

༄༅། །ཉི་མའི་སྒྲིང་པོ།

The Quintessence of the Sun

Sūryagarbha

འཕགས་པ་ཤིན་ཏུ་རྒྱས་པ་ཆེན་པོའི་སྡེ་ཉི་མའི་སྒྲིང་པོ་ཞེས་བྱ་བའི་མདོ།

'phags pa shin tu rgyas pa chen po'i sde nyi ma'i snying po zhes bya ba'i mdo

The Noble Very Extensive Sūtra “The Quintessence of the Sun”

Āryasūryagarbhanāmamahāvaiṣṭyasūtra

· Toh 257 ·

Degé Kangyur, vol. 66 (mdo sde, za), folios 91.b–245.b

TRANSLATED INTO TIBETAN BY

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Translated by the Dharmachakra Translation Committee
under the patronage and supervision of 84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha

First published 2022

Current version v 1.0.14 (2025)

Generated by 84000 Reading Room v2.26.1

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SUMMARY

- s.1 *The Quintessence of the Sun* is a long and heterogeneous sūtra in eleven chapters. At the Veṇuvana in the Kalandakanivāpa on the outskirts of Rājagṛha, the Buddha Śākyamuni first explains to a great assembly the severe consequences of stealing what has been offered to monks and the importance of protecting those who abide by the Dharma. The next section tells of bodhisattvas sent from buddha realms in the four directions to bring various dhāraṇīs as a way of protecting and benefitting this world. While explaining those dhāraṇīs, the Buddha Śākyamuni presents various meditations on repulsiveness and instructions on the empty nature of phenomena. On the basis of another long narrative involving Māra and groups of nāgas, detailed teachings on astrology are also introduced, as are a number of additional dhāraṇīs and a list of sacred locations blessed by the presence of holy beings.

ac.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ac.1 This text was translated by the Dharmachakra Translation Committee under the supervision of Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche. Benjamin Collet-Cassart translated the text from Tibetan into English and wrote the introduction. Andreas Doctor compared the draft translation with the original Tibetan and edited the text.

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

The generous sponsorship of Jamyang Sun and Manju Sun, which helped make the work on this translation possible, is most gratefully acknowledged.

i.

INTRODUCTION

i.1

The Quintessence of the Sun, which belongs to the General Sūtra section of the Kangyur, is a long and heterogeneous sūtra containing eleven chapters. At the Veṇuvana in the Kalandakanivāpa on the outskirts of Rājagṛha, the Buddha Śākyamuni first explains to a great assembly the severe consequences of stealing what has been offered to monks and the importance of protecting those who abide by the Dharma. The next section tells of bodhisattvas sent from buddha realms in the four directions to bring various dhāraṇīs as a way of protecting and benefitting this world. While explaining those dhāraṇīs, the Buddha Śākyamuni presents various meditations on repulsiveness and instructions on the empty nature of phenomena. On the basis of another long narrative involving Māra and groups of nāgas, detailed teachings on astrology are also introduced, as are a number of additional dhāraṇīs and a list of sacred locations blessed by the presence of holy beings.

i.2

With the exception of a short Sanskrit manuscript fragment found in Central Asia,¹ no Sanskrit manuscript of the text appears to be extant. We do, however, have translations of the sūtra into both Chinese and Tibetan. The Chinese translation (*Rizang fen* 日藏分, Taishō 397-14) was translated in 585 CE by Narendrayaśas (517–89), an Indian translator from Oḍḍiyāna who traveled the Silk Road in order to propagate Buddhism. He arrived in China during the Northern Qi dynasty in 556. At the request of Emperor Wenxuan, he resided at Tianpingsi and later at Daxingshansi, where he translated fourteen Indian sūtras into Chinese, including the *Karuṇāpuṇḍarikasūtra*,² the *Samādhirājasūtra*,³ and the *Mahāmeghasūtra*.⁴ The Tibetan translation was completed in the early translation period and is listed in the early ninth-century Denkarma (*ldan dkar ma*) catalog.⁵ According to the colophon of the Tibetan translation, the sūtra was translated into Tibetan by the Indian scholars Sarvajñādeva, Vidyākara-prabha, and Dharmākara and by the Tibetan translator Zangkyong. It was then edited and finalized by Kawa

Paltsek, the prolific translator who participated in numerous translation projects in Tibet during the early translation period, when the majority of Indian sūtras were translated into Tibetan. In producing this English rendering, we have based our work on the Tibetan Degé block print with reference to the Comparative Edition (*dpe bsdur ma*) and the Stok Palace manuscript.

i.3 The sūtra is quoted in Nāgārjuna's *Sūtrasamuccaya*⁶ and in Tsongkhapa's major work on the stages of spiritual progress, the *lam rim chen mo*.⁷ In terms of modern scholarship, the French scholar Sylvain Lévi includes translations from the Chinese of three long passages of the sūtra in an influential essay that investigates connections between Indian Buddhism and Central Asia.⁸ Bill Mak and Jeffrey Kotyk discuss some of the astrological elements contained in the sūtra in publications that focus on Buddhist astral science in China and its relationships with India.⁹ A passage of the text has also been translated by Jonathan Silk in his study of administrative roles in Indian Buddhist monasticism.¹⁰

i.4 In the Chinese canon, *The Quintessence of the Sun* is included in the Mahāsannipāta (Tib. *'dus pa chen po*), also called the Mahāvaipulya (Tib. *shin tu rgyas pa chen po'i sde*), a massive collection of seventeen Mahāyāna sūtras. According to Jens Braarvig, who presents a detailed textual history of this collection in his doctoral thesis on the *Akṣayamatinirdeśasūtra*,¹¹ the term *mahāsannipāta* can be understood to refer to both this great collection of sūtras and the great assembly of monks and bodhisattvas present around the Buddha when those teachings were given.¹² The Mahāsannipāta, preserved in its entirety in the Chinese canon, is a group of rather loosely related texts. Although these texts vary in terms of doctrine and form, they do show greater homogeneity than other scriptural collections such as the Ratnakūṭa. Braarvig argues that the first twelve sūtras in this collection must have been part of an Indic version of the collection,¹³ and that this collection probably predates the versions of texts from the collection that circulated as independent Sanskrit manuscripts or were translated into Tibetan and added to the Tibetan canon as independent texts. A few sūtras of the Mahāsannipāta are indeed available in Sanskrit (mostly in fragmentary forms) and in Tibetan, but only as independent texts. It appears that this collection did not receive the same level of attention in India as other large collections like the Ratnakūṭa and the Buddhāvataṃsaka. On the other hand, it is obvious that the Mahāsannipāta played an important role in some of the Chinese and Central Asian kingdoms along the Silk Road. It is, for example, praised in *The Book of Zambasta*, an important Khotanese Buddhist poem from the eighth century, along with the Prajñāpāramitā and the Buddhāvataṃsaka. According to Braarvig, the Chinese translation of the

Mahāsannipāta was initially compiled during the second or third century, at the earliest during the first. The collection that is extant today (Taishō 397) was compiled in 586 CE by the Khotanese monk Sengjiu. This collection is based on the manuscript of the translation of the first sūtras by Dharmarakṣema (414–21 CE) and was enlarged by new texts translated by Narendrayaśas, including *The Quintessence of the Sun*.¹⁴

i.5 There is some evidence suggesting that this sūtra, or at least parts of it, may have been composed in Central Asia.¹⁵ Its last chapter contains a list of twenty sacred sites blessed by the presence of holy beings. Less than half of the sites mentioned in this chapter are located in India, and many are Central Asian. This geographical list clearly reflects the propagation of Buddhism from India to China along the route of the pilgrims. The sacred location given the most attention in this text is situated in the land of Khaṣa, another name for the site of what would become the city-state of Khotan, which existed during the first millennium CE. According to Lévi, *The Quintessence of the Sun* is one of the sūtras most intimately connected with that region, and he holds the view that Khotan was one of the most active centers for the compilation of Mahāyāna literature, especially of sūtras destined for China.¹⁶ This passage of the text, which begins at 12.26, relates the story of a specific site in Khaṣa called Gomasālagandha, and is a condensed version of the narrative of the sūtra *The Prophecy on Mount Gośṛṅga*¹⁷ containing some of the same people and names. Other passages mentioning the same story are found in another work belonging to the Mahāsannipāta, the *Candragarbhapariṣcchā*.¹⁸ This latter work is represented in the Kangyur only by an excerpt (Toh 356) which does not seem to include such passages.

i.6 The connection between *The Quintessence of the Sun* and Central Asia is further confirmed by one of the astronomical measurements contained in the text, which places the user of that measurement in the northern or northwestern frontier of India.¹⁹ Also, the only extant Sanskrit manuscript fragment of the sūtra was found in Central Asia. It is a fragment of the astrological section of the text that, according to Rudolf Hoernle, was composed in a mixed dialect that is very corrupt and whose meaning is sometimes obscure.²⁰ Due to the complex and obscure nature of this astrological section, we have not attempted a rendering of it into English. Instead, we are hoping that future scholars may be able to produce a reliable study and translation of this section that can be added to this translation. We have indicated in the notes the relevant section, where thirty-two folios have been left untranslated.

The Translation

**The Noble Very Extensive Sūtra
The Quintessence of the Sun**

1.

Chapter One

PROTECTION OF THE SACRED DHARMA

[B1] [F.91.b]

1.1 Homage to all buddhas and bodhisattvas!

Thus did I hear at one time. The Blessed One was residing in the Veṇuvana at the Kalandakanivāpa near Rājagṛha, surrounded and attended by an innumerable, limitless, and indescribable number of bodhisattva great beings who had arrived from countless other buddha realms of the ten directions. He was also surrounded and attended by an innumerable, limitless, and indescribable number of great hearers who had gathered there from different buddha realms of the ten directions. In the same way, an innumerable, limitless, and indescribable number of other beings who had arrived there from the various buddha realms of the ten directions—Śakra, Lord Brahmā, the rulers of the gods, the rulers of the nāgas, the rulers of the yakṣas, the rulers of the gandharvas, the rulers of the asuras, the rulers of the garuḍas, the rulers of the kinnaras, and the rulers of the mahoragas—filled all the pathways on the ground and in the sky throughout the entire buddha realm of Sahā. There also arrived an innumerable and limitless number of different gods from the desire and form realms, of nāgas, yakṣas, and rākṣasas, and of asuras, garuḍas, kinnaras, and mahoragas. Sitting in silence, they looked up at the Blessed One as he revealed how bodhisattva conduct quickly brings perfection and manifests like space and as he gave teachings on the mindfulness of breathing, which is the gateway to immortality, and the sublime states. [F.92.a] They filled all the pathways on the ground and in the sky throughout the entire buddha realm of Sahā.

1.2 Still not satisfied by the teachings of the Blessed One's Dharma rain, they remained with their palms joined together, staring at the Blessed One. They beheld him like sick persons seeing the doctor, or like beings engulfed in darkness seeing a source of light, or like beings carried off by a river looking

at the riverbank, or like afflicted beings looking at a refuge from their suffering. In that way, filling all the pathways on the ground and in the sky throughout the entire buddha realm of Sahā, the bodhisattva great beings and the hearers as well as Lord Śakra and everyone else up to the lords of the mahoragas, the different gods from the desire and form realms, and the various humans and nonhuman beings were sitting silently with their palms joined together, looking at the Blessed One, the righteous King of the Dharma.

- 1.3 Present at that time was a mahābrahmā named Glorious Blazing Lotus. He had generated roots of virtue under many buddhas and would no longer regress on the path to unsurpassed and perfect awakening. He had also thoroughly trained in love by observing phenomena. This mahābrahmā Glorious Blazing Lotus then stood up, draped his shawl over one shoulder, and knelt on his right knee. Bowing down with his palms joined together in the direction of the Blessed One, with these verses he supplicated him to expound the Dharma:
- 1.4 “You have reached far and possess a swift course.
Dedicated to exhaustion, you are immutable and luminous.
You generate all forms of realization, your speech is utterly peaceful,
And you are an expert in the ways of the stars.
- 1.5 “You master the mindfulness of breathing,
You are endowed with the four sublime states,
And you cause sentient beings to abandon the destinies of rebirth
In a way that purifies the three realms. [F.92.b]
- 1.6 “You possess the knowledge of the single mode,
You eliminate the doubts of tens of thousands of gods and humans,
You have attained goodness, you have crossed the flood,
And you are endowed with the swift knowledge that leads to happiness.
- 1.7 “Your awakened conduct and buddha qualities are manifest,
And you have conquered the entirety of the suffering of those beings with
agitated minds
Who are blind, engulfed in darkness,
And carried away by the river of desire.
- 1.8 “Lord of humankind, you manifest compassion for those who have not
studied
And for those who are bereft of virtue and separated from skilled teachers.
Please let us hear about the Dharma of sameness;
Explain how to pass beyond birth and sever saṃsāra!

- 1.9 “Great sage, you have crossed the river of birth; please speak with
 compassion!
Due to their distorted minds, beings will wander for many lifetimes
On those paths that are webs of craving and contain the roots of afflictions;
Please sever them all!
- 1.10 “Victor, please tell us about the defects of craving,
 So that our suffering is pacified along with our six senses and our minds.
Great sage, in order for beings to be free from craving and its causes
And from the abundance of their torments,
- 1.11 “Please expound to us, out of your affection,
 The Dharma that dries up the river of craving,
Swiftly leads to happiness and immortality,
And eliminates craving!”
- 1.12 The Blessed One replied to the mahābrahmā Glorious Blazing Lotus:
- 1.13 “Those who have practiced the perfections in the past
 And will practice them in the future
Should never delight
In the teachings of the hearers.
- 1.14 “There is no other downfall besides that,
 To corrupt the teaching of the buddhas.
Yet the mind engages repeatedly,
Again and again, in such duality.
- 1.15 “By abandoning the three types of teachings—
 Those associated with aggression,
The teaching of the hearers, and conditioned awakening²¹—
One will perfect the qualities of the buddhas.
- 1.16 “Those beings, born in one of the four ways,
 Who have arrived in this buddha realm
Are all free from indulging in desire,
And all of them have attained insight into repulsiveness.
- 1.17 “The wise beings present here [F.93.a]
 Who follow the path to supreme awakening,
Who exert themselves and are well trained
In retention and patience,
- 1.18 “Whose six sense doors are restrained,
 And who have mastered their senses

- By applying mindfulness cross-legged
Will be the future thus-gone ones.
- 1.19 “They will also perfect the seven riches.
If I explain the way of repulsiveness here,
Then the basis for all, the constant that binds beings,
Will be severed.
- 1.20 “I have relinquished miserliness regarding the Dharma,
Yet, in order to protect beings, I have not explained this.
Still, for the sake of awakening,
Bodhisattvas will never give up this attitude.
- 1.21 “The buddhas of the ten directions
Have subsisted on this earth and blessed it
As they declared,
‘This Dharma must remain for a long time!’
- 1.22 “Likewise, you should frolic in this realm
And revel in the acceptances.
With restraint you should also
Remain here for a long time!
- 1.23 “I shall expound the vehicle of the hearers;
I shall explain that beings must be liberated from attachment
And that the aggregates, the elements,
And the sense sources are empty.
- 1.24 “I shall expound the thirteen aspects of tranquility
As well as special insight,
So that sentient beings bound by the tight fetters of desire
May become pure.
- 1.25 “I shall explain the four truths of the hearers
Out of affection for sentient beings,
To ensure that the Dharma teachings
Endure forever and remain undefiled.
- 1.26 “The hearers are tamed by the truths;
I shall free them from the ocean of saṃsāra.
Only at a later point shall I teach you
All the practices of the bodhisattvas.”

- 1.27 At that moment, all the beings present throughout the entire buddha realm of Sahā thought, “Alas, the Thus-Gone One will now give a hearers’ discourse. He will not give a discourse related to the Great Vehicle!”
- 1.28 All the bodhisattvas thought to themselves, [F.93.b] “O, the Thus-Gone One wishes us to withdraw into meditative seclusion, to ensure that we subsist on the earth in this buddha realm; to ensure that the way of the Dharma remains for a long time into the future; to ensure that the lineage of the Three Jewels remains uninterrupted in this buddha realm; to ensure that in the future the gods, nāgas, yakṣas, rākṣasas, asuras, garuḍas, kinnaras, mahoragas, humans, and nonhumans who lack faith generate faith; to ensure that those among them who have faith develop it further and further; to ensure that those beings who strive for the Dharma, who abide by the Dharma, who possess a wealth of qualities, and who are endowed with the scent of discipline gain happiness, remain free from harm, and perfect the happiness of emancipation; to ensure that, by all means, this buddha realm becomes saturated with qualities; to ensure that all the other buddha realms of the ten directions are also worthy of such a saturation; and to ensure that the masters receive reverence and respect. O, we must now fulfill the wish of the Thus-Gone One! We must ensure that we all sit cross-legged upon this earth and abide by our various individual acceptances, dhāraṇīs, absorptions, and practices replete with the most excellent aspects!”
- 1.29 Then all the bodhisattva great beings who had reached emancipation over the course of a hundred eons, who had reached the ten levels, who abided by the acceptance of the unborn nature of phenomena, who were endowed with the eighteen unique qualities of the buddhas and were skilled in the wisdom that does not depend upon anything else, and who had reached fearlessness sat cross-legged upon the earth, and thus they settled within their individual acceptances, [F.94.a] dhāraṇīs, and absorptions replete with the most excellent aspects.
- 1.30 At that moment, in accordance with the strength of that merit and through the power of that concordant cause, light started to radiate from the bodies of those great bodhisattvas who were settled in equipoise and from the bodies of those great bodhisattvas who were absorbed in concentration. Those lights were like the light of lamps. Some of those lights were equal to the light emitted by shooting stars; some were equal to the light emitted by Śakra, some were equal to the light emitted by Brahmā, the lord of the Sahā world, and some were equal to the light emitted by the moon. Some were equal to the light emitted by the sun, some were equal to the light emitted by two suns, some were equal to the light emitted by three suns, some were equal to the light emitted by five suns, and some were equal to the light emitted by a thousand suns. From the bodies of some of those bodhisattvas

radiated light equal to the light emitted by a trillion suns. This far-reaching, brilliant light, which had never been seen or heard of before anywhere in this entire buddha realm of Sahā, pervaded the world. From their bodies radiated a light that brought the most supreme form of bliss to the bodies and minds of sentient beings and provided delight and satisfaction. This light completely pacified all diseases, completely pacified all unwholesome views, completely pacified all kinds of physical depravity, completely pacified all types of hunger and thirst, completely pacified all desires, and completely pacified all forms of aggression, fear, affliction, and bondage. In this buddha realm, this light completely pacified all the fears associated with the suffering experienced in the prison of the three realms.

1.31 At that time, all those sentient beings—who were inclined toward the Buddha and the Dharma and skilled in delighting in the qualities of the Saṅgha—were seated in this buddha realm. [F.94.b] At the same time, this buddha realm became visible, in a radiant, clear, and brilliant manner, from as many buddha realms in the ten directions as there are grains of sand in the Ganges—whether those realms were empty of buddhas or not, whether they were pure or impure. This buddha realm had the radiance, clarity, and brilliance of a hundred thousand moons rising in the darkness of the night. In that way, this buddha realm of Sahā appeared in the most radiant, clear, and brilliant manner in buddha realms of the ten directions as numerous as the grains of sand in the Ganges—whether those realms were empty of buddhas or not, whether they were pure or impure.

1.32 Then, through the power of the Buddha, all bodhisattva great beings present in those different buddha realms who had reached emancipation over the course of a hundred eons, who were endowed with the eighteen unique qualities of the buddhas and skilled in the wisdom that does not depend on anything else, and who had reached fearlessness departed from those places, entered this buddha realm in a single instant of thought, and sat cross-legged upon the earth in their respective ways of abiding. The exact same lights radiated from the bodies of each of those beings who exerted themselves in virtuous endeavors, who had developed the power of virtue, and who were endowed with the causes and conditions of fearlessness.

1.33 Surrounded by his saṅgha of monks, the Blessed One then said to the great hearers, “Look at the power of the domain of concentration! Having used their blessings to overpower the domains of all the māras and nāgas, all the thus-gone ones of the past engaged with this entire buddha realm of Sahā to ensure that the way of the Dharma and the lineage of the Three Jewels remain uninterrupted and illuminated here. [F.95.a] Similarly, a countless and limitless number of bodhisattva great beings—as numerous as

the grains of sand in the Ganges—who revel in the domains of concentration and higher perception are now engaging with this great earth in this buddha realm of Sahā to ensure that the Dharma way remains for a long time and is illuminated; to ensure that the gods, nāgas, yakṣas, asuras, garuḍas, kinnaras, mahoragas, humans, and nonhumans who lack faith develop faith; to ensure that those among them who have faith develop it further and further; to ensure that sentient beings who strive for the Dharma, abide by the Dharma, possess a wealth of qualities, and have developed control over their minds experience happiness and remain free from harm; to ensure that my teachings do not vanish; and to perfect the happiness of emancipation. The bodhisattva great beings are thus reveling in the domains of concentration to bless those goals. In the places where these bodhisattva great beings revel in the domains of concentration, sentient beings who are afraid of saṃsāra’s suffering and wish for nirvāṇa will, now and after I pass away in the future, order the construction of stūpas and build buddha shrines, buddha statues, or repositories for the Dharma. Alternatively, in those places they will write down my teachings in books and carry this Dharma body of mine. In those places they will also engage in different forms of worship and offer a variety of precious substances such as gold, silver, beryl, crystals, [F.95.b] red pearls, emeralds, white corals, jewels, pearls, gemstones, conch shells, moonstones, corals, silken clothes, bells, silk brocades, high-quality cotton fabrics, fine cloths from Vārāṇasī, padded cushions, carpets, parasols, banners, flags, Dharma robes, necklaces, bracelets, perfumes, flowers, incense, and music, and they will express intense veneration, respect, devotion, and reverence.”

- 1.34 At that moment, the Blessed One joined his palms and his ten fingers together and continued: “I will then accept their offerings. In accordance with their inclinations, all those sentient beings will practice the three vehicles in order to reach the level of nonregression. In some lands, they will arrange temples, dwelling places, walking paths, hermitages, parks, and monastic compounds. Alternatively, they will perform or cause others to perform various acts of worship and veneration toward the followers of the hearers’ Dharma by offering Dharma robes, alms, bedding, seats, medicine, and tools. In those temples, walking paths, and hermitages, they will respectfully listen to the Dharma, engage in exegetical discussions about it, and read the scriptures. In those temples, walking paths, and other such places, they will also offer various types of gifts such as offerings stemming from the fields, households, and monastic compounds as well as male and female servants, elephants, horses, camels, oxen, buffaloes, donkeys, and other types of cattle and a variety of containers. [F.96.a] They will dedicate various bedding and seat articles for the use of my hearers who abide by the

Dharma, so that they may attain mental ornaments, mental tools, an assembly of practices, and the supreme happiness of emancipation. They will, now and in the future, offer various types of gifts to benefit my teachings. I will rejoice in and accept all those meritorious deeds manifested through the generosity of those sentient beings, to ensure that they are certain to experience a great result. All those beings will then avoid falling into error and will certainly abandon the three lower realms. Then, in accordance with their inclinations, they will reach the level of nonregression by practicing the three vehicles. As long as they continue in cyclic existence, those beings will never be separated from the two types of enjoyments—the enjoyment of the Dharma and material enjoyment.

1.35 “Now and in the future, whether in mountains, in jungles, under great trees, in the wilderness, or in the woods, there will be monks, nuns, and male and female lay practitioners who strive for liberation, abide by the Dharma, speak few words, observe silence, withdraw into meditative seclusion, engage in proper mental activity, and act in wholesome ways. There will also be gods, nāgas, and yakṣas. For the sake of discipline, monks, look at the power of the domain of concentration! Having overpowered the domains of all the māras and nāgas, the thus-gone ones of the past who resided, thrived, and lived well engaged with this buddha realm of Sahā to ensure that the way of the Dharma remains for a long time [F.96.b] and that the lineage of the Three Jewels remains uninterrupted. Now, a countless and limitless number of bodhisattva great beings have arrived in my buddha realm from other buddha realms of the ten directions as numerous as the grains of sand in the Ganges in order to ask questions, behold me, pay homage to me, worship me, honor me, and hear about the practices of the bodhisattvas who abide by the Dharma and who are endowed with the eye of space and the four correct knowledges. Since they are close to my heart, those bodhisattva great beings are sitting on this earth in states of concentration in order to ensure that the way of the Dharma remains for a long time and that the lineage of the Three Jewels remains uninterrupted; they are engaging with this buddha realm in order to subjugate the domains of the māras out of affection for those sentient beings who are afraid of cyclic existence and exert themselves in generosity.

1.36 “Now and in the future, as long as my teaching and the sacred Dharma, or even a reflection of the sacred Dharma, remain, should immoral monks who engage in negative actions make use of things that have been dedicated to monks who abide by the Dharma—even just a single leaf, fruit, or flower coming from any house, monastic compound, or field or, likewise, any male or female servant—such fools will encounter misfortune and trouble.

1.37 “They will experience four types of harm. What are the four? (1) Great infamy related to them will spread in the ten directions. (2) They will soon be separated from their dear and beloved friends, relatives, kin, preceptors, teachers, and attendants. (3) They will suffer from severe and long-lasting diseases. [F.97.a] (4) Their Dharma robes and alms bowls will be taken away from them by the five great dangers. What are the five? They are (1) kings, (2) thieves, (3) fire, (4) water, and (5) the hostile confiscation of one’s property.

1.38 In their next lives, four undesirable consequences will quickly manifest for such beings. What are the four? (1) After their bodies disintegrate, they will be born within the terrible great hells. (2) When, in a rare combination of circumstances and after a long time has passed, they finally pass away and leave the hell realms, they will be born in a dry and barren wilderness as blind animals or pretas without arms and legs, and for many hundreds of thousands of years they will experience the suffering of the intense torments caused by hunger and thirst. (3) When, in a rare combination of circumstances and after a long time has passed, they then pass away and transmigrate, they will be born for many hundreds of thousands of years as blind poisonous snakes that feed on dust. (4) When, in a rare combination of circumstances and after a long time has passed, they finally pass away and are born among humans, they will achieve the human condition within empty buddha realms ripe with the five degenerations. They will be stupid and ugly, their eyes, arms, and legs will be impaired, and they will crave dog food and feed on excrement. They will sleep in filthy swamps and rubbish heaps and spend their lives in the wilderness, in barren lands, and on highways. Then, after they pass away, they will again be born within the hell realms.

1.39 “Why will they experience such severe undesirable consequences? Because those monks who engage in negative actions steal and use for their own personal enjoyment the houses, fields, monastic compounds, male and female servants, and cattle that have been dedicated to those who abide by the Dharma. [F.97.b] By doing so, those monks who engage in negative actions are exerting themselves to eliminate, destroy, interrupt, and weaken the amazing and marvelous Dharma way of all the blessed buddhas who have appeared. Similarly, they put effort into eliminating, destroying, interrupting, and weakening the lineage of the Three Jewels. Why is it so? Because there are many on the side of virtue and because the Dharma way, as well as the lineage of the Three Jewels, blossoms due to the side of virtue. This is the reason why such severe ripening of undesirable circumstances will manifest to them.”

1.40 At that moment, the elder Gayākāśyapa started to shed tears and said, “Respected Blessed One, it would be permissible to remain unchanged even after achieving a human birth, but that is not the case if one engages in evil behavior for the sake of food and drink after becoming a renunciate!”

1.41 The Blessed One replied, “Thus it is, Mahāgayākāśyapa! Just as you have said, it would be better for beings to remain in the hell realms and exhaust their previous actions than for them to misbehave like that. Yet, there are some fools who have obtained a human birth, which is so hard to find, and received the vows, which are also so hard to obtain, pertaining to going forth and becoming fully ordained monks under the well-spoken Dharma and Vinaya. These are amazing and marvelous conditions that lead to the exhaustion of all suffering and bring an end to all defilements, yet those fools will entertain thoughts about nonvirtuous practices that will instead cause them to be disrespected and go without food and drink. [F.98.a] Due to the strength of their erudition or due to the influence of remaining in households, those monks who engage in negative actions will then steal and misappropriate the resources and possessions—houses, fields, monastic compounds, parks, male and female servants, and cattle—that have otherwise been dedicated to support the side of virtue by faithful members of the kṣatriya class, the brāhmaṇa class, the vaiśya class, and the śūdra class who have all donated this to be used by monks that abide by the Dharma and possess a wealth of qualities. Such will be the evil behavior of those fools.”

1.42 At this point King Bimbisāra asked the Blessed One, “Respected Blessed One, if such undesirable consequences are experienced by ordained monks who steal and use for themselves the resources and possessions that have been dedicated to monks who abide by the Dharma and possess a wealth of qualities, what analogy would illustrate the mass of nonvirtue generated by householders who steal and use for themselves the resources and possessions that have been dedicated to monks who abide by the Dharma?”

1.43 The Blessed One replied, “Tell me, Your Majesty, what is the point of your question?”

“Respected Blessed One, I²² donate resources and possessions to those monks who abide by the Dharma and who possess a wealth of qualities—I do not steal them. However, in the future, there will be members of the kṣatriya class, the brāhmaṇa class, the vaiśya class, and the śūdra class who lack faith and are not afraid of the afterlife. They will steal and use for themselves the resources and possessions that have been dedicated to monks who abide by the Dharma and possess a wealth of qualities. What troubles will they experience?”

- 1.44 “Your Majesty,” replied the Blessed One, [F.98.b] “If I were to describe the misfortunes that will be experienced by those oxen-like beings—whether from the kṣatriya class, the brāhmaṇa class, the vaiśya class, or the śūdra class—who steal and use for themselves the resources and possessions that have been dedicated to those who abide by the Dharma and possess a wealth of qualities, they would reject and disbelieve my words whenever they have the opportunity to hear my teachings. Those beings will experience two types of harm stemming from great terrors that cause ruin.”
- 1.45 King Bimbisāra requested the Blessed One a second time, “Blessed One, please instruct us! Well-Gone One, please instruct us! Respected Blessed One, there will be members of respectable family lineages—from members of the kṣatriya class to śūdras—who are afraid of the afterlife and genuinely uphold and consider the excellent teachings of the Blessed One’s well-spoken Dharma and Vinaya. Blessed One, upon hearing the teachings that stem from the activity of your speech, they will, with utmost strength and diligence, consider and protect the well-spoken teachings of the Victor. They will worship, look after, and protect those who correctly follow these teachings, who abide by the Dharma, and who possess a wealth of qualities. They will not steal from householders or from those who have gone forth. However, respected Blessed One, what troubles will be experienced by those householders who steal and use for themselves the resources and possessions of those who abide by the Dharma?”
- 1.46 “Your Majesty,” replied the Blessed One, “If I were to describe the misfortunes that will be experienced in the future by those oxen-like beings—[F.99.a] from members of the kṣatriya class to śūdras—who steal and use for themselves the resources and possessions that have been dedicated to those who abide by the Dharma and possess a wealth of qualities, they would reject and disbelieve my words whenever they have the opportunity to hear my teachings. Those beings will experience two types of harm stemming from great terrors that cause ruin.”
- 1.47 King Bimbisāra spoke a third time to the Blessed One: “Blessed One, please instruct us! Well-Gone One, please instruct us! Respected Blessed One, there will be members of respectable family lineages—from members of the kṣatriya class to śūdras—who are afraid of the afterlife and genuinely uphold and consider the excellent teachings of the Blessed One’s Dharma and Vinaya. Having heard the teachings that stem from the activity of the Blessed One’s speech, they will, with utmost strength and diligence, consider the well-spoken teachings of the Victor, and they will worship, look after, and protect those who correctly follow these teachings, abide by the

Dharma, and possess a wealth of qualities. They will not steal from householders or from those who have gone forth, and they will not steal the resources and possessions of those who abide by the Dharma.”

1.48 The Blessed One exclaimed, “Excellent, Your Majesty, excellent! Your eloquence is excellent! Your Majesty, in the future, there will be members of the kṣatriya class, the brāhmaṇa class, the vaiśya class, and the śūdra class who steal and rob the offerings related to the houses, fields, monastic compounds, and parks as well as the male and female servants, the bedding, [F.99.b] the seats, the medicine, the tools, and the cattle that have been dedicated to those who abide by the Dharma. All those beings—from the members of the kṣatriya class to śūdras—will soon experience twenty undesirable consequences in their present life. What are the twenty?²³ (1) They will be abandoned by the gods. (2) Their infamy will resound in all the cardinal and intermediate directions. (3) They will be abandoned by their friends and kin. (4) They will have a lot of enemies. (5) Their wealth and valuables will deteriorate. (6) They will have a lot of distractions. (7) Their limbs will be impaired. (8) They will suffer from insomnia. (9) They will constantly be tormented by craving. (10) They will be poisoned by what they eat and drink. (11) They will quickly be separated from their dear and loved ones. (12) They will continuously fight with others. (13) Their fathers, mothers, siblings, spouses, daughters, and male and female servants will not follow their instructions. (14) All their secret mantras, secret riches, secret retinues, and secret possessions will be revealed. (15) Their possessions will be squandered by the five terrors, such as the hostile confiscation of one’s property. (16) They will quickly be struck by severe diseases. (17) They will be without doctors and attendants and will experience the suffering of their flesh and blood drying out. (18) They will die in their excrement and urine. Your Majesty, those are the twenty undesirable consequences that those beings will quickly experience.

1.49 “After they die, those who steal and use for themselves the resources, possessions, and valuables that have been dedicated to the monks who abide by the Dharma [F.100.a] will be born in the great Hell of Unceasing Torment. There, for a lifetime stretching over eons, they will drink molten iron and copper, eat lumps of iron, and experience a variety of intense and unbearable harms while having to use clothes, resources, and belongings made of fire. Once the eons of their lifespans are exhausted, they will pass away and be born on paths within a dry and barren wilderness, with the general fortune of pretas with impaired legs, arms, and eyes. There, scorching winds blowing from the four directions will torture them, and they will experience torment and agony on razor-like grounds. They will undergo those types of suffering for many hundreds of thousands of years. When, in

a rare combination of circumstances, they pass away and transmigrate, they will then be born within the great oceans as creatures with oblong shapes and bodies that measure a hundred leagues. Due to their previous actions, the water surrounding them will be red like molten copper for leagues. In those waters, they will experience the harms of the hell realms for many hundreds of thousands of years. Then, after they pass away, they will be miraculously born into a vast wilderness as creatures with oblong shapes as large as mountains. They will be burned by scorching winds blowing from the four directions, and wild beasts and birds will come to feed on them. If, in a rare combination of circumstances, they pass away and transmigrate, they will then be born into the great hells. Then, after passing away, they will experience such great misfortunes again and again. Considering their condition thoroughly, even if, in a rare combination of circumstances, they are then born with the general fortune of humans, they will be born blind in miserable circumstances, in buddha realms ripe with the five degenerations. [F.100.b] Your Majesty, such are the misfortunes that will be experienced by those who steal the resources, possessions, and valuables that have been dedicated to those who abide by the Dharma."

1.50 At that moment, King Bimbisāra shed tears and said, "Respected Blessed One, such beings will surely have to remain in the hell realms, but how can they achieve a human condition and then engage in such severe nonvirtuous acts while they are humans?"

"Your Majesty," replied the Blessed One, "now and in the future, people will put their trust in you members of the kṣatriya class who abide by the Dharma, so look after them and protect them! You must by all means punish, in accordance with the Dharma, the renunciates or householders who steal the resources, possessions, and valuable belongings that have been dedicated to the monks who abide by the Dharma!"

1.51 "Respected Blessed One," said the king, "if the king does not by all means punish, in accordance with the Dharma, those householders and renunciates who steal the resources, possessions, and valuable belongings that have been dedicated to the monks who abide by the Dharma, and if he remains indifferent toward them, what mass of nonvirtue would that member of the kṣatriya class generate?"

1.52 "Your Majesty," replied the Blessed One, "if a single being were endowed with the entire mass of virtue of all sentient beings, including the hearers and solitary buddhas but not the thus-gone ones, would that sentient being be much more exalted than all the hearers and solitary buddhas, [F.101.a] and would they possess much greater merit?"

The king answered, “Respected Blessed One, that is correct! Respected Blessed One, that being would be much more exalted! Among all the living beings, there are not many who possess much greater merit than all the hearers and solitary buddhas.”

- 1.53 “Your Majesty,” continued the Blessed One, “imagine that all beings were endowed with the mass of merit in possession of this previously mentioned being and that some persons cut the limbs, gouged the eyes, and chopped the ears, noses, hands, and feet of all the living beings. Your Majesty, what do you think? What amount of nonvirtuous, evil actions would such persons generate?”

King Bimbisāra shed tears and remained silent.

- 1.54 The Blessed One insisted, “Answer this question, Your Majesty, answer this question!”

Weeping, the great king Bimbisāra answered, “Respected Blessed One, the persons who would cut the limbs, gouge the eyes, and chop the ears, nose, hands, and feet of a single one of those meritorious sentient beings would generate an uncountable, limitless, unfathomable, and incomparable amount of nonvirtuous, evil actions, so there is no need to speak of what would happen if one were to cut the limbs, gouge the eyes, and chop the ears, noses, hands, and feet of all those meritorious sentient beings!”

- 1.55 “Your Majesty,” continued the Blessed One, [F.101.b] “whether the Thus-Gone One is alive or has passed into nirvāṇa, now and in the future, until the last five hundred years when the sacred Dharma will be about to vanish, if members of the kṣatriya class remain indifferent toward householders and renunciates who steal and rob the resources, possessions, valuable belongings, offerings related to fields and houses, monastic compounds, parks, male and female servants, cattle, Dharma robes, alms, bedding, seats, medicine, and tools that have been dedicated to those who abide by the Dharma and who possess a wealth of qualities, and if they do not order those renunciate and householder thieves to be punished in all possible ways, those members of the kṣatriya class will generate much more nonvirtue. Just as it is for the members of the kṣatriya class, if those who have been appointed as authorities in villages, cities, towns, and countries remain indifferent and do not act against such thieves, all of them will also generate a much greater mass of nonvirtue.”

- 1.56 King Bimbisāra then asked, “Respected Blessed One, the king himself is heavily burdened, and the members of the kṣatriya class live with a great amount of carelessness. Nevertheless, respected Blessed One, if the king, while living carelessly, were to protect those persons who abide by the Dharma and stand up against the evil actions of sentient beings who steal the resources and possessions that have been dedicated to them, and if all

the authorities—from those of villages to those of countries—also stand up against the evil actions of those who rob the resources and possessions that have been dedicated in that way, [F.102.a] what mass of merit will they generate?”

1.57 “Your Majesty,” said the Blessed One, “imagine that all beings were endowed with the mass of merit that I have described before and that they were thrown into a prison where they would be tormented by hunger and thirst. Imagine that some beings then appeared and freed all those meritorious beings from that prison and served them for a full hundred years with offerings of Dharma robes, alms, bedding, seats, medicine, and tools. Your Majesty, what do you think? Would those beings generate a lot of merit on that basis?”

“A lot of merit, respected Blessed One! Respected Well-Gone One, the mass of merit generated by those beings would be immeasurable, limitless, and unfathomable!”

1.58 “Your Majesty,” continued the Blessed One, “now and in the future, until the last five hundred years, if any member of the kṣatriya class or any regional authority acts against the evil actions of people who steal something that has been dedicated to those who abide by the Dharma and who possess a wealth of qualities, they will generate a much greater mass of merit than that.”

1.59 The king then asked, “Respected Blessed One, if not protecting a single monk who abides by the Dharma generates that amount of nonvirtue, does protecting a single one of them generate that same amount of merit?”

“Your Majesty,” replied the Blessed One, “I have not allowed the practice of having only a single individual, or two, or three, or four; instead, Your Majesty, for the purposes of the saṅgha in the four directions, [F.102.b] I have prescribed that in each temple or hermitage there should be at least five monks who abide by the Dharma. I have prescribed that those monks who gather swiftly from the four directions at the sound of the gong should share their resources, possessions, rooms, bedding, seats, food, beverages, medicine, and tools. Even if as many as a hundred thousand monks reside in a single temple or hermitage, I have also prescribed in those places the shared use of all those things—up to and including tools—to those monks who gather swiftly at the sound of the gong. I have prescribed such use to those who are detached, unfettered, and dispassionate, to those who do not sleep but exert themselves during the first and last parts of the night, to those who turn their backs to saṃsāra, to those who focus inwardly on nirvāṇa, to those who do not criticize others, to those who do not praise themselves, to those who are content, to those who engage in ascetic

practices, to those who remain in seclusion, to those who engender diligence, to those who are settled in equipoise, and to those who engage in the applications of mindfulness.

1.60 “Your Majesty, such beings are present within the saṅgha of monks. Your Majesty, by giving away resources and possessions to those beings present within the saṅgha of monks, people generate limitless merit. Your Majesty, when five or more monks reside in a temple or a hermitage, people will acquire limitless merit in relation to such a saṅgha of monks when, at the sound of the gong, they offer resources to those monks who are disciplined, who observe pure discipline, who are apprehensive of the slightest wrongdoing, who teach and recite the discourses related to emptiness that were taught by the Thus-Gone One, who neither criticize others nor praise themselves, [F.103.a] who have abandoned envy and miserliness, who are affectionate toward all sentient beings, and who strive for liberation.

1.61 “Your Majesty, even if a saṅgha of monks consists of the minimum of five members, that saṅgha is referred to as *an ocean-like saṅgha of monks* as long as they observe pure discipline, are perfectly modest and humble, fear wrongdoing related to the next life, and exert themselves in ascetic practices and in the noble lineage. Since even such a saṅgha is said to help and benefit countless humans and liberate all beings from all their suffering, what need is there to mention a saṅgha of monks that consists of ten members or a hundred thousand members? Your Majesty, brāhmaṇas and great householders who are filled with faith will beat the gong in order to serve the saṅgha of monks. Your Majesty, regardless of whether there are few or many monks in that saṅgha who engage in negative actions and pretend to be spiritual practitioners, if there are just five monks in that congregation who abide by the Dharma and observe pure discipline and who are perfectly modest and humble, that saṅgha of monks will possess limitless qualities. That saṅgha is very deserving of generosity and deserves to be worshiped by all gods and humans. Therefore, Your Majesty, I entrust to your hands those monks who abide by the Dharma and who delight in the joy of the Dharma. If, for some reason, any householders or renunciates should threaten or harm them, do not let this happen but protect them!” [F.103.b] [B2]

1.62 King Bimbisāra then asked, “Respected Blessed One, should monks with impaired discipline who engage in negative actions be allowed to reside within the saṅgha? Should they be allowed to use and avail themselves of the sacred Dharma robes, alms, bedding, seats, medicine, and tools?”

1.63 “Your Majesty,” replied the Blessed One, “imagine that one of your senior ministers or important officials, someone appointed by the king, a eunuch, a member of the kṣatriya class, a brāhmaṇa, or a householder were to

transgress the laws of the government and commit crimes. Your Majesty, would you allow such a criminal to join your personal retinue during royal celebrations and festivals and enjoy him or herself, thus delighting and frolicking to his or her heart's content?"

The king replied, "No, Respected Blessed One."

1.64 "Similarly, Your Majesty," continued the Blessed One, "such persons with impaired discipline who engage in negative actions, who are like a rotten tree, who pretend to be spiritual practitioners, and who pretend to observe pure conduct are harming all the blessed buddhas of the past, present, and future. They are not the Blessed One's hearers—they have fallen under the influence of Māra. Those persons are following a degenerate path, and they will not be counted within the saṅgha of hearers in the future—they will not be able to enter it. [F.104.a] It is inappropriate for such people to consume even the husk of a sesame seed that has been dedicated to those monks who abide by the Dharma, so what need is there to speak of them residing within the saṅgha? Those persons will be rejected by the Dharma and Vinaya."

1.65 King Bimbisāra then asked, "Respected Blessed One, what are the signs of behavior through which one knows that monks with impaired discipline who engage in negative actions are henceforth not worthy of remaining, residing, and living among monks who abide by the Dharma?"

1.66 "Your Majesty," replied the Blessed One, "this is not something that can be known immediately by saying 'These are the features through which their impaired discipline becomes apparent.' Nevertheless, Your Majesty, the first of these signs is being disrespectful toward the Buddha as well as the Dharma, the Saṅgha, the preceptors, the teachers, and those who are exalted. It also involves renouncing the noble lineage, not delighting in spiritual contemplations, giving up modesty and humility, associating with householders, engaging in idle gossip, praising oneself, criticizing others, enjoying such behaviors, being caught in the trap of negative actions, following unwholesome paths, being arrogant, being haughty, being petty,²⁴ being conceited, being rude, being a hypocrite, being deceitful, being a cunning spiritual practitioner, being like an indolent monk, talking with the wish to cause disharmony in the saṅgha of monks, delighting in gain, honor, and praise, and enjoying the pleasure of entertainment. However, as long as their impaired discipline has not become apparent, one cannot immediately identify such signs in the monks with impaired discipline who engage in negative actions. [F.104.b] It is when such monks who engage in negative actions take possession of offerings related to houses, fields, and monastic compounds, as well as male and female servants, elephants, horses, camels, donkeys, and sheep, that their impaired discipline becomes apparent. Due to this, those evil monks will be banished from the saṅgha of monks; they will

not be allowed to remain and live there, since they have violated and lost their status as monks, and they will not be able to regain this status in the future.

1.67 “Your Majesty, it is better to reside in the dwelling places of outcastes than to reside with vile and greedy monks who are filled with aggression, who have no consideration for what is beneficial, who reject the afterlife, who lack compassion, who are like great pits filled with excrement, who follow the path of Māra, who harm gods and humans, who deceive all the sages of the three times, who extinguish the Dharma lamp of the lineage of the Three Jewels, who dry up the ocean of the Dharma, who create dissension among Dharma preachers, who deceive almsgivers and benefactors, who hurt monks that abide by the Dharma, and who disrupt the harmony of the Saṅgha. Through their attitude of greed, such evil monks turn the king away from the path that leads to the higher realms, and they will do the same to members of the kṣatriya class and to brāhmaṇas, vaiśyas, śūdras, men, women, boys, and girls. Instead they establish them on the three paths that lead to the lower realms.

1.68 “Your Majesty, behold the amount of distress that those evil monks will generate in gods and humans because of their greed! Your Majesty, the greedy monks and the monks who abide by the Dharma [F.105.a] and possess a wealth of qualities should therefore not reside together in the same monastic compound or the same temples. If they do reside together with those evil, haughty monks who have abandoned modesty and humility, the monks who abide by the Dharma should be loving and mindful in accordance with the Dharma. If those evil monks decide to leave those places, it is excellent, but if they do not, the monks who abide by the Dharma should then summon those members of the kṣatriya class, the brāhmaṇa class, the vaiśya class, and the śūdra class who govern over those cities, towns, villages, countries, or mountain areas. If the members of the kṣatriya class or the brāhmaṇas, vaiśyas, or śūdras expel the evil and greedy monks from those places, the monks who abide by the Dharma should remain there. If it is the case that, for the sake of food, beverages, or gains, the members of the kṣatriya, brāhmaṇa, vaiśya, or śūdra classes should take the side of the evil and greedy monks, the monks who abide by the Dharma should not show any aggression, attachment, or pride. Instead, they should leave those places without saying a word and go live elsewhere in the wilderness, in forests, in hills, or on mountain slopes, where they should remain silent, withdraw into meditative seclusion, and practice correct mental activity.”

1.69 Once again, King Bimbisāra shed tears and exclaimed, “Respected Blessed One, the members of the kṣatriya class, the brāhmaṇa class, the vaiśya class, and the śūdra class who, for the sake of food, beverages, or gains, take the

side of the evil and greedy monks and let the monks who abide by the Dharma and possess a wealth of qualities leave their places are corrupt! [F.105.b] Respected Well-Gone One, they are extremely corrupt! It will be hard for them to achieve a human life again; for those beings who circle in saṃsāra this is the last time to achieve a human life! Even though countless and innumerable blessed buddhas endowed with great compassion—as numerous as the grains of sand in the Ganges—will appear in the world, those sentient beings who do not listen respectfully to the words of the monks who abide by the Dharma will not be liberated from the lower realms or established in the higher realms. Instead, they will possess such negative actions!”

1.70 “Your Majesty,” said the Blessed One, “in the future, there will be members of the kṣatriya class, the brāhmaṇa class, the vaiśya class, and the śūdra class who have strong faith in the monks who abide by the Dharma. They will build hermitages for them. In those temples and hermitages, they will also give offerings of houses and fields, male and female servants, and monastic compounds for their use and enjoyment. After they die, they will be born as members of the kṣatriya class who are like great sal trees, or in other states up to the gods of the sphere of neither perception nor nonperception. They will also be born within pure buddha realms where they will meet blessed buddhas, and before long those almsgivers and benefactors will awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood. They will support the monks who abide by the Dharma under my teachings.

1.71 “Your Majesty, imagine that one of your sons, siblings, [F.106.a] dignitaries, or senior officials were to engage in wrongdoing. Your Majesty, what do you think? While you partake in a variety of joys and pleasures during the celebrations and festivals that you, great king, offer, would that person be able to remain in front of you and feel happy and playful and experience different types of joy and pleasure?”

“No, respected Blessed One,” replied the king, “that person would dare not come in front of me, so there is no need to speak of him feeling happy and playful!”

1.72 “Similarly, Your Majesty,” continued the Blessed One, “if someone takes possession of male and female servants, offerings related to houses and fields, and everything else up to sheep, I am not the teacher of that person, and that person is not my hearer. That person harms all the perfect buddhas of the three times and does not deserve to reside, in accordance with the Dharma, in those places that have been dedicated to those who abide by the Dharma. All the members of the kṣatriya class, the brāhmaṇa class, the vaiśya class, and the śūdra class who benefit those evil and greedy monks and do not make them leave those places also cause great harm to all the blessed

buddhas of the three times. Though they may have performed many acts of generosity, after they die they will be born within the great Hell of Unceasing Torment. Therefore, Your Majesty, since they only consider their own benefit, one should not side with those evil and greedy monks. Why? Because they harm all the gods and humans; [F.106.b] they do not benefit them, they cause them to fall into error, and they destroy the lineage of the Three Jewels.

1.73 “Your Majesty, if members of the kṣatriya class, the brāhmaṇa class, the vaiśya class, and the śūdra class remain on the side of the teaching of the monks who abide by the Dharma, and if they do not side with evil monks, even if they have not performed acts of generosity, since they side with the Dharma they are sublime benefactors of all the blessed buddhas of the three times. Since they protect the sacred Dharma, they should be regarded as the sacred upholders of the sacred Dharma. After they die they will be born within pure buddha realms, and before long they will awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood. Therefore, Your Majesty, wholesome member of the kṣatriya class, I entrust to you and place in your hands the followers of the Dharma and its teachings. Until the last five hundred years, support my Dharma followers! Thereby, my Dharma way and the lineage of the Three Jewels will endure for a long time, and the gods and humans will be benefited and experience happiness.”

1.74 Then King Bimbisāra asked the Blessed One, “Respected Blessed One, what are the criteria for someone to be called *an attendant*?”

“Your Majesty,” replied the Blessed One, “I have authorized two types of monks to be attendants. What are those two? They are worthy ones who cultivate the eight aspects of liberation and monks in training who have entered the stream. Your Majesty, I have authorized those two types of monks to perform the function of attendants.” [F.107.a]

1.75 *This concludes the chapter called “The Protection of the Sacred Dharma,” the first among the eleven chapters included in “The Quintessence of the Sun,” the Great Vehicle discourse of The Great Assembly.*

2.

Chapter Two

THE MESSENGERS

2.1

When the Blessed One had begun this discourse with King Bimbisāra on how to protect all those monks who abide by the Dharma, in the eastern direction, beyond countless buddha realms as numerous as the grains of sand in the Ganges, there was a world called Absence of Torment, where the thus-gone, worthy, perfect Buddha Campaka Color was residing, thriving, living well, and teaching the Dharma. In that buddha realm, the bodhisattva great being named Quintessence of the Sun's Energy was sitting in the assembly of the blessed thus-gone Campaka Color in order to listen to the Dharma. At one point, as the bodhisattva great being Quintessence of the Sun's Energy looked upward, he saw in the sky above that innumerable and countless bodhisattva great beings were departing from the east and proceeding toward the west. When he looked toward the west where those bodhisattva great beings were going, he saw a brilliant light. At that moment, he bowed down with his palms joined together in the direction of the Buddha Campaka Color and asked, "Respected Blessed One, I have seen in the sky above that innumerable and countless bodhisattva great beings are departing from the east and proceeding toward the west. I have also seen a brilliant light in the western direction. Why is this so?" [F.107.b]

2.2

The thus-gone Campaka Color replied to the bodhisattva great being Quintessence of the Sun's Energy, "Noble son, in the western direction, beyond countless buddha realms as numerous as the grains of sand in the Ganges, in a place ripe with the five degenerations, there is a buddha realm called Sahā, where the thus-gone, worthy, perfect Buddha Śākyamuni resides, thrives, and lives well. To ensure that the Dharma way and the lineage of the Three Jewels endure for a long time and that those who abide by the Dharma remain without interruption, he delivers to a great assembly Dharma teachings that are the gateways to the ascertainment of the three vehicles. He has gathered an assembly in that buddha realm of Sahā in order

to destroy the domain of the māras, to cause them to lose their power, to raise the banner of the Dharma, and to ensure that the Dharma way endures for a long time. There, all the thus-gone ones have uttered the dhāraṇī mantra called *jewel crest* and then left after having engaged with that buddha realm. The thus-gone Śākyamuni has gathered a great assembly of bodhisattva great beings and great hearers. They possess the three eyes that are endowed with the four correct knowledges, and they display the sublime states. This retinue distinctly fills the earth and the sky of the buddha realm of Sahā, and it is insatiable with respect to the sacred Dharma teachings revealed by the thus-gone Śākyamuni.

2.3 “At one point, the thus-gone Śākyamuni, who is endowed with the most delightful voice, wished to explain the four means of attracting disciples, the practice of the Dharma of *The Quintessence of the Sun*, the section on the light rays that destroy the nāgas, the dhāraṇī mantra that exhausts the karmic actions of sentient beings. So he formed the following wish: [F.108.a] ‘May all bodhisattva great beings who are practicing the six perfections within all the buddha realms of the ten directions—those who have reached emancipation over a hundred eons, who possess the eighteen unique qualities, who are not led astray by others, who have reached the level of nonregression, and who are experts in unobstructed wisdom—come to this buddha realm of Sahā! Once they have assembled here, may they employ their individual virtuous qualities and concentrations so that in this buddha realm this great earth may become highly favorable and nourishing and so that beings may be endowed with qualities, recall, diligence, and generosity—just as in other buddha realms!’

2.4 “This is why the bodhisattva great beings who have entered that buddha realm of Sahā are now sitting there absorbed in concentration in accordance with their own appropriate virtuous qualities, and this is why light is now radiating from the bodies of some of those meditators, as if from oil lamps. From the bodies of some of the others radiate light rays like the light emitted by many hundreds of thousands of suns and moons. The brilliant light emitted by the gathering of those numerous bodhisattva great beings is now pervading the buddha realm of Sahā. All those bodhisattva great beings who have arrived from all the buddha realms of the ten directions, none of whom had ever gone there before, arose from their absorptions and departed for the buddha realm of Sahā. Having arrived, they are now sitting cross-legged and revel in their individual concentrations. They pay homage to the thus-gone Śākyamuni and serve him, and they behold his great assembly. There, they also listen to the practice of the Dharma of *The Quintessence of the Sun*, [F.108.b] the section on the light rays that destroy the nāgas, the dhāraṇī mantra that exhausts the karmic actions of sentient beings.

2.5 “Noble son, since you have arisen from your absorption, you should, noble son, go to the Sahā world! Noble son, in that buddha realm of Sahā, sentient beings are bound by intense craving—they are referred to as *those who have fallen into craving*. In that buddha realm, women are unattractive and ugly, yet they are extremely conceited in terms of their appearance. They are smelly and unclean yet conceited due to their obsession with cleanliness. They are two-faced and lying yet proud of their pure conduct. They are stupid yet proud of their skills. They are miserly yet proudly consider themselves generous. They are unfaithful yet proudly consider themselves faithful. They are hypocritical and deceitful yet proudly consider themselves honest. They are envious yet proudly consider themselves free from envy. They are malicious yet proudly consider themselves loving. They create divisions yet proudly consider themselves harmonious. They have wrong views yet proudly consider their views to be correct. Even sacred beings who are great scholars, who possess magical powers, who revel in the higher perceptions, and who have trained in concentration can be overpowered by women in an instant. Through the faults of women, all their roots of virtue will be destroyed, and they will go to the lower realms and be born as hell beings.

2.6 “Noble son, if you would like to bring my words to the Sahā world in order to convey them to the thus-gone Śākyamuni, these words of mine will instill faith in the practice of the Dharma of *The Quintessence of the Sun*, the section on the light rays that destroy the domain of the nāgas, [F.109.a] the dhāraṇī mantra that exhausts the karmic actions of sentient beings. For that I shall confer the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the truth. It is powerful and very beneficial. It exhausts all forms of attachment associated with the desire realm, the form realm, and the formless realm as well as all forms of pride, special pride, and pride that thinks ‘I am.’ It exhausts all forms of longing, covetousness, excitement, and ignorance. It exhausts the views related to the transitory collection, all the extremist views, all doubts, all the views that consider discipline and disciplined conduct to be supreme, and all the views of permanence and nihilism, as well as all the views related to sentient beings, obscurations, living beings, persons, creators, feeling subjects, forms, sounds, smells, tastes, textures, great marvels, birth, and abiding. This acceptance that accords with the truth induces complete and genuine understanding of all the aggregates, from the aggregate of form up to the aggregate of consciousness. It induces complete and genuine understanding of all the faculties, from the eye faculty up to the mind faculty. [F.109.b] It induces genuine understanding and abandonment of all the

aggregates, the elements, and the sense sources. It liberates from desire related to any phenomenon, and it reveals the complete happiness of emancipation.

