

The Great Prajna Paramita Sutra

Volume 22

(Fascicles 421-440)

Translated by

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A Complete English Version of

The 600-fascicle Chinese

Da Bo Re Bo Luo Mi Duo Jing (600 Juan)

Translated from Sanskrit by

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Fascicle 421

Chapter 23

Boundlessness

Section 2

(In the Second Assembly)

At that time, the long-lived sage Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, “Why do you say that the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable, the great bodhisattvas in the future will be nonexistent and unattainable, and the great bodhisattvas in the present are nonexistent and unattainable? Why do you say that because matter is boundless, the great bodhisattvas are boundless; because feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are boundless, the great bodhisattvas are boundless? Why do you say that because the voice-hearer vehicle is boundless, the great bodhisattvas are boundless; because the self-enlightened one vehicle and great vehicle are boundless, the great bodhisattvas are boundless? Why do you say that as connected with matter, the great bodhisattvas are nonexistent and unattainable; as apart from matter, the great bodhisattvas are also nonexistent and unattainable; as connected with feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, the great bodhisattvas are nonexistent and unattainable; as apart from feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, the great bodhisattvas are also nonexistent and unattainable? And so forth, as connected with the voice-hearer vehicle, the great bodhisattvas are nonexistent and unattainable; as apart from the voice-hearer vehicle, the great bodhisattvas are also nonexistent and unattainable; as connected with the self-enlightened one vehicle and great vehicle, the great bodhisattvas are nonexistent and unattainable; as apart from the self-enlightened one vehicle and great vehicle, the great bodhisattvas are also nonexistent and unattainable? Why do you say that you have searched for great bodhisattvas in all dharmas, using all methods, in all places, and at all times, but you have not seen or found one, so you should not teach prajna paramita and provide cautions for great bodhisattvas? Why do you say that the great bodhisattvas have only provisional names but do not have self-nature? Why do you say that the ‘I,’ the sentient being, and so forth have only provisional names but do not have self-nature? Why do you say that the dharmas without arising in the final analysis have only provisional

names but do not have self-nature? Why do you ask what matter is without arising in the final analysis and what feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are without arising in the final analysis? And so forth, what voice-hearer vehicle is without arising in the final analysis and what self-enlightened one vehicle and great vehicle are without arising in the final analysis? Why do you say that if matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are without arising in the final analysis, they will not be named matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness? Why do you say that if the voice-hearer vehicle, self-enlightened one vehicle, and great vehicle are without arising in the final analysis, they will not be named the voice-hearer vehicle, self-enlightened one vehicle, and great vehicle? Why do you say that you cannot give teachings and cautions of the prajna paramita that is without arising in the final analysis to various great bodhisattvas who are also without arising in the final analysis? Why do you say that no great bodhisattvas can practice the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi apart from nonarising in the final analysis? Why do you say that when great bodhisattvas hear all these sayings and their minds are not drowned, worried, regretful, shocked, frightened, and scared, they are really the ones who can practice prajna paramita? Would you please kindly explain all these for me?"

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One replied to Sariputra, "Venerable one, as to your questions, 'Why were the great bodhisattvas in the past nonexistent and unattainable? Why will the great bodhisattvas in the future be nonexistent and unattainable? And why are the great bodhisattvas in the present nonexistent and unattainable?' Sariputra, I will say that as sentient beings are nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As sentient beings are empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As sentient beings are far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As sentient beings do not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. This applies to great bodhisattvas in the future and present as well.

"Sariputra, as matter is nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As matter is empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and

unattainable. As matter is far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As matter does not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness do not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. This applies to great bodhisattvas in the future and present as well.

“Sariputra, as the eye sphere is nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres are nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were also nonexistent and unattainable. As the eye sphere is empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres are empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were also nonexistent and unattainable. As the eye sphere is far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres are far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were also nonexistent and unattainable. As the eye sphere does not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres do not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were also nonexistent and unattainable. This applies to great bodhisattvas in the future and present as well.

“Sariputra, as the sight sphere is nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres are nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the sight sphere is empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres are empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the sight sphere is far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres are far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the sight sphere does not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres do not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. This applies to great bodhisattvas in the future and present as well.

“Sariputra, as the eye realm is nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms are nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the eye realm is empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms are empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the eye realm is far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms are far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the eye realm does not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms do not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. This applies to great bodhisattvas in the future and present as well.

“Sariputra, as the sight realm is nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms are nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the sight realm is empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms are empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the sight realm is far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms are far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the sight realm does not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms do not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. This applies to great bodhisattvas in the future and present as well.

“Sariputra, as the eye consciousness realm is nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the ear consciousness realm, nose consciousness realm, tongue consciousness realm, body consciousness realm, and conscious consciousness realm are nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the eye consciousness realm is empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the ear consciousness realm, nose consciousness realm, tongue consciousness

realm, body consciousness realm, and conscious consciousness realm are empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the eye consciousness realm is far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the ear consciousness realm, nose consciousness realm, tongue consciousness realm, body consciousness realm, and conscious consciousness realm are far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the eye consciousness realm does not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the ear consciousness realm, nose consciousness realm, tongue consciousness realm, body consciousness realm, and conscious consciousness realm do not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. This applies to great bodhisattvas in the future and present as well.

“Sariputra, as the eye contact is nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts are nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the eye contact is empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts are empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the eye contact is far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts are far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the eye contact does not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts do not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. This applies to great bodhisattvas in the future and present as well.

“Sariputra, as the feelings produced by eye contact are nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the feelings produced by ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts are nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the feelings produced by eye contact are empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the feelings produced by ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts are empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the feelings produced by eye contact are far away, the great bodhisattvas in the

past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the feelings produced by ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts are far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the feelings produced by eye contact do not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the feelings produced by ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts do not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. This applies to great bodhisattvas in the future and present as well.

“Sariputra, as giving paramita is nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas are nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As giving paramita is empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas are empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As giving paramita is far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas are far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As giving paramita does not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas do not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. This applies to great bodhisattvas in the future and present as well.

“Sariputra, as internal emptiness is nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as external emptiness, internal-external emptiness, emptiness of emptiness, emptiness of space, emptiness of ultimate truth, emptiness of conditioned phenomena, emptiness of unconditioned reality, emptiness in the final analysis, emptiness of nontemporality, emptiness of deconstruction and nondeconstruction, emptiness of original nature, emptiness of particular and common characteristics, emptiness of all dharmas, emptiness of nonattainment, emptiness of selflessness, emptiness of self-nature, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As internal emptiness is empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as external emptiness, internal-external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-

nature are empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As internal emptiness is far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as external emptiness, internal-external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As internal emptiness does not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as external emptiness, internal-external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature do not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. This applies to great bodhisattvas in the future and present as well.

“Sariputra, as the four bases of mindfulness are nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the four correct endeavors, four bases of power, five roots, five powers, seven factors for enlightenment, and noble eightfold path are nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the four bases of mindfulness are empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the four correct endeavors, four bases of power, and so forth, and noble eightfold path are empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the four bases of mindfulness are far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the four correct endeavors, four bases of power, and so forth, and noble eightfold path are far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the four bases of mindfulness do not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the four correct endeavors, four bases of power, and so forth, and noble eightfold path do not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. This applies to great bodhisattvas in the future and present as well.

“Sariputra, as the Buddha’s ten abilities are nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, great equanimity, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power are nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the Buddha’s ten abilities are empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of

Buddha's wisdom and power are empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the Buddha's ten abilities are far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power are far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the Buddha's ten abilities do not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power do not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. This applies to great bodhisattvas in the future and present as well.

“Sariputra, as the dharma of voice-hearer is nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the dharma of self-enlightened one and the Buddha dharma are nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the dharma of voice-hearer is empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the dharma of self-enlightened one and the Buddha dharma are empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the dharma of voice-hearer is far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the dharma of self-enlightened one and the Buddha dharma are far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the dharma of voice-hearer does not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the dharma of self-enlightened one and the Buddha dharma do not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. This applies to great bodhisattvas in the future and present as well.

“Sariputra, as all dharani gates are nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as all samadhi gates are nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As all dharani gates are empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as all samadhi gates are empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As all dharani gates are far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as all samadhi gates are far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As all dharani gates do not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as all samadhi

gates do not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. This applies to great bodhisattvas in the future and present as well.

“Sariputra, as dharma realm is nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as realness, reality, the realm of the inconceivable, and the realm of peace and stability are nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As dharma realm is empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as realness, reality, the realm of the inconceivable, and the realm of peace and stability are empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As dharma realm is far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as realness, reality, the realm of the inconceivable, and the realm of peace and stability are far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As dharma realm does not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as realness, reality, the realm of the inconceivable, and the realm of peace and stability do not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. This applies to great bodhisattvas in the future and present as well.

“Sariputra, as the voice-hearer vehicle is nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the self-enlightened one vehicle and the great vehicle are nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the voice-hearer vehicle is empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the self-enlightened one vehicle and the great vehicle are empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the voice-hearer vehicle is far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the self-enlightened one vehicle and the great vehicle are far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the voice-hearer vehicle does not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the self-enlightened one vehicle and the great vehicle do not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. This applies to great bodhisattvas in the future and present as well.

“Sariputra, as the perfect knowledge of everything is nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths

and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the perfect knowledge of everything is empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are empty, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the perfect knowledge of everything is far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are far away, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. As the perfect knowledge of everything does not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable; as the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and perfect knowledge of all phenomena do not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas in the past were nonexistent and unattainable. This applies to great bodhisattvas in the future and present as well.

“Why? Sariputra, in emptiness, the past, future, present, and the great bodhisattva are unattainable. Sariputra, emptiness, past, future, present, and great bodhisattva are not dualistic or separate. Sariputra, because of this cause and condition, I will say that the great bodhisattvas in the past, future, and present are nonexistent and unattainable.

(Sariputra asked, “Why are great bodhisattvas in the past, future, and present nonexistent and unattainable?” Well-Appearing One replied that because all dharmas are nonexistent, empty, far away, and do not have self-nature, the great bodhisattvas are nonexistent and unattainable in the past, future, and present. Why? In emptiness, the three phases of time and the great bodhisattvas are unattainable; they are not dualistic or separate.)

