beings connect with the sacred Dharma.

1.208 “Brahmā, how do the thus-gone ones teach? The eye is a principle of liberation. Likewise, the ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind are all principles of liberation. Why? The eye is empty of me and mine; such is its nature. It is the same for the others, up to and including the mind; they are empty of me and mine. Such is their nature.

1.209 “Brahmā, since this is without deception, you should understand how all sense fields are [F.45.b] principles of liberation of beings. Beings who apply themselves to this will infallibly attain liberation; and it is the same for form, sound, smell, taste, texture, and mental phenomena. This is the way all things are, which comprises the ways of emptiness; signlessness; wishlessness; the unconditioned; the unborn; the unceasing; the absence of coming and going; the absence of death, transference, and rebirth; natural luminosity; and detachment. Since syllables are inanimate by nature, they cannot meet each other; so the thus-gone ones speak in a way that is a gate of liberation from all syllables. Brahmā, all their syllables show the truth. All their utterances reveal the thus-gone ones’ teaching of the truth of the

principle of liberation. The Dharma taught by the thus-gone ones never turns into defilement. Their Dharma teachings lead to liberation; they reveal nirvāṇa. Brahmā, this is the way the thus-gone ones teach, and bodhisattvas need to learn it.

1.210 “Brahmā, you may wonder about the nature of the compassion with which the thus-gone ones teach the Dharma to beings. The thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for others, which has thirty-two aspects. They are: (1) All phenomena are devoid of a self, but beings are not interested in selflessness; this is why the thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for beings. (2) All phenomena are devoid of beings, yet beings call themselves *beings*; this is why the thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for beings. (3) All phenomena are devoid of a life principle, but beings think that a life principle exists; this is why the thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for beings. (4) All phenomena are devoid of an individual, [F.46.a] but beings remain fixated on an individual; this is why the thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for beings. (5) All phenomena are devoid of an essential nature, but beings see essences; this is why the thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for beings. (6) All phenomena are without foundation, but beings rely on foundations; this is why the thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for beings. (7) All phenomena are devoid of a substratum, but beings take delight in a substratum; this is why the thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for beings. (8) All phenomena are devoid of something to hold as mine, but beings are fixated on holding to things as mine; this is why the thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for beings. (9) All phenomena are devoid of an owner, but beings strive to hold on to things; this is why the thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for beings. (10) All phenomena are unreal, but beings rely on things as real; this is why the thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for beings. (11) All phenomena are unborn, but beings remain fixated on birth; this is why the thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for beings. (12) All phenomena are devoid of transference and rebirth, but beings are fixated on death, transference, and birth; this is why the thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for beings. (13) All phenomena are devoid of factors of defilement, but beings are defiled; this is why the thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for beings. (14) All phenomena are devoid of desire, but beings are full of attachment; this is why the thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for beings. (15) All phenomena are devoid of aversion, but beings are full of aversion; [F.46.b] this is why the thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for beings. (16) All phenomena are devoid of ignorance, but beings are ignorant; this is why the thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for beings. (17) All phenomena are devoid of coming, but beings are fixated on coming; this is why the thus-gone ones arouse great

compassion for beings. (18) All phenomena are devoid of going, but beings are fixated on going; this is why the thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for beings. (19) All phenomena are devoid of formation, but beings experience formation; this is why the thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for beings. (20) All phenomena are devoid of conceptual elaborations, but beings delight in conceptual elaborations; this is why the thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for beings. (21) All phenomena are emptiness, but beings hold on to views; this is why the thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for beings. (22) All phenomena are signlessness, but beings' experiences involve signs; this is why the thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for beings. (23) All phenomena are wishlessness, but beings have aspirations; this is why the thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for beings. (24) The thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for beings by thinking, 'Alas, the denizens of this world always fight and rage with malevolence; therefore, I will teach them the Dharma, so that they can abandon the fault of raging with malevolence.' (25) The thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for beings by thinking, 'Alas, the denizens of this world have wrong conceptions and follow perilous routes and mistaken paths; therefore, I shall set them upon the right path.' [F.47.a] (26) The thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for beings by thinking, 'Alas, the denizens of this world are overcome by greed and attachment, they know no contentment, and they carry off others' belongings; therefore, I shall establish them in the riches of the noble ones—faith, discipline, learning, generosity, insight, dignity, and propriety.' (27) The thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for beings by thinking, 'Alas, beings are oppressed by their craving for wealth, harvests, houses, sons, and wives, grasping at an essence where there is no essence; therefore, I shall teach them how everything is impermanent.' (28) The thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for beings by thinking, 'Alas, beings gain their subsistence through ignorance and deceiving one another; therefore, I shall teach them the Dharma, so that they may live by the right livelihood.' (29) The thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for beings by thinking, 'Alas, beings do not like each other, but pretend to be close for gain and praise; therefore, I shall become a genuine spiritual friend who leads them to nirvāṇa, the delightful pacification of all suffering.' (30) The thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for beings by thinking, 'Alas, beings are overwhelmed by emotional defilements and delight in family life, which is the source of so much suffering; therefore, I shall teach them the Dharma, to extricate them from the three realms of existence.' (31) The thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for beings by thinking, 'All phenomena arise from causes—this is their defining characteristic—but beings are idle when it comes to work at

the liberation of the noble ones.’ (32) The thus-gone ones arouse great compassion for beings by thinking, ‘There are beings who reject the perfect nirvāṇa, the supreme wisdom of the buddhas, which is devoid of attachment, and instead seek the lower vehicles of hearers [F.47.b] and solitary buddhas. I shall inspire them toward the vast, so that they may turn their attention toward the wisdom of the buddhas.’

1.211 “Brahmā, the compassion that the thus-gone ones arouse for beings has these thirty-two aspects. This is why the thus-gone ones are called *great compassionate ones*. Brahmā, you should know that the bodhisattva who generates for beings this great compassion endowed with these thirty-two aspects is a bodhisattva great being, who blossoms as a magnificent field of merit, who never falls back, and who strives to accomplish the benefit of beings.”

1.212 At the conclusion of this explanation—a section that is a Dharma gateway to great compassion—thirty-two thousand beings aroused the thought of unexcelled and perfect awakening. A hundred thousand others attained forbearance. Seventy-two thousand gods gained the pure eyes of Dharma, free of dust and specks.

1.213 Then the bodhisattva Jālinīprabha addressed the Blessed One, “Blessed One, Brahmaviśeṣacintin has heard this Dharma teaching on the thus-gone ones’ great compassion. But why does this cause no joy or inspiration in him?”

1.214 Brahmaviśeṣacintin himself replied, “Noble son, those who have dualistic minds can feel joy and inspiration. However, those who have realized the limit of reality, which is beyond duality, have no such feelings of joy or inspiration. Noble son, it is like someone conjured up by magic. When such an illusory being dances, it engenders no joy or inspiration. Noble son, likewise, since all phenomena have the characteristic of being like magical illusions, I do not feel any joy or inspiration about the Thus-Gone One’s miracles. [F.48.a] Noble son, if the manifestation of a thus-gone one hears the eloquent speech of that thus-gone one, he will not rejoice or be inspired. Likewise, noble son, those who know that phenomena are mere manifestations do not feel any particular joy concerning the thus-gone ones, nor do they disparage beings.”

1.215 Then Jālinīprabha asked, “Brahmā, do you see all phenomena as illusory manifestations?”

“Noble son, you should ask that of those who act based on dualistic distinctions.”

1.216 “Brahmā, what is your basis for action?”

“I act based on what all immature, ordinary beings act upon.”

- 1.217 “Brahmā, immature, ordinary beings act upon desire, aversion, and ignorance. They act upon personalistic false views, and upon belief in the supremacy of discipline and ascetic practices, as well as acting upon doubt, grasping at *me*, grasping at *mine*, desire, craving, and mistaken approaches. Do you do the same?”
- 1.218 “Noble son, do you posit the existence of all the ordinary phenomena of ordinary individuals?”
- 1.219 “I do not even posit the existence of ordinary individuals themselves, so how could I posit the existence of their ordinary phenomena?”
- 1.220 “Noble son, do you posit attachment, aversion, or ignorance toward these things that do not exist at all?”
- “No, I don’t.”
- 1.221 “Noble son, all phenomena are characterized as being free of desire, free of aversion, and free of ignorance. Noble son, since noble beings conduct themselves in this way, free of duality, they can also act in the way ordinary beings do. Noble son, any action is no action, any imputation is no imputation, and any going is no going.” [F.48.b]
- 1.222 “Brahmā, why is any action no action?”
- “Even if someone works for hundreds of sextillions of eons, one does not apprehend the realm of phenomena being depleted or filled; this is why any action is no action.”
- 1.223 “Brahmā, why is any imputation no imputation?”
- “Noble son, all phenomena can be designated, because they are not imputations; this is why the imputation of any phenomenon is no imputation.”
- 1.224 “Brahmā, how is any going no going?”
- “Since there is nowhere to go, any going is no going.”
- 1.225 The Blessed One congratulated Brahmaviśeṣacintin: “Brahmā, excellent, excellent! You have explained this point the way it should be explained. Excellent, excellent!”
- 1.226 Youthful Jālinīprabha said to Brahmaviśeṣacintin, “Brahmā, you said, ‘I conduct myself based on the same things as all immature, ordinary beings.’ This means that you also have conduct.”
- “Noble son, if I possessed a cause of birth, I would also have conduct.”
- 1.227 “Brahmā, if you are not born, how can you mature beings?”
- “Noble son, my birth is just like the manifestations produced by thus-gone ones.”
- “Therefore, the manifestations of the thus-gone ones have no birth whatsoever.”
- 1.228 “How do the manifestations of the thus-gone ones appear?”
- “They appear through the power of the buddhas.”

- “Noble son, my birth also appears through the power of karma.”
- 1.229 “Brahmā, do you produce karma when you act?”
- “Noble son, my actions produce no karma.”
- 1.230 “If there is no karma, how can this karma have power?”
- “The power is the same as the act [F.49.a]—neither is beyond suchness.”
- 1.231 Then the elder Śāriputra spoke to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, those who engage with the indirect teachings of these great elephants produce vast merit. Why? Blessed One, merely to hear the names of these holy beings is already excellent, so what need is there to mention hearing their teachings? Blessed One, imagine a tree that does not stand on the earth, yet it displays roots, a trunk, branches, leaves, flowers, and fruits. Blessed One, holy beings’ actions are just the same. They do not dwell on these phenomena, yet they display actions, birth, appearances, transference, and death. When they appear in the buddha realms, they teach by means of their insightful eloquence. Blessed One, how could any son or daughter of noble family who witnesses the manifestations of this insightful eloquence not arouse the mind of unexcelled and perfect awakening?” [B3]
- 1.232 Furthermore, in the assembly at that time there was a bodhisattva called Saṃkusuma, who said to the elder Śāriputra, “The Thus-Gone One has said that the elder is foremost among those who possess insight. So why is the elder unable to produce such a manifestation by means of insightful eloquence—doesn’t the elder understand the realm of phenomena?”
- 1.233 The elder Śāriputra replied, “Saṃkusuma, the hearers of the Blessed One teach in accordance with their domain.”
- 1.234 “Venerable Śāriputra, is the realm of phenomena your domain?”
- “No, it is not.”
- 1.235 “So, elder Śāriputra, how do you teach in accordance with your domain?”
- “I simply teach according to a hearer’s understanding.” [F.49.b]
- 1.236 “Elder, are you able to understand the immeasurable aspect of the domain of the realm of phenomena?”
- “Yes, noble son.”
- 1.237 “Since the realm of phenomena is devoid of any measure, it is immeasurable. Venerable Śāriputra, just as your comprehension is immeasurable, so is your teaching immeasurable. Just as one understands, so will one’s teaching.”
- 1.238 “Saṃkusuma, the realm of phenomena is not characterized as something that can be realized.”
- 1.239 “Venerable Śāriputra, if the realm of phenomena is not characterized as something that can be realized, is your liberation different from the realm of phenomena?”
- “No, it is not.”

- 1.240 “Why not?”
“Because then the realm of phenomena would become different.”
- 1.241 “So, venerable Śāriputra, for that reason your comprehension must be equal to the realm of phenomena.”
- 1.242 “Saṃkusuma, I do not want to teach; I just want to listen.”
- 1.243 “Venerable Śāriputra, how should one deliver or listen to the definitive explanation of how all phenomena never waver from the realm of phenomena?”
“That is not the point.”
- 1.244 “Then why do you feel that you only want to listen, and not teach?”
“Noble son, it is said that when the thus-gone ones teach the Dharma respectfully and someone else listens to the Dharma respectfully, both generate vast merit. That is why I am asking you to explain while I listen.”
- 1.245 “Elder Śāriputra, can you listen to the Dharma while resting in equipoise in the cessation of all perceptions and sensations.”
“Noble son, whoever listens with a dualistic mind is not in cessation.”
- 1.246 “Elder Śāriputra, are all phenomena naturally in cessation?”
“It is like this, noble son: All phenomena are in complete [F.50.a] cessation.”
- 1.247 “Consequently, venerable Śāriputra, there is no opportunity to listen to the Dharma without perpetual termination. Why? Because all phenomena are by nature in cessation.”
- 1.248 “Noble son, can you teach the Dharma without rising from meditative absorption?”
“Venerable Śāriputra, can you apprehend any phenomenon different from meditative equipoise?”
“No.”
“Therefore, this means that all immature, ordinary beings are in equipoise.”
- 1.249 “Noble son, if so, in which type of absorption are immature, ordinary beings resting?”
“The absorption with no disturbance of the realm of phenomena.”
- 1.250 “Saṃkusuma, if that is the case, then there is no difference between ordinary beings and noble ones.”
- 1.251 “Venerable Śāriputra, that is correct; I do not see ordinary beings as different from noble ones. Why not? Noble ones do not end any phenomenon, and immature, ordinary beings do not produce any phenomenon. They do not go beyond the equality of the realm of phenomena.”
- 1.252 “Noble son, what is the equality of phenomena?”

- “It is what the elders know and teach. Can the elders also produce the qualities of the noble ones?”
- “No.”
- 1.253 “Have you stopped being an ordinary being?”
- “No.”
- 1.254 “Well, have you gained the qualities of a noble one?”
- “No.”
- 1.255 “So then, do you know the phenomena of ordinary beings?”
- “No.”
- 1.256 “So then, what is the realization gained due to the understanding of the elders?”
- “The suchness of immature, ordinary beings who have not heard the teachings and the suchness upon liberation are the same. [F.50.b] This is also the suchness of complete nirvāṇa.”
- 1.257 “Venerable Śāriputra, this suchness is unerring suchness, unique suchness, unchanging suchness, and undisturbed suchness. Venerable Śāriputra, this suchness should be understood as being the suchness of all phenomena.”
- 1.258 Venerable Śāriputra now spoke to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, just as a great, blazing fire burns everything, so, Blessed One, do all the teachings presented by these noble sons teach the realm of phenomena. All Dharma teachings incinerate all emotional defilements.”
- 1.259 The Blessed One replied, “That is right, Śāriputra. It is just as you have said. All the teachings of these noble sons reveal the realm of phenomena, and all Dharma teachings incinerate all emotional defilements.”
- 1.260 Youthful Jālinīprabha then said to the elder Śāriputra, “Elder Śāriputra, the Blessed One says that you are foremost among the insightful. Elder Śāriputra, what is this insight that the Blessed One says is supreme?”
- 1.261 “Jālinīprabha, it is the insight that comes from following the words of the hearers. This is the insight of those who have reached liberation based on this specific, limited wisdom. This is the kind of insight in which the Blessed One says I am the foremost, which is not the insight of the bodhisattvas.”
- 1.262 “Is this insight a kind of conceptual elaboration?”
- “No.”
- 1.263 “Does it mean that this insight is an experience of equality?”
- “That is right, noble son.”
- 1.264 “Elder Śāriputra, how can this insight, which is an experience of equality, [F.51.a] have a measure?”
- 1.265 “Noble son, insight is beyond measure due to the nature of the realm of phenomena. Still, in the way that wisdom knows objects, it can be measured.”

1.266 “Venerable Śāriputra, is wisdom immeasurable, or does it have a measure?”

“Noble son, wisdom is beyond measure.”

1.267 “So then, if it is immeasurable, why do you say that it can be measured?”

Śāriputra the elder became silent.

1.268 At that moment, through the power of the Buddha, venerable Mahākāśyapa asked the Blessed One, “Blessed One, why is youthful Jālinīprabha called Jālinīprabha?”¹³

1.269 The Blessed One said to Jālinīprabha, “Noble son, please explain how you filled this world including the gods with joy and ripened your roots of virtue, and how with your roots of virtue you perfected the light that arouses the mind of unexcelled perfect awakening.”

1.270 “Very well!” youthful Jālinīprabha replied to the Blessed One. He then draped his shawl over one shoulder, knelt on his right knee, and joined his palms toward the Blessed One. Then the copper-colored nails on Jālinīprabha’s right hand emitted rays of light. These rays of light traversed immeasurable, infinite world systems and instantly permeated immeasurable buddha realms in the ten directions. In those immeasurable, incalculable world systems in all ten directions, the light reached beings in the hells, those born in the animal realm and in the worlds of Yama, those who were blind, deaf, lame, crippled, sickly, lustful, angry, dull, naked, hungry, thirsty, chained, imprisoned, destitute, [F.51.b] emaciated, old, dying, stingy, mean, malevolent, miserly,¹⁴ distracted, and stupid, as well as the ones with no faith, those of little knowledge, those of little merit, the shameless, those with no sense of propriety, and those with dark views. All those beings became filled with happiness as soon as this light touched them. There was no longer anyone tormented by desire, aversion, ignorance, pride, hypocrisy, jealousy, or anger. All beings felt joy and happiness.

1.271 All those who had gathered before the Buddha—the assembly of bodhisattvas, the assembly of hearers, gods, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, asuras, garuḍas, kinnaras, mahoragas, humans and nonhumans, monks, nuns, male lay practitioners, and female lay practitioners—appeared to be the color of gold. All of them possessed this unique coloration of the Thus-Gone One, as well as the same marks and physical features. The tops of their heads were invisible, and they appeared in the Buddha’s supreme physical form. All sat on lotus seats and were covered in lattices of jewels. They all had the same nature—the visible nature of the Buddha. They were all experiencing a joy that was like the joy of the bodhisattvas who have reached the absorption called *display of joy*. The entire assembly was filled with awe, its members inseparable from one another; they did not think of the Teacher as superior, or of themselves as inferior.

- 1.272 As soon as the light was emitted, four bodhisattvas arose from below. [F.52.a] They were the bodhisattva great beings Prañidhisamudgata, Viśeṣabhadrā, Jñānacandra, and Aparājitadhvaṃja. With their palms joined, they asked who among these genuine thus-gone ones should be the recipient of their homage, so that they could prostrate and take their seats. At this point, from the sky a voice proclaimed, “All the members of this assembly have but one color, the color of the Thus-Gone One, thanks to youthful Jālinīprabha.”
- 1.273 The four bodhisattvas declared, “If, through the power of truth and the words of truth, everyone in this assembly is of one color and one appearance, and if there is no distinction between them, just as all phenomena are devoid of distinctions, then, through the power of that truth and of those words of truth, may the Blessed One Śākyamuni now appear to us, so that we may present our offerings to the Thus-Gone One!”
- 1.274 At that instant, the Blessed One, along with his lion throne and lotus seat, arose in the sky to the height of a palm tree. The four bodhisattvas bowed their heads to the Blessed One and said to him, “Blessed One, the thus-gone wisdom of the thus-gone ones is inconceivable. Likewise, the merit and aspirations derived from Jālinīprabha’s revelation of happiness to beings are also beyond imagination.”
- 1.275 Then the Blessed One spoke to youthful Jālinīprabha, “Noble son, you have performed the buddhas’ activities; you have led innumerable beings to awakening, so now reabsorb your miraculous power.” [F.52.b]
- 1.276 Consequently, youthful Jālinīprabha reabsorbed the light he had been emanating. As soon as the light disappeared, all the members of the assembly recovered their former appearances. The Blessed One was again a single being, seated upon his lion throne and lotus seat.
- 1.277 Then the elder Mahākāśyapa said to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, where do these four bodhisattvas come from?”
They replied, “We come from a world below.”
- 1.278 “What is the name of this world?”¹⁵
“Our world is called Sarvaratnadarśin.”
- 1.279 “What is the name of the thus-gone one who resides there?”
“The name of its buddha is Ekaratnachattrā.”
- 1.280 “How far is it from here?”
“The Blessed One knows it.”
- 1.281 “Why did you come here?”
“The bodhisattva Jālinīprabha sent out a light that touched us. As soon as the light touched us, we heard the names of the Blessed One Śākyamuni and the bodhisattva Jālinīprabha. So we came here to see the Blessed One and the holy being, to prostrate to them, and to pay homage to them.”

- 1.282 Then the elder Mahākāśyapa asked the Blessed One, “Blessed One, how distant is the Sarvaratnadarśin world system, the Blessed One Ekaratnachattrā’s buddha realm?”
- 1.283 The Blessed One replied, “From there, the four bodhisattvas had to cross buddha realms numbering seventy-two times the grains of sand in the river Ganges. That is where lies the Sarvaratnadarśin world system, [F.53.a] the Blessed One Ekaratnachattrā’s buddha realm.”
- 1.284 “How long was their journey?”
“In one instant of thought they disappeared there and arrived here.”
- 1.285 “Blessed One, the bodhisattva Jālinīprabha emanates rays of light that reached all the way there, and these noble sons arrived here promptly. The bodhisattvas’ emanations of light and power of miracles are extraordinary.”
- 1.286 The Blessed One replied, “That is right, Kāśyapa; it is just as you have said. The activities of the bodhisattvas are inconceivable. They are unlike those of any hearer or solitary buddha.”
- 1.287 Then venerable Mahākāśyapa said to youthful Jālinīprabha, “Noble son, when your light touched this assembly, all its members became of the same color—the color of gold. What caused this?”
“Mahākāśyapa, ask the Blessed One and he will teach you.”
- 1.288 So venerable Mahākāśyapa asked the Blessed One, “Blessed One, the manifestation that just occurred—who caused this?”
- 1.289 The Blessed One replied, “Kāśyapa, when Jālinīprabha reaches awakening, his assembly will be of one color, the color of gold. His whole assembly will be oriented toward just one thing, omniscience. Around him, even the names of hearers and solitary buddhas will be unknown, as his saṅgha will be composed exclusively of bodhisattva great beings.”
- 1.290 Mahākāśyapa then said, “If so, Blessed One, then any bodhisattva born in that buddha realm will be seen as a thus-gone one.”
- 1.291 The Blessed One confirmed, “Mahākāśyapa, it is just as you have said. They will be [F.53.b] seen as thus-gone ones.”
- 1.292 At this point, forty-four thousand beings within this assembly aroused the mind of unexcelled and perfect awakening and aspired toward this buddha realm, saying, “Blessed One, when the bodhisattva Jālinīprabha awakens, at that time may we be reborn in his buddha realm!”
- 1.293 Then the elder Mahākāśyapa inquired of the Blessed One, “Blessed One, how long before the bodhisattva Jālinīprabha awakens to unexcelled and perfect buddhahood?”
- 1.294 “Kāśyapa,” the Blessed One answered, “why don’t you ask the bodhisattva Jālinīprabha when he will awaken to unexcelled and perfect buddhahood?”

- 1.295 The elder Mahākāśyapa then asked the bodhisattva Jālinīrabha, “Noble son, how long before you awaken to unexcelled and perfect buddhahood?”
- 1.296 Jālinīrabha replied, “Venerable Mahākāśyapa, if someone asked an illusory man conjured up by magic, ‘Noble son, how long before you awaken to unexcelled and perfect buddhahood?’ what would he reply?”
- 1.297 “Noble son, the illusory man is conjured up by magic; he is not real, so how could he answer?”
- 1.298 “So it is, venerable Mahākāśyapa, no phenomenon exists, just as in the case of the illusory man. So to whom did you pose the question, ‘How long before you awaken to unexcelled and perfect buddhahood?’ ”
- 1.299 “Noble son, an illusory man conjured up by magic is void, [F.54.a] beyond change, without thought, and unable to act. If you too are like that, how can you accomplish the benefit of infinite beings?”
- 1.300 “Venerable Mahākāśyapa, the nature of the illusion is also the nature of awakening. The nature of awakening is also the nature of beings. The nature of illusion, awakening, and beings is also the nature of all phenomena. Venerable Mahākāśyapa, I see neither worth nor worthlessness in anything.”
- 1.301 “Noble son, haven’t you entered buddhahood?”
“Venerable Mahākāśyapa, is the awakening of the thus-gone ones characterized as something one can enter?”
“No.”
“Therefore, I have not entered buddhahood, or become a hearer or a solitary buddha.”
- 1.302 “Noble son, what have you entered then?”
“I have entered suchness: this is what I have entered.”
“Noble son, there is neither entering nor leaving suchness.”
“Venerable Mahākāśyapa, just as I neither enter nor leave suchness, likewise all phenomena neither enter nor leave suchness.”
- 1.303 “Jālinīrabha, if there is neither entering nor leaving suchness, how can you mature beings?”
“Venerable Mahākāśyapa, beings are matured by aspiration prayers, not effort. Not turning away from anything, beings are ripened—not through effort.”
- 1.304 “Noble son, don’t you cause beings to leave saṃsāra?”
“I do not apprehend saṃsāra, so how could I turn beings away from saṃsāra?”
- 1.305 “Noble son, [F.54.b] don’t you lead beings to enter nirvāṇa?”
“I see no nirvāṇa, so how could I lead beings there?”
- 1.306 “Noble son, if saṃsāra does not exist and nirvāṇa is also nonexistent, why do bodhisattvas act to lead beings beyond suffering?”

- 1.307 “Venerable Mahākāśyapa, anyone who works toward spiritual awakening based on apprehending saṃsāra, realizing nirvāṇa, and holding sentient beings in their thoughts should not be called a ‘bodhisattva.’ ”
- 1.308 “Noble son, what are you working toward?”
“Venerable Mahākāśyapa, I surely do not act based on holding saṃsāra, nirvāṇa, or sentient beings in my thoughts. And yet, venerable Mahākāśyapa, since you ask me what I work toward, venerable Mahākāśyapa, I engage in the actions of the emanations of the Thus-Gone One; that is what I work toward.”
- 1.309 “Noble son, the emanations of the Thus-Gone One do not engage in anything.”
“Venerable Mahākāśyapa, the characteristic of all beings’ actions is the same.”
- 1.310 “Noble son, if this is the characteristic of all beings’ actions, since the emanations of the Thus-Gone One do not feel attachment, aversion, or ignorance, then where do the desire, aversion, and ignorance that beings experience come from?”
- 1.311 “Elder, let me question you and you may answer according to your conviction. Elder Mahākāśyapa, do you now harbor any desire, aversion, and ignorance?”
“No.”
- 1.312 “So then, have your desire, aversion, and ignorance disappeared? Have they been eliminated?”
“No.”
- 1.313 “If the elder has no desire, aversion, or ignorance, [F.55.a] yet they have not disappeared or been eliminated, then where are your desire, aversion, and ignorance?”
- 1.314 “Noble son, desire, aversion, and ignorance arise in the erroneous thoughts, conceptions, and imaginations of immature, ordinary beings. However, in the Dharma-Vinaya of the noble ones the erroneous is understood, so thoughts, conceptions, and imaginations do not arise. Here, there is also no desire, no aversion, and no ignorance.”
- 1.315 “Venerable Mahākāśyapa, what do you think? The emotional defilements that arise from the erroneous mind—are they real?”
“No, they are not real.”
- 1.316 “Venerable Mahākāśyapa, what do you think? Can something that is not real ever become real?”
“No.”
- 1.317 “Would the elder say that nonexistent things produce desire, aversion, and ignorance?”
“No.”