- 2.7 “Why will I do so? Because in those lands there are sentient beings who are like blind creatures, who are completely dull, who are like sheep, and who are intoxicated by sensual desire. This acceptance that accords with the truth eliminates all the views of those sentient beings and provides them with inexhaustible enjoyment. This acceptance that accords with the truth is the steadfast treasure of the entire Dharma. It subjugates all māras and enemies by converting them to the inconceivable Dharma, and it destroys the domain of all the māras. Furthermore, noble son, this acceptance that accords with the truth annihilates the māras and defeats the nāgas. It delights the gods, it pleases the hearts of the yakṣas, it causes the asuras to run away, it frightens the garuḍas, it generates faith in the kinnaras, and it terrifies the mahoragas. It subjugates the enemies, it generates sincere faith in the members of the kṣatriya class, it attracts the brāhmaṇas, and it pleases the vaiśyas and the śūdras. It frees women from their desires, it engenders weariness in the scholars, it delights the spiritual practitioners, and it cures all diseases. It pacifies and eliminates all struggle, famine, untimely death, hostile armies, untimely storms, untimely rain and flooding, untimely hurricanes, [F.110.a] untimely warm weather, snow, and heat waves, and it softens and purifies all substances that are harsh, rough, and hard to touch. It expands direct perception,²⁵ clarifies the way of the sacred Dharma, ensures that the lineage of the Three Jewels remains uninterrupted, and causes one to adhere to the teachings of the Buddha. It provides relief to those who are afraid of saṃsāra, generates the knowledge of exhaustion, causes one to realize the knowledge of the unborn, overcomes all the dense darkness of ignorance, and removes the burden of suffering.

- 2.8 *syād yathedaṃ: vayeṇāparivāre vāheṇāparivāre pṛthave pṛthavāparivāre āve āva parivāre tejetejāparivāre mālemālaparivāre khagekhagaparivāri āloke āloka parivāre sthāmeshthāmaparivāre rījerijāparivāre silesilāparivāre gamegamāparivāre āvopa avopāparivāre mālāmalama lamalama rālarālama vijñānabhūtagrahe bhūtagrahāparivāre cakṣugrahāparivāre śotragrahe śotragrahāparivāre ghrāṇagrahe grāṇagrahāparivāre jīhvāgrahe jīhvāgrahāparivāre kāyagrahe kāyagrahāparivāre mangrahe mangrahāparivāre sparśagrahe sparśagrahāparivāre vedanāgrahe vedanāgrahāparivāre tṛṣṇāgraha tṛṣṇāgrahāparivāre upādānagrahe upādānagrahāparivāre bhāvagrahe bhāvagrahāparivāre jātigrāhe jātigrāhāparivāre jaramaraṇagrahe jaramaraṇagrahāparivāre duḥkhas antapānagrahe duḥkhas antapānagrahāparivāre ārapāradvijagrahe ārapāradvijagrahāparivāre avṛtavivṛtasya avaramupamasasya vegavini vṛti āryar asmi saṃvegaśānti svāhā.*

- 2.9 “Noble son, with this practice of the Dharma of *The Quintessence of the Sun*, the section on the light rays that destroy the nāgas, [F.110.b] the dhāraṇī that exhausts the karmic actions of sentient beings, I will instill faith in others and confer upon them the acceptance that accords with the truth. Therefore, arise, and go to the buddha realm of Sahā! Present my words to the thus-gone Śākyamuni. Ask him if he has any ills or problems and whether he is healthy and well. Tell him, ‘In the eastern direction, beyond countless buddha realms as numerous as the grains of sand in the Ganges, there is a world called Absence of Torment. In that buddha realm, the thus-gone Campaka Color resides, thrives, lives well, and teaches the Dharma. That thus-gone one has sent me here to ask these questions to the Blessed One: “Respected Blessed One, are you well and free from ills? Are the members of your retinue comfortable and in good health? Are they eager to listen to the sacred Dharma? Do they apply the Dharma in the way they hear it? Do they persevere in the Dharma? Do they abide by the Dharma? Are the domains of the māras and the nāgas subjugated in your buddha realm? Is this the domain of the Buddha alone? Are you turning the Dharma wheel without obstruction in this place?” For those who turn a wheel of non-Dharma in this buddha realm, the thus-gone Campaka Color instills faith by granting the practice of the Dharma of *The Quintessence of the Sun*, the section on the light rays that destroy the nāgas, the dhāraṇī mantra that exhausts the karmic actions of sentient beings. He confers upon them this powerful and beneficial dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the truth. It exhausts all forms of attachment associated with the desire realm, the form realm, [F.111.a] and the formless realm. [...] ²⁶ It overcomes all the dense darkness of ignorance, and it removes the burden of suffering.’ ”
- 2.10 The bodhisattva great being Quintessence of the Sun’s Energy then said, “Respected Blessed One, when I consider this beneficial acceptance that accords with the Dharma and is filled with qualities, I am utterly afraid to go to the buddha realm of Sahā! Why? Because I have just heard about that realm from the Blessed One, and I am now aware that in the buddha realm of Sahā sentient beings are predominantly under the influence of desire and like blind persons. There, the women are unattractive and ugly yet extremely conceited in terms of their appearance. [...] Even sacred beings who are great scholars, who have trained in concentration, and who revel in the higher perceptions can be overpowered by women. Through the faults of women, all their roots of virtue will be destroyed, and they will go to the lower realms and be born as hell beings.”
- 2.11 The blessed thus-gone Campaka Color replied to the bodhisattva great being Quintessence of the Sun’s Energy, “Noble son, you do not speak for your own sake, and you do not act for your own benefit. Noble son, you

speaking and acting for the sake of all sentient beings. Noble son, who is the lay practitioner named Vimalakīrti who appears in the buddha realm of Sahā, within the retinue of the thus-gone Śākyamuni? [F.111.b] Is that not you?"

He remained silent.

2.12 "In that buddha realm and in countless trillions of buddha realms in between, I, the thus-gone Campaka Color, also sometimes manifest in the physical form of Brahmā to ripen beings. To ripen beings, I sometimes manifest in the physical form of Īśvara, of a spiritual practitioner, of Śakra, of a god, of the lord of the nāgas, of the lord of the asuras, of the lord of the garuḍas, of the lord of kinnaras, of the lord of humans, of a solitary buddha, of a hearer, of a member of the kṣatriya class, of a brāhmaṇa, of a householder, of a woman, of a boy, of a girl, of an animal, of a preta, and of a hell being.

2.13 "There are eighty thousand bodhisattva great beings in this retinue who are absorbed in attainment and arise from that state together with me. In this retinue, there are also some bodhisattvas whose minds are wavering and unsettled, and they strongly wish to behold the thus-gone Śākyamuni, to pay homage to him, to serve him, and to behold his great assembly. They also strongly wish to hear The Great Assembly from the thus-gone Śākyamuni. [F.112.a] However, those bodhisattvas only want to go there together with me. It would be improper if they were deceived by sensual desires there and if they were to go there and act in ways that make them unworthy to be my followers, so I will now speak for their benefit."

2.14 The thus-gone Campaka Color then said to the bodhisattva Quintessence of the Sun's Energy, "Noble son do not be afraid! Do not be afraid! Sacred being, I will confer upon you the dhāraṇī mantra called *lotus of sunlight*, through which one will develop intense aversion for the entire prison of the three realms; one will reach, perfect, and abide by the gateway of liberation, the absorption of the absence of marks; one will enter unwavering absorption; and one will thoroughly pass into nirvāṇa. This dhāraṇī mantra accomplishes all physical feelings and perceptions as well as the level of gaining control and liberation. It accomplishes the elimination of the ocean of saṃsāra and the removal of obstructions to the lineage of the Three Jewels. It accomplishes great love, great compassion, liberated insight, the subjugation of all māras and enemies, the knowledge of exhaustion, and the knowledge of the unborn, as well as enjoyment, life energy, peace, and lasting nirvāṇa.

2.15 "Noble son, all afflictions, such as desire, will diminish in those who listen one-pointedly to this *sunlight* dhāraṇī mantra, and after they die they will circle for seven lifetimes among the gods. There they will remember their former lives and will not be sullied by desires. [F.112.b] They will become

sages among the gods, worthy to be worshiped by them. After they die, they will circle for seven lifetimes among the humans, without being sullied by desires. They will become sages among the humans, worthy to be revered and worshiped by all the gods and humans. Those who listen one-pointedly to this *sunlight* dhāraṇī mantra seven times will, after they die, be born seven times among the gods, as sages endowed with the five higher perceptions and worthy to be revered and worshiped by all the gods. Then, they will be born seven times among the humans, as sages endowed with the five higher perceptions and worthy to be revered and worshiped by the gods, the nāgas, the yakṣas, the asuras, the humans, and the nonhumans. Noble son, all the gods and goddesses who recite seven times this dhāraṇī mantra *lotus of sunlight* to gatherings of gods in the god realms and listen to it one-pointedly will disregard all the pleasures of the five senses and delight in concentration. In this world, if someone whispers it seven times in the ears of kings, of members of the kṣatriya class, or of brāhmaṇas, vaiśyas, or śūdras, and if they listen to it one-pointedly, they will all disregard all the pleasures of the five senses and delight in concentration. Noble son, a woman who listens to this dhāraṇī mantra *lotus of sunlight* and contemplates it or recites it for seven days without doing anything else will, [F.113.a] accordingly, experience a diminution of all her afflictions, such as desire. It will be the last time she is born with a female body, and she will not regress on the path to unsurpassed and perfect awakening. From then on, until she reaches unsurpassed parinirvāṇa, she will never again be born with a female body while circling in saṃsāra—unless she wishes to. Noble son, if people create a cooling balm by reciting this dhāraṇī mantra *lotus of sunlight* seven times, anoint great drums or conch shells with it, and then beat these drums or blow in these conch shells, the potency of the curses directed at humans will be annihilated anywhere the sound reaches. No torments related to medicines, envoys, words, mental activity, physical transformation, pretense, bondage, the body, or the heart will be experienced, and fruits will manifest without doing any work. Noble son, the dhāraṇī mantra *lotus of sunlight* thus possesses great miraculous powers.

- 2.16 *tadyathā: siddhamate vilokamate eleketereṣe rūcisurūci buddhevibuddhe mahābuddhe unmadte unmadta pratiṣedhane ragadhuragadhuva pratiṣedhanebindu bindumate ciṭacitapraṭiṣedhani arkacandra adhe hatacid atihataniirmi hatakāmaṇe hatapaunabhaviraje hatac kṣusamate hatavitamabuddhe hatayāgre hatavisamāgre hatasumudracave hatavitamāraje hatatite hatadharmacacate hatadharmarāje hata-vahurāje hatapavarjamati hataugharaśmi hatadharmasiddhi hatasarva upadhana-jñājñājñā vijñājñājñā rivijñājñājñā sarvamārgajñājñā eṣa antasaṃsāraduḥkhe svāhā.*

2.17 “Noble son, remembering this dhāraṇī mantra that dries up all the rivers of desire and leads to the other shore of emancipation, [F.113.b] proceed to the Sahā world! Since you have already overcome all the demonic hooks of desire through your courage and heroic exertion with the objects, no one is able to sully your body or mind with the fetters of desire. So go to the buddha realm of Sahā and apply this dhāraṇī mantra as you have heard it! In that place, surely none of the billions of māras will be able to sully you with the stench of desire through the use of any mantras, medicines, or doctrines—just as no god or human can do so!”

2.18 At that moment, the bodhisattva great being Quintessence of the Sun’s Energy and all the other myriads of bodhisattvas and divine beings as well as the gods and humans exclaimed with amazement and astonishment, “The wisdom vision of the blessed buddhas and the level of mastery they have attained are amazing! They are truly amazing! We have never before heard this dhāraṇī mantra that completely destroys the torments of desire!”

2.19 Within the retinue, there were eighty-four thousand goddesses and girls who listened to this dhāraṇī mantra with reverence. As soon as they heard it their female genitals disappeared, they developed male genitals, and they all reached nonregression on the path to unsurpassed and perfect awakening.

2.20 The thus-gone Campaka Color then held up a garland of campaka flowers and said to the bodhisattva great being Quintessence of the Sun’s Energy, “O noble son, take this garland of campaka flowers along with the dhāraṇī mantra *lotus of sunlight* and the acceptance that accords with the truth. [F.114.a] Bring to that place those two dhāraṇīs which clear away desire like a flash of lightning, as well as the Dharma gateway. Once there, please convey my words to the thus-gone Śākyamuni and ask him if he has any ills or problems and whether he is healthy and well. Tell him ‘The thus-gone Campaka Color is inquiring whether you, respected Blessed One, are well and free from ills. Do the members of your retinue listen to you with respect? Are they eager for the Dharma? Do they abide by the Dharma? Do they persevere in the Dharma? That thus-gone one causes others to develop faith in those dhāraṇīs which clear away afflictions in all buddha regions, and in the Dharma gateway. He confers those powerful and beneficial dhāraṇī mantras—the Dharma gateways that clear away desire like a flash of lightning. They exhaust all forms of attachment associated with the desire realm and the form realm. [...] They overcome all the dense darkness of ignorance, and they remove the burden of suffering.’ ” [B3]

The bodhisattva great being Quintessence of the Sun’s Energy replied, “Respected Blessed One, I shall do so!”

2.21 Also, at that moment, eighty thousand bodhisattvas exclaimed in unison, “Respected Blessed One, we also wish to behold the thus-gone Śākyamuni, pay homage to him, worship him, revere him, and behold his great assembly, so we also wish to go. From that thus-gone one we wish to hear The Great Assembly, the Dharma gateway that clears away afflictions in all the buddha regions!”

 The thus-gone Campaka Color replied to them, [F.114.b] “Noble sons, in that case, all of you proceed together while assuming the appearance, look, hue, shape, and behavior of mahābrahmās!”

2.22 At that moment, the bodhisattva Quintessence of the Sun’s Energy and all the myriads of other bodhisattvas emanated bodies with the appearance, look, hue, shape, and behavior of mahābrahmās. They prostrated to the feet of the thus-gone Campaka Color and circumambulated him three times. Then they departed, and in a single instant they arrived in the buddha realm of Sahā. Immediately upon arriving, those sacred beings showered a rain of campaka flowers everywhere in the buddha realm of Sahā in order to worship the Blessed One. They then proceeded toward Magadha and the place where the blessed thus-gone Śākyamuni was residing. When they arrived there, they prostrated to the feet of the Blessed One and sat to one side. Up to that moment, the Blessed One had been engaged in a discourse with King Bimbisāra about how to abide by the Dharma.

2.23 At that time, in the southern direction, beyond buddha realms as numerous as the grains of sand needed to fill a city one league square, there was a world ripe with the five degenerations called Banner of Degeneration, where the thus-gone, worthy, perfect Buddha King of the Lord of Mountains was residing. He thrived, lived well, and taught the Dharma. At that point there was a bodhisattva great being named Gandhahastin present in his assembly. In the sky above he saw an innumerable and limitless number of bodhisattvas departing from the south and proceeding toward the north. [F.115.a] As he looked in the direction in which those bodhisattva great beings were going, he saw a brilliant light. He then questioned the thus-gone King of the Lord of Mountains, who replied to him in the same way as before: “Noble son, beyond buddha realms as numerous as the grains of sand needed to fill a city one league square, there is a world called Sahā, where the thus-gone Śākyamuni resides. He thrives, lives well, and teaches the Dharma. In that place, there is now a great assembly in which that thus-gone one reveals Dharma teachings that are the gateways to the ascertainment of the three vehicles, in order to ensure that the Dharma way remains for a long time, to ensure that the lineage of the Three Jewels remains uninterrupted, to ensure that those who abide by the Dharma remain without interruption, to destroy the domain of the māras, and to raise

the banner of the Dharma. There, all the thus-gone ones have recited the dhāraṇī mantra called *jewel crest* and then left. The thus-gone Śākyamuni has gathered a great assembly of bodhisattva great beings and hearers who possess the three eyes that are endowed with the four correct knowledges and who display the sublime states. This retinue distinctly fills the earth and the sky of the buddha realm of Sahā, and it is insatiable with respect to the Dharma teachings of the thus-gone Śākyamuni, who is endowed with the most delightful voice.

- 2.24 “Noble son, if you would like to bring my words to the Sahā world in order to convey them to the thus-gone Śākyamuni, [F.115.b] there these words of mine will instill faith in the practice of the Dharma of *The Quintessence of the Sun*, the section on the light rays that destroy the domain of the nāgas, the dhāraṇī mantra that exhausts the karmic actions of sentient beings. There, I will confer this powerful and beneficial dhāraṇī mantra that accords with emptiness. It exhausts all forms of attachment associated with the desire realm, the form realm, and the formless realm, as well as all forms of pride, special pride, and pride that thinks ‘I am.’ [...] It generates the knowledge of exhaustion, causes one to realize the knowledge of the unborn, overcomes all the dense darkness of ignorance, and removes the entire burden of suffering.

- 2.25 *tadyathā: dhumate dhumate akṣidhumate prabhāsadhūmate sarvākāśadhūmate avavṛkṣakhaga vimānakhaga avamohakhaga ananyakhaga vyavavṛdatikhaga arocānakhaga animākhaga lokakhaga śikhikhaga vitimirakhaga namokhaga akṣikhaga śrotrakhaga ghrāṇakhaga jivvākhaga kāyakhaga manakhaga rūpakhaga śaptakhaga gandhakhaga rasakhaga sparśakhaga dharmakhaga cakṣurdhātukhaga rūpadhātukhaga cakṣurvijñānadhātukhaga yāpadmanadhātukhaga dharmadhātukhaga manvijñānadhātukhaga pṛthavidhātukhaga apadhātukhaga tejodhātukhaga vāyudhātukhaga caturanusmṛtyupasthānakhaga yāvadvēṇikakhaga yāvadvāgakhaga abhikṣipā ananana vanana samudranana sarvakaranana sarvasaṃskara viśeṣanana kinacananana kṣataḥṣata ilimili iiiilimile svāhā.*

- 2.26 “Noble son, this is the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with emptiness. [F.116.a] It is very powerful and beneficial. It exhausts all forms of attachment associated with the desire realm and the form realm, and [...] it removes the burden of suffering. Arise, and go to the buddha realm of Sahā! Present my words to the thus-gone Śākyamuni and ask him if he has any ills. [...] For those who turn a wheel of non-Dharma in this buddha realm, the thus-gone King of the Lord of Mountains instills faith by granting the practice of the Dharma of *The Quintessence of the Sun*, the section on the light rays that destroy the nāgas, the dhāraṇī mantra that exhausts the karmic actions of sentient beings. He confers this powerful and beneficial dhāraṇī mantra that

accords with emptiness. It exhausts all forms of attachment associated with the desire realm and the form realm, and [...] it removes the entire burden of suffering.”

2.27 The bodhisattva great being Gandhahastin said, “Respected Blessed One, when I consider the benefits of the qualities and emptiness that are related to this dhāraṇī mantra that accords with emptiness, I am afraid to go to the buddha realm of Sahā! Why is it so, respected Blessed One? Because I have heard and understood what the Blessed One said: that in that buddha realm of Sahā, sentient beings are predominantly under the influence of intense desire; [...] due to the faults of women, all beings’ roots of virtue will deteriorate, and they will go to the lower realms and be born as hell beings.” [F.116.b]

2.28 The thus-gone King of the Lord of Mountains then said to the bodhisattva great being Gandhahastin, “The sky has three conditions. Due to those three conditions, it is always beautiful, it is unafflicted by snow, and it does not dry up the rivers. When the body has three conditions present—expertise, acceptance, and restraint—the stormy river of ignorance will not afflict the six sense faculties.²⁷ You are speaking like a child. Because of those three circumstances you are liberated from all rivers. These three circumstances reveal the nonexistence of sentient beings and the Dharma that removes the burden of the aggregates. You have cultivated the thirteen types of acceptance of the unborn nature of phenomena and abandoned all fears, so why do you say that you are afraid? Sometimes you assume the physical form of Brahmā to liberate beings in other buddha realms. At other times you manifest in many other buddha realms, in the physical forms of Maheśvara, Śakra, Nārāyaṇa, gods, yakṣas, lords of the nāgas, asuras, universal monarchs, doctors, members of the kṣatriya class, brāhmaṇas, hearers, [...] or ministers. You constantly manifest within afflicted buddha realms to purify buddha realms, so why do you say that you are afraid of ripening sentient beings?

2.29 “Noble son, I will now reveal to you the teaching of *the inexhaustible core*. It fulfills all wishes, it attracts omniscient wisdom, it subjugates the four māras, it eliminates all obstructions to the lineage of the Three Jewels, it produces the light rays that destroy the entire domain of the nāgas, [F.117.a] it exhausts all karmic actions of sentient beings, it produces great love, it brings sentient beings to maturity, it lets one take rebirth in the lower realms intentionally and with great compassion, it protects sentient beings, it pleases the minds of all beings, it reverses all wrong paths, views, desires, aspirations, and vehicles of all beings, it liberates all beings from the lower realms, it liberates all women and causes them to obtain male bodies, it causes all sections of the Dharma to become inexhaustible, it eliminates all

miserliness, it causes all types of absorption and higher perceptions to become inexhaustible, it generates faith in all beings, it establishes them on the path of the bodhisattvas, it transforms the vehicle of the hearers and the vehicle of conditions, [...] and it accomplishes unsurpassed parinirvāṇa. Such is the teaching of *the inexhaustible core*. Merely by hearing it, all the karmic obscurations of sentient beings, as well as all their other obscurations—as numerous as the grains of sand in the Ganges—that cause them to block, discard, and disregard all roots of virtue and prevent their fulfillment and practice, will be immediately exhausted. The fruition of these obscurations will not manifest, except for that of the karmic actions generated by the acts of immediate retribution, the rejection of the sacred Dharma, and the denigration of noble beings.

2.30 “Noble son, joy, faith, and understanding will develop in those who listen one-pointedly to this teaching of *the inexhaustible core* even a single time. [F.117.b] All the karmic obscurations of those sentient beings, as well as all their other obscurations—as numerous as the grains of sand in the Ganges—that cause them to block, discard, and disregard all roots of virtue and prevent their fulfillment and practice, will be immediately exhausted. The fruition of these obscurations will not manifest. No matter how they engage in the roots of virtue, if they undertake the practice of the perfection of generosity, they will be blessed by all buddhas, by all bodhisattvas, by all circumstantial victors, and by all worthy ones. Their households will experience inexhaustible enjoyments. If they are themselves proper vessels with body, speech, and mind undefiled by miserliness, and if they practice generosity without apprehension and with minds free of contempt for the recipients of generosity, even if they give away their head—their most sacred limb, no one in the world with its gods and humans will be able to create obstacles for them, unless they have committed the acts of immediate retribution, rejected the sacred Dharma, or denigrated noble beings.

2.31 “If they are diligent in undertaking the practice of the perfection of discipline, if they please the noble beings and receive their blessings, and if they abide by pure discipline, patience, and certainty, they will be worthy to be trusted and revered by Śakra, Brahmā, and all the protectors of the world. They will also be worthy to be revered by all the members of the kṣatriya class, the brāhmaṇas, the vaiśyas, and the śūdras. They will spend their days and nights without criticizing others or praising themselves and without clinging to personal gains and honor. They will sleep well, wake up refreshed, and experience few discomforts, and food and beverages will be available for them immediately and in great quantity. They will be compassionate and altruistic toward all beings [F.118.a] and will exert themselves in meaningful endeavors. Later, when they die, in the ten

directions they will see blessed buddhas who will give them this advice: 'Excellent, sublime being, excellent! Your discipline is faultless, so please come here to my pure realm! I will establish you on the ten levels.' Due to their vision of the buddhas, noble joy and faith will arise in them. After they die, they will be born into pure buddha realms where buddhas are present, and there they will quickly reach the ten levels. Once they abide on the ten levels, they will then swiftly awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood.

2.32 "If, when they hear this teaching of *the inexhaustible core*, those persons immediately cultivate the perfection of diligence, they will be endowed with generosity, pleasant speech, the ability to benefit, diligence that accords with one's aim, strength, enthusiasm, intelligence, and sacred courage. They will be worthy to be trusted, worshiped, revered, remembered, pleased, and protected by all the lords of the gods, nāgas, yakṣas, asuras, garuḍas, kinnaras, mahoragas, and humans, [...] and they will swiftly awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood.

2.33 "If, when they hear this teaching of *the inexhaustible core*, those persons immediately cultivate the perfection of patience, they will be free from all beings, they will be endowed with nonapprehension, [F.118.b] they will be blessed by noble beings, and they will achieve the acceptance that focuses on the Dharma. Even if their main and secondary limbs are cut off, not a single instant of anger will arise in them, and they will renounce all forms of aggression. They will be worthy to be trusted by everyone, from the lords of the gods to the lords of the humans, [...] and they will swiftly awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood.

2.34 "Similarly, if, when they hear this teaching of *the inexhaustible core*, those persons immediately cultivate the perfection of concentration, they will be swiftly blessed by noble beings and achieve the concentration that focuses on the Dharma, and they will achieve liberation, and formless attainment, as well as trillions of gateways to absorption, dhāraṇī, and acceptance. They will always be considered by all the buddhas. Everyone—from the lords of the gods to the lords of the humans—will think about them, and they will deserve their trust. [...] They will swiftly awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood.

2.35 "Noble son, those who listen one pointedly to this teaching of *the inexhaustible core* even a single time will give rise to intense joy, faith, and comprehension. All their karmic obscurations, mental obscurations, obscurations to the Dharma, and afflictive obscurations—as numerous as the grains of sand in the Ganges—that cause them to block, discard, and disregard all roots of virtue and prevent their fulfillment and practice will be

exhausted. The fruition of these obscurations will not manifest, except for that of the karmic actions generated by the acts of immediate retribution, the rejection of the sacred Dharma, and the denigration of noble beings. [F.119.a]

2.36 “When they cultivate the perfection of insight of the noble ones, they will be blessed by all buddhas, bodhisattvas, solitary buddhas, and worthy ones, and they will enjoy remaining in seclusion. The qualities through which they purify and perfect the faculty of insight of the noble ones will arise within their minds and mental states. They will comprehend all phenomena and eliminate and transcend all doubts. The world with its gods and asuras will not be able to harm them, and they will be worthy to be trusted, remembered, pleased, worshiped, revered, and protected by all the lords of the gods, yakṣas, asuras, garuḍas, kinnaras, and humans. Later, when they die, in the ten directions they will behold familiar blessed buddhas who will extend them a hand and say, ‘Sacred being, come here and stay in my pure buddha realm. I will establish you on the ten levels by means of knowledge.’ Through their vision of these buddhas, their noble joy, and their faith, they will, after they die, be born into pure buddha realms where buddhas are present. There they will attain the ten levels, and before long they will awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood. Noble son, [F.119.b] this is how greatly beneficial the great teaching of *the inexhaustible core* is.

2.37 “If sentient beings who are despised and rejected from all the pure buddha realms, who have committed the acts of immediate retribution, who have rejected the sacred Dharma, denigrated the noble ones, and committed the root downfalls hear this great teaching of *the inexhaustible core*, and if, while maintaining for seven years an attitude that is loving, affectionate toward all beings, impartial, and free from slander or idle gossip, they remember it by constantly cultivating the recollection of the Buddha and fixing their attention on him three times during the day and three times during the night while draping their shawls over one shoulder, kneeling on both knees, and joining their palms together, then, after those seven years have passed, the entirety of their terrible karmic actions will be exhausted and purified. Noble son this great teaching of *the inexhaustible core* is therefore endowed with great miraculous powers.

2.38 “If women who wish for success hear this teaching of *the inexhaustible core* and remember it while visualizing the Buddha in front of them three times during the day and three times during the night for seven months while kneeling on both knees and joining their palms together, they will achieve great success. From then on, until they reach unsurpassed and perfect awakening, they will no longer be born with a female body in saṃsāra—unless they wish for it. If women who wish for a husband, for status, for wealth, for pregnancy, [F.120.a] or for sons perform ablutions, guard against

frivolousness,²⁸ and remember this great teaching of *the inexhaustible core* by visualizing the Buddha in front of them three times during the day and three times during the night in a solitary place while kneeling on both knees and bowing with their palms joined together, their wishes will then be fulfilled accordingly. Until they reach unsurpassed nirvāṇa, it will be the last time they are born with a female body—unless they wish for it. This great teaching of *the inexhaustible core* is therefore very meaningful and beneficial; you have never heard anything like this before!

2.39 *tadyathā: śaraṇavyaya śikṣavyaya smṛtiṣvyaya brahmaṇiṣvyaya ṛddhiṣvyaya
indriyavyaya balavyaya bodhyaṇavyaya samādhivyaya dhāraṇiṣvyaya kṣāntiṣvyaya
dhyānavyaya arūpavyaya aninajavyaya mārgavyaya avijñāṣvyaya
pratisamavidvyaya bhūmiṣvyaya vidyāvyaya āmaitriṣvyaya mahākāruṇiṣvyaya
pṛthaviṣvyaya satvavyaya dharmavyaya tamovyaya ālokaṣvyaya pratibhasavyaya
pratiśrudkaṣvyaya gaganavyaya marutavyaya śūnyatāvyaya praṇihitaṣvyaya
animittaṣvyaya rutavyaya ghoṣavyaya kincanāvyaya abhisamaya anūna apaha
cacacaca cārāca caravimu caviṣakṣa kucacāravimu vyayavimu kṣayavimu
caravimu caviṣakṣa kucacāravimu vyayavimu kṣayavimu asamudra caravimu
cchadavimu ākāśavimu vyupaśamavimu anābhasavimu ahataṣvimu ārapāravimu
araparavimu upaśamasalilavimu svāhā.*

2.40 “Noble son, this is the great teaching of *the inexhaustible core*. It is endowed with great qualities, great meaning, and great benefits. It subjugates all sentient beings and benefits, cleanses, illuminates, and pacifies all of them. [F.120.b] Arise, and go to the Sahā world to present my words to the thus-gone Śākyamuni!”

2.41 Then, amazed and filled with intense joy, the entire retinue exclaimed, “The unobscured wisdom vision of the blessed buddhas is amazing, and so is this great teaching taught by the Thus-Gone One! It eliminates all minor, middling, and severe karmic obscurations that hinder all roots of virtue, and it swiftly delivers the happiness of emancipation!”

2.42 Then, the bodhisattva Gandhahastin exclaimed:

2.43 “This *inexhaustible core* that was uttered
Liberates the entire world
And exhausts all the karmic actions of sentient beings;
There is nothing else like it!

2.44 “It casts far away the karmic actions
One has generated in saṃsāra.
It liberates from all forms of suffering
And delivers splendid merit.

- 2.45 “It dries up the ocean of saṃsāra,
It overcomes all negative actions,
And it swiftly leads to the realms
Where the guides reside.
- 2.46 “After perceiving the many shortcomings
Of saṃsāra, the vessel of suffering,
All afflictions will be cleared away,
And sublime awakening will be achieved.
- 2.47 “If sentient beings listen to this way,
They will become unassailable.
Therefore, listening to it respectfully
Will lead to everything glorious!
- 2.48 “Respected Blessed One, I will remember this great teaching of the
inexhaustible core and go to the Sahā world!”
- 2.49 At that moment, the bodhisattva great beings in the retinue arose from
their absorption, and before long [F.121.a] an innumerable and limitless
number of them exclaimed in unison, “Respected Blessed One, we also want
to behold the thus-gone Śākyamuni, to pay homage to him, to worship him,
to revere him, to behold his great assembly, and to listen to the Dharma
teaching of *The Quintessence of the Sun*, which has never been heard before!
Blessed One, please allow us to go there!”
- 2.50 The thus-gone King of the Lord of Mountains replied, “Noble sons, all of
you please proceed together while adopting the attire, behavior, marks,
shape, and majestic power of Śakra.”
- 2.51 Then, the bodhisattva great being Gandhahastin and all the innumerable
and limitless bodhisattva great beings manifested personal emanations with
the attire, behavior, marks, shape, and majestic power of Śakra. They
prostrated to the feet of the blessed thus-gone King of the Lord of
Mountains, circumambulated him three times, and left. In a single instant
they arrived in the Sahā world. As soon as they arrived, in this buddha realm
of Sahā they showered a rain of perfumed substances—powders of white
sandalwood, uragasāra sandalwood, tamāla tree leaves, aloeswood, Chinese
incense, and yellow sandalwood—to worship the blessed Śākyamuni. When,
looking like Śakra, they arrived at the place where the thus-gone Śākyamuni
was residing, they prostrated to the feet of the Blessed One,
circumambulated him three times, and then sat to one side. [F.121.b] Up to
that moment, the Blessed One had been engaged in a discourse with King
Bimbisāra about how to abide by the Dharma.

Also during that time, in the western direction, beyond buddha realms as numerous as the grains of sand in forty-two Ganges Rivers, there was a buddha realm ripe with the five degenerations called Essence Banner, where thus-gone, worthy, perfect Buddha Royal Mass of Glorious Wisdom was residing. He thrived, lived well, and taught the Dharma to sentient beings and in accordance with the inclinations of the members of his four assemblies. A bodhisattva great being named Glorious Essence of Light, who had joined the assembly to listen to the Dharma, looked upward and saw in the sky above an innumerable and limitless number of bodhisattva great beings departing from the west and proceeding toward the east. When he looked in the eastern direction, where those bodhisattva great beings were going, he saw a brilliant light. He then questioned the thus-gone Royal Mass of Glorious Wisdom, who replied to him, “Noble son, in the eastern direction, beyond buddha realms as numerous as the grains of sand in forty-two Ganges Rivers, in a place ripe with the five degenerations, there is a world called Sahā, where the blessed Buddha, the thus-gone Śākyamuni, resides, thrives, lives well, and teaches the Dharma. At this time, there is in that place a great assembly [F.122.a] in which that thus-gone one reveals Dharma teachings that are the gateways to the ascertainment of the three vehicles, to ensure that the Dharma way and the lineage of the Three Jewels endure for a long time, to ensure that those who abide by the Dharma remain without interruption, to destroy the domain of the māras, and to raise the banner of the Dharma. There, all the thus-gone ones have recited the dhāraṇī mantra called *jewel crest* and then left. The thus-gone Śākyamuni has gathered a great assembly of bodhisattva great beings and hearers who possess the three eyes that are endowed with the four correct knowledges and who display the sublime states. This retinue distinctly fills the earth and the sky of the buddha realm of Sahā, and it is insatiable with respect to the Dharma teachings of the thus-gone Śākyamuni, who is endowed with the most delightful voice.

“Noble son, if you would like to bring my words to the Sahā world in order to convey them to the thus-gone Śākyamuni, I shall instill faith there in the practice of the Dharma of *The Quintessence of the Sun*, the section on the light rays that destroy the domain of the nāgas, the dhāraṇī mantra that exhausts the karmic actions of sentient beings. There, I will confer this powerful and beneficial acceptance that accords with the absence of wishes. It exhausts all forms of attachment associated with the desire realm, the form realm, and the formless realms, as well as all forms of pride, special pride, and pride that thinks ‘I am.’ [...] It generates the knowledge of exhaustion, [F.122.b] causes one to realize the knowledge of the unborn, overcomes all the dense darkness of ignorance, and removes the burden of suffering.

2.54 *tadyathā: śanaśava maśanaśava avakṣaśava kṣukṣutaśava cakṣaśava śrotraśava ghrāṇaśava jihvaśava kāyaśava manaśava kṣubhavidha cakṣupratiśava śrotra abhakṣabha ghrāṇatejakṣabha jihvavāyukṣabha kāyakramakṣabha manoja āloka-jñāyākṣabha vijasaṅkramakṣabha aṅgarakhagakṣabha samāropavyayākṣabha śamakankṣabha kṣayakarasakṣabha śāntavyahyasthakṣabha natotaitatona acanainanatona naghavanayinatona eśa evāntodukhasya svāhā.*

2.55 “Noble son, this is the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the absence of wishes. It is powerful and beneficial, it exhausts all forms of attachment associated with the desire realm and the form realm, [...] and it removes the entire burden of suffering. Take it with you, and go to the Sahā world! Convey my words to the thus-gone Śākyamuni and ask him if he has any ills or problems and whether he is healthy and well. Tell him, ‘In the western direction, beyond buddha realms as numerous as the grains of sand in forty-two Ganges Rivers, there is a buddha realm ripe with the five degenerations called Essence Banner, where the thus-gone, worthy, perfect Buddha Royal Mass of Glorious Wisdom resides, lives well, and teaches the Dharma to sentient beings and in accordance with the inclinations of the members of his four assemblies. [F.123.a] That thus-gone one has sent me here from that place to ask these questions to the Blessed One: “Respected Blessed One, are you well and free from ills? Are the members of your retinue in good health? Are they eager to listen to the sacred Dharma? Do they apply the Dharma in the way they hear it? Do they persevere in that Dharma? Do they abide by the Dharma? Are the domains of the māras and the nāgas subjugated in your buddha realm? Is this the domain of a single buddha? Are you turning the Dharma wheel without obstruction in this place?” For those who turn a wheel of non-Dharma in this buddha realm, the thus-gone, worthy, perfect Buddha Royal Mass of Glorious Wisdom instills faith by granting the practice of the Dharma of *The Quintessence of the Sun*, the section on the light rays that destroy the domain of the nāgas, this dhāraṇī mantra that exhausts the karmic actions of sentient beings. He also confers this powerful and beneficial dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the absence of wishes. It exhausts all forms of attachment associated with the desire realm and the form realm, [...] and it removes the entire burden of suffering.’ ”

2.56 The bodhisattva great being Glorious Essence of Light then said, “Respected Blessed One, when I consider the benefits of this dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the absence of wishes, I am very afraid of going to the buddha realm of Sahā! [F.123.b] Why is it so? Because I have heard and understood what the Blessed One said: in that buddha realm of Sahā, sentient beings experience intense suffering due to their improper views; they are predominantly under the influence of intense desire and are like

blind persons; [...] due to the faults of women, all roots of virtue will deteriorate, and beings will be born instantly in the Hell of Unceasing Torment.”

2.57 The thus-gone Royal Mass of Glorious Wisdom replied to the bodhisattva great being Glorious Essence of Light, “Answer these questions, noble son, answer these questions! In the buddha realm of Sahā, in the great ocean between the four continents, have you not established six hundred forty million nāgas into the practice of taking the threefold refuge by displaying the frightening appearance of a garuḍa, the king of birds, for nine days? Have you not caused them to give rise to the mind set on unsurpassed and perfect awakening?”

2.58 “Respected Blessed One, that is correct. I did as you have just said. I have indeed established sixty hundred forty million nāgas in that practice, until awakening, by displaying a frightening appearance.”

2.59 “Well then, noble son, in the middle of the four continents, in the place where no rain was falling and all the nāgas had become distressed, did you not manifest as great elephant-nāgas, great horse-nāgas, and great snake-nāgas showering down rains for seven days?”

“Respected Blessed One, that is correct. I did that due to my specific past aspirations.”

2.60 “Then why are you nervous to be sent there by me?” the Blessed One continued. [F.124.a]

The bodhisattva replied, “Respected Blessed One, when a skilled person encounters a great treasure of gems and starts digging with his fingernails, the more he or she digs, the more he or she will discover large amounts of jewels. Respected Blessed One, in the same way, the more a skilled person extracts the thus-gone ones’ treasure by means of such words, the more that person will gain huge amounts of invaluable Dharma gems. Therefore, in order to ripen beings in that place, I am now seeking from the Thus-Gone One great amounts of Dharma seals that can generate the thus-gone ones’ power, so that I may ripen a huge number of these beings.”

2.61 The thus-gone Royal Mass of Glorious Wisdom then said to the bodhisattva great being Glorious Essence of Light, “Noble son, I confer upon you what is known as the great teaching of the *fundamental knowledge* mantra: [B4]

2.62 *tadyathā: striraṇaśama samudthānaśama avarjanaśama svaramiṅgaśasama saṃyogaśama bandhanaśama samavisaraśama vātīnaśama samākramaśama avidyāśama saṃskāraśama vijñānaśama nāmarūpaśama ṣaḍāyatanaśama sparśaśama vedanaśama tṛṣṇaśama upādanaśama bhavaśama jātīśama jarāmaraṇaśama yāvadsarvamanuṣyaśama yāvadsarvatraidhātukasamiskṛtaśama ārapāraśama.*

2.63 “This is the great teaching of the *fundamental knowledge* mantra. [F.124.b] In that place, merely by hearing that great teaching, the lesser, moderate, and intense cravings of sentient beings and their afflictions that are the cause of saṃsāra will be completely pacified, as will their afflictions that act as the causes of rebirth in the form and formless realms. All their afflictions, as numerous as the grains of sand in the Ganges, will be pulverized, and all the physical, verbal, and mental negativities of the five classes of beings that they have accumulated so far—those that have not yet reached full fruition and those that have not been purified—will be counteracted. If some beings listen one-pointedly and appropriately to this great teaching of the *fundamental knowledge* mantra and cultivate this Dharma for seven days without doing anything else, everything that causes the deterioration and obstruction of virtue will be exhausted without coming to fruition. The same applies to everything that causes wealth to decline, everything that causes one to be separated from desirable objects, everything that harms the body and disturbs the mind, everything that causes one to feel weary of any type of virtue, and everything that causes one to feel joyful about any type of nonvirtue—except for the acts of immediate retribution, the rejection of the sacred Dharma, the denigration of the noble ones, and the root downfalls.

2.64 “Those beings will then engage in such roots of virtue. If they undertake the practice of the perfection of generosity, they will be blessed by all buddhas, by all bodhisattvas, by all circumstantial victors, and by all worthy ones, and their households will experience inexhaustible wealth. If they cultivate the perfections of discipline, patience, diligence, concentration, and insight, [F.125.a] they will not be harmed by the world with its gods and asuras. Instead, they will be worthy to be trusted, remembered, pleased, worshiped, revered, and protected by everyone, from all the lords of the gods to all the lords of the humans. Later, when they die, they will see in the ten directions blessed buddhas who will extend their hands and tell them, ‘Sublime beings, welcome! Please stay here in my pure buddha realm. I will establish you on the ten levels.’ Due to their visions of the buddhas and their noble joy and faith, they will, after they die, be born into buddha realms where the buddhas are present. There, they will reach the ten levels, and before long they will awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood. Noble son, this great teaching of the *fundamental knowledge* mantra is therefore very valuable.

2.65 “Noble son, in that buddha realm of Sahā, sentient beings are deteriorating in the roots of virtue that are conducive to certainty. Why is it so? Because they have been removed from all the buddha realms of the ten directions and because they commit the acts of immediate retribution, reject the sacred Dharma, denigrate the noble ones, and commit the root downfalls.

For a long time, they have all experienced various types of intense and harsh suffering in the three lower realms. Due to their release from and purification of those three lower realms, [F.125.b] they adopt the paths of the ten virtuous actions. Due to that cause, as well as the previous aspirations of the thus-gone Śākyamuni, they have now obtained a human body in that buddha realm. However, because of their familiarity with the experience of suffering in the lower realms, they have completely forgotten any faculties of faith up to insight that they had developed familiarity with in the past. This also applies to any previous familiarity with generosity up to insight, and it also applies to aspirations, weariness of saṃsāra, happiness of emancipation, and cultivation of the sublime states. Having forgotten all these, they have been born into that buddha realm. Moreover, due to all their former negative acts, they are born unattractive, ugly, with limbs missing, and lacking food, drinks, clothes, bedding, and ornaments. There they have short lifespans, their intellect and intelligence are weak, and they have few resources and possessions. Their roots of virtue, merits, and accomplishments are weak, and they perform few positive deeds. They engage in negative activities, they are seized by wrong view, they have faith in negative treatises, and they form harmful aspirations. They are affected by many diseases, they have many distractions, they have many activities and undertakings, and they repeatedly perform the three types of negative acts.²⁹ They are discomposed, scathing, impetuous, harsh, and angry. They follow the paths of the ten nonvirtuous actions, and they reject the Three Jewels. Therefore, most beings in that buddha realm are headed for the three lower realms. [F.126.a]

- 2.66 “Noble son, merely hearing this great teaching of the *fundamental knowledge* mantra will immediately liberate those beings from the paths that lead to the lower realms, since it connects them to the virtues that accord with certainty. They will rejoice in their past familiarity with the faculties of faith up to insight, as well as in their former formation of aspirations, meditation on the defects of saṃsāra, and cultivation of the sublime states. Just by hearing it, their lifespans will increase, their health will improve, their resources and possessions will multiply, and their virtuous deeds will immensely increase, as will their accomplishments of roots of virtue, their insight, their love, their equanimity, and their wholesome actions. Just by hearing it, they will all develop the correct view. Those beings who listen respectfully to this great teaching of the *fundamental knowledge* mantra and contemplate these qualities one-pointedly for seven days without doing anything else will follow the paths of the ten virtuous actions. They will engage in the three types of positive acts, take refuge in the Three Jewels, delight in the strength of aspirations, abide by the Dharma, and illuminate the lineage of the Three

Jewels. All those beings—except for those who have committed the acts of immediate retribution or the root downfalls—will recollect their previous lives there. After they die, they will then be born in this buddha realm of Sahā, over and over again. Those sentient beings who have not yet experienced the karmic ripening of their extremely severe negative actions will, [F.126.b] if they hear this great teaching of the *fundamental knowledge* mantra, achieve such qualities. As soon as they hear it, all their immeasurable karmic obscurations will be exhausted.

2.67 “In that place, those sentient beings should write down this entire Dharma teaching. They should build statues of the seven perfect buddhas and create monastic compounds for the saṅgha of the thus-gone Śākyamuni’s hearers who abide by the Dharma. They should also arrange benefactors in that place, exert themselves in restoring their vows at the proper times, and listen to the Dharma. For those sentient beings who have developed delight and supreme joy in the Three Jewels, there may manifest some undesirable consequences that resemble those various types of intense suffering they would otherwise experience in the three lower realms for myriads of eons: some may be sick for extended periods, but this will lead to the exhaustion of the capacity of their previous nonvirtuous actions. For some, it will be exhausted through their limbs being cut off. For some, it will be exhausted through running out of wealth. For some, it will be exhausted through the dissolution of their retinues. For some, it will be exhausted through losing their resources and possessions. For some, it will be exhausted through being harmed physically by members of their retinues and servants, or through being thrown into prison. For some, it will be exhausted through being told unpleasant words and being insulted. Through such consequences of similar nature, the nonvirtuous actions they created previously will be exhausted. Noble son, this great teaching of the *fundamental knowledge* mantra is therefore very valuable. [F.127.a]

2.68 *tadyathā: khagapariccheda garbhakṣase garbharevidyā prabhagakṣe kṣavayoge pratihāre śamanasikathe samameghajūṣṭe akṣayatate kṣabhavaje ninadanajhuṣe samāgrajhuṣe adhyāśayajhuṣe viprabhajhuṣe śaikṣajhuṣe satyajavajhuṣe sainyajavajhuṣe salilaguhyajhuṣe salaguhyavyākṣe paṇaghoṣe sadānakone sarvadhananthye vītapravṛtate upakramaṇathe anacchadyaparakhe pratikramana sakathayeśe salocanavame krodhadharekāśasaśe ākāśakhage nayakuñje vidyāvane klānavane upavane samemakāre śārayavane meghajhuṣe harikona vanayanmukhe sarakṣakole narāyanajhuṣe indravasane o a a va ā aravaha jarā avarāva sameghaduḥkhenastiraṇīrvāhe svāhā.*

2.69 “Noble son, this great teaching of the *fundamental knowledge* mantra is very valuable and beneficial. It benefits, cleanses, illuminates, reminds, and pacifies all beings. Sentient beings who listen to it one-pointedly and accomplish it as it is taught will be blessed by all thus-gone ones, by all bodhisattva great beings, by all circumstantial victors, and by all the worthy ones. They will deserve the consideration, trust, reverence, offerings, and protection of everyone—from the lords of the gods to the lords of the humans. Later, in their last moment of consciousness when they are about to die, they will see in front of them blessed buddhas from the ten directions [F.127.b] who will extend their hands and tell them, ‘O, come here, you who possess a wealth of qualities! Please stay in my pure buddha realm. I will establish you on the ten levels.’ Due to their noble joy, delight, and faith born from their visions of the buddhas, they will, after they die, be born into buddha realms where the buddhas are present. There they will reach the ten levels and swiftly awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood. This great teaching of the *fundamental knowledge* mantra is therefore very valuable and beneficial for exhausting the karmic actions of sentient beings and causing the attainment of complete purity and the attainment of the happiness of emancipation. Therefore, take it with you, go to the Sahā world, and present my words to the thus-gone Śākyamuni!”

The bodhisattva great being Glorious Essence of Light replied, “Respected Blessed One, I shall do so!”

2.70 At that moment, in that retinue, an innumerable and limitless number of bodhisattva great beings exclaimed in unison, “Respected Blessed One, we also want to behold the thus-gone Śākyamuni, to pay homage to him, to revere him, to behold his great assembly, and to hear the practice of the Dharma of *The Quintessence of the Sun*, the section on the light rays that destroy the domain of the nāgas, this dhāraṇī mantra that exhausts the karmic actions of sentient beings. It has not been long since we arose from the practice of absorption. Respected Blessed One, since many others have already left, please allow us also to go to the Sahā world!” [F.128.a]

2.71 The thus-gone Royal Mass of Glorious Wisdom said to them, “Noble sons, all of you proceed together while assuming the complexion, marks, appearance, shape, behavior, and attire of Nārāyaṇa!”

They replied, “Respected Blessed One, we shall do so!”

2.72 The bodhisattva great being Glorious Essence of Light and all those bodhisattva great beings now transformed themselves to have the complexion, marks, appearance, shape, behavior, and attire of Nārāyaṇa. They prostrated to the feet of the thus-gone Royal Mass of Glorious Wisdom and circumambulated him three times. Then they left and instantaneously arrived in the buddha realm of Sahā. As soon as they arrived, they showered

a rain of gold from the Jambū River everywhere in the buddha realm of Sahā in order to worship the Blessed One. They then proceeded toward the middle region of the four continents, in the direction of Magadha. When they arrived there, they prostrated to the feet of the blessed Śākyamuni and sat to one side. The Blessed One was still engaged in a discourse with King Bimbisāra about how to abide by the Dharma.

2.73 Also during that time, in the northern direction, beyond buddha realms as numerous as the grains of sand in eighty Ganges Rivers, there was a buddha realm ripe with the five degenerations called Manifestation of All Perfumes, where the thus-gone, worthy, perfect Buddha Glorious Essence of Flowers was residing. He thrived, lived well, and taught the Dharma. [F.128.b] A bodhisattva great being named Ākāśagarbha was present in that assembly in order to listen to the Dharma. At one point, he looked in the sky above and saw an innumerable and limitless number of bodhisattva great beings departing from the north and proceeding toward the south. When he looked in the southern direction, he saw a brilliant light. He then bowed down with his palms joined together in the direction of the Buddha Glorious Essence of Flowers and said, “Respected Blessed One, when I recently arose from the practice of absorption, I saw in the sky above an innumerable and limitless number of bodhisattva great beings departing from the north and going toward the south. Then, respected Blessed One, as I looked toward the south, I saw a brilliant light and wondered, ‘Why is this so?’ ”

2.74 The thus-gone Glorious Essence of Flowers replied to the bodhisattva great being Ākāśagarbha, “Noble son, in the southern direction, beyond buddha realms as numerous as the grains of sand in eighty Ganges Rivers, there is a buddha realm ripe with the five degenerations called Sahā, where the thus-gone, worthy, perfect Buddha Śākyamuni resides. He thrives, lives well, and to a great assembly he now reveals Dharma teachings that are the gateways to the ascertainment of the three vehicles, to ensure that the Dharma way endures for a long time and that those who abide by the Dharma of the lineage of the Three Jewels remain without interruption. In that buddha realm of Sahā, [F.129.a] a great assembly of the Buddha has gathered to destroy and cleanse the domain of the māras, to raise the banner of the Dharma, and to ensure that the Dharma way remains for a long time. There, all the thus-gone ones have uttered the dhāraṇī mantra called *jewel crest* and then left after having engaged with that buddha realm. The thus-gone Śākyamuni has gathered a great assembly of bodhisattva great beings and great hearers who possess the three eyes that are endowed with the four correct knowledges and who display the sublime states. This retinue

fills the earth and the sky of that buddha realm of Sahā, and it is insatiable with respect to the Dharma teachings of the thus-gone Śākyamuni, who is endowed with the most delightful voice.

2.75 “Wishing to explain the four means of attracting disciples, the practice of the Dharma of *The Quintessence of the Sun*, the section on the light rays that destroy the domain of the nāgas, the dhāraṇī mantra that exhausts the karmic actions of sentient beings, that thus-gone Śākyamuni, who is endowed with the most delightful voice, has formed the wish, ‘May the bodhisattva great beings from the buddha realms of the ten directions—from those who will reach emancipation over a hundred eons up to those who are in their final existence and possess the eighteen unique qualities, who are not led astray by others, and who are experts in unobstructed wisdom—enter this buddha realm of Sahā at this very moment! Once they are here, may they abide by each of their virtuous concentrations! In the same way, may the great earth in this buddha realm come to possess great strength, nourishment, and qualities. In the same way, may everyone be endowed with recollection, diligence, [F.129.b] generosity, and insight—just as in other buddha realms! May all bodhisattva great beings who are dwelling in the buddha realms of the ten directions enter this buddha realm of Sahā at this very moment! Once they have gathered here, may they dwell in accordance with the power of their individual virtues and in accordance with their concentrations!’

2.76 “The light that radiates from the bodies of some of those beings who are absorbed in states of concentration is like the light emitted by oil lamps. The light that radiates from the bodies of some is like the light emitted by [...] many trillions of suns and moons. This brilliant light emitted by the gathering of those bodhisattva great beings is now pervading the buddha realm of Sahā. Right now, the bodhisattva great beings who had withdrawn into meditative seclusion in all the buddha realms of the ten directions and who had never previously gone to the buddha realm of Sahā have arisen from their absorptions and departed for that realm. Once they arrive there, they will behold that thus-gone one and his great assembly. They will hear that great dhāraṇī mantra, sit cross-legged, and revel in a variety of individual virtuous concentrations.

2.77 “Noble son, you should also arise from your absorption and go to the buddha realm of Sahā! Noble son, in that buddha realm of Sahā, sentient beings have extremely short lifespans. They are affected by many diseases, their intelligence is weak, and their involvement with roots of virtue is limited. Their merit and their pursuit of virtuous activities are weak, [F.130.a] they are not afraid of the afterlife, their resources and possessions are few, and they are attached to desirable objects. They engage in nonvirtue, they

are envious, and they have abandoned modesty and humility. Since most of them have adopted the paths of the ten nonvirtuous actions, they will be born in the lower realms. Why is it so? Because, after they die, sentient beings living there who engage in a variety of actions are born in that same place as evil beings—from yakṣas to kaṭapūtanas. Those evil beings—from yakṣas to kaṭapūtanas—feed themselves by robbing the earth of its vitality. They also feed themselves by robbing of their vitality all grains, herbs, flowers, fruits, leaves, and juices. In this sense they are powerful beings. They also rob the vitality of humans who are in the womb and the vitality of those who have just been born. They also rob the vitality of the milk and the vitality of food and beverages. Since, in that place, they rob the vitality of humans when they are in the womb and right after they are born, the humans lack vitality and so must feed themselves on food and drink that are already degraded. Because of this, the humans living there are very sickly and have short lifespans. They are forgetful, and all their roots of virtue are corrupted. They are devoid of merit, they are not afraid of the afterlife, they lack resources and possessions, and they are attached to desirable objects. Since their conduct is impure, [...] and since they have adopted the paths of the ten nonvirtuous actions, [F.130.b] they will be born in the lower realms.

2.78 “Noble son, in the past, when I was a bodhisattva, I made the aspiration to be endowed with diligence, enthusiasm, and firm³⁰ resolution during my activities, and I venerated the perfect buddhas of the past. I supplicated them so that I may be able to protect pregnant women by whatever means necessary. I supplicated them so that, through my diligence, both the mothers and the children present in their wombs may experience well-being. I supplicated them so that no gods, nāgas, yakṣas, rākṣasas, garuḍas, kinnaras, mahoragas, kumbhāṇḍas, pretas, piśācas, pūtanas, kaṭapūtanas, ojhāras, apasmāras, fevers that last one day, fevers that last two days, fevers that last three days, fevers that last four days, vetālas, mantras, or medicines may be able to harm their bodies and minds. I supplicated them so that the mothers, the children present in their wombs, the newborn children, the milk they drink, and the food and drink they ingest may not be harmed in any way. I supplicated them so that their vitality may not be robbed and so that their bodies, elements, and minds may not be disturbed in any way. I supplicated them so that those beings may remain in the womb in a natural way and so that they may come out of the womb easily and unharmed, without their bodies or minds being hurt. I supplicated them so that they may drink milk and enjoy food and beverages with ease. I supplicated them so that they may experience little discomfort, live a long life, be intelligent, [F.131.a] [...] adopt the paths of the ten virtuous actions, delight in generosity, self-control, and restraint, and be afraid of the afterlife. I asked

them what are the mantras and medicines through which I could ripen those sentient beings, and so those perfect buddhas of the past taught me this great teaching—a mantra formula, a dhāraṇī mantra called *the peaceful core of knowledge*, through which I could ripen infinite myriads of beings and establish them in the six perfections.