“Furthermore, venerable Sariputra, as to your question, ‘Why do you say that because matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are boundless, the great bodhisattvas are also boundless? Because the voice-hearer vehicle, self-enlightened one vehicle, and great vehicle are boundless, the great bodhisattvas are also boundless?’ I will say that matter is like empty space, and feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are also like empty space. Why? Sariputra, empty space in the past, future, and present is unattainable. It is named empty space because its center and edge are unattainable. Matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness in the past, future, and present are also unattainable. Why? The nature of matter, feeling, thinking, action,

and consciousness is empty. Sariputra, in emptiness the past, future, and present are unattainable; it is named emptiness because its center and edge are unattainable. Sariputra, because of this cause and condition, I will say that because matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are boundless, the great bodhisattva is also boundless. Because the three vehicles are boundless, the great bodhisattva is also boundless.

(Sariputra asked, “Why are great bodhisattvas boundless because all dharmas are boundless?” Well-Appearing One said that it is because all dharmas are like empty space, boundless and unattainable in the past, future, and present.)

“Furthermore, venerable Sariputra, as to your questions, ‘Why are the great bodhisattvas nonexistent and unattainable whether they are connected to or separate from matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness? Why are the great bodhisattvas nonexistent and unattainable whether they are connected to or separate from the voice-hearer vehicle, self-enlightened one vehicle, and great vehicle?’ I will say that matter and the nature of matter are empty; feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness and their nature are empty too. Why? As matter is nonexistent and unattainable owing to its empty nature, the great bodhisattvas are also nonexistent and unattainable. As feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are nonexistent and unattainable owing to their empty nature, the great bodhisattvas are also nonexistent and unattainable.

(To Sariputra’s question why the great bodhisattvas are nonexistent and unattainable whether they are connected to or separate from various dharmas, Well-Appearing One responded that all dharmas and their nature are empty and unattainable, thus, nondharmas should be empty and unattainable too.)

“Sariputra, nonmatter and the nature of nonmatter are empty; nonfeeling, nonthinking, nonaction, and nonconsciousness and their nature are empty too. Why? As nonmatter is nonexistent and unattainable owing to the empty nonmatter nature, the great bodhisattvas are also nonexistent and unattainable. As nonfeeling, nonthinking, nonaction, and nonconsciousness are nonexistent and unattainable owing to the empty nature of nonfeeling, nonthinking, nonaction, and nonconsciousness, the great bodhisattvas are also nonexistent and unattainable. Sariputra, because of this cause and condition, I will say that as connected to matter, the great

bodhisattvas are nonexistent and unattainable; as separate from matter, the great bodhisattvas are also nonexistent and unattainable. As connected to feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, the great bodhisattvas are nonexistent and unattainable; as separate from feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, the great bodhisattvas are also nonexistent and unattainable. This principle applies to the three vehicles as well.

“Furthermore, venerable Sariputra, you said that I have searched for great bodhisattva in all dharmas, places, times, and by all methods, but cannot find one, so I suggest that I should not take the Buddha’s order to give teachings and cautions of prajna paramita to great bodhisattvas. You then asked me why. Sariputra, since matter and the nature of matter are empty, matter is nonexistent and unattainable in matter and in feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness; feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are also nonexistent and unattainable in matter. Since feeling and the nature of feeling are empty, feeling is nonexistent and unattainable in feeling and in matter, thinking, action, and consciousness; matter, thinking, action, and consciousness are also nonexistent and unattainable in feeling. Since thinking and the nature of thinking are empty, thinking is nonexistent and unattainable in thinking and in matter, feeling, action, and consciousness; matter, feeling, action, and consciousness are also nonexistent and unattainable in thinking. Since action and the nature of action are empty, action is nonexistent and unattainable in action and in matter, feeling, thinking, and consciousness; matter, feeling, thinking, and consciousness are also nonexistent and unattainable in action. Since consciousness and the nature of consciousness are empty, consciousness is nonexistent and unattainable in consciousness and in matter, feeling, thinking, and action; matter, feeling, thinking, and action are also nonexistent and unattainable in consciousness.

“Sariputra, since the eye sphere and the nature of the eye sphere are empty, the eye sphere is nonexistent and unattainable in the eye sphere and in the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres; the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres are also nonexistent and unattainable in the eye sphere. Since the ear sphere and the nature of the ear sphere are empty, the ear sphere is nonexistent and unattainable in the ear sphere and in the eye, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres; the eye, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres are also nonexistent and unattainable in the ear sphere. Since the nose sphere and the nature of the nose sphere are empty, the nose sphere is nonexistent and unattainable in the nose sphere and in the

eye, ear, tongue, body, and conscious spheres; the eye, ear, tongue, body, and conscious spheres are also nonexistent and unattainable in the nose sphere. Since the tongue sphere and the nature of the tongue sphere are empty, the tongue sphere is nonexistent and unattainable in the tongue sphere and in the eye, ear, nose, body, and conscious spheres; the eye, ear, nose, body, and conscious spheres are also nonexistent and unattainable in the tongue sphere. Since the body sphere and the nature of the body sphere are empty, the body sphere is nonexistent and unattainable in the body sphere and in the eye, ear, nose, tongue, and conscious spheres; the eye, ear, nose, tongue, and conscious spheres are also nonexistent and unattainable in the body sphere. Since the conscious sphere and the nature of the conscious sphere are empty, the conscious sphere is nonexistent and unattainable in the conscious sphere and in the eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body spheres; the eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body spheres are also nonexistent and unattainable in the conscious sphere.

“Sariputra, since the sight sphere and the nature of sight sphere are empty, the sight sphere is nonexistent and unattainable in the sight sphere and in the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres; the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres are also nonexistent and unattainable in the sight sphere. Since the sound sphere and the nature of sound sphere are empty, the sound sphere is nonexistent and unattainable in the sound sphere and in the sight, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres; the sight, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres are also nonexistent and unattainable in the sound sphere. Since the smell sphere and the nature of the smell sphere are empty, the smell sphere is nonexistent and unattainable in the smell sphere and in the sight, sound, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres; the sight, sound, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres are also nonexistent and unattainable in the smell sphere. Since the taste sphere and the nature of the taste sphere are empty, the taste sphere is nonexistent and unattainable in the taste sphere and in the sight, sound, smell, touch, and mental-image spheres; the sight, sound, smell, touch, and mental-image spheres are also nonexistent and unattainable in the taste sphere. Since the touch sphere and the nature of the touch sphere are empty, the touch sphere is nonexistent and unattainable in the touch sphere and in the sight, sound, smell, taste, and mental-image spheres; the sight, sound, smell, taste, and mental-image spheres are also nonexistent and unattainable in the touch sphere. Since the mental-image sphere and the nature of the mental-image sphere are empty, the mental-image sphere is nonexistent and

unattainable in the mental-image sphere and in the sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch spheres; the sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch spheres are also nonexistent and unattainable in the mental-image sphere.

“Sariputra, since the eye realm and the nature of the eye realm are empty, the eye realm is nonexistent and unattainable in the eye realm and in the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms; the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms are also nonexistent and unattainable in the eye realm. Since the ear realm and the nature of the ear realm are empty, the ear realm is nonexistent and unattainable in the ear realm and in the eye, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms; the eye, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms are also nonexistent and unattainable in the ear realm. Since the nose realm and the nature of the nose realm are empty, the nose realm is nonexistent and unattainable in the nose realm and in the eye, ear, tongue, body, and conscious realms; the eye, ear, tongue, body, and conscious realms are also nonexistent and unattainable in the nose realm. Since the tongue realm and the nature of the tongue realm are empty, the tongue realm is nonexistent and unattainable in the tongue realm and in the eye, ear, nose, body, and conscious realms; the eye, ear, nose, body, and conscious realms are also nonexistent and unattainable in the tongue realm. Since the body realm and the nature of the body realm are empty, the body realm is nonexistent and unattainable in the body realm and in the eye, ear, nose, tongue, and conscious realms; the eye, ear, nose, tongue, and conscious realms are also nonexistent and unattainable in the body realm. Since the conscious realm and the nature of the conscious realm are empty, the conscious realm is nonexistent and unattainable in the conscious realm and in the eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body realms; the eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body realms are also nonexistent and unattainable in the conscious realm.

“Sariputra, since the sight realm and the nature of the sight realm are empty, the sight realm is nonexistent and unattainable in the sight realm and in the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms; the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms are also nonexistent and unattainable in the sight realm. Since the sound realm and the nature of the sound realm are empty, the sound realm is nonexistent and unattainable in the sound realm and in the sight, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms; the sight, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms are also nonexistent and unattainable in the sound realm. Since the smell realm and the nature of the smell realm are empty, the smell realm is nonexistent and

unattainable in the smell realm and in the sight, sound, taste, touch, and mental-image realms; the sight, sound, taste, touch, and mental-image realms are also nonexistent and unattainable in the smell realm. Since the taste realm and the nature of the taste realm are empty, the taste realm is nonexistent and unattainable in the taste realm and in the sight, sound, smell, touch, and mental-image realms; the sight, sound, smell, touch, and mental-image realms are also nonexistent and unattainable in the taste realm. Since the touch realm and the nature of the touch realm are empty, the touch realm is nonexistent and unattainable in the touch realm and in the sight, sound, smell, taste, and mental-image realms; the sight, sound, smell, taste, and mental-image realms are also nonexistent and unattainable in the touch realm. Since the mental-image realm and the nature of the mental-image realm are empty, the mental-image realm is nonexistent and unattainable in the mental-image realm and in the sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch realms; the sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch realms are also nonexistent and unattainable in the mental-image realm.