- 1.318 “Venerable Mahākāśyapa, in that case, what are the desire, aversion, and ignorance that defile beings?”
- 1.319 “Noble son, all phenomena are thus by nature free of desire, free of aversion, and free of ignorance.”
- 1.320 “Venerable Mahākāśyapa, this is the reason why I say that all phenomena are illusory emanations by nature.”
- 1.321 Upon hearing these explanations, forty-four thousand bodhisattvas attained the level of concordant acceptance.
- 1.322 Then venerable Mahākāśyapa addressed the Blessed One, “Blessed One, anyone who sees the bodhisattva Jālinīprabha [F.55.b] will not have to fear falling into the lower realms in a bad rebirth. Anyone who hears these Dharma teachings will not have to experience the obstructive activities of the māras. Anyone whom he has matured for awakening will also not strive for the levels of the hearers or solitary buddhas. Blessed One, please explain the array of qualities of the bodhisattva Jālinīprabha’s buddha realm.”
- 1.323 The Blessed One replied, “Kāśyapa, the bodhisattva Jālinīprabha accomplishes the welfare of an immeasurable number of beings in any buddha realms in which he lives. Kāśyapa, do you see the light produced by this noble son?”
- “I see it, Blessed One.”
- 1.324 The Blessed One continued, “Kāśyapa, if the entire trichilocosm were filled with mustard seeds, it would be possible to count them down to the last one. However, Kāśyapa, the beings that the bodhisattva Jālinīprabha directs unflinchingly toward the attainment of unexcelled and perfect awakening through this display of light cannot be counted. Kāśyapa, such is the benefit that the bodhisattva Jālinīprabha brings with his display of light alone, not to mention his teachings of the Dharma. Kāśyapa, I will tell you about just a fraction of one particular aspect of the qualities present in this noble son’s buddha realm, so listen well. Kāśyapa, in seven million six hundred thousand incalculable eons, the bodhisattva Jālinīprabha will appear in a world called Viśiṣṭagaṇasamgraha as the thus-gone, worthy, and perfect Buddha Samantaprabhaviṅśarāja. He will approach the tree of awakening, and all māras and [F.56.a] demonic gods in that realm will be irreversibly directed toward unexcelled and perfect awakening, their generosity and open-handedness becoming bountiful. Kāśyapa, the ground in that world will be even like the palm of the hand, soft and pleasant to touch like kācilindika cloth, and bedecked with all precious substances. In that world there will be neither lower realms nor any unfree situations. There will be no stumps or thorns. It will be adorned with lotuses and permeated with the fragrance of great jewel lotuses. That world will be stainless and vast.

- 1.325 “Furthermore, Kāśyapa, the infinite bodhisattva saṅgha of the Thus-Gone One Samantaprabhaviḥkurvaṇarāja in that Viśiṣṭaguṇasaṃgraha world will be skilled in conferring the Dharma of accomplishment. Their magical manifestations will be bathed in light; they will have attained the treasury of perfect recollection, will have attained absorption, will possess unhindered eloquence, will be skilled in teaching through wisdom, and will have the superknowledges. They will be clever and fearless and will overcome all māras and opponents. They will be mindful, intelligent, understanding, and dignified, and will possess a sense of propriety. With the wisdom derived from training in insight, they will have developed limitless meditations.
- 1.326 “Also, Kāśyapa, there will be no women in this buddha realm, and all these bodhisattvas will be born miraculously, sitting cross-legged in a lotus. These bodhisattvas’ sustenance will be the joy of concentration. With a mere thought, food, drink, mounts, clothes, walkways, parks, houses, rivers, springs, lakes, ponds, [F.56.b] and pools will appear for them to enjoy. Kāśyapa, the thus-gone, worthy, and perfect Buddha Samantaprabhaviḥkurvaṇarāja will not teach the Dharma with words and explanations. Rather, as soon as the light of this thus-gone one touches the bodhisattvas, they will gain acceptance that phenomena are unborn. This light will also extend out to other buddha realms unobstructedly. This light will eliminate the emotional defilements of beings, so that they become free from them.
- 1.327 “Furthermore, Kāśyapa, this thus-gone one’s light will produce the thirty-two¹⁶ statements that describe the nature of all phenomena. The thirty-two statements are the following: (1) Since they are untarnished by views, all phenomena are empty. (2) Since they are free of all thoughts and concepts, all phenomena are signless. (3) Since they are genuinely beyond the three realms, all phenomena are wishless. (4) Since they are peaceful by nature, all phenomena are free of desire. (5) Since they are characterized by the absence of aspiration, all phenomena are free of aversion. (6) Since they are devoid of dark obscuration, all phenomena are free of ignorance. (7) Since they are unborn from the beginning, all phenomena are without coming. (8) Since they are devoid of transference, all phenomena are without going. (9) Since they are thoroughly without a basis, all phenomena are without abiding. (10) Since they are free from the past, future, or present, all phenomena are beyond the three times. (11) Since they are of one nature, all phenomena have no distinctions. (12) Since they are free from the ripening of karma, all phenomena are unborn. (13) Because one does not apprehend any agent, all phenomena are devoid of karma and its ripening. (14) Since they do not involve formation, all phenomena are devoid of activity. (15) Since they arise without being formed, all phenomena are unconditioned. [F.57.a] (16) Since they are without birth and destruction, all phenomena are unconditioned.

(17) Since they do not really arise, all phenomena are not real. (18) Since all things can be realized at once, all phenomena are true. (19) Since no sentient being can be apprehended, all phenomena are devoid of self. (20) Because of the ultimate, all phenomena are devoid of personal identity. (21) Since they are unable to know things, all phenomena are inanimate. (22) Since they have no affection or anger, all phenomena are neutral. (23) Since they cannot be grasped, no phenomenon exists. (24) Since they are naturally devoid of defilement, phenomena lack emotional defilements. (25) Since they are the ultimate isolation, all phenomena are the same. (26) Since they are the fullness of isolation, all phenomena are in isolation. (27) Since they are without disturbance, all phenomena abide within the limit of reality. (28) Since they are without difference, all phenomena are suchness. (29) Since they conform to everything, all phenomena are included within the realm of phenomena. (30) Since they do not interfere with each other, all phenomena are devoid of conditions. (31) Since equality makes them unfold, all phenomena are dependently originated. (32) Since they are revealed when seen as they are, all phenomena are awakening. (33) Since they are not established, all phenomena are nirvāṇa.

1.328 “Kāśyapa, in this way, the blessed, worthy, thus-gone Samantaprabhāvikurvaṇarāja’s light will produce thirty-two¹⁷ statements in order to present the nature of all phenomena.”

1.329 The elder Mahākāśyapa then said, “Blessed One, the buddha will be acting by means of those rays of light.”

1.330 The Blessed One replied, “Kāśyapa, the life of this thus-gone one will be limitless. His buddha realm will be free from the obstacles created by the māras.” [F.57.b]

1.331 Mahākāśyapa asked, “Blessed One, how will this noble son, most excellent in every aspect, wanting to hold sway over a buddha realm, come to hold sway over such a pure buddha realm?”

1.332 The Blessed One answered, “Kāśyapa, the bodhisattva Jālinīprabha has cultivated aspirations before many sextillions of buddhas. Thanks to his aspirations, he will hold sway over a buddha realm endowed with such extraordinary qualities. Therefore, Kāśyapa, a noble son or daughter who wishes to hold sway over such a buddha realm should train in the same way as the bodhisattva Jālinīprabha has trained.”

1.333 Then Brahmaviśeṣacintin said to the bodhisattva Jālinīprabha, “Noble son, the Blessed One gave your prophecy.”

“Brahmā, the Blessed One also gave the prophecy of all beings.”

1.334 “What did he prophesy?”

“The way karma will ripen.”

1.335 “Noble son, what did you do to receive your prophecy?”

- “Brahmā, if an action is not done with body, speech, or mind, can it be described?”
- “Why not?”
- 1.336 “Is awakening the performance of an action?”
- “No,” Brahmā replied,¹⁸ “awakening is not a formation of action; awakening is not the performance of an action.”
- 1.337 “Can unconditioned awakening be attained through performing an action?”
- “No, it cannot.”
- 1.338 “So it is, Brahmā, that this teaching involves no karma or the result of karma. Nor does it involve engaging in the performance of an action. That is the way awakening is. Just as awakening is attained, so is prophecy. [F.58.a] Through the conditioned, one does not receive any prophecy. You should know this.”
- 1.339 “Noble son, did you not receive your prophecy after practicing the six perfections?”
- “That is right, Brahmā. It is after practicing the six perfections that we receive our prophecies. Brahmā, relinquishing all emotional defilements is generosity. Not performing an action is discipline. Not perceiving flaws is patience. Being disengaged is diligence. Being without fixation is concentration. Being without conceptual elaboration is insight. Brahmā, when the bodhisattvas devote themselves to these six perfections, what is the object of their practice?”
- 1.340 “There is no object of practice. Why not? To the extent that someone practices them, he does not practice them. The practice is no practice. No practice is the practice of unexcelled and perfect awakening.
- 1.341 “Brahmā, you should know that, in accordance with this teaching, no practice is the practice of awakening. Brahmā, you asked about the prophecy of my awakening. I was prophesied the way suchness and the realm of phenomena are prophesied.”
- 1.342 “Noble son, suchness and the realm of phenomena cannot be prophesied.”
- “And my prophecy is given in just the way suchness and the realm of phenomena are prophesied.”
- 1.343 Then Brahmaviśeṣacintin asked the Blessed One, “Blessed One, how should the bodhisattvas practice in order to receive from the thus-gone ones a prophecy of their unexcelled and perfect awakening?”
- 1.344 The Blessed One said, “Brahmā, when bodhisattvas do not engage in birth, cessation, virtue, nonvirtue, the mundane, the supramundane, the defiled, the undefiled, [F.58.b] the reprehensible, the nonreprehensible, the conditioned, the unconditioned, practice, no practice, abandonment, no

abandonment, saṃsāra, nirvāṇa, seeing, hearing, thinking, cognizing, giving, letting go, discipline, vows, patience, stability, diligence, effort, concentration, absorption, insight, persistence, wisdom, or realization, then the thus-gone ones prophesy their unexcelled and perfect awakening. Why is that? Brahmā, to the extent that one engages with something, it involves effort, and effort is not awakening. To the extent that one engages with something, it involves concepts, and concepts are not awakening. To the extent that one engages with something, it involves formations of action, and formations are not awakening. To the extent that one engages with something, it involves conceptual elaboration, and conceptual elaboration is not awakening. Therefore, Brahmā, you should know that those bodhisattvas who transcend all engagements through this teaching receive a prophecy.”

1.345 Brahmaviśeṣacintin then asked the Blessed One, “Blessed One, could you please explain the term *prophecy*?”

1.346 The Blessed One replied, “All phenomena are devoid of duality—this is why [F.59.a] it is called *prophecy*. It is not an imputation of birth and destruction—this is why it is called *prophecy*. It is devoid of the actions of body, speech, and mind; this is why it is called *prophecy*. Brahmā, I remember that in the past there was an eon called Beautiful Light, during which seventy-two trillion thus-gone ones came. I paid homage to them, venerated them, worshiped them, and made offerings to them; yet none of these thus-gone ones gave me the prophecy. Later came the eon called Well-Created, during which seven hundred twenty million thus-gone ones came. I paid homage to them, venerated them, worshiped them, and made offerings to them; yet none of these thus-gone ones gave me the prophecy. Then, Brahmā, there followed the eon called Praised by Brahmā, during which eighteen thousand thus-gone ones came. I paid homage to them, venerated them, worshiped them, and made offerings to them; yet none of these thus-gone ones gave me the prophecy. After that, Brahmā, there was the eon called Well-Conducted, during which thirty-two thousand thus-gone ones came. I paid homage to them, venerated them, worshiped them, and made offerings to them; yet none of these thus-gone ones gave me the prophecy. Later still, Brahmā, there was the eon called Array, during which eighty-four thousand thus-gone ones came. I paid homage to them, venerated them, worshiped them, and made offerings to them; yet none of these thus-gone ones gave me the prophecy.

1.347 “Brahmā, I worshiped, made offerings, paid homage, and venerated all of them; and then, under their guidance I practiced pure conduct, abandoned all my possessions, trained in discipline, and observed the ascetic practices. [F.59.b] I meditated on patience and loving kindness, without falling prey to

anger, jealousy, pride, or hypocrisy. I cultivated concentration and disengagement, and remained on my seat in solitude, without wondering about food or things I heard.¹⁹ With this kind of diligence, I came to comprehend all I had heard; yet the thus-gone ones did not prophesy my unexcelled and perfect awakening for an eon or more, even though they voiced my name.²⁰ Why not? Because, Brahmā, I was fixated on practice. So, Brahmā, from this explanation you should know that it is those bodhisattvas who transcend all practices who receive the prophecy.

1.348 “Brahmā, the moment I saw the Thus-Gone One Dīpaṃkara, I gained the acceptance that phenomena are unborn. Then the Thus-Gone One Dīpaṃkara said to me, ‘In the future, after an incalculable eon, you will become a thus-gone, worthy, and perfect buddha called Śākyamuni.’ Then I had transcended all practices. Then I had perfected the six perfections. Why? To give up all signs is the perfection of generosity. To pacify all apprehending is the perfection of discipline. To be unchanged by objects is the perfection of patience. To leave all phenomena alone is the perfection of diligence. To not engage in any movement of mind is the perfection of concentration. To accept that phenomena are unborn by nature is the perfection of insight. Brahmā, this is how I perfected the six perfections with the Thus-Gone One Dīpaṃkara. [F.60.a] Brahmā, my practice of generosity from the moment I first generated the mind of awakening does not amount to even one percent of my later nonapprehending practice of generosity. It does not even come close to it as an analogy. The discipline and ascetic practices I first observed do not even come close as an analogy to my purified discipline. The patience and gentleness I observed from the moment I first generated the mind of awakening do not even come close as an analogy to the nature of my extreme patience. The diligence I observed from the moment I first generated the mind of awakening does not even come close as an analogy to my diligence that is free from acceptance and rejection. The concentration and disengagement I maintained from the moment I first generated the mind of awakening do not even come close as an analogy to my complete peace of signlessness. Brahmā, the discernment given by insight that I developed from the moment I first generated the mind of awakening does not even come close as an analogy to my insight free from conceptual elaboration. So, Brahmā, through this explanation, you should know what I mean when I say that I perfected the six perfections at that time.”

1.349 “Blessed One,” Brahmaviśeṣacintin asked, “how are the six perfections perfected?”

The Blessed One replied, “Not being conceited about one’s generosity, not fixating on discipline, not conceptualizing patience, not adopting diligence, not remaining in concentration, and avoiding duality in one’s insight: Brahmā, in this way the six perfections are perfected.”

1.350 “Blessed One, what is perfected when the six perfections are perfected?”

“Brahmā, once the six perfections are perfected, omniscience is perfected.”
[F.60.b]

1.351 “Blessed One,” he continued, “how is omniscience perfected when the six perfections are perfected?”

The Blessed One replied, “Brahmā, the equality in the perfection of generosity is the equality of omniscience. The equality in the perfection of discipline is the equality of omniscience. The equality in the perfection of patience is the equality of omniscience. The equality in the perfection of diligence is the equality of omniscience. The equality in the perfection of concentration is the equality of omniscience. The equality in the perfection of insight is the equality of omniscience. Therefore, through this equality, all phenomena are equal. The equality of all phenomena is the equality of omniscience. Furthermore Brahmā, perfecting the notions of generosity, discipline, patience, diligence, concentration, and insight perfects omniscience. Omniscience is free of all notions. Therefore, Brahmā, perfecting the six perfections brings omniscience to perfection.”

1.352 Brahmā asked, “Blessed One, what is the perfection of omniscience?”

The Blessed One replied, “Not grasping the eye or form, and so forth, up to not grasping the mind and mental objects. Brahmā, not grasping these six inner and outer sense fields is the perfection of omniscience. Brahmā, when omniscience is perfected in this way, there is no attachment to eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, or mind. Therefore, the omniscient wisdom of all thus-gone ones is devoid of attachment and obscuration. [F.61.a] Brahmā, omniscience does not grasp at anything. Brahmā, in this way omniscience is not a vessel of any phenomenon. Brahmā, *not being a vessel* means that it is not a real thing. *Not a real thing* means open space. Omniscience is like open space. This is why there is no grasping on to any phenomenon. Brahmā, take the analogy of space: it is the basis for all action, while it itself has no basis. Likewise, all wisdoms are present in omniscience, yet omniscience is not supported by anything.”

1.353 “Blessed One, when we say *omniscience*, why is it called *omniscience*?”

“Because, Brahmā, it knows all the practices of hearers and solitary buddhas—this is why it is called *omniscience*. It knows all their thoughts, actions, compassions, trainings, and observances—this is why it is called *omniscience*. It has abandoned all movement and overcome all conceit—this is why it is called *omniscience*. It is free of attainment and knowledge, yet it

knows the minds of all beings—this is why it is called *omniscience*. It contains the realization of all wisdoms, all wisdoms of the path of learning, all wisdoms of the path of no more learning, all wisdoms of the solitary buddhas, and also the wisdom of omniscience—this is why it is called *omniscience*. Since its correct application is wisdom, it is called *omniscience*. Since it knows all remedies, [F.61.b] it is called *omniscience*. Since it pacifies all disease, it is called *omniscience*. Since it overcomes all bondage, it is called *omniscience*. Since it overcomes all rebirth caused by habitual tendencies, it is called *omniscience*. Since it always abides in equipoise, it is called *omniscience*. Since it has no doubt regarding any phenomenon, it is called *omniscience*. All mundane and supramundane wisdoms are present within this omniscience; this is why it is called *omniscience*. Brahmā, this is why the term *omniscience* is a wise appellation for the wisdom that knows all things.”

1.354 Then Brahmaviśeṣacintin said to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, this is wonderful! In this way, the thus-gone ones know everything that occurs in the minds of beings without ever engaging in mental apprehending. Such is the inconceivable wisdom of the buddhas. Blessed One, what son or daughter of noble family would not arouse the mind of unexcelled and perfect awakening when it is endowed with such immeasurable qualities?”

1.355 At that point, the bodhisattva Jālinīrabha addressed the Blessed One, “Blessed One, if a bodhisattva seeks awakening because of the hope to gain certain qualities, he or she is not able to practice the Great Vehicle genuinely. Why not? Blessed One, we should not expect anything in return, as all phenomena are devoid of qualities and have no qualities. Therefore, bodhisattvas should not seek awakening for the sake of gaining qualities or something positive. Rather, motivated by great compassion, Blessed One, bodhisattvas give up hope—for both themselves and others—to avoid the terrors of suffering, [F.62.a] to generate virtue, to be free from views, to eliminate sickness, to abandon all grasping, to look equally upon loved ones and others, to remain unstained by worldly qualities, to be weary of conditioned things, to settle in happiness in nirvāṇa, to uphold the holy Dharma, and to mature beings. Blessed One, bodhisattvas have no regret concerning what is done or not done. Blessed One, happiness and suffering do not affect bodhisattvas. Nevertheless, Blessed One, how are the bodhisattvas’ roots of virtue pure?”

1.356 The Blessed One replied, “Noble son, the pure root of virtue is not the kingdom of a universal monarch, nor is it to be reborn as Śakra or Brahmā. The absence of rebirth and world of rebirth is the bodhisattvas’ pure root of virtue. The bodhisattvas’ pure root of virtue is when they are born in the lower animal realm or higher, even though their roots of virtue have not waned, and they help other sentient beings to produce roots of virtue.²¹

- 1.357 “Because they do not look for any entities, giving is a root of virtue of bodhisattvas. Because there is no mental anguish, discipline is a root of virtue of bodhisattvas. Because there is no ill will, patience is a root of virtue of the bodhisattvas. Because there is no laziness, diligence is a [F.62.b] root of virtue of bodhisattvas. Because of one-pointedness, concentration is a root of virtue of bodhisattvas. Because there are no views, insight is a root of virtue of bodhisattvas. Due to having an impartial mind, love is a root of virtue of bodhisattvas. Due to having pure motivation, compassion is a root of virtue of bodhisattvas. Due to being inspired to follow the Dharma, joy is a root of virtue of bodhisattvas. Due to not having affection or aversion, impartiality is a root of virtue of bodhisattvas. Due to not wanting the levels of the hearers or solitary buddhas, never abandoning the mind of awakening is a root of virtue of bodhisattvas.” [B4]
- 1.358 Mañjuśrī, who was in the assembly, had remained silent until now. So Brahmaviśeṣacintin remarked to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, youthful Mañjuśrī is in this assembly, yet he has not shared any authentic words of teaching.”
- 1.359 So the Blessed One said to youthful Mañjuśrī, “Mañjuśrī, please say a few words related to this teaching.”
- 1.360 Mañjuśrī asked, “Is there anything to impute onto this Dharma that has been realized by the Blessed One?”
- The Blessed One replied, “No, Mañjuśrī, there is nothing to impute onto this Dharma.”
- 1.361 Mañjuśrī asked, “Blessed One, is this Dharma something that can be discussed, spoken about, or taught?”
- 1.362 The Blessed One replied, “No, Mañjuśrī, this Dharma is not something that can be discussed, spoken about, or taught.”
- 1.363 Mañjuśrī asked, “Blessed One, [F.63.a] how then can one explain a Dharma that cannot be discussed, spoken about, or taught?”
- 1.364 Brahmaviśeṣacintin replied, “Mañjuśrī, don’t you teach the Dharma to other beings, to other people?”
- 1.365 “Brahmā, are there dualistic divisions within the realm of phenomena?”
- “No.”
- 1.366 “Aren’t all phenomena but the realm of phenomena?”
- “They are.”
- 1.367 “Brahmā, if the realm of phenomena is devoid of any duality, and all phenomena are ascertained as the realm of phenomena, how do you teach the Dharma to other beings, to other people?”
- 1.368 “Mañjuśrī, is it possible to teach the Dharma in the absence of duality?”
- “Yes, Brahmā, if there are some teachers or hearers.”
- 1.369 “Mañjuśrī, aren’t the thus-gone ones teaching the Dharma?”

- “Brahmā, they teach, although there is no duality. Why? Because the thus-gone ones teach without duality, without creating duality.”
- 1.370 “Mañjuśrī, if all phenomena are devoid of duality, how can immature, ordinary beings create duality out of nonduality?”
- “Immature, ordinary beings create duality by grasping at a self in their stream of being, but nonduality can never become dual. No matter how much duality has been created, nonduality itself remains nondual.”
- 1.371 “Mañjuśrī, how can we cognize nonduality?”
- “If it is something that can be cognized, then it is not nonduality. Nonduality cannot be cognized. Brahmā, duality is cognition. The thus-gone ones teach the Dharma without cognition. Nevertheless, the Dharma is not the way that it is taught. Why is that so? Because the Dharma is beyond syllables.”
- 1.372 “Mañjuśrī, the Dharma taught by the thus-gone ones—where does it lead?”
- “Brahmā, [F.63.b] the Dharma the thus-gone ones teach does not lead anywhere.”
- 1.373 “Mañjuśrī, don’t the thus-gone ones teach the Dharma to reach nirvāṇa?”
- “What nirvāṇa do you apprehend beings going to or arriving at?”
- “There is neither arriving at nor going to nirvāṇa.”
- “Brahmā, in this case the Dharma of the thus-gone ones leads without leading.”
- 1.374 “How should I listen to such a Dharma?”
- “Just the way it is spoken.”
- 1.375 “How is it spoken?”
- “As if without cognition, and without listening.”
- 1.376 “Who listens to the Dharma of the thus-gone ones?”
- “Those who are undefiled regarding objects.”
- 1.377 “Who will know this Dharma?”
- “Those who do not dispute, know, or realize it.”
- 1.378 “Mañjuśrī, why do monks argue so much?”
- “To say ‘this is correct’ or ‘this is incorrect’ is arguing. And likewise, to say ‘these are related’ or ‘these are unrelated,’ ‘this is emotional defilement’ or ‘this is purification,’ ‘this is virtue’ or ‘this is nonvirtue,’ ‘this is reprehensible’ or ‘this is not reprehensible,’ ‘this is defiled’ or ‘this is undefiled,’ ‘this is mundane’ or ‘this is not mundane,’ ‘this is conditioned’ or ‘this is unconditioned,’ ‘this is discipline’ or ‘this is a negative behavior,’ ‘this is to be done’ or ‘this is not to be done,’ and ‘this brings attainment’ or ‘this does not bring attainment’ – these are all arguments. Brahmā, merely to be proud of the Dharma or humble about it, or to adopt teachings or reject them, is already arguing. But the thus-gone ones [F.64.a] teach the Dharma without

arguing. To be fond of conceptual elaborations is nothing if not argument. One does not become a spiritual practitioner by indulging in arguments. He who wants to be a spiritual practitioner must be free from quarrelling.”

1.379 “Mañjuśrī, how does a monk abide by the thus-gone ones’ teachings, and how does he follow their words?”

“Brahmā, when a monk is not affected by praise or criticism, he abides by the teachings of the thus-gone ones. When a monk does not hanker after syllables, he follows the words of the thus-gone ones. When he has quelled all signs, he abides by the teachings. When he is not in conflict with the ultimate, he follows the words of the thus-gone ones. When he protects the Dharma, he abides by the teachings. When he does not conform with the words, he follows the words of the thus-gone ones.”

1.380 “Mañjuśrī, how do monks protect the sacred Dharma?”

“When they do not contravene equality, and when they do not disrupt the realm of phenomena, they protect the sacred Dharma.”

1.381 “Mañjuśrī, how do monks become close to the thus-gone ones?”

“Brahmā, when a monk sees that there is no closeness or distance in phenomena, he is close to the thus-gone ones.”

1.382 “How, Mañjuśrī, do monks worship and pay homage to the thus-gone ones?”

“Brahmā, when a monk makes no effort with body, speech, or mind, that monk worships and pays homage to the thus-gone ones.”

1.383 “Mañjuśrī, who makes offerings to the thus-gone ones?”

“Brahmā, those who do not produce any meritorious, non-meritorious, or nontransferring action.”

1.384 “Mañjuśrī, who can see the thus-gone ones?” [F.64.b]

“Those who have no attachment to the eye of flesh, the divine eye, the wisdom eye, the Dharma eye, or the Buddha eye.”

1.385 “Mañjuśrī, who sees the Dharma?”

“Those who see the dependent origination of things and do not contradict it.”