2.79 “With firm diligence and resolution, in all my lives I continuously protected pregnant women with this dhāraṇī mantra, this mantra formula, this vidyā mantra called *the peaceful core of knowledge*. I established in the three objects of refuge these women and the children in their wombs. From then on, those pregnant women and their children could not be hurt or injured, and their bodies, elements, and minds could no longer be disturbed by gods or any other beings, including māras, apasmāras, humans, and nonhumans. The world with its gods and asuras could no longer rob their vitality or hurt them with any medicines or mantras. Pregnant mothers would not be harmed by them anymore, and the children present in their wombs would remember their previous lives. The bodies of those beings who had entered the womb would have perfectly developed faculties, beautiful and elegant appearances, and excellent complexions which are replete with the most delightful features. They would be highly intelligent and emerge from the bellies of their mothers with ease [F.131.b] and with minds free of forgetfulness. Immediately after their births, powerful gods renowned for their great strength, each surrounded by a retinue of a hundred thousand members, would protect them and guard them. No humans or nonhumans could hurt them, injure them, disturb their bodies, elements, and minds, take their vitality, or hurt them with mantras and drugs. Those beings would have the most excellent physiques, and they would remember their past lives and be afraid of the afterlife. They would be endowed with a loving mindset, great compassion, and a generous attitude. They would delight in discipline and be endowed with patience, diligence, and other qualities. They would enjoy seclusion, exert themselves in concentration, and experience great joy in the presence of virtuous friends, and they would be endowed with the noble knowledge of emancipation that brings such qualities and leads to the exhaustion of suffering. Gods, nāgas, and yakṣas would diligently venerate those beings who dwelled in peace and with few afflictions. These people would vividly perceive the defects of saṃsāra and wish for the happiness of emancipation. If they were to give rise to the mind set on unsurpassed and perfect awakening, they would accordingly swiftly achieve the absorption of the bodhisattvas without forgetting the mind set on awakening. If they were to give rise to the mind set on the vehicle of the solitary buddhas, they would swiftly achieve the acceptance that accords with birth and disintegration. If those sentient beings were to give rise to the mind set on

the vehicle of the hearers, [F.132.a] they would, in accordance with this, achieve the acceptance that accords with the truth. All those sentient beings would be free from the three lower realms and proceed toward the higher realms. Noble son, through my commitment to engaging in the application of such skillful means, I ripened sentient beings and accomplished unsurpassed and perfect awakening. Noble son, this great teaching of *the peaceful core of knowledge* is therefore very meaningful.

2.80 “Noble son, when I saw sentient beings affected by diseases, I would infuse³¹ the medicinal plant *siṃhakṣir*³² with this great teaching of *the peaceful core of knowledge* and give it to those sick persons, and all their diseases would be completely cured. Where no such medicinal plant was available, I would instead infuse food and drink with the teaching of *the peaceful core of knowledge* and give it to those sick persons, and all their diseases would be completely cured. If those were not available either, I would infuse medicinal decoctions³³ with the mantra formula of *the peaceful core of knowledge* and give it to those sick persons, and all their diseases would be completely cured. Noble son, through my commitment to engaging in the application of such skillful means, I ripened sentient beings and accomplished unsurpassed and perfect awakening.

2.81 “Noble son, in places where trees did not bear flowers or fruits, I would infuse rainwater with the mantra formula of *the peaceful core of knowledge* and sprinkle it on those trees. Many flowers and fruits would then grow on those trees for many years, even in the absence of any water. I did the same with sugarcane plants, grapes, grains, and herbs. In places affected by droughts, where no rain was falling, I would infuse tortoise heart³⁴ with the mantra formula of *the peaceful core of knowledge* and wrap it with campaka leaves. [F.132.b] I would then place it on the shore of the ocean of the nāgas, and strong rains and great masses of water would pour down. If the downpour of those strong rains damaged the houses, fields, and monastic compounds, I would then infuse a precious gem of the king of snakes with this mantra formula of *the peaceful core of knowledge* and place it in the abode of those nāgas, and the rains would then come to a halt.

2.82 “In places affected by untimely wind, sun, untimely clouds, darkness, sandstorms, cold, heat, or untimely seasons, by armies, or by disturbances of the moon, the sun, the planets, the lunar mansions, the full moon, the half-moon, the seasons, or the years, I would, for the sake of sentient beings and out of compassion for them, perform ablutions day and night for seven days, feed on milk and cooked rice, and with great delight in the cultivation of the sublime states recite this teaching of *the peaceful core of knowledge* without doing anything else. Had I failed to look after those lands for these seven days, I would not have kept the promise I made to myself. In those places, I

would infuse with this great teaching of *the peaceful core of knowledge* an extract of campa herbs³⁵ combined with uragasāra sandalwood, mix it with an emetic made from the fruits of madana trees, and place it by a temple. That would pacify all instances of untimely wind, sun, untimely clouds, darkness, sandstorms, cold, and heat, and it would cause the seasons, the moon, the sun, the planets, the lunar mansions, the full moon, the half-moon, and the years to occur properly.

2.83 “Noble son, in this way I revealed the Dharma of this great teaching of *the peaceful core of knowledge* in places where people adhered to signs of auspiciousness and fortune and had wrong views. [F.133.a] Wherever people heard it, their afflictions would diminish. After renouncing all such signs of auspiciousness, fortune, and wrong views, those beings henceforth formed groups devoted to virtuous deeds and wholesome actions and to numerous aspirations.

2.84 “Noble son, similarly, through my commitment to engaging in the application of such skillful means, I ripened sentient beings, made them master the six perfections, and awoke to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood. This great teaching of *the peaceful core of knowledge* is therefore very helpful and beneficial to sentient beings: it benefits all of them, it cures all their diseases, and it protects and liberates all pregnant women. It pacifies all afflictions, it generates complete knowledge of all the aggregates and elements, and it causes one to discern all phenomena. It reveals all skillful means, it makes one realize the complete happiness of emancipation, and it induces sincere faith in all sentient beings. It causes one to attain happiness related to all phenomena, it eradicates all māras and enemies in accordance with the Dharma, and it thoroughly subjugates all the domains of the māras. Noble son, this great teaching of *the peaceful core of knowledge* annihilates all māras and vanquishes the afflictions. It pleases the gods, it delights the yakṣas, it overcomes the asuras, it frightens the garuḍas, it generates faith in the kinnaras, and it puts the mahoragas to flight. It completely pacifies quarrels, [F.133.b] fights, famines, death, diseases, hostile armies, untimely wind, rain, and all types of sicknesses. It pacifies cold, heat, snow, and heat waves, and it softens substances that are harsh, rough, and hard to touch. It causes the way of the Dharma related to all phenomena to blaze, it reveals the teachings of the buddhas, and it ensures that the lineage of the Three Jewels remains uninterrupted. It provides relief to those who are afraid of saṃsāra, it generates knowledge of exhaustion, it actualizes knowledge of the unborn, it overcomes all the dense darkness of ignorance, and it removes the burden of suffering. This is the great teaching of *the peaceful core of knowledge*:

2.85 *tadyathā: manākṣa avākṣa ghasākṣa janekṣa marmanākṣa kṣavākṣa maṇḍākṣa natākṣa nadarahu viśanāda khaganāda atanaṭa kunaṭa parikunaṭa nātanāṭa parikanāṭa udtaranāṭa vināṭa kuñjanāṭa cavaṇṇvaranāṭa khaḥamabhanāṭa puṣkarānāṭa sinharudranāṭa samalanāṭa śirikusaklaunāṭa talamarutakhava tehuḥṣavātirakṣadāmarajuvaha naputisantiranajava amohoragajala atrinā atrinā rava atrinākṣa avahā mārgatrinākṣa eṣa evantoduḥkhasya svāhā."*

2.86 When the Blessed One delivered this teaching, six hundred million beings in that retinue achieved the concordant acceptance, and sixty trillion of them entered into faultlessness.

2.87 "Noble son, through you I will confer this great teaching of *the peaceful core of knowledge* upon the thus-gone Śākyamuni. I will also bestow faith in the practice of the Dharma of *The Quintessence of the Sun*, the section on the light rays that destroy the domain of the nāgas, the dhāraṇī mantra that exhausts the karmic actions of sentient beings. [F.134.a] Take this *peaceful core of knowledge* with you, and go to that buddha realm of Sahā! Present my words to the thus-gone Śākyamuni, and ask him if he has any ills or problems and whether he is healthy and well. Tell him, 'In the northern direction, beyond buddha realms as numerous as the grains of sand in eighty Ganges Rivers, there is a buddha realm ripe with the five degenerations called Manifestation of All Sounds,³⁶ where the thus-gone, worthy, perfect Buddha Glorious Essence of Flowers resides and teaches the Dharma. That thus-gone one has sent me here from that buddha realm to ask these questions to the Blessed One: "Respected Blessed One, are you well and free from ills? Are the members of your retinue comfortable and in good health? Are they eager to listen to the sacred Dharma? Do they apply the Dharma persistently in the way they hear it? Do they abide by the Dharma? Are the domains of the māras and the nāgas subjugated in your buddha realm? Is this your only buddha realm? Are you turning the Dharma wheel without obstruction in this place?" For the sake of those who will turn the wheel in this buddha realm, the thus-gone Glorious Essence of Flowers will, in this place, bestow faith in the practice of the Dharma of *The Quintessence of the Sun*, this section on the light rays that destroy the domain of the nāgas, the dhāraṇī mantra that cleanses the karmic actions of sentient beings. He bestows this powerful and beneficial great teaching of *the peaceful core of knowledge*, which benefits all beings, [F.134.b] cures all diseases, pacifies all afflictions, [...] and removes the burden of suffering.' "

2.88 At that moment, the entire retinue exclaimed, amazed and astonished, "The blessed buddhas' wisdom and vision, which are unimpeded with respect to all phenomena, are amazing! They are truly amazing! The Thus-Gone One has now revealed to us nothing but this great teaching of the

peaceful core of knowledge, which benefits all beings and has never been heard before. What wise being in pursuit of awakening would not strive for something endowed with such countless and limitless qualities?”

2.89 Then, the bodhisattva Ākāśagarbha said, “When the sentient beings who are afraid of saṃsāra and pursue the happiness of emancipation proclaim the names of the Blessed One and the words of this dhāraṇī mantra *peaceful core of knowledge*, the great attainments and virtues of sentient beings will greatly increase in them, along with feelings of joy, delight, and respect.”

2.90 The thus-gone Glorious Essence of Flowers replied, “Thus it is, noble son! It is just as you have said! Noble son, when I was a bodhisattva and practiced the conduct with diligence, I made these aspirations: ‘Once I achieve awakening, if, in all the buddha realms of the ten directions, sentient beings who have the wish to strive for the perfections—from generosity up to insight— [F.135.a] proclaim my name and cause sentient beings to contemplate it, then, if there are any beings in the world with its gods and asuras who have the ability to create obstacles to their practice of those perfections, may the virtuous side of those beings—all but the causes that are results of their previous actions—multiply many hundreds of thousands of times! May I postpone my awakening to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood in order to help those mothers who experience great joy with their children, those who are weary of the burden of having children, and those pregnant women who pay homage to me, as well as anyone who proclaims my name with joy, respect, and faith. May I postpone my awakening to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood in order to help should any human or nonhuman being filled with hostility use medicines or mantras to hurt or disturb the bodies and minds of such mothers and the children they carry in their wombs, or should they for a single instant hurt a newborn baby!’ Those are the aspirations I made in the past when I was a bodhisattva. In accordance with those, anyone who is now tormented by such sufferings in any buddha realm and—as it was explained before—anyone who proclaims my name with joy, respect, and faith will be liberated from their sufferings. It will not be any other way—except when it comes to causes that are results of their previous actions, if these are not purified.” [B5]

2.91 The bodhisattva said, [F.135.b] “Respected Blessed One, that buddha realm of Sahā is strange: in that place, sentient beings are extremely hostile, impetuous, harsh, and envious. They lack affection and gratitude, they speak with harsh words, and they adhere to wrong views. So it would not be good if I were hurt there by some of those beings. I would not benefit anyone by going there!”

2.92 “Noble son,” replied the Blessed One, “it is impossible. There is no chance for this to happen! Not even ten million māras could hurt or create obstacles to those who have properly cultivated and contemplated the sublime states free from concepts; it would be impossible! Noble son, you have already properly cultivated and contemplated the sublime states free from concepts for a long time, so do not be afraid! Noble son, I will confer upon you a dhāraṇī mantra of great love that emerges from the sublime states free from concepts. Through this mantra, all hostile beings will develop trust and become stupefied; it will cause them to achieve acceptance, recollection, and sincere faith.

2.93 *tadyathā: vovriha vuvula ilavara ilasaha haṭyaṭyagaganākṣa śamaśama mitramitra cakravartitile sāgaratile durbhali hihile havahenarājane yavanamitre kṣānatimitre mitrarlame mitrakhaghe sarvasatojamitre sarvakramamitre manavartamitre dhitiśaramitre svāhā.*

2.94 “Noble son, if one rubs both hands with oil from campaka grains while reciting this secret dhāraṇī mantra that pacifies and stupefies hostile beings, it will make all hostile beings trusting and astonished. All those beings with hostile minds, such as the trillions of angry snakes, yakṣas, kumbhāṇḍas, pūtanās, and māras, will become powerless. [F.136.a] Even if all those hostile beings were to fill the four continents, a single handful of water would immediately annihilate them all. Even if the four oceans were entirely filled with murky water, a single handful of water would immediately make that water completely clear. There are no doubts about this, so take it with you, and go to the buddha realm of Sahā!”

2.95 At that moment, the innumerable and limitless bodhisattvas exclaimed in unison, “Respected Blessed One, we also wish to behold the thus-gone Śākyamuni, to pay homage to him, to revere him, to behold his great assembly, and to listen to the practice of the Dharma of *The Quintessence of the Sun*, the section on the light rays that destroy the domain of the nāgas, the dhāraṇī mantra that cleanses the karmic actions of sentient beings! Respected Blessed One, if you grant your permission, we will also go to the buddha realm of Sahā!”

2.96 The blessed thus-gone Glorious Essence of Flowers replied to them, “Noble sons, all of you please proceed together while adopting the attire, marks, shape, implements, and behavior of universal monarchs ruling over the four continents.”

2.97 All those eight hundred million bodhisattvas then transformed themselves to have the attire, marks, shape, implements and behavior of universal monarchs ruling over the four continents. Then, the bodhisattva Ākāśagarbha and all the other bodhisattvas bowed their heads to the feet of

the thus-gone Glorious Essence of Flowers, circumambulated him three times, and rested in the sky. Each bodhisattva great being also manifested seven lotuses, each with a thousand petals made of precious gems, [F.136.b] as well as the four kinds of troops. They departed in this manner and instantaneously arrived in this buddha realm of Sahā. Some of them showered a rain of gold powder everywhere in the buddha realm of Sahā in order to worship the blessed thus-gone Śākyamuni and his bodhisattvas. To worship the blessed thus-gone Śākyamuni and his bodhisattvas, others showered a rain of silver powder, and still others showered rains of perfumed powders, pearls, gold threads, pearl necklaces, armlets, cotton, fine fabrics, parasols, banners, and flags. All of them circumambulated this buddha realm of Sahā three times and then sat to one side.

- 2.98 *This concludes the chapter called “The Messengers,” the second chapter in “The Quintessence of the Sun,” the Great Vehicle discourse of The Great Assembly.*

3.

Chapter Three

THE DHĀRAṆĪ MANTRAS

- 3.1 When King Bimbisāra saw the unprecedented sight of innumerable and limitless numbers of mahābrahmās, Śākras, Nārāyaṇas, and universal monarchs ruling over the four continents, he was utterly amazed. He stood up and went close to them. Next, together with their retinues, the bodhisattva great beings—the four messengers of the buddhas—sat down and bowed with their palms joined together in the direction of the thus-gone Śākyamuni. [F.137.a] The bodhisattva great being Quintessence of the Sun’s Energy then tossed garlands of campaka flowers in the direction of the thus-gone Śākyamuni and uttered these verses:
- 3.2 “Sublime human, you hold the light that illuminates beings,
And you show the path to those who have corrupt views.
Endowed with the view of sameness, you benefit beings
And swiftly subjugate māras and nāgas.
- 3.3 “You liberate from their afflictions beings who are hard to tame,
And you cause the light of the Dharma to blaze for a long time in this world.
Supreme being, you beautify all the many realms
With these gateways of concentration.
- 3.4 “Victor, supreme being, many wise ones
Speak about this realm from far away.
This time for beings to receive the Dharma is hard to attain;³⁷
Seeing this, we have joined this assembly for the sake of the Dharma.
- 3.5 “It is difficult to achieve a human birth,
And even those who have obtained a human body for a very long time
Are seized by severe afflictions;
Great sage, please quickly sever the web of the afflictions!

- 3.6 “Like a great elephant, you liberate beings who have fallen
Into the ocean of suffering and the river of the afflictions.
The victors have sent us here as messengers
As they rejoice in your Dharma treasure.³⁸
- 3.7 “Respected Blessed One, in the eastern direction, beyond countless buddha realms as numerous as the grains of sand in countless Ganges Rivers, there is a world called Absence of Heat,³⁹ where the thus-gone, worthy, perfect Buddha Campaka Color resides, thrives, lives well, and teaches the Dharma. That thus-gone one has sent me here. He puts faith in the practice of the Dharma of *The Quintessence of the Sun*, the section on the light rays that destroy the domain of the nāgas, the dhāraṇī mantra expounded by you that cleanses the karmic actions of sentient beings, and he enquires whether you have any ills or problems and whether you are healthy and well. [F.137.b] Respected Blessed One, are you in good health and free from ills? Are the members of your retinue comfortable and free from ills? Are they eager to listen to the Dharma? Do they follow the Dharma persistently in the way they hear it? Do they abide by the Dharma? Are the domains of the māras and nāgas subjugated in your buddha realm? Is this your only buddha realm? Are you turning the Dharma wheel without obstruction in this place?
- 3.8 “For the sake of those who will turn the wheel in this buddha realm, the thus-gone Campaka Color puts faith in you and in this practice of the Dharma of *The Quintessence of the Sun*, the dhāraṇī mantra of the section on the light rays that destroy the domain of the nāgas. He confers this powerful and beneficial dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the truth. It exhausts all forms of attachment associated with the desire realm, the form realm, and the formless realm, as well as pride, special pride, and pride that thinks ‘I am.’ This acceptance that accords with the truth annihilates all māras and vanquishes the nāgas. It pleases the gods, it satisfies the yakṣas, it overcomes the asuras, it pleases the vaiśyas, and it delights the śūdras. It liberates women from their desires, it induces weariness in the scholars, it delights the spiritual practitioners, it completely pacifies all diseases, quarrels, fights, famines, untimely sicknesses, [F.138.a] hostile armies, wind, rains, rivers, cold, heat, snow, and heat waves, and it softens unsavory tastes and substances that are harsh, rough, and hard to touch. It causes the way of the Dharma to blaze, it reveals the teachings of the buddhas, and it ensures that the lineage of the Three Jewels remains uninterrupted. It provides relief to those who are afraid of saṃsāra, generates the knowledge of exhaustion, causes one to realize the knowledge of the unborn, overcomes all the dense darkness of ignorance, removes the burden of suffering, and dries up the river of craving.

3.9 *tadyathā: vāyevayaparivāre vahevahaparivāre pṛthāvīparivāre āve avaparivāre tejetejaparivāre mālemalaparivāre khagekhagaparivāre āloke ālokaparivāre sthama sthamaparivāre rājerājaparivāre silisilaparivāre gamegamaparivāre āvoca avocaparivāre malamalalamamelama rālarālalama vidyājñānabhutaṃgame bhutaṅgamaparivāre cakṣugrahe cakṣugrahaparivāre śotragrahe śotragrahaparivāre ghrāṇagrahe ghrāṇagrahaparivāre jihvāgrahe jihvagrahaparivāre kāyagrahe kāyagrahaparivāre managrahe managrahaparivāre sparśagrahe sparśagrahaparivāre vedanagrahe vedanagrahaparivāre tṛṣṇāgraha tṛṣṇāgrahaparivāre upādānagrahe upādānagrahaparivāre bhāvagrahe bhāvagrahaparivāre jātigrāhe jātigrāhaparivāre jaramaraṅgrahe jaramaraṅgrahāparivāre duḥkhasantapāgrāhe duḥkhasantapāgrāha-parivāre ārāpārādvajagrahe ārāpārādvajagrahāparivāre ārāpārādhvajagrahe ārāpārādhvajagrahāparivāre ārāpārādhvajagrahe ārāpārādhvajagrahāparivāre avṛtavivṛtasya [F.138.b] avaramupamāśvasya vegavinivarta āryarasmisamvegana-śānati svāhā.*

3.10 “Respected Blessed One, this is the acceptance that accords with the truth, which was conferred by the thus-gone Campaka Color.”

The Blessed One expressed his approval of this, as did the entire retinue that had arrived in the buddha realm of Sahā—all but those who were absorbed in concentration.

3.11 Then, the Blessed One said to the bodhisattva great being Quintessence of the Sun’s Energy, “Noble son, while sitting here on this seat, I shall teach extensively to sentient beings, with both meaning and letter and without adding or omitting anything, this acceptance that accords with the truth. Noble son, please reveal also the dhāraṇī mantra *hollow lotus stalk of the sun’s eye*,⁴⁰ which the thus-gone Campaka Color gave to protect you when you were coming here, the dhāraṇī mantra that accomplishes everything from the unique features of the body up to parinirvāṇa.”

3.12 At that moment, the bodhisattva great being Quintessence of the Sun’s Energy uttered these words:

3.13 *syād yathedaṃ: siddhamate vilokamate alegetariṣe rucesuruce buddhe vibuddhe mahābuddhe unmadte unmadtapraṭiṣedhane ragadhruvapraṭiṣedhane bindubindumate citacitavatiṣedhane arkecandra ardhe hataciti hatanirmi hatakāmavege hatapaunabhaviraje hatacakṣusamate hatavimatamudre hatayāghe hatayāghe hatasamudrajave hatavimanaṛāje hatahite hatacitāṭe hatadharmaṛāje hatavahurāje hatavarjamati hata upagamate hataroparasmī hatadharmaśiddhi hatasarvonamad [F.139.a] jñājñājñā vijñājñājñā sarvāmārgajñājñā eṣonadasaṃsaraduḥkhe svāhā.*

3.14 “Respected Blessed One, this is the dhāraṇī mantra *lotus of the sun’s eye*, which the thus-gone Campaka Color gave to protect me when I departed.”

- 3.15 The blessed Śākyamuni then said to Venerable Yaśas, “Yaśas, remember this dhāraṇī mantra *lotus of the sun’s eye*! Yaśas, it is rare for thus-gone, worthy, perfect buddhas to appear in the world, but it is much more difficult to obtain this dhāraṇī mantra *lotus of the sun’s eye*. Noble son, the thus-gone ones or their hearers could describe the qualities and the benefits related to Mount Sumeru or the great ocean, but they could never fully express the qualities and benefits of this dhāraṇī mantra *lotus of the sun’s eye*, even if they were to endeavor for eons or more. This dhāraṇī mantra *lotus of the sun’s eye* is therefore profound! Noble son, you must remember this dhāraṇī mantra *lotus of the sun’s eye*! Comprehend it and teach it on a vast scale to the four assemblies! Thereby, sentient beings’ attachments related to the desire realm will be abandoned, [...] all their defilements will be exhausted, and they will experience the happiness of emancipation.”
- 3.16 Then the bodhisattva great being Gandhastin uttered these verses:
- 3.17 “In front of the king of the trees, you defeated Māra
And achieved supreme awakening on your own.
Alone, you have subjugated gods, humans, and yakṣas.
Victor, you are the light rays of the sun’s supreme liberated wisdom. [F.139.b]
- 3.18 “You alone outshine the non-Buddhists in this world,
And you beautify the entire world, like the sun compared to a firefly.
Great sage, you liberate sentient beings within your assembly,
And you ensure that the lineage of the Three Jewels and the Dharma way
endure for a long time.
- 3.19 “Bodhisattvas who have arrived to worship you alone
Strive for the Dharma in the pursuit of virtue and awakening.
Victor, you teach the Dharma that eliminates all suffering,
And you reveal the supreme conduct of awakened wisdom.
- 3.20 “You alone appease sentient beings through your pacifying nectar,
And you liberate hundreds of millions of beings to free them from new
births.⁴¹
Your defilements are exhausted, you are free from views, you have
abandoned afflictions,
And you have reached the city of peace, where there is no sorrow.
- 3.21 “In the entire world, you are the sole doctor,
And the victors have sent us as messengers to ask you questions.
You abide by an ocean of knowledge and impartial compassion;
Great sage, listen to this moon-like Dharma, and I will confer a dhāraṇī.

3.22 “Respected Blessed One, in the southern direction, beyond buddha realms as numerous as the grains of sand needed to fill a city about a league in size, in a place ripe with the five degenerations, there is a world called Banner of Degeneration, where the thus-gone King of the Lord of Mountains resides, thrives, lives well, and teaches the Dharma. That thus-gone one has sent me here. He puts faith in you and in this practice of the Dharma of *The Quintessence of the Sun*, the section on the light rays that destroy the domain of the nāgas, the dhāraṇī mantra you expound that cleanses the karmic actions of sentient beings. [F.140.a] He enquires whether you have any ills or problems and whether you are healthy and well. Respected Blessed One, are you healthy and free from ills? Are the members of your retinue comfortable and in good health? Are they eager to listen to the sacred Dharma? Do they follow the Dharma persistently in the way they hear it? Do they abide by the Dharma? Are the domains of the māras and nāgas subjugated in your buddha realm? Is this your only buddha realm? Are you turning the Dharma wheel without obstruction in this place? For the sake of those who will turn the wheel in this buddha realm, the thus-gone King of the Lord of Mountains puts faith in you and in this practice of the Dharma of *The Quintessence of the Sun*, the section on the light rays that destroy the domain of the nāgas, the dhāraṇī mantra that cleanses the karmic actions of sentient beings. Then, he confers this powerful and beneficial dhāraṇī mantra that accords with emptiness. It exhausts all forms of attachment associated with the desire realm, the form realm, and the formless realm. It exhausts pride, special pride, and pride that thinks ‘I am,’ [...] and it removes the burden of suffering.

3.23 *tadyathā: dhumate dhumate akṣidhumate prabhāsadhūmate sarvākāśadhūmate
avaikhagha vaimetakhaga avaiṣakhaga amohakhaga ananyakhaga vyāvṛttikhaga
sarīrucakhaga anaimakhaga locanakhaga śikhikhaga [F.140.b] vitimirakkhaga
ukṣomakhaga urokhaga akṣikhaga yāvadamnokhaga rūbakhaga yāvadvijñānakhaga
cakṣudhātukhaga yāvadamnovijñānadhātukhaga pṛthavīdhātukhaga
yāvadvijñānadhātukhaga catusmṛtyupasthānakhaga yāvadvāvonakakhaga
duḥkḥakhaga yāvadmārgakhaga vipavana vikṣapa ananasamudranana sarvakāranana
sarvasaṁsthanana viśūpanana akincananana kṣa bhakṣa i le i i le i i le mi le svāhā.*

3.24 “Blessed One, this is the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with emptiness conferred by the thus-gone King of the Lord of Mountains.”

3.25 The blessed Śākyamuni expressed his approval of this, as did the entire retinue that had arrived in the buddha realm of Sahā—all but those who were absorbed in concentration.

3.26 Then the Blessed One said to the bodhisattva great being Gandhahastin, “Noble son, while sitting here on this seat, I shall teach extensively, with both meaning and letter and without adding or omitting anything, this dhāraṇī mantra that accords with emptiness. Noble son, please reveal also the teaching of the *inexhaustible core*, which the thus-gone King of the Lord of Mountains gave to protect you before you came here. This teaching of the *inexhaustible core* subsumes the accomplishment of the intentions and feelings of all sentient beings; it causes one to achieve omniscient wisdom, it subjugates the four māras, it is the basis for accomplishment, and it establishes the Dharma way and the lineage of the Three Jewels.”

3.27 At that moment, the bodhisattva great being Gandhahastin uttered these words:

3.28 *tadyathā: śraṇavyāya śikṣavyāya smṛtivyāya [F.141.a] prahīnavyāya ṛddhivyāya indriyavyāya balavyāya bodhyāṅgavyāya samadhyavyāya dhāraṇīvyāya kṣāntivyāya dhyānavyāya arūpavyāya aninajavyāya mārgavyāya abhijñāvyāya pratisaṃvidvyāya bhūmivyāya vidyavyāya mahāmaitrivyāya mahākaraṇavyāya pṛthivyavyāya satvavyāya dharmavyāya tamavyāya ālokovyāya pratibhāsavvyāya pratiśrutavyāya gaganavyāya māravyāya śūnyatāvyāya pratītyavyāya apraṇihitavyāya animidatavyāya rutavyāya ghoṣavyāya akincanvyāya abhisamaya anunu anona avaha cacāra cacacāravimu cacakṣa cacacaravimuvvyāya vimukṣaya vimu āpavyāya vimu asamudracaravimu cchedavimu ākāśavamu vyupaśmavimu anābhasavimu ahahavimu apāravimu upāsama salilavimu svāhā.*

3.29 “Respected Blessed One, this is the dhāraṇī mantra *inexhaustible core*, which the thus-gone King of the Lord of Mountains conferred in order to protect me when I departed.”

3.30 The blessed Śākyamuni then said to Venerable Ājñātakauṇḍinya, “Kauṇḍinya, remember this dhāraṇī mantra *inexhaustible core*! Kauṇḍinya, it is rare for thus-gone, worthy, perfect buddhas to appear in the world, but it is much more difficult to obtain this teaching of the *inexhaustible core*. Noble son, the thus-gone ones or their hearers could enumerate all the moments of thoughts formed by all sentient beings for a hundred thousand eons, but no one could enumerate the eighteen unique qualities of the buddhas who have understood without obscuration this dhāraṇī mantra *inexhaustible core*. Therefore, Kauṇḍinya, you should teach the Dharma of this teaching of the *inexhaustible core* on a vast scale to the four assemblies, just as you have heard it! [F.141.b] By hearing that Dharma, they will reach the exhaustion of all their karmic actions, achieve unimpeded, undivided, and uninterrupted eloquence, and become thus-gone ones who are more exalted than the three realms.”

- 3.31 At that moment, the bodhisattva great being Glorious Essence of Light bowed down with his palms joined together in the direction of the thus-gone Śākyamuni and uttered these verses:
- 3.32 “Wise protector, having crossed over,
You liberate the six classes of beings
Who are carried away by suffering
And agitated by the diseases of their afflictions.
- 3.33 “You reveal the correct path
To those who are deluded with regard to the six senses
And caught by Māra’s noose;
Within the worlds, your presence is extremely rare.
- 3.34 “Wise humans will abandon the basis of the household,
Which is endowed with the six branches.
You are the friend of the entire world,
And you eliminate all Dharma famine.
- 3.35 “Great practitioner, you possess the six higher perceptions⁴²
And reveal the truths.
Great sage, you liberate beings circling in saṃsāra
From their tight fetters.
- 3.36 “We have come to this realm
Out of faith in your mantra.
The protectors of the world have sent us here
As messengers, so please listen.
- 3.37 “Respected Blessed One, in the western direction, beyond buddha realms as numerous as the grains of sand in forty-two Ganges Rivers, there is a world called Essence Banner, where the thus-gone one named Royal Mass of Glorious Wisdom resides, thrives, lives well, and teaches the Dharma. That thus-gone one has sent me here. He puts faith in the practice of the Dharma of *The Quintessence of the Sun*, the section on the light rays that destroy the domain of the nāgas, the dhāraṇī mantra expounded by you that cleanses the karmic actions of sentient beings. [F.142.a] He enquires whether you have any ills or problems and whether you are healthy and well. Respected Blessed One, are you healthy and free from ills? Are the members of your retinue comfortable and in good health? Are they eager to listen to the sacred Dharma? Do they follow the Dharma persistently in the way they hear it? Do they abide by the Dharma? Are the domains of the māras and nāgas subjugated in your buddha realm? Is this your only buddha realm? Are you turning the Dharma wheel without obstruction in this place? For the sake of

those who will turn the wheel in this buddha realm, the thus-gone Royal Mass of Glorious Wisdom puts faith in you and in the practice of the Dharma of *The Quintessence of the Sun*, the section on the light rays that destroy the domain of the nāgas, the dhāraṇī mantra that cleanses the karmic actions of sentient beings. Then, he also confers this powerful and beneficial dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the absence of wishes. It exhausts all forms of attachment associated with the desire realm, the form realm, and the formless realm. It exhausts pride, special pride, and pride that thinks ‘I am,’ [...] it overcomes all the dense darkness of ignorance, and it removes the burden of suffering.

3.38 *tadyathā: śanaśara śamanaśava apakṣavaśa cakṣubhavaśava śotraśava ghrāṇaśava jihvaśava kāyaśava manāśava kṣatividyacakṣupṛthavikṣabha śrotra avakṣabha jihvavāyukṣabha manojakṣabha ālokajñānakṣabha vījasaṅgramakṣabha [F.142.b] ankurakhaghakṣabha śamkarukṣabha kṣayarāsakṣabha śāntivīyasrakṣabha natonatainatona avanyeratona nayāvanayinatoneṣa antaduḥkhasya svāhā.*

3.39 “Blessed One, this is the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the absence of wishes conferred by the thus-gone Royal Mass of Glorious Wisdom.”

3.40 The blessed Śākyamuni expressed his approval, as did all the sentient beings present within the buddha realm of Sahā—except for those who were absorbed in concentration.

3.41 Then the Blessed One said to the bodhisattva great being Glorious Essence of Light, “Noble son, while sitting here on this seat, I shall teach extensively to sentient beings, with excellent meaning and words and without adding or omitting anything, this dhāraṇī mantra that accords with emptiness. Noble son, please reveal also the teaching of the *fundamental vidyā mantra* that the thus-gone Royal Mass of Glorious Wisdom gave to protect you before you came here. That teaching completely pacifies and pulverizes the causes of saṃsāra—sentient beings’ lesser, moderate, and intense cravings as well as their afflictions associated with the form and the formless realms—accumulated for eons as numerous as the grains of sand in the Ganges. It cleanses their karmic actions, and it perfects all their virtues.”

3.42 “Respected Blessed One, I shall do so:

3.43 *tadyathā: vegapariccheda garbhasakṣase garbharevidyāprabhagakṣekṣaya yogepratihareśamannasikathe samameghajhaṣe akṣaya natekṣabhavaje niddhajhaṣe samanajhaṣe adhyaśayajhaṣe viprabhajhaṣe śaikṣajhaṣe senyajavajhaṣe saliguhyajhaṣe saliguhabhaikṣivanakoṣe sādhanakonosivadhananathye vitapavidte [F.143.a] upakramapathe anacchedyaprakhe pratikramena sakaṇṭhyaśaisalocanavame krodhadhare kāmasaṣe ākāśakhagenāgakunje vidyavane klanavane ucavane*

*samamakere śāriyavane meghajaveharikonova nayanamukhe sārakṣakole
narāyaṇacare indravāsane o a ava āṇava ā vara avāra sāramegha
duḥkhanastiraninirvāhe svāhā.*

- 3.44 “Respected Blessed One, this is the teaching of the *fundamental vidyā mantra* that the thus-gone Royal Mass of Glorious Wisdom conferred to protect me when I departed.”
- 3.45 The blessed Śākyamuni then said to Venerable Śāriputra, “Śāriputra, remember this fundamental dhāraṇī mantra! Śāriputra, it is rare for thus-gone, worthy, perfect buddhas to appear in the world, but it is much more difficult to obtain this fundamental dhāraṇī mantra. Śāriputra, the thus-gone ones or their hearers could count or evaluate the number of smallest particles in the earth element present in the world with its four continents over a hundred eons. However, even if they were to try for a hundred thousand eons, they could never describe the scope of this fundamental dhāraṇī mantra. This fundamental dhāraṇī mantra is therefore very profound. Śāriputra, you must remember this fundamental dhāraṇī mantra. You must comprehend it and teach it on a vast scale to the four assemblies! When sentient beings hear it, the causes of saṃsāra that exist within them—their lesser, moderate, and intense cravings as well as their afflictions associated with the form and the formless realms—will be completely pacified, and they will turn their backs on them for eons as numerous as the grains of sand in the Ganges. [F.143.b] Women’s karmic obscurations associated with the five acts of immediate retribution and their other causes of saṃsāra will be exhausted without any remainder; all their defilements will be exhausted, and they will be endowed with the happiness of emancipation.”
- 3.46 At that moment, the bodhisattva great being Ākāśagarbha bowed down with his palms joined in the direction of the Blessed One and uttered these verses:
- 3.47 “You are the sole guide,
And you have gained certainty with respect to all phenomena.
Since devotion arises in them upon seeing this,
Even the glorious spiritual friends worship you.
- 3.48 “You are worshiped by delightful spiritual friends
Replete with the most supreme aspects.
They make offerings to the Thus-Gone One
By offering flowers and incense.
- 3.49 “Since you have gathered this great assembly
Instantly in this place,
All the gods are praising you,

And the glorious spiritual friends worship you.

- 3.50 “O protector of the world,
You only demonstrate this on one occasion.
The wise asuras and the glorious spiritual friends
Are continuously worshipping you.
- 3.51 “Glorious Essence of Flowers
Is adorned with all aspects of glory;
He has sent us here as messengers
To ask you these questions.
- 3.52 “Respected Blessed One, in the northern direction, beyond buddha realms
as numerous as the grains of sand in eighty Ganges Rivers, in a place ripe
with the five degenerations, there is a world called Manifestation of All
Perfumes, where the thus-gone, worthy, perfect Buddha Glorious Essence of
Flowers resides and teaches the Dharma. That thus-gone one has sent me
here. He puts faith in the practice of the Dharma of *The Quintessence of the Sun*,
the section on the light rays that destroy the domain of the nāgas, the
dhāraṇī mantra expounded by you that cleanses the karmic actions of
sentient beings. He enquires whether you have any ills or problems and
whether you are healthy and well. [F.144.a] Respected Blessed One, are you
healthy and free from ills? Are the members of your retinue comfortable and
in good health? Are they eager to listen to the sacred Dharma? Do they
follow the Dharma persistently in the way they hear it? Do they abide by the
Dharma? Are the domains of the māras and nāgas subjugated in your
buddha realm? Is your buddha realm unique? Are you turning the Dharma
wheel without obstruction in this place? For the sake of those who will turn
the wheel in this buddha realm, the thus-gone Royal Mass of Glorious
Wisdom puts faith in you and in the practice of the Dharma of *The
Quintessence of the Sun*, the section on the light rays that destroy the domain
of the nāgas, the dhāraṇī mantra that cleanses the karmic actions of sentient
beings. Moreover, he also confers this powerful and beneficial dhāraṇī
mantra *peaceful core of knowledge*. It benefits all sentient beings, completely
cures all diseases, and completely subdues all afflictions. It generates
complete knowledge of all the aggregates and elements, causes one to
discern all phenomena, reveals all the skillful means, and causes one to
experience the entirety of the happiness of emancipation. It induces sincere
faith in all sentient beings, causes one to attain happiness related to all
phenomena, eradicates all māras and enemies in accordance with the
Dharma, and subjugates all the domains of the māras. This great teaching of
the *peaceful core of knowledge* annihilates all māras and vanquishes enemies. It

3.57 *tadyathā: vovṛhabubura talarava ilasaha haṭūhaṭū gaganākṣaśamamitra
cakravartitilesāgara tiledūnahile hilehavahe naraṇaṭe yavanamitre kṣitimitre paramitre
śikhimitre marutramitre khagamitre sarva uṇamitre sarvakāmamitre manaparumitre
dhanaśvaramitre svāhā.”*

3.58 Oh! As this teaching that pacifies hostile beings and puts them to sleep was being uttered by the bodhisattva great being Ākāśagarbha, [F.145.b] all hostile snakes—except for those who had reached acceptance and those who had reached the level of nonregression on the path to unsurpassed and perfect awakening—left for their respective places and fell asleep. Besides the bodhisattvas who had reached acceptance and the level of nonregression, all hostile yakṣas, asuras, garuḍas, mahoragas, pretas, piśācas, pūtanas, and kaṭapūtanas in saṃsāra also left for their respective places and fell asleep. Upon hearing this teaching that pacifies and puts to sleep all the hostile humans who are impetuous, harsh, devoid of affection, and in conflict with one another, as well as those who constantly manifest aggressive behavior, commit the five acts of immediate retribution, reject the sacred Dharma, denigrate the noble ones, and are endowed with the roots of nonvirtue, everyone developed a sincere attitude of love, compassion, and affection and became free of malice and anxiety. Everyone focused on the Dharma, began to fear the afterlife, developed sincere respect for the Three Jewels, observed the Dharma, and manifested a peaceful mindset. [F.146.a]

3.59 “Respected Blessed One, this is the dhāraṇī mantra that pacifies hostile beings that the thus-gone Glorious Essence of Flowers conferred to protect me when I departed.”

3.60 The thus-gone Śākyamuni then said to Venerable Maudgalyāyana, “Maudgalyāyana, remember this dhāraṇī mantra that pacifies and puts to sleep hostile beings and that is the outcome of the sublime states free from concepts! Maudgalyāyana, it is rare for thus-gone, worthy, perfect buddhas to appear in the world, but it is much more difficult to obtain this dhāraṇī mantra that is the outcome of the sublime states free from concepts and pacifies and puts to sleep hostile beings. Maudgalyāyana, even if one were to teach this mantra that pacifies and puts to sleep hostile beings for a hundred thousand eons without doing anything else, the world with its gods, and even the bodhisattva great beings who dwell on the levels, could not apprehend its meaning—only the thus-gone ones themselves could apprehend it. It is therefore very profound, valuable, and beneficial. It perfects the path to unsurpassed and perfect awakening, it fulfills all wishes, and it causes one to attain the great compassion that ripens sentient beings. Therefore, Maudgalyāyana, remember this dhāraṇī mantra that pacifies and puts to sleep hostile beings, and teach it extensively to sentient beings at the proper times. By the mere fact of hearing it, those beings who listen to it will

gain many qualities and benefits. The results of the karmic ripening of much aggression, which would otherwise have led to undesired consequences, will vanish and become nonexistent. They will clearly understand the many defects of saṃsāra, [F.146.b] they will generate many roots of virtue, they will acquire much merit, and they will attend to, serve, and revere many virtuous friends. They will therefore not regress from unsurpassed and perfect awakening. Maudgalyāyana, this dhāraṇī mantra causes the light of the Dharma to blaze, and it ensures that the lineage of the Three Jewels remains uninterrupted.

- 3.61 *This concludes the chapter called “The Dhāraṇī Mantras,” the third chapter in “The Quintessence of the Sun,” the Great Vehicle discourse of The Great Assembly.*

THE PURIFICATION OF KARMIC ACTIONS

- 4.1 The Blessed One then said to the four messengers and the other bodhisattva great beings, “Noble sons, abide in this buddha realm by your individual virtues!”
- 4.2 So, together with their retinues, those bodhisattva great beings sat cross-legged in their respective places. Then, those beings who had thoroughly cultivated the absorption of the dhāraṇī of acceptance entered into their respective states of absorption. From the bodies of some of those beings dwelling in equipoise radiated lights like the light emitted by oil lamps. From the bodies of some others radiated lights like the light emitted by trillions of suns and moons.
- 4.3 At that moment Venerable Ājñātakauṇḍinya thought, “Through the power of the Buddha, I should make a request to the thus-gone, worthy, perfect Buddha. I should request the Thus-Gone One to teach about those four dhāraṇī mantras in detail. I should ask so that the sentient beings who have arrived in this buddha realm of Sahā may hear this teaching and eliminate all their doubts, attain illumination with respect to all phenomena, become free of excitement, transcend all uncertainties and doubts, [F.147.a] swiftly enter into faultlessness, avoid falling into error, and strive for the higher realms.”
- 4.4 So, without speaking, Venerable Ājñātakauṇḍinya bowed with his palms joined together in the direction of the Blessed One.
- 4.5 The Blessed One asked Venerable Ājñātakauṇḍinya, “Kaṇḍinya, do you wish to ask the Thus-Gone One a question?”
- “Respected Blessed One, indeed! Indeed, respected Well-Gone One! Respected Blessed One, should I be granted the opportunity, I would like to ask a few questions to the respected Thus-Gone One.”
- 4.6 The Blessed One replied, “Kaṇḍinya, you may ask the thus-gone, worthy, perfect Buddha anything you wish. I will elucidate your questions and bring satisfaction to your mind in a way that will be directly understood

by the world with its gods.”

4.7 Venerable ĀjñātaKaundinya then said to the Blessed One, “Respected Blessed One, you have repeatedly stated that craving is a companion of individuals. Why did the Thus-Gone One designate craving as a companion of individuals? The Thus-Gone One has said that craving—the companion of beings—will cause one to continuously circle and take rebirth in saṃsāra for a long time.”

4.8 The Blessed One replied, “Kaundinya, you act for the benefit and welfare of many beings. This opportune question is excellent! Therefore, Kaundinya, listen carefully and pay attention. I will now explain this.”

Venerable ĀjñātaKaundinya replied, “Respected Blessed One, I shall do so!” [F.147.b] and he listened as the Blessed One had directed.

4.9 The Blessed One then said, “Kaundinya, the term *craving* refers to three types of craving. What are the three? They are (1) the craving related to the desire realm, (2) the craving related to the form realm, and (3) the craving related to the formless realm. [B6]

4.10 “There are also three other types of craving: (1) the craving related to arising, (2) the craving related to disintegration, and (3) the craving related to phenomena.

4.11 “Kaundinya, what are the forms of craving related to the desire realm? *Desire* refers to sexual intercourse. Careless beings strive to experience sensual pleasures, and humans with base natures delight in them. All forms of attachment will develop in sentient beings who are tormented by lustful longing. Those beings will therefore adopt the paths of the ten nonvirtuous actions and abide by it. Through such causes and conditions, the hell realms, the animal realms, the World of the Lord of Death, and the abodes of the destitute yakṣas will manifest. Due to attachment, sentient beings will experience a variety of harsh and unbearable sufferings within the five destinies of saṃsāra, and yet they will not be afraid of attachment. Since they have abandoned humility and modesty, and since they are disconnected from roots of virtue, they will only very rarely obtain a human body. Due to attachment, they will repeatedly engage in various physical, verbal, and mental unwholesome actions—up to the acts with immediate retribution. They will, repeatedly and for long periods of time, experience harsh and unbearable feelings in the lower realms. Since these are all caused by and based on attachment, they are referred to as *the downfalls stemming from the latent propensities of attachment*. [F.148.a]

4.12 “Therefore, the Thus-Gone One teaches the Dharma so that beings will abandon attachment.⁴³ He sees the defects of the various desires as they are, and so he causes beings to understand and genuinely realize the defects of those desires. He causes them to understand that desires are repulsive like

kimpaka fruits, heaps of glowing embers, vases filled with poison, stinking excrement, the edges of razor blades, thieves, the houses of outcastes, blazing iron lumps, hailstones, poisonous snakes, enemies, desolate roads, islands of *rākṣasīs*, executioners, rubbish, or charnel grounds. He causes them to understand the defects associated with attachment to sensual pleasures, clinging to desirable objects, lustful longing, the origination of desire, and the desires themselves. Knowing the defects of desires, those beings will grow weary of them. They will cultivate attitudes that agree with the Dharma, joyfully abide by the trainings they uphold, pursue the Dharma, delight in the joy of the Dharma, accumulate a wealth of Dharma, develop pure mindsets that are in accord with the Dharma, genuinely follow the path of the Dharma, and devote themselves to it. When they die, they will remember the Dharma, and the flavor of the Dharma will ripen in them. In whatever directions those beings who have lived with minds moistened by the Dharma look, they will see blessed buddhas who reside while teaching the Dharma in the company of great assemblies. They will hear the Dharma, and upon hearing it [F.148.b] they will behold the thus-gone ones with very delighted minds.

4.13 “After they die, they will leave the lower realms behind and be born within buddha realms in which a buddha is present. There, they will enjoy a wealth of qualities, self-control, and restraint. They will join the company of those who revel in the concentrations and the higher perceptions, those who are adorned with the perfect happiness of emancipation, with great love, and with great compassion, those who ripen all sentient beings, and those who are ornamented with the qualities of the buddhas.⁴⁴ By coming into contact with them, the latent imprints of their afflictions that lead to rebirth will be exhausted, and they will be adorned with those same qualities. It will be as when various fragrant substances are placed in a basket together with some ornaments. Before long, those ornaments will be permeated by those fragrances and will begin to emit the same scents. Even though their colors are dissimilar, they will soon be suffused with those fragrant substances. Similarly, Kaunḍinya, at the time of death, sentient beings who know the defects of desires will behold the buddhas. After they die, they will leave behind the lower realms and be born within buddha realms in which a buddha is present. [...] There, they will be adorned with those same qualities, and before long they will awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood.

4.14 “Therefore, Kaunḍinya, the noble sons or daughters who correctly discern what will be of benefit to themselves, others, and both themselves and others [F.149.a] should attend to, serve, and revere sacred beings. They should also question them about the experience of desires, their defects, and

the emancipation from them. Upon hearing the Dharma in those places, they will swiftly awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood. The ‘sacred beings’ are the buddhas, the bodhisattvas, the circumstantial victors, the worthy ones, and myself—the Teacher who has now appeared in the world, the blessed Buddha.⁴⁵ I wish to benefit all sentient beings, to completely liberate them from all their sufferings, and to fully reveal all the faults of desire. Therefore, all of you who have assembled here, listen well to the teaching on the defects of desires that I—the one who speaks without error, impartially, and with love and compassion and who benefits all sentient beings—reveal! Upon hearing such a teaching, keep it well in mind, and later on you will be liberated from the three lower realms and swiftly awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood.”

4.15 At that moment, all the sentient beings present throughout the entire buddha realm of Sahā exclaimed in unison, “Blessed One, please explain to us the defects of desires! We shall listen to this teaching one-pointedly and accomplish it in accordance with our strengths!”

4.16 The Blessed One then said, “The desires of sentient beings arise through four conditions. What are the four? They are (1) the attachment to form, [F.149.b] (2) the attachment to shape, (3) the attachment to contact, and (4) the attachment to passionate frolicking.

4.17 “What is meant by ‘attachment to form’? The wise ones, at the appropriate times, investigate the four great elements in terms of their exhaustion, selflessness, and the absence of sentient beings. On the other hand, immature beings who rely on mistaken views apprehend the objects they investigate with concepts such as ‘this is the body of a woman,’ ‘this is the body of a man,’ ‘this is bad,’ ‘this is good,’ ‘this is pleasant,’ or ‘this is undesirable.’ When men who are intoxicated by desire see the appearance of women, they fixate on attributes and signs. They thereby generate the ground of desire, the inclination toward desire, and the strong attachment to desire that had not yet previously arisen, and their roots of virtue will therefore become corrupted. Those beings will be rejected by all the wise ones, and since they do not guard their body, speech, and mind, they will involve themselves in all sorts of unwholesome activities. They will not care about the emancipation from desires, and they will fall into the three lower realms. After they die, they will be born as hell beings, animals, or pretas. Through the causes, the conditions, and the ground of such desires, they will experience harsh, scorching, and unbearable feelings of suffering in those places for a long time.

4.18 “While they know them to be women and men, the wise ones generate the perception of repulsiveness: they imagine their absence of hair, their skin, their ligaments, their flesh, their absence of blood, their bones, and their

white human skulls. They pursue that process, cultivate it, [F.150.a] and repeat it. They apply the same process with respect to the physical forms of men as they do with respect to the physical forms of women. They apply the same process with respect to what is far away as they do with respect to what is present in front of them. They apply the same process with respect to what is present in front of them as they do with respect to what is far away. Just as they do with others, they focus their attention and apply knowledge to their own white heaps of bones, their absence of hair, their skin, their ligaments, their flesh, and their lack of blood. By repeating that process many times, their minds become fully settled, trained, and focused. This is the first authentic elimination of the sphere of mental afflictions.

4.19 “Then, directing their attention on those heaps of bones, they apply their mindfulness to a spot about the size of a jujube fruit between their eyebrows. They meditate on this and repeat that process many times. [...] By doing so, their minds become fully settled, trained, and focused. Both their minds and bodies are utterly purified. How is it that their minds are utterly purified? Because they are pacified in all possible respects. Contemplating, cognizing, and observing this for a while is the second Dharma gateway, which accords with the practice of tranquility, eliminates attachment, and eliminates the sphere of afflictions.

4.20 “Why is it that their bodies are utterly purified? Because, in a similar way, the inhalation and exhalation of their breath is interrupted in their meditation—they neither breathe in nor breathe out. With both their bodies and minds utterly purified, they exert themselves in tranquility and focus on cessation. This is the third Dharma gateway, which focuses on cessation and eliminates the sphere of afflictions.

4.21 “Furthermore, the minds of those who are agitated can quickly become in accord with the practice of tranquility. For this, they should direct their attention to a spot about the size of a jujube fruit on the soft area at the top of their heads. [F.150.b] They should then cultivate this and repeat the process many times. Next, they should visualize and cultivate this up to the fontanel and repeat the process many times. After that, they must visualize their bones on that spot being pulverized into dust about the size of sand grains. After the second and third stages, they continue up to the point at which they visualize their entire skull and all their bones being pulverized into dust. They will then visualize that dust being blown away by the wind, until nothing but empty space remains. In this way, both their bodies and minds become utterly purified. This is the fourth Dharma gateway, which strives in the practice of tranquility, focuses on cessation, and eliminates the sphere of afflictions.”

4.22 Venerable Kaunḍinya then asked, “Respected Blessed One, does the complete wisdom of the realm of the conditioned include the limit of reality of the realm of space, the ground of voidness?”

“Yes, noble son. The limit of reality of the realm of the conditioned is like space; it pervades everything one sees.”

4.23 ĀjñātaKaunḍinya then said, “Respected Blessed One, is space one’s own cognition, or does it pervade others’ cognition?”

The Blessed One replied, “Since it pervades the realm of all phenomena, the entire realm of the conditioned must also pervade one’s own cognition. Why is it so? Those who meditate on the complete purity of form will behold the thus-gone ones. Those who see the bones of the skull being pulverized into dust and blown away by the wind will destroy all forms, so that no material form will appear anymore to their eye consciousness. They focus their attention and meditate on empty space, [F.151.a] and they do so repeatedly. In all the directions and in between, they will perceive space that is pure like beryl; the appearance of the thus-gone ones will manifest in their minds, and they will see the appearance of the thus-gone ones within that space. When they look in any of the directions and in between, they will perceive the forms of the thus-gone ones. The thus-gone ones, adorned with the excellent marks, will appear to their eye consciousness. In whatever direction or intermediate direction they gaze, they will only see the bodies of buddhas fully adorned with the thirty-two major marks, surrounded by auras of light, and with circumferences like that of a banyan tree.

4.24 “If, in accordance with their class, they have accumulated roots of virtue that accord with the aspect of certainty, they will wonder, ‘I must definitely ask the Thus-Gone One about who created space and where it will be exhausted!’ They will then think, ‘I have already asked the Thus-Gone One this.’ The Thus-Gone One will tell them, ‘Space is a verbal concept, and that concept is nonexistent. The term *space* and all other concepts are insubstantial. All phenomena are utterly nonexistent, unchanging, and devoid of characteristics. By investigating them from the perspective of the absence of characteristics, one becomes completely free from the basis of those characteristics.’ Upon hearing that teaching, they will then swiftly attain the fruition of nonreturners, and all their desires and attachments related to the form realm will disappear without remainder. Likewise, all their attachments related to the formless realm, their ignorance, their pride, and their agitation will also disappear without remainder.

4.25 “If those who, in accordance with their class, lack the roots of virtue that accord with the aspect of certainty [F.151.b] see the body of the Buddha, they will think, ‘I am truly apprehending the size of the Thus-Gone One.’ When they look in all directions, they will see the Thus-Gone One everywhere

throughout all of space. If they view the Thus-Gone One as being small, they will perceive him as being small. If they view him as being immeasurable, they will perceive him as being immeasurable. However, they will then think, 'Where does the Thus-Gone One come from? The Thus-Gone One does not come from anywhere and does not go anywhere. No place can be found where the Thus-Gone One goes to or comes from! Since the body and the three realms are caused by the mind alone, beings perceive in accordance with their concepts. I create the Buddha with my own mind. I see the Buddha through my mind. My mind itself is the Buddha, my mind itself is the body, and my mind itself is space. I perceive the Buddha through the concepts of my own mind. The mind does not cognize the mind. The mind does not see the mind. Mental perceptions are devoid of cognition. Mental perceptions are negations, and negations are insubstantial. Those phenomena only manifest because they are devoid of cognition.'

4.26 "Those who have previously given rise to the mind set on awakening and realized emptiness through insight will then contemplate objects while contemplating their intrinsic emptiness. They will attain the absorption in which the present buddhas are dwelling. Even so, they are followers of the hearers' vehicle. Since they have become accustomed to all forms being devoid of marks, their insight, their freedom from attachment, and their ignorance are purified. By contemplating emptiness, [F.152.a] they will attain the keen acceptance that accords with emptiness, and later on they will achieve its fruition without difficulty. If they meditate on empty space, their bodies and minds will be utterly purified. They will reach the gateway of liberation of emptiness, and they will achieve that fruition without difficulty. This the fifth Dharma gateway, which strives in emptiness, focuses on cessation, and interrupts the waves of afflictions."

4.27 As this teaching was being given by the Blessed One, ninety-nine trillion gods and humans from that retinue achieved the concordant acceptance, and eighty-four thousand of them achieved the acceptance that accords with emptiness. Similarly, sixty thousand beings reached the gateway of liberation of the absorption of emptiness, and twenty thousand of them achieved the absorption in which the present buddhas are dwelling. Countless sentient beings also achieved the fruition of the stream enterers, and the minds of eighty-four thousand monks were liberated from their defilements with no further grasping.