“Sariputra, since the eye consciousness realm and the nature of the eye consciousness realm are empty, the eye consciousness realm is nonexistent and unattainable in the eye consciousness realm and in the ear consciousness, nose consciousness, tongue consciousness, body consciousness, and conscious consciousness realms; the ear consciousness, nose consciousness, tongue consciousness, body consciousness, and conscious consciousness realms are also nonexistent and unattainable in the eye consciousness realm. Since the ear consciousness realm and the nature of the ear consciousness realm are empty, the ear consciousness realm is nonexistent and unattainable in the ear consciousness realm and in the eye consciousness, nose consciousness, tongue consciousness, body consciousness, and conscious consciousness realms; the eye consciousness, nose consciousness, tongue consciousness, body consciousness, and conscious consciousness realms are also nonexistent and unattainable in the ear consciousness realm. Since the nose consciousness realm and the nature of the nose consciousness realm are empty, the nose consciousness realm is nonexistent and unattainable in the nose consciousness realm and in the eye consciousness, ear consciousness, tongue consciousness, body consciousness, and conscious consciousness realms; the eye consciousness, ear consciousness, tongue consciousness, body consciousness, and conscious consciousness realms are also nonexistent and unattainable in the nose consciousness realm. Since the tongue consciousness

realm and the nature of the tongue consciousness realm are empty, the tongue consciousness realm is nonexistent and unattainable in the tongue consciousness realm and in the eye consciousness, ear consciousness, nose consciousness, body consciousness, and conscious consciousness realms; the eye consciousness, ear consciousness, nose consciousness, body consciousness, and conscious consciousness realms are also nonexistent and unattainable in the tongue consciousness realm. Since the body consciousness realm and the nature of the body consciousness realm are empty, the body consciousness realm is nonexistent and unattainable in the body consciousness realm and in the eye consciousness, ear consciousness, nose consciousness, tongue consciousness, and conscious consciousness realms; the eye consciousness, ear consciousness, nose consciousness, tongue consciousness, and conscious consciousness realms are also nonexistent and unattainable in the body consciousness realm. Since the conscious consciousness realm and the nature of the conscious consciousness realm are empty, the conscious consciousness realm is nonexistent and unattainable in the conscious consciousness realm and in the eye consciousness, ear consciousness, nose consciousness, tongue consciousness, and body consciousness realms; the eye consciousness, ear consciousness, nose consciousness, tongue consciousness, and body consciousness realms are also nonexistent and unattainable in the conscious consciousness realm.

“Sariputra, since the eye contact and the nature of the eye contact are empty, the eye contact is nonexistent and unattainable in the eye contact and in the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts; the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts are also nonexistent and unattainable in the eye contact. Since the ear contact and the nature of the ear contact are empty, the ear contact is nonexistent and unattainable in the ear contact and in the eye, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts; the eye, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts are also nonexistent and unattainable in the ear contact. Since the nose contact and the nature of the nose contact are empty, the nose contact is nonexistent and unattainable in the nose contact and in the eye, ear, tongue, body, and conscious contacts; the eye, ear, tongue, body, and conscious contacts are also nonexistent and unattainable in the nose contact. Since the tongue contact and the nature of the tongue contact are empty, the tongue contact is nonexistent and unattainable in the tongue contact and in the eye, ear, nose, body, and conscious contacts; the eye, ear, nose, body, and conscious contacts are also nonexistent and unattainable in the tongue contact. Since the body

contact and the nature of the body contact are empty, the body contact is nonexistent and unattainable in the body contact and in the eye, ear, nose, tongue, and conscious contacts; the eye, ear, nose, tongue, and conscious contacts are also nonexistent and unattainable in the body contact. Since the conscious contact and the nature of the conscious contact are empty, the conscious contact is nonexistent and unattainable in the conscious contact and in the eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body contacts; the eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body contacts are also nonexistent and unattainable in the conscious contact.

“Sariputra, since the feelings produced by eye contact and the nature of the feelings produced by eye contact are empty, the feelings produced by eye contact are nonexistent and unattainable in the feelings produced by eye contact and in the feelings produced by ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts; the feelings produced by ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts are also nonexistent and unattainable in the feelings produced by eye contact. Since the feelings produced by ear contact and the nature of the feelings produced by ear contact are empty, the feelings produced by ear contact are nonexistent and unattainable in the feelings produced by ear contact and in the feelings produced by eye, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts; the feelings produced by eye, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts are also nonexistent and unattainable in the feelings produced by ear contact. Since the feelings produced by nose contact and the nature of the feelings produced by nose contact are empty, the feelings produced by nose contact are nonexistent and unattainable in the feelings produced by nose contact and in the feelings produced by eye, ear, tongue, body, and conscious contacts; the feelings produced by eye, ear, tongue, body, and conscious contacts are also nonexistent and unattainable in the feelings produced by nose contact. Since the feelings produced by tongue contact and the nature of the feelings produced by tongue contact are empty, the feelings produced by tongue contact are nonexistent and unattainable in the feelings produced by tongue contact and in the feelings produced by eye, ear, nose, body, and conscious contacts; the feelings produced by eye, ear, nose, body, and conscious contacts are also nonexistent and unattainable in the feelings produced by tongue contact. Since the feelings produced by body contact and the nature of the feelings produced by body contact are empty, the feelings produced by body contact are nonexistent and unattainable in the feelings produced by body contact and in the feelings produced by eye, ear, nose, tongue, and conscious contacts; the feelings produced by

eye, ear, nose, tongue, and conscious contacts are also nonexistent and unattainable in the feelings produced by body contact. Since the feelings produced by conscious contact and the nature of the feelings produced by conscious contact are empty, the feelings produced by conscious contact are nonexistent and unattainable in the feelings produced by conscious contact and in the feelings produced by eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body contacts; the feelings produced by eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body contacts are also nonexistent and unattainable in the feelings produced by conscious contact.”

Section 3

(In the Second Assembly)

“Sariputra, since giving paramita and the nature of giving paramita are empty, giving paramita is nonexistent and unattainable in giving paramita and in pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas; pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas are also nonexistent and unattainable in giving paramita. And so forth, since prajna paramita and the nature of prajna paramita are empty, prajna paramita is nonexistent and unattainable in prajna paramita and in giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, and meditation paramitas; giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, and meditation paramitas are also nonexistent and unattainable in prajna paramita.

“Sariputra, since internal emptiness and the nature of internal emptiness are empty, internal emptiness is nonexistent and unattainable in internal emptiness and in external emptiness, internal-external emptiness, emptiness of emptiness, emptiness of space, emptiness of ultimate truth, emptiness of conditioned phenomena, emptiness of unconditioned reality, emptiness in the final analysis, emptiness of nontemporality, emptiness of deconstruction and nondeconstruction, emptiness of original nature, emptiness of particular and common characteristics, emptiness of all dharmas, emptiness of nonattainment, emptiness of selflessness, emptiness of self-nature, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; external emptiness, internal-external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are also nonexistent and unattainable in internal emptiness. And so forth, since emptiness of selfless self-nature and the nature of emptiness of selfless self-nature are empty, emptiness of selfless self-nature is nonexistent and unattainable in emptiness of selfless self-nature and in internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of self-nature; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of self-nature are also nonexistent and unattainable in emptiness of selfless self-nature.

“Sariputra, since the four bases of mindfulness and the nature of the four bases of mindfulness are empty, the four bases of mindfulness are nonexistent and unattainable in the four

bases of mindfulness and in the four correct endeavors, four bases of power, five roots, five powers, seven factors for enlightenment, and noble eightfold path; the four correct endeavors, four bases of power, and so forth, and noble eightfold path are also nonexistent and unattainable in the four bases of mindfulness. And so forth, since the noble eightfold path and the nature of the noble eightfold path are empty, the noble eightfold path is nonexistent and unattainable in the noble eightfold path and in the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and seven factors for enlightenment; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and seven factors for enlightenment are also nonexistent and unattainable in the noble eightfold path.

“Sariputra, since the Buddha’s ten abilities and the nature of the Buddha’s ten abilities are empty, the Buddha’s ten abilities are nonexistent and unattainable in the Buddha’s ten abilities and in the four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, great equanimity, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power; the four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power are also nonexistent and unattainable in Buddha’s ten abilities. And so forth, since the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power and the nature of the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power are empty, the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power are nonexistent and unattainable in the eighteen distinctive features and in the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and great equanimity; the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and great equanimity are also nonexistent and unattainable in the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power.

“Sariputra, since all samadhi gates and the nature of all samadhi gates are empty, all samadhi gates are nonexistent and unattainable in all samadhi gates and in all dharani gates; all dharani gates are also nonexistent and unattainable in all samadhi gates. Since all dharani gates and the nature of all dharani gates are empty, all dharani gates are nonexistent and unattainable in all dharani gates and in all samadhi gates; all samadhi gates are also nonexistent and unattainable in all dharani gates.

“Sariputra, since the dharma of embryonic Buddha nature and the nature of the dharma of embryonic Buddha nature are empty, the dharma of embryonic Buddha nature is nonexistent and unattainable in the dharma of embryonic Buddha nature and in the dharmas of eight-forbearance, stream-enterer, once-returner, nonreturner, arhat, bodhisattva, and Thus-Comer; the dharma of eight-forbearance, the dharma of stream-enterer, and so forth, and the dharma of the Thus-Comer are also nonexistent and unattainable in the dharma of embryonic Buddha nature. And so forth, since the dharma of Thus-Comer and the nature of the dharma of Thus-Comer are empty, the dharma of Thus-Comer is nonexistent and unattainable in the dharma of Thus-Comer and in the dharma of embryonic Buddha nature, the dharma of eight-forbearance, and so forth, and the dharma of bodhisattva; the dharma of embryonic Buddha nature, the dharma of eight-forbearance, and so forth, and the dharma of the bodhisattva are also nonexistent and unattainable in the dharma of Thus-Comer.

“Sariputra, since the stage of pure contemplation and the nature of the stage of pure contemplation are empty, the stage of pure contemplation is nonexistent and unattainable in the stage of pure contemplation and in the stages of embryonic Buddha nature, eight-forbearance, insight, slight vexation, freedom from all desires, arhat, self-enlightened one, bodhisattva, and Thus-Comer; the stage of embryonic Buddha nature, the stage of eight-forbearance, and so forth, and the stage of Thus-Comer are also nonexistent and unattainable in the stage of pure contemplation. And so forth, since the stage of Thus-Comer and the nature of the stage of Thus-Comer are empty, the stage of Thus-Comer is nonexistent and unattainable in the stage of Thus-Comer and in the stages of pure contemplation, embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and bodhisattva; the stage of pure contemplation, stage of embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and the stage of bodhisattva are also nonexistent and unattainable in the stage of Thus-Comer.