1.386 “Who sees dependent origination?”

“Those who do not produce equality or contradict it.”

1.387 “Mañjuśrī, who acquires the superknowledges?”

“Those who do not produce or stop contaminations.”

1.388 “Mañjuśrī, who engages in the trainings of the thus-gone ones?”

“Those who do not create, experience, produce, or abandon anything.”

1.389 “Mañjuśrī, who is correctly engaged?”

“Those who do not engage in the three realms.”

1.390 “Mañjuśrī, who is thoughtfully tamed?”

“Those who do not take rebirth.”

- 1.391 “Mañjuśrī, who becomes happy?”
“Those who are without a sense of ownership.”
- 1.392 “Mañjuśrī, who is liberated?”
“Those who are not disturbed by apprehending.”
- 1.393 “Mañjuśrī, who has crossed over?”
“Those who abide in neither saṃsāra nor nirvāṇa.”
- 1.394 “Mañjuśrī, the monks who have exhausted contaminations—what have they exhausted?”
“Brahmā, if they have exhausted the contaminations, they do not exhaust contaminations. These contaminations are momentary; knowing this is called *exhausting the contaminations*.”
- 1.395 “Mañjuśrī, who speaks the truth?”
“Those who are beyond all argument.”
- 1.396 “Who sets out on the path?”
“Brahmā, immature, ordinary beings set out on the path.”
- 1.397 “Mañjuśrī, who [F.65.a] sets out on no path?”
“The noble ones who know that all phenomena do not come from anywhere and do not go anywhere.”
- 1.398 “Mañjuśrī, how do we see the truth?”
“By not seeing anything. Why? If you see something, this means it is not true; that is why not seeing is seeing the truth.”
- 1.399 “What do you see when you see the truth?”
“To not see any views is seeing the truth.”
- 1.400 “Where should we search for it?”
“Search for the truth in the four errors.”
- 1.401 “Mañjuśrī, what do you have in mind when you say that?”
“When investigating the four errors, one finds that there is no permanence, happiness, self, or purity. What is not permanent is impermanent. What is not happiness is suffering. What is without self is selfless.²² What is not pure is impure. Brahmā, seek the truth of the nobles ones – that all phenomena are selfless. Those who search for this truth do not know suffering, do not abandon its origin, do not realize cessation, and do not practice the path.”
- 1.402 “Mañjuśrī, how do you practice the path?”
“One should not mistake practice for a thing, mistake practice for a non-thing, or mistake any phenomenon for a thing or for a non-thing. Brahmā, freedom from duality is the path. If one does not apprehend any phenomenon while on the path, then that is the path. The path does not produce or remove anything. Saṃsāra does not exist, nor does nirvāṇa. Why not? There is nothing to obtain, and nothing to eliminate—this is the path of the noble ones.”

- 1.403 At this point the great sāla-tree-like brahmin householder Samavartin asked Mañjuśrī, “Youthful Mañjuśrī, how should [F.65.b] a lay practitioner take refuge in the Buddha? How should he take refuge in the Dharma? How should he take refuge in the Saṅgha?”
- 1.404 “Noble son, a lay practitioner should avoid grasping these dualistic views: the view of a self and the view of an other, the view of a self and the Buddha, the view of a self and the Dharma, and the view of a self and the Saṅgha. Lay practitioners thereby take refuge in the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Saṅgha. Furthermore, noble son, when lay practitioners do not relate to the Thus-Gone One as form, feeling, perception, formation, or consciousness, they have taken refuge in the Buddha. When lay practitioners do not conceptualize or elaborate any phenomenon, they have taken refuge in the Dharma. When lay practitioners consider the Saṅgha as unconditioned, while not negating its conditioned nature, they take refuge in the Saṅgha. Moreover, noble son, lay practitioners who do not apprehend the Buddha, the Dharma, or the Saṅgha take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha.”
- 1.405 Samavartin then asked, “Mañjuśrī, the bodhisattvas who have entered awakening—where have they entered?”
- “They have entered open space. Why? Awakening is like open space.”
- 1.406 “Mañjuśrī, why do we then say that ‘a bodhisattva has entered awakening’?”
- “Noble son, bodhisattvas know that all entering is not entering. They know that all phenomena are not phenomena. They know that all beings [F.66.a] are not beings. This, noble son, is when we say that ‘a bodhisattva has entered awakening.’”
- 1.407 Then the great sāla-tree-like brahmin householder Samavartin asked the Blessed One, “Blessed One, why are bodhisattvas called *bodhisattvas*?”
- 1.408 “Noble son,” the Blessed One replied, “when bodhisattvas generate compassion for beings stuck in their wrong ways, while arousing no favoritism for beings who are firmly engaged in correct ways, they are called *bodhisattvas*. Why? Noble son, bodhisattvas do not make aspirations toward awakening for the sake of beings who are firmly engaged or those who are undetermined. Their aspirations toward awakening are reserved for those beings who are stuck in their wrong ways—this is why they are called *bodhisattvas*. Therefore, noble son, bodhisattvas make their aspirations toward awakening out of compassion for beings who are stuck in wrong ways—this is why they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- 1.409 Then a bodhisattva called Bodhi addressed the Blessed One, “Blessed One, I would like to explain why they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- “Bodhi, please do so,” replied the Blessed One.

- 1.410 “Blessed One,” said Bodhi, “when a man or a woman follows the eight vows of fasting as they are instructed—without breaking them—we say that they have taken those vows properly. Likewise, Blessed One, from the first arousing of the mind of awakening until reaching the seat of awakening, bodhisattvas never waver from the mind of awakening. This is the reason why they are called *bodhisattvas*.” [F.66.b]
- 1.411 Then the bodhisattva Dr̥ḍhamati said, “Blessed One, when bodhisattvas have a firm resolve that instils in them loving kindness that does not apprehend sentient beings, they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- 1.412 The bodhisattva Sattvatara said, “Blessed One, bridges or boats let beings cross to the other shore without growing weary and without conceptualizing it. Likewise, Blessed One, when bodhisattvas’ minds are like that regarding the liberation of all beings, they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- 1.413 The bodhisattva Apāyavidhama said, “Blessed One, when bodhisattvas set foot in a buddha realm and all its lower abodes are instantly pacified, they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- 1.414 The bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara said, “Blessed One, when the mere sight of a bodhisattva causes sentient beings to firmly set out on the path to awakening, or when they need only hear the name of a bodhisattva to be freed from all their fears, they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- 1.415 The bodhisattva Mahāsthāmaprāpta said, “Whenever bodhisattvas step on the ground or walk, and all the māras’ worlds in the trichiliocosm are shaken, they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- 1.416 The bodhisattva Aparikheda said, “Blessed One, imagine that as many eons as there are grains of sand in the river Ganges constituted one single day. Fifteen of these days make a fortnight, thirty days make a month, and twelve such months make a year. If bodhisattvas serve a buddha who appears for one trillion such years, untiringly observing pure conduct in as many buddha realms as there are grains of sand in the river Ganges [F.67.a] before finally receiving the prophecy, they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- 1.417 The bodhisattva Susārvhāvāha said, “Blessed One, when bodhisattvas see beings stuck on the wrong path and generate the great compassion of wishing to lead them on the right path without hoping for any reward, they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- 1.418 The bodhisattva Sumeru said, “Blessed One, when bodhisattvas nonconceptually know all phenomena, equal to Mount Meru, they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- 1.419 The bodhisattva Nārāyaṇa said, “Blessed One, when bodhisattvas are not overwhelmed by any emotional defilement, they are called *bodhisattvas*.”

- 1.420 The bodhisattva Citta said, “Blessed One, when bodhisattvas can accommodate all mental phenomena in their minds without being harmed or impaired by them, they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- 1.421 The bodhisattva Siṃhavikrāntagāmin said, “Blessed One, when bodhisattvas can bear the profound Dharma without being afraid or scared, so that they are dreaded by the non-Buddhists, they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- 1.422 The bodhisattva Acintya said, “Blessed One, when they relate to the inconceivability of mind without thought, and without ever producing thoughts, they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- 1.423 The god Susīma said, “When they are free from attachment, no matter which divine paradise they may be born in, and when they do not engage with the nature of nonattachment as something to understand, they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- 1.424 The bodhisattva Satyavādin said, [F.67.b] “Blessed One, when bodhisattvas always abide by the truth and never lie, even in dreams, they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- 1.425 The bodhisattva Priyadarśana said, “When they see all forms as the physical form of the buddha, they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- 1.426 The bodhisattva Nityakṛpa said, “Blessed One, when bodhisattvas behold the sufferings of beings who live in saṃsāra, and thereby feel no happiness in any pleasure other than the joy of the Dharma and the joy of maturing beings, they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- 1.427 The bodhisattva Apratihatacitta said, “Blessed One, when no emotional defilements and no māras hamper them, they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- 1.428 The bodhisattva Nityamuditendriya said, “Blessed One, when the power of constant joy and laughter makes them fulfill their intentions and activities, now and in the future, they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- 1.429 The woman Vimatividhvamsana said, “Blessed One, when bodhisattvas have no doubt or hesitation regarding any phenomenon, they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- 1.430 Siṃhakumārī said, “Blessed One, when they are without feminine or masculine characteristics, but manifest in various forms to mature beings, they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- 1.431 The girl Ratna said, “Blessed One, when the jewels of the Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha [F.68.a] are the only jewels bodhisattvas delight in, they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- 1.432 The lay practitioner Viśākhadattā said, “Blessed One, awakening does not exist for one who apprehends. Those who do not apprehend phenomena and who do not produce or stop anything, they are called *bodhisattvas*.”

- 1.433 The householder Bhadrāpāla said, “Blessed One, when merely remembering the name of the bodhisattvas awakens beings, they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- 1.434 Youthful Ratnacandra said, “Blessed One, when bodhisattvas continuously maintain pure conduct, and never entertain desirous thoughts, not to mention actually indulging in lustful acts, they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- 1.435 The god Mandāravapuṣpagandha said, “Blessed One, when bodhisattvas have the fragrance of discipline, and thereby exude the fragrance of discipline, so that no other odor can be smelled, they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- 1.436 The bodhisattva Nandaka said, “Blessed One, when bodhisattvas relish three things—paying homage to the buddhas, upholding the Dharma, and maturing beings—they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- 1.437 Brahmaviśeṣacintin said, “Blessed One, when bodhisattvas say that there is not a single phenomenon that is not a quality of the buddha, they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- 1.438 The bodhisattva Maitreya said, “Blessed One, when bodhisattvas cause beings to gain the loving-kindness absorption as soon as they are seen, they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- 1.439 Youthful Mañjuśrī [F.68.b] said, “Blessed One, when bodhisattvas teach the Dharma without considering their teaching as Dharma or not Dharma, and have no ideas of self or others, they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- 1.440 The bodhisattva Jālinīrabha said, “Blessed One, when bodhisattvas quell all the emotional defilements of beings with their light, they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- 1.441 The bodhisattva Saṃkusuma said, “Blessed One, when bodhisattvas see all the buddha realms in the ten directions as flowers that are brought to full bloom by the thus-gone ones, they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- 1.442 In this way the bodhisattvas spoke according to their individual eloquence. Then the Blessed One said to the great sāla-tree-like brahmin householder Samavartin, “When bodhisattvas delight in liberating all suffering beings, and give all their roots of virtue to all beings, they are called *bodhisattvas*.”
- 1.443 Then Brahmaviśeṣacintin asked youthful Mañjuśrī, “Noble son, what do you abide by?”
- “I abide by the same principles as all the beings who engage with all conditioned phenomena.”
- 1.444 “What do all beings who engage with all conditioned phenomena abide by?”
- “They abide by the same principles as all the thus-gone ones.”
- 1.445 “What do all the thus-gone ones abide by?”
- “They abide by emptiness, which is the ultimate.”

- 1.446 “If, noble son, [F.69.a] all immature, ordinary beings abide by the same thing as the thus-gone ones, what makes the thus-gone ones superior?”
“Brahmā, do you think there are differences within emptiness?”
“No, Mañjuśrī.”
- 1.447 “Has the Blessed One not taught that all phenomena are empty?”
Mañjuśrī continued.
“That is correct.”
- 1.448 “Brahmā, that is why all phenomena are devoid of distinctions, and this is the character of how they abide. Brahmā, the thus-gone ones superimpose no differences on phenomena.”
- 1.449 “Mañjuśrī, why is there the expression *abiding*?”
“Brahmā, *abiding* refers to abiding in the four abodes of Brahmā. Brahmā, those who do not abide in the four abodes of Brahmā are not abiding in the abodes. Whoever abides in the abodes perfects the four abodes of Brahmā. This type of abiding is called *abiding in the abodes*. Brahmā, you may abide in a hermitage or out in the open, but if you lack the four abodes of Brahmā, you are not really abiding in the abodes. You are not skilled in abiding.” He continued, “However, even if you sit in a lofty mansion on a golden throne bedecked with cushions and covers, if you possess the four abodes of Brahmā, then you are abiding in the abodes, and you are skilled in abiding.”
- 1.450 “By abiding in which abode will we gain wisdom vision?”
“By abiding in the abodes that purify the view of a self.”
- 1.451 “Mañjuśrī, do you mean that when one sees the self, one sees wisdom?”
“That is right, Brahmā. He who sees the self, sees wisdom. Brahmā, take this analogy: A man who knows how to assess gold can tell what a good ore is by knowing what a bad one is. Likewise, one can see wisdom purely by seeing the self.”
- 1.452 “Tell me Mañjuśrī, what is the view of the self like?” [F.69.b]
“It is seeing the selfless nature; Brahmā, the self is utterly unreal. To be certain of its nonexistence is to see the self.”
- 1.453 “Mañjuśrī, if I understand correctly, what you say is that by seeing the self, one sees the Buddha. Why? Is it because the essence of the self is the essence of the Buddha?”
“That’s right, Brahmā.”
- 1.454 “Mañjuśrī, how do we see the Thus-Gone One?”
“By not modifying the view of the self. Why? The view of the self is seeing phenomena, and by the view of phenomena, one sees the Buddha.”
- 1.455 “Mañjuśrī, is it possible to engage correctly without engaging with any teaching?”
“Brahmā, one who does not engage with any conditioned entity engages correctly.”

- 1.456 “How does one engage when one ‘engages correctly’?”
 “When one does not seek to eliminate or actualize anything, that is the correct view.”
- 1.457 “Mañjuśrī, is it possible that noble ones who have developed the eye of insight are unable to see the thus-gone ones?”
 “Brahmā, the eye of insight of the noble ones is perfected when the thus-gone ones are seen without duality.”
- 1.458 “Mañjuśrī, what does the eye of insight see?”
 “Brahmā, if it were to see any particular thing, it would not be the eye of insight. Brahmā, the eye of insight sees neither conditioned phenomena nor unconditioned ones. Why not? Insight is nonconceptual, so it cannot see anything conditioned. It also does not see unconditioned things, since these cannot be seen by the eyes.”
- 1.459 “Mañjuśrī, can a monk who engages correctly fail to attain the fruition?”
 “Brahmā, in correct practice [F.70.a] there is no attainment of fruition. In correct practice there is no practice. Here, there is also no concept of attaining fruition. Brahmā, in nonattainment one sees attainment. Any attainment involves overt pride. But in correct practice there is neither overt pride nor the lack of overt pride. There is no attainment either. There is no realization.”
- 1.460 “Mañjuśrī, *realization* is characterized by realizing what phenomenon?”
 “Brahmā, any phenomenon is without production in the past, present, and future. When someone realizes this, he or she is said to have gained realization.”
- 1.461 “Mañjuśrī, how do we realize that phenomena are unproduced?”
 “By realizing that there is no production of anything. That is why it is explained as seeing how all conditioned phenomena are unborn, and as ascertaining reality.”
- 1.462 “Mañjuśrī, to what does *ascertaining reality* refer?”
 “*Ascertaining the correct view* is to recognize that the self and nirvāṇa are alike, that they are not two different things, and that they cannot be separated. Because it engages with reality, it is called *ascertaining correctly*. Since equality is ascertained through equality, it is called *ascertaining correctly*. Since it leads to the definitive meaning, it is called *ascertaining correctly*. Since there is no reification of any absorption, it is called *ascertaining correctly*.”
- 1.463 Then the Blessed One congratulated youthful Mañjuśrī, “Mañjuśrī, what you have said is excellent; it is just as you have explained. Hearing your explanation of the teaching, seven thousand monks liberated their minds from contaminations, with no further grasping. Thirty-two thousand gods gained the pure eyes of Dharma, free of dust and specks. [F.70.b] Ten

thousand living beings gained freedom from desire. Two hundred living beings generated the mind of unexcelled and perfect awakening. Five thousand bodhisattvas gained acceptance that phenomena are unborn.”

1.464 Then Brahmaviśeṣacintin addressed the Blessed One, saying, “Blessed One, youthful Mañjuśrī acts as a buddha.”

Mañjuśrī replied, “Brahmā, the coming of a buddha brings no benefit nor harm.”

1.465 “Mañjuśrī, the Blessed One brings beings beyond measure to nirvāṇa. Don’t you likewise lead beings beyond measure to nirvāṇa?”

“Brahmā, are you positing beings where no sentient beings exist?”

“No, I am not.”

1.466 “Brahmā, are you describing beings where there is no sentient being? Are you positing the existence of beings where there is no sentient being?”

“No, I am not.”

1.467 “Brahmā, do you claim that the thus-gone ones appear or disappear?”

“No, I don’t.”

1.468 “Who are the beings that the thus-gone ones lead to nirvāṇa?”

“Youthful Mañjuśrī, things are just the way you have explained them. Here there is neither saṃsāra nor nirvāṇa.”

1.469 “That’s right, Brahmā. The thus-gone ones apprehend neither saṃsāra nor nirvāṇa. Brahmā, the hearers tamed by the Blessed One also apprehend neither saṃsāra nor nirvāṇa. Brahmā, *nirvāṇa* is nothing more than a convention, a mere imputation. But here there is neither saṃsāra nor any nirvāṇa.”

1.470 “Mañjuśrī, who will place their trust in this?”

“Those who have no attachment to phenomena.” [F.71.a]

1.471 “Mañjuśrī, when you say *attachment*, to what precise attachment are you referring?”

“Brahmā, *attachment* refers to attachment to nonexistence. If, Brahmā, there is attachment to existence, one cannot be free from overt pride. In this way one becomes attached to nonexistence. Therefore, as one realizes ‘this does not exist,’ one is not attached. When one is not attached, one does not circle in saṃsāra. When one does not circle, one does not transmigrate. When one does not transmigrate, that is nirvāṇa.”

1.472 “Mañjuśrī, what does nirvāṇa remedy in order to be called *nirvāṇa*, *beyond suffering*?”

“Brahmā, *nirvāṇa* is so-called because it does not misconstrue mutually dependent conditions. Ignorance does not form. With no formation, nothing is joined together. When nothing is joined together, there is no origin. This

absence of origin is called *nirvāṇa*. To experience this absence of origin is cessation. The path to cessation is the realization of the utterly unborn. These are the four truths of the noble ones.”

1.473 Then the great sāla-tree-like brahmin householder Samavartin spoke to youthful Mañjuśrī, “Mañjuśrī, all that you have taught are true teachings.”

“Noble son, all words are true.”

1.474 “Mañjuśrī, do you mean that no false words exist—all that is incorrect is correct?”

“Noble son, that is correct. You may wonder why. It is because all speech is dependent; it does not abide in any place, in any direction. Whatever is dependent and does not abide in any place or direction is nonexistent, and therefore it is true. This is why all words are also said to be true. [F.71.b] Devadatta’s words and the Thus-Gone One’s words are not different. Why not? All words are the words of the Thus-Gone One. All words are always only suchness. Any forms of words that convey meaning do not have meaning. This is why they convey meaning. That being so, all words are equal in being letters, similar in being letters, and empty of letters. Hence, all words are similar.”

1.475 “Mañjuśrī,” said Samavartin, “didn’t the Thus-Gone One speak about the conventions of the noble ones and the conventions of ordinary beings?”

“Noble son, aren’t the words used to express the conventions of the noble ones the same words used to express the conventions of ordinary beings?”

“That’s right, Mañjuśrī.”

1.476 “Do you think that there are words of noble ones and words of ordinary beings?”

“No, I don’t.”

1.477 “Words themselves do not think or conceptualize. Likewise, noble ones are free from all thoughts and concepts. They have no discursive conventions, so noble ones do not conventionally label things by means of linguistic conceptions. They do not conceive of Dharma. They do not conceive of non-Dharma. They do not conceive of the self. They do not conceive of the other. As an analogy, cymbals, drums, hand drums, and horns all provide the conditions for the arising of sounds without concepts. In a similar vein, the noble ones see the conditions from which things arise, so they have no attachment to conventional labels—no attachment at all.”

1.478 Then the bodhisattva Samavartin said to Mañjuśrī, “Mañjuśrī, the Blessed One has said that when monks gather, they should do one of two things: they should discuss the Dharma, or they should keep noble [F.72.a] silence. Mañjuśrī, can you clarify what it means to *discuss the Dharma* and to *keep the noble silence*?”

1.479 Mañjuśrī replied, “To discuss the Dharma is to speak of things that do not conflict with the Buddha, the Dharma, or the Saṅgha. To keep the noble silence is to be devoted to the Buddha as the nature of reality, the Dharma as freedom from desire, and the Saṅgha as what is unconditioned. Further, noble son, discussing the Dharma consists in discussing the application of the four applications of mindfulness. Keeping the noble silence consists in neither reflecting upon nor mentally engaging in any phenomena. Discussing the Dharma consists in discussing the application of the four correct abandonments. Keeping the noble silence consists in transcending similarity or dissimilarity on the basis of equality. Discussing the Dharma consists in discussing the application of the four bases of miraculous powers. Keeping the noble silence consists in making no deliberate efforts with body, speech, or mind. Discussing the Dharma consists in discussing the application of the five powers and the five strengths. Keeping the noble silence consists in not having any faith in any phenomena due to faith in anything, and neither accepting nor rejecting any phenomena. Keeping the noble silence also consists in being dedicated to maintaining mindfulness, one-pointed concentration, freedom from vain thoughts, and the natural equipoise of all things—which becomes the condition for not relying on any conceptual elaboration. Discussing the Dharma consists in discussing the application of the seven branches of awakening. Keeping the noble silence consists in remaining, through meditative equipoise, in a state without postulation, devoid of any superimpositions or anything to acquire or remove. Discussing the Dharma consists in the application of the eightfold path of the noble ones. [F.72.b] Keeping the noble silence consists in not being dependent either on Dharma or non-Dharma through realizing that the Dharma is like a raft.

1.480 “Noble son, in this way, when bodhisattvas speak about these thirty-seven elements of awakening and explain, teach, present, engage with, comment on, analyze, clarify, and correctly propound them, that is discussing the Dharma. In this way, when the Dharma is experienced directly, one does not see the Dharma as being separate from the body, or the body as being separate from the Dharma. Thus, to neither see them as dual or as nondual is the way they are seen. When seen in this way, even the seeing of the direct perception of wisdom is not seeing. This not seeing anything is keeping the noble silence. Furthermore, noble son, to not discuss in such a way that you impute a self, impute others, impute the Dharma, or impute non-Dharma—this is discussing the Dharma. To remain unmoved, without uttering any words, speech, sounds, or voices as a result of having reached the inexpressible nature, and to be subdued by the mind’s void nature—this is keeping the noble silence. Noble son, to speak in accordance with an

understanding of the different capacities of beings, superior or inferior, is to discuss the Dharma. To transcend both equipoise and distraction is to keep the noble silence.”

1.481 The great sāla-tree-like brahmin householder Samavartin now said to youthful Mañjuśrī, “Mañjuśrī, if I understand your explanation correctly, hearers and solitary buddhas neither discuss the Dharma nor keep the noble silence. This is because they are not skilled in knowing the different capacities, superior or inferior, and they do not remain continuously in equipoise. Mañjuśrī, if truthful people were to tell who [F.73.a] discusses the Dharma and who keeps the noble silence, then, Mañjuśrī, they would say that it is the Thus-Gone One. This is because the Blessed Buddha knows the individual faculties of every sentient being and always remains in equipoise.”

1.482 The Blessed One told youthful Mañjuśrī, “Mañjuśrī, it is as the noble son Samavartin has explained. This is the intent of the blessed buddhas.”

1.483 At this point the elder Subhūti addressed the Blessed One, “Blessed One, I remember hearing the Blessed One say that when monks gather, they should do two things: they should discuss the Dharma or keep the noble silence. Blessed One, if hearers cannot practice these two, why does the Thus-Gone One teach this to them, saying to them, ‘Discuss the Dharma or keep the noble silence’?”

1.484 “What do you think, Subhūti?” the Blessed One replied, “If hearers have not heard the Dharma, can they discuss the Dharma and can they remain one-pointedly in the noble silence?”

“No, they cannot.”

1.485 “Subhūti,” the Blessed One continued, “you should know that the hearers and solitary buddhas do not discuss the Dharma or keep the noble silence in the way it has just been described.”

1.486 Next, youthful Mañjuśrī said to the venerable Subhūti, “Subhūti, the eighty-four thousand behaviors of beings are known to the Thus-Gone One. Do the elders know them? Are they able to explain them? Can the wisdom of the elders penetrate teachings related to these topics?”

“No, Mañjuśrī.”

1.487 Mañjuśrī continued, “Elder [F.73.b] Subhūti, can you rest in absorption to see what happens in the minds of beings, and can you rest in absorption to look at the minds of all beings, whereby yours and those of others appear clearly to you?”

“No, Mañjuśrī.”

1.488 “Venerable Subhūti, the thus-gone ones discuss the Dharma by teaching the remedies for each of the eighty-four thousand behaviors of beings. Without moving from the equipoise of absorption, they also know the

behaviors of all beings. Venerable Subhūti, from this presentation you should know that this is not the domain of hearers and solitary buddhas. Venerable Subhūti, those beings with a preponderance of desire are liberated by what is beautiful, and not by the repulsive. This, the thus-gone ones also know. Those beings who have a preponderance of aversion are liberated by seeing faults, and not by kindness—the thus-gone ones also know this. Those beings who have a preponderance of ignorance are liberated by criticism, and not by teaching them the Dharma—the thus-gone ones also know this. Those beings for whom the three poisons are in equal proportions are not liberated by what is attractive or by what is repulsive, they are not liberated by kindness or by faults, and they are also not liberated by being taught the Dharma or by being criticized. For them, the thus-gone ones with equanimity teach specific Dharma teachings to liberate them in accordance with their dispositions. This, the thus-gone ones also know. Subhūti, thanks to this explanation you should know that the Dharma presentations of the thus-gone ones are supreme, that their mental absorption is supreme, and that their joy in remaining silent [F.74.a] is supreme.”

1.489 Venerable Subhūti said to youthful Mañjuśrī, “Mañjuśrī, if hearers and solitary buddhas cannot speak the Dharma or keep the noble silence, what are the bodhisattvas’ qualities that enable them to speak the Dharma and keep the noble silence in this way?”

1.490 “Venerable Subhūti,” Mañjuśrī answered, “The Thus-Gone One knows this, as he perceives it directly. Since this is therefore known to the Thus-Gone One, you should ask him.”