4.28 The Blessed One then said, "Furthermore, Kaundinya, those who do not dwell mentally on that contemplation of the skull, who have no faith in it, and who are not inspired by it should go to a charnel ground. There they will see a variety of human corpses—some bluish, some festering, some bloody, some being devoured, some decomposed, some without flesh and blood,

and some as bare bones completely white like conch shells. They should examine all these corpses repeatedly. If they contemplate those objects, keep them in mind, and meditate on them with quiet minds, without wavering or being distracted, [F.152.b] they will experience everything up to the exhaustion of all their defilements.

4.29 “Sentient beings with overweening pride should contemplate, visualize, and meditate on human corpses that become bluish shortly after death. They will then perceive their own bodies in the same way they perceive the corpses they have contemplated. They will see that their own bodies are the same as the corpses of others—they are not different from bluish and festering corpses. By maintaining their efforts in applying this meditation to their own bodies, they will perceive their bodies entirely festering and bloody, their bellies infested by maggots. They will see their bodies entirely infested and devoured by maggots, up until the stages where they are without flesh and blood and become bare bones completely white like conch shells, heaps of bones connected with ligaments. This is what they should focus on, build up, and cultivate. Day and night, whether they are walking, standing, sitting, or lying down, they should contemplate, visualize, and meditate on their own bodies as heaps of bones completely white like conch shells and connected with ligaments and skin. They will be able to perceive this in the blink of an eye. [F.153.a] Just as they perceive their own bodies, wherever they look—whether at the earth, trees, humans, or animals—they will see heaps of bones completely white like conch shells and connected with ligaments. Wherever they walk⁴⁶ and travel, they will tread on and sidestep heaps of bones. They will trample on heaps of bones, sit on them, and sleep on them, just like those who have cultivated, focused on, and exerted themselves in the perception of repulsiveness. They will abandon all forms of attachment related to the desire realm, in accordance with their class but not otherwise.

4.30 “This is the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with emptiness. It gathers the winds from the four directions that pulverize the heaps of bones into dust and disintegrate them. Just as it gathers the winds that pulverize the heaps of bones of their own bodies into dust and disintegrate them, it also gathers the winds that pulverize all bodies and this entire earth into dust and disintegrate them to the point that material form will no longer appear before theirs or others’ eyes.

4.31 “Those beings will then focus on the empty, beryl-like space. They will visualize space, meditate on it, and repeat that process many times. They will think, ‘Furthermore, for the sake of investigation, I will contemplate the sky as being yellow. I will envisage the sky to be yellow, visualize that, and meditate on it.’ In that way, they will imagine that the entire sky is yellow. In

the same way, they will imagine that its color is red, white, crimson, and every other color up to crystalline. Similarly, they will visualize all material appearances and the entire earth as blue water, [F.153.b] thereby imagining these to be blue. They will also contemplate, cognize, and envisage the entire earth as being water with colors ranging from yellow to red, white, violet, and crystalline. They will then visualize the entire earth element as crystalline, and after that, they will visualize that it is reduced to the size of about four fingers. Then, they will hit it with their toes and make it shake, rock, quiver, and quake as they please—they will shake it in any way they want. When they shake it, this great earth with its mountains will quiver, wobble, shake, and quake.

4.32 “They will also contemplate, cognize, envisage, and visualize blue, pink, red, and white lotus flowers on that water, and they will clearly imagine fresh breezes blowing in the four directions. They will then walk, sit, and lie down on these flowers. They will also visualize, in the four directions, great mountains of various colors, on top of which they will walk, rest, sit, and lie down. Then, interrupting that process, they will contemplate, consider, cognize, envisage, and visualize these mountains to be pure space. Next they will contemplate, envisage, and visualize their bodies to be light—just like a piece of cotton wool that is fluttering in the breeze and carried off by a gentle wind. [F.154.a] They will contemplate and visualize the lightness of their bodies to the point at which as they are carried by the wind they dwell in midair, where they will then walk, sit, rest, and lie down. Next they will rest in absorption on the fire element and radiate various blue, yellow, red, violet, and crystalline lights from their bodies. They will emit blazing fire from the upper parts of their bodies and shower down streams of cold water from their lower parts. At other times they will emit blazing fire from the lower parts of their bodies and shower down rains of cold water from the upper parts of their bodies.

4.33 “Likewise, they will manifest themselves on top of the earth, caress the sun and the moon with their hands, and physically exert their influence up to the world of Brahmā. Interrupting that process, they will then contemplate and visualize forms in any number and color they might think of, such as blue, yellow, red, white, violet, or crystalline. If they think, ‘I am looking at the Thus-Gone One,’ they will see the Thus-Gone One. Wherever they look, they will see the Thus-Gone One. If they think that the Thus-Gone One’s body is small, they will perceive him as being small. If they think that it is immeasurable, [...] they will see the Thus-Gone One as filling the entire sky. They will think, ‘The Thus-Gone One does not come from and does not go anywhere. [F.154.b] The cause of the bodies present in all the three realms is only the mind. I perceive things in the way I imagine them. I perceive the

various different colors, forms, and magical displays of my own mind. My mind consists of different forms, magical displays, colors, cognitions, and concepts—it manifests in a variety of ways. The mind is mingled with space; it is described as wind, and all winds are insubstantial.’ Such is the meaning of the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the truth shared by ordinary beings, the dhāraṇī mantra that the thus-gone Campaka Color conferred upon me through the bodhisattva great being Quintessence of the Sun’s Energy.

4.34 “What is the meaning of the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the truth unshared by ordinary beings? It is the abandonment of the attachment to form and shape. Some will think, ‘Space is inapprehensible and inexpressible. In the same way, the mind is also inexpressible—both are inexpressible. These aggregates are accompanied by torment, anxiety, delusion, and deception, so if I now fully abandon the conceptual mind, there is no doubt that space will be abandoned, as will all discursiveness that arises on the basis of concepts!’ However, they should know this by observing space through the first instant of their mind, so that all cognitions are interrupted and none are generated. Mental productions will then cease, and those that have not yet arisen will not be produced. In that way, since its causes have ceased, the mind will also cease, [F.155.a] and they will enter the absorption of cessation in which physical, verbal, and mental formations are utterly purified. They will spend either one day within that cessation, or, if they prefer, many hundreds of thousands of eons will pass before the first instant of mind arises, immediately after the absorption of cessation. Within the second instant of mind, all their defilements and lives will be exhausted, and they will simultaneously pass into parinirvāṇa. This is the meaning of the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the undefiled truth unshared by ordinary beings.

4.35 “What is the meaning of the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the truth both shared and unshared by ordinary beings? Some will think, ‘Forms are only perceived in the way they are imagined. The mind is both the mind and forms, so I should not imagine pure space.’ Wishing to abandon all forms, they will abandon all their perceptions of forms, and they will then perfect and dwell within the sphere of infinite space while thinking, ‘This is infinite space!’ This is the absorption that is shared by ordinary beings.

4.36 “Some will then think, ‘My physical form is space—I see space as physical form. What is the defining characteristic of space? The defining characteristic of space is that it accommodates. However, space is pervaded by the winds, and the winds arise from the four great elements. My physical form is also made of the four great elements, since both have the same defining characteristics.’ They will wonder, ‘Does everything that arises have the essence of the great elements?’ [F.155.b] They then think, ‘Neither of these

arise with general characteristics.’ Why is that? Because all phenomena are intrinsically empty. Similarly, one’s own essence is also empty of any other entity—it is unborn, unceasing, unarisen, and groundless.’ When they investigate in that way, the thus-gone ones will manifest in their minds, and those beings will see nothing but the thus-gone ones throughout all of space. Perceiving the thus-gone ones in that way, they will attain the fruition of the non-returners. This is the first sphere of liberation based on the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the truth shared by ordinary beings.

4.37 “Again, some will wonder, ‘Is abiding by this sphere of infinite space the defining characteristic of my own essence, or is it space?’ They will then think, ‘The pure defining characteristic of space is my own identity, but it is not the defining characteristic of my own essence.’ Thinking in that way, the more they contemplate limitless, infinite space, the more they will cognize their identity. This is the absorption that is shared by ordinary beings.

4.38 “Some will then wonder, ‘If all of space is my identity, does space have other essences? When I focus my attention on the thus-gone ones, how do they manifest?’ The more they contemplate the thus-gone ones, the more they will perceive them. As soon as they see them, some will settle within the first fruition, and some will actualize the other fruitions up to the level of the worthy ones who have abandoned all afflictions. This is the second sphere of liberation based on the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the truth shared by ordinary beings.

4.39 “Again, some will wonder, ‘Is my own identity, which is thoroughly pure, pristine, unsullied space, also my virtuous mind, which is groundless and devoid of all afflictions?’ [F.156.a] They will then think, ‘The eightfold path of the noble ones, which generates great illumination, is free of all afflictions.’ The moment they contemplate the eightfold path of the noble ones that is free of all afflictions, some will settle within the fruition of the stream enterers, and some will actualize the other fruitions up to the level of the worthy ones. This is the third sphere of liberation based on the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the truth shared by ordinary beings.

4.40 “Again, some will think, ‘What my concepts bring about is meaningless. I should not keep on imagining forms. Where there are forms, there are distinct perceptions that are impediments, and there is old age and death. I will therefore train to bring an end to old age and death. I will focus on the perception of space!’ Again, they will contemplate, cognize, envisage, and visualize the perception of space. In all possible ways, they will verbalize, visualize, perfect, and dwell within utterly pure space. This is the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the truth shared by ordinary beings. It is shared with ordinary beings.

- 4.41 “Again, some will think, ‘This is my pure identity, yet my concepts are still applied to all of space. I must consider space in terms of my identity!’⁴⁷ My perception is space.’ Nevertheless, all perceptions are said to be the sound of suffering, so this is not⁴⁸ the cessation and pacification of the entirety of suffering and its origin. [F.156.b] As they perceive this as the cessation of suffering and its origin, some will settle within the fruition of the stream enterers, and some will settle within the other fruitions up to the level of the worthy ones. This is the fourth sphere of liberation based on the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the truth shared by ordinary beings.
- 4.42 “Again, some will think, ‘In order to cultivate space, I must dwell on it repeatedly. All of space is my identity. I must apply myself to space. I must investigate consciousness!’ Thinking in that way, their consciousnesses will manifest in the same manner as space. They will abandon their perceptions of space, and their consciousnesses will manifest in the same manner as infinite, limitless space. This is the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the truth shared by ordinary beings.
- 4.43 “Those who abide by this will think, ‘This perception of my consciousness is a concept; it is suffering and its origin, and it is a mistaken consciousness. Nevertheless, my mistake must be interrupted.’ At the occasion of contemplating suffering up to its cessation, some will settle within the first fruition, and others will settle within the other fruitions up to level of the worthy ones. This is the fifth sphere of liberation based on the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the truth shared by ordinary beings.
- 4.44 “Again, some will think, ‘My perceptions of consciousness are concepts; they are like pains, boils,’ and a disease. I must also surely abandon my perceptions of consciousness!’ Thinking in that way, they will abandon the perception of space as well as the perception of consciousness, and they will not apprehend anything whatsoever. At that moment, they will enter the absorption of the absence of perception. [F.157.a] Those in whom this has occurred in the past have reached the absorption that is shared by ordinary beings. Similarly, they will think, ‘Consciousness is a pain, a boil, and a disease. I must surely focus my attention on nonexistence!’ What kind of nonexistence? All perceptions are devoid of *I* and *mine*. Through that identity, both identity and perceptions must be abandoned—that is nirvāṇa. At the occasion of contemplating nirvāṇa, some will settle within the fruition of the stream enterers, and others will settle within the other fruitions up to the level of the worthy ones. This is the sixth sphere of liberation based on the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the truth shared by ordinary beings.
- 4.45 “Again, some will think, ‘I must dwell on the pure level of the absorption of consciousness with a mind totally devoid of afflictions!’ Thinking in that way, they will abide with minds totally devoid of concepts. At the occasion

of contemplating the perception of impermanence, they will actualize the fruition of the stream enterers and the other fruitions up to the level of the worthy ones. This is the seventh sphere of liberation based on the dhāraṇī mantra of the acceptance that accords with the truth unshared by ordinary beings.

4.46 “Again, some will think, ‘I must entirely abandon the cognition in which there is nothing whatsoever, and then I must perfect and dwell within the sphere of neither perception nor nonperception!’ Thinking in that way, they will completely abandon the sphere of nothing whatsoever and instead contemplate the sphere of neither perception nor nonperception, without cognizing, envisaging, visualizing, cultivating, or accomplishing it. This is the eighth sphere of liberation based on the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the truth unshared by ordinary beings. Through it, all forms of attachment related to the desire realm, [F.157.b] as well as all attachment to form, shape, contact, and passionate frolicking, will be abandoned. The attachments of noble beings will disappear without any remainder. Those of ordinary beings will be weakened, but later on they will be born through the power of circumstances, and this will cause them to be born within the lower realms.

4.47 “This was the detailed discussion on the meaning of the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the truth, that the thus-gone Campaka Color conferred upon me through the bodhisattva great being Quintessence of the Sun’s Energy. It is powerful and beneficial, and it bestows faith in the teachings I expound within this great assembly. It exhausts all forms of attachment related to the desire realm, the form realm, and the formless realm, as well as all forms of pride, special pride, overweening pride, and envy. It brings about understanding with respect to all forms of longing, covetousness, agitation, and ignorance, and with respect to the view of the transitory collection, doubts, the views that consider discipline and disciplined conduct to be supreme, the views of permanence and nihilism, and all the views related to sentient beings, living beings, souls, persons, creators, feeling subjects, forms, tactile objects,⁴⁹ birth, and the great elements. [...] It completely purifies all the aggregates, the elements, and the sense sources, and it reveals all the happiness of emancipation. [F.158.a]

4.48 “That statement annihilates the māras and defeats the nāgas. It delights the gods, pleases the yakṣas, overcomes the asuras, frightens the garuḍas, causes the kinnaras to develop faith, and terrifies the mahoragas. It subjugates the enemies, delights the members of the kṣatriya class, induces comprehension in the brāhmaṇas, pleases the vaiśyas, and delights the śūdras. It frees women from their desires, engenders weariness in the scholars, delights spiritual practitioners, and cures all diseases. It pacifies

quarrels, fights, famine, disease, unexpected hostile armies, and untimely winds, rains, floods, cold, warmth, snow, and heat waves, and it softens substances that are harsh, tasteless, and hard to touch. It causes the Dharma way to blaze, it ensures that the lineage of the Three Jewels remains uninterrupted, and it reveals the teachings of the Buddha. It provides relief to those who are afraid of saṃsāra, generates the knowledge of exhaustion, causes one to realize the knowledge of the unborn, overcomes the aggregates associated with ignorance, and removes all suffering. This is the acceptance that accords with the truth.”

4.49 As this teaching was being given, an innumerable and limitless number of gods and humans present in that place attained the eye of Dharma, which is immaculate, spotless, and free of affliction with regard to phenomena. At that time, the minds of nine billion six hundred million beings were liberated from their defilements with no further grasping, and eighty trillion beings attained the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the truth. [F.158.b] An innumerable and limitless number of sentient beings gave rise to the mind set on unsurpassed and perfect awakening and achieved the level of nonregression, and thirty-two thousand of them reached the acceptance of the unborn nature of phenomena.

4.50 All the gods, nāgas, yakṣas, rākṣasas, asuras, garuḍas, kinnaras, mahoragas, pretas, kumbhāṇḍas, piśācas, humans, and nonhumans exclaimed, “Excellent! Respected Blessed One, your virtuous words are excellent! The unimpeded wisdom vision of the blessed buddhas is amazing! Who would not form this intention to reach unsurpassed and perfect awakening? Thus-Gone One, you are the eyes and the wisdom of all sentient beings. You pacify all their sufferings, you bestow happiness upon them, and you are the raft that leads them across saṃsāra!”

4.51 Then, Venerable Ājñātakaunḍinya asked the Blessed One, “Respected Blessed One, what is the dhāraṇī mantra, *the sun’s eye*, that the bodhisattva great being Quintessence of the Sun’s Energy has revealed? This dhāraṇī mantra accomplishes everything from undivided great protection up to parinirvāṇa. It generates in sacred beings feelings of revulsion toward the entire prison of the three realms, it connects them to the happiness of liberation related to the absorption of the absence of marks, and it causes them to enter unshakeable absorptions and become composed. Those who hear it will experience the diminution of all their afflictions, such as desire. They will circle for seven lifetimes as sages among the gods, their minds will not be sullied by desires, [F.159.a] and they will be worthy to be worshiped by all the gods. Then, after they die, they will circle for seven lifetimes among

humans. Their minds will not be sullied by desires, they will be sages among humans, and they will be worthy to be worshiped and revered by all humans and gods.”

4.52 “Do not be upset, Kauṇḍinya, it is very good,” replied the Blessed One. “Kauṇḍinya, this dhāraṇī mantra connected to the sun is not for the hearers or the solitary buddhas. This dhāraṇī mantra, *the lotus of the sun’s eye*, is the concordant cause of the eighteen unique qualities of the buddhas. Kauṇḍinya, even if I were to teach about the meaning of this dhāraṇī mantra, *the sun’s eye*, for a hundred thousand eons, those hundred thousand eons would come to an end before I could expound its entire meaning in detail. The world with its gods would be confused about it. Apart from the thus-gone ones, the worthy ones, the perfect buddhas themselves, no one can apprehend it directly. The meaning of this dhāraṇī mantra, *the sun’s eye*, is unfathomable, difficult to perceive, and hard to realize. Similarly, the meanings of *the inexhaustible core*, *the fundamental knowledge* mantra, and the dhāraṇī mantra that pacifies and puts to sleep hostile beings are unfathomable, difficult to perceive, and hard to comprehend. Apart from the thus-gone ones themselves, no one can apprehend them directly.”

4.53 Kauṇḍinya then said, “Respected Blessed One, please explain to us the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with emptiness that the thus-gone King of the Lord of Mountains conferred through the bodhisattva great being Gandhahastin!”

4.54 The Blessed One replied, “Thus it is, Kauṇḍinya. [F.159.b] In the presence of the world with its gods, I will now explain the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with emptiness that the thus-gone King of the Lord of Mountains conferred upon me in this place. This dhāraṇī mantra bestows faith in the teachings that I expound within this assembly. If I explain it here, an innumerable and limitless number of sentient beings will benefit, and they will apprehend it directly. Therefore, Kauṇḍinya, listen!” [...]

4.55 The Blessed One then said, “Kauṇḍinya, sentient beings who are intoxicated by the arrogance associated with attachment and who do not care about emancipation will circle in saṃsāra for a long time. They will experience endless harsh feelings of suffering in the three lower realms. The great compassion of the bodhisattva great beings arises for their sake. Then, through the great strength of their compassion, through their great diligence, exertion, and discipline, those bodhisattva great beings swiftly pursue unsurpassed and perfect awakening, and they quickly awaken to perfect buddhahood. With insight, ascertainment, and care and in order to liberate those beings from the three lower realms they teach the Dharma that leads to the exhaustion of suffering. Sentient beings who listen to these teachings with the intention of escaping from suffering will attain the first

fruition as well as the other fruitions up to the fourth one. Alternatively, those who are eager to take on the frightening sufferings of saṃsāra in the pursuit of unsurpassed wisdom for the sake of all beings will attain unsurpassed wisdom, and they will then teach the Dharma to emancipate beings from their desires—just as I am doing now.

4.56 “Kauṇḍinya, what is meant by ‘attachment to contact?’ [F.160.a] Sentient beings who connect with one another through physical contact experience pleasant feelings that generate suffering. This will cause them to experience suffering acutely. As an analogy, some deadly poisonous snakes kill beings by staring at them. Other snakes will kill beings with merely their breath. Still other snakes kill beings merely by contact. Finally, other snakes will kill beings merely by connecting with them. Likewise, some sentient beings waste and consume all their roots of virtue through a mere visual contact. Some waste and consume all their roots of virtue by touching one another physically. Some waste and consume all their roots of virtue through a mere interaction. Still others give rise to and experience suffering acutely through the mere contact of sexual intercourse.

4.57 “Kauṇḍinya, what is the emancipation from attachment to contact? Kauṇḍinya, in this context, beings should investigate the clear form of the heaps of bones. How should they do so? Upon seeing desirable, attractive, pleasing, and enticing physical forms that generate in them desire and lust, they should cultivate a wish for the happiness of emancipation by seeing that physical forms are made of the four great elements—by their very nature they will perish, disintegrate, and turn into dust. How do they come to see this? They will perceive this exactly as it is by contemplating, cognizing, envisaging, and visualizing the heaps of bones that are hairless and covered with flesh, have fingernails attached, and are devoid of blood, bare, completely white like conch shells, and connected with ligaments. [F.160.b] As they pursue, cultivate, and repeat this process many times, they will genuinely perceive these heaps of bones both day and night, and this will generate in them feelings of revulsion toward the entire world. They will think, ‘Since I am subject to the terrors of old age and death, I must definitely smash to pieces this great vessel of old age and death! How will I be able to completely destroy this great vessel of old age and death? I must do so by carefully investigating this heap of bones!’ Thinking in that way, they will investigate this entire heap of bones, and their attention placed on the perception of the white color of all those bones will become their practice of tranquility.

4.58 “They will further pursue their investigation by observing ‘These are the bones of my skull’ all the way down to ‘These are the bones of my toes.’ They will wonder, ‘In order to destroy this great vessel of old age and death,

where should I undertake the practice of insight?' They will then think, 'I must destroy my heap of bones—this great vessel of old age and death—by gathering the winds in my mouth and nose!' With that thought in mind, they will begin by gathering the winds at the tips of their noses. Then, they will pulverize their bones into the finest particles of dust, and with those winds they will blow this dust away. Through that practice, all their heaps of bones will be disintegrated. Just as all their heaps of bones are blown away by the winds without any remainder, so will they discard their own body, which gives rise to the perception of bones, and thus all of it will appear to be empty. This is the first branch of emptiness. [B7]

4.59 "Furthermore, their identities will appear to them as the emptiness of the inner, but they will still perceive outer physical forms. They will think, 'I must disintegrate all material appearances by gathering the winds!' [F.161.a] By doing so, all outer appearances of form will be disintegrated by those winds. Having entirely abandoned all the inner and outer appearances of form, they will specifically contemplate this. This is the second branch of emptiness.

4.60 "Again, they will think, 'All the material appearances I have abandoned appear to me as emptiness and not in any other way. However, since my mind that conceives the winds is not entirely liberated, I must abandon that too!' Since phenomena do not come from or go anywhere, they will give up conceptualizing in terms of going or the absence of going. This is the third branch of emptiness.

4.61 "Again, they will wonder, 'Is there anything true at all among all conditioned things?' Thinking in that way, they will directly understand what is true. Knowing that all phenomena that arise are phenomena that cease, they will understand that all three realms are nonexistent and unreal, and their formations will become utterly purified and pacified. This is the fourth branch of emptiness.

4.62 "Some will settle within the first fruition, some will cultivate the concordant acceptance, and some will reach awakening in accordance with the right times and circumstances. Their efforts to entirely settle concepts and analysis will be completely pacified, and they will enter the absorption of cessation. According to their inclinations, they will pass from one day up to countless eons absorbed in that cessation. In the second instant immediately following the first instant of emerging from that, their afflictions will be exhausted. At that moment, their lives will also be exhausted, and they will simultaneously pass into parinirvāṇa. [F.161.b]

4.63 "This is the eighth, the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with emptiness. It is a powerful and beneficial dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the truth that is not shared by ordinary beings. It exhausts all forms of attachment associated

with the desire realm, the form realm, and the formless realm, [...] and it removes the burden of suffering. It is the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with emptiness that the thus-gone King of the Lord of Mountains conferred upon me through the bodhisattva great being Gandhahastin. It is a dhāraṇī mantra that bestows faith in the teachings that I expound within this assembly.”

4.64 As this teaching was being given, ninety-two trillion sentient beings settled within the first fruition, and the minds of six million of them were liberated from their defilements with no further grasping. Nine hundred ninety trillion sentient beings who had performed their duties in the past achieved the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with emptiness, and eighty thousand of them achieved the self-arisen dhāraṇī mantra. Sixty quintillion sentient beings gave rise to the mind set on unsurpassed and perfect awakening and would no longer regress on the path to unsurpassed and perfect awakening.

The entire retinue exclaimed “Excellent!” and showered a rain of celestial flowers and perfumed substances.

4.65 Venerable Kauṇḍinya then said to the Blessed One, “Respected Blessed One, please explain to us the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the absence of wishes that the thus-gone Royal Mass of Glorious Wisdom conferred through the bodhisattva great being Glorious Essence of Light, the dhāraṇī mantra that bestows faith in this great teaching of The Great Assembly!” [F.162.a]

4.66 The Blessed One replied, “Kauṇḍinya, thus it is! Kauṇḍinya, thus it is! Kauṇḍinya, I will explain to this retinue the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the absence of wishes. Kauṇḍinya, there are sentient beings within this retinue who have thoroughly purified themselves in the past and are able to understand this teaching. Therefore, Kauṇḍinya, listen!” [...]

4.67 The Blessed One then said, “Kauṇḍinya, there are sentient beings here who lack dedication and are entangled in desire. They do not understand or care about emancipation, and so they will circle in saṃsāra for a long time. [...]

4.68 “What is emancipation from the attachment to mental concepts, and how does one correctly train in it? They will think, ‘If all types of attachment—the attachments related to the desire realm, the form realm, the formless realm, shape, contact, imagination, and concepts—arise on account of the connection of formations, who has produced those formations? Who is producing them? They are produced by the winds. My physical, verbal, and mental formations, as well as those winds, must therefore be destroyed! The winds enter and leave from my mouth and nose. It is these winds that have produced the formations, so the very same winds must break apart and

destroy this body!’ Thinking in that way, they will imagine that the breaths that are drawn in and expelled dry out their flesh and blood and cause them to disappear. The breaths that are exhaled will discard their flesh and blood outside of their bodies, [F.162.b] until they see that their entire bodies have become hollow. They will then visualize how the inhalation and exhalation of the breath through all their orifices fully extracts their hairs, fingernails, flesh, and blood and removes them from their body. This will cause the entirety of their flesh and blood to disappear from their body, until they consider, contemplate, cultivate, and visualize the heaps of bare bones that are white like conch shells and connected with ligaments.

4.69 “While settled in mental equipoise, their previous connections to the state of attachment related to the desire realm will decline and diminish. Similarly, their attachment related to the form realm, the formless realm, shape, contact, imagination, and concepts will also be suppressed and reduced. However, when their minds are no longer settled in equipoise, they will, according to the circumstances they encounter, be repeatedly and temporarily weakened in relation to objects ranging from form to contact. They will then think, ‘In accordance with my class, I must cut off and eliminate attachment and its basis! Just as a tree that has been cut but not uprooted may still continue to grow, so will the latent imprints of craving that have not been eliminated eventually generate various types of suffering.’ They will therefore meditate on this until they perceive their bodies as skeletons, white like conch shells and connected with ligaments. [F.163.a] Similarly, when any kind of form—whether sentient or not—appears before their eyes, they will systematically perceive such forms as white skeletons connected with ligaments, without adding or omitting anything. They will not let their minds be distracted from this. This is their practice of tranquility.

4.70 “At that time, they will train by observing, ‘These are the bones of the skull, these are the teeth, and this is the throat,’ all the way down to ‘These are the bones of the toes.’ In that way, they will accomplish mental concentration that is joined with insight. Why is that? Because they accomplish concentration intentionally. When their minds become utterly still and tranquil, this should be their meditation. When their minds become utterly still and tranquil, they should cultivate that while practicing insight alone. When their minds become utterly still and tranquil while practicing insight alone, they should cultivate that by examining and disintegrating the heaps of bones and grinding them into dust. They should then consider how the mental observation of this dust of bones is not uncaused but rather has the characteristic of being exhaustible and perishable. In that way, they will realize the acceptance that accords with insight.

- 4.71 “Because they observe the completely white dust of bones in all material appearances and because they understand that the mind is quick and swift, they will also directly understand the acceptance that accords with arising.⁵⁰ Because they observe the insubstantial nature of the completely white dust of bones, which they perceive without attachment in all forms, and because they understand the lack of self in the mind that is quick and swift, they will directly understand the acceptance that accords with disintegration. [F.163.b] Because they observe the lack of expressibility, fondness, apprehension, equipoise, and existence with regard to the completely white dust of bones, which they perceive without attachment in all forms, they will directly understand the acceptance that accords with peaceful tranquility.
- 4.72 “Since they will achieve acceptance, they will free themselves from and rise above attachment related to the three times. Their thoughts will be peaceful, their basis will be stable, and they will abandon the limits of the three times. They will abandon the limits of the three types of craving,⁵¹ turn away from and pacify the three realms of saṃsāra, abandon the three types of defilements, achieve the three gateways of liberation, and eliminate the three types of fetters. At that point they will achieve the fruition of the stream enterers. Furthermore, through their efforts in becoming accustomed to the fact that phenomena are devoid of true characteristics, they will settle within the fruition of the worthy ones. Moreover, those who perceive all material appearances as heaps of bones that are pure, white like conch shells, and connected with ligaments will obtain highly tranquil minds. They will contemplate this while walking, standing, sitting, and lying down. If they contemplate, cultivate, and visualize that, their practice of tranquility will become utterly proficient and refined.
- 4.73 “At that moment, the practitioners will understand inner and outer selflessness and emptiness. If a perception of blue should arise in them in relation to those heaps of bones that they visualize in all forms, they will perceive the heaps of bones to be blue. If they should contemplate any of the other colors up to crystalline, they will perceive all material appearances as heaps of bones in those respective colors up to crystalline. These thoughts will arise in them: [F.164.a] ‘Why do all material appearances appear as white heaps of bones? Why do they appear as other colors up to crystalline?’ They will then think, ‘Since these are all the echoes of my mind, they are empty and fake—they are all mental projections!’ Those who understand in that way are worthy recipients of the generosity of the whole world. Kauṇḍinya, with the exception of the perception of dislike or the perception of disgust toward food, this is the meaning of the acceptance that accords with the absence of wishes. This is what the thus-gone Royal Mass of Glorious Wisdom conferred upon me.”

4.74 The bodhisattva Sumati then asked, “Respected Blessed One, when the hearers who wish to practice tranquility do so in that way, they will practice repulsiveness. What signs will arise in them?”

4.75 The Blessed One replied, “Those who cultivate repulsiveness in order to exhaust their attachments should direct their attention to their foreheads. The following signs will arise in them: Whenever they conceive of the body with an attitude of revulsion, their entire bodies will begin to shake and ache; this is the first sign. Whenever they cultivate this repeatedly, all their body parts will feel as if they are being scraped against a rough surface; this is the second sign. Then, those who practice without distraction will eventually experience exhilaration throughout their entire bodies, as if they were filled with milk; this is a sign that their minds abide one-pointedly within a state of tranquility. Nevertheless, they will also abandon those feelings of pleasure and well-being by practicing the absence of marks. Furthermore, in order to refine their discernment, [F.164.b] their mind will be purified of all afflicted states caused by attachment and will be purified of insight afflicted by ignorance. When that occurs, they will become able to discern the different aspects, from suffering to peace, based on those heaps of bones of all bodies. Next, heat will emerge from their entire bodies. This is the perfection of their practice of tranquility. Through the roots of virtue generated by this heat and the experience of constant bliss, their minds will become pure, and they will know that they are like gods. By examining those heaps of bones according to this fourfold sequence, they will eventually see flames on their foreheads. In order to completely transcend ignorance, they will again and again investigate their heaps of bones according to those experiences; they will repeat this fourfold sequence a great number of times. Thereby, they will not encounter the disintegration of their minds or the phenomena that arise from the mind.’

4.76 “They will then float around in that way without dwelling on anything, like a dust mote in the sunlight. As they now see all conditioned things through their eminent perception, they will correctly understand that all conditioned phenomena are selfless [...] and subject to cessation; this is their attainment of the root of virtue of the summit. Furthermore, they will also see fires dying and blazing up on their bodies, as well as brilliant lights shining in the ten directions; this is the path of the first concentration. Similarly, they will attain the roots of virtue as well as the great elements of the form realm. Their entire bodies will be pervaded by the great bliss of the form realm. Sunlight will radiate from their hearts, and wherever they look and examine will be filled with light from the sun. They will meditate on those light rays in accordance with the absence of wishes. [F.165.a] At that time, their minds will become free from wishes related to the three realms. They will diligently

dwell on emptiness in the same manner without apprehending the four truths of the noble ones. Heat will emerge from their entire bodies, a multicolored warm glow will emerge from the tops of their heads, and parasols will shelter them above their heads; this is the root of virtue of the summit. Furthermore, in accordance with nonapprehension they will fully understand the acceptance that accords with the truth. At that time, they will fully understand the four truths of the noble ones.

4.77 “Noble son, this is the hearer’s meditation on repulsiveness. Those who have thoroughly meditated on repulsiveness will attain tranquility, and those signs will manifest. With such signs and faith, they will follow the eightfold path of the noble ones, abandon all afflictions, and reach the level of the worthy ones. Therefore, noble son, you should teach those contemplations to those who follow the vehicle of the hearers within the buddha realm Victorious through Light Rays.”

4.78 As this teaching on repulsiveness was being given, countless beings present in that place achieved the acceptance that accords with the truth, and countless sentient beings saw the truth.

4.79 Then, the Blessed One said to Ājñātakauṇḍinya, “Kauṇḍinya, if everyone could follow the same approach and had the same inclination, I would only have to give sentient beings a single Dharma teaching, through which their minds would be liberated from defilements.

4.80 “Some will think, ‘As long as my mind is not completely pacified, the boils, diseases, and pains of existence will arise, as will the diversity of rebirths and the various destinies. Therefore, I must make sure to control my own mind and take hold of my thinking!’ Thinking in that way, they will think of the heaps of bones as being the cause for generating mental composure. [F.165.b] This is the first attainment of faultlessness in those with superior minds. It will be achieved without difficulty, and in this very life they will live happily and attain the level of nonregression.

4.81 “Again, they will think, ‘Now that I have gathered the conditions that lead to mental composure, I must collect myself by means of considering disintegration!’ This is the second attainment of faultlessness in those with superior minds, through which they will live happily in the present life. It will be achieved without difficulty or hardship.

4.82 “Again, they will think, “As long my mind chases after the cause of such conditioned composure, I will remain intoxicated by physical and mental bliss, so I must be sure to make such physical and mental bliss subside!’ They will then train while thinking, ‘By recollecting the heaps of bones through conditioned concentration,⁵² physical and mental bliss will manifest. I must definitely abandon such bliss!’ Thinking in that way, they will make the consciousnesses—from the eye consciousness up to the mind

consciousness—disappear in accordance with arising and disintegration. This is the third attainment of faultlessness in those with superior minds, through which they will live happily in the present life. It will be achieved without difficulty or hardship.

4.83 “Again, they will think, ‘I must dwell within the realm of phenomena in accordance with the fact that everything is liberated, exhausted, intrinsically pure, devoid of essence, and peaceful! How should I do so? I must abide in accordance with the pacification of thinking.’ Accordingly, the movement of all their thoughts will completely subside, and their minds will abide peacefully. This is the fourth attainment of faultlessness in those with superior minds, through which they will live happily in the present life. It will be achieved without difficulty or hardship.

4.84 “Those who are endowed with these four qualities of superior minds will see the eight million four hundred thousand gateways to concentration. [F.166.a] They will settle within the fruition of the non-returners and in the other fruitions up to the level of the worthy ones. Those monks will be liberated from duality, and they will be strong and powerful.

4.85 “Kauṇḍinya, how could all beings have the same approach, the same interest, and the same inclination? Since they have different inclinations, the Thus-Gone One teaches the Dharma through Dharma gateways and discourses that are expressed in different words. The Blessed One teaches different types of perceptions to sentient beings with mistaken views. Hence, the meaning of all those perceptions—whether the perceptions of impermanence, suffering, and selflessness or the perceptions of decomposing corpses, festering corpses, bluish corpses, devoured corpses, or scattered corpses—has been taught here.”

Ājñātakauṇḍinya then said, “Blessed One, please explain to us how one should cultivate the perception of dislike and the perception of disgust toward food!”

4.86 The Blessed One replied, “Kauṇḍinya, I have explained enough. The perspectives of those in this realm who accomplish the Dharma properly in order to achieve the happiness of emancipation are different from the perspectives of those in other worlds who do the same—they are engaged in different activities and practices. Thus, Kauṇḍinya, if I were to explain this, besides those who have entered faultlessness and those bodhisattva great beings who can understand this, all other beings present would be thoroughly confused.”

4.87 “Respected Blessed One,” continued Ājñātakauṇḍinya, “please explain to us about the perception of dislike toward the entire world and the perception of disgust toward food! [F.166.b] Respected Well-Gone One, please explain this to us! By hearing this, sentient beings will generate a

variety of roots of virtue. Since beginningless time, beings have rushed through and circled in saṃsāra while obscured by ignorance, bound by craving, and impeded by the downfall of craving. Those beings take pleasure in this world. Why? Because they are bound by food and sexual intercourse. If they do not hear this Dharma way, they will sink into the five destinies of saṃsāra, and they will constantly be afflicted by suffering. Blessed One, you wish for the happiness of all sentient beings, and you have developed great love and compassion for everyone. Respected Blessed One, please explain to us the entire meaning of the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the absence of wishes that the thus-gone Royal Mass of Glorious Wisdom conferred in order to benefit many beings, including gods and humans! Respected Blessed One, please explain to us the perception of dislike toward the entire world! By hearing this, sentient beings will turn away from their desires. Respected Blessed One, please explain to us the perception of disgust toward food! By hearing this, sentient beings will turn away from their attachments to flavors. Sentient beings who understand the shortcomings of desires and flavors will delight in transcending saṃsāra and will look for liberation from the bondages of existence.”

4.88 The Blessed One replied, “Thus it is, Kaundinya! It is just as you have said! In accordance with the words that the bodhisattva Glorious Essence of Light expressed to me, [F.167.a] I will now, in the presence of the world with its gods, explain the perception of dislike toward the entire world and the perception of disgust toward food. Therefore, Kaundinya, listen!” [...]

4.89 The Blessed One then said, “Kaundinya, what are the worlds for which dislike must be generated? There are two: the world of sentient beings and the world of formations. What is the world of sentient beings? ‘Sentient beings’ refers to those who are born among the five types of beings—hell beings, animals, pretas, gods, and humans. Within the desire realm, there are twenty planes of existence. Within the form realm, there are sixteen. And within the formless realm, there are four. Such is the number of the worlds of sentient beings.

4.90 “What are the twenty planes of existence of the desire realm? There are eight great hells, each surrounded by sixteen hells. What are those eight? They are the Hell of Revival of the Three Times,⁵³ the Black Line Hell, the Hell of Crushing, the Hell of Wailing, the Hell of Intense Wailing, the Hell of Heat, the Hell of Intense Heat, and the Hell of Unceasing Torment, each surrounded by sixteen hells. Due to physical, verbal, and mental negative actions, sentient beings have been born and will be born in those places, experiencing harsh, unbearable, and scorching feelings of suffering. All the physical forms their eyes perceive in those places will be repulsive. None will be attractive; they will all be unpleasant. None will be pleasant; they will

all be ugly. None will be beautiful; they will all be hideous. None will be pretty. Therefore, on that basis, they will experience harsh, unbearable, and scorching feelings of suffering in those places. All the sounds they hear with their ears, all the scents they smell with their noses, everything they taste with their tongues, everything they touch with their bodies, [F.167.b] and all the mental phenomena they become conscious of will be repulsive. None will be attractive; they will all be unpleasant. None will be pleasant; they will all be dislikeable. None will be likeable; they will all be disagreeable. None will be enjoyable. Their bodies will be consumed by fire; they will eat lumps of iron and drink molten iron and copper. On that basis, they will experience harsh, unbearable, and scorching feelings of suffering in those places. Until the physical, verbal, and mental negative actions they committed in the past when they were born here among humans have been exhausted and purified, they will not die and transmigrate from those places. Kaundinya, consider this: what sentient being who wishes for happiness and feels aversion toward suffering would enjoy and wish for those hells? This is the first destiny of those who engage in negative actions, toward which the wise ones should generate the perception of dislike.

4.91 “Kaundinya, how should the wise ones generate the perception of dislike toward the condition of the animals? Kaundinya, there are animals who are born with extremely small bodies: some are born with bodies about the size of the fiftieth fraction of the tip of a hair, others with bodies about the size of dust motes in the sunlight, and yet others with bodies about the size of jujube fruits. Still others obtain bodies up to ten thousand leagues long. The lifespan of some of them lasts for a single instant, whereas the life of others stretches over an eon. In those places, animals do not practice the Dharma or engage in virtue. They have abandoned modesty and humility, they are lacking in compassion and sympathy, they are constantly tormented by suffering, they are always afraid, they eat each other, and they follow all the paths of the nonvirtuous actions. [F.168.a] Since they are engulfed in the darkness of ignorance, both those among them who proceed toward the lower realms and those who proceed toward the happy destinies will mistake improper behavior for virtuous action. What wise one would enjoy and wish for the condition of those animals, who are constantly tormented by suffering within the darkness of ignorance? This is the second destiny of those who engage in negative actions, toward which the wise ones should generate the perception of dislike.

4.92 “Kaundinya, how should the wise ones generate the perception of dislike toward the condition of the pretas? Kaundinya, there are pretas whose bodies are a finger span in size. Some are born with bodies an arm span in size, others with bodies a thousand leagues long. They are naked, and their

bodies are rough, black, shriveled, and devoid of flesh and blood. They are constantly tormented by hunger and thirst, they lack food and drink, and they inhale and exhale fire. They are hostile toward one another, they lack compassion, they are always exhausted, and they cannot find any cool clouds to shelter them. They feed on iron, copper, iron lumps, hot pus and blood, burning dirt, burning excrement, boiling urine, burning winds, or burning food made of roots, leaves, flowers, fruits, and trees. Even such food they find only occasionally and only through much hardship and huge efforts. The life of some pretas lasts for a thousand years, while the life of others lasts for a hundred thousand years. They never experience happiness, they are constantly tormented by suffering, and they are engulfed in the darkness of ignorance at all times, [F.168.b] so what wise one would enjoy the condition of the pretas? This is the third destiny of those who engage in negative actions, toward which the wise ones should generate the perception of dislike.

4.93 “Kaunḍinya, how should the wise ones generate the perception of dislike toward the human world? Within the human world, people are tormented by the sufferings related to old age, sickness, death, encountering what they do not like, being separated from what they like, endeavoring in a variety of ways, anxiety, aggression, envy, miserliness, calumny, harsh words, covetousness, cold, heat, and harming one another. In the human world, people are constantly tormented by the suffering caused by the remembrance of death, the suffering associated with their short lifespans, and the suffering caused by the recollection of their need to leave this world, so what wise one would wish for and enjoy this human world? This is the fourth destiny of those who commit mixed actions, toward which the wise ones should generate the perception of dislike.

4.94 “Kaunḍinya, how should the wise ones generate the perception of dislike toward the world of the gods? Within the six classes of gods in the desire realm, sentient beings are tormented by the suffering related to craving for desirable objects, and they are tormented by the sufferings associated with their valuables, possessions, and enjoyments. They are tormented by the suffering related to the eventual exhaustion of the roots of virtue they have accumulated previously, the suffering related to striving, and the suffering of being separated from what they like. They are tormented by the suffering of death induced by the exhaustion of their merit [F.169.a] and by the suffering of falling again and again into the lower realms. This is the fifth perception of dislike, which is related to the gods of the desire realm. Those were the five ways in which the wise ones should generate the perception of dislike toward the entire desire realm.

4.95 “Kaunḍinya, how should the wise ones generate the perception of dislike toward the gods of the form realm? Among the classes of gods, the sixteen types of gods of the form realm cultivate the worldly concentrations, so none of them are free from the sufferings associated with defilement. They are still tormented by many types of suffering, including the suffering of being born with remainder. They do not care about transcendence and escape, and so they are not free from the sufferings of the lower realms. Since they are tormented by such sufferings, what wise one would enjoy and wish for their condition? The wise ones should generate the perception of dislike toward the form realm in this way.

4.96 “Furthermore, those sentient beings within the form realm, who have not attained undefiled concentration and who are not free, are tormented by suffering as they follow the path of the noble ones. They are tormented by the suffering caused by their pursuit of perfection, and they are tormented by the fact that they do not master the absorptions related to all the levels. They are tormented by the suffering caused by their lack of mastery of the absorptions common to the solitary buddhas, and they are tormented by their lack of mastery of the domain of the thus-gone ones. Those gods, who will eventually pass away in those places, are tormented by such sufferings. [F.169.b] The wise ones should therefore generate the perception of dislike toward the form realm.

4.97 “Kaunḍinya, how should the wise ones generate the perception of dislike toward the formless realm? Within the four divine abodes of the formless realm, sentient beings are also absorbed in defiled concentrations—none of them are free from the sufferings associated with defilement. They are tormented by such sufferings and by the suffering caused by the fact that they do not master the levels of training and no more training. They are tormented by the sufferings of not hearing the Dharma and lacking mastery of the permanent elimination of all forms of craving. They are also tormented by the sufferings related to the circumstances of death and by the suffering of being born with remainder. They are not free from all the sufferings of the lower realms. Since they are tormented by such sufferings, the wise ones should generate the perception of dislike toward the formless realm.

4.98 “In those eight ways, existence manifests as all these prisons of the three realms. The wise ones should generate the perception of dislike in those ways and cultivate the eightfold path of the noble ones with fervent determination. Kaunḍinya, this was the perception of dislike toward the entire world.

4.99 “What is the perception of dislike toward the world of formations? This refers to the three types of formations—the physical, verbal, and mental formations. What are the physical formations? Inhalation and exhalation are

referred to as *the physical formations*. What are the verbal formations? Concepts and analysis are referred to as *the verbal formations*. What are the mental formations? [F.170.a] Consciousness and thoughts are referred to as *the mental formations*. Those three types of formations are the characteristics shared by sentient beings.

4.100 “How should the wise ones generate the perception of dislike toward formations? They should examine the characteristics of their inhalation and exhalation in terms of freshness, staleness, coolness, warmth, and repulsiveness. Having also examined the characteristics of the inhalation and exhalation of all bodies as well as their orifices, they will think, ‘These formations are like lightning—they arise out of nowhere and disappear right away.’ Thinking in that way, they will contemplate how formations are exhausted and insubstantial. All concepts arise as one conceives of things as being different, and these perceptions of exhaustion and insubstantiality arise within concepts. All the perceptions of coolness, warmth, repulsiveness, freshness, and staleness related to those phenomena arise from such perceptions and thoughts, and they lead to the perception of total exhaustion and the perception of insubstantiality.⁵⁴ They lead to the perception that all formations are exhausted and the perception that they disintegrate. They lead to the perception of the freedom from desire and the perception that apprehends cessation. By seeing the past and future limits of all formations, they will develop the perception of total exhaustion up to the perception that focuses on cessation. Those who have thoroughly purified their way of apprehending formations will perceive all formations as being transitory, perishable, unreliable, impermanent, insubstantial, and selfless. [F.170.b] Diligent beings who thus correctly understand will develop the perception of dislike toward all formations. Similarly, by focusing on analytical and nonanalytical cessation, they will apprehend the three times, abandon all fetters, completely purify their vision, and sever the continuity of saṃsāra. Having entered into the faultless reality, they will attain the fruition of the stream enterers. Kauṇḍinya, this is how the wise ones generate the perception of dislike toward the world of formations in all its aspects. Kauṇḍinya, this is the contemplation that brings about the perception of dislike.

4.101 “What is the perception of repulsiveness toward Dharma robes? Kauṇḍinya, whenever the wise ones see Dharma robes, touch them, use them as garments, wear them, take them off, or conceal them, they should develop feelings of revulsion by regarding them as human skin smeared with blood that is bleeding, stinking, and covered with maggots and flies. In

that way, clever beings will develop the perception that these robes should not be enjoyed. This is how the wise ones generate the perception of dislike toward Dharma robes.

4.102 “Kauṇḍinya, how should the wise ones generate the perception of disgust toward food? When the wise ones eat food, they should develop feelings of revulsion by thinking, ‘This food is made of entrails, it is hairless and skinless flesh smeared with pus and blood and infested by maggots and flies, and this bowl is a stinking human skull!’ If they eat rice gruel, they should perceive it as a human corpse covered by maggots. If they drink water, they should develop feelings of intense revulsion by regarding it as human blood. Similarly, they should perceive flour as the dust of crushed human bones, and milk cream as human skin. [F.171.a] They should also perceive all meat broths, soups, vegetable stews, and lentils as human blood and brain, vegetables as human hairs and teeth, meat as human flesh, and the juices of sugar canes, molasses, grapes, and pomegranates as human blood, brain, phlegm, and marrow. Kauṇḍinya, this is how the wise ones should generate the perception of disgust toward food.

4.103 “Kauṇḍinya, how should the wise ones generate the feeling of fear when they enter households, houses, or storied mansions? They should develop that feeling by imagining that they are burned like a tree consumed by fire as they enter one of the four gates of a great city and by perceiving the plaster on the houses as human flesh, the paintings as drawings made with human blood, the beddings as human skin, and the seats as heaps of human bones or human corpses.’ They should contemplate those images and apply such remedies. Kauṇḍinya, the wise ones who perceive in that way will develop a perception of dislike toward the entire world.

4.104 “What qualities and benefits do those who develop the perception of dislike toward the entire world gain? They will achieve the three concordant acceptances. What are those three? They are (1) the acceptance that accords with the absence of wishes, (2) the acceptance that accords with emptiness, and (3) the acceptance that accords with the absence of marks. They will be benefitted by achieving those three worldly acceptances; their minds will penetrate the meaning of the view of emptiness as well as the nonexistence of formations that arise and disintegrate. They will see that the aggregates are intrinsically impermanent, painful, empty, and selfless. [F.171.b] They will see that all phenomena—from the elements to the sense sources, the truths, and dependent origination—are intrinsically impermanent, painful, empty, and selfless. They will attain the fruition of the stream enterers and the other fruitions up to the level of the worthy ones. Kauṇḍinya, this is the equipoise of the liberation of no more training.

4.105 “Kauṇḍinya, this perception of dislike toward the entire world is very helpful for sentient beings. It causes them to abandon all forms of attachment associated with the desire realm, the form realm, and the formless realm, as well as pride, agitation, doubt, and the entire darkness of ignorance. It establishes them up to the level that is without remainder. This dhāraṇī mantra that fulfills all goals and accords with the absence of wishes that the thus-gone Royal Mass of Glorious Wisdom conferred upon me through the bodhisattva great being Glorious Essence of Light is very powerful and beneficial—it is a dhāraṇī mantra that bestows faith in the teachings I expound to this great assembly. It exhausts all forms of attachment associated with the desire realm, the form realm, and the formless realm, as well as pride. It generates the knowledge of exhaustion and the knowledge of the unborn, induces the wisdom vision of the unborn, overcomes and completely destroys all the dense darkness of ignorance, and removes the entire burden of suffering. It annihilates the māras, defeats the enemies, [F.172.a] pleases all the gods, delights all the yakṣas, overcomes the asuras, terrifies the garuḍas, generates faith in the kinnaras, and scares away the mahoragas. It subdues the enemies, generates faith in the members of the kṣatriya class, induces comprehension in the brāhmaṇas, delights the vaiśyas, and utterly pleases the śūdras. It frees women from their desires, induces weariness in the scholars, and delights the spiritual practitioners. It completely pacifies the entire world as well as all quarrels, fights, famines, diseases, unexpected hostile armies, untimely winds, rains, floods, cold, heat, snow, and heat waves, and it softens all the substances that are harsh, tasteless, and difficult to touch. It causes the way of the Dharma to blaze, ensures that the lineage of the Three Jewels remains uninterrupted, reveals the teachings of the buddhas, and provides relief to those who are afraid of saṃsāra. This is the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the absence of wishes.”

4.106 As this teaching was being given, an innumerable and limitless number of gods and humans attained the eye of Dharma that is immaculate and spotless with regard to phenomena, and the minds of nine billion eight hundred million beings were liberated from defilements with no further grasping. At that time, eighty thousand beings attained this dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the absence of wishes, an innumerable and limitless number of them gave rise to the mind set on unsurpassed and perfect awakening and reached the level of nonregression, and five million eight hundred thousand reached acceptance of the unborn nature of phenomena.

4.107 All the gods, nāgas, yakṣas, rākṣasas, asuras, garuḍas, [F.172.b] kinnaras, mahoragas, pretas, piśācas, kumbhāṇḍas, humans, and nonhumans exclaimed, “Excellent! Respected Blessed One, this is excellent! The

unimpeded wisdom vision of the blessed buddhas is amazing! It is truly amazing! Respected Blessed One, the thus-gone ones know the inclinations of all sentient beings, and they have perfected the expertise related to their faculties. They satisfy all sentient beings with the taste of the Dharma, they reveal the eightfold path of the noble ones, and they pacify all forms of suffering. Therefore, who would not generate faith in this unsurpassed and perfect awakening?”

4.108 Joining their palms together, the gods, nāgas, yakṣas, asuras, garuḍas, kinnaras, and mahoragas then exclaimed in unison, “Respected Blessed One, we shall diligently and by all means revere, honor, and worship any place where this dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the truth is taught—even if it just written in a book. We shall nurture, guard, and protect those who preach the Dharma and those who listen to it, as well as their dwelling places, so that they remain free from harm by any of their opponents. We shall ensure that they never lack wealth and that they always remain proper recipients and objects of generosity. We shall ensure that those assemblies remain free from disease. We shall ensure that they will enjoy, relish, and find great pleasure in their things and possessions. We shall protect, in accordance with the Dharma, those who pursue the Dharma and abide by it!”

4.109 The Blessed One replied, “Benefactors of the Buddha’s teachings, your engagements, made to ensure that the Dharma way and the lineage of the Three Jewels remain uninterrupted, are excellent!” [F.173.a] [B8]

4.110 At that moment, Venerable Śāriputra bowed with his palms joined in the direction of the Blessed One and said, “Respected Blessed One, please explain to us the dhāraṇī mantra that the thus-gone Glorious Essence of Flowers intended to confer here through the bodhisattva Ākāśagarbha—the dhāraṇī mantra that bestows faith in this great instruction of *The Quintessence of the Sun*, the *peaceful core of knowledge* that puts hostile beings to sleep!”

4.111 “Śāriputra,” replied the Blessed One, “I will explain this in the presence of the world with its gods. Therefore, Śāriputra, listen!” [...]

4.112 The Blessed One then said, “Śāriputra, from far away, the thus-gone Glorious Essence of Flowers knows your inclinations and latent tendencies. He has conferred that dhāraṇī mantra in this buddha realm because you adhere to the perception of a self, your mind entertains mistaken views, you are thoroughly confused within the swamp of saṃsāra, and you are utterly deluded with respect to the eightfold path of the noble ones. In this place, although phenomena are selfless, immature beings mistakenly pursue a sense of self.

4.113 “Śāriputra, how do the wise ones investigate the self? They directly perceive it in accordance with the absence of self. Śāriputra, in this place, the wise ones should investigate the self in the following way: since these

beings entertain the notion of a self with respect to their bodies, they should examine their bodies properly. How should they do so? Concerning the sense faculties alone, [F.173.b] they should investigate their eyes while sitting cross-legged on their various seats with all their faculties restrained. They should think, 'My right eye is made of the four great elements. It is connected with ligaments and filled with water. Only the winds control its movements. When they enter the eye faculty, the winds cause the eye to roll and move. Those winds that control the eye and produce its manifestations are in turn supported by space. Space is inapprehensible—it is inexpressible and selfless. Just as space is selfless, so too are the winds. Those winds that enter the eye faculty, make it roll, control its movements, control it, and produce its manifestations are also inapprehensible, inexpressible, selfless, and beyond observation.'

4.114 "Likewise, those who investigate the entire eye by correctly considering the earth element present within the eye faculty, which is solid and the mere size of a banyan seed, will not apprehend a self. They will be free from doubts about this. The earth element is selfless—it is found to be inapprehensible and selfless. In the same way, they will investigate the elements from the water element to the fire element. By investigating the eye in that way, they will have absolutely no doubt about the fact that the great elements that constitute the eye are selfless. They will think, 'A self that results from contact between eye and form is impossible.' They will then also properly examine the winds and find that they have the essence of space. Having done so, they will not find a self anywhere.

4.115 "They will then think, 'A dependently arisen consciousness cannot arise in the absence of conditions. [F.174.a] Based on the eye faculty and form, only the eye consciousness arises—it arises due to the condition of form. Name and form arise in association with consciousness, and the six sense sources manifest from that. They are followed by contact, the experience of feeling, the strong attachment of craving, appropriation, becoming, birth, and old age and death. Therefore, all these phenomena are dependent upon the eye consciousness. The eye consciousness does not come from the eastern direction, the southern direction, the western direction, or the northern direction. It does not come from above or from below. It ceases in the same instant it arises—it does not last until the next moment. It ceases, yet it does not go anywhere—it is without composition. All those phenomena arise based on conditions and cease when those conditions are incomplete. That which depends on conditions is selfless. Those conditions are also devoid of a creator, someone who experiences, a producer, or an activator—they are selfless. That which is selfless is empty of *I* and *mine*. Why is it so? Because such is the nature of the eye. Since it does not remain

eternally, and since it is devoid of disintegration, it is devoid of *I* and *mine*. All phenomena are devoid of acceptance and rejection. They are not created by the hearers, by the solitary buddhas, or by the thus-gone ones. The eye is intrinsically selfless. That which is selfless is empty, and all phenomena are empty by way of not being apprehended. Similarly, by training until reaching the gateway of liberation of the absence of marks, [F.174.b] they will eliminate the foundation of attachment as well as all the afflictions that arise on its basis. At that moment, some of them will realize the first truth, and some others will realize the other truths up to the fourth one. The same goes with respect to the ear, nose, and tongue.