“Sariputra, since the stage of ecstasy and its nature are empty, the stage of ecstasy is nonexistent and unattainable in the stage of ecstasy and in the stages of freedom from defilement, emitting light, flaming wisdom, being extremely difficult to surpass, manifestation of pure realness, going far away, the unmovable, expedient wisdom, and dharma cloud; the stage of freedom from defilements, stage of emitting lights, and so forth, and the stage of dharma cloud are also nonexistent and unattainable in the stage of ecstasy. And so forth, since the stage of dharma cloud and its nature are empty, the stage of dharma cloud is nonexistent and unattainable

in the stage of dharma cloud and in the stage of ecstasy, stage of freedom from defilements, and so forth, and the stage of expedient wisdom; the stage of ecstasy, stage of freedom from defilements, and so forth, and the stage of expedient wisdom are also nonexistent and unattainable in the stage of dharma cloud.

“Sariputra, since the perfect knowledge of everything and its nature are empty, the perfect knowledge of everything is nonexistent and unattainable in the perfect knowledge of everything and in the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are also nonexistent and unattainable in the perfect knowledge of everything. Since the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and its nature are empty, the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths is nonexistent and unattainable in the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and in the perfect knowledge of everything and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena; the perfect knowledge of everything and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are also nonexistent and unattainable in the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths. Since the perfect knowledge of all phenomena and its nature are empty, the perfect knowledge of all phenomena is nonexistent and unattainable in the perfect knowledge of all phenomena and in the perfect knowledge of everything and the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths; the perfect knowledge of everything and the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths are also nonexistent and unattainable in the perfect knowledge of all phenomena.

“Sariputra, since stream-enterer and the nature of stream-enterer are empty, stream-enterer is nonexistent and unattainable in stream-enterer and in once-returner, nonreturner, arhat, bodhisattva, and Thus-Comer; the once-returner, once-returner, and so forth, and Thus-Comer are also nonexistent and unattainable in stream-enterer. And so forth, since Thus-Comer and the nature of Thus-Comer are empty, Thus-Comer is nonexistent and unattainable in Thus-Comer and in stream-enterer, once-returner, and so forth, and bodhisattva; stream-enterer, once-returner, and so forth, and bodhisattva are also nonexistent and unattainable in Thus-Comer.

“Sariputra, since great bodhisattva and the nature of great bodhisattva are empty, great bodhisattva is nonexistent and unattainable in great bodhisattva and in prajna paramita, teachings, and cautions; prajna paramita, teachings, and cautions are also nonexistent and

unattainable in great bodhisattva. Since prajna paramita and the nature of prajna paramita are empty, prajna paramita is nonexistent and unattainable in prajna paramita and in great bodhisattva, teachings, and cautions; great bodhisattva, teachings, and cautions are also nonexistent and unattainable in prajna paramita. Since teachings and cautions and their nature are empty, teachings and cautions are nonexistent and unattainable in teachings and cautions and in great bodhisattva and prajna paramita; great bodhisattva and prajna paramita are also nonexistent and unattainable in teachings and cautions.

“Sariputra, I have searched for great bodhisattvas in all places all the time by all ways, but I have not seen one. Why? It is because the self-nature is empty. Sariputra, because of this cause and condition, I say that I have searched for great bodhisattvas in all places all the time by all ways, but I have not seen one. How can I take the Buddha’s order to give teachings and cautions of prajna paramita to various great bodhisattvas?

(Well-Appearing One explained to Sariputra that because all dharmas, including the five aggregates, spheres, realms, stages of cultivation, and the effects of cultivation, are empty and without self-nature, they are nonexistent and unattainable. Therefore, the great bodhisattva he seeks is also nonexistent and unattainable. Given this truth, he questioned how he could give teach prajna paramita to great bodhisattvas when both are nonexistent and unattainable.)

“Furthermore, Sariputra, you asked why a great bodhisattva is merely a provisionally created name without self-nature. Sariputra, it is because ‘great bodhisattva’ is a designated name.”

At that time, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, “Based on what cause and condition do you say that great bodhisattva is a designated name?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Sariputra, matter is a designated name, and feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are also designated names. Why? Matter is not a name, and the name is not matter. Feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are not the names, and the names are not feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. There are no names in matter, feeling, and so forth; there are no matter, feeling, and so forth in the names. The names are provisionally created; these dharmas are neither combined nor separate. Why? It is because the self-nature of

matter, feeling, and so forth, and the self-nature of names are empty. In the empty self-nature, matter, feeling, and so forth, and the names are nonexistent and unattainable. Sariputra, the name of great bodhisattva is also provisionally created. It is based on this reason to say that the great bodhisattva is a designated name without self-nature.

“Sariputra, the eye sphere is a designated name, and the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres are also the designated names. Why? The eye sphere is not the name, and the name is not the eye sphere; the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres are not the names, and the names are not the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres. In the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, there are no names; in the names, there are no eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth; these dharmas are neither combined nor separate; they are but provisionally created. Why? It is because the self-nature of the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and the self-nature of the names are empty. In the empty self-nature, the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and the names are all nonexistent and unattainable. Sariputra, the name of great bodhisattva is also provisionally created. It is based on this reason to say that the great bodhisattva is a designated name without self-nature.

“Sariputra, the sight sphere is a designated name, and the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres are also the designated names. Why? The sight sphere is not the name, and the name is not the sight sphere; the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres are not the names, and the names are not the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres. In the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, there are no names; in the names, there are no sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth; these dharmas are neither combined nor separate; they are but provisionally created. Why? It is because the self-nature of the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and the self-nature of the names are empty. In the empty self-nature, the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and the names are all nonexistent and unattainable. Sariputra, the name of great bodhisattva is also provisionally created. It is based on this reason to say that the great bodhisattva is a designated name without self-nature.

“Sariputra, the eye realm is a designated name, and the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms are also the designated names. Why? The eye realm is not the name, and the name is not the eye realm; the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms are not the names,

and the names are not the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms. In the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, there are no names; in the names, there are no eye realm, ear realm, and so forth; these dharmas are neither combined nor separate; they are but provisionally created. Why? It is because the self-nature of the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and the self-nature of the names are empty. In the empty self-nature, the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and the names are all nonexistent and unattainable. Sariputra, the name of great bodhisattva is also provisionally created. It is based on this reason to say that the great bodhisattva is a designated name without self-nature.

“Sariputra, the sight realm is a designated name, and the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms are also the designated names. Why? The sight realm is not the name, and the name is not the sight realm; the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms are not the names, and the names are not the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms. In the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, there are no names; in the names, there are no sight realm, sound realm, and so forth; these dharmas are neither combined nor separate; they are but provisionally created. Why? It is because the self-nature of the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and the self-nature of the names are empty. In the empty self-nature, the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and the names are all nonexistent and unattainable. Sariputra, the name of great bodhisattva is also provisionally created. It is based on this reason to say that the great bodhisattva is a designated name without self-nature.

“Sariputra, the eye consciousness realm is a designated name, and the ear consciousness, nose consciousness, tongue consciousness, body consciousness, and conscious consciousness realms are also the designated names. Why? The eye consciousness realm is not the name, and the name is not the eye consciousness realm; the ear consciousness, nose consciousness, tongue consciousness, body consciousness, and conscious consciousness realms are not the names, and the names are not the ear consciousness, nose consciousness, tongue consciousness, body consciousness, and conscious consciousness realms. In the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, there are no names; in the names, there are no eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth; these dharmas are neither combined nor separate; they are but provisionally created. Why? It is because the self-nature of the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and the self-nature

of the names are empty. In the empty self-nature, the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and the names are all nonexistent and unattainable. Sariputra, the name of great bodhisattva is also provisionally created. It is based on this reason to say that the great bodhisattva is a designated name without self-nature.

“Sariputra, the eye contact is a designated name, and the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts are also the designated names. Why? The eye contact is not the name, and the name is not the eye contact; the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts are not the names, and the names are not the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts. In the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, there are no names; in the names, there are no eye contact, ear contact, and so forth; these dharmas are neither combined nor separate; they are but provisionally created. Why? It is because the self-nature of eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and the self-nature of the names are empty. In the empty self-nature, eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and the names are all nonexistent and unattainable. Sariputra, the name of great bodhisattva is also provisionally created. It is based on this reason to say that the great bodhisattva is a designated name without self-nature.

“Sariputra, the feelings produced by eye contact is a designated name, and the feelings produced by ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts are also the designated names. Why? The feelings produced by eye contact are not the name, and the name is not the feelings produced by eye contact; the feelings produced by ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts are not the names, and the names are not the feelings produced by ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts. In the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, there are no names; in the names, there are no feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth; these dharmas are neither combined nor separate; they are but provisionally created. Why? It is because the self-nature of the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and the self-nature of the names are empty. In the empty self-nature, the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and the names are all nonexistent and unattainable. Sariputra, the name of great bodhisattva is also provisionally created. It is based on this reason to say that the great bodhisattva is a designated name without self-nature.

“Sariputra, giving paramita is a designated name, and pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas are also the designated names. Why? Giving paramita is not the name, and the name is not giving paramita; pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas are not the names, and the names are not pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas. In giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas, there are no names; in the names, there are no giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas; these dharmas are neither combined nor separate; they are but provisionally created. Why? It is because the self-nature of giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas and the self-nature of the names are empty. In the empty self-nature, giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas and the names are all nonexistent and unattainable. Sariputra, the name of great bodhisattva is also provisionally created. It is based on this reason to say that the great bodhisattva is a designated name without self-nature.