1.491 At that time the Blessed One replied to the venerable Subhūti saying, “Subhūti, there is an absorption called *the undistracted mind penetrating the Dharma of all the buddhas*. All bodhisattvas who have attained this absorption possess the qualities to speak the Dharma and keep the noble silence.”

1.492 At this point youthful Mañjuśrī addressed the bodhisattva Samavartin, “Noble son, to teach the eighty-four thousand sections of the Dharma in accordance with the eighty-four thousand behaviors is to discuss the Dharma. To enter the equipoise where perceptions and sensations have ceased is to keep the noble silence. Noble son, even if I were to speak for an eon or more about discussing the Dharma and keeping the noble silence, I would not run out of things to say.”

1.493 The Blessed One then said to the great sāla-tree-like brahmin householder Samavartin, “Noble son, in the past, before an utterly incalculable and immeasurably vast number of eons, there was an eon called Vighuṣṭakīrti. At that time, on that occasion, there was a world called Priyadarśana, home to the thus-gone, worthy, and perfect Buddha Samantaraśmi. He was one with

proper knowledge and conduct, [F.74.b] a well-gone one, a knower of the world, a person to train beings, a guide, a most excellent one, a teacher of gods and humans, and a blessed buddha. The Priyadarśana world system of the thus-gone Blessed One Samantaraśmi was ripe with jewels, prosperous, joyful, abundant in crops, delightful, and filled with gods and humans. The fragrances of many types of incense permeated this world, and everything was as soft as cotton, smooth like kācilindika cloth, and exquisitely adorned with the seven precious substances. This Priyadarśana world was composed of forty million four-continent systems, where each of the great continents measured eighty-four thousand leagues. Each of its cities was ornamented with all types of precious substances and measured about one league. Each city was surrounded by five hundred villages, hamlets, districts, and markets. In each town, village, market, and district lived many hundreds of thousands of beings. Whatever appeared before the eyes of these people was always attractive and pleasing, and they saw nothing unpleasant. These people had also developed the absorption of *remembering the buddha*. That is why this world was called Priyadarśana—Delightful to Behold.

1.494 “Bodhisattvas from other buddha realms also came to this world and, when they too saw this Priyadarśana world, it filled them with delight in a way that no other world had. The Thus-Gone One Samantaraśmi taught the Dharma to beings there by presenting the three vehicles. For the most part, he explained in great detail the statement, ‘Noble sons, you need to abide by these two practices: discuss the Dharma or remain in peace by keeping the noble silence.’ [F.75.a] [B5] Noble son, in the zenith direction, two bodhisattvas called Akṣayamati and Viśeṣamati left the buddha realm of the Thus-Gone One Bhaiṣajyarāja and went to meet the Thus-Gone One Samantaraśmi. They prostrated to the Blessed One’s feet and circumambulated him three times. Then they took places by his side. At that point, the Thus-Gone One taught them, extensively and perfectly, the absorption called *pure light* in the following way: ‘Why is this absorption called *pure light*? It is called *pure light* because bodhisattvas who have attained this absorption are liberated from all signs and emotional defilements and have reached clarity concerning all buddha qualities. All phenomena within the past are pure, all phenomena within the future are pure, and all phenomena within the present are pure—this is the *purity of the three times*. Since they are pure, they cannot be turned into something impure. Pure things are pure by nature, so they are thoroughly pure. This is why all phenomena are said to be luminous by nature.

1.495 “ ‘What is the nature of all phenomena? All phenomena have emptiness as their nature and are thus free from apprehending. All phenomena are signless by nature, so they are free of thoughts and concepts. All phenomena

are wishless by nature, so they are free of accepting, rejecting, intending, and functioning, and are utterly devoid of inherent essence. They are naturally luminous. The nature of saṃsāra is the nature of nirvāṇa. The nature of nirvāṇa is the nature of all phenomena. This is why the nature of mind is said to be naturally luminous. [F.75.b] Noble sons, as an analogy, it is untenable and impossible for open space to become defiled. Noble sons, likewise, it is untenable and impossible for the nature of mind to become defiled. Noble sons, as an analogy, clouds, smoke, or dust may appear in the sky, reducing the sky's beauty, purity, and clarity. Yet, they do not defile the nature of the sky. If the sky itself were defiled, it could never become pure. Since, in this way, it never becomes defiled, it is designated as the *sky*. Noble sons, likewise, immature, ordinary beings, who direct their minds inappropriately, generate emotional defilements, but they never defile the nature of mind. If it could become defiled, it could not be thoroughly pure. Since, in this way, it never becomes defiled, it is liberated by being naturally liberated. Noble sons, this is an introduction to the absorption called *pure light*. Thus taught the Thus-Gone One to the two bodhisattvas. Upon hearing about that absorption, the two attained Dharma insight regarding the inconceivable Dharma.

1.496 “Then the bodhisattva Akṣayamati said to the blessed Thus-Gone One Samantaraśmi, ‘Blessed One, now that we have heard your introduction to this absorption, how should we abide?’

1.497 “ ‘Noble sons,’ replied the Blessed One to the two bodhisattvas, ‘discuss the Dharma by teaching it genuinely or abide in the noble silence.’ When these two bodhisattvas heard the pronouncement ‘Excellent, excellent!’ from that buddha, [F.76.a] they prostrated to his feet and circumambulated him three times. Then they left that blessed one for a pleasant grove, where they took up residence in a mansion that they magically manifested. The god Bhadraraśmi from the heaven of Great Brahmā went to meet the bodhisattvas at their dwelling with an assembly of seven million two hundred thousand Brahmā gods. These gods prostrated to the feet of the two bodhisattvas, circumambulated them three times, and then asked them, ‘Noble sons, the blessed Thus-Gone One Samantaraśmi said that when monks have gathered and are together, they have two things to do: discuss the Dharma discourses or keep the noble silence. So what does it mean to discourse upon the Dharma and keep the noble silence?’

1.498 “The two bodhisattvas replied to Brahmā Bhadraraśmi’s query, ‘Brahmā, we are going to explain a little of the teachings on this question, so listen well. About this the thus-gone ones have direct perception and full realization.’ Noble son, amid the gathering assembled around them, the two bodhisattvas taught extensively the meaning of discoursing upon the

Dharma and keeping the noble silence. At that time, the seven million two hundred thousand Brahmā gods gained acceptance that phenomena are unborn. Brahmā Bhadraraśmi also attained the absorption of *pure light*. Noble son, the two bodhisattvas, who had uninterrupted eloquence, then taught correctly about discoursing upon the Dharma and keeping the noble silence. They taught for seventy-six thousand years, elucidating these two topics and [F.76.b] answering the gods' questions, with no end to their exchange.

1.499 "Then, from the sky where he sat, that thus-gone one spoke to both of them saying, 'Supreme noble sons, do not speak to argue; do not speak to create disputes. Rather, see all words as echoes, for all words are like reverberating sounds. You should understand that you have accomplished the unfailing mastery of eloquence. Should you wish to explain these two topics for an eon or more, your eloquence would still not be exhausted. Nevertheless, the words of the buddhas are complete peacefulness; they are peace, utter peace, complete peace, the meaning beyond words, and the inexpressible meaning. The more this is expressed, the further it is from the meaning. Therefore, rely on the meaning and not the words.' The two bodhisattvas heard that thus-gone one's exhortation and remained silent. Noble son, based on this explanation you should know that bodhisattvas can teach eloquently in this way for a hundred thousand eons or more. Noble son, you should not think that at that time, on that occasion, these two bodhisattvas were some other persons. Why not? Because at that time youthful Mañjuśrī was the bodhisattva Akṣayamati. And Samavartin, at that time, on that occasion, you were the bodhisattva Viśeṣamati. At that time, on that occasion, Mahābrahmaviśeṣacintin was the Brahmā god Bhadraraśmi."

1.500 The great sāla-tree-like brahmin householder Samavartin said to the Blessed One, "Blessed One, those who apply diligence to what has been said here will gain the supreme benefit: the thus-gone ones' awakening. By contrast, those who have no diligence could not be helped even by hundreds of thousands of blessed ones. [F.77.a] Blessed one, awakening comes from diligence."

1.501 Youthful Mañjuśrī asked the great sāla-tree-like brahmin householder Samavartin, "What is the diligence practiced by bodhisattvas?"

"Diligence is the way they exert themselves that leads to realization."

1.502 "Again, how does this exertion lead to realization?"

"Exerting oneself without conceptualizing any phenomenon leads to realization."

1.503 "What is realization?"

"Realization is seeing the equality of all phenomena."

1.504 "Noble son, can equality be seen?"

"No, it cannot."

- “If it cannot, then it becomes difference since it cannot be equality.”
- 1.505 Brahmaviśeṣacintin then spoke, “Mañjuśrī, not seeing any phenomenon due to equality—that is realization.”
- 1.506 “Why would nothing be seen?” Mañjuśrī replied.
“Nothing is seen because one is free of duality. Mañjuśrī, not seeing is true seeing.”
- 1.507 “Brahmā, who sees the equality of the world?”
“The thus-gone ones do.”
- 1.508 “What do they see?”
“They see the suchness of form, without construing it as anything different. They see the suchness of feeling, of perception, of formation, and of consciousness, without construing them as anything different. Mañjuśrī, seeing the suchness of the five aggregates exactly as it is, they see the world as it is.”
- 1.509 “Brahmā, what is the unique character of the world?”
“Extinction is the unique character of the world.”
- 1.510 “If the world is characterized by extinction, Brahmā, [F.77.b] will the characteristics of the world be extinguished?”
“Mañjuśrī, the characteristics of the world do not become extinguished.”
- 1.511 “Well then, why do you say that the unique characteristic of the world is extinction?”
“Mañjuśrī, thorough extinction does not become extinguished. Why? Because what is extinguished cannot become extinguished.”
- 1.512 “Brahmā, don’t the thus-gone ones teach that conditioned phenomena are subject to extinction?”
“Mañjuśrī, the nature of extinction is never exhausted. It is with this in mind that the thus-gone ones say that conditioned phenomena are subject to extinction.”
- 1.513 “Brahmā, what makes something a conditioned phenomenon?”
“Mañjuśrī, it is due to having the nature of extinction that it is called a *conditioned phenomenon*.”
- 1.514 “Brahmā, where do conditioned phenomena rest?”
“They rest upon the unconditioned nature.”
- 1.515 “Brahmā, what is the difference between conditioned and unconditioned phenomena?”
“Mañjuśrī, the difference between conditioned and unconditioned phenomena is a convention. Why? Because it is conventions that assert ‘this is conditioned’ and ‘this is unconditioned.’ And the nature of the conditioned is the nature of the unconditioned, as there is, in reality, no difference.”
- 1.516 “Brahmā, to what does *reality* refer?”

- “Mañjuśrī, *reality* refers to the phenomena that are indistinguishable from the unconditioned.”
- 1.517 “What is the meaning behind *ascribing names*?”
 “Names are given to communicate to others. Why? All names are exaggerations and thus also superimpositions. So that is why, when the thus-gone ones teach without making superimpositions or exaggerations, their teachings are called *the superior words*. Furthermore, Mañjuśrī, because it is not the case that all words are words, the words of the buddhas are called *inexpressible*. [F.78.a] Why? Because the perfect buddhas are precisely those who are not distinguished by verbal expression.”
- 1.518 “How then are the perfect buddhas distinguished?”
 “They are not distinguished through their form either, nor through their name or their nature.”
- 1.519 “Can they be distinguished through something of a character other than their form?”
 “No, they cannot.” He continued, “The thus-gone ones cannot be distinguished based on the nature of phenomena such as their physical characteristics, nor can they be distinguished based on something else—this is the way that they are distinguished. Thus, they teach by means of suchness and without losing sight of it—this is the way they are distinguished.”
- 1.520 “That being so, why are the thus-gone ones called *perfectly awakened*?”
 “Mañjuśrī, the thus-gone ones have perfectly awakened to and have realized phenomena as they really are in terms of their nature and essence. That is why they are called *perfectly awakened*.”
- 1.521 Then the great sāla-tree-like brahmin householder Samavartin said to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, how do bodhisattvas enter the Great Vehicle?”
- 1.522 At that moment the Blessed One answered in these verses:
 “These wise beings know
 That one does not enter awakening by destroying forms.
 They say, ‘As is form, so is awakening.’
 This is how these wise beings enter.
- 1.523 “Since they are distinguished by suchness,
 As is form, so is awakening.
 Supremely wise, they make
 No distinction in awakening.
- 1.524 Awakening is in fact indivisible.
 In actuality, awakening is not apprehended.
 Whoever strives for this absolute

- Will connect with awakening.
- 1.525 “Search for awakening in the aggregates,
The elements, and the sense fields—
Their very nature is awakening;
In their fading away there is no awakening.
- 1.526 “The moment they do not grasp at phenomena—the good ones,
The bad ones, or the neutral ones—
And do not find anything to abandon in them,
They have truly connected with awakening. [F.78.b]
- 1.527 “When they do not maintain any duality
In terms of a true Dharma or a false Dharma,
Or any other form of duality,
They have thoroughly connected with awakening.
- 1.528 “The unconditioned is nonduality,
The conditioned is duality—
Having relinquished these two extremes,
They apply the conduct for awakening.
- 1.529 “Though they have transcended ordinary birth,
They do not avoid manifesting,
Nor do they reach a goal.
These noble ones are worthy recipients of offerings in this world.
- 1.530 “Those who see all worldly phenomena
And, like a lotus in the world,
Devote themselves to supreme conduct,
Have connected with awakening.
- 1.531 “In the midst of worldly conduct,
They also act.
Yet these wise beings are free
From what obscures the world.
- 1.532 “They have no emotional defilements within saṃsāra;
These bodhisattvas have no fear,
No weakness, and no weariness.
They apply the conduct for awakening.
- 1.533 “They know things properly and investigate,
And realize the way the realm of phenomena is.
These wise ones do so without resorting to concepts

- Of what is Dharma and what is not.
- 1.534 “They practice the conduct for awakening
Without destroying any phenomenon
Or producing any—
This is the characteristic of awakening.
- 1.535 “All phenomena are devoid of characteristics;
They are like space and equal.
These wise beings never think that phenomena
Are characterized, or that they are not.
- 1.536 “They have become skilled in conduct,
And have perfected skillful means.
These wise beings also fulfill
The aspirations of beings.
- 1.537 “They always uphold the sacred Dharma,
And always abide by what is true.
They are never conceited concerning the Dharma—
This is my Dharma.
- 1.538 “Buddhas may be born,
Or guides may not appear.
Yet all phenomena are always empty,
Never departing from their fundamental nature.
- 1.539 “They perceive all phenomena directly,
And abide by the nature of phenomena—
Suchness, just as it is—
Their steadfast ground.
- 1.540 “The depth of their profound conduct
Can never be fathomed by the māras.
In this way they practice,
Grasping to no phenomenon.
- 1.541 “They seek the wisdom of the buddhas,
Knowing it is not an actual [F.79.a] object to pursue.
This wisdom can be found nowhere,
In whichever direction you look.
- 1.542 “The wisdom of the buddhas has no attachment—
No attachment to any phenomenon.
Those who strive for awakening

- Also produce no attachment.
- 1.543 “Those who are exalted due to generosity
Always delight in taming the mind.
They relinquish everything,
Without any attachment.
- 1.544 “Phenomena cannot be relinquished,
Nor can they be held.
In actuality, no phenomenon
Is a thing that can be owned.
- 1.545 “He who knows that
No phenomenon exists or is liberated
Has no view of anything—
He is a great benefactor.
- 1.546 “Bodhisattvas are utterly free
Of views of me and mine.
That is why whenever they give,
They never rely on anything.
- 1.547 “Furthermore, all their acts of generosity
They dedicate toward awakening.
Generosity for awakening’s sake
Is no cause of dualistic notions.
- 1.548 “Discipline free of formation,
They always maintain.
Yet they never proudly think,
‘I maintain discipline.’
- 1.549 “Discipline is not made or produced:
This these wise ones know.
That is why their discipline
Is utterly stainless, like space.
- 1.550 “The body is like a reflection,
Speech is like an echo, and
Mind is like an illusion.
Knowing this, they observe no arrogant discipline.
- 1.551 “They are always in peace, complete peace, and
Thorough peace, and thus resting in equipoise.
They pacify all negativity

- And have transcendent, complete peace.
- 1.552 “They do not view negative behavior
And discipline dualistically.
They realize the realm of phenomena,
So their discipline is stainless.
- 1.553 “They have perfected patience
And can bear all harm.
In this way, they look equally
Upon all beings.
- 1.554 “No phenomenon ever remains,
But is destroyed instant by instant,
So they neither revile
Nor revere them.
- 1.555 “Their bodies could be cut into pieces; [F.79.b]
However, their minds would be undisturbed.
The mind abides
Neither inside nor outside of the body.
- 1.556 “The body that comes from the four elements
Is like an enemy.
Realizing this,
These wise ones have no conceit for *me*.
- 1.557 “Those who can actualize this
Are said to have patience.
All beings together
Could not sway their minds.
- 1.558 “They practice great diligence:
Powerful, stable, and free of fear.
They know both body and mind,
Yet rely on neither.
- 1.559 “They harbor no belief in a beginning or end to saṃsāra.
Even for the sake of a single sentient being,
These strong ones don the armor of diligence.
- 1.560 “Phenomena are unborn:
They do not come into being.
Immature beings, because they are mistaken,
Do not realize how it all began.

- 1.561 “The realm of phenomena is always there;
The realm of phenomena is inconceivable.
The one who truly and fully realizes this
Knows neither birth nor death.
- 1.562 “These bodhisattvas strive so that
Those who fail
To see this character of phenomena
May abandon their mistake.
- 1.563 “Perfect buddhas do not misconstrue
The way beings are,
While never stripping off their armor:
Behold the unique quality of their diligence!
- 1.564 “These bodhisattvas recognize that phenomena
Are like illusions or mirages.
Finding no essence in them,
They see them as space.
- 1.565 “Conceptualizing nonexistence,
Unwise individuals are swayed by emotional defilements.
Those who have passed beyond this suffering
Explain this to them.²³
- 1.566 “This is why they practice diligence,
Not to eliminate anything.
Since things and non-things are both impermanent,
These bodhisattvas cultivate diligence.
- 1.567 “They always remain in solitude,
Aware of the absence of emotional defilements,
And cultivating a fear of saṃsāra.
They have no acquaintances and rely on no one.²⁴
- 1.568 “These wise ones who practice steadfastly in the wilderness
Remain solitary like a rhinoceros.
Full of knowledge and wisdom,
They master the superknowledges.
- 1.569 “As in the wilds, so too in town,
They dwell in equality.
Never conceptualizing actions and activities,
They always maintain equipoise. [F.80.a]

- 1.570 “Eventually they develop trust and become liberated
Within the Dharma of equipoise—
The undefiled state of peace.
That is why it is called *equipoise*.
- 1.571 “They establish evenness, they go to evenness,
They abide in evenness, and
They do not contravene evenness.
That is why it is called *equipoise*.
- 1.572 “They always maintain the thought of awakening,
Are never obscured, and
Mature beings.
That is why it is called *equipoise*.
- 1.573 “They always remember the perfect Buddha,
The dharmakāya, and the Thus-Gone One,
And are free from desire for forms.
That is why it is called *equipoise*.
- 1.574 “They meditate on phenomena,
Knowing the nature of phenomena as it is,
But not through reflection and mental engagement.
That is why it is called *equipoise*.
- 1.575 “They meditate remembering the saṅgha;
The saṅgha is unconditioned by nature.
So in peace, free of measure,
These wise ones meditate in concentration.
- 1.576 “In the ten directions of embodied beings
They see buddha realms and buddhas,
Yet they do not relate dualistically
To eyes and forms.
- 1.577 “They listen to all the Dharma teachings
Given by buddhas,
Yet they do not relate dualistically
To ears and sounds.
- 1.578 “They know in one thought
The minds of beings,
Yet they do not conceptually elaborate
About these beings or their minds.

- 1.579 “They can remember as many million eons
As there are grains of sand in the Ganges,
Yet they do not have preconceptions
About before or after.
- 1.580 “They can travel with their magical powers
To billions of buddha realms in inconceivable numbers,
Yet seeing no body and no mind,
They become fatigued neither physically nor mentally.
- 1.581 “They distinguish and know all phenomena;
They have gained mastery of eloquence.
They teach the realm of phenomena
For millions of eons on end.
- 1.582 “Having also perfected insight,
They have trained in mastery of the aggregates,
And explain the supreme Dharma,
In which there is nothing to adopt, and no elaboration.
- 1.583 “They know about conditions,
And have abandoned the two extremes; [F.80.b]
They know the causes of emotional defilements,
But also know them to be pure, without evil.
- 1.584 “They fully respect conditions,
While holding no wrong views.
In this way, all phenomena
Are unreal and depend on conditions.
- 1.585 “Views of the self, views of the Buddha,
Views of things as empty, and
Views of nirvāṇa and of saṃsāra:
They have none of these.
- 1.586 “Knowing the nature of insight,
The light of wisdom emerges.
The instant something appears, they are free from desire,
And practice the conduct for awakening.
- 1.587 “This vehicle is the Great Vehicle,
The inconceivable vehicle of the buddhas,
Open to all beings:
The unsurpassable Great Vehicle.

- 1.588 “Among all vehicles,
The great beings regard it as supreme.
That is why all other vehicles
Are subsumed by the Great Vehicle.
- 1.589 “Other vehicles are not as great,
As they cannot address all beings,
Whereas the Great Vehicle
Accommodates all embodied beings.
- 1.590 “The Great Vehicle is like space,
Which is stainless.
Those who have entered it have no uncharitable thoughts
For any embodied being.
- 1.591 “Just as space is immeasurable,
Formless, and indemonstrable,
So is this Great Vehicle
Immeasurable and devoid of obscuration.
- 1.592 “If all beings
Were to follow this holy vehicle,
Each would have the right circumstances:
Behold the unique qualities of this vehicle!
- 1.593 “To praise the qualities of the Great Vehicle,
And of those who abide in it,
For ten million eons
Would not exhaust all there is to explain.
- 1.594 “Anyone who retains
A single stanza of this sūtra
Will abandon the unfree states.
Such a learned being will gain the states of leisure.
- 1.595 “Anyone who rejoices in this sūtra
Will never take birth
In the lower realms,
But will become a god or a human.
- 1.596 “I prophesy that anyone who
Later, during times of great terror,
Hears this sūtra
Will reach awakening.

- 1.597 “Those persons will have this teaching in their hands,
And follow the sacred Dharma.
While following the Dharma,
They will turn the wheel of the Dharma. [F.81.a]
- 1.598 “Those who recollect this sūtra
Will reach perfect awakening,
Abandoning the great self
That has been circling in saṃsāra for endless eons.
- 1.599 “Those who hold the meaning herein
Will have the ability of heroes.
Overcoming the factions of māras,
They will have great diligence and insight.
- 1.600 “Those who rejoice in this sūtra
Will receive prophecies,
Just as I received one from Dīpaṃkara,
When I practiced patience.
- 1.601 “Those who teach this sūtra
To those who were not liberated
When the Buddha was protecting the world
Are accomplishing a buddha’s deed.”
- 1.602 With the explanation offered in these perfectly crafted verses, five thousand gods aroused the mind of awakening. Two thousand bodhisattvas gained acceptance that phenomena are unborn. The minds of more than one thousand monks were freed of contamination, without further clinging. Thirty-two thousand living beings gained the pure eyes of Dharma, free of dust and specks.
- 1.603 At this point youthful Mañjuśrī said to the Blessed One, “If I understand correctly what you have explained, Blessed One, the aspiration toward awakening is an aspiration toward wrong view. Why is this? Because, Blessed One, apprehending is wrong. In this regard, the effort made by those who apprehend awakening and who thus aspire toward what is apprehended is wrong. Why? Blessed One, awakening is not in the desire realm, awakening is not in the form realm, and awakening is not in the formless realm. Blessed One, since awakening is nowhere, there is no way to aspire to it. Blessed One, it is like people who say they will grab the sky. Will this aspiration they have for the sky give them the sky?”
The Thus-Gone One replied, “No, Mañjuśrī, it will not.”

- 1.604 Mañjuśrī continued, “Blessed One, similarly, the aspiration toward space-like awakening is like aspiring for the sky. Blessed One, [F.81.b] awakening is not an object of aspiration. It is beyond the three times; it cannot be approached. Blessed One, if bodhisattvas consider things in a dualistic way—thinking, when they form their aspirations, that awakening and saṃsāra are different, that awakening and views are different, and that awakening and nirvāṇa are different—these bodhisattvas are not practicing the path to awakening.”
- 1.605 Then Brahmaviśeṣacintin said to youthful Mañjuśrī, “Mañjuśrī, how should bodhisattvas act in order to practice the path to awakening?”
- 1.606 “Brahmā, bodhisattvas practice the path to awakening when they interact with any phenomenon without interacting with any phenomenon. Brahmā, bodhisattvas practice the path to awakening with actions beyond objects.”
- 1.607 “Mañjuśrī, how do bodhisattvas practice the path to awakening with actions beyond objects?”
- “They are free of all apprehended signs, and free of eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind. In this way, they are beyond all objects of action.”
- 1.608 “Mañjuśrī, what does *beyond* mean?”
- “Not going beyond equality. Why? Brahmā, awakening is the equality of all phenomena.”
- 1.609 “Mañjuśrī, how do bodhisattvas connect with awakening?”
- “Through the way awakening is.”
- 1.610 “What is awakening like?”
- “Brahmā, awakening is neither past, nor future, nor present. Therefore, bodhisattvas connect with awakening through the purity of the three times and the purity of the three spheres of experience. Past things, future things, present things, and those that will never come to be are not different. When relating to them, there is actually no interaction whatsoever. Why not? [F.82.a] Because relating to them in this way brings omniscient wisdom.”
- 1.611 “Mañjuśrī, why is it called *omniscient wisdom*?”
- “The wisdom that knows everything is called *omniscient wisdom*.”
- 1.612 “Mañjuśrī, what is knowing everything like?”
- “Brahmā, in the knowledge of everything, nothing exists; in the knowledge of everything, there is no knowledge of everything—this is the knowledge of everything. There is no knowledge of everything that comprehends actual, real entities.”
- 1.613 “Why are there no entities?”
- “Entities are devoid of a nature behind their names. They are nothing more than an absence of name and nature. Awakening is also nothing more than that. If it were something distinct from other entities, it would just be another entity. Therefore, beings do not deteriorate within that state, nor is

realization to be found elsewhere. Rather, through the equality of self, the equality of awakening is known; and through the equality of awakening, the equality of self is known. This is the way that awakening is realized. Since it is not otherwise, it does not become something else. The self is always devoid of self—that is why it does not need to become something else. Just as space does not change into something else, so do all phenomena not become something else.”

1.614 Brahmaviśeṣacintin then said to youthful Mañjuśrī, “So the thus-gone ones speak the truth, as they discern these phenomena.”

1.615 “Brahmā, the thus-gone ones discern no phenomenon. Why not? The thus-gone ones do not even apprehend the nature of reality, so how could they discern anything?”