4.116 “Then, they will continue their investigation by focusing carefully on their entire bodies. Some will first split one of their hairs into fifty parts and then further break these parts into ten pieces. They will then repeat that process with each of their hairs, reaching the conviction that a self cannot be found within those hairs. They will then apply the same observation to their skin, flesh, blood, phlegm, ligaments, bowels, brains, bones, marrow, and bile. They will also focus their attention, in the way that has been described before, on the upward-moving winds, the downward-moving winds, and the winds that are devoid of acceptance and rejection. This is how they will investigate their bodies.

4.117 “They will then pursue their investigation further by focusing carefully on their minds. How will they do so? They will think, ‘The mind consciousness arises based on the mind as well as mental phenomena. In association with consciousness, name and form arise, followed by the six sense sources, the contact created by meeting, the experience of feeling, the strong attachment of craving, appropriation, becoming, birth, and old age and death. All those phenomena therefore arise based on mind consciousness. The mind consciousness does not come from the eastern direction, [...] and it does not come from below. Mind consciousness ceases in the very instant it arises through the gathering of conditions—it does not last until the next moment. It ceases but does not go anywhere. It is devoid of composition. [F.175.a] All these phenomena arise based on conditions and cease when those conditions are incomplete. They all depend upon conditions, and they are therefore selfless. No creator, experiencer, producer, or activator can be found within those conditions, and those are therefore also selfless. That which is selfless is empty of *I* and *mine*. Why is it so? Because it is the nature of the mind. Since it does not remain eternally, and since it is devoid of disintegration, it is devoid of *I* and *mine*.’ All phenomena have the nature of arising and disintegrating, and they are devoid of acceptance and rejection. They have not been created by the hearers, by the solitary buddhas, or by the thus-gone ones. The mind is naturally and intrinsically selfless. That which is

selfless is empty, and all phenomena are selfless by way of not being apprehended. Similarly, by training until reaching the gateway of liberation of the absence of marks, they will eliminate the foundation of attachment as well as the afflictions that arise on its basis. At that moment, some of them will realize the first truth, and some others will realize the other truths up to the fourth one. Since the wise ones cannot find a self when they look for it, they will directly perceive phenomena by way of the absence of self.

4.118 “Śāriputra, since the wise ones abide by emptiness, the absence of marks, and the absence of wishes, they are worthy to be revered, worshiped, protected, remembered, and trusted by Lord Śakra and by everyone else. [F.175.b] They are worthy to be revered, worshiped, protected, and remembered by everyone from Lord Brahmā to the rulers of the gods, the rulers of the nāgas, the rulers of the yakṣas, the rulers of the asuras, the rulers of the garuḍas, the rulers of the kinnaras, and the rulers of the mahoragas. They are also worthy to be trusted by the human rulers.

4.119 “Śāriputra, that dhāraṇī mantra *peaceful core of knowledge* was conferred upon me by the thus-gone Glorious Essence of Flowers through the bodhisattva Ākāśagarbha. It induces faith in *The Quintessence of the Sun*, which I expound in this great assembly. That dhāraṇī mantra *peaceful core of knowledge* is powerful and beneficial—it benefits all sentient beings. It completely cures all diseases and subdues all afflictions. It generates knowledge of all the aggregates, elements, and sense sources, it causes one to discern all phenomena, it reveals all skillful means, and it uncovers the entirety of the happiness of emancipation. It induces faith in all sentient beings, causes one to enter the happiness related to all qualities, overcomes all māras and enemies in accordance with the Dharma, and destroys all the domains of the māras. It annihilates the māras and vanquishes the enemies, pleases the gods, delights the yakṣas, overcomes the asuras, pleases the garuḍas, causes the kinnaras to develop faith, [F.176.a] and puts the mahoragas to flight. It delights the members of the kṣatriya class, induces comprehension in the brāhmaṇas, satisfies the vaiśyas, and utterly pleases the śūdras. It frees women from their desires, releases pregnant women into happiness and well-being, induces recollection in the scholars, and delights the spiritual practitioners. It pacifies all sicknesses, quarrels, fights, famines, epidemics, diseases, hostile armies, untimely winds, rains, floods, cold, heat, snow, and heat waves, and it softens all substances that are harsh, rough, and difficult to touch. It causes the way of the Dharma to blaze, reveals the teachings of the buddhas, and ensures that the lineage of the Three Jewels remains uninterrupted. It provides relief to those who are afraid of saṃsāra, generates the knowledge of exhaustion, actualizes the knowledge of the unborn, overcomes all the dense darkness of ignorance, and removes the

burden of suffering. This great teaching of the *peaceful core of knowledge* purifies the karmic actions of sentient beings. It leads them beyond the ways of the māras and causes them to enter the domain of the buddhas. It provides control over all phenomena, it perfects the eighteen unique qualities of the buddhas, and it turns the wheel of the Dharma. It causes the Dharma rain to fall, it ripens all sentient beings, and it leads to unsurpassed parinirvāṇa. This is the great teaching of the *peaceful core of knowledge*.” [F.176.b]

4.120 As this teaching was being given by the Blessed One, an innumerable and limitless number of gods and humans present there, those whose karmic obscurations generated in the past were not yet exhausted, attained the eye of Dharma that is immaculate and spotless with regard to phenomena. The minds of myriads of beings were liberated from their defilements with no further grasping. At that time, seven hundred thousand beings attained the dhāraṇī mantra *peaceful core of knowledge* and would no longer regress from the three vehicles. An innumerable and limitless number of gods and humans gave rise to the mind set on unsurpassed and perfect awakening and would no longer regress on the path to unsurpassed and perfect awakening. Also, eighty-four thousand beings reached the acceptance of the unborn nature of phenomena.

4.121 After the beings present throughout this entire buddha realm of Saha received these teachings on the meaning of those four dhāraṇī mantras—the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the truth, the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with emptiness, the dhāraṇī mantra that accords with the absence of wishes, and the dhāraṇī mantra *peaceful core of knowledge*—all attachments related to the desire realm, the form realm, shape, contact, longing, and the formless realm of an innumerable and limitless number of them were exhausted, and their defects became clear to them. Some produced the roots of virtue of repulsiveness, while others gave rise to the six spheres, the spheres of mastery, the spheres of totality, the mindfulness of breathing, [F.177.a] tranquility, special insight, the first concentration, the other particular concentrations up to the fourth one, the formless attainments, the acceptance that accords with the truth, the level of the family, and the qualities of the eighth level. Some others also produced the roots of virtue that are common to the hearers, the roots of virtue that are common to the solitary buddhas, and the roots of virtue related to omniscient wisdom, as well as the common absorptions, acceptance, and recall.

4.122 At that time, when ninety-one trillion women listened one-pointedly to this teaching with the understanding that the female condition is flawed, their female genitals disappeared, and instead they developed male genitals. Likewise, the female genitals disappeared on nine hundred ninety million

goddesses, eighty-four thousand female nāgas, eighty-six thousand female yakṣas, eighty-four female asuras, seventy thousand female garuḍas, twelve trillion female kinnaras, one thousand female mahoragas, ninety trillion female pretas, and forty-two trillion female piśācas, and they all developed male genitals. Pregnant women were filled with supreme physical and mental happiness. Even within the animal realms, beings gave birth to male and female offspring without experiencing any form of physical harm or mental distress. These babies were born with unimpaired faculties, perfect physical forms, [F.177.b] the power of recall, and the ability to remember past lives, and they were all endowed with courage, endurance, and insight. All the diseases that could prevent pregnant women from giving birth were completely pacified, and the children in their wombs obtained that same level of well-being. After attaining such physical and mental well-being, the baby boys and girls were born with perfect ease. Their appearances were perfect, they possessed the supreme power of recall and the ability to remember their past lives, and they were endowed with courage, endurance, and insight.

4.123 Then all the gods, nāgas, yakṣas, asuras, garuḍas, kinnaras, mahoragas, pretas, piśācas, kumbhāṇḍas, pūtanās, humans, and nonhumans applauded and exclaimed, “Blessed One, this is excellent! Today the Thus-Gone One has turned the wheel of the Dharma that had never been heard before. It purifies the karmic obscurations of mental concepts, it liberates from saṃsāra, it purifies all destinies in existence, and it brings satisfaction through the nectar of emancipation. This is truly amazing! Today, the Thus-Gone One has showered down a Dharma rain that illuminates all buddha realms. He has done so in order to protect all those beings who have reached maturity, to purify all their defilements, to bring about their attainment of the eye of supreme insight, and to ensure that the lineage of the Three Jewels remains uninterrupted. We shall worship the Thus-Gone One to the best of our ability!”

4.124 Besides those who were exerting themselves in absorption, [F.178.a] all the gods and the others up to the pūtanās offered divine music and played instruments to worship the Blessed One. They showered down a rain of divine golden powder as well as rains of divine flowers, perfume, incense, fine cloths, Dharma robes, ornaments, and divine flower garlands. To worship the Blessed One, who was like the rising sun, they also tossed precious flowers, perfumes, incense, fine cloths, and garlands.

4.125 *This concludes the chapter called “The Purification of Karmic Actions,” the fourth among the eleven chapters in “The Quintessence of the Sun,” the noble Great Vehicle discourse of The Great Assembly.*

THE PROTECTION

- 5.1 Then, together with their respective retinues, all the rulers of the gods, the rulers of the nāgas, the rulers of the yakṣas, the rulers of the asuras, the rulers of the garuḍas, the rulers of the kinnaras, the rulers of the mahoragas, the rulers of the pretas, the rulers of the piśācas, and the rulers of the pūtanās bowed with their palms joined together in the direction of the Blessed One and said, “Respected Blessed One, in all the places where monks, nuns, male and female lay practitioners, or faithful sons or daughters of noble family observe this initial practice of repulsiveness up to the absorption of cessation while contemplating the virtuous factors that have just been described, we shall regard them—up to the faithful daughters of noble family—together with their retinues as the teachers of their own respective classes. [F.178.b] We shall serve all of them through body, speech, and mind, and we shall ensure that they never lack Dharma robes, alms, bedding, medicine, and requisites. We shall liberate them from the fifteen unsettling dangers. What are those fifteen?⁵⁵ We shall liberate them from the unsettling dangers related to the body. We shall liberate them from dirt, sticks, weapons, poison, stones, hostile beings, abusive beings, and faithless beings. We shall liberate them from disturbances in the elements. We shall protect those who serve them with offerings of delicious food and beverages, medicine, and requisites. We shall protect all such righteous sponsors, relatives, and benefactors from the unsettling dangers caused by diseases, enemies, bhūtas, and foes. We shall protect them from the unsettling dangers caused by poison, kings, civil war, invasion, and famine. Those are the fifteen unsettling dangers.
- 5.2 “We shall regard as our own family members all present and future monks, nuns, male and female lay practitioners, and faithful sons or daughters of noble family—even those who merely maintain an imitation of the sacred Dharma—as well as those who abide by this initial practice of

repulsiveness up to the absorption of cessation and who sleeplessly exert themselves during the first and last parts of the night in the endeavors that have been described before. [F.179.a] We shall regard the regions, cities, countries, mountain hamlets, towns, capitals, and solitary places where they reside as the dwelling places of our own families. We shall avert and repel those fifteen unsettling dangers. We shall regard as the dwelling place of our own families any region where even just one single person who applies effort in such virtuous deeds resides, even if that person remains there for only a single day. We shall protect and defend those persons against those fifteen unsettling dangers. We shall regard those almsgivers, benefactors, members of the kṣatriya class, brāhmaṇas, vaiśyas, śūdras, men, women, boys, and girls as members of our own groups. We shall protect and defend them against those fifteen unsettling dangers. We shall also protect and defend against these unsettling dangers those who venerate, worship, and serve others who exert themselves in such virtuous endeavors by offering them houses, temples, monastic compounds, land, Dharma robes, alms, bedding, medicine, and tools. We shall protect and defend those pregnant women who show respect to such people, ensuring that they always remain safe and free from disease and experience many intense joys. We shall also protect from and defend against those fifteen unsettling dangers anyone who supplicates with affection those who exert themselves in such genuine contemplations, [F.179.b] anyone who proclaims their names, anyone who ties the string,⁵⁶ anyone who protects them, anyone who opposes nonvirtuous deeds, and anyone who incites others to engage in virtuous deeds.

- 5.3 “We shall send humans and nonhumans to oppose any human or nonhuman beings who intend to ignore the words of those persons who strive in properly contemplating such virtuous endeavors, as well as those who intend to disregard, abuse, oppose, harm, or utterly corrupt⁵⁷ those persons and harbor ill will toward them. We shall not tolerate them. Those sentient beings who intend to ignore the words of those who strive in properly contemplating such virtuous endeavors and those sentient beings who intend to disregard, abuse, oppose, harm, or harbor ill will toward those persons and utterly corrupt them will experience fifteen harms. What are those fifteen? They will experience (1) the suffering of quickly becoming sick, (2) the suffering related to the loss of their wealth, (3) the suffering related to the deterioration of their possessions, (4) the suffering of their main and secondary limbs being cut off, (5) the suffering of being separated from their beloved retinues, (6) the suffering related to the decline of their power, (7) the suffering related to their dwelling places, (8) the suffering of being crushed by enemies, (9) the suffering of being constantly disturbed in

their minds, (10) the suffering related to their realm, (11) the suffering related to disturbances caused by the members of the kṣatriya class, [F.180.a] (12) the suffering related to disturbances caused by thieves, (13) the suffering related to the disturbances caused by women, (14) the suffering related to the quick exhaustion of their lifespan, and (15) the suffering of death. Those sentient beings will quickly experience those harms.

5.4 “Even if those sentient beings who intend to ignore the words of those who strive in properly contemplating in this way or who intend to disregard, abuse, oppose, harm, or harbor ill will toward those persons and utterly corrupt them take refuge in us out of fear and eagerly serve us with substances to accomplish a variety of mantras, we shall not accept such acts of service to fulfill their purposes, and we shall not give refuge to them. We shall not accomplish their activities or benefit them.

5.5 “There will be troublemakers—from gods and nāgas up to kaṭapūtanas—who are hostile, ruthless, ungrateful, and unafraid of the afterlife. In the wilderness, in forests, in remote places, in hermitages, in charnel grounds, under trees, in monastic compounds, in temples, in houses, and along walking lanes, they will approach those persons who strive in properly contemplating such virtuous endeavors. With hostile attitudes they will have the intention to harm them. They will cause disturbances to their bodies and minds, and they will rob their vital essences. Those beings—from gods and nāgas up to kaṭapūtanas—who are hostile, ungrateful, [F.180.b] and unafraid of the afterlife will even cause disturbances to the bodies and minds of those persons’ attendants and benefactors and rob their vital essences. Barring circumstances related to previous actions, if we do not stand against, oppose, and punish each of those beings—from gods and nāgas up to kaṭapūtanas—for their crimes, we will deceive all the thus-gone ones of the three times. While circling in saṃsāra, may we in that case never become proper vessels for the domains of the hearers, the solitary buddhas, or the thus-gone ones, and may we never achieve the happiness of emancipation!”

5.6 The Blessed One replied, “Noble sons, your commitment to make the Dharma way of all the thus-gone ones of the three times blaze and ensure that the lineage of the Three Jewels remains uninterrupted is excellent! Please do that! By doing so, you will worship and serve all the thus-gone ones of the three times. The noble sons who employ such diligence and determination to protect the well-spoken Dharma and Vinaya, as well as those who follow it and abide by the Dharma, will enjoy abundance and excellence while circling in saṃsāra. They will never experience the suffering of saṃsāra, and they will swiftly awaken to unsurpassed and

perfect buddhahood. Therefore, since you feel aversion for suffering and wish for happiness, please act in that way! Your commitment to such wholesome activities is excellent!”

- 5.7 At that moment, [F.181.a] the innumerable and limitless number of nonhuman bhūtas who feed on vital essences and blood said, “Respected Blessed One, we are not humans. We feed on vital essences as well as flesh and blood. We shall not harm the Thus-Gone One’s hearers. Respected Blessed One, if we were to harm the hearers who contemplate the practice of repulsiveness that the Blessed One has taught today, may we lose our composure! May we lose our ability to reach any domain of power! We shall protect such persons, and we shall protect and defend their attendants and benefactors as well. We shall also protect, defend, guard, and look after those who support the Thus-Gone One’s hearers who abide by the Dharma and contemplate the practice of repulsiveness, and those who offer them temples, lands, monastic compounds, Dharma robes, alms, bedding, and medicinal substances.”

“Excellent, delightful beings, excellent!” replied the Blessed One, “Please do that!”

- 5.8 Then, the earth goddess Sthāvarā said, “Respected Blessed One, I shall provide the vitality of this vast earth to sustain the bodies of the Thus-Gone One’s hearers who abide by the Dharma and strive in the practice of repulsiveness. [F.181.b] Thereby, those who abide by the Dharma and exert themselves in such absorptions will become endowed with a majestic appearance, beautiful complexion, recollection, diligence, and insight.”

- 5.9 “Great benefactress,” replied the Blessed One, “with such alms you will satisfy my children, my heart children, who are born from my mouth, who are endowed with the Dharma, and who are emanated from the Dharma. This is excellent! Through this act of great generosity, you will perfect the Great Vehicle!”

- 5.10 Śrī Mahādevī then said, “Respected Blessed One, I will ensure that all almsgivers and benefactors of those who abide by the Dharma never lack merriment, wealth, grains, fruits, resources, and wealth. I will take care of those people who offer temples, grounds, lands, Dharma robes, alms, bedding, and medicinal substances in order to maintain, support, and look after those who day and night contemplate the practice of repulsiveness up to the absorption of cessation. I will make sure that they possess an abundance of tools, resources, and possessions and that they experience a bounty of physical and mental well-being, as well as happiness and pleasure. I will ensure that they never separate from those who are worthy recipients of generosity and that they always remain associated with them. I

- will ensure that their minds remain delighted by the Dharma, [F.182.a] that they are affectionate, that they do not fall into mistaken views, and that they remain loving, compassionate, and uncorrupted”
- 5.11 “Your support of the great benefactors is excellent!” replied the Blessed One. “Your diligent determination will cause the Great Vehicle to flourish.”
- 5.12 At that moment, Vajrapāṇi, the Lord of Guhyakas, said, “Respected Blessed One, thanks to the many wealthy almsgivers and benefactors who support and protect the teachings of the Blessed One while this section of The Great Assembly is being expounded, the Dharma way will blaze for a long time in this Buddha realm, and it will remain uncorrupted.”
- 5.13 Then the bodhisattva great being Maitreya asked, “O Lord of Guhyakas, can space be seen to degenerate?”
- “No,” replied Vajrapāṇi, “because space is devoid of dwelling and imputation.”
- 5.14 Maitreya asked, “Can phenomena be seen to assemble?”
- “No,”⁵⁸ replied Vajrapāṇi, “because they are within the limit of reality.”
- 5.15 “Can the limit of reality and space be seen as different?” asked Maitreya.
- “They are indistinct,” replied Vajrapāṇi, “and therefore not different.”⁵⁹
- 5.16 Maitreya asked, “Are space and phenomena different?”
- “Since they are within the unmoving and unborn realm of phenomena, they are devoid of difference,” replied Vajrapāṇi.
- 5.17 “Noble son,” asked Maitreya, “can the distinction between conditioned and unconditioned phenomena not be seen?”
- Vajrapāṇi replied, “Just as the limit of reality and suchness are indistinct, conditioned phenomena are imputations projected onto space, and they are therefore indistinct.”
- 5.18 “Is it conditioned phenomena that accord with the limit of reality, [F.182.b] or is it unconditioned phenomena?” asked Maitreya.
- “Since emptiness is an imputation,” replied Vajrapāṇi, “there are either conditioned or unconditioned phenomena within the limit of reality and suchness.”
- 5.19 Maitreya asked, “Is there any assembly within emptiness?”
- Vajrapāṇi replied, “Since it is not lasting, and since it is intrinsically empty and devoid of disintegration, the assembly of all phenomena is emptiness. Not even an entity named *emptiness* can be found. Noble son, the essential nature is empty of essential nature, the basis of characteristics is empty of the basis of characteristics, and the nonexistence of the basis of characteristics is also empty of the basis of characteristics. One should understand all phenomena in that same manner. Why? Because all phenomena are inexpressible and are therefore emptiness. The essential nature of all phenomena has not been created by the hearers, by the solitary

buddhas, or by the thus-gone ones. One should understand that the limit of reality, suchness, and conditioned and unconditioned phenomena all have the nature of space, and therefore they are all devoid of difference—they are indistinct.”

5.20 As this teaching was being given, the obscurations stemming from nonvirtuous actions committed in the past by countless sentient beings who had previously trained in the mode of emptiness were exhausted, and they attained the eye of Dharma, which is immaculate and spotless with regard to phenomena. Nine billion two hundred thousand sentient beings gave rise to the mind set on unsurpassed awakening and obtained the qualities of nonregression.

5.21 *This concludes the chapter called “The Protection,” the fifth among the eleven chapters in “The Quintessence of the Sun,” the noble Great Vehicle discourse of The Great Assembly.*

6.

CHAPTER SIX

6.1 At that time, [F.183.a] King Bimbisāra, who felt joyful and exhilarated, exclaimed, “Respected Blessed One, this buddha realm of Sahā is filled with bodhisattva great beings who exert themselves in concentration, and it is bathed in a brilliant light that has never been seen or heard of before. This is amazing! Respected Well-Gone One, this is truly amazing! Still, besides this buddha realm and its outer mountain range, nothing else whatsoever appears. Respected Blessed One, if this entire buddha realm of Sahā is perceived due to the light of those bodhisattva great beings, what would the light emitted by the thus-gone ones who have entered into absorption be like? Might we be able to perceive the arrays of qualities of other buddha realms through the light emitted by the Thus-Gone One?”

6.2 The Blessed One replied, “Thus it is, Your Majesty! The thus-gone ones dwell within their own domains. They are adorned by the ornament of great merit. They display boundless accomplishments as their abodes are ripened into buddhahood, which is the outcome of the roots of virtue they created by gathering accumulations in the past and the outcome of their previous bodhisattva activity. The thus-gone ones’ manifestations are blessed by the domain of nonattachment; they possess the intelligence that engages in the generation of bright wisdom, and they are born from the perfection of wisdom. They have reached accomplishment for all future eons, they dwell within the limitless domain of the buddhas, they turn the wheel of the Dharma, and they are the result of having gained control over all phenomena. [F.183.b] They know those among all beings who are of highest faculties and those who are not, and they are skilled in ripening beings. Since they have truly conquered habitual patterns, they display the spontaneous accomplishment of their enlightened activities. Your Majesty, these are the reasons why you will perceive an innumerable and limitless number of universes in all the ten directions. In the same way, you will also

perceive an innumerable and limitless number of thus-gone ones surrounded by assemblies of bodhisattvas and hearers residing in those places.”

6.3 King Bimbisāra and the tens of millions of other beings then said in unison, “Blessed One, please show us the domain of the buddhas, the outcome of the ornament of great merit! Please show us everything up to the spontaneous accomplishment of your enlightened activities! Blessed One, please agree to show us the domain of the thus-gone ones!”

6.4 The Blessed One said to Venerable Ājñātakauṇḍinya, “Kauṇḍinya, all the great hearers, the householders, and the renunciates should remain absorbed within their own virtuous factors. I will also remain absorbed within my own domain—the domain of the buddhas.”

6.5 At that moment, all the beings—from gods, nāgas, and yakṣas to humans and nonhumans—who had seen the truth, who had achieved the concordant acceptance, who would no longer regress from the three vehicles, and who had sincere faith in the Three Jewels sat cross-legged and entered into absorption. [F.184.a] Then, within the domain of all the buddhas, the Blessed One entered the absorption known as *the sun and moon-like absorption that pervades the sky with insight and satisfies all the numerous wise ones*. That absorption is not the domain of any hearers or solitary buddhas, nor is it the domain of any bodhisattva great beings or a domain that could be understood by any sentient being. It is exclusively the domain of all the blessed buddhas’ wisdom.

6.6 After the Blessed One had entered this absorption, the entire buddha realm of Sahā and all the trillions of worlds with their four continents, the trillions of Mount Sumerus, the trillions of suns and moons, and the trillions of divine abodes at the summit of existence appeared within the body of the Thus-Gone One. The entire buddha realm of Sahā appeared within the body of the Thus-Gone One. All the afflictions related to the physical and mental suffering of all the sentient beings present in this buddha realm of Sahā—the hell beings, the animals, those in the World of the Lord of Death, the gods, and the humans—were completely eliminated, and they all achieved physical and mental well-being similar to that experienced by the monks who have entered into absorption and reached the tranquility of the second concentration. All the bodhisattvas then arose from their absorptions, and the light was dimmed within their bodies. All the hearers and sentient beings who had entered into absorption likewise arose from their absorptions and experienced such physical and mental well-being. [F.184.b] They were all amazed and astonished. With their senses satisfied, they sat within the body of the Thus-Gone One and looked at the pores of the Blessed One’s body. They all saw that from one pore of the Blessed One’s

body radiated light as bright as the light emitted by as many suns, moons, great precious gems, and tenth-level bodhisattvas as there are grains of sand in the Ganges River. Such was the light that radiated from each of the pores of the Blessed One. The light emanating from the Blessed One's body filled all the buddha realms of the ten directions with its brilliance. All the blessed buddhas residing within the buddha realms in which a buddha was present then filled this entire buddha realm of Sahā with these utterances:

- 6.7 "Lion of the Śākyas, supreme among humans,
You are the outcome of love and compassion.
You benefit all sentient beings
And rely upon accomplishments based on merit.
- 6.8 "You display the domain of the buddhas
Out of affection for all sentient beings,
And you illuminate all the realms
With the light of your compassion.
- 6.9 "Upon seeing all the vast realms
Illuminated by that light,
Everyone pursues sublime awakening
And gives rise to the supreme attitude.
- 6.10 "All those who have achieved miraculous powers
Have quickly arrived.
Circumambulate the Lion of the Śākyas,
Supreme among humans!
- 6.11 "All those who have not developed miraculous powers
Should pay homage to him from afar. [F.185.a]
Give rise to the mind set on awakening,
And become the best among humans!"
- 6.12 When the blessed buddhas had uttered this statement from their respective buddha realms, each of those thus-gone ones—attended and surrounded by bodhisattvas, great hearers, gods, nāgas, yakṣas, asuras, garuḍas, gandharvas, kinnaras, and mahoragas several times as numerous as the grains of sand of the Ganges—left their buddha realms and miraculously arrived in this buddha realm of Sahā to ripen sentient beings through the power of their compassion, to fulfill the intent and the aspiration of the thus-gone Śākyamuni, and to proclaim his qualities. Upon arriving, they circumambulated the body of the Blessed One three times. The beings

present in the retinues of those blessed buddhas also circumambulated the blessed thus-gone Śākyamuni and engaged in acts of worship. After that, they returned to their respective buddha realms.

6.13 At that time, those beings in the buddha realm of Sahā who were present within the body of the Blessed One saw those thus-gone ones residing with their retinues amid the arrays of qualities of all the buddha realms of the ten directions. They saw them arriving from those places with their retinues, circumambulating the blessed Śākyamuni, departing, reentering their respective buddha realms, sitting at the Vajra Seat, and teaching the Dharma. In each of those buddha realms, [F.185.b] as those blessed buddhas were sitting at their seats while teaching their respective retinues about the thus-gone Śākyamuni's praises, qualities, fame, insight, merit, diligence, compassion, and ripening of sentient beings, an innumerable and limitless number of beings—as many as the grains of sand in the Ganges—gave rise to the mind set on unsurpassed and perfect awakening and received individual prophecies. Others did the same with respect to the vehicles of the hearers and the solitary buddhas. All the beings present within the body of the Blessed One witnessed this and heard those prophecies. All of those beings who were sitting within the body of the Blessed One also perceived the different feelings of happiness and suffering experienced by the sentient beings who lived in empty buddha realms ripe with the five degenerations. At that time, all those who lived in those empty universes ripe with the five degenerations also perceived that light, and they saw the thus-gone Śākyamuni. They saw those countless blessed buddhas and the countless beings who accompanied each of those thus-gone ones circumambulating the thus-gone Śākyamuni within this world. At that moment, all those beings experienced sublime joy, and their feelings of suffering disappeared. Tenth-level bodhisattva great beings entered those empty buddha realms ripe with the five degenerations to ripen these sentient beings. In buddha realms with beings to be tamed by buddhas, [F.186.a] they assumed the appearance of buddhas and spoke of the buddha realm of Sahā in a single voice, a single utterance, and a single sound:

6.14 “We have all come
To one realm for the sake of virtue.
If no buddhas reside within a world,
No one will achieve great glory.

6.15 “If you solely dedicate yourself
To the mind set on awakening,
You will no longer experience
Suffering in saṃsāra.

- 6.16 “All of you, quickly depart with us
To worship Śākyamuni—
The foremost among humans—
And to circumambulate him!” [B9]
- 6.17 Those bodhisattva great beings, appearing like buddhas and accompanied by sentient beings possessing miraculous powers who were as numerous as the grains of sand in the Ganges, then left those realms. They circumambulated the thus-gone Śākyamuni three times, worshiped the Blessed One with music from instruments made of precious gems and with different dances and songs, and then formed the aspiration to attain unsurpassed and perfect awakening. Some aspired for the vehicle of conditions, some for the vehicle of the hearers. All of them reached the level of nonregression in accordance with their individual inclinations. At that time, they reached different levels of absorption, acceptance, and recall in accordance with their individual practices. Then, after having accomplished a variety of roots of virtues, they returned to their respective realms.
- 6.18 Some tenth-level bodhisattva great beings assumed the appearance of solitary buddhas, and some others took on the appearances of hearers, Brahmā, Śakra, the Four Great Kings, [F.186.b] Nārāyaṇa, Maheśvara, nāgas, yakṣas, asuras, and universal monarchs. To ripen sentient beings, they then entered buddha realms where there were sentient beings to be tamed by hearers. There, they taught the Dharma to sentient beings while assuming the appearance of hearers. Everyone in those buddha realms perceived that light as well as the thus-gone Śākyamuni. They were filled with intense joy and delight, their senses were satisfied, their feelings of suffering disappeared, and they experienced feelings of happiness. Those who taught the Dharma in those buddha realms in the appearance of hearers were in fact bodhisattva great beings. Through the roots of virtue created by the accumulation of great merit, they spoke of the buddha realm of Sahā in this melodious utterance:
- 6.19 “Overcome inclinations toward negative actions
And abandon evil views!
Go beyond saṃsāra,
To where there is no involvement with the world!
- 6.20 “If you are inclined toward negative actions
You will disregard emancipation.
Thus, this body that undergoes old age and death
Has remained in saṃsāra for a long time.
- 6.21 “It is rare to behold the Teacher,

It is rare to find such freedoms as these,
It is rare to hear the Dharma,
And it is extremely rare to perform virtuous actions.

- 6.22 “Therefore, eagerly form
The aspiration to reach awakening. [F.187.a]
Liberate yourselves from all forms of suffering
And become guides in the world!
- 6.23 “Quickly abandon
The views of permanence and nihilism,
And investigate correctly
The selflessness of all formations!
- 6.24 “Wash away suffering and its origin, craving,
With the water of wisdom
And quickly depart all together
To worship the Lion of the Śākyas!”
- 6.25 Those bodhisattva great beings, appearing like hearers and accompanied by sentient beings possessing miraculous powers who were as numerous as the grains of sand in the Ganges, then left those realms. In this world, they circumambulated the thus-gone Śākyamuni and his retinue three times and worshiped the Blessed One by offering him a variety of precious gems, fine cotton cloths, Dharma robes, jewelry, ornaments, parasols, banners, flags, flowers, perfumes, music, praise, song, and dance. When they arrived back in their respective buddha realms, those bodhisattva great beings sat back on their seats. In the same way, they proclaimed to their individual retinues the praises and the fame of the thus-gone Śākyamuni [...] and the virtuous qualities of his activity of ripening all beings. In those buddha realms, the innumerable and limitless numbers of sentient beings present in these retinues gave rise to the mind set on unsurpassed and perfect awakening. Likewise, some gave rise to the mind set on the vehicles of the hearers and the solitary buddhas. All of them reached the level of nonregression. [F.187.b]
At that time, they reached various levels of absorption, recall, and acceptance, and they created roots of virtue. All sentient beings also saw, in this buddha realm of Sahā, the array present in the body of the Blessed One. They were all amazed and astonished by the qualities of the Thus-Gone One. At that moment, those sentient beings—innumerable and limitless as the grains of sand of the Ganges—who had not yet given rise to the mind set on unsurpassed and perfect awakening gave rise to it. Similarly, some gave rise to the mind set on the vehicles of the solitary buddhas and the hearers, and they all reached the level of nonregression. The same happened with respect

to all those who assumed the other appearances—up to those who appeared as universal monarchs—all the way to their attainment of the level of nonregression. This is how the Blessed One, who is endowed with great miraculous powers, rested in equipoise in the absorption that stems from the domain of all buddhas, in order to ripen all beings.

6.26 *This concludes the sixth among the eleven chapters in “The Quintessence of the Sun” of The Great Assembly.*

THE PRESENTATION OF THE CONJUNCTIONS OF THE LUNAR MANSIONS

- 7.1 When the evil Māra saw all these thus-gone ones and retinues in their respective palaces present within the body of the Thus-Gone One, he became extremely unhappy. Dirt emerged from his entire body, and he began to weep out of distress. He started to run to and fro, to leave only to reappear, and to jump up, run and race around, gape, laugh, sigh, lick his mouth, close his eyes, stretch and contract his arms, [F.188.a] rest his head in his hands, and rub his throat and breast. When they saw this, all the sentient beings residing in the abode of Māra were unsettled. They became displeased and unhappy. One māra leader named Celestial Tree questioned the evil Māra with these verses:
- 7.2 “Why do you run around like that
With such agitation and distress?
It seems that nothing can make you happy,
And nothing pleases you.”
- 7.3 With tears in his eyes, the evil Māra replied:
- 7.4 “When I saw the powerful Gautama,
My heart cracked into pieces.
Dirt leaked from my entire body,
And my eyes were filled with tears.
- 7.5 “Since that entire mass of beings has gathered
To hear his teachings,
That are so agreeable to all beings,
My domain has been emptied.
- 7.6 “Tens of millions of beings

Have arrived there from the ten directions—
From places infinite like space.
They have circumambulated him and are now sitting around him.

7.7 “All the māras and their retinues
Have also gone for refuge in him.
Even my armies have disappeared—
I cannot find them anywhere!”

7.8 The māra leader Celestial Tree then said to the evil Māra:

7.9 “All of us, with our retinues,
Should don our strongest armor
And go pulverize his body
With our mighty swords, wheels, and lances!”

7.10 The evil Māra replied:

7.11 “Better if you go there yourself
And first take refuge in him.
Then you can attack him!
I myself am bound by tight fetters.”

7.12 The māra leader Celestial Tree then said:

7.13 “Whatever method we might use,
It will not be enough to overcome our enemy.
Yet, if we fool him by assuming a friendly appearance,
We will be able to kill him!”

7.14 The evil Māra replied: [F.188.b]

7.15 “I have thought about
Going there while assuming a friendly appearance,
But he would see the frightening and stinking
Rotten corpses around our necks.”

7.16 Celestial Tree replied:

7.17 “With respect to the domain of the māras,
The nāgas, and those who have reached the concentrations,
Our domain has been conquered,
But the domain of the nāgas has remained firm.

7.18 “Those nāgas have great might,
And their troops are numerous and powerful.

Their domain cannot be conquered
By anyone!

7.19 “Let us quickly ask
The rulers of the nāgas,
Who reside in the desire realm,
To crush Gautama into dust!”

7.20 The evil Māra replied:

7.21 “O, you fine and wise being,
Go to the realm of the nāgas
And tell them all
To wage a war against Gautama!”

7.22 “I shall do so!” replied Celestial Tree. He then raised his arm toward a
hundred thousand soldiers wearing armor and proclaimed:

7.23 “We are going to the abode of the nāgas.
We will make them wage war against Gautama
And kill him!
We must convince them all to become our allies.”

7.24 However, none of the soldiers were able to move, so the leader Celestial Tree
began to weep, and his hairs stood on end. With his palms joined, he
supplicated the evil Māra:

7.25 “We are unable
To go anywhere!
This is the powerful magical power of Gautama!
This is the trickery of the sage!

7.26 “Our legs are bound,
And dirt emerges from our bodies.
Please do something
To overcome our enemy!”

7.27 Tormented by increasing suffering and distress, a thought arose in the mind
of the evil Māra: “Now I must by all means bring to mind my demonic power,
so that I can address all the nāgas in their abodes and make them upset and
irate!” [F.189.a]

7.28 At that moment, the evil Māra manifested flesh flies, mosquitoes, and
hornets in all the abodes of the nāgas, and he filled these places with
disgusting smells. He made dirt emerge from the nāgas’ bodies, and
everyone became unhappy. Upset, all the nāgas, the great nāgas, and the

nāga women, boys, and girls started to look around and wonder, “Who is making fun of us?” They did not understand what was happening, as they could not see anyone. Overwhelmed by anger, all the nāgas, great nāgas, and nāga women, boys, and girls in this four-continent world left their residences. The two nāga kings Nanda and Upananda also left their residences with retinues of many hundreds of thousands.

7.29 Alongside Mount Sumeru, there is a mountain called Kalatiya. On the summit of that mountain there is a⁶⁰ sacred site of wise sages called Complete Support. It covers an area of forty thousand leagues, and it is ornamented with the divine seven precious substances. The nāgas entered that sacred site of wise sages to find shelter. However, as soon as they entered that place, their bodies became as small as the pin used to apply ointment to the eyes. Still, due to the power of their anger, they all perceived their bodies to be as big as Mount Sumeru. They could neither call out nor leave that place, so they just sat there, overcome by misery and anger.

7.30 Similarly, all fifty-six thousand nāga kings of Jambudvīpa, including the great nāga king Sāgara and his retinue of many trillions, Airāvaṇa, Supraṭiṣṭhita, Takṣaka, Anavatapta, [F.189.b] Mucilinda, Samudradatta, Given by the Water God, Given by a Householder, Given by the River, Apalāladatta, Given by the Mountain, Gajāśīrṣa, Born from an Ornament, Elapatra, Invisible Wrists, Collection of Sounds, Strength of the Ocean, Karkoṭaka, High Snow Mountain, Strength of the Water, Blue Topknot, Pale Yellow Gold, Green Grass, Abused Tree, Bright Eyes, Elephant Extinction, Tīkṣṇadatta, Moving in Places, Bad Plough, Elavaṇa, Red Eyes, Attractive, and Supreme, entered that sacred site of wise sages to find shelter, each surrounded by retinues of many hundreds of thousands. In each of the eighty-four thousand continents, many hundreds of thousands of great nāgas also left their residences and entered that realm to find shelter. [F.190.a] Similarly, the nāga kings Body-Piercing Needle and Great Movement, surrounded by myriads of nāgas, great nāgas, and nāga kings, left Uttarakuru in the north and came to that sacred site of wise sages for protection. The nāga kings Moon Protector and Wealth Giver, surrounded and attended by many trillions of nāgas, great nāgas, and nāga kings, left Pūrvavideha in the east, and they too entered that sacred site of wise sages to find shelter. The nāga kings Endowed with Jewel Garlands and Endowed with Garlands of Light left Godānīya attended by myriads of nāgas, great nāgas, and nāga kings, and they also entered that sacred site of wise sages to find shelter.

7.31 At that time, within these four continents and eight million other continents, there was not a single nāga or great nāga—whether born from an egg, from a womb, from heat and moisture, or miraculously, whether

male, female, boy, or girl—who did not immediately come to that sacred site of wise sages; they all entered that place to find shelter. As soon as they entered it, each of their bodies became as small as the pin used to apply ointment to the eyes. However, due to the power of their anger, they all perceived that their bodies were as big as Mount Sumeru.

7.32 The evil Māra saw that all those nāgas had gathered in that realm and that their bodies had become small. When he saw this, he became exceedingly agitated, distressed, and scared. He said to his own faction, “Great demons, [F.190.b] all the nāgas have moved away. They have gathered at that sacred site of wise sages, and their power, appearance, and magnificence have decreased. Look at the overwhelming power of that spiritual practitioner!”

7.33 Another māra leader named Support of Discipline then said:

7.34 “Do not be dejected. Listen to me!
This is a game of the nāgas.
Think about that great assembly
That will crush the son of the Śākyas into dust!”

7.35 The evil Māra replied:

7.36 “Clever one, quickly go to that place
And generate enthusiasm in all those groups of nāgas!
If they are able to kill the son of the Śākyas and his assembly,
The domains of the nāgas will become most eminent.”

7.37 The māra leader Support of Discipline then departed from that abode of Māra together with eighty thousand creatures.

7.38 Since his previous aspirations had been accomplished, the thus-gone Śākyamuni had gained dominion over all wise sages. He was ripening all beings and gave teachings that were the outcome of the magical powers of all the domains of the buddhas. He was inducing weariness in all the bodhisattva great beings and bringing delight to all the gods, nāgas, yakṣas, humans, and nonhumans. He engaged with this entire buddha realm, causing it to become the most magnificent of all the pure buddha realms and making it most fortunate, endowed with the great splendor that plants the seeds of merit, and worthy to be worshiped in all the buddha realms.

7.39 The Thus-Gone One then interrupted the manifestation of his magical displays. While they were present inside the body of the Blessed One, the perceptions of everyone in this buddha realm were purified by him. [F.191.a] Now, as the Thus-Gone One interrupted the power of his absorption of miraculous transformation, which is an outcome of the domain of all the buddhas, he reappeared as he was before. He was extremely radiant, clear, and brilliant, and all the buddha realms were bathed in the light rays of his

magnificence. Amazed and astonished, all the many hundreds of thousands of bodhisattva great beings worshiped the Blessed One with offerings of flowers, perfumes, powders, precious gems, fine fabrics, Dharma robes, and necklaces, as well as a variety of ornaments and musical tunes. They circumambulated the Blessed One and sat in front of him. Similarly, the Blessed One's hearers and all the gods, nāgas, yakṣas, asuras, garuḍas, kinnaras, mahoragas, kumbhāṇḍas, pretas, piśācas, pūtanas, kaṭapūtanas, humans, and nonhumans worshiped him with offerings of flowers, perfumes, powders, precious gems, fine fabrics, Dharma robes, necklaces, and a variety of ornaments. They circumambulated him and sat in front of him to listen to the Dharma.

7.40 At the same time, the māra leader Support of Discipline and his army of eighty thousand māras landed in Jambudvīpa, and they saw how the spiritual practitioner Gautama had interrupted the display of his vast body and that he was now again dwelling in the land of Magadha. They wondered, "Did his magical powers become weak because he is afraid of us? As he now sits there with his retinue within that assembly, is he not committing negative deeds by staying there because of us? [F.191.b] We must definitely go there right away and hear the reason for this!"

7.41 The māra leader Support of Discipline and his retinue then proceeded toward the place where the Blessed One was staying. When they arrived, they sat down before the Blessed One, and Support of Discipline uttered this verse:

7.42 "You have not yet crossed the ocean
Of severe disease, old age, and death!
When you deceive sentient beings in this way,
How could you have reached emancipation?"

7.43 The Blessed One replied in verse to the māra leader Support of Discipline:

7.44 "I have crossed the river of existence,
I am free from craving,
And I teach the Dharma to beings
Out of affection for them.

7.45 "A long time ago in cyclic existence,
You practiced for the sake of awakening.
You accomplished generosity and discipline
Since the time of Dīpaṅkara.

7.46 "You have venerated
Ten billion buddhas,

And I have given a prophecy to you
For the sake of the Supreme Vehicle.

7.47 “You have trained in the ascetic practices
And thoroughly meditated on the absence of marks.
I am giving you pure eyes,
So remember your past lives!”

7.48 At that moment, aroused by his past lives, aspirations, and worship of the buddhas and by all his roots of virtue, the māra leader Support of Discipline was humbled, like scattered grass, in front of the Blessed One. With tears in his eyes, he joined his palms and said, “Respected Blessed One, I am like a child, a drunk person, or someone who is mentally disturbed. I confess my faults. Respected Blessed One, I confess my faults! I now remember that, for a full uncountable eon, I previously engaged in the practice of the six perfections with great effort in order to reach unsurpassed and perfect awakening. [F.192.a] I repeatedly cultivated roots of virtue. I have previously served and revered a trillion blessed thus-gone ones in a variety of ways. I have heard the Dharma from them, and I made aspirations. Once, during the lifetime of the thus-gone Kāśyapa, a monk was requesting a discourse of the vehicle of the hearers. Without thinking, I then spoke these evil words: ‘Alas! This exposition on the hearers’ discourses in the presence of followers of the Great Vehicle, given while assuming the appearance of a spiritual practitioner is demonic!’ If I had not said those evil words at that time, I would have received a prophecy for unsurpassed and perfect awakening. However, due to the karmic residue of that action, I was born in the abode of Māra after I died. For five hundred seventy million years, and then a hundred thousand more, I did not have a single thought aimed at unsurpassed and perfect awakening, so what need is there to mention practicing the sublime states?”

7.49 Repeating these words, the māra leader Support of Discipline apologized to the Thus-Gone One and his retinue. He then exclaimed, “From now on I would rather remain in the hell realms for as long as I have so far been circling in saṃsāra than let my mind stray from unsurpassed and perfect awakening!”

7.50 The Blessed One replied, “Excellent, noble son! Those who dedicate themselves to the mind set on awakening with a compassionate attitude are making the most outstanding gift to the great guides. Even the merit of lighting lamps as big as Mount Sumeru in front of the great guides would not match that heap of merit. [F.192.b] Therefore, adopt this attitude!

Surrender this strong negative karmic action to me! Remember that the aggregates and elements are devoid of concepts and marks—they are conditioned! Then you will become a leader with supreme qualities.”

7.51 At that very moment, the bodhisattva great being Support of Discipline achieved the concordant acceptance with respect to phenomena. Then, he stood up, draped the body of the Blessed One with garlands made of invaluable pearl jewelry, and asked, “What are the qualities that will cause us to quickly understand all phenomena and destroy all views as if they were water bubbles? What are the qualities that will cause us to achieve the supreme acceptance set on awakening and quickly liberate all beings? What should the bodhisattvas cultivate for the sake of abandonment?”

7.52 The Blessed One replied, “Support of Discipline, the wise ones must quickly generate four qualities. What are the four? (1) Enthusiastically accepting boundless suffering for the sake of others, (2) undertaking the endless trainings of the buddhas’ domain, (3) undertaking them without letting them regress, and (4) quickly perfecting all the limitless buddha qualities.”

7.53 When they heard that teaching, supreme trust, faith, and respect arose in the minds of the eighty-four thousand māras in the retinue of Support of Discipline, and they sincerely apologized to the Blessed One. They also made aspirations to reach unsurpassed and perfect awakening, and they all achieved the absorption that does not forget the mind of awakening. [F.193.a] They draped the body of the Blessed One with Dharma robes made of divine substances and then sat to one side.

7.54 When he saw this, the evil Māra became exceedingly distressed and scared. He shouted, “They have been consumed by the spiritual practitioner, so now I have lost those retinues! All those who left from here have fallen under his power, so no one can go outside anymore! We must remain here in this domain of the māras!” As he shouted this, he quickly closed the city gates and had guards protect them.

7.55 Then, with his sky-like vision, the Blessed One began to give extensive teachings about the three pure abodes—the focus on sentient beings, the focus on phenomena, and the absence of focus. All the nāgas who had found shelter and gathered at the sacred site of wise sages at the summit of Mount Kalatiya now noticed that their bodies had become as small as the pin used to apply ointment to the eyes, but they were unable to restore their bodies to their normal size. They became filled with fear and terror, and their hairs stood on end. So they all bowed toward Nanda and Upananda and supplicated, “When those flesh flies, mosquitoes, and hornets appeared in

- our towns, we all left our homes and entered this realm to find shelter. But now we are unable to leave again, and our bodies have become tiny. Please protect us so that we may return to our homes! Please grant us fearlessness!"
- 7.56 Nanda and Upananda replied:
- 7.57 "This spiritual practitioner is deceitful.
The son of the Śākyas is performing magical tricks.
He has entered this buddha realm [F.193.b]
And then absorbed it all into his body.
- 7.58 "He has manifested those flesh flies, mosquitoes, and hornets
In all the abodes of the nāgas.
We have come to this place to find shelter,
And our strengths have declined.
- 7.59 "Although Gautama has a cunning intelligence,
Through his actions his magical powers have now declined,
And his own body has also become small.
This commoner now appears sitting on his seat.
- 7.60 "He reduced the size of our bodies
And bound us inside this prison.
We are unable to do anything,
So you must pay homage to the fearless god!"
- 7.61 So all the nāgas paid homage to the evil Māra, the lord of the desire realm,
saying, "Please protect us, so that we may be able to escape from this prison
and live again in our own homes!"
- 7.62 The nāga king Airāvaṇa then said to them:
- 7.63 "Māra and his armies are themselves frightened
And distressed by the cunning tricks of Gautama.
He has taken away many of his followers
By deceiving his retainers and followers.
- 7.64 "Māra has no power whatsoever;
His movements and magical powers have declined.
Quickly go and seek protection in other beings!
All of you must honor the gods!"
- 7.65 Some of the nāgas then paid homage to the Four Great Kings, some paid
homage to Śakra, some paid homage to the supreme god in the Heaven Free
from Strife, some paid homage to the supreme god in the Heaven of Joy,
some paid homage to the gods in the Heaven of Delighting in Emanations,

some paid homage to the gods in the Heaven of Making Use of Others' Emanations, and some paid homage to the mahābrahmās. The nāga king Sāgara then said to all the other nāga kings:

- 7.66 “Why do you not see
That all the gods and their rulers are sitting around Gautama?
They make various offerings to him,
And they have all taken refuge in this śūdra! [F.194.a]
- 7.67 “Friends, instead pay homage to other great sages
Who undergo intense ascetic practices!
Why not pay homage to Protecting Guardian,
High Flier, Jyotīrasa, and Bhārgava?”
- 7.68 Some of the nāgas then paid homage to the sage Utterly Glorious, some paid homage to the sage Stable, some paid homage to Protecting Guardian, some paid homage to High Flier, some paid homage to Jyotīrasa, and some paid homage to Bhārgava. Then, in search of protection, they approached those beings endowed with the five higher perceptions.
- 7.69 At that time, those sages endowed with the five higher perceptions were sitting on the western slope of the snow mountain, listening to the praises of the leader of the Śākyas in front of the sage Jyotīrasa. When they heard the lamenting calls of all those nāgas, the five sages stood up and said to the bodhisattva great being Jyotīrasa, “Do you see that the Blessed One is harming all the nāgas in that sacred site of wise sages and that they are approaching us in search of protection? Please get up, go there, and liberate all those groups of nāgas!”
- 7.70 Jyotīrasa replied, “Go meet them! Once those many hundreds of thousands of gods, nāgas, and yakṣas sit in front of me, they will ask questions about the sublime states devoid of reference point, and I will satisfy their minds.”
- 7.71 All the sages prostrated to the feet of Jyotīrasa, circumambulated him three times, and departed using their miraculous powers. When they arrived at the sacred site of wise sages, the nāgas prostrated to them and supplicated, [F.194.b] “If you are great sages endowed with merit and insight who have mastered all methods, please protect us and release us from the fears of this prison!”
- 7.72 The sages replied, “We are not able to liberate you from this place. Nāga lords, on the western slope of the snow mountain lives the master of all the sages. He is called Jyotīrasa. He is renowned for his great power and has developed great insight, skill, and majesty. He will liberate you from this place. Go pay homage to him!”

- 7.73 When they heard those words, all the nāgas joined their palms in the direction of the sage Jyotīrasa and called for help in unison. Then, with the appearance of a sage, the bodhisattva sage Jyotīrasa miraculously left his place and arrived at the sacred site of wise sages, surrounded and attended by many hundreds of thousands of gods, kinnaras, and yakṣas. All the nāgas prostrated to him and supplicated him with utmost respect, “Please protect us so that we may return to our residences and live happily! Please liberate us from this place!”
- 7.74 Through the power of circumstances, the great sage, who was observing time and had knowledge about it, started to talk to them about the order of the lunar mansions:
- 7.75 “I will explain to you how
You can all be free.
Nothing else will be of benefit to you,
So listen to this attentively!
- 7.76 “We are now in Punarvasu,
And it is the last month of the summer.
It is the solar deity,
And it is connected to all the nāgas.
- 7.77 “Since you do not engage
In the observation of the stars,
This sage will teach you
By condensing this topic to its essence.”
- 7.78 The nāgas said:
- 7.79 “Who placed the planets
And the stars of the lunar mansions in the sky? [F.195.a]
Please expound to us the knowledge
Of the yearly cycle that delights the wise ones!
- 7.80 “How are the moon, the sun,
The lunar mansions, and the planets coursing?
Which lunar mansion will appear
During the first month?
- 7.81 “What are the muhūrtas of the different months?
What is their sequence?
What is their deity? What is their family?
What is their heaviness? What is their lightness?

- 7.82 “What are their benefits? What is their harm?
What are their strengths? Please tell us quickly about this!
What brings about the night?
What is in front of the sun?
- 7.83 “How many steps of shadow are there
When the sun circles around?
During which month is the sun in the south?
How does it reside in the north?
- 7.84 “Sage, we ask all these questions to you.
Please teach us all this!”
Through his great insight,
The expert of the world Jyotīrasa replied,
- 7.85 “O nāgas! In the past,
At the beginning of the fortunate eon,
A wealthy human king appeared
In the glorious city of Pañcālā.
- 7.86 “He had given up desires, he was righteous,
He wished for chastity, and he was very learned,
But his queen
Longed for sensual pleasure.
- 7.87 “At that time, she associated with a reckless man
And fornicated with him repeatedly
In a place without other people,
With the aim of becoming pregnant.
- 7.88 “She became pregnant through the power of the Dharma,
And an ugly son was born.
He had the head, the neck,
The ears, and the face of a donkey.
- 7.89 “His head was repulsive and covered with matted hairs,
But the other half of his body was human.
When she saw him, the queen panicked
And quickly abandoned him in the latrines.
- 7.90 “Because he was filthy and disgusting to touch,
The rākṣasī Female Donkey took him with her
And brought him to her dwelling place in the snow mountains,
Where she raised him lovingly as if he were her own son.

- 7.91 “Since she made him drink rejuvenating elixir,
He spent his time in the company of the gods.
He acquired great insight and became skilled,
Diligent, and compassionate.
- 7.92 “He developed great majesty and love,
And he benefitted all sentient beings. [F.195.b]
Hosts of gods gathered together
And paid homage to Uṣṭra.
- 7.93 “Out of affection for him,
They manifested a snow mountain
Covered with trees filled with flowers and fruits.
It was fragrant and delightful,
- 7.94 “All kinds of plants were growing on it,
And it was home to many types of birds.
For sixty thousand years the sage Uṣṭra
Resided there in isolation.
- 7.95 “He engaged in the ascetic practice
Consisting in standing on one foot.
Śakra and Brahmā paid homage to him,
And all the gods openly praised him.
- 7.96 “All the gods of the form realm,
Led by Brahmā, approached him.
As did all the gods of the desire realm,
Led by Śakra.
- 7.97 “All the nāgas, yakṣas, and kumbhāṇḍas
Also came close to him,
As did all the wise ones within the world—
The sages practicing pure conduct
- 7.98 “And all the beings residing
In the desire and form realms.
They all worshiped the sage Uṣṭra
With a variety of offerings.
- 7.99 “Bowing with their palms joined,
Śakra and Brahmā asked him,
‘O excellent being,
How may we please you, Guide?

7.100 “ ‘What are your expectations and intentions?
Please tell us what you want!’
The sage Uṣṭra replied,
‘I remember how the planets, lunar mansions, and stars

7.101 “ ‘Appeared in the sky
During the previous eons.
Each day, the lunar mansions
Change from one to the other.

7.102 “ ‘In all my lives, I have known
The qualities and activities of the lunar mansions.’
All the hosts of gods then said,
‘In this excellent eon,

7.103 “ ‘This knowledge has disappeared.
Please kindly present to us
The sequence of the lunar mansions!
Please tell us about their activities and qualities

7.104 “ ‘While they remain in this world!
Ocean of qualities, please explain this to us!’
“The sage Uṣṭra replied,
‘First of all, there is the lunar mansion called Kṛttikā.

[...] ⁶¹ [F.212.a]

7.105 At this point all the nāgas gathered at the sacred site of wise sages
developed respect and appreciation for the supreme teacher, the sage
Jyotīrasa, and diligently worshiped him to the best of their abilities.

7.106 *This concludes the chapter called “The Presentation of the Conjunctions of the Lunar
Mansions,” the seventh among the eleven chapters included in “The Quintessence of
the Sun,” the Great Vehicle discourse of The Great Assembly. [B11]*

8.

CHAPTER EIGHT

8.1

Sāgara then said:

8.2

“You remember past lives

Based on the placement of the lunar mansions in the sky.

Wise one, leader of the three realms,

Clear-minded one, glorious being,

8.3

“As an example of your love and compassion,

And in accordance with your affection for everyone,

Please liberate all the nāgas from this place!

Your discipline and observances

8.4

“Are unmatched in the three realms.

You bring satisfaction to all the nāgas.

You are the master of all sages, [F.212.b]

And you are worthy to be worshiped by the humans.

8.5

“Most glorious of all beings,

Please quickly liberate the nāgas

And all those groups of gods, nāgas, and yakṣas

Who attend upon you!”

8.6

With a wish to induce strong faith in the Three Jewels, the sage Jyotīrasa then uttered these appropriate and sweet-sounding words to all those groups of nāgas:

8.7

“I do not possess such qualities!

I am not the sage Uṣṭra.

I do not have the power

To liberate you from this place.