“Sariputra, internal emptiness is a designated name; external emptiness, internal-external emptiness, emptiness of emptiness, emptiness of space, emptiness of ultimate truth, emptiness of conditioned phenomena, emptiness of unconditioned reality, emptiness in the final analysis, emptiness of nontemporality, emptiness of deconstruction and nondeconstruction, emptiness of original nature, emptiness of particular and common characteristics, emptiness of all dharmas, emptiness of nonattainment, emptiness of selflessness, emptiness of self-nature, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are also the designated names. Why? Internal emptiness is not the name, and the name is not the eye contact; external emptiness, internal-external emptiness, and so forth are not the names, and the names are not external emptiness, internal-external emptiness, and so forth. In internal emptiness, external emptiness, internal-external emptiness, and so forth, there are no names; in the names, there are internal emptiness, external emptiness, internal-external emptiness, and so forth; these dharmas are neither combined nor separate; they are but provisionally created. Why? It is because the self-nature of internal emptiness, external emptiness, internal-external emptiness, and so forth, and the self-nature of the names are empty. In the empty self-nature, internal emptiness, external emptiness, internal-external emptiness, and so forth, and the names are all nonexistent and unattainable. Sariputra, the name of great

bodhisattva is also provisionally created. It is based on this reason to say that the great bodhisattva is a designated name without self-nature.

“Sariputra, the four bases of mindfulness is a designated name, and the four correct endeavors, four bases of power, five roots, five powers, seven factors for enlightenment, and noble eightfold path are also the designated names. Why? The four bases of mindfulness are not the name, and the name is not the four bases of mindfulness; the four correct endeavors, four bases of power, and so forth are not the names, and the names are not the four correct endeavors, four bases of power, and so forth. In the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, there are no names; in the names, there are no four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth; these dharmas are neither combined nor separate; they are but provisionally created. Why? It is because the self-nature of the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and the self-nature of the names are empty. In the empty self-nature, the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and the names are all nonexistent and unattainable. Sariputra, the name of great bodhisattva is also provisionally created. It is based on this reason to say that the great bodhisattva is a designated name without self-nature.

“Sariputra, the Buddha’s ten abilities is a designated name, and the four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, great equanimity, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power are also the designated names. Why? The Buddha’s ten abilities are not the name, and the name is not the Buddha’s ten abilities; the four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, and so forth are not the names, and the names are not the four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, and so forth. In the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, and so forth, there are no names; in the names, there are no Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, and so forth; these dharmas are neither combined nor separate; they are but provisionally created. Why? It is because the self-nature of the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, and so forth, and the self-nature of the names are empty. In the empty self-nature, the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, and so forth, and the names are all nonexistent and unattainable. Sariputra, the name of great

bodhisattva is also provisionally created. It is based on this reason to say that the great bodhisattva is a designated name without self-nature.

“Sariputra, the samadhi gate is a designated name, and the dharani gate is also a designated name. Why? The samadhi gate is not a name, and the name is not the samadhi gate; the dharani gate is not a name, and the name is not the dharani gate. In the samadhi gate and dharani gate, there are no names; in the names, there are no samadhi gate and dharani gate; these dharmas are neither combined nor separate; they are but provisionally created. Why? It is because the self-nature of the samadhi gate and dharani gate, and the self-nature of the names are empty. In the empty self-nature, the samadhi gate, dharani gate, and the names are all nonexistent and unattainable. Sariputra, the name of great bodhisattva is also provisionally created. It is based on this reason to say that the great bodhisattva is a designated name without self-nature.

“Sariputra, the perfect knowledge of everything is a designated name, and the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are also the designated names. Why? The perfect knowledge of everything is not the name, and the name is not the perfect knowledge of everything; the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are not the names, and the names are not the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. In perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena, there are no names; in the names, there are no perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; these dharmas are neither combined nor separate; they are but provisionally created. Why? It is because the self-nature of the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena, and the self-nature of the names are empty. In the empty self-nature, the three kinds of perfect knowledge and the names are all nonexistent and unattainable. Sariputra, the name of great bodhisattva is also provisionally created. It is based on this reason to say that the great bodhisattva is a designated name without self-nature.

(Well-Appearing One explained in these paragraphs why the great bodhisattva is a designated name without self-nature.)

“Furthermore, venerable Sariputra, as to your question, ‘Based on what cause and condition do you say that the ‘I,’ the sentient being, the living one, and so forth are without arising in the final analysis, and that they are provisionally created names without self-nature?’ I will say that the ‘I,’ the sentient being, the living one, and so forth, and the viewer are nonexistent and unattainable in the final analysis, so how can they arise? Sariputra, matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are nonexistent and unattainable in the final analysis, so how can they arise? Sariputra, the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres are nonexistent and unattainable in the final analysis, so how can they arise? Sariputra, the sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres are nonexistent and unattainable in the final analysis, so how can they arise? Sariputra, the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms are nonexistent and unattainable in the final analysis, so how can they arise? Sariputra, the sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms are nonexistent and unattainable in the final analysis, so how can they arise? Sariputra, the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, nose consciousness realm, tongue consciousness realm, body consciousness realm, and conscious consciousness realm are nonexistent and unattainable in the final analysis, so how can they arise? Sariputra, the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts are nonexistent and unattainable in the final analysis, so how can they arise? Sariputra, the feelings produced by eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts are nonexistent and unattainable in the final analysis, so how can they arise? Sariputra, giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas are nonexistent and unattainable in the final analysis, so how can they arise? Sariputra, internal emptiness is nonexistent and unattainable in the final analysis, so how can it arise? External emptiness, internal-external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are nonexistent and unattainable in the final analysis, so how can they arise? Sariputra, the four bases of mindfulness are nonexistent and unattainable in the final analysis, so how can they arise? The four correct endeavors, four bases of power, and so forth, and noble eightfold path are nonexistent and unattainable in the final analysis, so how can they arise? The Buddha’s ten abilities are nonexistent and unattainable in the final analysis, so how can they arise? The four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, and so forth, and

eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power are nonexistent and unattainable in the final analysis, so how can they arise? Sariputra, all samadhi gates are nonexistent and unattainable in the final analysis, so how can they arise? All dharani gates are nonexistent and unattainable in the final analysis, so how can they arise? And so forth, the voice-hearer vehicle is nonexistent and unattainable in the final analysis, so how can it arise? The self-enlightened one vehicle and the great vehicle are nonexistent and unattainable in the final analysis, so how can they arise? Sariputra, it is based on this cause and condition to say that the 'I,' the sentient being, the living one, and so forth do not have arising and self-nature; they are merely provisionally created names.

(Well-Appearing One explained that because the 'I,' the sentient being, the living one, and so forth, and the viewer cannot arise because they are nonexistent and unattainable in the final analysis. Similarly, all dharmas cannot arise because they are nonexistent and unattainable in the final analysis.)

"Furthermore, venerable Sariputra, you asked, 'Based on what cause and condition do you say that all dharmas, as the designated names without self-nature, do not arise in the final analysis?' Sariputra, all dharmas do not arise in the final analysis because they do not have the self-nature of combination. Why? It is because the self-nature of combination is empty."

(Well-Appearing One explained that all dharmas do not have the self-nature of combination. Thus, they do not arise in the final analysis.)

Meanwhile, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, "What dharmas do not have the self-nature of combination?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "Sariputra, matter does not have the self-nature of combination; feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness do not have the self-nature of combination either. The eye sphere does not have the self-nature of combination; the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres do not have the self-nature of combination either. The sight sphere does not have the self-nature of combination; the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres do not have the self-nature of combination either. The eye realm does not have the self-nature of combination; the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms do not have the

self-nature of combination either. The sight realm does not have the self-nature of combination; the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms do not have the self-nature of combination either. The eye consciousness realm does not have the self-nature of combination; the ear consciousness realm, nose consciousness realm, tongue consciousness realm, body consciousness realm, and conscious consciousness realm do not have the self-nature of combination either. The eye contact does not have the self-nature of combination; the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts do not have the self-nature of combination either. The feelings produced by eye contact do not have the self-nature of combination; the feelings produced by ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts do not have the self-nature of combination either. Giving paramita does not have the self-nature of combination; pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas do not have the self-nature of combination either. The four bases of mindfulness do not have the self-nature of combination; the four correct endeavors, four bases of power, five roots, five powers, seven factors for enlightenment, and noble eightfold path do not have the self-nature of combination either. And so forth, the Buddha's ten abilities do not have the self-nature of combination; the four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, great equanimity, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power do not have the self-nature of combination either. The voice-hearer vehicle does not have the self-nature of combination; the self-enlightened one vehicle and the great vehicle do not have the self-nature of combination either. Sariputra, it is based on this cause and condition to say that all dharmas do not arise in the final analysis; they do not have the self-nature; and they are merely provisional created names.

(Well-Appearing One listed the dharmas without the self-nature of combination.)

“Furthermore, Sariputra, all dharmas are impermanent and go nowhere.”

Meanwhile, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, “What dharmas are impermanent and go nowhere?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Sariputra, matter is impermanent and goes nowhere; feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are impermanent and will go nowhere. Why?

Sariputra, the dharmas are impermanent because their self-nature is exhausted. Sariputra, it is based on this reason to say that the dharmas are impermanent and will go nowhere.

“Sariputra, the conditioned dharmas are impermanent and go nowhere; the unconditioned dharmas are impermanent and go nowhere. The flawed dharmas are impermanent and go nowhere; the flawless dharmas are impermanent and go nowhere. The virtuous dharmas are impermanent and go nowhere; the not virtuous dharmas are impermanent and go nowhere. The morally related dharmas are impermanent and go nowhere; the morally unrelated dharmas are impermanent and go nowhere. Why? Sariputra, the dharmas are impermanent because their self-nature is exhausted. Sariputra, it is based on this reason to say that the dharmas are impermanent and will go nowhere.

(Well-Appearing One explained why all dharmas are impermanent and go nowhere.)

“Furthermore, Sariputra, all dharmas are impermanent and do not decay and extinguish.”

Meanwhile, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, “What dharmas are impermanent and do not decay and extinguish?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Sariputra, matter is impermanent and does not decay and extinguish. Feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are impermanent and do not decay and extinguish. Why? It is because of their original nature.

“Sariputra, the conditioned dharmas and the unconditioned dharmas are impermanent and do not decay and extinguish. The flawed dharmas and the flawless dharmas are impermanent and do not decay and extinguish. The virtuous dharmas and the not virtuous dharmas are impermanent and do not decay and extinguish. The morally related dharmas and the morally unrelated dharmas are impermanent and do not decay and extinguish. Why? It is because of their original nature.

(Well-Appearing One said that all dharmas are impermanent and do not decay and extinguish because of their original nature.)