“Mañjuśrī, don’t the thus-gone ones know clearly what is a conditioned thing, what is unconditioned, what is mundane, and what is supramundane?”

1.616 “Brahmā, what do you think? Can space be discerned, [F.82.b] and can it be known by anyone?”

“No, Mañjuśrī, it cannot.”

1.617 “Can what we call *space* be born or cease?” Mañjuśrī continued.

“No, it cannot.”

1.618 “Likewise, Brahmā, the way you know any phenomenon is also the way you know space. A phenomenon is not born and does not cease. So to know all phenomena is not a knowledge of phenomena. The knowledge of all phenomena is also not otherwise. Hence there is no knowing of phenomena—this is the knowledge of everything. Why? The knowledge of everything is just like the knowledge of phenomena. That is why it is said that all phenomena abide in suchness—the suchness which does not itself abide.”

1.619 At that moment, the Four Great Kings, along with Śakra, ruler of the gods, and Brahmā, lord of Enduring, who had gathered and were present in the assembly, strew divine flowers on the Thus-Gone One before they spoke, saying timidly, “Blessed One, the noble sons and daughters who trust this teaching of youthful Mañjuśrī will overcome all māras and opponents. Why? Blessed One, youthful Mañjuśrī’s teaching is free of all conceptions. All noble sons and daughters who do not fear these teachings, and who do not become afraid or panic at them, will accumulate no small roots of virtue. Blessed One, places where this Dharma teaching appear are blessed by the Buddha. Where this profound Dharma way is heard, that land is the province of the thus-gone ones. Villages, cities, regions, districts, temples, and gathering places—anywhere this Dharma teaching appears—the wheel of

the Dharma should be seen to revolve. Māras do not roam such places, or those attached to apprehending. [F.83.a] Blessed One, this Dharma teaching is heard by those who have worshiped buddhas of the past.

1.620 “Blessed One, thanks to this Dharma teaching, the Dharma has become clear for us. Blessed One, even our flesh and blood could not repay the Thus-Gone One, youthful Mañjuśrī, and Brahmaviśeṣacintin. Blessed One, those who deliver this Dharma teaching are for us like the Teacher. We will always surround them, and the noble sons will be protected by these gods. Those who write, read, teach, or recite this Dharma teaching will be heard by hundreds of thousands of gods.”

1.621 Then the Blessed One approved of the Four Great Kings, Śakra, ruler of the gods, and Brahmā, lord of Enduring, saying, “Excellent, excellent! It is just as you have said, excellent ones. Friends, imagine that the entire trichilocosm was filled with jewels. If you were to measure that quantity of gems against the roots of virtue accrued from listening to this Dharma teaching, the latter would be far superior. Leave aside the trichilocosm; imagine as many world systems as there are grains of sand in the river Ganges, filled with jewels. Far superior in comparison would be the roots of virtue accrued from listening to this Dharma teaching. Friends, noble sons or daughters who want to acquire merit should listen to this Dharma teaching. Those who want possessions, the Dharma, good looks, wealth, [F.83.b] servants, mastery of the Dharma, the excellence of gods and humans, fame, articulateness, erudition, mindfulness, intelligence, realization, stability, insight, eloquence, memory, a spiritual friend, superknowledges, knowledge, wisdom, awakening, all virtuous qualities, the branches of awakening, good conduct, the ability to lead all beings to happiness, and nirvāṇa—such noble sons or daughters should listen to this Dharma teaching, trust it, remember it, understand it, grasp it, read it, and teach it extensively to others. Friends, I do not see any such beings—even those who have merely heard this Dharma teaching—who do not enjoy these wonderful circumstances.

1.622 “Friends, you must trust this and understand it. I do not see any worldly wealth that could repay the master or teacher from whom you hear and grasp this teaching. Why not? This Dharma is beyond the world, so no worldly material thing can repay it. These Dharma teachings are unstained by the world, so worldly material things cannot repay them. This Dharma has no worldly character, so worldly material things cannot repay it. The only way to repay the gift of this Dharma teaching is to strive in the Dharma, because wrongheaded effort would be no recompense. Those who practice these teachings have paid homage to their masters or teachers. They have genuinely repaid their masters or teachers. They have consumed the alms of

the country without incurring any debts. They have applied the words of the thus-gone ones. They [F.84.a] have crossed over the river. They have traversed all wildernesses. They have hoisted the parasol, the victory banner, and the flag. They are heroes who are completely victorious.

1.623 “They are like lions, fearless and intrepid. They are of noble birth, like the excellent elephant. They are like the elephant, their minds very peaceful. They are like the dominant bull, who overcomes all enemies. They are like physicians, as they liberate all beings from their every illness. They are not afraid to teach the profound Dharma. They are characterized by the most excellent generosity, and have abandoned all emotional defilements. They have pure discipline, and have perfected peace and tranquility. They have the strength of patience, and are free of grasping at me and mine. They have great diligence, and during countless eons they have gathered infinite accumulations. They have perfect concentration, mindfulness, and focus. They have great insight and are skilled at teaching with the wisdom that clearly discerns the different expressions related to all things. They have great merit, as they are beautifully adorned with the marks of a hundred merits. They have charisma so great that they outshine the sun and the moon. They have acquired great strength and have the force of the ten powers.

1.624 “They are like massive clouds that roar with the thunder of Dharma. They pour down a torrential rain of Dharma, pacifying all emotional defilements. They are havens, as they are in the city of nirvāṇa. They are like protectors for those oppressed by the fears of saṃsāra. They are like lamps, free of the obscuration of darkness. They are like refuges for those frightened by māras. They are like supports for all beings. They grant consecration at the seat of awakening. [F.84.b] They have gained the Dharma eye. They see the suchness of phenomena. They know that all phenomena are empty. They always have great compassion. They are always imbued with great love. They never abandon any being. They have turned away from the lower vehicle. They follow the Great Vehicle. They have abandoned mistakes. They have reached equality. They have developed the resolve of bodhisattvas. They reside at the seat of awakening. They have tamed the army of māras. They have realized omniscience. They will turn the wheel of the Dharma. They will accomplish the buddhas’ deeds. Friends, even if I were to explain about these holy individuals who strive to apply this Dharma teaching for an entire eon, or even longer, and even with the perfect eloquence of the thus-gone ones, I would not reach the end of the praises garnered by these holy individuals who strive to apply this Dharma teaching.”

- 1.625 At that moment, the god Avaivartin, who was in the assembly, addressed the Blessed One, “Blessed One, when we say *practicing the Dharma*, what does that mean? What does it refer to?”
- 1.626 “Divine son,” the Blessed One replied, “*practicing the Dharma* is to not practice any phenomenon. Why? When not practicing any phenomenon, nothing is created and nothing is done. This non-creation and non-doing is practicing the Dharma. Practicing the Dharma means to not practice virtue or nonvirtue. Likewise, it means to not engage with the mundane or the supramundane, the contaminated or the uncontaminated, the reprehensible acts [F.85.a] or the nonreprehensible acts, the conditioned or the unconditioned, or saṃsāra or nirvāṇa. That is what *practicing the Dharma* means. Not practicing any phenomenon is practicing the Dharma. To conceive of something as the Dharma is not practicing the Dharma. To think, ‘I should practice the Dharma’ or ‘I should not practice the Dharma’ is not practicing the Dharma. The practice that relates to all phenomena in this way is practicing the Dharma. The absence of an antidote in the absence of conceptual elaboration is what is meant by *practicing the Dharma*.”
- 1.627 The god Avaivartin then said to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, those who have been practicing correctly, and anyone who ever does so, are unmistakable. Why? Because, Blessed One, they practice correctly, whereas those who follow wrong paths do not practice at all. Those who are on the right path do not practice the Dharma. For those who are practicing correctly, there is no lack of equality. Why? Blessed One, all phenomena are equality without differentiation.”
- 1.628 Brahmaviśeṣacintin now asked that god, “Divine son, do you practice in this way?”
- “Brahmā, if the Blessed One had explained practice as dualistic, I too would be practicing that practice. But practice is not dualistic, so there is no practitioner and nothing practiced. There is absolutely nothing to practice, and yet, Brahmā, since I neither exaggerate nor impute, I perform this practice. Practice is like the nature of things, and relating to suchness in this way is what we call *practicing the Dharma*.”
- 1.629 “Divine son,” Brahmā said, “I have never seen you in this buddha realm.”
- “Brahmā,” he replied, “this buddha realm [F.85.b] has never seen me.”
- 1.630 “The thought and concepts ‘I see this buddha realm’ and ‘I do not see it’ do not exist.”
- “Brahmā, I too do not have concepts, or think ‘I saw before’ or ‘I did not see.’ ”
- 1.631 “Divine son, who claims to have seen something never seen before?”

“It is all the immature, ordinary beings who have not previously seen the certainty of the noble ones. Brahmā, once they penetrate this certainty, they see something that was not seen before.”

1.632 “The certainty is neither a cognition of the eye consciousness nor something that can be cognized through the ear, nose, tongue, body, or mind consciousnesses. It is seen when seeing suchness as it is—the suchness of the eye as it is, the suchness of the ear as it is, the suchness of the nose as it is, the suchness of the tongue as it is, the suchness of the body as it is, and the suchness of the mind as it is. To see them is to see correctly.”

1.633 At this point Śakra, ruler of the gods, said to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, when a captain reaches an island of jewels, everything he sees is a jewel. Likewise, Blessed One, for the holy individuals who possess the jewel of the inconceivable Dharma, anything they express is an eloquent presentation of the precious Dharma. Their eloquence sheds light on the limit of reality. Therefore, it does not involve attachment to the self, or attachment to phenomena, or attachment to beings. Hence, their eloquence is accurate and makes no mistake. Their eloquence is such that it does not dwell on the past, focus on the future, or entertain the present. Their eloquence inspires those who are not inspired and liberates those who are inspired. [F.86.a] Their eloquence crushes those with manifest pride and answers the wishes of those who have no pride. Their eloquence renders māras powerless, and those who hear their eloquence transcend the work of māras. Their eloquence makes those who have not generated roots of virtue do so and prevents those who have generated roots of virtue from losing them. Their eloquence makes those who have generated emotional defilements abandon them and prevents those who have not generated emotional defilements from generating them. Their eloquence grants the armor of diligence to the bodhisattvas who do not yet wear it and prevents those who wear it from shedding it. Their eloquence propagates the Dharma and upholds it. Their eloquence leads to perfecting all buddha qualities. Blessed One, such eloquence can overcome all non-Buddhist positions. Why? Blessed One, when the fox cannot even bear the lion’s roar, how could it roar like that itself? Likewise, Blessed One, no other factions can withstand the unsurpassable lion’s roar.”

1.634 At this point the god Avaivartin asked Śakra, ruler of the gods, “Kauśika, what is the meaning of the expression *the lion’s roar*?”

1.635 Śakra replied, “Divine son, *the lion’s roar* refers to words spoken without attachment to any phenomenon, whereas speaking with attachment to phenomena is not the lion’s roar—it is the fox’s whimper. Any teaching inspired by a particular view is not the lion’s roar.”

1.636 Śakra, ruler of the gods, then requested, “Divine son, please explain the lion’s roar.”

“Kauśika, *the lion’s roar* is to teach without any attachment, even to the Thus-Gone One, and so it goes without saying, to any other lowly phenomenon as well. The correct practice is a lion’s roar, and that is why it is called *the lion’s roar*. It is a definitive teaching, and that is why [F.86.b] it is called *the lion’s roar*. It is teaching without fear, and that is why it is called *the lion’s roar*. Kauśika, it is a Dharma teaching aimed at becoming accustomed to the unborn, unceasing, and unattained nature of all phenomena, and that is why it is called *the lion’s roar*. Teachings aimed at defilement or purification, fetters or freedom, do not have the lion’s roar. Kauśika, *the lion’s roar* is the definitive teaching that all phenomena are devoid of a person and devoid of a self. Kauśika, *the lion’s roar* is the definitive teaching of emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness. Speaking to protect the Dharma is *the lion’s roar*. For example, generating the mind of awakening by saying, ‘May I become a buddha in order to free all beings’ is *the lion’s roar*. To talk about contentment regarding pleasures is *the lion’s roar*. Kauśika, the expression *the lion’s roar* refers to staying in solitude and practicing correctly, starting with generosity. To maintain correct discipline is *the lion’s roar*. To have an equanimous mind regarding those who are close and those who are not is *the lion’s roar*. To maintain diligence is *the lion’s roar*. To abandon emotional defilements is *the lion’s roar*. To discriminate with insight is *the lion’s roar*.”

1.637 Once this teaching explaining the lion’s roar was given, the trichiliocosm shook in six ways, and many hundreds of thousands of musical instruments resounded without being played. A great light illuminated the world. A hundred thousand gods rejoiced and said, “Marvelous! We have just heard the god resound the lion’s roar, turning the wheel of the Dharma for the second time in this world.”

1.638 Then the Blessed One smiled. [F.87.a] It is the nature of things that when the blessed buddhas smile, they send out rays of light of many colors from their mouths—blue, yellow, red, white, violet, crystal, and silver. This light pervaded infinite world systems, rose to the Brahmā worlds, and then returned, circling three times around the Blessed One before disappearing into the crown of his head. [B6]

1.639 Brahmaviśeṣacintin then praised the Blessed One in the following verses:

“You master the supreme wisdom of all, Sage who knows all and outshines all;

You know all beings’ deeds in the three times,

And their thoughts, aware of what would liberate their minds—

- Lord among gods, Omniscient One, we beseech you: explain the cause of your smile.
- 1.640 “Beyond the domain of the pure hearers, solitary buddhas, and worthy ones, Your buddha wisdom is inconceivable and unbounded, and you have no attachment.
You know how to speak to all beings according to their behavior.
In your supreme, irrefutable words, we beseech you: explain the cause of your smile.
- 1.641 “This ravishing light, stainless and beautiful,
Outshines the light of the sun and moon and the luster of Brahmā.
It illuminates billions of worlds and every Mount Meru.
Why do you smile? Please explain its cause to us.
- 1.642 “Free of the torments, such as desire, aversion, and arrogance, and fully at peace,
Gods, men, and nāgas are filled with love as they see your face.
As they behold the Thus-Gone One insatiably, their bodies feel well and satisfied.
O Sage, please explain to us why you smile.
- 1.643 “You see that phenomena are like space, ever devoid of action and always empty,
Illusory like thunder and clouds, hollow like bubbles, [F.87.b]
And empty like dreams and rainfalls or space or the reflection of the moon in water—
Please explain to us, with your pleasant speech, the cause of your virtuous smile.
- 1.644 “Free of all grasping, concepts, and thoughts, you are inspired by emptiness.
Without concepts of self or objects, you always relish signlessness.
With no wish for the three realms, you delight in concentration and absorption.
O Guide, please explain to us why you smile in this way.
- 1.645 “You have no attachment to speech, or to sounds, voices, or letters.
Yet you wisely teach the Dharma in the world, without dwelling on individuals or phenomena.
Everyone in the assembly thinks that the Well-Gone One gives them a specific teaching,
Taught with the peerless insight of supreme wisdom, miracles, powers, and strengths.

- 1.646 “Supreme physician who heals all suffering and vanquishes sickness, old age, and death,
You, great hero, have the power to defeat the might of the māras.
You are a guardian, a defender, a protector of the world, and its light.
Asuras, gods, and nāgas all worship you—please explain to us the cause of your smile.”
- 1.647 The Blessed One replied to Brahmaviśeṣacintin saying, “Brahmā, do you see the god Avaivartin?”
“Yes, I do,” he replied.
- 1.648 “Brahmā,” the Blessed One continued, “in three million two hundred thousand eons, this god Avaivartin will awaken to unexcelled and perfect buddhahood, in the buddha realm called Excellent Manifestation. In an eon called Praised by Brahmā, he will appear as a thus-gone, worthy, and perfect buddha, with proper knowledge and conduct, well gone, a knower of the world, a most excellent guide who trains beings, and a teacher of gods and humans, the Blessed Buddha Sumerudīparāja. The ground of his buddha realm will be made of two precious substances: beryl and Jambu River gold. [F.88.a] His saṅgha will be exclusively composed of bodhisattvas, all of them heroes who will have overcome māras and opponents. In this buddha realm, beings will obtain food or drink as soon as they form the wish. Their pleasures will be like those in the Heaven of Joy. During his immeasurable lifespan, this thus-gone one will teach the faultless Dharma.”
- 1.649 “Divine son,” said Brahmaviśeṣacintin, “the Thus-Gone One has now given you your prophecy.”
- 1.650 “Brahmā, I have been prophesied just as suchness or the realm of phenomena may be prophesied.”
- 1.651 “Divine son, nothing can be prophesied of suchness or the realm of phenomena.”
- 1.652 “You should see the way bodhisattvas are prophesied in the way you see that suchness and the realm of phenomena cannot be prophesied.”
- 1.653 “Divine son, moreover, since the Thus-Gone One has now given you your prophecy in this way, the pure conduct you observed when you followed other perfect buddhas has not been useless.”
- 1.654 “Brahmā, to abide nowhere is to observe pure conduct.”
“Divine son, whoever abides nowhere in that way observes pure conduct.”
- 1.655 “Brahmā, when you do not abide in the three realms, you observe pure conduct. And Brahmā, when you are in the three realms, you are not observing pure conduct. Furthermore, Brahmā, those who do not abide by

- any notions of a self, a sentient being, a life, or a person observe pure conduct. Brahmā, in short, you observe pure conduct when you abide in no phenomenon.”
- 1.656 “Divine son, why is this called *observing pure conduct*?”
“*Observing pure conduct*, Brahmā, refers to abiding on the path of nonduality.”
- 1.657 “Divine son, what are you abiding on when you abide on the path?” [F.88.b]
“Brahmā, *abiding on the path* refers to not abiding by any phenomena. Why? Not abiding and not grasping is following the path.”
- 1.658 “Divine son, how do you cultivate the path?”
“Brahmā, one should train without straying into existence or nonexistence, and without giving rise to the existence or nonexistence of any phenomenon. If you cultivate in this manner, you will be diligent in cultivating the path.”
- 1.659 “Divine son, by what means do you cultivate the path?”
“Brahmā, not by seeing, not by hearing, not by remembering, not by cognizing, not by obtaining some state, and not by actualizing. To not cultivate anything is the cultivation of the path.”
- 1.660 “Divine son, what is *donning the bodhisattvas’ solid armor of diligence*?”
“Brahmā, when bodhisattvas do not see phenomena as being either one or many, we say that they *don the bodhisattvas’ solid armor of diligence*. Since the realm of phenomena is unadulterated, they do not differentiate or unite phenomena. They see neither factors of defilement nor purification, but only the realm of phenomena—this is the bodhisattvas’ supreme practice of diligence. To neither negate nor posit any phenomenon is practicing diligence. Brahmā, diligence is practiced when there is no action of body, speech, or mind.”
- 1.661 “Excellent!” said the Blessed One, approving of the god Avaivartin. Then he told Brahmaviśeṣacintin, “Brahmā, it is just as this god has said. His diligence is the supreme practice of diligence. The diligence that involves no physical, verbal, or mental action is the supreme practice of diligence. Brahmā, [F.89.a] I remember that, even as I practiced diligence in the past, with only few possessions and observing ascetic conduct, the thus-gone ones did not prophesy my awakening to unexcelled and perfect awakening. Likewise, I paid homage to the masters, worshiped them, stayed in solitary places, listened to many teachings, and did everything I could for beings; but despite always striving diligently in this way, I did not receive my prophecy. Why not? Because my diligence was based on physical, verbal, and mental action. Brahmā, once I acquired the diligence the divine son just described for us, the Thus-Gone One Dīpaṅkara gave me my prophecy. He

said, 'Brahmin child, in the future, you will become a thus-gone, worthy, and perfect buddha by the name of Śākyamuni.' Brahmā, in this way, the bodhisattvas who wish to quickly reach the level of the prophecy should practice diligence as just explained—to have diligence without acting upon anything."

1.662 "Blessed One, how should we practice this diligence free of action?"

"Brahmā, by practicing diligence endowed with the equality of the three times."

1.663 "Blessed One, how should we practice diligence endowed with the equality of the three times?"

1.664 "By not apprehending reference points where the past mind has vanished, the future mind has not yet come, and the present mind does not remain. When something has vanished, there is nothing to apprehend. Things that have not yet come are unborn. Likewise, all things that occur now are, in reality, nonabiding. The reality is unborn. Something that is unborn is neither past, nor future, nor present. Something that is neither past, nor future, nor present [F.89.b] is natural. Whatever is natural is unborn. Brahmā, to practice diligence in this way, in the equality of the three times, swiftly brings the prophecy. Brahmā, bodhisattvas who have such patience aspire to generosity in which there is nothing to give, to discipline in which there is nothing to protect, to patience in which there is nothing to feel proud about, to diligence in which there is nothing to act upon, to concentration on the equality of all things, and to insight in which there is no concept of anything. Aspiring in this way, they do not exaggerate anything, do not diminish anything, do not do anything, and do not act on anything.

1.665 "They practice generosity without hoping for any reward. They practice discipline without imputing something to guard. They cultivate patience through the emptiness of outer and inner phenomena. They practice diligence through knowing that no action actually exists. They practice concentration by resting in equipoise without resting. They also cultivate insight by means of signlessness. Brahmā, endowed with such patience, the bodhisattvas are not sullied by the actions they demonstrate. Since they are not sullied, they reach the equality of all phenomena that no gain or loss can steal from them, nor can any fame, infamy, criticism, praise, suffering, or pleasure. Since they have transcended all worldly phenomena and are free from the mind that apprehends dualistically, and have realized the nondual Dharma, they have no haughtiness or humility, are neither withdrawn nor angry, do not undermine or harm anyone, and are bereft of conceit; nor do they lack carefulness and vigilance. [F.90.a] In order to bring all beings to maturity, they generate great compassion for all those beings who have fallen into duality. Thinking of them, they take birth again. Brahmā, when

someone who has attained the patience that is devoid of a self generates great compassion for all beings and takes birth again—that is the supreme practice of diligence.”

1.666 When this teaching on diligence was given, eight thousand bodhisattvas gained acceptance that phenomena are unborn. The Blessed One prophesied that they would all be called the Thus-Gone One *Ḍḍhavīrya*,²⁵ while awakening to perfect buddhahood in various buddha realms.

1.667 Then venerable Mahākāśyapa, who was in the assembly, spoke to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, take the analogy of the great nāgas. They make rain fall on the ocean, and not in other places. Blessed One, likewise, holy beings, like the great nāgas in that analogy, pour down a rain of Dharma on the ocean of holy beings’ mindstreams, but not on those of other beings.”

1.668 The Blessed One replied, “Kāśyapa, you are right. However, when the great kings of the nāgas withhold their rain from Jambudvīpa, it is not due to stinginess. Why not? The Jambudvīpa region could not survive such a rain, whose drops are as big as chariot axles. Kāśyapa, if the great nāgas were to pour their rain down on Jambudvīpa, all its villages, cities, hills, rocks, and mountains, along with its entire environment, would be washed away, like a juniper leaf washed away by water poured from a jar. That is why the great nāgas do not let their rain fall on Jambudvīpa. [F.90.b] Kāśyapa, it is the same with these bodhisattvas, who pour the rain of the Dharma only on holy beings; it is not out of stinginess with the Dharma that they do not let it fall on other beings, but because those beings would not be able to receive it. That is why the rain of the Dharma falls on the ocean-like, supreme minds of holy beings.

1.669 “Kāśyapa, in the analogy, when the rain falls in drops as big as chariot axles on the great ocean, the great ocean does not diminish or increase. Likewise, Kāśyapa, even if the holy beings listen to or explain the Dharma for eight eons, the Dharma will not diminish or increase. It is similar to the waters of rivers on the four continents—as they flow into the ocean, they all take on its same salty taste. Likewise, Kāśyapa, as soon as these holy beings receive any one of the various teachings and explanations of the Dharma, they realize its one taste—which is emptiness. The ocean is pure, clean, pristine, clear, and without impurity. It will not retain any impure water. Likewise, Kāśyapa, these holy beings are pure, clean, pristine, and clear, which means that they bear no ill will, aversion, anger, or spite. The ocean is profound, and its depth is difficult to measure. Likewise, these holy beings follow the profound Dharma approach, and their depth is difficult for the hearers and solitary buddhas to fathom. The water and jewels contained in the ocean defy all measure. Likewise, Kāśyapa, these holy beings, whose insight is immeasurable, are rich with infinite Dharma jewels. The ocean,

Kāśyapa, is a trove of jewels. Likewise, Kāśyapa, due to their many accomplishments, these holy beings are troves of Dharma jewels beyond measure. [F.91.a] Jewels in the ocean, Kāśyapa, are of three kinds: those that have great value, those with no value, and semiprecious ones. Likewise, Kāśyapa, these holy beings teach the Dharma in accordance with the individual capacities of beings, liberating their mindstreams with the vehicle of the hearers, the vehicle of the solitary buddhas, or the Great Vehicle.

1.670 “Kāśyapa, just as the ocean does not exist for one particular being, so, Kāśyapa, do these holy beings not generate the mind of awakening for one sentient being in particular. Kāśyapa, just as the ocean eventually settles and comes to rest, so, Kāśyapa, do these holy beings settle and come to rest in omniscience. Kāśyapa, just as the ocean does not retain corpses, so, Kāśyapa, do these holy beings not retain the mindset of a hearer or a solitary buddha. They do not entertain stingy or negative thoughts, ill will, laziness, forgetfulness, or mistaken insight. Nor do they entertain views of a self, a sentient being, a life, a person, or an individual. Kāśyapa, during the great fire at the end of an eon, first all streams, rivers, puddles, pools, ponds, and lakes will dry up, and only later will the ocean evaporate and dry up. Just so, Kāśyapa, when the sacred Dharma will start to disappear, first the sacred Dharma of all those who follow the partial conduct will disappear, and only later will the buddha vehicle—the sacred Dharma that is upheld by holy beings with oceanic intelligence—disappear from their hands.

1.671 “However, Kāśyapa, since these holy beings would rather give up their lives than give up the sacred Dharma, [F.91.b] how, Kāśyapa, could the sacred Dharma disappear from the hands of such holy beings? Well, you should not think that their sacred Dharma will disappear. Kāśyapa, in the ocean there is a giant vajra jewel called the Sum of All Jewels. Even the heat of the seven suns burning everything up to the Brahmā worlds could not burn it. Rather, it would simply find a place in the great ocean of another world, in another buddha realm. Kāśyapa, it is infeasible and impossible for this precious jewel to move anywhere else but to another great ocean, rather than being burned with the world system it is in.