8.8

“You should look for the other sage,

- Who for many eons
Has undergone austerities and hardships.
He will be able to liberate you.
- 8.9 “That sage has always been diligent and practiced generosity.
He is wise and has benefited sentient beings
Through offerings of elephants, horses,
Chariots, sons, wives, and wealth.
- 8.10 “In the past, he has often given away
His limbs, head, ears, eyes, skin, blood,
Sons, male and female servants,
Food, beverages, bedding, and meals.
- 8.11 “He will liberate you through his love and compassion.
He is unmatched in the three realms,
And he revels in concentration.
That sage is named Uṣṭra.
- 8.12 “He is loving and has given rise to the mind set on awakening.
He has mastered the Vedas⁶² in the past,
And he has liberated many sentient beings
Tormented by suffering.
- 8.13 “For the sake of even a single being,
He has patiently endured the destinies
Of hell beings and pretas during eons in past lives.
He is a buddha who has appeared in the world.
- 8.14 “The one who has liberated all those tormented beings
From their sufferings is Uṣṭra.
Due to his firm diligence and compassion,
When Uṣṭra was born within saṃsāra
- 8.15 “To benefit sentient beings,
He was born as a prince, the son of Śuddhodana,
In the family of Ikṣvāku.
As soon as he was born,
- 8.16 “Happiness was felt in the three realms,
The world became splendidous,
And beings were filled with happiness. [F.213.a]
All the kings of the gods, nāgas, bhūtas, and yakṣas
- 8.17 “Arrived from all directions to worship the prince.

- He walked seven steps,
And this entire earth with its mountains and oceans started to shake.
The son of the Śākyas said,
- 8.18 “ ‘I will liberate beings from the torments
Caused by old age, sickness, suffering, and death,
And I will establish them on the dry shore,
Where they will experience peace and happiness and be free from sorrow.’
- 8.19 “The gods and nāgas tossed
Flowers, perfumed substances, and precious gems,
And the different groups of bhūtas
Praised the prince in these words:
- 8.20 “ ‘For many eons in the past,
You have joyfully engaged
In discipline, generosity, and concentration,
And you have patiently endured suffering for the sake of all beings.
- 8.21 “ ‘Among all your lives,
This birth is your last one.
Since you have pacified all suffering,
You will soon awaken to buddhahood.’
- 8.22 “He donned the saffron robes
And became peerless.
After renouncing sixty thousand women,
He practiced intense austerities for six years.
- 8.23 “Alone, he overcame
The cunning Māra and his army,
Reached the boundless, supreme peace of awakening,
And realized the ultimate path devoid of sorrow.
- 8.24 “His love, wisdom, and compassion
Are unmatched among all sentient beings,
And his impartial love
Extends to all beings.
- 8.25 “He does not harm anyone
But liberates everyone
From their suffering.
He frees them from the bondage of their prisons.
- 8.26 “He resides in Magadha,

- Where he teaches the Dharma among beings.
 Supplicate him
 And behold him with love!
- 8.27 “Go meet this supreme sage—
 He will liberate you
 From all the sufferings of migration.
 I will also go there myself.
- 8.28 “Those among you who wish
 For supreme joy and happiness
 Will no longer be afraid of the garuḍas [F.213.b]
 But will enjoy permanent happiness and freedom from suffering!
- 8.29 “The cunning Māra is harming you
 Within this prison.
 Remember everything
 That I have told you!”
- 8.30 At that moment, all the male, female, boy, and girl nāgas and great nāgas who had gathered at the sacred site of wise sages joined their palms and exclaimed, “We prostrate to the one who is more exalted than the entire world, who has mastered all phenomena, who clears away the suffering of all sentient beings, who bestows all forms of happiness, who generates all kinds of joy, who has perfected all types of insight, who is always loving and filled with compassion, who accomplishes all activities, who reveals all the paths, who teaches the genuine vision, and who is worshiped by the gods and the nāgas! Worthy One of the three realms who deserves everyone’s worship, we have all been thrown into this prison of suffering—please liberate us from this place! We must stay together with those nāgas.”
- 8.31 The Blessed One then restored the body of all those nāgas to their previous condition, but they were still unable to leave that place. They all said to the sage Jyotīrasa, “That thus-gone one is genuine—he always seeks the happiness of all beings, and he does not want to harm anyone! We want to take refuge in him and stay close to him. Please enable us to leave this place quickly! Please liberate us from this bondage of the māras!”
- 8.32 The sage Jyotīrasa replied, [F.214.a] “In order to reverse the wheel of saṃsāra for the bodhisattva great beings, to purify the path of awakening, to teach the principle of cause and effect to sentient beings, [...] and to cause them to achieve the buddha eye, the Thus-Gone One—the omniscient sage who is the outcome of great compassion aimed at providing welfare and happiness to all beings—has revealed the supreme abodes that focus on what has only rarely occurred⁶³ and that, in common with the hearers, focus

on sentient beings. For the bodhisattva great beings who attend to teachers, he also taught the sublime states that focus on that which arises from causes and on intellectual analysis. Right now, in countless buddha realms as numerous as all the smallest grains of sand in the Ganges, the Thus-Gone One is using the water of the Dharma to cleanse those bodhisattva great beings who master the six perfections of the unsurpassed vehicle as well as all other beings. He does this in order to free them from the ocean of saṃsāra, to subjugate the four māras, and to ensure that the lineage of the Three Jewels remains uninterrupted. The Thus-Gone One does not observe the realm of sentient beings who are afflicted by a multitude of conceptual afflictions. He is devoid of arising, movement, basis, characteristics, marks, attachment, determination, substance, darkness, light, apprehension, illumination, activity, and distinction. [...] He is devoid of wishes with respect to all the aggregates, the elements, the sense sources, and the great elements, as well as craving with respect to the nature of the eye that is devoid of a subject of experience up to craving with respect to the nature of the mind that is devoid of a subject of experience. He is devoid of formation and engagement. He liberates beings through the realm of phenomena, the limit of reality, the absence of cessation, the unadulterated suchness, [F.214.b] the realm of phenomena devoid of engagement, the ultimate emptiness, and the nonregressing sameness of all phenomena.⁶⁴ He is endowed with the conduct of perpetual wisdom, and he apprehends what is genuine. Right now, this thus-gone one teaches the sublime states devoid of reference point to the bodhisattva great beings who have fully trained in the practices of the six perfections, whose minds are equal to space, who have reached the sameness of unattached wisdom, and who have truly overcome the afflictions associated with the latent tendencies of all views.”

8.33 Oh! As this teaching was being given by the sage Jyotīrasa, the nāga king Sāgara and the nāga kings Body-Piercing Needle, Harsh to the Moon, and Precious Protector remembered the roots of virtue and aspirations related to the bodhisattva conduct they had accumulated in the past, and they achieved recall endowed with insight and composure.

8.34 At that time, eighty-four other nāgas also remembered the roots of virtue and aspirations related to the bodhisattva conduct they had accumulated in the past, and they achieved the absorption that does not forget the mind of awakening. They said to the bodhisattva Jyotīrasa, “Please take our message to supplicate the compassionate Thus-Gone One, who has developed great compassion such that he can free us from the bondages of the māras in this place!”

8.35 “I shall do so!” replied the bodhisattva great being Jyotīrasa, and he miraculously left that place in the appearance of a sage and with a retinue of many thousands of sages.

8.36 *This concludes the eighth among the eleven chapters included in “The Quintessence of the Sun ,” the noble Great Vehicle discourse of The Great Assembly.*

9.

Chapter Nine

THE RECOLLECTION OF THE BUDDHA

9.1 When the evil Māra saw that all the nāgas had taken refuge in the Blessed One, [F.215.a] he became exceedingly distressed and scared, and his body began to shake like the leaves of a jujube tree. Sweating, he raised his two hands and lamented:

9.2 “The nāgas have gone for refuge.
All beings have become deluded
And placed on the path of immortality.
Look at this endless deceit!”

9.3 The daughter of Māra named Free of Darkness said:

9.4 “Sentient beings go for refuge in that spiritual practitioner
Just by hearing about him.
They do so by merely hearing such words,
Not to mention seeing him!

9.5 “You have observed him for a long time
While applying all kinds of effort,
And you have given us a lot of advice,
But have you not learned about his magic?”

9.6 Māra replied:

9.7 “The sage Gautama is clever.
He naturally has great skills,
And he has penetrated the meaning of empty phenomena.
Having crossed over, he is now freeing beings.”

9.8 Free of Darkness said:

- 9.9 “Someone who has penetrated the meaning of emptiness
Cannot be shaken by ten million māras.
I go for refuge
In the one who bestows the happiness of emancipation!
- 9.10 “I go for refuge
In the one who indulges in suchness
Devoid of characteristics
And has mastered wisdom!
- 9.11 “I will learn his magic
And liberate all beings!
May everyone achieve unsurpassed buddhahood
In which all phenomena are mastered!”
- 9.12 All the five hundred daughters of Māra then assembled in that abode of
Māra and made aspirations to reach awakening. The evil Māra became
exceedingly distressed, frightened, and confused. With great energy, he
began to walk away. However, not long after the sage Jyotīrasa had left,
Māra, through his demonic magical powers, produced a rain of burning
stones that fell from his demonic abode in the sky onto that sacred site of
wise sages. [F.215.b] He did so with the wish to crush all the nāgas.
Nevertheless, through the power of the Blessed One, it turned into a rain of
flowers instead, which only brought great delight to all the nāgas.
- 9.13 Filled with Joy then said, “O daughters of Māra, look! Even those nāgas
who have gone for refuge in the spiritual practitioner Gautama in
Jambudvīpa are harmed by many miseries, so there is no need to mention
you, girls, who stay here and go for refuge in him!”
- 9.14 The daughters of Māra replied:
- 9.15 “Even ten million māras are unable to kill
Those who take refuge in the Buddha.
Even if their discipline is corrupt and their minds are disturbed,
They will definitely transcend birth.
- 9.16 “Even a multitude of māras are unable to kill
Those who toss a single flower to the Teacher
While making the firm aspiration to reach awakening.
Without doubt, they will become buddhas within the world.
- 9.17 “Those who take up a single fundamental precept,
Contemplate the meaning of even just one of his words,
And give rise to the mind set on awakening
Will definitely become leaders of sentient beings.

- 9.18 “Father, when the Buddha saw this group of nāgas,
He caused various rains of flowers to fall on their place.
With his single Buddha domain, he has dedicated this to you.
There is nothing that could have been done there!⁶⁵
- 9.19 “In that place, the Teacher revealed
A teaching that, when heard a single time,
Will exhaust the negative deeds of those beings
And purify our karmic obscurations.”⁶⁶
- 9.20 Strongly distressed and criticized, the evil Māra felt miserable and hurt, and
so he retired alone to his house to mourn.
- 9.21 At that moment, the bodhisattva great being Jyotīrasa arrived where the
Blessed One was residing, just as his discourse on the sublime states devoid
of reference point was coming to an end. [F.216.a] He sat down, joined his
palms together in the direction of the Blessed One, [...] and said to him,
“Respected Blessed One, please expound to us the dhāraṇī mantra that
focuses attention on the four highest abodes!⁶⁷ Concerning this dhāraṇī
mantra, in the past, when we were both sons of brāhmaṇas, we committed
physical crimes against the king Victorious God and so were sentenced to
death. We were thrown into prison, and for a fortnight we were chained by
five shackles and had nothing to eat. We supplicated the thus-gone
Mandāravagandha without thinking about anyone else. Then, out of
affection for us, the thus-gone Mandāravagandha appeared through a
narrow opening in our cell. Through this manifestation of the magical
powers of the buddhas’ domains, he taught us the dhāraṇī mantra that
focuses the attention on the four highest abodes. Through the power of the
Buddha, we heard this mantra from inside our cells—both the words and
their meaning. By focusing our attention on this mantra, joy and faith arose
in our minds. At that moment, all the karmic actions that otherwise would
have ripened in our present existence, our next life, and our many
subsequent lives was exhausted, as were all our karmic obscurations and
our obscurations related to afflictions, phenomena, sentient beings, the
perfections from generosity to insight, possessions, enjoyments, the
exhaustion of life energy, intentional rebirth in saṃsāra, and going to the
pure buddha realms. [F.216.b] As soon as we heard this dhāraṇī mantra that
focuses the attention on the four highest abodes, our necks were released
from the five shackles, and we miraculously escaped from our prison. We
then flew in the sky and arrived in the presence of the thus-gone
Mandāravagandha. After we passed away, we were born in the buddha

realm called Mountain Light. We became renunciates in front of the blessed thus-gone Cloud Complexion, and for countless eons thereafter we were not born in empty buddha realms.

9.22 “Similarly, in this buddha realm of Sahā, everywhere from this place all the way up to the Highest Heaven is now filled with innumerable humans and nonhumans who are afflicted by various types of karmic obscurations and by obscurations related to afflictions, phenomena, and sentient beings. They are obscured by impure actions within pure buddha realms, and so they are unable to escape from their condition. As soon as they hear the dhāraṇī mantra for the karmic actions of sentient beings, all their karmic actions that would otherwise ripen in their present existence and in their subsequent lives will be exhausted, as will all their karmic obscurations and obscurations related to affliction, phenomena, sentient beings, the perfections from generosity to insight, possessions, enjoyments, the paths of the ten virtuous actions, rebirth, and going to the pure buddha realms. [F.217.a] Through this Dharma teaching, those sentient beings will achieve various degrees of acceptance and absorption. When they finally arrive at the time of death at the ends of their lives, they will be able to intentionally take rebirth in saṃsāra, and they will remember their past lives. They will constantly cultivate diligence and follow the paths of the ten virtuous actions. Without falling into mistaken views, they will exert themselves in the six perfections and in the four means of attracting disciples. They will listen to the Dharma, serve the Saṅgha, revel in the concentrations, develop the higher perceptions, and strive in the cultivation of the sublime states. Respected Blessed One, out of your affection for all sentient beings, please expound to us now the dhāraṇī mantra that focuses the attention on the four highest abodes, so that all those beings may never part from those qualities until they reach unsurpassed and perfect nirvāṇa!”

9.23 The Blessed One replied, “Noble son, your endeavor to benefit many beings is excellent! [...] Faithful monks, nuns, and noble sons or daughters who wish to cross the ocean of saṃsāra through any of the three vehicles all want to quickly perfect their individual vehicle. They want to overcome all suffering, to retain everything they hear, to be fully liberated from their physical, verbal, and mental negativities, and to protect the teachings. They also want fame, gain, plenty to eat and drink, power, [F.217.b] good physique, strength, retinues, wealth and grain, and preeminent positions. They want to be worshiped by all humans and nonhumans. They always have desire for the body, and they always want to control themselves⁶⁸ through body, speech, and mind. They want to accomplish the absorptions, the formless attainments, the higher perceptions, the sublime states, the dhāraṇīs, and various types of acceptances. However, since they are mainly

propelled by their various karmic and afflictive obscurations, and by all the obscurations up to the obscurations related to going to the pure buddha realms and taking intentional rebirth in saṃsāra, they are unable to accomplish the various roots of virtue quickly. This is because they are afflicted by those karmic obscurations.

9.24 “Those beings should wash themselves, wear clean clothes, and eat pure food. Then, on the auspicious eighth day of the month, whether they are sitting cross-legged on a clean bed or up walking, if they contemplate the physical form of the Buddha with no other thought or action and with no distraction, they will come to behold the Buddha in his own appearance if they can do this anywhere from one night up to seven nights. If they think of the Buddha’s body as being small, they will perceive it as being small in the exact same way, and if they think that it is limitless, they will perceive it as being limitless. During the whole night, they will see his thirty-two major marks. While visualizing a single mark from which blue color radiates, they should recite this mantra:

9.25 *tadyathā: vijrimbha vijrimabha utpāda vyaya vijrimabha snava* [F.218.a] *vara anudatthātā bhūtakotī vijrimabha svāhā.*

9.26 As that blue light radiates and spreads out, it is absorbed into the crowns of their own heads. They should then maintain this visualization undistractedly for one night while reciting those words without being scared or frightened. They should then perceive their bodies as fire. How should they do so? They should see that the dazzling blue light penetrates all the major and minor limbs of their bodies and that the whole of their bodies is consumed by blazing fire until it is reduced to ashes. They should then visualize the wind completely blowing the ashes away in the four directions, until everything becomes empty. When no physical forms appear anymore in any direction, the final accomplishment of that practice is reached. Noble son, if beings have thoroughly cultivated this recollection of the Buddha—the dhāraṇī mantra that focuses the attention on the four highest abodes—and properly performed and contemplated this act of worship, all their karmic obscurations, as well as their obscurations related to afflictions and phenomena and all their other obscurations, will be purified. This does not include acts with immediate retribution, the abandonment of the sacred Dharma, and the denigration of the noble ones.

9.27 “If they want, they will be able to memorize with certainty in a single day and night all the words of the Buddha, all the treatises of the non-Buddhists, the eighteen fields of knowledge, and all the poetic compositions. If they want to cultivate the four concentrations, the higher bases of miraculous displays, the four sublime states, the four correct knowledges, and the four

formless attainments, they will be able to become fully trained in them in a single day and night. If they want, they will be able to clearly know in a single instant all the deaths, rebirths, and mental activities of all beings in the three times. [F.218.b] If they want, they will be able to fill the entirety of space in a single instant with their own bodies, with the bodies of buddhas, Śakra, Brahmā, Nārāyaṇa, Maheśvara, the Four Great Kings, or universal monarchs, or with water, fire, or earth. If they want, they will be able to fill the entirety of space in a single instant with all kinds of flowers, garlands of gems, perfumes, parasols, banners, flags, fine fabrics, Dharma robes, and ornaments. All the limitless karmic actions of those who have thoroughly cultivated, mingled their minds with, and contemplated this recollection of the Buddha that focuses the attention on the four highest abodes will be purified without exception. Their merit, power, diligence, absorption, retention, acceptance, miraculous displays, and higher perceptions will become limitless. All those who have perfected this practice in that way will quickly be liberated from saṃsāra—except for those who have committed the acts with immediate retribution, abandoned the sacred Dharma, or denigrated the noble ones. This being so, even if those who have committed the acts with immediate retribution, abandoned the sacred Dharma, or denigrated the noble ones cultivate for seven weeks, in accordance with the way it is taught here, this recollection of the Buddha that focuses the attention on the four highest abodes, when those seven weeks have passed, not only will a third of their karmic obscurations be exhausted—they will all be purified without remainder.

9.28 “The cultivation of this recollection of the Buddha that focuses the attention on the four highest abodes is therefore very meaningful. [F.219.a] If this recollection of the Buddha that focuses the attention on the four highest abodes is merely overheard by humans or nonhumans, they will develop faith, joy, and intense delight upon investigating it further. They will be freed from the tight shackles of their prisons. All those who suffer will be freed from suffering. They will be freed from the sufferings related to possessions, punishments, beatings, precipices, fire, water, poison, enemies, and bhūtas and from the fears associated with diseases, places, kings, servants, and the lower realms. This will be the cause for them to be born within the happy destinies. If someone merely hears this recollection of the Buddha that focuses the attention on the four highest abodes, faith will arise in that person upon examination. This in itself is already highly meaningful and beneficial, let alone cultivating this practice in the way it is taught!”

9.29 As this Dharma teaching was being delivered, eighty-six quintillion beings who had purified themselves in the past attained the absorption of the Buddha’s recollection and developed the qualities that have been

described above. At that time, eight billion four hundred million beings attained the acceptance of knowing the doctrine of suffering. Among the countless beings present, some settled within the practice of the successive attainments and the first fruition, while others achieved the other fruitions up to the level of a worthy one. At that time, countless beings gave rise to the mind set on unsurpassed and perfect awakening for the first time. [F.219.b]

9.30 Through the power of the Buddha, the five hundred daughters of Māra, including Free of Darkness, heard this entire teaching on the Buddha's recollection that purifies the mind even while one is present in the abode of Māra. When they heard it, their female properties disappeared, and they attained male properties. All those among them who had purified themselves in the past achieved the absorption of the Buddha's recollection and developed the qualities that have been described above. They all assumed the appearance of mahābrahmās. Each of them was surrounded and attended by retinues of many trillions playing billions of instruments and drums as they flew away from the inconceivable arrays in the abode of Māra and landed in front of the Blessed One. They tossed and offered different kinds of divine flowers, garlands, perfumes, ointments, parasols, banners, flags, precious fabrics, and Dharma robes to the Blessed One. Then they circumambulated him three times, bowed down to his feet, and sat to one side.

9.31 *This concludes the chapter called "The Recollection of the Buddha," the ninth among the eleven chapters included in "The Quintessence of the Sun," from the noble Great Assembly.*

THE TRAVEL TO MOUNT SUMERU

10.1 Then, the Blessed One said to the bodhisattva great being Jyotīrasa, “Noble son, tell me the message of that group of nāgas.”

With a mind devoid of afflictions, Jyotīrasa replied, “Blessed One, it is time for you to come! Blessed One, please perform your deeds!”

10.2 The Blessed One replied, “Noble son, [F.220.a] it is time for the Thus-Gone One to reveal the inconceivable teaching on the nāgas’ karmic action—the teaching of purification.”

10.3 At that moment, everyone—from all the gods to all the kumbhāṇḍas—showered rains of flowers, perfumes, precious gems, fine fabrics, Dharma robes, ornaments, embroideries, parasols, banners, and flags and offered music by playing myriads of instruments, and all the humans and nonhumans praised his qualities. Amid all this, the Blessed One stood up and departed toward the north, in the direction of Mount Sumeru.

10.4 All the gods of the desire and the form realms understood that the Blessed One wanted to go to the summit of Mount Sumeru attended by his saṅgha of hearers and surrounded by his saṅgha of bodhisattvas. When he saw this, Brahmā, lord of the Sahā world, manifested a stairway for the Blessed One made of the seven precious substances and covered with various fine fabrics and divine precious flowers. He said, “Blessed One, please proceed on your way by using my stairway!”

10.5 The gods of the Heaven of Making Use of Others’ Emanations also manifested for the Blessed One a stairway made of gold from the Jambū River and covered with various powders of the most precious types of sandalwood. They said, “Blessed One, please proceed on your way by using our stairway!”

10.6 The gods of the Heaven of Delighting in Emanations also manifested for the Blessed One a stairway made of divine gold and covered with bright powders of white sandalwood. They said, “Blessed One, please proceed on

your way by using our stairway!" [F.220.b]

10.7 The supreme god of the Heaven of Joy also manifested for the Blessed One a stairway made of divine beryl and covered with bright powders of yellow sandalwood. He said, "Blessed One, please proceed on your way by using my stairway!"

10.8 The supreme god of the Heaven Free from Strife also manifested for the Blessed One a stairway made of divine beryl and covered with bright divine powders. He said, "Blessed One, please proceed on your way by using my stairway!"

10.9 Śakra, lord of the gods, also manifested for the Blessed One a stairway made of red pearls and covered with bright powders of divine sandalwood and garlands of precious gems. He said, "Blessed One, please proceed on your way by using our stairway!"

10.10 The Four Great Kings also manifested for the Blessed One a stairway made of divine emeralds and covered with a variety of divine fabrics. They said, "Blessed One, please proceed to the summit of Mount Sumeru by using our stairway!"

10.11 The four rulers of the asuras and their retinues also manifested for the Blessed One a stairway made of divine white coral and covered with bright divine golden powders. They said, "Blessed One, please proceed to the summit of Mount Sumeru by using our stairway!"

10.12 Out of affection for them, the Blessed One agreed, and so he emanated six buddhas similar to himself. Then, through this great display of the Blessed One, those seven buddhas, attended by hearers and surrounded by saṅghas of bodhisattvas, arrived at the summit of Mount Sumeru in front of all the rulers of the gods and the asuras. Those seven buddhas sat on the summit of Mount Sumeru, shining through their sublime brilliance and radiance. [F.221.a] From the bodies of each of those buddhas radiated light like the light emitted by ten billion suns and moons.

10.13 When they saw this, all the nāgas who had assembled at the sacred site of wise sages became curious and asked one another, "Where do those seven beings who dwell within that brilliant light on the summit of Mount Sumeru come from?"

10.14 Nanda and Upananda said, "Those who dwell on the summit of Mount Sumeru together with the gods come from the Priests of Brahmā. They are the most supreme divine lords and have perfected the knowledge of the wisest beings. They are dwelling there out of love for us, and they bring us delight through their glorious brilliance. They will liberate us from our bondages, so you should all pay homage to them!"

- 10.15 Anavatapta said, “It is not them! This is the evil Māra, the leader of beings, the lord of the desire realm gifted with magical powers. Out of affection for you, he is dwelling there surrounded by his sons and other beings. He will liberate all the sentient beings who are afraid⁶⁹ of the sufferings of the desire realm—hunger, thirst, and disease. He will quickly liberate you from your sufferings.”
- 10.16 Lord of the Earth said, “It is not him! These are the Great Kings, the rulers of the gods, and the gods of the Heaven Free from Strife, the Heaven of Joy, the Heaven of Delighting in Emanations, and the Heaven of Making Use of Others’ Emanations. They are dwelling on that mountain out of affection for you, and they look upon our group of nāgas. We should all call to them for help and shout with loud voices, ‘Please protect us!’ Since they are constantly blissful, they will liberate you from your prisons.”
- 10.17 Sāgara said, “It is not them! This is the majestic and resplendent Śakra, lord of the gods, together with his retinue. He looks lovingly upon all those within this four-continent world who are following the Dharma. All of you, generate love in your minds and quickly let go of anger! [F.221.b] He will quickly liberate the nāgas—he will liberate you from this place and from all your fears.”
- 10.18 Supraṭiṣṭhita said, “It is not him! These are hosts of majestic gods from the form realms who are endowed with concentration and bliss. They have ascended this sacred site of wise sages for the sake of sentient beings, and they are now sitting here. Out of love, they will quickly pacify the suffering of beings in all directions and will shower down a rain of Dharma. All of you, pay homage to them with divine minds! They will liberate us from this place.”
- 10.19 The nāga Body-Piercing Needle said, “These are not the gods of the form realms! These are the four demon leaders—Kubera, Supreme Being, Nectar Drink, and Bound in Movement. Surrounded by groups of yakṣas, they protect the four directions and free sinful beings. When they see our weak⁷⁰ minds, they will quickly liberate us.”
- 10.20 The nāga Precious Protector said, “It is not them! They seem to be monks sitting there with shaved heads and saffron robes. All of you, look at them! They are sitting with their palms joined, like moons surrounded by stars. I⁷¹ see those seven as monks with shaved heads who have reached great accomplishments and are steady in their spiritual observances. I see those monks with saffron robes. They are adorned with the marks and worthy to be worshiped by all beings.”
- 10.21 The nāga Body-Piercing Needle then said, “This is the great leader of the world himself! This is how it seems to me. He is the universal friend of sentient beings, the protector of beings who clears away the ocean of

suffering. The other sages that appear together with him are his emanations. He is dwelling there out of love for us, and he will liberate you from your sufferings.”

10.22 As soon as the Blessed One sat down on the summit of Mount Sumeru, a hundred thousand retinues took place along eighty-four leagues of that mountain. Above the Blessed One, [F.222.a] the gods of the desire and form realms emanated a storied mansion made of the divine seven precious substances that stretched all the way up to the divine abode of the Highest Heaven. It was multicolored, delightful to behold, and adorned all along its many hundreds of thousands of leagues. To worship the Blessed One, they also manifested a variety of divine fabrics, ornaments, embroideries, parasols, banners, flags, perfumes, and flowers to adorn him.

10.23 Then, the Blessed One summoned Śakra, lord of the gods, and said to him, “Kauśika, I, buddhas, bodhisattva great beings, great hearers, sages, māras, gods renowned for their great power, nāgas, yakṣas, humans, and nonhumans have resided in the buddha realm of Sahā. Similarly, the Thus-Gone One himself now resides here on Mount Sumeru, as do those bodhisattva great beings who have come from all the buddha realms of the ten directions and those gods renowned for their great power. May the beings residing on the summit of Mount Sumeru bring you welfare and happiness!”

10.24 Śakra replied, “Respected Blessed One, since you act out of affection for us, and since all of us—māras, Śakra, Brahmā, lords of the gods, lords of the nāgas, lords of the yakṣas, lords of the gandharvas, lords of the asuras, lords of the garuḍas, lords of the kinnaras, lords of the mahoragas, [F.222.b] sentient beings renowned for great power, divine sages, and human sages—have assembled here in this buddha realm of Sahā to pay homage to the Blessed One, revere him, and bring him enjoyment as he resides on Mount Sumeru, we will all meet with great welfare and happiness here!”

10.25 While sitting there, the Blessed One smiled, and various blue, yellow, red, white, violet, and crystalline light rays radiated from his mouth. Those light rays spread out and pervaded all the buddha realms of the billions of abodes of Māra, Śakra, Brahmā, and everyone else, including the rulers of the gods, the asuras, and the sages. In those abodes, all the beings renowned for their great power who were given the names *Māra* up to *sages* were touched by the light. They all left their abodes and instantly arrived at the summit of Mount Sumeru before the Blessed One and his six buddha emanations.

10.26 The Blessed One then ceased his emanations and declared, “Among all the billions of Mount Sumerus present in my buddha realm, I have explained that this Mount Sumeru is the most supreme and eminent. All the great

assemblies reside on this Mount Sumeru—it is the king of all Mount Sumerus!”

10.27 When they heard this, Śakra (Kauśika) and everyone else including Brahmā, lord of the Sahā world, became elated and overjoyed.

10.28 Through the power of the Blessed One, the four great nāga kings then left the sacred site of wise sages. With his tail still resting in the great southern ocean, [F.223.a] the nāga king Sāgara stretched his head up to the summit of Mount Sumeru, where he gazed one-pointedly at the Blessed One. Similarly, with their tails resting respectively in the great western, northern, and eastern oceans, the nāga kings Precious Protector, Body-Piercing Needle, and Harsh to the Moon stretched their heads up to the summit of Mount Sumeru, where they all gazed one-pointedly at the Blessed One. The remaining countless trillions of nāgas were unable to leave, and so they supplicated stealthily, “Please protect us and liberate us from this prison!”

10.29 The nāga kings Nanda and Upananda thought, “The Blessed One will descend to the ground from the summit of Mount Sumeru. He will then reside here and teach the Dharma to the nāgas.” With this in mind, they both stretched their own bodies from the ground all the way up to the summit of Mount Sumeru.

10.30 Śakra thought, “Oh! The bodies of those nāgas are rough and dangerous to touch. It would be terrible if they were to harm the soles of the Blessed One’s feet!” With this in mind, he then draped the bodies of the nāgas in divine fabrics, and their heads with powders made of the finest sandalwood and leaves of tamāla trees. He also tossed divine flowers onto them.

10.31 The Blessed One now expanded the size of the sacred site of wise sages to a width of eighty-four quintillion leagues, and in the middle of it Brahmā, lord of the Sahā world, spread cushions adorned with divine fabrics, ornaments, jewels, and precious gems.

10.32 At that moment, while sitting on the summit of Mount Sumeru, the Blessed One said to ĀjñātaKaundīnya, [F.223.b] “I teach the Dharma through the magical and transformative power of the buddhas’ domain, so that everyone throughout the entire buddha realm of Sahā may hear it. Kaundīnya, clinging to the arising, continuation, origination, and appropriation of the eye is the arising of suffering. It is a disease and the perpetuation of the factors of existence. It is the manifestation of old age and death. Kaundīnya, clinging to the arising, continuation, origination, and appropriation of the ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind is the arising of suffering. It is a disease and the perpetuation of the factors of existence. It is the manifestation of old age and death. Kaundīnya, the cessation, pacification, disappearance, and pacification of the appropriation of the eye is the cessation of suffering. It is the pacification of the factors of existence and the disappearance of old age

and death. Kauṇḍinya, the cessation, pacification, disappearance, and pacification of the appropriation of the ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind is the cessation of suffering. It is the pacification of the factors of existence and the disappearance of old age and death.

10.33 “Within the world with its gods, Brahmā, spiritual practitioners, brāhmaṇas, gods, and humans, I have presented the Dharma and so have become renowned as the most eminent being. Through my great love I have become renowned as the most supreme being. Through my great compassion I have become renowned as a holy being. By transcending saṃsāra I have become renowned as the unsurpassed one. Through my generosity, discipline, and restraint I have become renowned as the one who is impartial toward all beings. That Dharma is the outcome of the cultivation of such generosity, discipline, and restraint, as well as sublime states and the eightfold path of the noble ones. [F.224.a] That Dharma I have taught and elucidated to all beings on a vast scale. Since the affectionate Teacher wishes to benefit others, I have performed my deeds toward the hearers. Now it is your turn to act! Make sure you do not have any regrets in the future! Therefore, in order to eradicate old age and death, you must practice and exert yourselves in the wilderness, under trees, in charnel grounds, in the mountains, in hermitages, and in secluded places! This is my teaching.”

10.34 When the Blessed One delivered this Dharma teaching, myriads of sentient beings in each of the four continents in all the billions of four-continent worlds in this buddha realm of Sahā generated a variety of roots of virtue. Some settled within states of absorption, retention, and acceptance. Likewise, some gave rise to the Dharma eye with respect to phenomena. In some the karmic obscurations that would have led them to the hell realms were purified. In others the karmic obscurations that would have led them to be born into the hell realms, as animals or destitute yakṣas, or as poor humans were purified. Those who were afflicted by diseases recovered their health, and sentient beings were liberated from their prisons.

10.35 The nāga king Sāgara then uttered these verses to the Blessed One:

10.36 “You are endowed with an abundance of virtue,
Pure golden conduct, and immaculate compassion.
Sublime among gods, humans, and nāgas,
You clear away the mud of their afflictions.

10.37 You fully establish all sentient beings
On the paths of discipline, erudition, and knowledge.
Please liberate those groups of nāgas!
With your firm compassion, remember your past commitments!

10.38 “For the sake of other beings’ minds,

You relinquish⁷² their suffering. [F.224.b]
Just so, the nāgas in this place are endlessly afflicted
By much suffering caused by delusion.

10.39 “Your enemies pay homage to you, your diligence is firm,
And you are free from the jungle of birth.
Please satisfy all the nāgas
With the water of wisdom!”

10.40 *This concludes the chapter called “The Travel to Mount Sumeru,” the tenth among the
eleven chapters included in “The Quintessence of the Sun,” the noble Great Vehicle
discourse of The Great Assembly. [B12]*

THE GOING FOR REFUGE OF THE NĀGAS

- 11.1 While showering rains of flowers, precious gems, and Dharma robes, playing instruments and drums, and singing melodious songs, all the gods, nāgas, yakṣas, and asuras present there departed from the summit of Mount Sumeru together with the Blessed One. Attended by his saṅgha of hearers and surrounded by his saṅgha of bodhisattvas, the Blessed One then took a seat on the cushions that had been prepared for him at the center of the sacred site of wise sages. To worship the Blessed One, all the gods, nāgas, yakṣas, asuras, and kinnaras showered rains of various ornaments, powders, flowers, and precious gems from the sky. The nāgas also offered the Blessed One different kinds of flowers, perfumes, precious gems, silken clothes, fine fabrics, Dharma robes, and ornaments. They circumambulated him three times, prostrated to his feet, and sat in front of him to listen to the Dharma. The nāga king Sāgara then asked, “Respected Blessed One, what are the deeds through which sentient beings are born as nāgas?”
- 11.2 The Blessed One replied, [F.225.a] “Nāga lord, there are ten types of karmic obscurations through which beings will quickly be born as nāgas. What are those ten? (1) There are sentient beings who exert themselves in the six perfections and pursue the unsurpassed vehicle but are not quick to regard pleasures as defects, even though they strive in generosity and give freely. Through the power of their aspirations, they will be born among the nāgas. (2) There are sentient beings who pursue the unsurpassed vehicle and exert themselves in the perfection of generosity but are unable to guard their discipline perfectly and in a faultless manner. Fearing the conditions of the hell beings and pretas, they will be born among the nāgas through their aspirations. (3) There are sentient beings who pursue the unsurpassed vehicle but are filled with intense pride. Due to the power of this pride, they will be born among the nāgas through their aspirations. (4) There are sentient beings who exert themselves in the conduct of the unsurpassed

vehicle but have a lot of aggression in them and are extremely hostile toward others. Due to the feelings of enmity they entertain, they will form the wish to be born among the nāgas just before they die. They will thus be born there through their aspirations. (5) There are sentient beings who genuinely follow the vehicle of the hearers, search for those who are worthy of gifts, and are endowed with an attitude of worship. They may also be born among the nāgas through their own aspirations. (6) There are sentient beings who possess the defects of miserliness and pride. They will be born among the nāgas through their actions. (7) There are sentient beings who delight in pride, talk nonsense, and lie. They will be born among the nāgas through their actions. (8) There are many sentient beings who do not revere the Buddha, the Dharma, [F.225.b] the Saṅgha, the precepts, the preceptors, the teachers, the ones who should be respected, and their parents. Due to pride and the delusion induced by inferior actions of body, speech, and mind, they will be born among the nāgas. (9) There are sentient beings who, overwhelmed by pride and ignorance, lack control and do not behave faultlessly. They will be born among the nāgas. (10) Finally, there are sentient beings who are proud and who are used to slander and to speaking with abusive words. After they die, they will also be born among the nāgas.

11.3 “There are three other circumstances through which one will be born among the nāgas. What are those three? (1) There are sentient beings who are born among hell beings due to extremely severe negative actions of body, speech, and mind. After they die, they will be born among the nāgas due to a small residue of those negative actions. The same concerns the births among (2) animals and (3) pretas. Through those three circumstances, one will be born among the nāgas.”

11.4 Sāgara said, “Respected Blessed One, that is correct! Respected Well-Gone One, that is correct! Respected Blessed One, there are nāgas in this place who have an abundance of possessions and enjoyments and are like gods, while others are like wretched humans struck by plague, like pretas, animals, or even hell beings. They experience terrible suffering!”

11.5 The nāga prince named Lotus Face then asked, “Which actions have led me to be born within a family of nāgas and [F.226.a] with a blazing body? Everything I touch with my body—even with the slightest brush—burns and is consumed by flames. I must always walk without sandals and move around naked. My parents enjoy perfect prosperity and an exalted status, similar to that experienced by universal monarchs ruling over the four continents.”

11.6 The Blessed One replied, “O, nāga! In the past, thirty-one eons ago, the thus-gone, worthy, perfect Buddha, blessed Śikhin, appeared in the world. At that time, there was a king named Free of Flowers. For three months, he

offered all sorts of supplies to the thus-gone Śikhin and his retinue—saṅghas of hearers and bodhisattvas counting many hundreds of thousands of members—and he listened to the Dharma continuously. He made the aspiration to reach unsurpassed and perfect awakening. He also built the Blessed One a fully functional temple. King Free of Flowers had a son named Arjuna. Because of his intense fear of saṃsāra, this son became a renunciate in the presence of the Blessed One, and he then looked after the monastic compound of the saṅgha that his father had donated. Later on, the son of the king Free of Flowers—the monk Arjuna—became jealous of all the hearers of the Blessed One, those monks who were residing there while partaking of food, beverages, and bedding. Those monks, the hearers of the Blessed One, eventually left the place. Arjuna was extremely delighted by their departure, but he could neither partake of these provisions himself nor give them away to others. After he died, that monk was born within the great hells. For many trillions of years, [F.226.b] he was boiled in those great hells. When he finally died and transmigrated from those hells, he was then born among the pretas, where he experienced suffering for many hundreds of thousands of years. After that, he again experienced further suffering among hell beings and pretas.

11.7 “Nāga, if you think that this person Arjuna—who became a renunciate out of fear of saṃsāra and then suffered in the three lower realms for such a long time after he died—was anyone else, then you should not think that! Because it is you who are afflicted by such strong karmic obscurations. From then on and for thirty-one eons, you have continuously been born in the three lower realms. Due to the residue of those karmic obscurations, you have now been born among the nāgas. It was you who experienced those sufferings and no one else. In the future, after you die, it is likely that you will again be tormented continuously by suffering among the hell beings, animals, and pretas.”

11.8 Utterly distressed, the nāga started to weep. He prostrated to the feet of the Blessed One and exclaimed, “Respected Blessed One, I confess all the faults I have committed out of foolishness, delusion, confusion, and lack of intelligence! I confess each of my faults! Respected Blessed One, I will embrace the vows willingly! I wish to be a lay practitioner of the Thus-Gone One! I will renounce killing for as long as I live! I go for refuge in the Blessed One!”

11.9 The Blessed One replied, “Excellent, noble son, excellent! Since you have gone for refuge in me with such determination, all the lower realms are now exhausted for you. After you die, you will achieve a human body during the time of Maitreya. [F.227.a] You will become a renunciate in the presence of Maitreya and actualize the fruitions up to the level of the worthy ones. King

Free of Flowers, who at that time revered Śikhin and his retinue for three months by offering all sorts of supplies and built a fully functional monastic compound for the saṅgha, was no one but this very nāga king Sāgara. Do not think that this was someone else! For thirty-one eons, he was never born in the lower realms but instead experienced divine glory and excellent fortune on an extremely vast scale. He was born here among the nāgas through the power of his aspirations for the unsurpassed vehicle, and he now experiences such glory and fortune in this place.”

11.10 When they heard those words, all the nāgas became weary and extremely unhappy. They developed the utmost respect and fondness for the Blessed One. Among the nāgas, there was one nāga named Feeble Fruit, who was blind. He started to lament loudly, “You who are affectionate toward sentient beings, please protect us! For a long time, I have had the most terrible physical sufferings. Worms, bugs, and all kinds of other creatures are devouring me. I lack food and drink and am living in boiling water!”

11.11 The Blessed One replied:

11.12 “In the past, you were a spiritual practitioner
Under the teachings of the Victor Krakucchanda.
You were learned and practiced the conduct of cleanliness,
But you also committed negative deeds in seclusion.

11.13 “You had many followers,
And you became a teacher like myself.
Your disciples praised you
As a worthy one endowed with great magical powers.

11.14 “Whenever wealth and meals appeared,
You partook of it alone.
You abused gentle monks
Upon seeing them. [F.227.b]

11.15 “You did not enjoy living among others,
And for a thousand lifetimes,
You entertained the thought
‘May this be my food!’

11.16 “Due to the ripening of that karmic action,
You were born here as a nāga,
And those creatures living on your body
Are now constantly feeding on you.

11.17 “You are therefore living in boiling water,
And you have become blind.

- In the future, you will eat
Burning iron and copper in hell.
- 11.18 “Without strength and filled with distress,
You are now weeping among the nāga lords,
But if you confess each of your faults,
You shall be freed from your sufferings.”
- 11.19 The Blessed One then touched his face
With his gold-like hand.
Considering the hardships he had undergone,
The Teacher then said,
- 11.20 “When I was the king Excellent Eyes,
I once removed both my eyes
For the sake of a blind brāhmaṇa,
With these words of truth.
- 11.21 “With those exact words of truth,
May you gain faultless eyes!
Through my excellent conduct,
May your past actions be purified!”
- 11.22 *tadyathā: cakṣukhava rasanakhava karmakhava ananjana virāja vara anta jñāma
nisaraṇatroya a he candra ḍane krimi śuddhe phal śuddhe aje taje tale tantale
vasedhasake vasate rūrati mahārūravi triratnaprate svāhā.*
- 11.23 As those words of truth were uttered by the Blessed One, the eyes of Feeble
Fruit became immaculate, as did the eyes of fifty-three thousand other nāgas.
Furthermore, the previous karmic obscurations of eight billion four hundred
million yakṣas, kumbhāṇḍas, pretas, piśācas, and humans were exhausted,
and their eyes also became immaculate.
- 11.24 The god Susīma joined his palms and exclaimed, “Look at the power of the
leaders of the world! [F.228.a] They give their eyes to those who do not see
the path. If the teachers do not appear in the world anymore, in the future no
one will achieve eyes of flesh with which to proceed!”
- 11.25 At that moment, the Blessed One said to Venerable Ājñātakauṇḍinya,
“Kauṇḍinya, remember this dhāraṇī mantra—this great mantra formula—
that accomplishes vision. Now and in the future, all the sentient beings who
become blind or develop poor eyesight due to the residue of past karmic
actions, disturbances of the elements, mantras, medicines, or poison should
read aloud this dhāraṇī mantra that accomplishes vision and confess each of
their actions. If for seven weeks they wipe their eyes while cultivating the

recollection of the Buddha with a loving attitude toward all beings and without doing anything else, their eyes will become immaculate. People should commission this dharaṇī mantra to be written down and repeatedly read aloud if they have become blind due to the residual karmic actions related to the acts with immediate retribution, the residual karmic action of rejecting the sacred Dharma, the residual karmic action of denigrating noble beings, the residual karmic action of blocking generosity of the Dharma, the residual karmic action of destroying books, or the residual karmic action of destroying others' eyes. They should also confess their karmic obscurations. Furthermore, they should blend together ocean foam, licorice, kaca herb,⁷³ the three medicinal fruits, dried turtle heart,⁷⁴ and honey. It should then be cooked and smeared around the eyes while they read aloud the words of this mantra one thousand and eight times. If for seven weeks they cultivate the recollection of the Buddha and produce images of the Buddha without doing anything else, all their karmic obscurations will be purified, and their eyes will become immaculate. [F.228.b] If they build a monastic compound for the saṅgha where monks can reside, their karmic obscurations will also be purified, and later on their eyes will never be impaired within saṃsāra."

11.26 The entire retinue of nāgas exclaimed, "Great compassionate one, benefactor of all beings in the three times, healer of all diseases, we pay homage to you!"

11.27 The nāga Blue Color then started to lament loudly:

11.28 "You purify all negative deeds,
You have performed austerities,
You are endowed with all splendor,
You know all actions, and you are the king of all beings.

11.29 "I am lacking water.
I live in the wilderness,
Where I am tormented by scorching winds,
And I reside in stinking places.

11.30 "I have not experienced a single day of happiness
In ten billion years,
And my retinue and I
Are constantly devoured by others."

11.31 The Blessed One replied:

11.32 "There are beings who commit negative deeds
But accomplish merit later on.
Even if they physically feed the saṅgha of monks

- After beating the gong,
- 11.33 “Through the residue of their former karmic action,
They will undergo much suffering
Wherever they are born,
Yet they will not lack food and drink.
- 11.34 “Alternatively, they will be born
As nāgas due to their karmic actions,
And the tops of their heads
Will be adorned by the king of jewels.
- 11.35 “As nāgas who give water,
They are known as *the source of water*.
Water will flow
In the places where those nāgas reside.
- 11.36 “Wherever they go—
Whether on earth or in the sky—
Water will appear
As soon as they think about it.
- 11.37 “There are also sentient beings
Who have obtained a human body,
Although they committed a variety of negative deeds.
If they do not revere the Saṅgha, [F.229.a]
- 11.38 “They will experience all kinds of suffering
In the three lower realms.
They will then attain birth
In the realm of the nāgas.
- 11.39 “Water will not appear to them,
And there will be no precious gem adorning their heads.
They will live in dry and barren places
Without any water.
- 11.40 “In the past you were
A forest-dwelling monk
Under the teachings of the Victor Tīṣya.
You were filled with envy and miserliness.
- 11.41 “When you saw monks begging for alms,
You offered them gifts
With a grimacing face,

- And you criticized them openly.
- 11.42 “You even filled their water discretely
With impure substances,
And you covered the paths they were walking on
With stinking substances.
- 11.43 “When gentle monks passed by,
You abused them with rebukes,
And you also rejected
Other gentle monks far away.
- 11.44 “Through such envy and miserliness,
You swiftly and angrily abused
All the spiritual practitioners you met,
And you did this continuously.
- 11.45 “You angrily criticized benefactors,
And you gave up all humility and modesty.
Due to the ripening of that karmic action,
You were born as a hell being.
- 11.46 “You experienced a lot of suffering in the hell realms,
In ten million different bodies.
You also experienced unbearable suffering
Among the pretas for a very long time.
- 11.47 “You have now suffered a lot
Since you were born as a nāga.
You are living without water
In barren, isolated regions.
- 11.48 “You will again and again experience
Feelings of suffering in the hell realms,
And you will still experience feelings of suffering
Among the pretas and animals for a very long time.
- 11.49 “Those who, during the final period, give rise to ill will
And are constantly envious, miserly, and angry
Will neither guard their concentration nor worship the buddhas.
They will neither guard their discipline nor reside in the forest.” [F.229.b]
- 11.50 At that moment, within that retinue of nāgas, two hundred sixty million
nāgas who were like pretas remembered their past lives. They started to
weep loudly and said, “Blessed One, please protect us! Well-Gone One,

please protect us! We have produced the same karmic obscurations under the teachings of previous victors, and we have therefore suffered in the three lower realms for a long time. We are now constantly tormented by such sufferings among the nāgas who are like pretas. We are just like the nāga Blue Color, who is also like a preta.”

11.51 The Blessed One replied, “Take some water and sprinkle it on the Thus-Gone One’s feet. All your sufferings will be exhausted thereby.”

11.52 The nāgas who were like pretas scooped up some water in their hands, but the water turned into blazing fire, and a mass of fire rose up in the air to a height of seven palm trees. This repeated seven times. That group of nāgas, as well as the entire retinue, then became utterly distressed and started to shed tears.

11.53 The Blessed One then said:

11.54 “The fruition one obtains
Accords with the actions performed.
If the actions are virtuous, the results are excellent;
If they are negative, the results are also negative.

11.55 “All of you, nāgas who are like pretas, repeat these words:

11.56 “Through the words of truth
By which the Teacher
Developed an impartial mind toward all beings,
May the water I am holding not turn into fire!”

11.57 All the nāgas said, “This eighth time, we will lift the water up with our hands and pour it on the feet of the Blessed One while confessing each of our faults!”

11.58 The Blessed One said: [F.230.a]

11.59 “All the remaining obscurations of your negative deeds
Are now exhausted,
And you will obtain a human existence
During the time of Maitreya.

11.60 “You will quickly go forth
Under the teachings of Maitreya.
You will exert yourselves in practice,
And you will soon achieve the level of the worthy ones.”

11.61 At that moment, through the power of the Buddha, all the groups of nāgas who had assembled there remembered their past lives, actions, destinies, and rebirths. As they realized their own past negative actions, many

hundreds of thousands of nāgas within that retinue started to weep. Some of them said, “We were householders under the teachings of past thus-gone ones. Because we spent our time with our relatives and did not listen to the Dharma, we ended up misusing the flowers, fruits, juices, food, and beverages that had been offered to the saṅgha of monks.” Others said, “We misused that which had been offered in the four directions.” Others said, “We have misused that which we ourselves had offered.” Yet others said, “We were under the teachings of Vipāśyin, Śikhin, or Kanakamuni.” Some nāgas said, “We were householders under the teachings of the thus-gone Kāśyapa. Similarly, because we spent time with our relatives and did not listen to the Dharma, we ended up misusing the flowers, fruits, juices, food, and beverages of the saṅgha that had been donated to monks. [F.230.b] Due to the karmic actions of those negative deeds, we have repeatedly experienced all kinds of unbearable great sufferings within the hell realms. For a long time, we have also been constantly tormented by suffering among pretas and animals. Through the residue of those karmic actions, we have now been born here as inferior nāgas. We are cooked in boiling water and burned on scorching sand, and we feed on lumps of iron. Wherever we go, we experience such terrible suffering. Please protect us!”

11.62 The Blessed One replied, “O nāgas, it is not acceptable for you to use the possessions of the Saṅgha! This is close to the acts with immediate retribution! You will not be able to quickly confess such acts without having to experience their ripening. O nāgas, despite that fact, you must commit to taking the threefold refuge for as long as you live! You will thereby gain benefits and happiness. For those reasons, all the thus-gone ones have intentionally nurtured you in saṃsāra and caused you to take the threefold refuge.”

11.63 Within that assembly, there was also a blind female nāga. Her mouth was filled with worms, and from it was dripping pus with a stench like putrid urine. Her lower body parts were similar to this. Her entire body was decaying, oozing pus, and covered with skin diseases and worms, and she was being devoured by flesh flies, mosquitoes, and hornets.

11.64 The Blessed One looked at her with great compassion and asked, [F.231.a] “Sister, what kind of negative deeds related to the body did you commit?”

She replied, “Respected Blessed One, I am tormented by suffering! Respected Blessed One, I experience burning pains! I remember that thirty-six thousand years have now passed since I was born as this inferior nāga. These terrible sufferings have not ceased for even a single day!”

11.65 The Blessed One asked, “What actions did you commit in the past?”

She said, “Ninety-one eons ago, under the teachings of the Victor Vipāśyin, I was born as a girl in a human family. Intoxicated by lust, I repeatedly wished to have sexual intercourse with those monks who had gone forth under the teachings of the Blessed One, in the temples of the Saṅgha and on the Saṅgha’s beds. I was not afraid of the consequences of such faults. Blessed One, since that time I have never again obtained the body of a god or a human. Instead, I have been constantly tormented by unbearable pain in the three lower realms.”

11.66 The Blessed One asked, “Sister, where did you go when that great eon came to an end?”

She replied, “By the great winds aroused by my previous actions, I was propelled into other worlds ripe with the five degenerations. After those worlds were destroyed, I was thrown into this place. Blessed One, please protect me through your great compassion! Well-Gone One, please protect me!”

11.67 With his two hands the Blessed One then lifted up some water mixed with medicinal incense for wounds and uttered words of truth. He said, “Through these words of truth by which I previously, without any attachment, gave away my body in order to benefit a pigeon, may your diseases be healed!” He then poured that water into the mouth of the female nāga and sprinkled it over her body. [F.231.b] All her diseases were completely healed, and she settled within the threefold refuge.

11.68 There was also another nāga in that place who was stinking, filled with worms, and covered by yellowish worms. Hot and thick pus and blood were oozing out of his body, and he was unable to speak. He was extremely repugnant.

11.69 When the Blessed One saw him, he asked, “Nāga, what kind of nonvirtuous actions did you commit in the past?”

The nāga opened his mouth, but since it was filled with all kinds of worms and with pus, blood, and fire, he was unable to speak.⁷⁵ The Blessed One took water in his hands and said:

11.70 “Through the same words of truth
By which I threw myself into a fire
To benefit a sage when I was a rabbit,
May this nāga recover his ability to speak!”

11.71 He then poured the water he was holding into the mouth of the nāga, thereby extinguishing the fire inside his mouth and removing the worms, pus, and blood.

- 11.72 When his mouth had been purified, the nāga said, “Respected Blessed One, I was a farmer under the teachings of the Victor Kāśyapa. I once asked a hearer of the Blessed One to lend me fifty golden coins on interest, assuring him that I would pay him back in the fall. He only gave me ten with a fee of eighty cowries, not the fifty golden coins I had asked for. Hence, overwhelmed by anger toward that monk, I took ten with a fee of eighty cowries and never paid him back. On another occasion, I went to a monastic compound in which there were resident monks and ate thirteen mangoes that had been offered to the Saṅgha. Through just the residue of that karmic obscuration, after I died I was born within one of the neighboring hells in this barren wilderness. My body was constantly covered by worms, pus, and blood, [F.232.a] and I suffered the torments caused by hunger and thirst. Due to those nonvirtuous actions, after I died I was born in the great hells. After that monk died, his anger and miserliness caused him to be born here among the nāgas, in my armpit. He always moves in my body. Constantly overwhelmed by anger, he fills my body with his warm breath. Due to those causes, my body is continuously covered by worms, pus, and blood. Thus-Gone One, please protect me! Please liberate me from those hostile snakes!”
- 11.73 The Blessed One took water in his hands and said:
- 11.74 “During a period of famine,
I was a fish in this place,
And I was sated by feeding on flesh and blood.
May both of you be well!”
- 11.75 As he poured water on that nāga, another nāga emerged from his armpit. Both of them asked, “For how long have we been freed from the lower realms?”
- 11.76 The Blessed One replied, “Hey, nāgas! For those who use or give to others the flowers, fruits, leaves, food, beverages, bedding, plants, or tools that have been offered to the Saṅgha in one of the four directions, negative deeds will ripen. Since these acts are extremely heavy—almost as heavy as the acts with immediate retribution—no one is able to quickly eliminate those actions without experiencing their fruition! Nāgas, come here and go for refuge in the Three Jewels! If you do so, you will henceforth live in water.”
- 11.77 They were then established into the refuge of the Three Jewels and henceforth lived in water. [F.232.b]
- 11.78 The Blessed One then said:
- 11.79 “It may be tolerable to have one’s limbs
Cut by sharp razor blades,
But one should never give to householders
Possessions that have already been offered.

- 11.80 "It may be tolerable to eat iron lumps
 That are like blazing flames,
 But one should never use
 Something that belongs to the Saṅgha.
- 11.81 "It may be tolerable to take and swallow
 A fire as high as Mount Sumeru,
 But householders should never use
 The possessions of the Saṅgha.
- 11.82 "It may be tolerable to have all one's limbs cut off
 And to be impaled on a stake,
 But householders should never use
 The possessions of the Saṅgha.
- 11.83 "It may be tolerable to enter a room
 Filled with burning embers,
 But householders should never spend the night
 In the rooms of Saṅgha members.
- 11.84 "It may be tolerable to take in one's hands
 Iron lumps that are like burning flames,
 But renunciates and householders
 Should never hold gold coins.
- 11.85 "It may be tolerable to have one's body
 Chopped by a sharp wheel,
 But one should never criticize or develop arrogance toward
 The well-spoken Dharma teachings.
- 11.86 "It may be tolerable for followers of the well-spoken Dharma
 To gouge out their own eyes,
 But they should never pass judgment on others
 And angrily banish such people.
- 11.87 "It may be tolerable for followers of the well-spoken Dharma
 To wear clothes made of fire,
 But they should never take the clothes of householders
 Through pretense or force.
- 11.88 "It may be tolerable for renunciates to drink
 Unpleasant water that burns like fire,
 But they should never take
 Food and beverages through hypocrisy."