“Sariputra, it is based on this cause and condition to say that all dharmas are without arising in the final analysis; they do not have self-nature; and they are merely provisional created names.

“Furthermore, venerable Sariputra, you asked, ‘Why do you ask what kinds of matter are without arising in the final analysis? What kinds of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are without arising in the final analysis? And so forth, what voice-hearer vehicle is without arising in the final analysis? What self-enlightened one vehicle and what great vehicle are without arising in the final analysis?’ Sariputra, the self-nature of all kinds of matter is without arising, and the self-nature of all kinds of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness is without arising either. Why? Sariputra, all kinds of matter, feeling, thinking, action consciousness are not made or initiated. Why? It is because the maker and initiator of all kinds of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are unattainable. Sariputra, the self-nature of the voice-hearer vehicle is without arising; the self-nature of the self-enlightened one vehicle and the great vehicle is also without arising. Why? Sariputra, the voice-hearer vehicle, the self-enlightened one vehicle, and the great vehicle are not made or initiated. Why? It is because the maker and initiator of the voice-hearer vehicle, the self-enlightened one vehicle, and the great vehicle are unattainable. Sariputra, it is based on this cause and condition to ask what kinds of matter are without arising in the final analysis; what kinds of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are without arising in the final analysis; and what voice-hearer vehicle, what self-enlightened one vehicle, and what great vehicle are without arising in the final analysis.

(Well-Appearing One explained why he asked these questions: What kinds of five aggregates are without arising in the final analysis? What vehicles are without arising in the final analysis. The answer is that these dharmas do not arise because the maker and initiator are unattainable.)

“Furthermore, venerable Sariputra, you asked, ‘Why do you say that matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness without arising in the final analysis are not named matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness; the voice-hearer vehicle, the self-enlightened one vehicle, and the great vehicle without arising in the final analysis are not named the voice-hearer vehicle, the self-enlightened one vehicle, and the great vehicle?’ Sariputra, the original nature of matter is empty. The dharmas with empty original nature should not be established as with

arising, extinction, duration, and decay. Therefore, as matter is without arising in the final analysis, it is not named matter. Why? Emptiness is not matter. Sariputra, the original nature of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness is empty too. The dharmas with empty original nature should not be established as with arising, extinction, duration, and decay. Therefore, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness without arising in the final analysis are not named feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Why? Emptiness is not feeling, thinking, action, or consciousness. Sariputra, the original nature of the voice-hearer vehicle is empty too. The dharmas with empty original nature should not be established as with arising, extinction, duration, and decay. Therefore, the voice-hearer vehicle without arising in the final analysis is not named the voice-hearer vehicle. Why? Emptiness is not the voice-hearer vehicle. Sariputra, the original nature of self-enlightened one vehicle and the original nature of the great vehicle are empty. The dharmas with empty original nature should not be established as with arising, extinction, duration, and decay. Therefore, the self-enlightened one vehicle and the great vehicle without arising in the final analysis are not named the self-enlightened one vehicle or the great vehicle. Why? Emptiness is not the self-enlightened one vehicle or the great vehicle. Sariputra, because of this cause and condition, I say that the dharmas without arising in the final analysis should not be named matter, feeling, thinking, action, or consciousness; nor should they be named the voice-hearer vehicle, the self-enlightened one vehicle, or the great vehicle.

(Well-Appearing One explained why the dharmas without arising in the final analysis should not be named matter, feeling, and so forth, and the voice-hearer vehicle, self-enlightened one vehicle, or great vehicle.)

“Furthermore, venerable Sariputra, you asked, ‘Why do you say that you cannot give teachings and cautions of prajna paramita that is without arising in the final analysis to great bodhisattvas who are also without arising in the final analysis?’ Sariputra, nonarising in the final analysis is prajna paramita, and prajna paramita is nonarising in the final analysis. Why? Nonarising in the final analysis and prajna paramita are not dualistic or separate. Sariputra, nonarising in the final analysis is great bodhisattva, and great bodhisattva is nonarising in the final analysis. Why? Nonarising in the final analysis and great bodhisattva are not dualistic or separate. Sariputra, because of this cause and condition, how can I give teachings and cautions of

prajna paramita that is without arising in the final analysis to the great bodhisattvas who are also without arising in the final analysis?

(Well-Appearing One explained why he cannot give teachings and cautions to great bodhisattvas about prajna paramita. It is because prajna paramita and great bodhisattvas are without arising in the final analysis; they are neither dualistic nor separate.)

“Furthermore, venerable Sariputra, you asked, ‘Why do you say that apart from nonarising in the final analysis, no great bodhisattvas can practice the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi?’ Sariputra, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas do not see prajna paramita or great bodhisattva apart from nonarising in the final analysis. Why? Prajna paramita, great bodhisattva, and nonarising in the final analysis are not different or separate. Sariputra, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas do not see matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness apart from nonarising in the final analysis. Why? Matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness and nonarising in the final analysis are not different or separate. Sariputra, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas do not see the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres apart from nonarising in the final analysis. Why? The eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres and nonarising in the final analysis are not different or separate. Sariputra, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas do not see the sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres apart from nonarising in the final analysis. Why? The sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres and nonarising in the final analysis are not different or separate. Sariputra, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas do not see the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms apart from nonarising in the final analysis. Why? The eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms and nonarising in the final analysis are not different or separate. Sariputra, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas do not see the sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms apart from nonarising in the final analysis. Why? The sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms and nonarising in the final analysis are not different or separate. Sariputra, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas do not see the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, nose consciousness realm, tongue consciousness realm, body consciousness realm, and conscious consciousness realm apart from nonarising in the final analysis. Why? The eye consciousness

realm, ear consciousness realm, nose consciousness realm, tongue consciousness realm, body consciousness realm, and conscious consciousness realm and nonarising in the final analysis are not different or separate. Sariputra, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas do not see the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts apart from nonarising in the final analysis. Why? The eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts and nonarising in the final analysis are not different or separate. Sariputra, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas do not see the feelings produced by eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts apart from nonarising in the final analysis. Why? The feelings produced by eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts and nonarising in the final analysis are not different or separate. Sariputra, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas do not see giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas apart from nonarising in the final analysis. Why? Giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas and nonarising in the final analysis are not different or separate. Sariputra, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas do not see the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, four bases of power, five roots, five powers, seven factors for enlightenment, and noble eightfold path apart from nonarising in the final analysis. Why? The four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path and nonarising in the final analysis are not different or separate. Sariputra, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas do not see the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, great equanimity, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power apart from nonarising in the final analysis. Why? The Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power and nonarising in the final analysis are not different or separate. Sariputra, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas do not see all samadhi gates and all dharani gates apart from nonarising in the final analysis. Why? All samadhi gates, all dharani gates, and nonarising in the final analysis are not different or separate. Sariputra, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas do not see the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena apart from nonarising in the final analysis. Why? The perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena and nonarising in the final analysis are not different or separate. Sariputra, when

cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas do not see the voice-hearer vehicle, self-enlightened one vehicle, and great vehicle apart from nonarising in the final analysis. Why? The voice-hearer vehicle, self-enlightened one vehicle, and great vehicle and nonarising in the final analysis are not different or separate. Sariputra, because of this cause and condition, no great bodhisattvas can practice the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi apart from nonarising in the final analysis.

(Well-Appearing One explained why the great bodhisattvas cannot practice the unsurpassed bodhi apart from arising in the final analysis. His answer is that all dharmas, including the aggregates, spheres, realms, and the superior holy dharmas, are not apart from nonarising in the final analysis. When practicing the dharmas, the great bodhisattvas will not see the dharmas apart from nonarising in the final analysis. These various dharmas and nonarising in the final analysis are not different and separate.)

“Furthermore, venerable Sariputra, you asked, ‘Why do you say that the great bodhisattvas not drowned, worried, regretful, shocked, frightened, and scared upon hearing sayings about prajna paramita are the real practitioners of prajna paramita?’ Sariputra, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas do not see any operations in all dharmas; they rather see that all dharmas are like dreams, illusions, echoes, images in mirrors, illusory images of water under sunlight, shadows, mirages, and transformed things. The dharmas look as if they were doing something, while they are not. After having this realization, the great bodhisattvas will rejoice and their minds will not be drowned, worried, regretful, or frightened because they know that the original nature of all dharmas is empty. Sariputra, because of this reason, I say that if great bodhisattvas hear prajna paramita and their minds are not be drowned, worried, regretful, shocked, scared, or frightened, they do practice prajna paramita.”

(Well-Appearing One explained why the great bodhisattvas not worried and scared upon hearing the teachings of prajna paramita are the real practitioners of prajna paramita.)

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Chapter 23

Boundlessness

Section 4

(In the Second Assembly)

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, when cultivating prajna paramita and contemplating various dharmas, the great bodhisattvas will not receive, grasp, dwell in, and be attached to matter and establish it as with selfness, nor will they receive, grasp, dwell in, and be attached to feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness and establish them as with selfness. Why? World-Honored One, these great bodhisattvas at that time do not see matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness.

“The great bodhisattvas will not receive, grasp, dwell in, and be attached to the eye sphere and establish it as with selfness, nor will they receive, grasp, dwell in, and be attached to the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres and establish them as with selfness. Why? World-Honored One, these great bodhisattvas at that time do not see the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere.

“The great bodhisattvas will not receive, grasp, dwell in, and be attached to the sight sphere and establish it as with selfness, nor will they receive, grasp, dwell in, and be attached to the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres and establish them as with selfness. Why? World-Honored One, these great bodhisattvas at that time do not see the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere.

“The great bodhisattvas will not receive, grasp, dwell in, and be attached to the eye realm and establish it as with selfness, nor will they receive, grasp, dwell in, and be attached to the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms and establish them as with selfness. Why? World-

Honored One, these great bodhisattvas at that time do not see the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm.

“The great bodhisattvas will not receive, grasp, dwell in, and be attached to the sight realm and establish it as with selfness, nor will they receive, grasp, dwell in, and be attached to the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms and establish them as with selfness. Why? World-Honored One, these great bodhisattvas at that time do not see the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm.