1.672 “Likewise, Kāśyapa, such holy beings go to other buddha realms when the sacred Dharma disappears and the seven unwholesome behaviors manifest. The seven unwholesome behaviors are (1) staying among non-Buddhists, (2) keeping evil company, (3) engaging in wrong practices, (4) harming each other, (5) entering the thicket of views, (6) destroying roots of virtue, and (7) lacking attainment and realization. When these seven unwholesome behaviors are rife in a world, holy beings are aware that beings are not recipients for the teachings, and they move to other buddha realms. There they continue to see buddhas, listen to the sacred Dharma,

mature beings, and enhance roots of virtue. Kāśyapa, just as beings beyond count live relying on the great ocean, so, Kāśyapa, do beings beyond count relying on the bodhisattvas live in the three excellent abodes, which are the excellent abode of the gods, the excellent abode of humans, and the excellent abode of nirvāṇa. Kāśyapa, just as [F.92.a] beings cannot drink the water in the ocean, so, Kāśyapa, opposing factions cannot drink the Dharma teachings shared by the holy beings. Kāśyapa, just as beings who live in the ocean have no need to search for water elsewhere to drink, so, Kāśyapa, these holy beings have no need to taste others' views, but solely savor the taste of the Dharma of self-arising wisdom."

1.673 Then the elder Mahākāśyapa said to the Blessed One, "Blessed One, the breadth and depth of the oceans in the trichiliocosm can be measured. However, the world with its hearers, solitary buddhas, and gods cannot sound the breadth and depth of these holy beings. That is why the minds of these holy beings are said to be like the sky."

1.674 "Kāśyapa," the Blessed One answered, "the breadth and depth of the great oceans in as many trichiliocosms as there are grains of sand in the river Ganges can be measured. But the breadth and depth of the ocean-like, supreme intelligence of these holy beings cannot be fathomed by the world with its hearers, solitary buddhas, and gods."

1.675 Then, at that time, the Blessed One spoke the following verses:

"Just as the waters of all rivers
Seek out the ocean incessantly,
So do they seek out all Dharma teachings
Without ever being satiated.

1.676 "However much water flows into the ocean,
The ocean never changes—no increase, no decrease.
However much Dharma may be heard, the realm of phenomena
Is never seen to increase or decrease.

1.677 "Just as the ocean gathers pure water,
And sullied waters do not flow into it,
So does the conduct of these skilled masters
Never absorb the emotional defilements.

1.678 "Just as the depth of the ocean is too profound
To be plumbed by embodied beings,
So the qualities of the ocean of wisdom
Cannot be fathomed by opposing factions. [F.92.b]

1.679 "Just as the different characters of the many rivers

- Merge into one taste as they flow into the ocean,
So do the many different teachings received
Merge into the single taste of liberation.
- 1.680 “Just as the ocean, repository of water,
Is not there for the sake of any one being,
So those who pursue awakening
Do it for the sake of all beings.
- 1.681 “Just as the ocean is a trove of precious substances
And the source of many jewels,
So are supreme beings jewel mines
Who produce the Three Jewels.
- 1.682 “Just as the ocean, without thinking,
Always produces the three types of jewels,
So do they teach the Dharma,
To purify beings with the three vehicles.
- 1.683 “Just as the waters descend
And flow into the ocean at the shores,
So do supreme beings progress toward omniscience
With constant diligence to liberate others.
- 1.684 “Just as the ocean retains no corpses
And is not adulterated by them,
So those who seek supreme awakening
Do not follow lower vehicles.
- 1.685 “The ocean produces a precious stone
Renowned for its durability called the Sum of All Jewels.
Unscathed by the fire at the end of times,
It goes elsewhere upon the destruction of the world.
- 1.686 “Just so, when upholding the stainless Dharma,
Those with supreme diligence who apply themselves to it
Know when a world is not suited for the Dharma,
And depart to follow another thus-gone one.
- 1.687 “When the inferno blazes at the end of time,
Every pool, pond, and lake is dried up,
And finally the oceans evaporate,
And the trichiliocosm is no more.
- 1.688 “At that time, those who can practice the supreme Dharma,

- Which surpasses any limited conduct,
Will protect the Dharma of supreme beings,
Even at the cost of their lives and limbs.
- 1.689 “Well-gone ones may pass away,
But this Dharma will never diminish in them due to carelessness.
In this way, with their utterly pure minds,
They abide in the Dharma and always maintain the practice.
- 1.690 “Just as the ocean is home to countless beings, [F.93.a]
And does not come into existence for just a single one of them,
So do these renowned beings set out
To liberate all worlds.
- 1.691 “All oceans in the world
Can be measured without exception,
But all the practices of these victors
Cannot be fathomed by worthy ones and solitary buddhas.
- 1.692 “The extraordinary expanse of space
In all directions can be measured,
But their wisdom is greater than space
And can never be measured.
- 1.693 “These bodhisattvas, with their diligence and discipline,
Who form the vast intention to liberate others,
And set out to liberate all worlds without exception—
Kāśyapa, how could these peerless beings be surpassed?
- 1.694 “Like the ocean, they are jewel mines.
Full of merit, they are fields of merit.
They are the kings of diagnosis, the supreme physicians,
Who free beings of their chronic ills.
- 1.695 “They are supports, refuges, and protectors.
They are defenders, lamps, and shining suns.
They give sight to those who are blind,
And offer them ambrosia.
- 1.696 “They are the brilliant and supreme lords of the Dharma,
With vast, open minds like Śakra.
They abide in the four abodes of Brahmā,
Turning the wheel of the Dharma of Brahmā.
- 1.697 “They are captains, skillful guides,

- Who show the right path to those gone astray.
They are heroes who quell the māras—
Holy beings who abide on the seat of awakening.
- 1.698 “They are like a moon of boundless white Dharma.
They are like the sun shining with the brightest light.
They are also like clouds that thunder with boundless intelligence,
And pour a rain of ambrosia over the three worlds.
- 1.699 “Like the lion, they are not plagued by fear.
Like the elephant, their minds are well tamed.
They are like the mountain of Meru,
Because they cannot be destroyed by enemies.
- 1.700 “They are pure like clear water, and
They are difficult to approach like fire.
Ever unattached like the wind,
They are without anger like the earth.
- 1.701 “They are free of ill will, pride, anger, and jealousy,
And like fruit trees, [F.93.b] they bear fruit without thought.
They are unsullied by the eight worldly concerns,
And maintain pure discipline—they are like lotuses.
- 1.702 “They are like the udumbara flower,
Heard of only once in ten million eons in virtuous fields.
They are grateful to the buddhas supreme among humans
And strive to stay within the buddhas’ family.
- 1.703 “They have great compassion and are resilient in their practice,
They maintain loving kindness and their joy is supreme,
They keep equanimity in the face of the five sense pleasures, and
They constantly search for the wealth of the victorious ones.
- 1.704 “Their generosity is most excellent,
They also maintain wisdom and discipline,
They are singularly heroic due to the strength of their patience,
And their diligence is solid and powerful.
- 1.705 “They master concentration and the superknowledges,
And can magically reach realms beyond measure.
They listen to the Dharma of the supreme, holy sages,
And teach just as they have heard.
- 1.706 “They liberate others in accordance with beings’ inclinations,

- Knowing the behaviors of beings.
They are skilled in working with and understanding inclinations,
From taking practice to heart to becoming non-Buddhist.²⁶
- 1.707 “They know that all phenomena are described by the phrase,
‘This is produced from the gathering of those.’
They are skilled in knowing and realizing conditions.
They have abandoned views of the two extremes and delight in equality.
- 1.708 “They see where phenomena come and where they go
And the way things are.
Nothing comes, and nothing arises;
Everything abides within the nature of reality—this they know.
- 1.709 “Seeing that all that is conditioned is false
Spurs their compassion—
Unreal emotional defilements cause the suffering of beings,
And they practice to liberate them from it.
- 1.710 “Immature beings distinguish between I and mine,
Striving in actions not based on the equality of things.
Knowing that this way is not the true Dharma,
These bodhisattvas practice the Dharma to abandon views.
- 1.711 “The mistaken minds of beings believe
That the lack of self is a self, that the impure is pure,
That suffering is happiness, and that the impermanent is permanent—
Such is beginningless saṃsāra.
- 1.712 “These bodhisattvas know these wrong approaches
And are aware that there is no sentient being and no person,
Or any self, purity, permanence, or happiness.
They train with the right approach. [F.94.a]
- 1.713 “Kāśyapa, here I have mentioned only a fraction of their qualities:
A speck of dust compared with the entire Earth.
The praises of the domain of bodhisattvas
And their wisdom are infinite.
- 1.714 “All offerings that may be found in the trichiliocosm
I offer to these bodhisattvas,
Who deserve even greater offerings—
They are the irreversible heart sons of the victorious ones.
- 1.715 “Anyone who diligently strives to become a buddha

Should worship me as well as the buddhas of the future,
The victors who pass into nirvāṇa,
And those who dwell in all directions.”

- 1.716 Then Brahmaviśeṣacintin said to youthful Mañjuśrī, “Mañjuśrī, will you request the thus-gone, worthy, and perfect Buddha to bless this Dharma teaching so that in the future, particularly in the final five-hundred-year period, it may be practiced and flourish?”
- 1.717 Mañjuśrī responded thus to Brahmaviśeṣacintin, “Brahmā, what do you think? Within this Dharma teaching is there anything that should be blessed by the Blessed One, or that has been taught by him?”
“No, Mañjuśrī.”
- 1.718 “Brahmā,” Mañjuśrī continued, “since they are all inexpressible, no Dharma teaching can be blessed. Indeed, Dharma teachings can never decrease or be objects of protection. Brahmā, if you wish to bless the Dharma, you may as well wish to bless space. Brahmā, the bodhisattva who advocates any Dharma teaching is not teaching the Dharma. Why not? Because bodhisattvas who have gone beyond all discourse endeavor without dispute.²⁷ Brahmā, if some bodhisattvas think, ‘the Dharma has been taught to this assembly,’ they are not listening to the Dharma. Why not? Non-listening is listening to the Dharma.”
- 1.719 “Mañjuśrī, [F.94.b] what do you mean when you say ‘non-listening is listening to the Dharma’?”
- 1.720 “Brahmā, not listening with the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, or mind is listening to the Dharma. When you do not grasp on to their sense fields—form, sound, smell, taste, texture, and mental phenomena—you listen to the Dharma.”
- 1.721 As they heard this teaching from Mañjuśrī, thirty-two thousand gods, five thousand monks, three hundred nuns, eight hundred male lay practitioners, and eight hundred female lay practitioners within the assembly gained acceptance that phenomena are unborn. They also said, “That’s right, Mañjuśrī. It is just as you have said: non-listening is listening to the Dharma.”
- 1.722 Brahmaviśeṣacintin now asked these bodhisattvas who had gained acceptance, “Did you hear this Dharma teaching?”
“Brahmā, we heard it by not listening.”
- 1.723 “How then did you gain knowledge of this Dharma teaching?”
“By not knowing it and not being aware.”
- 1.724 “What did you gain as you gained acceptance?”
“Nothing, as nothing can ever be acquired.”
- 1.725 “How do you realize the meaning of this Dharma teaching?”

- “By having nothing to realize.”
- 1.726 “Do you have a direct experience of this Dharma teaching?”
“Yes, Brahmā, since we have a direct experience of all phenomena being beyond self and other.”
- 1.727 Then the god Vimalaketu, who was present in the assembly, addressed Brahmaviśeṣacintin: “Brahmā, even if the Thus-Gone One does not give a prophecy to those who have just heard this Dharma teaching, I shall prophesy their awakening to unexcelled and perfect buddhahood. Why? Brahmā, the result and seeds of this Dharma teaching are never wasted. All those who are noble ones [F.95.a] uphold this teaching. It genuinely produces all roots of virtue. It overcomes all māras and opponents. It frees from all obstacles. It inspires. It delights and pleases those who have faith. It is upheld by all the buddhas. This Dharma teaching is protected by the world with its gods. This Dharma teaching is a definitive teaching and irrevocable. This Dharma teaching leads unfailingly to the seat of awakening. This Dharma teaching is the source of the truth of the Dharma of the buddhas. This Dharma teaching is the turning of the wheel of the Dharma. This Dharma teaching eliminates every regret. This Dharma teaching leads to the path of the noble ones.
- 1.728 “Those who aspire to liberation should listen carefully to this Dharma teaching. Those who aspire to gain perfect recollection should remember this Dharma teaching. Those who aspire to merit should teach this Dharma teaching well. Those who aspire to the Dharma should preserve this Dharma teaching well. This Dharma teaching is incalculable since it leads to nirvāṇa. This Dharma teaching cannot be plundered by those who hold to apprehending. This Dharma teaching is the teaching of those worthy of offerings. This Dharma teaching delights the learned. This Dharma teaching is free of negative views, so it is the source of insight. This Dharma teaching overcomes ignorance, and as a result, it is the source of wisdom. This Dharma teaching is crafted with perfect words, each pregnant with meaning. This Dharma teaching is taught using the connection between the words. This Dharma teaching teaches the ultimate correctly, and so produces its realization. This Dharma teaching expresses the Dharma, so it should not be abandoned. This Dharma teaching should not be renounced by the insightful. [F.95.b] This Dharma teaching is a treasure for those who want wealth. This Dharma teaching eliminates the suffering of the distressed. This Dharma teaching brings equanimity to those who are desirous. This Dharma teaching brings diligence to the lazy. This Dharma teaching brings concentration to the distracted. This Dharma teaching brings clarity to those with wrongheaded insight. Brahmā, all the Dharma teachings of the buddhas are present in this Dharma teaching.”

- 1.729 As the god delivered his praise of this Dharma teaching, the trichiliocosm shook in six ways, and the Blessed One applauded the god, saying, “Excellent!”
- 1.730 Brahmaviśeṣacintin then spoke to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, has this god previously heard this Dharma teaching from other perfect buddhas?”
- 1.731 “Brahmā,” answered the Blessed One, “this god has heard this Dharma teaching from sixty-four quintillion buddhas. Brahmā, after four million two hundred thousand eons have passed, the god Vimalaketu will appear in a world system called Ratnavati as the Thus-Gone One Ratnavyūha. Until that time, he will please and serve all the buddhas yet to come, and he will also listen to this Dharma teaching from those blessed buddhas. Brahmā, any monk, nun, layman, laywoman, god, nāga, yakṣa, or gandharva who gains acceptance of this Dharma teaching will be reborn in the world of the Ratnavati buddha realm of the Thus-Gone One Ratnavyūha.
- 1.732 Then [F.96.a] the god Vimalaketu said to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, I do not seek awakening, I do not aspire to it, I do not delight in it, I am not attached to it, I do not apprehend it, I do not think about it, I do not conceptualize it, and I do not form preconceptions about it. So why does the Blessed One give me a prophecy?”
- 1.733 “Divine son,” the Blessed One replied, “imagine that someone threw straw, wood, branches, leaves, and foliage into a fire and ordered, ‘Do not burn the straw, wood, branches, leaves, or foliage!’ Would they not burn? Likewise, divine son, although the bodhisattvas do not delight in awakening, have no attachment to it, do not apprehend it, do not desire it, do not aspire to it, do not think of it, and do not conceptualize it, all the buddhas prophesy their awakening. Again, divine son, any bodhisattva who does not delight in awakening, has no attachment to it, does not apprehend it, does not desire it, does not aspire to it, does not think of it, and does not conceptualize it will nevertheless be prophesied by the thus-gone ones.”
- 1.734 Then five hundred gods present in the assembly asked the Blessed One, “Blessed One, we too do not delight in awakening, have no attachment to it, do not apprehend it, do not seek it, do not aspire to it, do not conceptualize it, and do not form preconceptions about it. So why does the Blessed One not prophesy our awakening to unexcelled and perfect awakening?”
- 1.735 At that very moment, through the power of the Buddha, they saw eighty-four thousand buddhas in midair above them. These thus-gone ones prophesied their unexcelled and perfect awakening. The five hundred gods said to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, the thus-gone ones have just said to us, ‘We prophesy your awakening, you bodhisattvas who do not delight in awakening, have no attachment to it, do not apprehend it, have no desire for it, do not aspire to it, do not think of it, do not conceptualize it, and do not

form preconceptions about it.' [F.96.b] This is extraordinary! Blessed One, we see eighty-four thousand buddhas above us, and all these thus-gone ones have prophesied our unexcelled and perfect awakening."

1.736 At this point Mañjuśrī said to the Blessed One, "Blessed One, please grant your blessings so that in the future, during the final five-hundred-year period, this Dharma teaching may be practiced in this world, remain for a long time, enter the ears of noble sons and daughters who don the great armor, prevent noble sons and daughters from falling prey to the works of māras, prevent any harm by māras and demonic gods, and cause noble sons and daughters to uphold this Dharma teaching, don the great armor, and unfailingly arrive at unexcelled and perfect awakening."

1.737 The Blessed One spoke thus: "In that case, Mañjuśrī, to bless this Dharma teaching so that it may remain for a long time, I will give you a mantra statement called "attracting the gods, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, asuras, garuḍas, kinnaras, mahoragas, and kumbhāṇḍas." So listen carefully. The noble sons and daughters who teach the Dharma while holding to this mantra statement will receive the protection of the gods, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, asuras, garuḍas, kinnaras, mahoragas, and kumbhāṇḍas. This means that these sons and daughters of noble family will be protected in every circumstance, whether they are on the right path or on the wrong path, or are on their way to the temple or to their homes, on a walk, or in assembly. They will be eloquent, mindful, and intelligent, and will have strong mental faculties. Opponents and harmful enemies [F.97.a] will be unable to reach them. They will be mindful and careful, whether they stand, walk, sit, or lie down. Mañjuśrī, the mantra statement is:

1.738 *udhure dhudhure manate catima gocare śilali hilimili thili thimili huluhuluhulu ebadte betate khakhare khare kharake āsanne jagati mahile manuṣa tanemanasevargandhe sarvaruti rabābagate sindhule namo buddhebhyaḥ cadiratre namodharmāyanirgatani namaḥ saṃghāya bāhitapāpe vyupaśāntāni sarvapāpānimitrime sarvabuddhebhyaḥ satyanirdeśabrahmapatho mahāṣibih praśāstatatratīṣṭhanati sarvabhutagrāha namaḥ sarvabuddhebyaḥ siddhyantumemantrapadāsvāhā.*

1.739 "Mañjuśrī, such is the mantra statement. Bodhisattvas who apply this Dharma teaching with diligence should always be careful, calm, humble, and undistracted, with pure conduct. They should not hoard food but be content. They should delight in living in a hermitage, have little activity, and be physically and mentally disengaged. They must delight in loving-kindness and compassion, delight and trust in the Dharma, speak the truth, and not deceive others. They should enjoy settling inwardly, be diligent in correct thinking, avoid mistaken thinking, and rejoice in ascetic training and

minimize material possessions. They must react in the same way in the face of loss or gain, turn toward nirvāṇa, fear saṃsāra, react in the same way to the pleasant and the unpleasant, avoid many thoughts, abandon their bodies and lives, and disregard all things. They should practice excellent behavior and conduct, delight in discipline and vows, be patient and gentle, have a nature that endures harmful words, be diligent, [F.97.b]²⁸ strive to do everything that helps beings, be smiling, avoid frowning, speak sincerely, overcome pride, be kind, and be easy to befriend. Mañjuśrī, the noble sons and daughters who observe these practices should recite this mantra.

1.740 “Mañjuśrī, by doing so, such Dharma teachers will gain ten strengths in this very life. What are these ten? They will develop: (1) The strength of remembrance, as by nature they do not forget. (2) The strength of intelligence, as they are masters at discerning phenomena. (3) The strength of realization, as they comprehend the teachings of the sūtra section. (4) The strength of faith, as they never forsake vows and conduct. (5) The strength of dignity and propriety, as they remain on guard regarding themselves and others. (6) The strength of erudition, as they have perfected insight. (7) The strength of perfect recollection, as they remember everything they have heard. (8) The strength of eloquence, as they are upheld by the blessings of the buddhas. (9) The strength of the profound, as they have acquired the five superknowledges. (10) The strength of acceptance that phenomena are unborn, as they quickly perfect omniscient wisdom. Mañjuśrī, the Dharma teachers who have engaged in such conduct and who recite these mantra words will fully attain these ten strengths.”

1.741 As the Blessed One gave this teaching on the mantra words, the Four Great Kings trembled in awe with goosebumps. Surrounded by many hundreds of thousands of servants, they went before the Blessed One, prostrated to his feet, folded their hands, and said, “Blessed One, we, the Four Great Kings, who have reached the level of stream enterers, will pay heed to the instructions of the Thus-Gone One. Thus, Blessed One, we, the Four Kings, with our kin and entourages, will guard, protect, and defend all noble sons and daughters who speak the Dharma, teach the Dharma, and uphold and read this sūtra. [F.98.a] Whether they are in villages, towns, counties, or districts, whether they are householders or renunciants, Blessed One, we, the Four Kings, with our strength and our people, will enthusiastically serve the noble sons and daughters, guard them, protect them, inspire them, give them courage, and prevent others from harming or hurting them. Blessed One, we will prevent any harm from gods, nāgas, yakṣas, and kumbhāṇḍas within a hundred leagues of wherever this Dharma teaching is practiced.”

1.742 Then the great king Virūḍhaka spoke the following verse to the Blessed One:

“All my children and relatives
And servants and retinue
Will help me
Worship these holders of the teaching.”

1.743 Next, the great king Virūpākṣa said this:

“I am the son of the Dharma king,
Born from the Dharma, and manifested by the Dharma.
Your sons who pursue awakening I shall worship.”

1.744 Then the great king Dhṛtarāṣṭra offered this verse:

“Anyone who upholds
This sūtra spoken by the Buddha
Anywhere in the ten directions
I shall protect.”

1.745 Last, the great king Vaiśravaṇa spoke the following verse:

“Anyone who strives to awaken
Is worthy of my fitting homage.
No other sentient being
Can match such an offering.”

1.746 Then Satyacandra Vaiśravaṇa offered the Blessed One a parasol made of the seven precious substances, along with these verses:

1.747 “I shall retain this Dharma teaching,
Which stems from the Thus-Gone One,
And teach it to others.
Such is my intention. [F.98.b]

1.748 “The Blessed One knows my mind
And all that I have done in the past.
As I now pay homage to him,
May I also become a guide for the world.

1.749 “I offer this parasol
To protect the infinite Buddha,
So that just like you,
The crown of my head may be invisible.

1.750 “Buddha, O holy being,
Looking upon you, filled with love,

- Gave me the pure eyesight
To see the victor Ajita.
- 1.751 “The teacher who perfected wisdom
Then prophesied:
‘Later, in the future,
You will be reborn in the Heaven of Joy.
- 1.752 “ ‘After your death and transfer from the Heaven of Joy,
You will see the victor Maitreya.
Then, for twenty thousand eons
You will worship him and go forth.
- 1.753 “ ‘Having gone forth,
You will observe pure conduct perfectly.
Thus, all the lords of this Good Eon
You will get to see.
- 1.754 “ ‘Having made offerings to all
And practiced pure conduct,
After six hundred million eons
You will become a buddha.
- 1.755 “ ‘In the buddha realm
Called Well-Adorned Jewel Parasol,
You will teach the Dharma
Exclusively to bodhisattvas.
- 1.756 “ ‘Your life will span an eon
To benefit beings.
After your nirvāṇa,
The sacred Dharma will remain pure for another half eon.’ ”
- 1.757 Śakra, lord of the gods, surrounded by hundreds of thousands of servants,
now addressed the Blessed One: “Blessed One, I will also protect and defend
the Dharma teachers who uphold this sūtra. I will pay homage to them and
worship them. Wherever this Dharma teaching is written down or read, I will
give those who teach this Dharma the strength, power, and eloquence to
present it, and will come with my assembly to listen to them.”
- 1.758 Now Gopaka, the son of Śakra, lord of the gods, presented the Thus-Gone
One with a necklace adorned with all manner of jewels, before offering these
verses:
- 1.759 “O Sage, I am witnessing a direct vision [F.99.a]

- Of the way you practiced in the past.
Thus, emulating you,
I will also find the buddhas' wisdom.
- 1.760 "There is nothing that you did not give in the past, and
Nothing that you did not abandon.
Thus, I will also train in relinquishing
All my possessions.
- 1.761 "This sūtra of yours
That I have received from the Protector of the World—
I will explain it again and again
To repay your kindness.
- 1.762 "Those who delight in this sūtra
Are similar to my teacher.
As I search for the buddha qualities,
I will always worship it.
- 1.763 "Protector, hearers cannot
Guard the sacred Dharma.
Later, in the times of great destruction,
I shall guard them.
- 1.764 "Protector, inspire me, and
Clear the doubts of the gods in me;
May I become like you, a supreme sage,
Who remains as long as is necessary.
- 1.765 "Well-Gone One, master of omniscient wisdom,
Please give me the prophecy
Foretelling I'll become like you,
A perfectly awakened one,
- 1.766 "And say, 'After ten billion eons
And another one billion eons,
You will appear in the world as a buddha
Called Flow of Wisdom.
- 1.767 " 'Though in the peace of awakening,
And having tamed the māras,
Billions of beings
You'll lead to awakening.' "

- 1.768 Next, Brahmā, lord of Enduring, addressed the Blessed One: “Blessed One, I will abandon the comfort of resting in concentration to go listen to the Dharma when the sons and daughters of noble family teach this Dharma teaching. Why? Because Śakra and Brahmā are born from these teachings. Blessed One, I will respect and worship these sons and daughters of noble family. Indeed, they are worthy of the respect and homage of the world, including the gods.”
- 1.769 Then Brahmā, lord of Enduring, offered the following verses to the Blessed One:
- “Any monk or nun
Or male or female lay practitioner
Who upholds this sūtra
Is a worthy recipient of offerings from everyone. [F.99.b]
- 1.770 “If there were only one being
Who was introduced to this sūtra,
Protector of Beings, I would rejoice.
For such Dharma teachers,
- 1.771 “I shall arrange a throne.
As they expound this sūtra,
I shall gladly offer flowers
To fill the sky up to the world of Brahmā.
- 1.772 “Anyone responsible for this sūtra
Being heard in future times
Is a source of joy,
Who should be praised for their effort.
- 1.773 “Should this sūtra be found
In a buddha realm
Millions of blazing worlds yonder,
Steadfastly I shall cross over.
- 1.774 “I would gladly offer
Jewels heaped higher than Mount Meru
To train on the buddhas’ path
And listen to this sūtra.”
- 1.775 At that moment the Blessed One displayed powerful miracles that caused the four divisions of evil māras to gather before him, prostrating to the Blessed One’s feet. Then they said, “Blessed One, we, with armies and servants, pledge in the presence of the Blessed One that wherever this

Dharma teaching is practiced, we will not inflict our demonic actions upon those who either listen to or teach the Dharma. Instead, we shall protect them, guard them, and defend them.”

1.776 The Blessed One now emitted golden rays of light that pervaded this buddha realm. Then he addressed Mañjuśrī: “Mañjuśrī, the thus-gone ones have blessed this Dharma teaching so that the holy beings may be able to uphold the sacred Dharma. Mañjuśrī, as long as this Dharma teaching is practiced in the world, the sacred Dharma will also remain.”

1.777 Upon hearing this, the entire assembly rejoiced, and filled with happiness, they [F.100.a] sprinkled all their incense, garlands, ointments, flowers, and colored powders before the Blessed One and exclaimed, “Wonderful! May this Dharma teaching remain for long in this world and spread far and wide!”

1.778 The Blessed One then asked venerable Ānanda, “Ānanda, will you uphold this Dharma teaching?”

“I will, Blessed One,” he replied.