- 11.89 At that time, the Blessed One liberated fourteen thousand nāgas from the terrible sufferings caused by their previous negative actions, and he established them into the threefold refuge. Eight hundred million other nāgas also went for refuge in the Three Jewels and were truly established in the three vehicles. [F.233.a]
- 11.90 The Blessed One then said to Venerable Kauṇḍinya, “Kauṇḍinya, look at how sentient beings are fooling themselves! Some use for themselves the various possessions that others have offered out of fear of the terrors of poverty and to benefit monks who abide by the Dharma. Others give these things away for the enjoyment of others, while still others rob them by force and then make use of them themselves. By doing so, they will meet with suffering for a long time in the three lower realms. There are also some people who, fearing poverty and in order to free themselves from the prison of saṃsāra, became renunciates under the teachings of blessed buddhas of the past but later renounced their consideration of wholesome practices and recitation. Some such degenerate beings will rob and misuse the various items that have been offered to monks who abide by the Dharma. Others among them will give these items to householders. Both those groups will be tormented by suffering for a long time in the three lower realms. Seeing those shortcomings, I have informed and reminded my hearers of them. None of my hearers should give to householders the flowers, fruits, leaves, and plant extracts that have been offered to monks and to the Saṅgha of monks. They should not be enjoyed while entertaining any perception of a person. My hearers should not engage in any trade outside the Saṅgha. They should not exchange and barter goods⁷⁶ or discuss wealth. No one should settle themselves in the sufferings of the lower realms by hoarding material things. People should instead amass the Dharma and settle themselves in the four types of undivided faith, [F.233.b] the three vehicles, and the three gateways of liberation.”
- 11.91 *This concludes the chapter called “The Going for Refuge of the Nāgas,” the eleventh among the eleven chapters included in “The Quintessence of the Sun”—the noble discourse of The Great Assembly. [B13]*

12.

CONCLUSION

- 12.1 Then the elder Ājñātakauṇḍinya said to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, please bless the nāgas! Please make this Dharma teaching, which involves the conduct of teaching about the inconceivable karmic action, blaze for a long time!”
- 12.2 The Blessed One said, “As long as the great stūpas in this four-continent world still contain beings who diligently engage in practice, this Dharma teaching will continue to be practiced on the four continents. What are those great stūpas? Here in Jambudvīpa, many past buddhas, bodhisattvas, solitary buddhas, and hearers have continuously resided at this stūpa—the sacred site of wise sages called Complete Support—and they will continue to reside here in the future. The perfect buddhas of the past have entrusted this sacred site of wise sages called Complete Support to Varuṇa, to ensure that the great teachings remain for a long time. I also entrust it to him. He will joyfully ripen those persons who abide by the Dharma and diligently engage in practice. He will also protect those donors and benefactors who strive to serve those who abide by the Dharma.”
- 12.3 The nāga king Varuṇa replied, “Respected Blessed One, that is correct! [F.234.a] The thus-gone Krakucchanda entrusted to me the protection of this sacred site of wise sages called Complete Support. He has also entrusted to me the protection of those who exert themselves in sameness and abide by the Dharma, as well as the donors and benefactors who strive to serve those who exert themselves in sameness and abide by the Dharma. I will protect both those groups as requested, for as long as the sacred Dharma blazes. Similarly, the thus-gone ones Kanakamuni and Kāśyapa entrusted that task to me, to ensure that that Dharma way continues to blaze. In the same way, following the command of the Blessed One, I will now protect the persons in this sacred site of wise sages called Complete Support who exert themselves in sameness and abide by the Dharma, as well as the donors and benefactors

who strive to serve and revere those persons who exert themselves in sameness and abide by the Dharma. As long as those hearers reside here without assistance, I will protect them all!”

12.4 “Excellent, nāga, excellent!” said the Blessed One. “Through these blessings, those great benefactors will make my Dharma way blaze for a long time!”

12.5 The Blessed One then said, “In Godānīya, on Dust Mountain, there is the sacred site of wise sages called Bright Colors. [...] I entrust its protection to the nāga king Endowed with Jewel Garlands.”

“Respected Blessed One, that is correct!” replied the nāga king Endowed with Jewel Garlands. “The thus-gone Krakucchanda entrusted to me the protection of this sacred site of wise sages called Bright Colors. [F.234.b] [...] As long as those hearers reside there without assistance, I will look after them all!”

12.6 “Excellent, nāga, excellent!” said the Blessed One. “Through these blessings, those benefactors will make my Dharma way blaze for a long time!”

12.7 The Blessed One then said, “In Pūrvavideha, on Langana Mountain, there is the sacred site of wise sages called Emergence of Sages. I entrust its protection to the nāga king Moon Protector.”

The nāga king Moon Protector replied, “[...] For that long, I will look after them!”

12.8 The Blessed One then said, “In Uttarakuru, on Victorious Joy Mountain, there is the sacred site of wise sages called Stacked Incense. I entrust its protection to the nāga king Body-Piercing Needle. I also entrust to him the protection of those persons who exert themselves in sameness and abide by the Dharma, as well as the donors and benefactors who strive to serve and revere those monks who exert themselves in sameness and abide by the Dharma.”

12.9 The nāga king Body-Piercing Needle replied, “Respected Blessed One, that is correct! In the past, the thus-gone Krakucchanda also entrusted to me the protection of this sacred site of wise sages called Stacked Incense as well as those who abide by the Dharma. Kanakamuni and Kāśyapa have done the same, and I have supported the Dharma way. In the same way, following the command of the Blessed One, I will now protect that entire sacred site of wise sages called Stacked Incense!”

“Excellent, nāga lord, excellent!” said the Blessed One. “Through these blessings, those great benefactors will make the Dharma way blaze for a long time!” [F.235.a]

- 12.10 The Blessed One then said, “In Godānīya, there is also the sacred site of wise sages called Source of Light Rays. I entrust its protection to the nāga king Gajaśīrṣa. [...] He will make the Dharma way blaze for a long time!”
- 12.11 The Blessed One then said, “In Pūrvavideha, there is also the sacred site of wise sages called Lotus Flowers Like Banyan Trees. I entrust its protection to the nāga king Wealth Giver. [...] He will make the Dharma way blaze for a long time!”
- 12.12 The Blessed One then said, “In Uttarakuru, there is also the sacred site of wise sages called Light Rays of Stacked Incense. I entrust its protection to the nāga king Moving in Places. [...] He will make the Dharma way blaze for a long time!”
- 12.13 The Blessed One then said, “Within the great ocean, in the dwelling place of the nāga king Sāgara, there is also the sacred site of wise sages called Radiating Diamond Light. I entrust its protection to the nāga king Sāgara. [...] He will make the Dharma way blaze for a long time!”
- 12.14 The Blessed One then said, “On the summit of Mount Sumeru, in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, there is also the sacred site of wise sages called Essence of Blooming Flowers. I entrust its protection to the nāga king Airāvaṇa. [...] He will make the Dharma way blaze for a long time!”
- 12.15 The Blessed One then said, “Here in Jambudvīpa, at the place called Nandivardhana, there is also the sacred site of wise sages called Cave of the Elders. I entrust its protection to the nāga king Jackal. [...] He will make the Dharma way blaze for a long time!”
- 12.16 The Blessed One then said, “In Vaiśālī, there is also the sacred site of wise sages called Completely Stable. I entrust its protection to the nāga king Vāsuki. [...] He will make the Dharma way blaze for a long time!”
- 12.17 “In Kapilavastu, there is also the sacred site of wise sages called Fragrance of the Golden Lamp. I entrust its protection to the nāga king Anavatapta. [F.235.b] [...] He will make the Dharma way blaze for a long time!
- 12.18 “In Magadha, there is also the sacred site of wise sages called Vast. I entrust its protection to the nāga king Given by the Mountain. [...] He will make the Dharma way blaze for a long time!
- 12.19 “In Mathurā, there is also the sacred site of wise sages called Thick Clouds. I entrust its protection to both nāga kings Jackal and Movement. [...] They will make the Dharma way blaze for a long time!
- 12.20 “In the country of Kosala, there is also the sacred site of wise sages called Pure Victor. I entrust its protection to the nāga king Kṛmi. [...] He will make the Dharma way blaze for a long time!

- 12.21 “Beyond Guhā, there is also the sacred site of wise sages called True Fragrance of Mucilinda. I entrust its protection to the nāga king Mucilinda. [...] He will make the Dharma way blaze for a long time!
- 12.22 “In Gandhāra, there is also the sacred site of wise sages called Provisions for the Path of Seeing. I entrust its protection to the nāga king Elapatra. [...] He will make the Dharma way blaze for a long time!
- 12.23 “In Kashmir, there is also the sacred site of wise sages called Saffron Summit. I entrust its protection to the nāga king Hullura. [...] He will make the Dharma way blaze for a long time!
- 12.24 “In the land called Fetching Water, there is also the sacred site of wise sages called Essence of Illumination. I entrust its protection to the nāga king Dangler. [...] He will make the Dharma way blaze for a long time!
- 12.25 “In China, there is also the sacred site of wise sages called Light of Nārāyaṇa. I entrust its protection to the nāga king Samudradatta. [...] He will make the Dharma way blaze for a long time! [F.236.a]
- 12.26 “In the land of Khaṣa, at the place called Breast of the Earth near Mount Gośṅga, along the bank of the Gomatī river, there is also the sacred site of wise sages called Gomasālagandha. I entrust the protection of that sacred place to the nāga king Given by a Householder. [...] He will make the Dharma way blaze for a long time!
- 12.27 “Many supreme wise sages have continuously resided at those great stūpas in the past, as have many bodhisattva great beings, solitary buddhas, great hearers, and sages who had developed the five higher perceptions. Those great stūpas have been blessed by all those powerful beings renowned for their great strength who were born in this buddha realm, and these places have been entrusted to them so that they may generate roots of virtue for the sake of sentient beings who are afraid and weary of saṃsāra. In that way, all the blessed buddhas and bodhisattva great beings who have appeared in the countless buddha realms in the ten directions have considered, thought about, and blessed those twenty great stūpas in order to exhaust the karmic actions of sentient beings. Similarly, all the blessed buddhas and bodhisattva great beings who in the future will appear in the countless buddha realms in the ten directions will consider, think about, and bless those twenty great stūpas. In the future, all the most excellent victorious ones who will appear in this buddha realm will reside in and bless those twenty great stūpas for the sake of sentient beings and in order to exhaust their karmic actions. [F.236.b] All the bodhisattva great beings, solitary buddhas, great hearers, and sages who have developed the five higher perceptions will also reside in and bless those twenty great stūpas for the sake of sentient beings and to exhaust their karmic actions. I will entrust their protection to those beings renowned for their great strength. In the

same way, I now entrust those twenty great stūpas to you in accordance with the names you have heard. Protect those places for the sake of those sentient beings who are weary of saṃsāra! Look after them to ensure that the Dharma does not vanish!”

12.28 All the nāgas who had been entrusted to protect those twenty sacred places replied, “Respected Blessed One, we nāgas are severely intoxicated by the obscurations of lethargy and sleep. If we count according to human time, just one of our nights of sleep lasts for twenty-one human years. If those sacred sites of wise sages were threatened by danger caused by gods, humans, fire, or water while we sleep, those great stūpas could be destroyed. Since we would be asleep and intoxicated, we would be unable to prevent their destruction. This would be a great fault against all the thus-gone ones of the three times!” [F.237.a]

12.29 The Blessed One then said to twenty-eight yakṣa leaders, “Take care of those great stūpas, those sacred sites of wise sages that the victors always keep in mind. Look after them and protect them!”

12.30 The twenty-eight⁷⁷ great yakṣa leaders agreed to protect the sacred sites of wise sages as requested, just like those who resided there in the past. However, they did not agree to protect the sacred place of Gomasālagandha.”

12.31 At that moment, the nāga king Given by a Householder said, “Respected Blessed One, I could take up the protection of that great stūpa, the sacred site of wise sages called Gomasālagandha that is located at the place of Breast of the Earth near Mount Gośṛṅga, along the bank of the Gomatī river. However, in that region, there are no lands, villages, cities, or towns, nor are there any other places inhabited by humans. There are only bodhisattva great beings, solitary buddhas, great hearers, and sages who have mastered the five higher perceptions and the magical powers who have arrived from other regions, other four-continent worlds, and other buddha realms. They have used their miraculous powers to arrive at Gomasālagandha, that sacred site of wise sages, to worship it, but afterward they will leave again. Respected Blessed One, I have just witnessed that none of the yakṣa leaders are eager to protect that place. So now I am left wondering whether this should not be regarded as a bad place.”

12.32 The Blessed One replied, “Nāga lord, do not say such things! In the land of Khaṣa there are twenty thousand powerful beings who see the truth and are renowned for their great powers. [F.237.b] They will perform worship day and night at that great stūpa Gomasālagandha, the sacred site of wise sages. Furthermore, nāga lord, three thousand years after the thus-gone Kāśyapa passed into perfect nirvāṇa, Breast of the Earth was home to a country called Rough Stone. It was filled with many humans and other beings, and

everyone lived happily and joyfully. Five hundred thousand sages who were worthy of gifts, reveled in the concentrations, and wished for the unsurpassed vehicle resided in that place. At that time, humans craved food. For the sake of food, they accused the sages of engaging in sexual intercourse and threw dust and ashes at them. Hence, the sages eventually left the country Rough Stone. When they saw that the sages had left, those beings rejoiced and were overjoyed. Do you remember how furious you became, and how you deprived them of their water by drying out the rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, springs, and wells in their country? In that land, the fire god also became angry and extinguished the fires of those beings, leaving them tormented by hunger and thirst. After they died, those beings were soon born in isolated places where they remained for a long time. I will now go to Gomasālagandha and reside for seven days at that sacred site of wise sages so that a hundred years after I pass into parinirvāṇa there will be villages, cities, towns, countries, and mountain hamlets at Breast of the Earth. There will be resources and possessions for sentient beings who follow the Great Vehicle, everyone will live happily and joyfully, and the place will be filled with many humans and other beings.” [F.238.a]

12.33 The Blessed One then asked the yakṣa leader Famous, “Famous, do you remember?”

“Respected Blessed One,” replied Famous, “I remember how in the past the thus-gone Kāśyapa spent seven days in a single sitting at Mount Gośṛṅga, resting in the happiness of liberation. After those seven days had passed, when he arose from that absorption, he remained at Gomasālagandha, that sacred site of wise sages. I remember those who protected him during that time, as well as those who guarded the pippalī trees. I also remember those who exerted themselves in serving his hearers, those who exerted themselves in the absorptions, and those who protected the people who abided by the Dharma, as well as those who guarded the pippalī trees.”

12.34 The nāga king Given by a Householder exclaimed, “Respected Blessed One, as long as there are hearers without assistance, I shall protect them! Until the time of Maitreya, I shall always protect that great stūpa Gomasālagandha from the troubles caused by water, fire, yakṣas, and kumbhāṇḍas!”

12.35 “Excellent, nāga lord, excellent!” replied the Blessed One. “Through such blessings, those friends and benefactors will make my Dharma way blaze for a long time!”

12.36 At that moment, the six hundred million bodhisattva great beings who had arrived and gathered from other buddha realms of the ten directions to listen to the great teaching of *The Quintessence of the Sun* said, “Respected Blessed

One, [F.238.b] we shall also remain within this four-continent world! We shall fill those sacred sites of wise sages with offerings ranging from flowers to flags and with gold of various degrees of refinement! We shall uphold this *Quintessence of the Sun*—the dhāraṇī mantra that purifies karmic action—and reveal it to others! We shall teach it extensively! We shall reflect on and abide by the dhāraṇī mantra that the Blessed One has taught! To perfect the path of awakening and the six perfections, we shall purify ours and others' karmic obscurations! Ten million māras have assembled here today, as have an innumerable and limitless number of gods, nāgas, yakṣas, asuras, garuḍas, kinnaras, and mahoragas. The Blessed One has placed the protection of all those great stūpas, those sacred sites of wise sages, in the hands of the nāgas and the yakṣas. However, since the minds of the māras, the gods, the kinnaras, and the asuras have changed, the Blessed One declared, 'I now entrust the protection of those sacred sites of wise sages to pure beings.' But perhaps the Blessed One is not aware that now or in the future other beings such as humans might harm, demolish, and destroy those great stūpas. That would not be good!"

12.37 The Blessed One replied, "Excellent, noble sons, excellent! But do not be afraid! Do not be scared! The perfect buddhas of the past have blessed all those great stūpas, those sacred sites of wise sages, [F.239.a] and they have entrusted their protection to the nāgas and yakṣas. Similarly, I now entrust the protection of all those great stūpas, those sacred sites of wise sages, to the nāgas and yakṣas. Why do I do so? I entrust the protection of those great stūpas, those sacred sites of wise sages, to the nāgas and yakṣas in order to purify the karmic obscurations of those who have obtained the eight unfree states, to create the causes of the happiness of emancipation, to generate the conditions and the manifestation of everything needed to sustain sentient beings, to cause the growth of medicinal plants and forests, to make a variety of foods ripen, and to pacify untimely winds and rain. Furthermore, whether in the past or in the future, all the great stūpas where the thus-gone ones are born are sacred places for the world with its gods. The same is true for those places where they exert themselves in concentration in the forest of ascetics, awaken to perfect buddhahood, and turn the wheel of Dharma. The same is true for those places where thus-gone ones' Dharma bodies or born emanations are located, where the thus-gone ones' hearers who abide by the Dharma reside, and where my Dharma way remains. I also entrust the protection of those great stūpas to the māras, gods, nāgas, yakṣas, and asuras. [F.239.b]

12.38 "Furthermore, I will now confer upon you the great teaching that generates faith in and repels⁷⁸ all bhūtas. It is known as *the great teaching that accomplishes absorption and repels hostile beings*. It has been taught and blessed

by all the thus-gone ones of the past, who rejoiced thereby. It has generated faith in and repelled hostile beings, and it has caused them to engage in virtue. Similarly, all the future thus-gone ones will teach it and bless it, and they will rejoice thereby. It will generate faith in and repel hostile beings, and it will cause them to engage in virtue. This great teaching is the outcome of the four bases of miraculous displays. It is the great lord of accomplishment that repels all hostile beings. It frees beings from great disciplined observances. It causes one to engage with great wisdom. It causes one to remember a great amount of learned knowledge. It frees beings from great methods. It definitely subjugates the great enemies. It generates faith in those who show great hostility. It heals severe diseases. It repels great terrors. It enables one to cross great wildernesses. It causes one to see the great truths. It causes one to reach great acceptance. It makes one enter the ocean of great wisdom. It causes one to fully awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood.

12.39 *tadyathā: āma avāsa āmavarivara saṁśrīya garbhaparipāsā mitramitra śvāyāmitra parivāsā mitrasamajñāya nikathasamajñāya triśyaṅghava drava rāja vīnaśāya samaśāya niranbhadrama vāvāgram ṛddhivīgraman samajñāna* [F.240.a] *avavarga narāyanavarga samāgram sarvatathāgata adhiṣṭhānamārga svāhā.*

12.40 “Good beings, this has been taught and blessed by all the buddhas. It accomplishes the absorptions that are the outcome of the four bases of miraculous displays. It repels all hostile beings and causes them to engage in virtue. It frees beings from great disciplined observances. [...] It causes one to fully awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood. Now and in the future, if māras, gods, nāgas, yakṣas, rākṣasas, asuras, garuḍas, kinnaras, kumbhāṇḍas, humans, or nonhumans attempt to harm, destroy, or demolish those great stūpas with water, fire, or any other hostile means, you should focus your attention on the thus-gone ones of the three times, and with a loving attitude toward all sentient beings you must recollect this great teaching, which accomplishes all absorptions and repels all hostile beings. If you do so, it will generate faith in their minds, and henceforth they will no longer attempt to destroy those places. Noble sons, in the world with its gods and all its beings, I have never seen anyone who did not turn away from negativity and abandon unwholesome actions after having heard this great teaching, which accomplishes all absorptions and repels all hostile beings—apart from those who hold on to past enmity.”

12.41 Oh! As this teaching was being expounded by the Blessed One, [F.240.b] the gods, nāgas, yakṣas, rākṣasas, pretas, kumbhāṇḍas, piśācas, humans, and nonhumans who had sincere faith in the Blessed One were overjoyed and became ecstatic, and they developed utmost faith in him.

- 12.42 At that same time, through the miraculous powers of the Blessed One, the evil Māra himself heard in his abode this teaching that accomplishes absorption. When he heard it, intense appreciation, faith, and respect for the Blessed One arose in him. With tears in his eyes, he said to his retinue, “Listen to my words! The great nāgas and gods on that sacred and splendorous mountain site, which is filled with worms, have asked the wise sage, the sublime Victor who is endowed with supreme acceptance, qualities, and expression, for forgiveness. I will also go there and ask that peerless spiritual practitioner for forgiveness. I will go for refuge in him. Come with me and take refuge in that forgiving victor who possesses such great and incomparable love. Come and listen to his Dharma, which cannot be illustrated! Sever the web of your afflictions and enter the city of purity and fearlessness!”
- 12.43 The evil Māra and the eight hundred million members of his retinue then prostrated to the feet of the Blessed One and said:
- 12.44 “Sublime human, great pacifier,
Please forgive us pernicious beings through your mighty tolerance!
We know your qualities;
Please forgive us for all the wrong actions we have committed!
- 12.45 “We pay homage to all the victors of the three times,
And we go for refuge in the Dharma and the Saṅgha.
Master, please accept this confession of our faults! [F.241.a]
We will never cause you trouble again!”
- 12.46 The Blessed One replied to the evil Māra:
- 12.47 “I am devoid of anger and all the other afflictions,
And I am always impartial toward all beings.
Māra, I rejoice in your attitude.
The Victor is tolerant; he always forgives!”
- 12.48 Filled with intense joy and faith, the evil Māra prostrated to the feet of the Blessed One and circumambulated him three times. He then sat down, gazing one-pointedly at the Blessed One.
- 12.49 The māra named Rough Radiating Light, who was present in the retinue, now prostrated, together with all the others from Māra’s realm, to the feet of the Blessed One and asked, “Respected Blessed One, concerning the eye, is the eye the cause of forms, or are forms the cause of the eye? [...] Is the mind element the cause of mental phenomena, or are mental phenomena the cause of the mind element?”

- 12.50 The Blessed One replied, “Noble son, the eye is not the cause of forms, nor are forms the cause of the eye. [...] The mind is not the cause of mental phenomena, nor are mental phenomena the cause of the mind. Yet, noble son, although the eye is empty of the eye, the eye consciousness nevertheless arises based on the eye. The cognition of forms arises through the condition of the eye, [...] and the mind consciousness arises through the condition of the mind. Through those conditions, the sense objects, up to mental phenomena, are cognized. When one observes the eye consciousness, it does not come from or go anywhere. As for the eye, it does not dwell anywhere outside, and it cannot be found anywhere in the three times. [F.241.b] The eye is beyond decrease, increase, convention, designation, collection, and foundation.
- 12.51 “To give an analogy, the sunbeams that enter the windows of a house when the sun rises in the morning appear to be resting on its walls. Yet the walls themselves are beyond any darkness, lightness, or concepts. The walls are not the light, and the light is not conditioned by the walls. Nevertheless, the light appears on the walls.⁷⁹ That light is not the sun, nor is the sun the light. When the sun sets the light disappears, yet it does not go anywhere—it is groundless. Still, the light is cognized through the condition of the sun, and it appears based on the appearance of form. Similarly, the cause of the six inner sense sources is not⁸⁰ the six inner sense sources. The cause of the inner sense sources is not the outer sense sources either, because they are meeting each other. Their meeting is beyond movement, collection, and foundation. Because they are meeting each other and because they are not objects, outer and inner sense sources are beyond consciousness, convention, movement, collection, and foundation. Nevertheless, consciousness brings about cognition, and since consciousness is conditioned by formation, consciousness is also caused by⁸¹ formation.
- 12.52 “There are three types of formations: physical, verbal, and mental formations. What are the physical formations? Inhalation and exhalation are the physical formations. Inhalation and exhalation assume divisions:⁸² [F.242.a] since they are unequaled and unmistakable suchness, they do not belong to any category whatsoever, they are beyond freshness and staleness, they have the characteristic of being nonabiding, they are equal to space, and they move within space. The winds are not space, nor is space the winds. They mingle with each other, but each is not the domain of the other. Both are empty, inexpressible, and free of characteristics. They are beyond decrease and increase. They remain hither and thither, and they are the exalted limit of reality. Such are the physical formations. Therefore, the

physical formations do not dwell within consciousness. They are beyond meeting, movement, and collection, and they are groundless. The same goes for consciousness. [...] And it is groundless.

12.53 “What are the verbal formations? They are concepts and analysis. What are concepts? They are that which causes inhalation and exhalation. They are created in accord with the mind.⁸³ Concepts generate thoughts. They generate thoughts in terms of the characteristic of disintegration, they generate thoughts about purity, they generate thoughts that are based on the winds, and they cause them to cease.⁸⁴ The winds of concepts develop⁸⁵ momentarily. The winds do not become thoughts—neither of these two is the domain of the other. Both are free of characteristics, [...] inexpressible, and nonexistent like space. What is analysis? [F.242.b] Analysis is what causes the movement of the winds of inhalation and exhalation throughout the entire body with either aspect of cold or warmth. Analysis does not cognize contact and touch. Analysis and the winds are not each other’s domains. Both are mutually free of characteristics [...] and inexpressible.

12.54 “What are the mental formations? The mental formations are perception and intention. What is perception? It is the mind that understands phenomena to be a certain way. [...] At the time of inhalation, there is no exhalation. In this way perception becomes accustomed to formations. After they arise, the formations are exhausted. By perceiving them accordingly, the perception of formations is cultivated. This is what is meant by ‘perception.’ Perception is based on the winds, [...] and both are inexpressible. What is intention? Through intentions, [...] perception becomes accustomed to formations, one enters into faultless reality, and one transcends the level of ordinary beings. Becoming accustomed to birth and disintegration clears away formations from the mind so that the winds are no longer stirred. This is what is meant by ‘intention.’ Since the three types of feelings are abandoned, one comes to possess the support of wisdom—the unadulterated eye [...] and the unadulterated mind—and one becomes a noble one.

12.55 “Noble son, in that way, the cause of the forms that are observed is not the eye, the cause of the eye is not forms, [...] the cause of mental phenomena is not the mind, and the cause of the mind is not mental phenomena. They are not each other’s domains. They are beyond verbal designation, movement, abiding, and collection. [F.243.a] They are inexpressible, they remain hither and thither, and they are grounded in the limit of reality.”

12.56 Oh! As this teaching was given by the Blessed One, the māra Rough Radiating Light and twenty thousand members of the retinue of māras who had performed their duties under past victors achieved the concordant acceptance. At that time, countless gods and humans who had performed

their duties under past victors also settled within the first concentration and in the other concentrations up to the fourth. Some settled within the first fruition, others in the fruitions up to the third one. Some planted the seeds of the hearers' vehicle, some planted the seeds of the vehicle of conditions, and some gave rise to the mind set on unsurpassed and perfect awakening. Within that retinue of nāgas, six quintillion nāgas gave rise to the mind set on unsurpassed and perfect awakening that they had not previously generated. Throughout the entire buddha realm of Sahā, the great earth shook six times.

12.57 To worship the Blessed One, the bodhisattva great beings who had come to that place from the ten directions showered various rains of precious gems, fine fabrics, and flowers through the power of their different bodhisattva absorptions. They exclaimed, "This Assembly, which has never been heard before, this teaching on absorption, is truly amazing and marvelous! This is the second turning of the Dharma wheel of Śākyamuni! Respected Blessed One, we shall also remember this dhāraṇī mantra of this very extensive discourse—the great instruction of *The Quintessence of the Sun*—and teach it to sentient beings in our respective buddha realms!" [F.243.b]

12.58 The māras, gods, nāgas, yakṣas, rākṣasas, asuras, garuḍas, kinnaras, mahoragas, kumbhāṇḍas, pretas, and piśācas who had assembled there were also truly amazed. They played different types of instruments and offered the Blessed One all kinds of precious gems, fine fabrics, Dharma robes, ornaments, flowers, garlands, perfumes, and ointments.

12.59 The nāga king Sāgara then said to the Blessed One, "Respected Blessed One, please look after us with affection! Please come to receive alms in our abode, the great ocean! There, my retinue and I will listen to this great instruction of *The Quintessence of the Sun* in its entirety—including its beginning, middle, and end—from the Blessed One."

12.60 The Blessed One replied, "Nāga lord, the Thus-Gone One will not enter the great ocean at this time."

12.61 Sāgara said, "Respected Blessed One, how much merit does a noble son or daughter who listens one-pointedly to this great instruction of *The Quintessence of the Sun* generate?"

12.62 The Blessed One replied, "Nāga lord, imagine that someone filled this entire four-continent world with all kinds of precious gems and offered it to the thus-gone ones. If another being listens with one-pointed attention to the complete great instruction of *The Quintessence of the Sun* in its entirety, the amount of merit generated by the former being would not match even a hundredth, a thousandth, or a trillionth of the merit generated by the latter

person. In fact, no number, fraction, analogy, [F.244.a] or illustration would come close. Nāga lord, such is the scale of the merit generated merely by hearing this *Quintessence of the Sun*!”

12.63 Sāgara then said, “Respected Blessed One, since you will not come to our great ocean at this time, if I write down this great instruction of *The Quintessence of the Sun*, now that I have heard it, and carry it with me, how many virtuous qualities will develop in the great ocean?”

12.64 The Blessed One replied, “Nāga lord, in all the places where this great instruction of *The Quintessence of the Sun* is written down in its entirety and carried, ten benefits will manifest. What are those ten? (1) The homes and lands in those places will be filled with plenty of wealth, grains, possessions, and valuables and with all kinds of precious gems. (2) Furthermore, the six hundred million bodhisattva great beings who have gathered to venerate those great stūpas will come to meet, revere, worship, and serve all the homes and lands where this great instruction of *The Quintessence of the Sun* is written down and worshiped. There, they will completely pacify all disputes, fights, epidemics, diseases, famines, and the two kinds of armies, as well as untimely winds, rains, and illnesses.”

12.65 At that moment, all six hundred million bodhisattva great beings exclaimed, “Respected Blessed One, we shall do so! In all the homes and lands where this great instruction of *The Quintessence of the Sun* is written down and worshiped, we shall completely pacify all disputes, fights, epidemics, diseases, famines, and the two kinds of armies, [F.244.b] as well as untimely winds and rains!”

12.66 The Blessed One then said, “Furthermore, (3) Śakra, Brahmā, the Four Great Kings, the twenty-eight yakṣa leaders and their retinues, Śrī Mahādevī, the great goddess Sarasvatī, the earth goddess Sthāvarā, and the medicine goddess Accomplished One and her retinue will continuously, day and night, look after and protect the homes and lands where this great instruction of *The Quintessence of the Sun* is written down.”

12.67 At that moment, Śakra, Brahmā, [...] the medicine goddess Accomplished One, and their retinues exclaimed, “Respected Blessed One, we shall do so! [...]”

12.68 “Furthermore,” said the Blessed One, (4) “beings who have revered many buddhas in the past, who are powerful and renowned for their great strength, and who are endowed with perfect generosity, discipline, and restraint will take birth in all those homes and lands [...]. (5) In those homes, sentient beings who are attached to the pleasures of the five senses will constantly exert themselves in the perfection of generosity. (6) They will delight in those who are suitable recipients of generosity. (7) Those places will be continuously pervaded by a rain of rich Dharma water. (8) The

sentient beings living in those places will always exert themselves in following the paths of the ten virtuous actions. [F.245.a] (9) The sentient beings living in those places will always be loving, compassionate, and free of desires. Finally, (10) sentient beings living in all those homes and lands will leave the three lower realms behind and be born within the higher realms. Nāga lord, those ten benefits will manifest in the homes and lands where this great instruction of *The Quintessence of the Sun* is written down and repeatedly read in order to worship me, so there is no need to mention the benefit brought about by the persons who recite it, elucidate those Dharma teachings, and abide by the Dharma! Even if I were to describe such a mass of merit for a hundred eons, this would not be an easy task! Nāga lord, such is the depth of this great instruction of *The Quintessence of the Sun*. Such is the great quality and the great benefit of this great instruction of *The Quintessence of the Sun*!"

12.69 When the Blessed One had said this, the bodhisattva great beings who had come from all the buddha realms of the ten directions and all the māras, gods, nāgas, yakṣas, rākṣasas, asuras, garuḍas, gandharvas, kinnaras, mahoragas, kumbhāṇḍas, pretas, piśācas, pūtanās, humans, and nonhumans rejoiced and praised the words of the Blessed One with great exhilaration, joy, and delight.

12.70 *This concludes the eleven chapters included in "The Quintessence of the Sun," the noble Great Vehicle discourse of The Great Assembly.*

12.71 *This concludes the noble very extensive sūtra "The Quintessence of the Sun."*
[F.245.b]

c.

Colophon

c.1 This was translated by the Indian preceptors Sarvajñadeva, Vidyākaraprabha, and Dharmākara and the translator Bandé Zangkyong. It was then edited and finalized by the translator-editor Bandé Kawa Paltsek.

n.

NOTES

- n.1 Hoernle 1916, pp. 121–25.
- n.2 Roberts, Peter Alan. trans., *The White Lotus of Compassion* (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh112.html>), Toh 112 (84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha, 2018).
- n.3 Roberts, Peter Alan. trans., *The King of Samādhis Sūtra* (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh127.html>), Toh 127 (84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha, 2018).
- n.4 See Mahamegha Translation Team, trans. *The Great Cloud (1)* (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh232.html>), Toh 232.
- n.5 Denkarma, folio 297.b; note that the title in the Denkarma is ‘phags pa ‘dus pa chen po’i sde nyi ma’i snying po The Denkarma is dated to c. 812 CE. In this catalog, *The Quintessence of the Sun* is included among the “Miscellaneous Mahāyāna Sūtras” (*theg pa chen po’i mdo sde sna tshogs*) with a length of thirteen sections (*bam po*). See also Herrmann-Pfandt 2008, p. 46, no. 81.
- n.6 Ed. Bhikkhu Pāsādika 1989, pp. 79–82.
- n.7 Cutler 2002, pp. 231–32 and 253.
- n.8 Lévi 1905, pp. 256–58; Lévi 1904, pp. 546–47 and 565.
- n.9 Kotyk 2017, pp. 58–64; Mak 2015, pp. 64–66.
- n.10 Silk 2008, p. 34.
- n.11 Braarvig 1993, pp. xxv–xli. For a translation of this sūtra, see Jens Braarvig and David Welsh, trans., *The Teaching of Akṣayamati* (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh175.html>), Toh 175 (84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha, 2020).

- n.12 Braarvig 1993, p. xxv.
- n.13 Notably, the Mahāsannipāta collection is mentioned in the sūtras themselves, and the introductions of those texts are almost identical (Braarvig 1993, pp. xxxix–xl).
- n.14 Braarvig 1993, pp. xxxiii–xxxvii.
- n.15 Several scholars support this hypothesis. For example, Braarvig (1993, p. xxxvi) mentions that some of the passages of *The Quintessence of the Sun* suggest a Central Asian origin, and Dan Martin (2001, p. 38) speaks of texts translated into Chinese by Narendrayaśas that belong to the Mahāsannipāta section of the Kangyur but may never have existed in an Indian language. See also Demiéville (1973, p. 196) and Nakamura (1980, p. 216) for Japanese literary references on the subject.
- n.16 Lévi 1904, p. 564; Lévi 1905, p. 286.
- n.17 Dharmachakra Translation Committee, trans., *The Prophecy on Mount Gośrṅga* (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh357.html>), Toh 237 (84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha), 2021. See [i.4](https://read.84000.co/translation/toh357.html#UT22084-076-011-10) (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh357.html#UT22084-076-011-10>)–[i.10](https://read.84000.co/translation/toh357.html#UT22084-076-011-10) (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh357.html#UT22084-076-011-27>) for more information on Khotan and its relationship to Buddhist literature. Note that Chomden Rikpai Raltri (*bcom ldan rigs pa'i ral gri*) did not include *The Quintessence of the Sun* in his list of twenty canonical works believed to have been translated from Khotanese (see Toh 357, [i.8](https://read.84000.co/translation/toh357.html#UT22084-076-011-23) (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh357.html#UT22084-076-011-23>) and [n.11](https://read.84000.co/translation/toh357.html#UT22084-076-011-24) (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh357.html#UT22084-076-011-24>)).
- n.18 *The Candragarbhapariṣṭhā* (*The Questions of Candragarbha*), and to a lesser degree *The Quintessence of the Sun*, are part of a wider group of texts that focus on the spread, duration, and decline of the Buddha's teachings, and have sometimes been termed “prophecies of decline” or “prophetic histories.” For an account of the Buddhist “prophetic history” literature, see Nattier 1991.
- n.19 The day-to-night ratio of 18:12 on the summer solstice indicated in the text is only possible at a latitude of 35 degrees north, slightly north of modern-day Kashmir or Kabul (Mak 2015, pp. 65–66).
- n.20 Hoernle 1916, pp. 121–25.
- n.21 *rkyen gyi byang chub*. This is likely a reference to the awakening of a solitary buddha; see the glossary entry for “vehicle of conditions.”

- n.22 Translated based on Stok: *bdag gis*. Degé: *dag gis*.
- n.23 The text only lists eighteen undesirable consequences.
- n.24 Tentative translation based on Kangxi, Yongle, Lithang, Choné, and Narthang: *'phral g.yor can*. Degé: *'phral gyar can*.
- n.25 Translated based on Kangxi, Yongle, Lithang, Choné, and Narthang: *mngon sum 'gyur du rnam par 'phel bar byed pa*. Degé: *mdangs sum 'gyur du rnam par 'phel bar byed pa*.
- n.26 The ellipses [...] throughout this translation indicate omissions of passages that appeared previously in the text (Tibetan: ... *nas* ... *bar*).
- n.27 This translation is tentative. Degé: *nam mkha' la rkyen gsum yod de/ gsum gyis khyab pas rnam par mdzes so/ gangs ni gdung bar mi byed do/ chu klung dag la skam par mi 'gyur ro/ rkyen gsum pa dag la mkhas pa dang / bzod pa dang / bsdams pas lus khyab pa ni lung gis ma rig pa'i chu bos kyang dbang po drug gdung bar mi byed do*. Stok: *nam mkha' la rkyen gsum yod de/ gsum gyis khyad par rnam par mdzes so/ gangs ni gdung bar mi byed do/ chu klung dag la skam par mi 'gyur ro/ rkyen gsum po mkhas pa dang / bzod pa dang / bsdams pas lus khyad pa ni lung gis ma rig pa'i chu bos kyang dbang po drug gdung bar mi byed do*.
- n.28 This translation is tentative. Tibetan: *byi 'chor pa srung ba*.
- n.29 The negative acts related to body, speech, and mind.
- n.30 Translated based on Stok, Kangxi, Yongle, and Lhasa: *brtan pa*. Degé: *brten pa*.
- n.31 Translation based on Stok, Narthang, and Lhasa: *brabs*. Kangxi and Choné: *brims*. Degé: *brams*. This applies to the instances below as well.
- n.32 We have been unable to identify this substance. Tibetan: *sman sing ha k+Shir*.
- n.33 Translated based on Stok, Yongle, and Kangxi: *sman bkus te bor ba*. Degé: *sman bkus te bor ba*.
- n.34 We are unsure what this refers to—perhaps a plant? Tibetan: *ru sbal gyi snying*.
- n.35 Tibetan: *lcam pa*.
- n.36 In the previous section, this buddha realm was called Manifestation of All Perfumes.
- n.37 This translation is tentative. Tibetan: *'gro ba'i chos kyi dus 'di dka' ba ste*.

- n.38 Translated based on Stok: *khyod kyi chos kyi gter*. Degé: *khyod kyi chos kyi gter*.
- n.39 Above this buddha realm was called Absence of Torment.
- n.40 In the previous section this dhāraṇī mantra was called *lotus of sunlight*.
- n.41 Translated based on Stok, Yongle, Kangxi, Narthang, and Lhasa: *yang srid*. Degé: *yang sred*.
- n.42 Translated based on Stok: *mngon shes drug ldan sgom chen lags*. Degé: *mgon shes drug ldan sgom byed la*.
- n.43 Translated based on Kangxi, Yongle, and Choné: *'dod chags spang ba'i phyir*. Degé: *'dod chags spangs pa'i phyir* ("because he has abandoned attachment").
- n.44 Translated based on Lithang, Narthang, Choné, and Lhasa: *sangs rgyas kyi yon tan*. Degé: *sangs rgyas kyi zhing yon tan* ("the qualities of the buddha realms").
- n.45 This translation is tentative. Tibetan: *da ltar 'jig rten du ston pa nga byung ngo zhes bya ba nas sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das so zhe bya ba'i bar*.
- n.46 Translated based on Stok: *'chag par byed*. Degé: *chags par byed*.
- n.47 Stok: *gang bdag gis nam mkha' la brtag par bya'o* ("I must investigate space").
- n.48 Translated based on Stok: *ma yin*. Degé: *yin* ("is").
- n.49 Translated based on Yongle, Lithang, Kangxi, Narthang, Choné, and Stok: *reg byar lta ba*. Degé: *reg par lta ba* ("the view of contact").
- n.50 Translated based on Yongle, Lithang, Kangxi, Narthang, Lhasa, and Stok: *skye ba*. Degé: *skyo ba* ("weariness").
- n.51 Stok: *srid pa gsum* ("the three realms of existence").
- n.52 Translated based on Stok: *rkyen*. Degé: *skyon* ("defects").
- n.53 This translation is tentative. Tibetan: *dus gsum pa'i yang sos*.
- n.54 Reading *dngos po med par* instead of *dngos por*.
- n.55 Based on the following section of the text, it is unclear what those fifteen dangers are.
- n.56 We are unsure what this refers to. Tibetan: *skud pa btags pa*.
- n.57 Translated based on Stok: *rab tu nyams pa*. Degé: *bar du nyams pa*.

- n.58 Yongle, Kangxi, and Choné: *ci yang dag pa'i mthar thug pa'i phyir mngon no* ("Yes, because they are the limit of reality").
- n.59 Stok: *'di ni tha mi dad pa nyid de/ tha mi dad pa nyid kyi mi 'dra ba'o.* ("They are indistinct—indistinct but different.") Degé reads *'di ni tha mi dad pa nyid de/ tha mi dad pa nyid kyi phyir mi 'dra ba'o.* ("They are indistinct and therefore different.") As we suspect that the Tibetan may be corrupt here, we have translated it as "They are indistinct and therefore not different."
- n.60 Translated based on Stok: *zhig.* Degé: *bzhi* ("four").
- n.61 The entire section that follows (folios 196.a.1–212.a.4) has not been translated here.
- n.62 The Stok Palace edition reads *ri dags* ("wild animals").
- n.63 Stok Palace MS reads *dang por ma byung ba la dmigs pa* ("... that focus on that which has not occurred first").
- n.64 The translation of this entire section is tentative. Tibetan: *da ltar shin tu kun tu rtop pa'i nyon mongs pa'i tshogs kyi sems can gyi kham la dmigs pa med pa/ kun nas ldang ba med pa/ rgyu ba med pa/ gzhi med pa/ mtshan nyid med pa/ mtshan ma med pa/ chags pa med pa/ rnam par gzhas pa med pa/ rdul med pa/ mun pa med pa/ snang ba med pa/ gzung ba med pa/ gsal byed med pa/ spyod pa med pa/ tha mi dad pa nyid ces bya ba nas phung po dang / kham dang / skye mched dang / 'byung ba chen po thams cad dang / mig gi rang bzhin tshor ba po med pa'i sred pa zhes bya ba'i bar nas/ yid kyi rang bzhin tshor ba po med pa'i sred pa'i bar la smon pa med pa dang/ mngon par 'du byed pa med pa dang / 'jug pa med pa'i chos kyi dbyings dang/ yang dag pa'i mtha' dang / 'gag pa med pa dang / de bzhin nyid 'dres pa med pa dang/ gang 'jug pa med pa'i chos kyi dbyings don dam pa stong pa nyid dang / phyir mi ldog pa'i chos thams cad mnyam pa nyid kyis sgrol ba.*
- n.65 This translation of these two lines is tentative. Tibetan: *sangs rgyas yul gcig gis ni khyod la bsngos/ der ni ci yang nus par ma gyur.*
- n.66 The translation of this verse is tentative. Tibetan: *gang gis sems can de dag sdig byed cing / bdag cag gi ni las kyi sgrib 'byang ba/ ched du lung bstan pa ni der nyan pa'i/ rig pa gcig kyang der ni ston pas gsungs.*
- n.67 This translation ("four highest abodes") is tentative. Tibetan: *bzhi pa rab kyi mtha' gnas.*
- n.68 Translated based on the Narthang, Lhasa, and Stok editions: *kun tu gnon pa.* Degé reads *kun tu gnod pa* ("to harm").

- n.69 Translated based on Yongle, Kangxi, Narthang, Lhasa, and Stok: *'jigs*. Degé: *'jig* (“destroyed”).
- n.70 Translated based on Stok: *sems zhan*. Degé: *sems can gzhan* (“other sentient beings”).
- n.71 Translated based on Stok: *bdag*. Degé: *dag* (plural particle).
- n.72 Translation based on Yongle, Narthang, Choné, Lhasa, and Stok: *btang*. Degé: *gtar* (“to bleed”).
- n.73 We have been unable to identify this item. Tibetan: *sman ka tsa*.
- n.74 Presumably this is the name of a plant. Tibetan: *rus sbal gyi snying*.
- n.75 This translation is tentative. Tibetan: *srin bu'i rigs dang / rnag khrag dang / mes gang ba'i kha'i sgo sbyang brims te smra ma nus so*. We have been unable to identify the meaning of *sbrang brims*. Stok: *spyad brims*. Yongle: *spyad ri brams*. Kangxi: *spyad ri brims*.
- n.76 This translation is tentative. Tibetan: *bskor ba dang / bsgyur ba*.
- n.77 Translated based on Stok: *nyi shu rtsa brgyad*. Degé: *nyi shu rtsa drug* (“twenty-six”).
- n.78 Translated based on Yongle, Kangxi, and Stok: *phyir ldog par byed pa*. Degé reads: *phyir mi ldog par byed pa* (“not reverting”).
- n.79 Stok: *'on kyang de la snang ba yang med do* (“Nevertheless, it is beyond light”).
- n.80 Translated based on Stok: *ma yin*. Degé: *yin* (“is”).
- n.81 Translated based on Stok: *las*. Degé: *lags* (“consciousness is also the cause of formation”).
- n.82 This translation is tentative. Tibetan: *yan lag rnam len pa ste*.
- n.83 Tentative translation based on Degé: *sems kyis rjes su mthun par byas pa dag yin no*. Stok: *sems kyis rjes su 'dun par bya ba dag yin no*.
- n.84 This translation is tentative. Tibetan: *de la rtog pa rnam kyis rtog par byed pa nas 'jig pa'i mtshan nyid rnam kyis rtog par byed/ yongs su dag pa la rtog par byed/ rlung la rten pa'i rtog pa de dag skye bar byed/ dgag pa'i bar du ste*.
- n.85 Translated based on Stok: *'phel ba*. Degé: *'chel ba*. Yongle and Kangxi: *mchel ba*. Lithang, Narthang, and Choné: *mchil ba*. Lhasa: *'tshal ba*.

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 Absence of Heat

ma dros pa

མ་རྩོལ་པ།

—

A buddha realm located in the eastern direction during the time of the Buddha Śākyamuni. Also called Absence of Torment.

g.2 absence of marks

mtshan ma med pa

མཚན་མ་མེད་པ།

animitta

The absence of the conceptual identification of perceptions, knowing that the true nature has no attributes, such as color or shape. One of the three gateways of liberation.

g.3 Absence of Torment

yongs su gdung ba med pa

ཡོངས་སྤྱ་གདུང་བ་མེད་པ།

—

A buddha realm located in the eastern direction during the time of the Buddha Śākyamuni. Also called Absence of Heat.

g.4 absence of wishes

smon pa med pa

སྤོན་པ་མེད་པ།

apraṇihita

The absence of any conceptual goal that one is focused upon achieving, knowing that all composite phenomena create suffering. One of the three gateways of liberation.

g.5 absorption

ting nge 'dzin

ཉིང་རིམ་ཇོན།

samādhi

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

In a general sense, *samādhi* can describe a number of different meditative states. In the Mahāyāna literature, in particular in the Prajñāpāramitā sūtras, we find extensive lists of different samādhis, numbering over one hundred.

In a more restricted sense, and when understood as a mental state, *samādhi* is defined as the one-pointedness of the mind (*cittaikāgratā*), the ability to remain on the same object over long periods of time. The *Drajoṛ Bamponyipa* (*sgra sbyor bam po gnyis pa*) commentary on the *Mahāvīryūtpatti* explains the

term *samādhi* as referring to the instrument through which mind and mental states “get collected,” i.e., it is by the force of *samādhi* that the continuum of mind and mental states becomes collected on a single point of reference without getting distracted.

g.6 Abused Tree

gshe ba'i shing

གཤེ་བའི་ཤིང་།

—

A nāga king.

g.7 Accomplished One

grub pa

གྲུབ་པ།

—

A medicine goddess.

g.8 acts with immediate retribution

mtshams med pa'i las

མཚམས་མེད་པའི་ལས།

ānantaryakarman

The five extremely negative actions that, once those who have committed them die, result in immediate rebirth in the hells without the experience of the intermediate state. They are killing an arhat, killing one's mother, killing one's father, creating a schism in the Saṅgha, and maliciously drawing blood from a tathāgata's body.

g.9 aggregate

phung po

ཕུང་པོ།

skandha

The five aggregates of form, sensation, 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.10 Airāvāṇa

sa srung gi bu

ས་སྤྱང་གི་བུ།

airāvaṇa

A nāga king.

g.11 Ājñātakauṇḍinya

kun shes kau Di n+ya

ཀུན་ཤེས་ཀྱི་རྩུ།

ājñātakauṇḍinya

Another name for Kauṇḍinya. As he was the first to understand the Buddha Śākyamuni's teaching on the four truths of the noble ones, he received the name Ājñātakauṇḍinya (Kauṇḍinya Who Understood).

g.12 Ākāśagarbha

nam mkha'i snying po

ནམ་མཁའི་སྤྱིང་པོ།

ākāśagarbha

A bodhisattva residing in a buddha realm in the northern direction during the time of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.13 Anavatapta

ma dros pa

མ་དྲོས་པ།

anavatapta

A nāga king.

g.14 Apalāladatta

chu sog ma med kyis byin

ཆུ་སོག་མ་མེད་ཀྱིས་བྱིན།

apalāladatta

A nāga king.

g.15 apasmāra

brjed byed

བརྟེན་བྱེད།

apasmāra

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A class of nonhuman beings believed to cause epilepsy, fits, and loss of memory. As their name suggests—the Skt. *apasmāra* literally means “without memory” and the Tib. *brjed byed* means “causing forgetfulness”—they are defined by the condition they cause in affected humans, and the term can refer to any nonhuman being that causes such conditions, whether a bhūta, a piśāca, or other.

g.16 applications of mindfulness

dran pa nye bar gzhag pa

སྒྲུབ་པ་ལྷན་པར་གཞག་པ།

smṛtyupasthāna

A fundamental practice of Buddhist meditation: close application of mindfulness to the body, close application of mindfulness to feelings, close application of mindfulness to mind, and close application of mindfulness to phenomena.

g.17 Arjuna

srid sgrub bcas

འུ་འུ་སྐུ་བཅས།

arjuna

A monk in the past, son of the king Free of Flowers during the time of the Buddha Śikhin.

g.18 asura

lha ma yin

ལྷ་མ་ཡིན།

—

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.19 attendant

zhal ta pa

ཞལ་ཏེ།

vaiyāptyakara

A monk in charge of providing for monastery residents and visitors. One of several official administrative or managerial positions at a monastery.

g.20 Attractive

yid 'phrog

ཡིད་འཕྲོག

—

A nāga king.

g.21 Bad Plough

gshol ngan

གཤོལ་ངན།

—

A nāga king.

g.22 Banner of Degeneration

snyigs ma'i rgyal mtshan

སྒྱིགས་མའི་རྒྱལ་མཚན།

—

Name of a buddha realm located in the southern direction during the time of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.23 Bhārgava

ngan spong gi bu

ངན་སྦྲོང་གི་བུ།

bhārgava

Name of a sage.

g.24 bhūta

'byung po

འབྱུང་པོ།

bhūta

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

This term in its broadest sense can refer to any being, whether human, animal, or nonhuman. However, it is often used to refer to a specific class of nonhuman beings, especially when bhūtas are mentioned alongside rākṣasas, piśācas, or pretas. In common with these other kinds of nonhumans, bhūtas are usually depicted with unattractive and misshapen bodies. Like several other classes of nonhuman beings, bhūtas take spontaneous birth. As their leader is traditionally regarded to be Rudra-Śiva (also known by the name Bhūta), with whom they haunt dangerous and wild places, bhūtas are especially prominent in Śaivism, where large sections of certain tantras concentrate on them.

g.25 Bimbisāra

gzugs can snying po

འཇུག་མ་ཅན་སྡིང་པོ།

bimbisāra

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The king of Magadha and a great patron of the Buddha. His birth coincided with the Buddha's, and his father, King Mahāpadma, named him "Essence of Gold" after mistakenly attributing the brilliant light that marked the Buddha's birth to the birth of his son by Queen Bimbī ("Goldie"). Accounts of Bimbisāra's youth and life can be found in *The Chapter on Going Forth* (Toh 1-1, *Pravrajyāvastu*).