“The great bodhisattvas will not receive, grasp, dwell in, and be attached to the eye consciousness realm and establish it as with selfness, nor will they receive, grasp, dwell in, and be attached to the ear consciousness realm, nose consciousness realm, tongue consciousness realm, body consciousness realm, and conscious consciousness realm and establish them as with selfness. Why? World-Honored One, these great bodhisattvas at that time do not see the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm.

“The great bodhisattvas will not receive, grasp, dwell in, and be attached to the eye contact and establish it as with selfness, nor will they receive, grasp, dwell in, and be attached to the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts and establish them as with selfness. Why? World-Honored One, these great bodhisattvas at that time do not see the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact.

“The great bodhisattvas will not receive, grasp, dwell in, and be attached to the feelings produced by eye contact and establish them as with selfness, nor will they receive, grasp, dwell in, and be attached to the feelings produced by ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts and establish them as with selfness. Why? World-Honored One, these great bodhisattvas at that time do not see the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact.

“The great bodhisattvas will not receive, grasp, dwell in, and be attached to giving paramita and establish it as with selfness, nor will they receive, grasp, dwell in, and be attached to pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas and establish them as

with selfness. Why? World-Honored One, these great bodhisattvas at that time do not see giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita.

“The great bodhisattvas will not receive, grasp, dwell in, and be attached to internal emptiness and establish it as with selfness, nor will they receive, grasp, dwell in, and be attached to external emptiness, internal-external emptiness, emptiness of emptiness, emptiness of space, emptiness of ultimate truth, emptiness of conditioned phenomena, emptiness of unconditioned reality, emptiness in the final analysis, emptiness of nontemporality, emptiness of deconstruction and nondeconstruction, emptiness of original nature, emptiness of particular and common characteristics, emptiness of all dharmas, emptiness of nonattainment, emptiness of selflessness, emptiness of self-nature, and emptiness of selfless self-nature and establish them as with selfness. Why? World-Honored One, these great bodhisattvas at that time do not see internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature.

“The great bodhisattvas will not receive, grasp, dwell in, and be attached to the four bases of mindfulness and establish them as with selfness, nor will they receive, grasp, dwell in, and be attached to the four correct endeavors, four bases of power, five roots, five powers, seven factors for enlightenment, and noble eightfold path and establish them as with selfness. Why? World-Honored One, these great bodhisattvas at that time do not see the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path.

“The great bodhisattvas will not receive, grasp, dwell in, and be attached to the Buddha’s ten abilities and establish them as with selfness, nor will they receive, grasp, dwell in, and be attached to the four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, great equanimity, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power and establish them as with selfness. Why? World-Honored One, these great bodhisattvas at that time do not see the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power.

“The great bodhisattvas will not receive, grasp, dwell in, and be attached to all samadhi gates and establish them as with selfness, nor will they receive, grasp, dwell in, and be attached to all dharani gates and establish them as with selfness. Why? World-Honored One, these great bodhisattvas at that time do not see all samadhi gates and all dharani gates.

“The great bodhisattvas will not receive, grasp, dwell in, and be attached to the perfect knowledge of everything and establish it as with selfness, nor will they receive, grasp, dwell in, and be attached to the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena and establish them as with selfness. Why? World-Honored One, these great bodhisattvas at that time do not see the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena.

(Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha that when cultivating prajna paramita and contemplating various dharmas, the great bodhisattvas will not receive, grasp, dwell in, and be attached to the five aggregates, six inner spheres and realms, six outer spheres and realms, the feelings produced by the six contacts, and so forth, and six paramitas, various kinds of emptiness, as well as the rest of the superior holy dharmas, nor will they establish them as with selfness because they do not see these dharmas when practicing prajna paramita.)

“World-Honored One, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas do not see matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Why? The nature of matter, feeling, and so forth is empty and without arising and extinction. They do not see the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres. Why? The nature of the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth is empty and without arising and extinction. They do not see the sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres. Why? The nature of the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth is empty and without arising and extinction. They do not see the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms. Why? The nature of the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth is empty and without arising and extinction. They do not see the sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms. Why? The nature of the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth is empty and without arising and extinction. They do not see the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, nose consciousness realm, tongue consciousness realm, body consciousness realm, and conscious consciousness realm. Why? The nature of the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth is empty and without arising and extinction. They do not see the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts. Why? The nature of the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth is empty and without arising and extinction. They do not see the feelings produced by eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts. Why? The nature of the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth is empty and without arising and

extinction. They do not see giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas. Why? The nature of giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth is empty and without arising and extinction. They do not see internal emptiness, external emptiness, internal-external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature. Why? The nature of internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth is empty and without arising and extinction. They do not see the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path. Why? The nature of the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth is empty and without arising and extinction. And so on, they do not see the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power. Why? The nature of the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth is empty and without arising and extinction. They do not see all samadhi gates and all dharani gates. Why? The nature of all samadhi gates and all dharani gates is empty and without arising and extinction. They do not see dharma realm, realness, reality, the realm of the inconceivable, and the realm of peace and stability. Why? The nature of dharma realm, realness, and so forth is empty and without arising and extinction. They do not see all bodhisattva actions and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas. Why? The nature of all bodhisattva actions and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas is empty and without arising and extinction. They do not see the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Why? The nature of the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena is empty and without arising and extinction.

(Well-Appearing One explained that the great bodhisattvas do not see various dharmas when practicing prajna paramita because the nature of these dharmas is empty and without arising and extinction.)

“World-Honored One, matter without arising and extinction is not matter; feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness without arising and extinction are not feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Why? Matter, feeling, and so forth are not different or separate from nonarising and nonextinction. Why? The dharmas without arising and extinction are not one dharma, two dharmas, many dharmas, or different dharmas. Therefore, matter without arising

and extinction is not matter; feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness without arising and extinction are not feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness.

“World-Honored One, the eye sphere without arising and extinction is not the eye sphere; the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres without arising and extinction are not the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres. Why? The eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth are not different or separate from nonarising and nonextinction. Why? The dharmas without arising and extinction are not one dharma, two dharmas, many dharmas, or different dharmas. Therefore, the eye sphere without arising and extinction is not the eye sphere; the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres without arising and extinction are not the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres.

“World-Honored One, the sight sphere without arising and extinction is not the sight sphere; the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres without arising and extinction are not the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres. Why? It is because the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth are not different or separate from nonarising and nonextinction. Why? The dharmas without arising and extinction are not one dharma, two dharmas, many dharmas, or different dharmas. Therefore, the sight sphere without arising and extinction is not the sight sphere; the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres without arising and extinction are not the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres.

(Then, the dharmas without arising and extinction are the realness of the dharmas, which transcends the worldly transient dharmas.)

“World-Honored One, the eye realm without arising and extinction is not the eye realm; the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms without arising and extinction are not the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms. Why? The eye realm, ear realm, and so forth are not different or separate from nonarising and nonextinction. Why? The dharmas without arising and extinction are not one dharma, two dharmas, many dharmas, or different dharmas. Therefore, the eye realm without arising and extinction is not the eye realm; the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms without arising and extinction are not the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms.

“World-Honored One, the sight realm without arising and extinction is not the sight realm; the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms without arising and extinction are not the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms. Why? The sight realm, sound realm, and so forth are not different or separate from nonarising and nonextinction. Why? The dharmas without arising and extinction are not one dharma, two dharmas, many dharmas, or different dharmas. Therefore, the sight realm without arising and extinction is not the sight realm; the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms without arising and extinction are not the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms.

“World-Honored One, the eye consciousness realm without arising and extinction is not the eye consciousness realm; the ear consciousness realm, nose consciousness realm, tongue consciousness realm, body consciousness realm, and conscious consciousness realm without arising and extinction are not the ear consciousness realm, nose consciousness realm, tongue consciousness realm, body consciousness realm, and conscious consciousness realm. Why? The eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth are not different or separate from nonarising and nonextinction. Why? The dharmas without arising and extinction are not one dharma, two dharmas, many dharmas, or different dharmas. Therefore, the eye consciousness realm without arising and extinction is not the eye consciousness realm; the ear consciousness realm, nose consciousness realm, tongue consciousness realm, body consciousness realm, and conscious consciousness realm without arising and extinction are not the ear consciousness realm, nose consciousness realm, tongue consciousness realm, body consciousness realm, and conscious consciousness realm.

“World-Honored One, the eye contact without arising and extinction is not the eye contact; the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts without arising and extinction are not the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts. Why? The eye contact, ear contact, and so forth are not different or separate from nonarising and nonextinction. Why? The dharmas without arising and extinction are not one dharma, two dharmas, many dharmas, or different dharmas. Therefore, the eye contact without arising and extinction is not the eye contact; the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts without arising and extinction are not the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts.

“World-Honored One, the feelings produced by eye contact without arising and extinction are not the feelings produced by eye contact; the feelings produced by ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts without arising and extinction are not the feelings produced by ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts. Why? The feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth are not different or separate from nonarising and nonextinction. Why? The dharmas without arising and extinction are not one dharma, two dharmas, many dharmas, or different dharmas. Therefore, the feelings produced by eye contact without arising and extinction are not the feelings produced by eye contact; the feelings produced by ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts without arising and extinction are not the feelings produced by ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts.

“World-Honored One, giving paramita without arising and extinction is not giving paramita; pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas without arising and extinction are not pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas. Why? Giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth are not different or separate from nonarising and nonextinction. Why? The dharmas without arising and extinction are not one dharma, two dharmas, many dharmas, or different dharmas. Therefore, giving paramita without arising and extinction is not giving paramita; pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas without arising and extinction are not pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas.

“World-Honored One, internal emptiness without arising and extinction is not internal emptiness; external emptiness, internal-external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature without arising and extinction are not external emptiness, internal-external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature. Why? Internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth are not different or separate from nonarising and nonextinction. Why? The dharmas without arising and extinction are not one dharma, two dharmas, many dharmas, or different dharmas. Therefore, internal emptiness without arising and extinction is not internal emptiness; external emptiness, internal-external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature without arising and extinction are not external emptiness, internal-external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature.