1.779 “Ānanda,” the Blessed One continued, “in that case, I entrust you with this Dharma teaching, so that you will uphold it, keep it, read it, and teach it faithfully.”

1.780 “Blessed One, what will be the merit of making offerings to someone who upholds, keeps, reads aloud, teaches, or writes down this teaching?”

1.781 “Compared to paying homage to the Thus-Gone One and the saṅgha of monks with all types of delightful goods as many times as there are letters and syllables in this Dharma teaching, the merit of remembering, upholding, sharing with others, and reading aloud this Dharma teaching is much greater. Ānanda, to ensure that this Dharma teaching remains for long in the future, you should write it down, and anyone who makes offerings to these volumes will gain ten treasures in this very life. They are (1) the treasure of seeing the Buddha by gaining the buddha eye, (2) the treasure of hearing the Dharma by gaining the divine ear, (3) the treasure of seeing the Saṅgha by reaching the Saṅgha irreversible from the path of awakening, (4) the treasure of inexhaustible enjoyments by gaining the jewel hand, (5) the treasure of a beautiful appearance by perfecting the marks and signs, (6) the treasure of servants due to an unshakable assembly, (7) the treasure of erudition by gaining perfect recollection, [F.100.b] (8) the treasure of remembrance by gaining eloquence, (9) the treasure of fearlessness by overcoming all opponents, and (10) the treasure of merit by nurturing all beings.”

1.782 As the Blessed One delivered this Dharma teaching, seven quintillion two hundred quadrillion bodhisattvas gained acceptance that phenomena are unborn, infinite beings set out toward awakening, and innumerable beings were liberated with no further grasping.

- 1.783 Venerable Ānanda then asked the Blessed One, “Blessed One, what is the name of this Dharma teaching and how should it be known?”
- 1.784 “Ānanda,” the Blessed One replied, “this Dharma teaching should be known as *The Condensation of All Dharmas*, or *Display of the Buddha’s Adornments*, or *The Questions of Brahmaviśeṣacintin*, or *Mañjuśrī’s Teaching*.
- 1.785 When the Blessed One had spoken, youthful Mañjuśrī, Brahmaviśeṣacintin, the great sāla-tree-like brahmin householder Samavartin, the bodhisattva Jālinīprabha, the elder Mahākāśyapa, the venerable Ānanda, the bodhisattvas of the ten directions, the great hearers, and the whole world, including all gods, humans, asuras, and gandharvas, rejoiced at the words of the Blessed One and offered praises.
- 1.786 *This concludes the noble Great Vehicle sūtra “The Questions of Brahmaviśeṣacintin.”*

c.

Colophon

c.1 The translation was proofed and finalized by the Indian preceptors Śākyaprabha, Dharmapāla, and Jinamitra, together with the chief editor-translator Bandé Dharmatāśīla and the assistant editor-translators Bandé Devendrarakṣita, Kumārarakṣita, and others.

ab.

ABBREVIATIONS

C Choné

D Degé

H Lhasa (Zhol)

J Lithang

K Kangxi (Peking, late 17th Century)

N Narthang

S Stok Palace MS

Y Yongle

n.

NOTES

- n.1 The text lacks a unifying thematic or narrative structure. In an attempt to order the material, the Korean rendering of Kumārajīva's translation divides the text into eighteen chapters, although the original Sanskrit was most likely devoid of such chapter headings. These are also absent from the Tibetan translation, which merely divides the text into six sections (*bam po*) based on length rather than thematic content.
- n.2 Taishō 585, translated by Dharmarakṣa in 286 CE, in the Western Jin: *Chi xin fantian suo wen jing* (持心梵天所問經). Taishō 586, translated by Kumārajīva in 402 CE, in the Later Qin: *Si yi fantian suo wen jing* (思益梵天所問經). Taishō 587, translated by Bodhiruci in 536 CE, in the Northern Wei: *Sheng siwei fantian suo wen jing* (勝思惟梵天所問經). See Lancaster, Lewis, *The Korean Buddhist Canon: A Descriptive Catalogue* (http://www.acmuller.net/descriptive_catalogue/index.html). Kumārajīva's translation (with comparison to the other Chinese renderings and the Tibetan translation) has been translated into French by Jean-Marie Lourmé (Lourmé 1978). In addition, over the last decade Kiyotaka Goshima has published several articles on, and partial translations of, this sūtra in Japanese. We have not consulted Goshima's publications due to language limitations on our part.
- n.3 See Denkarma, F.297.a.6. See also Herrmann-Pfandt 2008, 55, no. 97.
- n.4 In the colophons, Dharmatāśīla is at times listed under the Tibetan version of his name, Chönyi Tsültrim (*chos nyid tshul khrims*).
- n.5 Despite reading "sixteen" (*bcu drug*) here, the text lists seventeen names.
- n.6 The Tibetan reads *mtshe ma*. This is an earlier translation of the *yāma/yama* realm, which was later translated as *'thab bral*. For details, see Scherrer-Schaub 2002, 330.

- n.7 Tentative translation following S: *rigs kyi bu 'dong la rag go/ 'dong la rag go*. D: *rigs kyi bu 'dod la rag go/ 'dod la rag go*.
- n.8 K and S provide the more sensible reading of *mtho* (exalted) instead of *thos*; and Y, J, K, N, C, and S all read *dmas pa* (dejected) instead of *ngoms pa*.
- n.9 Reading 'jig (instead of 'jug) as reflected in Y, J, K, N, C, H, and S.
- n.10 Reading *la* (rather than *las*) based on U and S.
- n.11 Tibetan: *nyi tsher spyod pa*. Sanskrit: *pradeśakārin*. This refers to a lay practitioner (*upāsaka*) who observes two or three precepts out of the five lay vows (see Lamotte 2001, vol. 2, 644). However, it is possible that in the present context it refers to lay practice more broadly. Monier-Williams defines the term simply as “a type of ascetic.”
- n.12 The five strengths listed here differ from the more common five strengths.
- n.13 This name means “Lattice Light.”
- n.14 D has 'zung. However, all the other editions read 'jungs, which is old Tibetan meaning “miserly.”
- n.15 This sentence is missing from D but appears in Y, K, and C.
- n.16 The text says thirty-two, while listing thirty-three.
- n.17 See [n.16](#).
- n.18 Despite the word *smras pa* in Tibetan, which indicates a change of speaker, given what comes before and after in the conversation, it seems that both “No” and “awakening...” are the words of Brahmā.
- n.19 Translation tentative. Here we have read *yongs su ma dris pa* instead of *yongs su dris pa* as it appears in the Tibetan.
- n.20 Translation tentative. The Tibetan reads: *de byed pa'i brtson 'grus kyis thos pa thams cad khong du chud par byas pa'i de bzhin gshegs pa de dag gis ming yang bskal pa'am/ bskal pa las lhag par brjod du yod kyang de bzhin gshegs pa de dag gis nga bla na med pa yang dag par rdzogs pa'i byang chub tu lung ma bstan*.
- n.21 Translation tentative. The Tibetan reads *nam bdag kyang dge ba'i rtsa ba yongs su mi 'bri la/ chung ngu na dud 'gro'i skye gnas su song ba yan chad sems can gzhan gyi dge ba'i rtsa ba rnams bskyed pa 'di ni byang chub sems dpa' rnams kyi dge ba'i rtsa ba yongs su dag pa'o*.

- n.22 The text here reads, “What is without self has a self.” (*gang la bdag med pa de ni bdag yod pa'o*). However, given the context, this seems to be a mistake. We have therefore amended this sentence according to S, which has the correct reading.
- n.23 Translation tentative.
- n.24 Translation follows S: *yid mi rton*.
- n.25 This name means Firm Diligence.
- n.26 Translation tentative.
- n.27 Translation follows S: *rtsod pa med pa lhur byed pa yin no*. D reads *rtsod pa med pa lhur byed pa ma yin no*.
- n.28 This folia side is missing in the Degé edition of this text, which instead contains folia 97.b from *The Questions of Sāgaramati* (Toh 152). Our translation follows content of the missing folia given in the Comparative Edition.

b.

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GLOSSARY

· Types of attestation for names and terms of the corresponding ·
source language

AS	<i>Attested in source text</i> This term is attested in a manuscript used as a source for this translation.
AO	<i>Attested in other text</i> This term is attested in other manuscripts with a parallel or similar context.
AD	<i>Attested in dictionary</i> This term is attested in dictionaries matching Tibetan to the corresponding language.
AA	<i>Approximate attestation</i> The attestation of this name is approximate. It is based on other names where the relationship between the Tibetan and source language 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 Acintya
bsam gyis mi khyab pa
བསམ་གྱིས་མི་ལྷན་པ།
acintya

g.2 Agramati

blo gros mchog

སློ་གྲོས་མཚོག

agramati

One of the bodhisattvas attending this teaching.

g.3 Ajita

ma pham

མ་ཕམ།

ajita

Another name for Maitreya.

g.4 Akṣayamati

blo gros mi zad pa

སློ་གྲོས་མི་བཅད་པ།

akṣayamati

g.5 Amitāyus

tshe dpag med

ཚེ་དཔག་མེད།

amitāyus

g.6 Amoghadarśin

mthong ba don yod

མཐོང་བ་དོན་ཡོད།

amoghadarśin

One of the bodhisattvas attending this teaching.

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 Anantamati

blo gros mtha' yas pa

སློ་གྲོས་མཐའ་ཡས་པ།

anantamati

One of the bodhisattvas attending this teaching.

g.9 Anikṣiptadhura

brtson pa mi gtong ba

བརྩོན་པ་མི་གཏོང་བ།

anikṣiptadhura

One of the bodhisattvas attending this teaching.

g.10 Aparājitadhvaja

gzhan gyis mi thub rgyal mtshan

གཞན་གྱིས་མི་སྲུབ་རྒྱལ་མཚན།

aparājitadhvaja

g.11 Aparikheda

kun tu mi skyo ba

ཀུན་ཏུ་མི་སྐྱོ་བ།

aparikheda

g.12 Apāyavidhama

ngan song sel

ངན་སོང་སེལ།

apāyavidhama

g.13 apprehending

dmigs

དམིགས།

ālambana · upalabdhi · alambhate

dmigs (pa) translates a number of Sanskrit terms including *ālambana*, *upalabdhi*, and *alambhate*. These terms commonly refer to apprehending or perception both in the sense of act and object (perceiving and what is perceived). As part of their doctrine of “threefold nonapprehending / nonreferentiality” (*'khor gsum mi dmigs pa*), Mahāyāna Buddhists famously assert that all three categories of apprehending lack substantiality.

g.14 Apratihatacitta

thogs pa med

ཐོགས་པ་མེད།

apratihatacitta

g.15 Array

bkod pa

བཀོད་པ།

vyūha

The name of an eon (*kalpa*).

g.16 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.17 Avaivartin

phyir mi ldog pa

ཕྱིར་མི་ལྷོག་པ།

avaiṅartin

g.18 Avalokiteśvara

spyan ras gzigs kyi dbang po

སྤྱན་རས་གཟིགས་ཀྱི་དབང་པོ།

avalokiteśvara

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

One of the “eight close sons of the Buddha,” he is also known as the bodhisattva who embodies compassion. In certain tantras, he is also the lord of the three families, where he embodies the compassion of the buddhas. In Tibet, he attained great significance as a special protector of Tibet, and in China, in female form, as Guanyin, the most important bodhisattva in all of East Asia.

g.19 Beautiful Light

mdzad par snang ba

མཛད་པར་སྣང་བ།

—

The name of an eon (*kalpa*).

g.20 Bhadrapāla

bzang skyong

བཟང་སྣོད།

bhadrapāla

A householder, listed as one of the sixteen holy beings attending this teaching.

g.21 Bhadraraśmi

'od zer bzang po

འོད་ཟེར་བཟང་པོ།

bhadraraśmi

g.22 Bhaiṣajyarāja

sman pa rgyal po

སྤོན་པ་རྒྱལ་པོ།

bhaiṣajyarāja

g.23 blessed one

bcom ldan 'das

བཅོམ་ལྷན་འདས།

bhagavān · bhagavat

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

In Buddhist literature, an epithet applied to buddhas, most often to Śākyamuni. The Sanskrit term generally means “possessing fortune,” but in specifically Buddhist contexts it implies that a buddha is in possession of six auspicious qualities (*bhaga*) associated with complete awakening. The Tibetan term—where *bcom* is said to refer to “subduing” the four *māras*, *ldan* to “possessing” the great qualities of buddhahood, and *'das* to “going beyond” *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*—possibly reflects the commentarial tradition where the Sanskrit *bhagavat* is interpreted, in addition, as “one who destroys the four *māras*.” This is achieved either by reading *bhagavat* as *bhagnavat* (“one who broke”), or by tracing the word *bhaga* to the root √*bhañj* (“to break”).

g.24 Bodhi

byang chub

བྱང་ལྷན།

bodhi

g.25 bodhisattva

byang chub sems dpa'

བྱང་ལྷན་སེམས་དཔའ།

bodhisattva

A person who is dedicated not merely to gaining liberation through attaining the state of an arhat, but to becoming a buddha. A name created from the Sanskritization of the Middle-Indic *bodhisatto*, the Sanskrit equivalent of which was *bodhisakta* (“one who is set on awakening”). Some contemporary scholars maintain that the word derives from *bodhisatvan* (“warrior of awakening”).

g.26 Brahmā

tshangs pa

ཚངས་པ།

brahmā

(1) In this text, the term is frequently used as a shorthand for Brahmaviśeṣacintin, one of the main interlocutors in this sūtra. (2) A high-ranking deity, presiding over a divine world where other beings consider him the creator; he is also considered to be the “Lord of Enduring” (our universe).

g.27 Brahmā realm

tshangs pa'i ris

ཚངས་པའི་རིས།

—

g.28 Brahmaviśeṣacintin

tshangs pa khyad par sems

ཚངས་པ་ཁྱད་པར་སེམས།

brahmaviśeṣacintin

A bodhisattva who is one of the interlocutors in this teaching.

g.29 branches of awakening

byang chub kyi yan lag

བྱང་ཚུབ་གྱི་ཡན་ལག

bodhyaṅga

See “seven branches of awakening.”

g.30 Candraprabha

zla 'od · zla ba'i 'od

ཟླ་འོད། · ཟླ་བའི་འོད།

candraprabha

(1) One of the bodhisattvas attending this teaching. (2) A buddha in the eastern buddha realm Paṇḍita.

g.31 Candraraśmiprabha

zla ba'i 'od zer

ཟླ་བའི་འོད་ཟེར།

candraraśmiprabha

One of the bodhisattvas attending this teaching.

g.32 Citta

sems

སེམས།

citta

g.33 consciousness
rnam par shes pa · rnam shes

རྣམ་པར་ཤེས་པ། · རྣམ་ཤེས།

vijñāna

One of the five aggregates.

g.34 defilement
kun nas nyon mongs pa

ཀུན་ནས་ཉོན་མོངས་པ།

saṅkleśa

Another term for saṃsāra , this is the counterpart of “purification.”

g.35 Devadatta
lha sbyin

ལྷ་སྤྱིན།

devadatta

g.36 Devendrarakṣita
de ben dra rak+Shi ta

དེ་བེན་ང་རྒྱ་ཏ།

devendrarakṣita

Named as one of the editor-translators of this sūtra.

g.37 Dharaṇīṃdhara
sa 'dzin

ས་འཛིན།

dharaṇīṃdhara

One of the bodhisattvas attending this teaching.

g.38 dharmakāya
chos kyi sku

ཚོས་ཀྱི་སྐུ།

dharmakāya

The Dharma body, which is a buddha’s awakening, in contrast to his “Form body,” the rūpakāya, which is his visible form perceived by other beings.

- g.39 Dharmapāla
d+har+ma pA la
 ལྷམ་པ་ལ།
dharmapāla
 An Indian scholar from the eighth century named as one of the translators of this sūtra.
- g.40 Dharmatāśīla
d+har+ma tA shI la
 ལྷམ་ཏཱ་ཤི་ལ།
dharmatāśīla
 Named as one of the editor-translators of this sūtra.
- g.41 Dhṛtarāṣṭra
yul 'khor srung
 ཡུལ་འཁོར་སྤྱང་།
dhṛtarāṣṭra
 One of the Four Great Kings, or guardians of the world, he presides over the eastern quarter and rules over the gandharvas that live there.
- g.42 Dīpaṃkara
mar me mdzad
 མར་མེ་མཛད།
dīpaṃkara
- g.43 Dṛḍhamati
blo gros brtan pa
 ལྷོ་གྲོས་བརྟན་པ།
dṛḍhamati
- g.44 Dṛḍhavīrya
brton 'grus brtan pa
 བརྟན་འགུས་བརྟན་པ།
dṛḍhavīrya
- g.45 eightfold path of the noble ones
'phags pa'i lam yan lag brgyad pa

འཕགས་པའི་ལམ་ཡན་ལག་བརྒྱད་པ།

āryāṣṭāṅgamārga

Correct view, intention, speech, actions, livelihood, effort, mindfulness, and concentration. These eight are included in the thirty-seven elements of awakening.

g.46 Ekaratnachattrā

rin po che gdugs gcig pa

རིན་པོ་ཆེ་གདུགས་གཅིག་པ།

ekaratnachattrā

g.47 elder

gnas brtan

གནས་བརྟན།

sthavira

Literally “one who is stable” and usually translated as “elder,” a senior monastic teacher in the early Buddhist communities. Also became the name of the Buddhist tradition within which the Theravāda developed.

g.48 emotional defilement

nyon mongs pa

ཉོན་མོངས་པ།

kleśa

The afflictions that hold one back from awakening, often listed as attachment, anger, ignorance.

g.49 Enduring

mi mjed

མི་མཇེད།

sahā

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The name for our particular world system, the universe of a thousand million worlds, or trichiliocosm, in which our four-continent world is located.

Although it is sometimes said that it can refer only to our own four-continent world around Mount Meru, the sūtras largely seem to equate it with this trichiliocosm, and this is confirmed by scholars like Jamgön Kongtrul (see *The Treasury of Knowledge, Book One*). Each trichiliocosm is ruled by a god Brahmā; thus, in this context, he bears the title of *Sahāmpati*, Lord of Sahā. Our

world system of Sahā, or Sahālokadhātu, is also described as being the buddhafield of the Buddha Śākyamuni. He teaches the Dharma here to beings who adhere to inferior ways and perceive this universe as an impure buddhafield contaminated with the five degenerations (*pañcakaṣāya, snyigs ma lnga*): the degeneration of time, sentient beings, place, lifespan, and mental afflictions (see *The Teaching of Vimalakīrti*, Toh 176). It is also mentioned as the field of activity of all the thousand buddhas of this Fortunate Eon (see *The White Lotus of Compassion*, Toh 112).

The name Sahā possibly derives from the Sanskrit \sqrt{sah} , “to bear, endure, or withstand.” It is often interpreted as alluding to the inhabitants of this world having to endure suffering. The Tibetan translation, *mi mjed*, follows along the same lines. It literally means “not unbearable,” in the sense that beings here are able to bear the suffering they experience.

g.50 Excellent Manifestation

legs par sprul pa

ལེགས་པར་སྤྱུལ་པ།

—

g.51 extraordinary 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.52 feeling

tshor ba

ཚོར་བ།

vedanā

One of the five aggregates.

g.53 fetters

kun tu sbyor ba

ཀུན་ཏུ་སྦྱོར་བ།

saṃyojana

Synonym of emotional defilements, which lead beings to act negatively and prevent them from acting virtuously, hence keeping them fettered to suffering in their next lives.

g.54 five aggregates

phung po lnga

ཕུང་པོ་ལྔ།

pañcaskandha

The five aggregates (*skandha*) of form, feeling, perception, formation, and consciousness. On the individual level the five aggregates refer to the basis upon which the mistaken idea of a self is projected.

g.55 five powers

stobs lnga

སྟོབས་ལྔ།

pañcabala

Faith, diligence, mindfulness, absorption, and insight. These are the same as the five strengths at a further stage of development.

g.56 five strengths

dbang po lnga

དབང་པོ་ལྔ།

pañcendriya

Faith, diligence, mindfulness, absorption, and insight. These are the same as the five powers at a lesser stage of development.

g.57 Flow of Wisdom

ye shes 'byung

ཡེ་ཤེས་འབྱུང་།

—

g.58 form

gzugs

གཟུགས།

rūpa

One of the five aggregates.

g.59 form body

gzugs kyi sku

གཟུགས་ཀྱི་སྐུ།

rūpakāya

The visible form of a buddha that is perceived by other beings, in contrast to his “Dharma body,” the dharmakāya, which is his awakening.

g.60 formation

'du byed

འདུ་བྱེད།

saṃskāra

One of the five aggregates.

g.61 four abodes of Brahmā

tshangs pa'i gnas bzhi

ཚངས་པའི་གནས་བཞི།

caturbrahavihāra

Loving kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity.

g.62 four applications of mindfulness

yang dag pa'i dran pa nye bar bzhag pa bzhi

ཡང་དག་པའི་དྲན་པ་ཉེ་བར་བཞག་པ་བཞི།

catuḥsmṛtyupasthāna

Mindfulness of the body, feelings, mind, and phenomena.

g.63 four bases of miraculous powers

rdzu 'phrul gyi rkang pa bzhi

རྩུ་འཕྲུལ་གྱི་རྐང་པ་བཞི།

caturrdhipāda

Intention, diligence, attention, and discernment.

g.64 four correct abandonments

yang dag par spong ba bzhi

ཡང་དག་པར་སྦོང་བ་བཞི།

catuḥsamyakprahāṇa

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

g.65 four errors

phyin ci log bzhi

ཕྱིན་ཅི་ལོག་བཞི།

caturviparyāsa

Perceiving what is impermanent to be permanent; what is suffering to be happiness; what is impure to be pure; and what is no self to be a self.

g.66 Four Great Kings

rgyal po chen po bzhi

རྒྱལ་པོ་ཆེན་པོ་བཞི།

caturmahārāja

Four gods who live on the lower slopes (fourth level) of Mount Meru in the Heaven of the Four Great Kings and guard the four cardinal directions. Each is the leader of a semidivine class of beings living in his realm. They are Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Virūḍhaka, Virūpākṣa, and Vaiśravaṇa.

g.67 four truths of the noble ones

'phags pa'i bden pa bzhi

འཕགས་པའི་བདེན་པ་བཞི།

caturāryasatya

The first teaching of the Buddha, covering (1) suffering, (2) the origin of suffering, (3) the cessation of suffering, and (4) the path to the cessation of suffering.

g.68 Gaganagañja

nam mkha' mdzod

ནམ་མཁའ་མཛོད།

gaganagañja

One of the bodhisattvas attending this teaching.

g.69 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 sentient beings during the intermediate state between death and rebirth. Gandharvas are said to live on fragrances (*gandha*) in the desire realm, hence the Tibetan translation *dri za*, meaning “scent eater.”

g.70 garuḍa

nam mkha' lding

ནམ་མཁའ་ལྗིང་།

garuḍa

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

In Indian mythology, the garuḍa is an eagle-like bird that is regarded as the king of all birds, normally depicted with a sharp, owl-like beak, often holding a snake, and with large and powerful wings. They are traditionally enemies of the nāgas. In the Vedas, they are said to have brought nectar from the heavens to earth. *Garuḍa* can also be used as a proper name for a king of such creatures.

g.71 Gopaka

sbed byed

སྤེད་བྱེད།

gopaka

g.72 Great Brahmā

tshangs pa chen po

ཚངས་པ་ཆེན་པོ།

mahābrahmāṇa

The name of the third of the three abodes in the first level of the form realm, so called because the beings here are like the great god Brahmā, being lords of this trichiliocosm called Endurance.

g.73 guardians of the world

'jig rten skyong ba

འཇིག་རྟེན་སྐྱོང་བ།

lokapāla

See “Four Great Kings.”

g.74 Guhagupta

phug sbas

ཕུག་སྐྱེས།

guhagupta

One of the bodhisattvas attending this teaching.

g.75 hearer

nyan thos

ཉན་ཐོས།

śrāvaka

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The Sanskrit term *śrāvaka*, and the Tibetan *nyan thos*, both derived from the verb “to hear,” are usually defined as “those who *hear* the teaching from the Buddha and *make it heard* to others.” Primarily this refers to those disciples of the Buddha who aspire to attain the state of an arhat by seeking self-liberation and nirvāṇa. They are the practitioners of the first turning of the wheel of the Dharma on the four noble truths, who realize the suffering inherent in saṃsāra and focus on understanding that there is no independent self. By conquering afflicted mental states (*kleśa*), they liberate themselves, attaining first the stage of stream enterers at the path of seeing, followed by the stage of once-returners who will be reborn only one more time, and then the stage of non-returners who will no longer be reborn into the desire realm. The final goal is to become an arhat. These four stages are also known as the “four results of spiritual practice.”

g.76 Heaven Free from Strife

mtshe ma

མཚོ་མ།

yamaloka

The third of the six heavens of the desire realm.

g.77 Heaven of Bliss

bde ba can

བདེ་བ་ཅན།

sukhāvātī

The buddha realm in which the Buddha Amitāyus lives.

g.78 Heaven of Delighting in Emanations

'phrul dga'

འཕྲུལ་དགའ།

nirmāṇarati

The fifth of the six heavens of the desire realm.

g.79 Heaven of Joy

dga' ldan

དགའ་ལྷན།

tuṣita

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Tuṣita (or sometimes Saṃtuṣita), literally “Joyous” or “Contented,” is one of the six heavens of the desire realm (*kāmadhātu*). In standard classifications, such as the one in the *Abhidharmakośa*, it is ranked as the fourth of the six counting from below. This god realm is where all future buddhas are said to dwell before taking on their final rebirth prior to awakening. There, the Buddha Śākyamuni lived his preceding life as the bodhisattva Śvetaketu. When departing to take birth in this world, he appointed the bodhisattva Maitreya, who will be the next buddha of this eon, as his Dharma regent in Tuṣita. For an account of the Buddha’s previous life in Tuṣita, see *The Play in Full* (Toh 95), [2.12](#), and for an account of Maitreya’s birth in Tuṣita and a description of this realm, see *The Sūtra on Maitreya’s Birth in the Heaven of Joy*, (Toh 199).

g.80 Heaven of Making Use of Others’ Emanations

gzhan 'phrul dbang byed

གཞན་འཕྲུལ་དབང་བྱེད།

paranirmitavaśavartin

The highest of the six heavens of the desire realm.

g.81 Heaven of the Thirty-Three

sum cu rtsa gsum

སུམ་བུ་ཚུ་གསུམ།

trāyastriṃśa

The second heaven of the desire realm, located above Mount Meru and reigned over by Śakra (Indra) and thirty-two other gods.

g.82 Indradatta

dbang pos byin

དབང་པོས་བྱིན།

indradatta

One of the bodhisattvas attending this teaching.

g.83 insight

shes rab

ཤེས་རབ།

prajñā

As the sixth of the six perfections, it refers to the profound understanding of the emptiness of all phenomena, the realization of ultimate reality—also sometimes rendered as wisdom. In other contexts it refers to the mental factor responsible for ascertaining specific qualities of a given object, such as its characteristics or whether it should be taken up or rejected.

g.84 Jālinīprabha

dra ba can gyi 'od

དྲ་བ་ཅན་གྱི་འོད།

jālinīprabha

A bodhisattva and one of the interlocutors in this teaching.

g.85 Jambudvīpa

'dzam bu gling

འཛམ་བུ་གླིང།

jambudvīpa

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The name of the southern continent in Buddhist cosmology, which can signify either the known human world, or more specifically the Indian subcontinent, literally “the *jambu* island/continent.” *Jambu* is the name used for a range of plum-like fruits from trees belonging to the genus *Szygium*, particularly *Szygium jambos* and *Szygium cumini*, and it has commonly been rendered “rose apple,” although “black plum” may be a less misleading term. Among various explanations given for the continent being so named, one (in the *Abhidharmakośa*) is that a *jambu* tree grows in its northern mountains beside Lake Anavatapta, mythically considered the source of the four great rivers of India, and that the continent is therefore named from the tree or the fruit. *Jambudvīpa* has the *Vajrāsana* at its center and is the only continent upon which buddhas attain awakening.