King Śreṇya Bimbisāra first met with the Buddha early on, when the latter was the wandering mendicant known as Gautama. Impressed by his conduct, Bimbisāra offered to take Gautama into his court, but Gautama refused, and Bimbisāra wished him success in his quest for awakening and asked him to visit his palace after he had achieved his goal. One account of this episode can be found in the sixteenth chapter of *The Play in Full* (Toh 95, *Lalitavistara*). There are other accounts where the two meet earlier on in childhood; several episodes can be found, for example, in *The Hundred Deeds* (Toh 340, *Karmaśataka*). Later, after the Buddha's awakening, Bimbisāra became one of his most famous patrons and donated to the saṅgha the Bamboo Grove, Veṇuvana, at the outskirts of the capital of Magadha, Rājagṛha, where he built residences for the monks. Bimbisāra was imprisoned and killed by his own son, the prince Ajātaśatru, who, influenced by Devadatta, sought to usurp his father's throne.

g.26 Black Line Hell

thig nag

ཐིག་ནག་

kālasūtra

One of the eight hot hells.

g.27 Blue Color

rtsi sngon po

ཙེ་སྟོན་པོ།

—

A nāga.

g.28 Blue Topknot

gtsug phud sngon po

གཙུག་ཕུད་སྟོན་པོ།

—

A nāga king.

g.29 Body-Piercing Needle

lus 'bigs pa'i khab

ལུས་འབྲིགས་པའི་ཁབ།

—

A nāga king.

g.30 Born from an Ornament

rgyan skyes

རྒྱན་སྟེས།

—

A nāga king.

g.31 Bound in Movement

rgyu bar btags pa

རྒྱུ་བར་བཏགས་པ།

—

A demon leader.

g.32 Brahmā

tshangs pa

ཚེངས་པ།

brahmā

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A high-ranking deity presiding over a divine world; he is also considered to be the lord of the Sahā world (our universe). Though not considered a creator god in Buddhism, Brahmā occupies an important place as one of two gods (the other being Indra/Śakra) said to have first exhorted the Buddha Śākyamuni to teach the Dharma. The particular heavens found in the form realm over which Brahmā rules are often some of the most sought-after realms of higher rebirth in Buddhist literature. Since there are many universes or world systems, there are also multiple Brahmās presiding over them. His most frequent epithets are “Lord of the Sahā World” (*sahāṃpati*) and Great Brahmā (*mahābrahman*).

g.33 brāhmaṇa

bram ze

བླ་མ་ཟླ།

brāhmaṇa

The highest of the four classes in the Indian caste system, it is most closely associated with religious vocations.

g.34 Breast of the Earth

sa'i nu ma

སའི་རྩ་མ།

—

A location in Khaṣa.

g.35 Bright Colors

bkra ba

བརྒྱ་བ།

—

A holy site blessed by the presence of sages.

g.36 Bright Eyes

mig gsal

མིག་གསལ།

—

A nāga king.

g.37 buddha realm

sangs rgyas kyi zhing

སངས་རྒྱལ་གྱི་ཞིང་།

buddhakṣetra

Roughly a synonym for “universe,” although Buddhist cosmology contains many universes of different types and dimensions. “Buddha realm” indicates, in regard to any type of universe, that it is the field of influence of a particular buddha.

g.38 Campaka Color

tsam pa ka'i mdog

ཅམ་པ་ཀའི་མདོག་

—

A buddha residing in the eastern direction at the time of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.39 Cave of the Elders

gnas brtan gyi phug

གནས་བརྟན་གྱི་ཕུག་

—

A holy site blessed by the presence of sages.

g.40 Celestial Tree

nam mkha'i shing

ནམ་མཁའི་ཤིང་།

—

Name of a mercenary demon.

g.41 China

rgya yul

རྒྱ་ཡུལ་།

—

g.42 circumstantial victor

rkyen gyi rgyal ba

རྟེན་གྱི་རྒྱལ་བ།

—

A being who attains victory (i.e., awakening) through specific circumstances. A synonym for a solitary buddha.

g.43 Cloud Complexion

sprin gyi mdog

སྤྲིན་གྱི་མདོག་

—

A past buddha.

g.44 Collection of Sounds

sgra bsags

སྒྲ་བསགས།

—

A nāga king.

g.45 Complete Support

kun rten

ཀུན་རྟེན།

—

A holy site blessed by the presence of sages.

g.46 Completely Stable

shin tu brtan pa

ཤིན་ཏུ་བརྟན་པ།

—

A holy site blessed by the presence of sages.

g.47 concentration

bsam gtan

བསམ་གཏན།

dhyāna

The fifth of the six perfections. Generally one of the synonyms for meditation, referring to a state of mental stability. The specific four concentrations are four successively subtler states of meditation that are said to lead to rebirth into the corresponding four levels of the form realm.

g.48 Dangler

'phyang ba

འཕྱང་བ།

—

A nāga king.

g.49 Dharmākara

d+harmA ka ra

ཐཱ་མ་ར་ཀ་ར་

dharmākara

Butön includes the Kashmiri abbot Dharmākara in his list of ninety-three paṇḍitas invited to Tibet to assist in the translation of the Buddhist scriptures. Tāranātha dates Dharmākara to the rule of *Vanapāla, son of Dharmapāla. With Paltsek, he translated two of Kalyāṇamitra's works on Vinaya, the *Vinayaprasnakārikā* ('*dul ba dri ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa*, Toh 4134) and the *Vinayaprasnaṭīkā* ('*dul ba dri ba rgya cher 'grel pa*, Toh 4135).

g.50 Dīpaṅkara

mar me mdzad

མར་མེ་མཛད།

dīpaṅkara

The buddha who preceded Śākyamuni and gave him the prophecy of his buddhahood.

g.51 Dust Mountain

rdul gyi ri

རུལ་གྱི་རི།

—

A mountain in Godānīya.

g.52 eight aspects of liberation

rnam par thar pa brgyad

རྣམ་པར་ཐར་པ་བརྒྱད།

aṣṭavimokṣa

A series of progressively more subtle states of meditative realization or attainment. There are several presentations of these found in the canonical literature. One of the most common is as follows: (1) One observes form while the mind dwells at the level of the form realm. (2) One observes form externally while discerning formlessness internally. (3) One dwells in the direct experience of the body's pleasant aspect. (4) One dwells in the realization of the sphere of infinite space by transcending all conceptions of matter, resistance, and diversity. (5) Transcending the sphere of infinite

space, one dwells in the realization of the sphere of infinite consciousness. (6) Transcending the sphere of infinite consciousness, one dwells in the realization of the sphere of nothing whatsoever. (7) Transcending the sphere of nothing whatsoever, one dwells in the realization of the sphere of neither perception nor nonperception. (8) Transcending the sphere of neither perception and nonperception, one dwells in the realization of the cessation of conception and feeling.

g.53 eight unfree states

mi khom pa brgyad

མི་ཁོམ་པ་བརྒྱད།

aṣṭākṣaṇa

Circumstances that do not provide the freedom to practice the Buddhist path: being in the realms of (1) the hells, (2) pretas, (3) animals, and (4) long-lived gods; or in the human realm among (5) barbarians or (6) extremists, (7) in places where the Buddhist teachings do not exist, and (8) without adequate faculties to understand the teachings where they do exist.

g.54 eighteen fields of knowledge

rig pa'i gnas bco brgyad

རིག་པའི་གནས་བཅོ་བརྒྱད།

aṣṭādaśavidyāsthāna

A traditional list that includes the great philosophical systems of India (Sāṅkhya, Yoga, etc.) as well as ordinary sciences and arts such as arithmetic, medicine, astrology, music, and archery.

g.55 eighteen unique qualities

ma 'dres pa bcwa brgyad

མ་འངྒེས་པ་བརྒྱ་བརྒྱད།

aṣṭādaśāveṇika

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Eighteen special features of a buddha's behavior, realization, activity, and wisdom that are not shared by other beings. They are generally listed as: (1) he never makes a mistake, (2) he is never boisterous, (3) he never forgets, (4) his concentration never falters, (5) he has no notion of distinctness, (6) his equanimity is not due to lack of consideration, (7) his motivation never falters, (8) his endeavor never fails, (9) his mindfulness never falters, (10) he never abandons his concentration, (11) his insight (*prajñā*) never decreases, (12) his liberation never fails, (13) all his physical actions are preceded and

followed by wisdom (*jñāna*), (14) all his verbal actions are preceded and followed by wisdom, (15) all his mental actions are preceded and followed by wisdom, (16) his wisdom and vision perceive the past without attachment or hindrance, (17) his wisdom and vision perceive the future without attachment or hindrance, and (18) his wisdom and vision perceive the present without attachment or hindrance.

g.56 eightfold path of the noble ones

'phags pa'i lam yan lag brgyad pa

འཕགས་པའི་ལམ་ཡན་ལག་བརྒྱད་པ།

āryāṣṭāṅgamārga

Right view, intention, speech, actions, livelihood, effort, mindfulness, and concentration.

g.57 Elapatra

e la'i 'dab ma

ཨ་ལའི་འདབ་མ།

elapatra

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A nāga king often present in the retinue of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

According to the Vinaya, in the time of the Buddha Kāśyapa he had been a monk (*bhikṣu*) who angrily cut down a thorny bush at the entrance of his cave because it always snagged his robes. Cutting down bushes or even grass is contrary to the monastic rules and he did not confess his action. Therefore, he was reborn as a nāga with a tree growing out of his head, which caused him great pain whenever the wind blew. This tale is found represented in ancient sculpture and is often quoted to demonstrate how small misdeeds can lead to great consequences. See, e.g., Patrul Rinpoche, *The Words of My Perfect Teacher*.

g.58 Elavarṇa

e la'i gdong

ཨ་ལའི་གདོང་།

elavarṇa

A nāga king. The Tibetan *e la'i gdong* seems to reflect *elamukha* rather than the attested *elavarṇa*.

g.59 element

khams

ཁམས།

dhātu

One way of describing experience and the world in terms of eighteen elements (eye and form, ear and sound, nose and smell, tongue and taste, body and physical objects, and mind and mental phenomena, to which the six consciousnesses are added). Also refers here to the “four great elements.”

g.60 Elephant Extinction

glang po zad

གླང་པོ་ཟད།

—

A nāga king.

g.61 Emergence of Sages

drang strong 'byung ba

དར་སྟོང་འབྱུང་བ།

—

A holy site blessed by the presence of sages.

g.62 emptiness

stong pa nyid

སྟོང་པ་ནིད།

śūnyatā

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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

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

g.63 Endowed with Garlands of Light

ba lang gi 'od kyi phreng ba can

བ་ལང་གི་འོད་ཀྱི་ཐེང་བ་ཅན།

—

A nāga king. (Note that this translation is partly tentative, as the Tibetan *ba lang*, which ordinarily means “cow,” “bull,” or “elephant,” has not been rendered into English, as its meaning here is unclear.)

g.64 Endowed with Jewel Garlands

rin po che'i phreng ba can

རིན་པོ་ཆེའི་ཐེང་བ་ཅན།

—

A nāga king.

g.65 equipoise

mnyam par bzhaḡ pa · mnyam par gzhaḡ pa

མཉམ་པར་བཞག་པ། · མཉམ་པར་གཞག་པ།

samāhita · samāpatti

A state of mental equipoise derived from deep concentration.

g.66 Essence Banner

snying po'i rgyal mtshan

སྙིང་པོའི་རྒྱལ་མཚན།

—

Name of a buddha realm located in the western direction during the time of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.67 Essence of Blooming Flowers

me tog rab tu rgyas pa'i snying po

མེ་ཏོག་རབ་ཏུ་རྒྱས་པའི་སྙིང་པོ།

—

A holy site blessed by the presence of sages.

g.68 Essence of Illumination

'od zer byed pa'i snying po

འོད་ཟེར་བྱེད་པའི་སྙིང་པོ།

—

A holy site blessed by the presence of sages.

g.69 Excellent Eyes

mig bzangs

མིག་བཟངས།

—

Name of a king, a previous incarnation of the Buddha.

g.70 Famous

ming can

མིང་ཅན།

—

A yakṣa leader.

g.71 Feeble Fruit

bras bu nyam chung

བས་བུ་ཉམ་ཚུང་།

—

A nāga.

g.72 Female Donkey

bong mo

བོང་མོ།

—

A rākṣasī.

g.73 Fetching Water

chu len

ཚུ་ལེན།

—

A land in the northern region of the Indian subcontinent.

g.74 Filled with Joy

dga' khyab ma

དགའ་ཁྱབ་མ།

—

It is unclear who this might be.

g.75 five degenerations

snyigs ma lnga

ཕྱི་གཞི་མ་ལྔ།

pañcakaṣāya

Five aspects of life that indicate the degenerate nature of a given age. They are the impurities of views, of afflictions, of sentient beings, of lifespan, and of time.

g.76 five higher perceptions

mngon par shes pa lnga

མངོན་པར་ཤེས་པ་ལྔ།

pañcābhijñā

Divine sight, divine hearing, the ability to know past and future lives, the ability to know the minds of others, and the ability to produce miracles.

g.77 formation

'du byed

འདུ་བྱེད།

saṃskāra

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

g.78 formless attainments

gzugs med pa'i snyoms par 'jug pa

གཟུགས་མེད་པའི་སྟོན་པར་འཇུག་པ།

ārūpyasamāpatti

These comprise (1) the attainment of the sphere of infinite space, (2) the attainment of the sphere of infinite consciousness, (3) the attainment of the sphere of nothing whatsoever, and (4) the attainment of the sphere of neither perception nor nonperception.

g.79 four assemblies

'khor bzhi po

འཁོར་བཞི་པོ།

catuḥparṣad

The assemblies of monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen.

g.80 four bases of miraculous displays

rdzu 'phrul gyi rkang pa bzhi

རྩུ་འཕུལ་གྱི་ཀང་པ་བཞི།

caturṛddhipāda

Four types of absorption related to intention, diligence, attention, and analysis as they manifest on the greater path of accumulation.

g.81 four concentrations

bsam gtan bzhi

བསམ་གཏན་བཞི།

caturdhyāna

The four levels of concentration related to the form realm.

g.82 four correct knowledges

so so yang dag par rig pa bzhi

སོ་སོ་ཡང་དག་པར་རིག་པ་བཞི།

caturḥpratisaṃvid

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

g.83 four great elements

'byung ba chen po bzhi

འབྱུང་བ་ཆེན་པོ་བཞི།

caturmahābhūta

Earth, water, fire, and wind.

g.84 Four Great Kings

rgyal po chen po bzhi

རྒྱལ་པོ་ཆེན་པོ་བཞི།

caturmahārāja

Four deities on the base of Mount Sumeru, each the guardian of his direction: Vaiśravaṇa in the north, Dhṛtarāṣṭra in the east, Virūpākṣa in the west, and Virūḍhaka in the south.

g.85 four kinds of troops

dpung gi tshogs yan lag bzhi pa

དཔུང་གི་ཚོགས་ཡན་ལག་བཞི་པ།

caturaṅgalakāya

The fourfold division of an army into infantry, cavalry, elephants, and chariots.

g.86 four māras

bdud bzhi

བདུད་བཞི།

caturmāra

Four symbols or personifications of the defects that prevent awakening. These four are *devaputramāra* (*lha'i bu'i bdud*), the divine māra, which is the distraction of pleasures; *mṛtyumāra* (*'chi bdag gi bdud*), the māra of death; *skandhamāra* (*phung po'i bdud*), the māra of the aggregates, which is the body; and *kleśamāra* (*nyon mongs pa'i bdud*), the māra of the afflictions.

g.87 four means of attracting disciples

bsdu ba'i dngos po bzhi

བསྐྱ་བའི་དངོས་པོ་བཞི།

catuḥsaṅgrahavastu

These are traditionally listed as four: generosity, kind talk, meaningful actions, and practicing what one preaches.

g.88 four truths of the noble ones

'phags pa'i bden pa bzhi

འཕགས་པའི་བདེན་པ་བཞི།

caturāryasatya

The Buddha's first teaching, which explains suffering, the origin of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path to the cessation of suffering.

g.89 Fragrance of the Golden Lamp

gser sgron dri zhim

གསེར་སྒྲོན་རྩི་ཞིམ།

—

A holy site blessed by the presence of sages.

g.90 Free of Darkness

mun bral

མུན་བྲལ།

—

Name of a daughter of Māra.

g.91 Free of Flowers

me tog bral

མེ་ཏོག་བྲལ།

—

A past king during the time of the Buddha Śikhin.

g.92 Gajaśīrṣa

ba lang mgo

བ་ལང་མགོ།

gajaśīrṣa

A nāga king.

g.93 Gandhahastin

spos kyi glang po che

སྤོས་ཀྱི་གླང་པོ་ཅེ།

gandhahastin

A bodhisattva residing in a buddha realm in the southern direction at the time of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.94 Gandhāra

sa 'dzin

ས་འདྲིན།

gandhāra

An ancient kingdom once located in northwestern India in what is now Pakistan and eastern Afghanistan. It lasted from around the sixth century BCE to the eleventh century CE and attained its height in the first to fifth centuries under the Buddhist Kushan kings.

g.95 gandharva

dri za

དྲི་བ།

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 ruled by 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.96 Ganges

gang gA

གང་གླ།

gaṅgā

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The Gaṅgā, or Ganges in English, is considered to be the most sacred river of India, particularly within the Hindu tradition. It starts in the Himalayas, flows through the northern plains of India, bathing the holy city of Vārāṇasī, and meets the sea at the Bay of Bengal, in Bangladesh. In the *sūtras*, however, this river is mostly mentioned not for its sacredness but for its abundant sands—noticeable still today on its many sandy banks and at its delta—which serve as a common metaphor for infinitely large numbers.

According to Buddhist cosmology, as explained in the *Abhidharmakośa*, it is one of the four rivers that flow from Lake Anavatapta and cross the southern continent of Jambudvīpa—the known human world or more specifically the Indian subcontinent.

g.97 garuḍa

nam mkha' lding

ནམ་མཁའ་ལྗེ་།

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.98 Gautama

gau ta ma

གོ་ཏ་མ།

gautama

The family name of the Buddha Śākyamuni, it is often used by those who are not his followers.

g.99 Gayākāśyapa

ga ya 'od srung

ག་ཡ་འོད་སྤྱང་།

gayākāśyapa

The brother of Nadīkāśyapa and Uruvilvākāśyapa. A practitioner of fire offering at Uruvilvā (Bodhgaya), he and his two hundred pupils were converted to the Dharma, becoming bhikṣus (monks) under the Buddha. He and his brothers and their pupils were the third group to become followers of the Buddha Śākyamuni after his awakening. Also known as Mahāgayākāśyapa.

g.100 Given by a Householder

khyim bdag gis byin

ཁྱིམ་བདག་གིས་བྱིན།

—

A nāga king.

g.101 Given by the Mountain

ri bos byin

རི་བོས་བྱིན།

—

A nāga king.

g.102 Given by the River

chu bas byin

ཚུ་བས་བྱིན།

—

A nāga king.

g.103 Given by the Water God

chu lhas byin

ཚུ་ལྷས་བྱིན།

—

A nāga king.

g.104 Glorious Blazing Lotus

pad ma 'bar ba'i dpal

པད་མ་འབར་བའི་དཔལ།

—

Name of a mahābrahmā.

g.105 Glorious Essence of Flowers

dpal me tog gi snying po

དཔལ་མེ་ཏོག་གི་སྙིང་པོ།

—

A buddha residing in the northern direction during the time of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.106 Glorious Essence of Light

snang ba'i snying po dpal

སྒྲོམ་བའི་སྙིང་པོ་དཔལ།

—

A bodhisattva residing in a buddha realm in the western direction during the time of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.107 Godānīya

ba lang spyod

བ་ལང་སྟོད།

godānīya

One of the four continents of the human world according to traditional Indian cosmology, it is situated to the west of Mount Sumeru.

g.108 Gomasālagandha

go ma sA la gan d+ha

གོ་མ་སྤུ་ལ་གན་རྒྱ།

gomasālagandha

A sacred stūpa in Khaṣa, said to have been blessed by several past buddhas.

g.109 Gomatī

go ma ti

གོ་མ་ཏི།

—

A river in the land of Khaṣa.

g.110 great element

'byung po chen po

འབྲུང་པོ་ཆེན་པོ།

mahābhūta

See “four great elements.”

g.111 Great Movement

rgyu ba chen po

རྒྱ་བ་ཆེན་པོ།

—

A nāga king.

g.112 Green Grass

rtswa sngon po

རྩ་སྟོན་པོ།

—

A nāga king.

g.113 Guhā

phug

ཕུག

—

A region of unknown location.

g.114 Harsh to the Moon

zla ba la rtsub pa

ཟླ་བ་ལ་རྩུབ་པ།

—

A nāga king.

g.115 Heaven Free from Strife

'thab bral

འཐབ་བྲལ།

yāma

The lowest of the heavenly realms, it is characterized by freedom from difficulty.

g.116 Heaven of Delighting in Emanations

'phrul dga'

འཕྲུལ་དགའ།

nirmāṇarati

The fifth (counting from the lowest) of the six heavens in the desire realm.

g.117 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.118 Heaven of Making Use of Others’ Emanations

gzhan 'phrul dbang byed

གཞན་འཕྲུལ་དབང་བྱེད།

paranirmitavaśavartin

The highest heaven in the desire realm.

g.119 Heaven of the Thirty-Three

sum cu rtsa gsum pa

སུམ་བུ་ཙ་གསུམ་པ།

trāyastriṃśa

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

g.120 Hell of Crushing

bsdus gzhom

བསྐྱུས་གཞོན།

saṅghāta

One of the eight hot hells.

g.121 Hell of Heat

tsha ba

ཚ་བ།

tāpana

One of the eight hot hells.

g.122 Hell of Intense Heat

rab tu tsha ba

རབ་དུ་ཚ་བ།

pratāpana

One of the eight hot hells.

g.123 Hell of Intense Wailing

ngu 'bod chen po

ངུ་འབོད་ཆེན་པོ།

mahāraurava

One of the eight hot hells.

g.124 Hell of Revival

yang sos

ཡང་སོས།

sañjīva

One of the eight hot hells.

g.125 Hell of Unceasing Torment

mnar med pa

མནར་མེད་པ།

avīci

One of the eight hot hells.

g.126 Hell of Wailing

ngu 'bod

དུ་འབོད།

raurava

One of the eight hot hells.

g.127 High Flier

mthon por 'phur

མཐོན་པོར་འཕུར།

—

Name of a sage.

g.128 High Snow Mountain

gangs mtho ba

གངས་མཐོ་བ།

—

A nāga king.

g.129 higher perception

mngon par shes pa

མངོན་པར་ཤེས་པ།

abhijñā

Supernormal cognitive powers possessed to different degrees by bodhisattvas and buddhas, they are listed as the five higher perceptions or the six higher perceptions.

g.130 Highest Heaven

'og min

འོག་མིན།

akaniṣṭha

The highest heaven of the form realm, where a buddha always receives the anointment of the ultimate wisdom, proceeding there mentally from his seat of awakening under the Bodhi tree.

g.131 Hullura

hu lu ru la

ཧུ་ལུ་རུ་ལ།

hullura

A nāga king.

g.132 Ikṣvāku

bu ram shing

བུ་རམ་ཤིང་།

ikṣvāku

A family lineage from which many royal families claimed descent, it is the name of an early royal dynasty in India said to be a solar dynasty. Though there are many versions of how the dynasty received its name, they all relate it to the sugar cane (*ikṣu*). The Buddha Śākyamuni was considered to be in this family line.

g.133 Invisible Wrists

tshigs mi mngon

ཚིགས་མི་མངོན།

—

A nāga king.

g.134 Īśvara

dbang phyug

དབང་ཕྱུག

īśvara

Literally “lord,” this term is an epithet for the god Śiva, but functions more generally in Buddhist texts as a generalized “supreme being” to whom the creation of the universe is attributed.

g.135 Jackal

sbyang

སྟང་།

—

A nāga king.

g.136 Jambū River

'dzam bu'i chu bo

འཛམ་བུ་རྒྱ་བོ།

jambūnādī

A legendary river carrying the remains of the golden fruit of a legendary rose-apple (*jambu*) tree.

g.137 Jambudvīpa

'dzam bu'i 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 *Syzygium*, particularly *Syzygium jambos* and *Syzygium 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.138 Jyotīrasa

skar ma la dga' ba

སྐར་མ་ལ་དག་འབ།

jyotīrasa

Name of a sage.

g.139 Kalandakanivāpa

ka lan da ka gnas

ཀ་ལན་ད་ཀ་གནས།

kalandakanivāpa

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A place where the Buddha often resided, within the Bamboo Park (Veṇuvana) outside Rajagṛha that had been donated to him. The name is said to have arisen when, one day, King Bimbisāra fell asleep after a romantic liaison in the Bamboo Park. While the king rested, his consort wandered off.

A snake (the reincarnation of the park's previous owner, who still resented the king's acquisition of the park) approached with malign intentions. Through the king's tremendous merit, a gathering of *kalandaka*—crows or other birds according to Tibetan renderings, but some Sanskrit and Pali sources suggest flying squirrels—miraculously appeared and began squawking. Their clamor alerted the king's consort to the danger, who rushed back and hacked the snake to pieces, thereby saving the king's life. King Bimbisāra then named the spot Kalandakanivāpa ("Kalandakas' Feeding Ground"), sometimes (though not in the *Vinayavastu*) given as Kalandakanivāsa ("Kalandakas' Abode") in their honor. The story is told in the *Samghabhedavastu* (Toh 1, ch.17, Degé Kangyur vol.4, folio 77.b et seq.). For more details and other origin stories, see the 84000 Knowledge Base article [Veṇuvana and Kalandakanivāpa](#).

g.140 Kanakamuni

gser thub

གསེར་ཐུབ།

kanakamuni

One of the six buddhas who preceded Śākyamuni in this Fortunate Eon.

g.141 Kapilavastu

ser skya'i gnas

ཤེར་སྐྱའི་གནས།

kapilavastu

The capital city of the Śākya kingdom, which is where the Bodhisattva (i.e., Siddhārtha Gautama before his awakening) grew up.

g.142 Karkoṭaka

stobs kyis rgyu

སྟོབས་ཀྱིས་རྒྱ།

karkoṭaka

A nāga king.

g.143 Kashmir

kha che'i yul

ཁ་ཆེའི་ཡུལ།

kaśmīra

The northernmost geographical region of the Indian subcontinent.

g.144 Kāśyapa

'od srung

འོད་སྤྱང་།

kāśyapa

One of the six buddhas who preceded Śākyamuni in this Fortunate Eon. Also the name of one of the Buddha Śākyamuni's principal pupils.

g.145 kaṭapūtana

lus srul po

ལུས་སྤྱུལ་པོ།

kaṭapūtana

Ugly spirits with rotting bodies.

g.146 Kauṇḍinya

kau Di n+ya

ཀོད་ཏི་ལྷ།

kaunḍinya

The first monk that the Buddha Śākyamuni recognized as having understood his teachings.

g.147 Kauśika

kau shi ka

ཀོ་ཤི་ཀ།

kauśika

Another name for Indra. Kauśika, Śakra, and Indra all refer to the same god, of central importance in the Vedas, who in Buddhist cosmology is regarded as the king of gods in the realm of desire.

g.148 Kawa Paltsek

dpal brtsegs

དཔལ་བརྟེན།

—

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Paltsek (eighth to early ninth century), from the village of Kawa north of Lhasa, was one of Tibet's preeminent translators. He was one of the first seven Tibetans to be ordained by Śāntarakṣita and is counted as one of Guru Rinpoché's twenty-five close disciples. In a famous verse by Ngok Lotsawa

Loden Sherab, Kawa Paltsek is named along with Chokro Lui Gyaltzen and Zhang (or Nanam) Yeshé Dé as part of a group of translators whose skills were surpassed only by Vairotsana.

He translated works from a wide variety of genres, including sūtra, śāstra, vinaya, and tantra, and was an author himself. Paltsek was also one of the most important editors of the early period, one of nine translators installed by Tri Songdetsen (r. 755–797/800) to supervise the translation of the Tripiṭaka and help catalog translated works for the first two of three imperial catalogs, the Denkarma (*Idan kar ma*) and the Samyé Chimpuma (*bsam yas mchims phu ma*). In the colophons of his works, he is often known as Paltsek Rakṣita (*rak+Shi ta*).

g.149 Khaṣa

kha sha

ཁ་ཤ།

khaṣa

An alternative name for the ancient kingdom of Khotan which was located on the southern branch of the Silk Road that passed through the Tarim Basin. The kingdom, which was an important oasis and center for trade, existed during the first millennium CE.

g.150 King of the Lord of Mountains

ri dbang gi rgyal po

རི་དབང་གི་རྒྱལ་པོ།

—

A buddha residing in the southern direction at the time of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.151 kinnara

mi 'am ci

མི་འམ་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.152 Kosala

ko sa la

ཀོ་ས་ལ།

kosala · kośala

An ancient kingdom in North India.

g.153 Krakucchanda

'khor ba 'jig

འཁོར་བ་འཇིག།

krakucchanda

One of the six buddhas who preceded Śākyamuni in this Fortunate Eon.

g.154 Kṛmi

srin bu

སྲིན་བུ།

kṛmi

A nāga king.

g.155 kṣatriya

rgyal rigs

རྒྱལ་རིགས།

kṣatriya

The second highest of the four classes in the Indian caste system, it is associated with warriors, the aristocracy, and kings.

g.156 Kubera

lus ngan

ལུས་ངན།

kubera

In this instances, the name of a demon leader. This name generally belongs to Vaiśravaṇa, one of the four great kings.

g.157 kumbhāṇḍa

grul bum

གུལ་བུམ།

kumbhāṇḍa

A class of beings subordinate to the great king of the south, Virūdhaka. The name is a play on the word *āṇḍa*, which means “egg” but is a euphemism for testicle, as they are often depicted as having testicles as big as pots (from *khumba*, or “pot”).

g.158 Langana Mountain

lang ga Na'i ri

ལང་ག་ཤའི་རི།

—

A mountain in Pūrvavideha.

g.159 level of the family

rigs kyi sa

རིགས་ཀྱི་ས།

gotrabhūmi

One of the initial levels of realization on the path of the hearers. Depending on classification system it is either the first or the second level (when it is preceded by the Śuklavipaśyanā level).

g.160 Light of Nārāyaṇa

sred med kyi bu'i 'od

སྲེད་མེད་ཀྱི་བུའི་འོད།

—

A holy site blessed by the presence of sages.

g.161 Light Rays of Stacked Incense

spos brtsegs 'od zer

སྤྱོས་བརྟེན་ལ་འོད་ཟེར།

—

A holy site blessed by the presence of sages.

g.162 limit of reality

yang dag pa'i mtha'

ཡང་དག་པའི་མཐའ།

bhūtakoti

A synonym for ultimate reality.

g.163 Lord of the Earth

sa yi dbang phyug

ས་ཡི་དབང་ཕྱུག

—

A nāga.

g.164 Lotus Face

pad ma'i gdong

པད་མའི་གདོང་།

—

A nāga prince.

g.165 Lotus Flowers Like Banyan Trees

pad ma'i shing n+ya gro d+ha lta bu

པད་མའི་ཤིང་གློ་བློ་རྩ་བུ།

—

A holy site blessed by the presence of sages.

g.166 Magadha

ma ga d+hA

མ་ག་རྩ།

magadha

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

An ancient Indian kingdom that lay to the south of the Ganges River in what today is 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 later by Bimbisāra's son, Ajātaśatru. Its capital was initially Rājagṛha (modern-day Rajgir) but was later moved to Pāṭaliputra (modern-day Patna). Over the centuries, with the expansion of the Magadha's might, it became the capital of the vast Mauryan empire and seat of the great King Aśoka.

This region is home to many of the most important Buddhist sites, including Bodh Gayā, where the Buddha attained awakening; Vulture Peak (*Gṛdhra-kūṭa*), where the Buddha bestowed many well-known Mahāyāna sūtras; and the Buddhist university of Nālandā that flourished between the fifth and twelfth centuries CE, among many others.

g.167 mahābrahmā

tshangs pa chen po

ཚངས་པ་ཆེན་པོ།

mahābrahmā

Beings from the third heaven of the realm of form, meaning “great Brahmā.”

g.168 Mahāgayākāśyapa

ga ya 'od srung chen po

ག་ཡ་འོད་སྤྱང་ཆེན་པོ།

mahāgayākāśyapa

Alternate name of Gayākāśyapa, the brother of Nadikāśyapa and Uruvilvākāśyapa. A practitioner of fire offering at Uruvilvā (Bodhgaya), he and his two hundred pupils were converted to becoming bhikṣus (monks) under the Buddha. He and his brothers and their pupils were the third group to become followers of the Buddha Śākyamuni after his awakening.

g.169 Mahāsannipāta

'dus pa chen po

འདུས་པ་ཆེན་པོ།

mahāsannipāta

A collection of seventeen sūtras on a range of themes, compiled as a separate collection. Today, this collection only exists in Chinese translation, although several of the individual scriptures exist in Sanskrit and in Tibetan translation.

g.170 Maheśvara

dbang phyug che

དབང་ཕྱུག་ཆེ།

maheśvara

One of the most frequently used names for Śiva. The name is often synonymous with Īśvara, but it is sometimes presented as that of a separate deity.

g.171 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.172 Maitreya

byams pa

བཏུམས་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.173 Mandāravagandha

man dA ra ba

མན་དྲ་བ།

mandāravagandha

A past buddha under whom Śākyamuni acquired merit along the first through ninth bhūmis, according to the Mahāvastu.

g.174 Manifestation of All Perfumes

spos thams cad yang dag par ’phags pa

སྤྱོད་སྐྱམས་ཅད་ཡང་དག་པར་འཕགས་པ།

—

Name of a buddha realm located in the northern direction during the time of the Buddha Śākyamuni. Also called Manifestation of All Sounds.

g.175 Manifestation of All Sounds

sgra thams cad yang dag par 'phags pa

སྒྲ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཡང་དག་པར་འཕགས་པ།

—

Name of a buddha realm located in the northern direction during the time of the Buddha Śākyamuni. Also called Manifestation of All Perfumes.

g.176 Māra

bdud

བདུད།

māra

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Māra, literally “death” or “maker of death,” is the name of the deva who tried to prevent the Buddha from achieving awakening, the name given to the class of beings he leads, and also an impersonal term for the destructive forces that keep beings imprisoned in saṃsāra:

(1) As a deva, Māra is said to be the principal deity in the Heaven of Making Use of Others’ Emanations (*paranirmitavaśavartin*), the highest paradise in the desire realm. He famously attempted to prevent the Buddha’s awakening under the Bodhi tree—see *The Play in Full* (Toh 95), 21.1—and later sought many times to thwart the Buddha’s activity. In the sūtras, he often also creates obstacles to the progress of śrāvakas and bodhisattvas. (2) The devas ruled over by Māra are collectively called *mārakāyika* or *mārakāyikadevatā*, the “deities of Māra’s family or class.” In general, these māras too do not wish any being to escape from saṃsāra, but can also change their ways and even end up developing faith in the Buddha, as exemplified by Sārthavāha; see *The Play in Full* (Toh 95), 21.14 and 21.43. (3) The term māra can also be understood as personifying four defects that prevent awakening, called (i) the divine māra (*devaputramāra*), which is the distraction of pleasures; (ii) the māra of Death (*mṛtyumāra*), which is having one’s life interrupted; (iii) the māra of the aggregates (*skandhamāra*), which is identifying with the five aggregates; and (iv) the māra of the afflictions (*kleśamāra*), which is being under the sway of the negative emotions of desire, hatred, and ignorance.

g.177 Mathurā

bcom brlag

བཅོམ་བརྒྱུག

mathurā

A city in the North Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. It is located approximately fifty kilometers north of Agra.

g.178 Maudgalyāyana

maud gal gyi bu

མོད་གལ་གྱི་བུ།

maudgalyāyana

Alternate name for Mahāmaudgalyāyana, one of the closest disciples of the Buddha Śākyamuni, who was known for his miraculous abilities.

g.179 Moon Protector

zla ba srung

ཟླ་བ་སྤྲོད།

—

A nāga king.

g.180 Mount Gośṛṅga

ri glang ru

རི་གླང་རུ།

gośṛṅga

A mountain in Khaṣa. Gośṛṅga means “cow horn” in Sanskrit and the hill is said to have received this name due to having two pointed peaks.

g.181 Mount Kalatiya

ri kha la ti ya

རི་ཁ་ལ་ཏི་ཡ།

kalatiya

A mountain located near Mount Sumeru.

g.182 Mount Sumeru

ri rab

རི་རབ།

sumeru

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

According to ancient Buddhist cosmology, this is the great mountain forming the axis of the universe. At its summit is Sudarśana, home of Śakra and his thirty-two gods, and on its flanks live the asuras. The mount has four sides facing the cardinal directions, each of which is made of a different

precious stone. Surrounding it are several mountain ranges and the great ocean where the four principal island continents lie: in the south, Jambudvīpa (our world); in the west, Godānīya; in the north, Uttarakuru; and in the east, Pūrvavideha. Above it are the abodes of the desire realm gods. It is variously referred to as Meru, Mount Meru, Sumeru, and Mount Sumeru.

g.183 Mountain Light

ri bo'i 'od

རི་བོ་འོད།

—

A buddha realm in the past.

g.184 Movement

rgyu ba

རྒྱ་བ།

—

A nāga king.

g.185 Moving in Places

gnas na rgyu

གནས་ན་རྒྱ།

—

A nāga king.

g.186 Mucilinda

btang bzung

བཏང་བབྱུང་།

mucilinda

A nāga king.

g.187 muhūrta

yud tsam

ཡུད་ཙམ།

muhūrta

Period of time in ancient India that corresponds to the thirtieth part of a full day.

g.188 nāga

klu

ལྷ

nāga

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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

g.189 Nanda

dga' bo

དགའ་བོ།

nanda

One of the main nāga kings, usually associated with the nāga king Upananda.

g.190 Nandivardhana

dga' 'phel

དགའ་འཕེལ།

nandivardhana

A location in Jambudvīpa.

g.191 Nārāyaṇa

sred med kyi bu

སྲེད་མེད་ཀྱི་བུ།

nārāyaṇa

An alternate name for Viṣṇu (*khyab 'jug*).

g.192 Nectar Drink

bdud rtsi'i skom

བདུད་རྩི་སྐོམ།

—

A demon leader.

g.193 non-returner

phyir mi 'ong ba

ཕྱིར་མི་འོང་བ།

anāgāmin

One who has achieved the third level of attainment on the path of the hearers and is free from further rebirth in the desire realm.

g.194 ojohāra

mdangs 'phrog pa

མདངས་འཕྲོག་པ།

ojohāra

A class of supernatural beings that rob the strength of beings.

g.195 Pale Yellow Gold

gser ser skya

གསེར་སེར་སྒྱ།

—

A nāga king.

g.196 Pañcāla

lnga len

ལྷ་ལེན།

pañcālā

One of the major North Indian kingdoms in the Buddha's time, it was located to the west of the kingdom of Kośala and east of Kuru.

g.197 paths of the ten nonvirtuous actions

mi dge ba bcu'i las kyī lam

མི་དགེ་བ་བརྒྱའི་ལས་ཀྱི་ལམ།

daśakuśalakarmapatha

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

g.198 paths of the ten virtuous actions

dge ba bcu'i las kyī lam

དགེ་བ་བརྒྱའི་ལས་ཀྱི་ལམ།

daśakuśalakarmapatha

Not engaging in the paths of the ten nonvirtuous actions: killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, divisive speech, harsh speech, gossip, covetousness, ill will, and wrong views.

g.199 perfection

pha rol tu phyin pa · pha rol phyin

པ་རོལ་ཏུ་བྱིན་པ། · པ་རོལ་བྱིན།

pāramitā

See “six perfections.”

g.200 piśāca

sha za

ཤ་བ།

piśāca

A class of nonhumans said to dwell in impure and perilous places, where they feed on impure things, including flesh.

g.201 Precious Protector

rin chen skyong

རིན་ཆེན་སྐྱོང་།

—

A nāga king.

g.202 preta

yi dgas

ཡི་དགས།

preta

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

One of the five or six classes of sentient beings, into which beings are born as the karmic fruition of past miserliness. As the term in Sanskrit means “the departed,” they are analogous to the ancestral spirits of Vedic tradition, the *pitṛs*, who starve without the offerings of descendants. It is also commonly translated as “hungry ghost” or “starving spirit,” as in the Chinese 餓鬼 *e gui*.

They are sometimes said to reside in the realm of Yama, but are also frequently described as roaming charnel grounds and other inhospitable or frightening places along with piśācas and other such beings. They are particularly known to suffer from great hunger and thirst and the inability to

acquire sustenance. Detailed descriptions of their realm and experience, including a list of the thirty-six classes of pretas, can be found in *The Application of Mindfulness of the Sacred Dharma*, Toh 287, 2.1281– 2.1482.

g.203 Priests of Brahmā

tshangs pa'i mdun na 'don pa

ཚངས་པའི་མདུན་ན་འདོན་པ།

brahmapurohita

The second heaven in the realm of form. Also called Brahmapariṣadya.

g.204 Protecting Guardian

rtas bsrungs

རྟ་ས་བསྐྱུངས།

—

Name of a sage.

g.205 Provisions for the Path of Seeing

mthong ba'i lam rgyags

མཐོང་བའི་ལམ་རྒྱགས།

—

A holy site blessed by the presence of sages.

g.206 Punarvasu

nab so

ནབ་སོ།

punarvasu

The name of a lunar asterism. Its chief star is known as Beta Geminorum in the occidental tradition.

g.207 Pure Victor

rgyal ba dag pa

རྒྱལ་བ་དག་པ།

—

A holy site blessed by the presence of sages.

g.208 Pūrvavideha

lus 'phags po

ལུས་འཕགས་པོ།

pūrvavideha

One of the four continents of the human world according to traditional Indian cosmology, it is situated to the east of Mount Sumeru.

g.209 pūtana

srul po

སྤྱུ་པོ།

pūtana

A class of disease-causing spirits associated with cemeteries and dead bodies.

g.210 Quintessence of the Sun's Energy

nyi ma'i shugs kyi snying po

ཉིམ་མེ་ཤུགས་ཀྱི་སྤྱིང་པོ།

—

A bodhisattva residing in a buddha realm in the eastern direction at the time of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.211 Radiating Diamond Light

nor bu'i snying po'i 'od 'phro ba

ནོར་བུའི་སྤྱིང་པོའི་འོད་འཕྲོ་བ།

—

A holy site blessed by the presence of sages.

g.212 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 (Gṛdhrakūṭapārvata), 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.213 rākṣasa

srin po

སྲིན་པོ།

rākṣasa

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A class of nonhuman beings that are often, but certainly not always, considered demonic in the Buddhist tradition. They are often depicted as flesh-eating monsters who haunt frightening places and are ugly and evil-natured with a yearning for human flesh, and who additionally have miraculous powers, such as being able to change their appearance.

g.214 rākṣasī

srin mo

སྲིན་མོ།

rākṣasī

A female rākṣasa.

g.215 Red Eyes

mig dmar

མིག་དམར།

—

A nāga king.

g.216 root downfalls

ltung ba'i rtsa ba

ལྷུང་བའི་རྩ་བ།

mūlāpatti

Downfalls are actions of body, speech, and mind that cause one to fall from the path of awakening and, in the cases of root downfalls, to fall into the lower realms of existence.

g.217 Rough Radiating Light

'od 'phro rtsub

འོད་འཕྲོ་རྩུབ།

—

A son of Māra.

g.218 Rough Stone

rdo rtsub

རོ་རུབ།

—

Name of a location in Khaṣa.

g.219 Royal Mass of Glorious Wisdom

ye shes dpal brtsegs rgyal po

ཡེ་ཤེས་དཔལ་བརྟེན་རྒྱལ་པོ།

—

A buddha residing in the western direction during the time of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.220 Saffron Summit

gur kum gyi rtse mo

གུར་ཀུམ་གྱི་རྩེ་མོ།

—

A holy site blessed by the presence of sages.

g.221 Sāgara

rgya mtsho

རྒྱ་མཚོ།

sāgara

A nāga king.

g.222 sage

drang srong

དང་སྟོང་།

ṛṣi

An ancient Indian spiritual title, especially for divinely inspired individuals credited with creating the foundations for all Indian culture.

g.223 Sahā

mi mjed

མི་མངའ།

sahā

This present universe of ours, usually referring to the whole trichiliocosm but at times only to our own world with its four continents surrounding Mount Sumeru. Sahā means “endurance,” as beings here have to endure suffering.

g.224 Śakra

brgya byin

བརྒྱ་ཕྱིན།

śakra

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The lord of the gods in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three (*trāyastriṃśa*). 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.225 Śākya

shAkya

ཤཱཀ།

śākya

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Name of the ancient tribe in which the Buddha was born as a prince; their kingdom was based to the east of Kośala, in the foothills near the present-day border of India and Nepal, with Kapilavastu as its capital.

g.226 Śākyamuni

shAkya thub pa

ཤཱཀ་ཐུབ་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.227 Samudradatta

rgya mtshos byin

ཀུ་མཚས་བྱིན།

samudradatta

A nāga king.

g.228 Sarasvatī

dbyangs can

དབྱངས་ཅན།

sarasvatī

Literally “The Melodious One.” The goddess of eloquence and learning.

g.229 Śāriputra

shA ri'i bu

ཤ་རི་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.230 Sarvajñādeva

sarba dz+nyA de ba

སཀ་རྩོ་དེ་བ།

sarvajñādeva

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

According to traditional accounts, the Kashmiri preceptor Sarvajñādeva was among the “one hundred” paṇḍitas invited by Trisong Detsen (r. 755–797/800) to assist with the translation of the Buddhist scriptures into Tibetan. Sarvajñādeva assisted in the translation of more than twenty-three works, including numerous sūtras and the first translations of Śāntideva’s *Bodhicaryāvatāra* and Nāgārjuna’s *Suhṛllekha*. Much of this work

was likely carried out in the first years of the ninth century and may have continued into the reign of Ralpachen (*ral pa can*), who ascended the throne in 815 and died in 838 or 841 CE.

g.231 seven perfect buddhas

yang dag par rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas bdun po

ཡང་དག་པར་རྫོགས་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་བདུན་པོ།

—

The best known of many sets of past buddhas, including Śākyamuni as the seventh, his three predecessors in this eon (Krakucchanda, Kanakamuni, and Kāśyapa), and the three last buddhas of the previous eon (Vipaśyin, Śikhin, and Viśvabhū).

g.232 seven precious substances

rin po che sna bdun

རིན་པོ་ཆེ་སྣ་བདུན།

saptaratna

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The set of seven precious materials or substances includes a range of precious metals and gems, but their exact list varies. The set often consists of gold, silver, beryl, crystal, red pearls, emeralds, and white coral, but may also contain lapis lazuli, ruby, sapphire, chrysoberyl, diamonds, etc. The term is frequently used in the sūtras to exemplify preciousness, wealth, and beauty, and can describe treasures, offering materials, or the features of architectural structures such as stūpas, palaces, thrones, etc. The set is also used to describe the beauty and prosperity of buddha realms and the realms of the gods.

In other contexts, the term *saptaratna* can also refer to the seven precious possessions of a cakravartin or to a set of seven precious moral qualities.

g.233 seven riches

nor bdun

ནོར་བདུན།

saptadhana

The seven riches of noble beings: faith, discipline, generosity, learning, modesty, humility, and insight.

g.234 Śikhin

gtsug tor can

གཞུག་ཏེ་ཅན།

śikhin

One of the six buddhas who preceded Śākyamuni in this Fortunate Eon.

g.235 six higher perceptions

mngon shes drug

མཛོན་ཤེས་རྒྱལ།

ṣaḍabhijñā

Divine sight, divine hearing, knowledge of the minds of others, remembrance of past lives, ability to perform miracles, and the knowledge that all mental defilements have been destroyed.

g.236 six perfections

pha rol tu phyin pa drug

ཕ་རོལ་ཏུ་ཕྱིན་པ་རྒྱལ།

ṣaṭpāramitā

The trainings of the bodhisattva path: generosity, discipline, patience, diligence, concentration, and insight.

g.237 six spheres

skye mched drug

སྒྱེ་མཆེད་རྒྱལ།

ṣaḍāyatana

Six sets of similar dharmas under which all compounded and uncompounded dharmas may be included: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, mind, and their objects—visible forms, sounds, smells, flavors, tangibles, and dharmas.

g.238 solitary buddha

rang sangs rgyas

རང་སངས་རྒྱལ།

pratyekabuddha

Someone who has attained liberation without relying on a teacher in their final lifetime and as a result of progress in previous lives but, unlike a buddha, does not have the accumulated merit and motivation to teach others. Like *śrāvaka* ("hearer"), this term is also used to denote Buddhists who do not follow the Mahāyāna.

g.239 Source of Light Rays

'od zer byung ba

འོད་ཟེར་བྱུང་བ།

—

A holy site blessed by the presence of sages.

g.240 special insight

lhag mthong

ལྷག་མཐོང་།

vipāśyanā

One of the basic forms of Buddhist meditation, aimed at developing insight into the nature of reality. Often presented as part of a pair of meditation techniques, the other being “tranquility.”

g.241 sphere of infinite space

nam mkha' mtha' yas skye mched

ནམ་མཁའ་མཐའ་ཡས་སྟེ་མཆོད།

ākāśānantyāyatana

First of the four formless absorptions.

g.242 sphere of neither perception nor nonperception

'du shes med 'du shes med min skye mched

འདུ་ཤེས་མེད་འདུ་ཤེས་མེད་མིན་སྟེ་མཆོད།

naivasaṃjñānāsaṃjñāyatana

Fourth of the four formless absorptions.

g.243 sphere of nothing whatsoever

ci yang med pa'i skye mched

ཅི་ཡང་མེད་པའི་སྟེ་མཆོད།

ākīñcanyāyatana

Name of the third of the four formless realms and of the third formless concentration, so termed because in its preparatory phase absolute nothingness is the object of meditation.

g.244 spheres of mastery

zil gyis gnon pa'i skye mched

ཟིལ་གྱིས་གཞོན་པའི་སྟེ་མཆོད།

abhibhvāyatana

This refers to the miraculous perceptual transformation that ensues when one (1) regards lesser external forms, (2) regards greater external forms, (3) regards blue external forms, (4) regards yellow external forms, (5) regards red external forms, (6) regards white external forms, (7) abides in the sphere of infinite space, or (8) abides in the sphere of infinite consciousness.

g.245 spheres of totality

zad par gyi skye mched

ཟད་པར་གྱི་སྐྱེ་མཆེད།

kṛtsnāyatana

The ten spheres of totality comprise the total meditative immersion into (1) the earth element, (2) the water element, (3) the fire element, (4) the wind element, (5) the space element, (6) blueness, (7) yellowness, (8) redness, (9) whiteness, and (10) consciousness.

g.246 Śrī Mahādevī

dpal lha mo chen mo

དཔལ་ལྷ་མོ་ཆེན་མོ།

śrī mahādevī

“Glorious Great Goddess.” This is also a widespread name in Hindu contexts; it is, for example, an epithet of Śiva’s consort, but this name could refer to a number of different figures.

g.247 Stable

brtan po

བརྟན་པོ།

—

Name of a sage.

g.248 Stacked Incense

spos brtsegs

སྤོས་བརྟེགས།

—

A holy site blessed by the presence of sages.

g.249 Sthāvarā

brtan ma

བནྟན་མ།

sthāvarā

An earth goddess.

g.250 stream enterer

rgyun du zhugs pa

རྒྱུན་དུ་ཐུགས་པ།

srotaāpanna

A person who has entered the “stream” of practice that leads to nirvāṇa. The first of the four attainments of the path of the hearers.

g.251 Strength of the Ocean

mtsho gyad

མཚོ་གྲ།

—

A nāga king.

g.252 Strength of the Water

chu'i shugs

ཆུ་འི་ཐུགས།

—

A nāga king.

g.253 sublime states

tshangs pa'i gnas

ཚངས་པའི་གནས།

brahmavihāra

The four qualities of limitless love, compassion, joy, and equanimity.

g.254 Śuddhodana

zas gtsang

ཟས་གཙང་།

śuddhodana

The Buddha Śākyamuni's father and king of the Śākyas.

g.255 śūdra

dmangs rigs

དམངས་རིགས།

śūdra

The fourth and lowest of the classes in the Indian caste system, it generally encompasses the laboring class.

g.256 Sumati

blo gros bzang po

སློ་གྲོས་བཟང་པོ།

sumati

A bodhisattva at the time of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.257 Support of Discipline

tshul khrims rten

ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས་རྟེན།

—

Name of a demon.

g.258 Supraṭiṣṭhita

shin tu brtan pa

ཤིན་ཏུ་བརྟན་པ།

supraṭiṣṭhita

A nāga king.

g.259 Supreme

rab mchog

རབ་མཆོག།

—

A nāga king.

g.260 Supreme Being

skye mchog

སྐྱེ་མཆོག།

—

A demon leader.

g.261 Susīma

mtshams bzangs

སུསྐམ་སྐམ་བཟངས།

susīma

A god.

g.262 Takṣaka

'jog po

འཛོག་པོ།

takṣaka

A nāga king.

g.263 ten levels

sa bcu

ས་བརྒྱ།

daśabhūmi

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

g.264 Thick Clouds

stug pa'i sprin

སྤྱག་པའི་སྤྲིན།

—

A holy site blessed by the presence of sages.

g.265 thirty-two major marks

mtshan sum cu rtsa gnyis

མཚན་སྟུང་རྩ་ལྔ་གཉིས།

—

These are the major physical marks that identify the buddha body of emanation and which also, in some sources and traditions, portend the advent of a universal monarch.

g.266 three gateways of liberation

rnam par thar pa'i sgo gsum

རྣམ་པར་ཐར་པའི་སྒོ་གསུམ།

trivimokṣadvāra

Emptiness, absence of marks, and absence of wishes.

g.267 Three Jewels

dkon mchog gsum

དཀོན་མཆོག་གསུམ།

triratna

The Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha.

g.268 three lower realms

ngan song gsum · ngan 'gro gsum

ངན་སྒྲོང་གསུམ། · ངན་འགྲོ་གསུམ།

tryapāya · tridurgati

The animal, preta, and hell realms.

g.269 three objects of refuge

skyabs gsum

སྐྱབས་གསུམ།

triśaraṇa

The Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha.

g.270 three realms

srid pa gsum · srid pa gsum po · kham gsum · kham gsum pa

སྤྲིད་པ་གསུམ། · སྤྲིད་པ་གསུམ་པོ། · ཁམས་གསུམ། · ཁམས་གསུམ་པ།

tribhava · tridhātu

The desire realm, form realm, and formless realm.

g.271 three types of defilements

dri ma gsum

དྲི་མ་གསུམ།

trimala

The three root emotional defilements (*kleśa*): desire, hatred, and delusion.

Also known as the three poisons (*triviṣa*).

g.272 three types of fetters

kun tu sbyor ba gsum

ཀུན་དུ་སྦྱོར་བ་གསུམ།

trisamyojana

Three fetters to be abandoned on the path of seeing: the view of the transitory collection, viewing discipline as supreme, and harboring doubt.

g.273 three vehicles

theg pa gsum

ཐེག་པ་གསུམ།

triyāna

The hearer, solitary buddha, and bodhisattva vehicles.

g.274 Tīkṣṇadatta

rnon pos byin

རྣོན་པོས་བྱིན།

tikṣṇadatta

A nāga king.

g.275 Tiṣya

skar rgyal

སྐར་རྒྱལ།

tiṣya

A past buddha.

g.276 tranquility

zhi gnas

ཞི་གནས།

śamatha

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

g.277 True Fragrance of Mucilinda

btang bzung bden pa'i dri

བཏང་བརྩུང་བདེན་པའི་དྲི།

—

A holy site blessed by the presence of sages.

g.278 universal monarch

'khor los sgyur ba · 'khor los sgyur ba'i rgyal po

འཁོར་ལོས་སྐུར་བ། · འཁོར་ལོས་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 (*vartate*) 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.279 Upananda

nye dga'

ཉེདག་

upananda

One of the main nāga kings, usually associated with the nāga king Nanda.

g.280 Uṣṭra

nga bong

ང་བོང་།

uṣṭra

A sage with a human body and the face of a donkey and expert in astrology, he was a past life of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.281 Uttarakuru

byang gi sgra mi snyan

ཐུང་གི་སྒྲ་མི་སྒྲ།

uttarakuru

The northern continent of the human world according to traditional Indian cosmology, literally meaning “northern unpleasant sound.”

g.282 Utterly Glorious

rab tu dpal ldan

རབ་ཏུ་དཔལ་ལྡན།

—

Name of a sage.

g.283 Vaiśālī

yangs pa can

ཡངས་པ་ཅན།

vaiśālī

A great city during the Buddha Śākyamuni’s time, it was the capital of the Licchavi republic; at present it is the town of Basarh in the Indian state of Bihar. It is the site where the Buddha Śākyamuni laid down various rules of the Vinaya, gave other teachings, and, on his last visit, announced his approaching parinirvāṇa.

g.284 vaiśya

rje’u rigs

རྗེ་འུ་རིགས།

vaiśya

The second lowest of the four classes in the Indian caste system, it generally includes the merchants and farmers.

g.285 Vajra Seat

rdo rje’i gdan

རྡོ་རྗེ་འགཏན།

vajrāsana

The site of a buddha’s awakening, referring to the vajra seat of any buddha realm.

g.286 Vajrapāṇi

lag na rdo rje

ལག་ན་རྡོ་རྗེ།

vajrapāṇi

An important bodhisattva, “Wielder of the Vajra,” whose compassion is to manifest in a terrific form to protect the practitioners of the Dharma from harmful influences.

g.287 Vārāṇasī

yul ka shi

ཡུལ་ཀ་ཤི།

kāśī

City in North India where the Buddha Śākyamuni first taught the Dharma.

g.288 Varuṇa

chu lha

ཐུ་ལྷ།

varuṇa

A nāga king.

g.289 Vast

rgya chen

རྒྱ་ཆེན།

—

A holy site blessed by the presence of sages.

g.290 Vāsuki

nor rgyas kyi bu

ནོར་རྒྱལ་ཀྱི་བུ།

vāsuki

A nāga king.

g.291 vehicle of conditions

rkyen gyi theg pa

རྒྱེན་གྱི་ཐེག་པ།

—

Another name for the solitary buddha vehicle.

g.292 Veṇuvana

'od ma'i tshal

འདས་མའི་ཚལ།

veṇuvana

A forest monastery north of Rājagṛha where the Buddha Śākyamuni spent several monsoon retreats and delivered many Great Vehicle teachings.

g.293 victor

rgyal ba

ཐུལ་བ།

jina

An epithet for a buddha.

g.294 Victorious God

rgyal gyi lha

ཐུལ་གྱི་ལྷ།

—

A past king.

g.295 Victorious Joy Mountain

rgyal dga'i ri

ཐུལ་དགའི་རི།

—

A mountain in Uttarakuru.

g.296 Victorious through Light Rays

'od zer gyis rgyal ba

འོད་ཟེར་གྱིས་ཐུལ་བ།

—

A buddha realm.

g.297 Vidyākaraprabha

bid+yA ka ra pra b+ha

བིདྲ་ཀ་ར་པ་མ།

vidyākaraprabha

According to Nyangral Nyima Öser's history, Ralpachen invited the Indian abbot Vidyākaraprabha to Tibet along with Jinamitra, Surendrabodhi, and Dānaśīla in the first part of the ninth century. Vidyākaraprabha was the author of the *Madhyamakanayasārasamāśaprakaraṇa*, a work in the Yogācāra-

Madhyamaka school pioneered by Śāntarakṣita, translated into Tibetan with Paltsek under the name *dbu ma'i lugs kyi snying po mdor bsdus pa'i rab tu byed pa* (Toh 3893). He worked with Paltsek on numerous other translations on topics as diverse as the *Sphuṭārthā* commentary to the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*, an extract from the *Vimuktimārga*, and the early *Vidyottamamahātantra*.

g.298 Vimalakīrti

dri ma med par grags pa

དྲིམ་མེད་པར་གྲགས་པ།

vimalakīrti

One of the sixteen great bodhisattvas. The names of the sixteen vary from text to text.

g.299 Vipāśyin

rnam par gzigs

རྣམ་པར་གཟིགས།

vipāśyin

One of the six buddhas who preceded Śākyamuni in this Fortunate Eon.

g.300 Wealth Giver

dbyig gtong

དབྱིག་གཏོང་།

—

A nāga king.

g.301 well-gone one

bde bar gshegs pa

བདེ་བར་གཤེགས་པ།

sugata

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

One of the standard epithets of the buddhas. A recurrent explanation offers three different meanings for *su-* that are meant to show the special qualities of “accomplishment of one’s own purpose” (*svārthasampad*) for a complete buddha. Thus, the Sugata is “well” gone, as in the expression *su-rūpa* (“having a good form”); he is gone “in a way that he shall not come back,” as in the expression *su-naṣṭa-jvara* (“a fever that has utterly gone”); and he has gone “without any remainder” as in the expression *su-pūrṇa-ghaṭa* (“a pot

that is completely full"). According to Buddhaghosa, the term means that the way the Buddha went (Skt. *gata*) is good (Skt. *su*) and where he went (Skt. *gata*) is good (Skt. *su*).

g.302 World of the Lord of Death

gshin rje'i 'jig rten

གཤིན་རྗེའི་འཇིག་རྟེན།

yamaloka

Another name for the realm of the pretas.

g.303 worthy one

dgra bcom pa

དགུ་བཅོམ་པ།

arhat

Used both as an epithet of buddhas and to refer to the final accomplishment of the śrāvaka path.

g.304 yakṣa

gnod sbyin

གནོད་སྤྱིན།

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 rule 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.305 Yaśas

grags pa

གྲགས་པ།

yaśas

The son of a wealthy merchant in Vārāṇasī. After the five excellent disciples, Yaśas was the next to go forth and receive ordination. He was followed in short order by Pūrṇa, Vimāla, Gavāṃpati, and Subāhu, all five together being referred to as the “five excellent companions.”

g.306 Zangkyong

bzang skyong

བཟང་སྐྱོང་།

—

Tibetan translator of the ninth century.