- g.86 **Jinamitra**
dzi na mi tra
 ཇོ་ན་མི་ཏྲ།
jinamitra
 An Indian paṇḍita resident in Tibet during the late eighth and early ninth centuries and named as one of the translators of this sūtra.
- g.87 **Jñānacandra**
ye shes zla ba
 ཡེ་ཤེས་ཟླ་བ།
jñānacandra
- g.88 **Kalandakanivāpa**
ka lan da ka'i gnas
 ཀ་ལན་ད་ཀའི་གནས།
kalandakanivāpa
 A place where the Buddha often resided, within the Bamboo Grove (Veṇuvana) outside Rājagṛha that had been donated to him by King Bimbisāra of Magadha.
- g.89 **Kāśyapa**
'od srung
 འོ་ད་སྲུང།
kāśyapa
 Another name of Mahākāśyapa.
- g.90 **Kauśika**
kau shi ka
 ཀོ་ཤི་ཀ།
kauśika
 Another name of Śakra.
- g.91 **kinnara**
mi' am ci
 མི་འཇམ་ཅི།
kinnara
 Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A class of nonhuman beings that resemble humans to the degree that their very name—which means “is that human?”—suggests some confusion as to their divine status. Kinnaras are mythological beings found in both Buddhist and Brahmanical literature, where they are portrayed as creatures half human, half animal. They are often depicted as highly skilled celestial musicians.

g.92 Kumārarakṣita

ku mA ra rak+Shi ta

ཀུ་མ་ར་ར་ཀྲ་སྲི་ཏ།

kumārarakṣita

Named as one of the editor-translators of this sūtra.

g.93 kumbhāṇḍa

grul bum

ཀུམ་བུ་མུ་མ།

kumbhāṇḍa

A class of dwarf beings subordinate to Virūḍhaka, the Great King of the South. The name uses a play on the word *āṇḍa*, which means “egg” but is a euphemism for testicle. Thus, they are often depicted as having testicles as big as pots (from *khumba*, or “pot”).

g.94 limit of reality

yang dag pa'i mtha'

ཡང་དག་པའི་མཐའ།

bhūtakoṭi

A synonym for ultimate truth and a way of describing the attainment of perfection as the culmination of the spiritual path.

g.95 Magadha

ma ga dha

མ་ག་ཏ།

magadha

An ancient Indian kingdom that lay to the south of the Ganges river in what is today the state of Bihar. Magadha was the largest of the sixteen “great states” (*Mahājanapada*) that flourished between the sixth and third centuries BCE in northern India. During the life of the Buddha Śākyamuni, it was ruled by King Bimbisāra and was home to many of the most important Buddhist

sites, including Bodh Gayā, Nālandā, and Rājagṛha. Its capital was initially Rājagṛha but was later moved to Pāṭaliputra (modern day Patna) sometime after the reign of Bimbisāra's usurper son, Ajātaśatru.

g.96 Mahābrahmaviśeṣacintin

tshangs pa chen po khyad par sems

ཚངས་པ་ཆེན་པོ་ཁྱུད་པར་སེམས།

mahābrahmaviśeṣacintin

Another name for Brahmaviśeṣacintin, a bodhisattva who is one of the interlocutors in this teaching.

g.97 Mahākāśyapa

'od srung chen po

འོད་སྲུང་ཆེན་པོ།

mahākāśyapa

A senior disciple of the Buddha Śākyamuni, famous for his austere lifestyle.

g.98 Mahāsthāmaprāpta

mthu chen thob

མཐུ་ཆེན་ཐོབ།

mahāsthāmaprāpta

g.99 mahoraga

lto 'phye chen po

ལྷོ་འཕྱེ་ཆེན་པོ།

mahoraga

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Literally “great serpents,” mahoragas are supernatural beings depicted as large, subterranean beings with human torsos and heads and the lower bodies of serpents. Their movements are said to cause earthquakes, and they make up a class of subterranean geomantic spirits whose movement through the seasons and months of the year is deemed significant for construction projects.

g.100 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 the heaven of Tuṣita, 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.101 Mandāravapuṣpagandha

man dA ra ba

མན་དྲ་བ།

mandāravapuṣpagandha

g.102 Manifest Joy

mngon par dga' ba

མཛོན་པར་དགའ་བ།

abhirati

A buddha realm.

g.103 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.

g.104 māra

bdud

འདུད།

māra

Māra is the personification of spiritual death in Indian religious mythology. In Buddhism, it refers to the lord of death as well as his minions, who attempted in various ways to prevent the Buddha's awakening and likewise try to thwart the spiritual aims of Buddhist practitioners. 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 emotional defilements, the māra of the lord of death, and the māra of the sons of gods.

g.105 mind of awakening

byang chub sems

བྱང་ལྡན་སེམས།

bodhicitta

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

In the general Mahāyāna teachings, bodhicitta, the mind of awakening, is the intention or the strong aspiration to attain awakening for the sake of all sentient beings. Its two aspects on the relative level of truth are famously summarized in Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (chapter 1, verses 15, 16):

"Bodhicitta, the awakened mind, is known in brief to have two aspects: First, aspiring, bodhicitta in intention; Then active bodhicitta, practical engagement. These correspond to the wish to go and then actually setting out." On the level of absolute truth, bodhicitta is the realization of emptiness or the awakened mind itself.

g.106 nāga

klu

ལུ།

nāga

A semidivine class of beings who live in subterranean aquatic environments and are said to hoard wealth and esoteric teachings. They are associated with snakes and serpents, and are subordinate to Virūpākṣa, the Great King of the West.

g.107 Nandaka

dga' byed

- དགའ་བྱིན།
nandaka
- g.108 Naradatta
mes byin
 མེས་བྱིན།
naradatta
 One of the bodhisattvas attending this teaching.
- g.109 Nārāyaṇa
mthu bo che
 མཐུ་བོ་ཅེ།
nārāyaṇa
- g.110 nature of extinction
zad pa'i chos nyid
 ཟད་པའི་ཚོས་ཉིད།
 —
- g.111 Nityakṛpa
rtag tu snying brtse ba
 རྟག་ཏུ་སྙིང་བརྩེ་བ།
nityakṛpa
- g.112 Nityamuditendriya
rtag tu dga' dgod dbang po
 རྟག་ཏུ་དགའ་དགོད་དབང་པོ།
nityamuditendriya
- g.113 Non-Buddhist
mu stegs pa
 མུ་སྟེགས་པ།
tīrthika
 A follower of one of the non-Buddhist religious systems in India.
- g.114 Padmavyūha
pad ma bkod pa

པད་མ་བཀོད་པ།

padmavyūha

One of the bodhisattvas attending this teaching.

g.115 Pariśuddha

yongs su dag pa

ཡོངས་སུ་དག་པ།

pariśuddha

A buddha realm.

g.116 perception

'du shes

འདུ་ཤེས།

samjñā

One of the five aggregates.

g.117 Praised by Brahmā

tshangs pa bstod pa

ཚངས་པ་བསྟོད་པ།

brahmastuta

The name of an eon (*kalpa*).

g.118 Praṇidhisamudgata

smon lam yang dag 'phags

སློན་ལམ་ཡང་དག་འཕགས།

praṇidhisamudgata

g.119 Priyadarśana

mthong na dga' ba

མཐོང་ན་དག་འབ།

priyadarśana

g.120 Priyadarśana

mthong na dga'

མཐོང་ན་དག་འ།

priyadarśana

An ancient buddha realm, home to Buddha Samantaraśmi.

g.121 purification
rnam par byang ba

རྣམ་པར་བྱང་བ།

vyavadāna

Another term for nirvāṇa, this is the counterpart of “defilement.”

g.122 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.123 Ratna

rin chen

རིན་ཆེན།

ratna

g.124 Ratnacandra

rin chen zla ba

རིན་ཆེན་ལྷ་བ།

ratnacandra

g.125 Ratnākara

dkon mchog 'byung gnas

དཀོན་མཆོག་འབྱུང་གནས།

ratnākara

One of the bodhisattvas attending this teaching.

g.126 Ratnamudrāhastā

lag na phyag rgya rin po che

ལག་ན་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་རིན་པོ་ཆེ།

ratnamudrāhastā

One of the bodhisattvas attending this teaching.

g.127 Ratnapāṇi

lag na rin po che

ལག་ན་རིན་པོ་ཆེ།

ratnapāṇi

One of the bodhisattvas attending this teaching.

g.128 Ratnaśrī

rin po che dpal

རིན་པོ་ཆེ་དཔལ།

ratnaśrī

One of the bodhisattvas attending this teaching.

g.129 Ratnavati

rin po che'i bkod pa

རིན་པོ་ཆེའི་བཀོད་པ།

ratnavati

A future buddha realm, home to Buddha Ratnavyūha.

g.130 Ratnavyūha

rin chen ldan

རིན་ཆེན་ལྷན།

ratnavyūha

g.131 reality

chos nyid

ཚོས་ཉིད།

dharmatā

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The real nature, true quality, or condition of things. Throughout Buddhist discourse this term is used in two distinct ways. In one, it designates the relative nature that is either the essential characteristic of a specific phenomenon, such as the heat of fire and the moisture of water, or the defining feature of a specific term or category. The other very important and widespread way it is used is to designate the ultimate nature of all phenomena, which cannot be conveyed in conceptual, dualistic terms and is often synonymous with emptiness or the absence of intrinsic existence.

In this text:

Also rendered here as “nature” or “truth.”

Note that the term “reality” has also been used to render terms of similar meaning such as *yang dag (nyid)*, as in “limit of reality” (*yang dag pa'i mtha'*).

g.132 realm of phenomena

chos kyi dbyings

ཚོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས།

dharmadhātu

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

g.133 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.134 Sahacittotpādadharmacakrapravartin

sems skyed ma thag tu chos kyi 'khor lo bskor ba

སེམས་སྐྱེད་མ་ཐག་ཏུ་ཚོས་ཀྱི་འཁོར་ལོ་བསྐྱོར་བ།

sahacittotpādadharmacakrapravartin

One of the bodhisattvas attending this teaching.

g.135 Śakra

brgya byin

བརྒྱ་བྱིན།

śakra

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The lord of the gods in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three (*trāyastriṃśā*). 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.136 Śākyamuni

shAkyā thub pa

ལྷན་ལྷན་པ།

śākyamuni

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

An epithet for the historical Buddha, Siddhārtha Gautama: he was a *muni* (“sage”) from the Śākya clan. He is counted as the fourth of the first four buddhas of the present Good Eon, the other three being Krakucchanda, Kanakamuni, and Kāśyapa. He will be followed by Maitreya, the next buddha in this eon.

g.137 Śākyaprabha

shA kya pra b+ha

ལྷན་པ་ལྷན།

śākyaprabha

An Indian scholar from the eighth century named as one of the translators of this sūtra.

g.138 Samantaprabhavikurvaṇarāja

kun tu 'od rnam par 'phrul pa'i 'od zer gyi rgyal po

ཀུན་ཏུ་འོད་རྣམ་པར་འཕུལ་པའི་འོད་ཟེར་གྱི་རྒྱལ་པོ།

samantaprabhavikurvaṇarāja

g.139 Samantaraśmi

kun tu 'od zer

ཀུན་ཏུ་འོད་ཟེར།

samantaraśmi

g.140 Samavartin

mnyam par gnas pa

མཉམ་པར་གནས་པ།

samavartin

g.141 Saṃkusuma

kun tu me tog

ཀུན་ཏུ་མེ་ཏོག་།

saṃkusuma

g.142 Śāriputra

shA ri'i bu

ཤཱ་རིའི་བུ།

śāriputra

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

One of the principal śrāvaka disciples of the Buddha, he was renowned for his discipline and for having been praised by the Buddha as foremost of the wise (often paired with Maudgalyāyana, who was praised as foremost in the capacity for miraculous powers). His father, Tiṣya, to honor Śāriputra's mother, Śārikā, named him Śāradvatīputra, or, in its contracted form, Śāriputra, meaning "Śārikā's Son."

g.143 Sarvaratnadarśin

rin po che thams cad ston pa

རིན་པོ་ཆེ་གསལ་ཅད་སྟོན་པ།

sarvaratnadarśin

A present buddha realm, home to Buddha Ekaratnachattrā.

g.144 Sarvasvaparitāgin

bdog pa thams cad yongs su btong ba

བདོག་པ་གསལ་ཅད་ཡོངས་སུ་བཏོང་བ།

sarvasvaparitāgin

One of the bodhisattvas attending this teaching.

g.145 Sattvatara

sems can sgrol

སེམས་ཅན་སྐྱོལ།

sattvatara

g.146 Satyacandra

bden pa'i zla ba

བདེན་པའི་ཟླ་བ།

satyacandra

g.147 Satyavādin

bden par smra ba

བདེན་པར་སྟུང་བ།

satyavādin

g.148 seat of awakening

byang chub kyi snying po

བྱང་ལྡན་གྱི་སྦྱིང་པོ།

bodhimaṇḍa

Bodhimaṇḍa, the “seat of awakening,” can be explained in terms of location , in which case it refers to the sphere in which the dharmakāya is realized; to Akaniṣṭha, which is the place of awakening for the saṃbhogakāya ; or to the foot of the bodhi tree at Vajrāsana, which is the site of awakening for the supreme nirmāṇakāya . In terms of realization , the “seat of awakening” refers to unsurpassable, perfect awakening.

g.149 sense fields

skye mched

སྐྱེ་མཆེད།

āyatana

These can be listed as twelve or as six sense fields (sometimes also called “sense sources,” “bases of cognition,” or simply *āyatanas*). In the 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, and (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.150 seven branches of awakening

byang chub kyi yan lag bdun

བྱང་ལྡན་གྱི་ཡན་ལག་བདུན།

saptabodhyaṅga

Mindfulness, discernment of phenomena, effort, joy, suppleness, concentration, and impartiality. These are contained in the thirty-seven elements of awakening.

g.151 seven riches

nor bdun

ནོར་བདུན།

sapta dhanāni

Faith, discipline, generosity, learning, dignity, propriety, and wisdom.

g.152 Siṃha

seng ge

སེང་གེ།

siṃha

One of the bodhisattvas attending this teaching.

g.153 Siṃhakumārī

gzhon nu seng ge

གཙོན་ལུ་སེང་གེ།

siṃhakumārī

g.154 Siṃhavikrāntagāmin

seng ge gros su 'gro ba

སེང་གེ་གྲོས་སུ་འགྲོ་བ།

siṃhavikrāntagāmin

g.155 six perfections

pha rol tu phyin pa drug

ཕ་རོལ་ཏུ་ཕྱིན་པ་དུག།

ṣaṭpāramitā

The six practices or qualities that a follower of the Great Vehicle perfects in order to become a buddha. 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.156 solitary buddha

rang sangs rgyas

རང་སངས་རྒྱས།

pratyekabuddha

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Literally, “buddha for oneself” or “solitary realizer.” Someone who, in his or her last life, attains awakening entirely through their own contemplation, without relying on a teacher. Unlike the awakening of a fully realized buddha (*samyaksambuddha*), the accomplishment of a pratyekabuddha is not regarded as final or ultimate. They attain realization of the nature of dependent origination, the selflessness of the person, and a partial realization of the selflessness of phenomena, by observing the suchness of all that arises through interdependence. This is the result of progress in previous lives but, unlike a buddha, they do not have the necessary merit, compassion or motivation to teach others. They are named as “rhinoceros-like” (*khadḡgaviṣāṇakalpa*) for their preference for staying in solitude or as “congregators” (*vargacārin*) when their preference is to stay among peers.

g.157 Śrīgarbha

dpal gyi snying po

དཔལ་གྱི་སྡིང་པོ།

śrīgarbha

One of the bodhisattvas attending this teaching.

g.158 Subhūti

rab 'byor

རབ་འབྲོར།

subhūti

g.159 substratum

kun gzhi

ཀུན་གཞི།

ālaya

The subtlest form of deluded consciousness, which serves as the storehouse for karmic seeds, therefore serving as the substratum from which appearances manifest.

g.160 suchness

de bzhin nyid

དེ་བཞིན་ཉིད།

tathatā

g.161 Sum of All Jewels

rin chen sdud · rin po che thams cad 'dus pa

རིན་ཆེན་སྒྲུང། . རིན་པོ་ཆེ་ཐམས་ཅད་འདུས་པ།

—

The name of a giant vajra jewel.

g.162 Sumeru

ri rab chen po

རི་རབ་ཆེན་པོ།

sumeru

g.163 Sumerudīparāja

ri rab sgron ma'i rgyal po

རི་རབ་སྒྲོན་མའི་རྒྱལ་པོ།

sumerudīparāja

g.164 superknowledges

mngon par shes pa

མངོན་པར་ཤེས་པ།

abhijñā

Divine sight, divine hearing, knowing how to manifest miracles, remembering previous lives, knowing the minds of others, and knowing that all defects have been eliminated. Sometimes listed as five, without the sixth.

g.165 Sūryagarbha

nyi ma'i snying po

ཉི་མའི་སྤྱིང་པོ།

sūryagarbha

One of the bodhisattvas attending this teaching.

g.166 Susaṃprasthita

shin tu yang dag zhugs

ཤིན་ཏུ་ཡང་དག་ལྷགས།

susaṃprasthita

One of the bodhisattvas attending this teaching.

g.167 Susārthavāha

ded dpon bzang po

དེད་དཔོན་བཟང་པོ།

susārthavāha

A bodhisattva listed as one of the sixteen holy beings attending this teaching.

g.168 Susīma

mtshams bzang

མཚམས་བཟང་།

susīma

g.169 Suvikrāntavikrāmin

rab kyi rtsal gyis rnam par gnon pa

རབ་གྱི་རྩལ་གྱིས་རྣམ་པར་གཞོན་པ།

suvikrāntavikrāmin

One of the bodhisattvas attending this teaching.

g.170 Svālaṃkāravvyūha

rgyan thams cad bkod pa

རྒྱན་ཐམས་ཅད་བཀོད་པ།

svālaṃkāravvyūha

One of the bodhisattvas attending this teaching.

g.171 ten powers

stobs bcu

སྟོབས་བརྒྱ།

daśabala

Ten areas of a buddha's knowledge, through which he is omniscient.

g.172 thirty-seven elements of awakening

byang chub kyi phyogs kyi chos sum cu rtsa bdun

བྱང་ལྔ་བཅུ་གྱི་ཕྱོགས་གྱི་ཚོས་སུམ་ཅུ་རྩ་བདུན།

saptatrimśadbodhipakṣyadharmā

The thirty-seven elements are the practices that lead the practitioner to the awakened state: the four applications of mindfulness, the four correct abandonments, the four bases of miraculous power, the five faculties, the five powers, the eightfold path of the noble ones, and the seven branches of awakening.

g.173 three realms

khams gsum

ཁམས་གསུམ།

traidhātuka

The desire, form, and formless realms.

g.174 thus-gone one

de bzhin gshegs pa

དེས་ཞིན་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 is also often used as a specific epithet of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.175 tranquility

zhi gnas

ཞི་གནས།

śamatha

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

g.176 trichiliocosm

stong gsum gyi stong chen po

སྟོང་གསུམ་གྱི་སྟོང་ཆེན་པོ།

trisāhasramahāsāhasralokadhātu

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The largest universe described in Buddhist cosmology. This term, in Abhidharma cosmology, refers to 1,000³ world systems, i.e., 1,000 “dichiliocosms” or “two thousand great thousand world realms” (*dvisāhasramahāsāhasralokadhātu*), which are in turn made up of 1,000 first-order world systems, each with its own Mount Sumeru, continents, sun and moon, etc.

g.177 universal monarch

'khor lo sgyur ba'i rgyal po

འཁོར་ལོ་སྐུར་བའི་རྒྱལ་པོ།

cakravartin

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

An ideal monarch or emperor who, as the result of the merit accumulated in previous lifetimes, rules over a vast realm in accordance with the Dharma. Such a monarch is called a *cakravartin* because he bears a wheel (*cakra*) that rolls (*vartana*) across the earth, bringing all lands and kingdoms under his power. The *cakravartin* conquers his territory without causing harm, and his activity causes beings to enter the path of wholesome actions. According to Vasubandhu’s *Abhidharmakośa*, just as with the buddhas, only one *cakravartin* appears in a world system at any given time. They are likewise endowed with the thirty-two major marks of a great being (*mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇa*), but a *cakravartin*’s marks are outshined by those of a buddha. They possess seven precious objects: the wheel, the elephant, the horse, the wish-fulfilling gem, the queen, the general, and the minister. An illustrative passage about the *cakravartin* and his possessions can be found in *The Play in Full* (Toh 95), 3.3–3.13.

Vasubandhu lists four types of *cakravartins*: (1) the *cakravartin* with a golden wheel (*suvarṇacakravartin*) rules over four continents and is invited by lesser kings to be their ruler; (2) the *cakravartin* with a silver wheel (*rūpyacakravartin*) rules over three continents and his opponents submit to him as he approaches; (3) the *cakravartin* with a copper wheel (*tāmracakravartin*) rules over two continents and his opponents submit themselves after preparing for battle; and (4) the *cakravartin* with an iron wheel (*ayaścakravartin*) rules over one continent and his opponents submit themselves after brandishing weapons.

g.178 Uttaramati

bla ma'i blo gros

ལྷ་མའི་བློ་གྲོས།

uttaramati

One of the bodhisattvas attending this teaching.

g.179 Vaiśravaṇa

rnam thos kyi bu

རྣམ་ཐོས་ཀྱི་བུ།

vaiśravaṇa

One of the Four Great Kings, or guardians of the world, he presides over the northern quarter and rules over the yakṣas that live there. He is also known as Kubera.

g.180 Vardhamānamati

blo gros 'phel

བློ་གྲོས་འཕེལ།

vardhamānamati

One of the bodhisattvas attending this teaching.

g.181 Varuṇadatta

chus byin

ཚུས་བྱིན།

varuṇadatta

One of the bodhisattvas attending this teaching.

g.182 Veṇuvana

'od ma'i tshal

འོད་མའི་ཚལ།

veṇuvana

A park near Rājagṛha. It was the first settled residence dedicated to the Buddhist saṅgha, offered to the Buddha by King Bimbisāra of Magadha.

g.183 victor

rgyal ba

རྒྱལ་བ།

jina

One of the epithets applied to a buddha.

- g.184 **Vighuṣṭakīrti**
snyan pa rnam par grags pa
 ལྷན་པ་རྣམ་པར་གྲགས་པ།
vighuṣṭakīrti
 The name of an eon (*kalpa*).
- g.185 **Vijṛmbhita**
rnam par bsgyings pa
 རྣམ་པར་བསྐྱེད་སེམས་པ།
vijṛmbhita
 One of the bodhisattvas attending this teaching.
- g.186 **Vimalaketu**
dri ma med pa'i tog
 དྲི་མ་མེད་པའི་རྟོག་
vimalaketu
- g.187 **Vimatividhvaṃsana**
yid gnyis rnam par 'joms ma
 ཡིད་གཉིས་རྣམ་པར་འཇོམས་མ།
vimatividhvaṃsana
- g.188 **Virūḍhaka**
'phags skyes po
 འཕགས་སྐྱེས་པོ།
virūḍhaka
 One of the Four Great Kings, or guardians of the world, he presides over the southern quarter and rules over the preta kumbhāṇḍa spirits that live there.
- g.189 **Virūpākṣa**
mig mi bzang
 མིག་མི་བཟང་།
virūpākṣa
 One of the Four Great Kings, or guardians of the world, he presides over the western quarter and rules over the nāgas that live there.
- g.190 **Viśākhadattā**

sa gas byin

ས་གས་བྱིན།

viśākhadattā

A female lay practitioner.

g.191 Viśeṣabhadra

khyad par bzang

ལྷན་པར་བཟང་།

viśeṣabhadra

g.192 Viśeṣamati

khyad par blo gros

ལྷན་པར་སློ་བོ་ས།

viśeṣamati

(1) One of the sixteen bodhisattvas attending this teaching in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni. (2) A bodhisattva in the retinue of the Thus-Gone One Bhaiṣajyarāja who went to meet the Thus-Gone One Samantaraśmi and became the bodhisattva and brahmin householder Samavartin.

g.193 Viśiṣṭagaṇasamgraha

khyad par gyi yon tan bsdus pa

ལྷན་པར་གྱི་ཡོན་ཏན་བསྐྱུས་པ།

viśiṣṭagaṇasamgraha

g.194 Well-Adorned Jewel Parasol

legs brgyan pa rin chen gdugs

ལེགས་བརྒྱན་པ་རིན་ཆེན་གདུགས།

—

A future buddha realm where Vaiśravaṇa will awaken.

g.195 Well-conducted

legs par drangs pa

ལེགས་པར་དྲངས་པ།

sunīta

The name of an eon (*kalpa*).

g.196 Well-Created

shin tu sprul pa

ཤིན་ཏུ་སྐྱུལ་པ།

sunirmita

The name of an eon (*kalpa*).

g.197 well-gone one

bde bar gshegs pa

བདེ་བར་གཤེགས་པ།

sugata

An epithet of a buddha also meaning “gone to bliss.”

g.198 wisdom

ye shes

ཡེ་ཤེས།

jñāna

Although the Sanskrit term *jñāna* can refer to knowledge in a general sense, it is often used in Buddhist texts to refer to the mode of awareness of a realized being. In contrast to ordinary knowledge, which mistakenly perceives phenomena as real entities having real properties, wisdom perceives the emptiness of phenomena, their lack of intrinsic essence.

g.199 worldly concern

'jig rten gyi chos

འཇིག་རྟེན་གྱི་ཚོས།

lokadharmā

The eight worldly concerns are gain and loss, fame and disgrace, praise and blame, and pleasure and pain.

g.200 worthy one

dgra bcom pa

དགའ་བཅོམ་པ།

arhat

One who has achieved the fourth and final level of attainment on the hearer’s path and who has attained liberation from saṃsāra with the cessation of all defilements. Also used as an epithet of the buddhas.

g.201 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.202 Yama

gshin rje

གཤེན་རྗེ།

yama

From Vedic times, the Lord of Death, who directs the departed into the next realm of rebirth.