“World-Honored One, the four bases of mindfulness without arising and extinction are not the four bases of mindfulness; the four correct endeavors, four bases of power, and so forth, and noble eightfold path without arising and extinction are not the four correct endeavors, four bases of power, and so forth, and noble eightfold path. Why? The four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth are not different or separate from nonarising and nonextinction. Why? The dharmas without arising and extinction are not one dharma, two dharmas, many dharmas, or different dharmas. Therefore, the four bases of mindfulness without arising and extinction are not the four bases of mindfulness; the four correct endeavors, four bases of power, and so forth, and noble eightfold path without arising and extinction are not the four correct endeavors, four bases of power, and so forth, and noble eightfold path.

“World-Honored One, the Buddha’s ten abilities without arising and extinction are not the Buddha’s ten abilities; the four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power without arising and extinction are not the four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power. Why? The Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth are not different or separate from nonarising and nonextinction. Why? The dharmas without arising and extinction are not one dharma, two dharmas, many dharmas, or different dharmas. Therefore, the Buddha’s ten abilities without arising and extinction are not the Buddha’s ten abilities; the four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power without arising and extinction are not the four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power.

“World-Honored One, all samadhi gates without arising and extinction are not all samadhi gates, and all dharani gates without arising and extinction are not all dharani gates. Why? It is because all samadhi gates and all dharani gates are not different or separate from nonarising and nonextinction. Why? The dharmas without arising and extinction are not one dharma, two dharmas, many dharmas, or different dharmas. Therefore, all samadhi gates without arising and extinction are not all samadhi gates, and all dharani gates without arising and extinction are not all dharani gates.

“World-Honored One, dharma realm without arising and extinction is not dharma realm; realness, reality, the realm of the inconceivable, and the realm of peace and stability without arising and extinction are not realness, reality, the realm of the inconceivable, and the realm of peace and stability. Why? Dharma realm, realness, and so forth are not different from nonarising and nonextinction. Why? The dharmas without arising and extinction are not one dharma, two dharmas, many dharmas, or different dharmas. Therefore, dharma realm without arising and extinction is not dharma realm; realness, reality, the realm of the inconceivable, and the realm of peace and stability without arising and extinction are not realness, reality, the realm of the inconceivable, and the realm of peace and stability.

“World-Honored One, all great bodhisattva actions without arising and extinction are not all great bodhisattva actions; the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas without arising and extinction is not the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas. Why? All great bodhisattva actions and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas are not different or separate from nonarising and nonextinction. Why? The dharmas without arising and extinction are not one dharma, two dharmas, many dharmas, or different dharmas. Therefore, all great bodhisattva actions without arising and extinction are not all great bodhisattva actions; the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas without arising and extinction is not the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas.

“World-Honored One, the perfect knowledge of everything without arising and extinction is not the perfect knowledge of everything, and the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena without arising and extinction are not the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Why? The perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are not different or separate from nonarising and nonextinction. Why? The dharmas without arising and extinction are not one dharma, two dharmas, many dharmas, or different dharmas. Therefore, the perfect knowledge of everything without arising and extinction is not the perfect knowledge of everything, and the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena without arising and extinction are not the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena.

(Well-Appearing One further stated that the dharmas without arising and extinction are not the dharmas. Why? The dharmas themselves are nonarising and nonextinction; they are not different from or separate from nonarising and nonextinction. The dharmas without arising extinction are not one dharma, two dharmas, many dharmas, or different dharmas; they are not dharmas.)

“World-Honored One, as matter is not dualistic, it is not matter; as feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are not dualistic, they are not feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness either. As the eye sphere is not dualistic, it is not the eye sphere; as the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres are not dualistic, they are not the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres either. As the sight sphere is not dualistic, it is not the sight sphere; as the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres are not dualistic, they are not the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres either. As the eye realm is not dualistic, it is not the eye realm; as the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms are not dualistic, they are not the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms either. As the sight realm is not dualistic, it is not the sight realm; as the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms are not dualistic, they are not the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms either. As the eye consciousness realm is not dualistic, it is not the eye consciousness realm; as the ear consciousness realm, nose consciousness realm, tongue consciousness realm, body consciousness realm, and conscious consciousness realm are not dualistic, they are not the ear consciousness realm, nose consciousness realm, tongue consciousness realm, body consciousness realm, and conscious consciousness realm either. As the eye contact is not dualistic, it is not the eye contact; as the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts are not dualistic, they are not the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts either. As the feelings produced by eye contact are not dualistic, they are not the feelings produced by eye contact; as the feelings produced by ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts are not dualistic, they are not the feelings produced by ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts either. As giving paramita is not dualistic, it is not giving paramita; as pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas are not dualistic, they are not pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas either. As internal emptiness is not dualistic, it is not internal emptiness; as external emptiness, internal-external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are not dualistic, they are not external emptiness, internal-external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of

selfless self-nature either. As the four bases of mindfulness are not dualistic, they are not the four bases of mindfulness; as the four correct endeavors, four bases of power, and so forth, and noble eightfold path are not dualistic, they are not the four correct endeavors, four bases of power, and so forth, and noble eightfold path either. As the Buddha's ten abilities are not dualistic, they are not the Buddha's ten abilities; as the four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power are not dualistic, they are not the four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power either. As the samadhi gates are not dualistic, they are not the samadhi gates; as the dharani gates are not dualistic, they are not the dharani gates either. As dharma realm is not dualistic, it is not dharma realm; as realness, reality, the realm of the inconceivable, and the realm of peace and stability are not dualistic, they are not realness, reality, the realm of the inconceivable, and the realm of peace and stability either. As great bodhisattva actions are not dualistic, they are not great bodhisattva actions; as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas is not dualistic, it is not the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas either. As the perfect knowledge of everything is not dualistic, it is not the perfect knowledge of everything; as the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are not dualistic, they are not the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena either.

(Dharmas seemingly appear dualistic, but their real nature should be nondualistic.)

“World-Honored One, matter enters the nondualistic dharma number; feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness also enter the nondualistic dharma number. The eye sphere enters the nondualistic dharma number; the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres also enter the nondualistic dharma number. The sight sphere enters the nondualistic dharma number; the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres also enter the nondualistic dharma number. The eye realm enters the nondualistic dharma number; the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms also enter the nondualistic dharma number. The sight realm enters the nondualistic dharma number; the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms also enter the nondualistic dharma number. The eye consciousness realm enters the nondualistic dharma number; the ear consciousness realm, nose consciousness realm, tongue consciousness realm,

body consciousness realm, and conscious consciousness realm also enter the nondualistic dharma number. The eye contact enters the nondualistic dharma number; the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts also enter the nondualistic dharma number. The feelings produced by eye contact enter the nondualistic dharma number; the feelings produced by ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts also enter the nondualistic dharma number. Giving paramita enters the nondualistic dharma number; pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas also enter the nondualistic dharma number. Internal emptiness enters the nondualistic dharma number; external emptiness, internal-external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature also enter the nondualistic dharma number. The four bases of mindfulness enter the nondualistic dharma number; the four correct endeavors, four bases of power, and so forth, and noble eightfold path also enter the nondualistic dharma number. The Buddha's ten abilities enter the nondualistic dharma number; the four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power also enter the nondualistic dharma number. All samadhi gates enter the nondualistic dharma number; all dharani gates also enter the nondualistic dharma number. Dharma realm enters the nondualistic dharma number; realness, reality, the realm of the inconceivable, and the realm of peace and stability also enter the nondualistic dharma number. All great bodhisattva actions enter the nondualistic dharma number; the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas also enters the nondualistic dharma number. The perfect knowledge of everything enters the nondualistic dharma number; the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and perfect knowledge of all phenomena also enter t

he nondualistic dharma number."

(Dharma number refers to a numerical expression of the dharmas; for instance, the *four* bases of mindfulness, the *five* roots, and so forth. As Well-Appearing One stated that all dharmas enter the nondualistic dharma number, it means that no dharma is dualistic.)

Chapter 24

Getting Far Away

Section 1

(In the Second Assembly)

At that time, the long-lived sage Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, “The benevolent one, you said that the great bodhisattvas should cultivate prajna paramita and contemplate and investigate various dharmas. Would you explain what is bodhisattva mahasattva? What is prajna paramita? How do the great bodhisattvas contemplate and investigate various dharmas?”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One replied, “The venerable one, you asked, ‘What is bodhisattva mahasattva?’ Sariputra, ones who pursue diligently the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi with an attempt to bring benefits and happiness to sentient beings are named bodhisattva. Those who are enlightened to realize the phenomena of all dharmas universally and thoroughly without attachment are named mahasattva.”

(Mahasattva means great. Bodhisattva mahasattva means great bodhisattva.)

Meanwhile, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One again, “How do great bodhisattvas (bodhisattvas mahasattva) get to know the phenomena of all dharmas universally and thoroughly without attachment?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Sariputra, the great bodhisattvas should get to know the phenomena of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness as they really are without attachment. They should get to know the phenomena of the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres as they really are without attachment. They should get to know the phenomena of the sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres as they really are without attachment. They should get to know the phenomena of the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms as they really are without attachment. They should get to know the phenomena of the sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms as they really are without

attachment. They should get to know the phenomena of the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, nose consciousness realm, tongue consciousness realm, body consciousness realm, and conscious consciousness realms as they really are without attachment. They should get to know the phenomena of the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts as they really are without attachment. They should get to know the phenomena of the feelings produced by eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts as they really are without attachment. They should get to know the phenomena of giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas as they really are without attachment. They should get to know the phenomena of internal emptiness, external emptiness, internal-external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature as they really are without attachment. They should get to know the phenomena of the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, four bases of power, and so forth, and noble eightfold path as they really are without attachment. And so on, they should get to know the phenomena of the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power as they really are without attachment. They should get to know the phenomena of all samadhi gates and all dharani gates as they really are without attachment. They should get to know the phenomena of dharma realm, realness, reality, the realm of the inconceivable, and the realm of peace and stability as they really are without attachment. They should get to know the phenomena of the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena as they really are without attachment."

(Well-Appearing One explained how great bodhisattvas get to know the phenomena of all dharmas universally and thoroughly without attachment.)

In the meantime, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, "What are the phenomena of all dharmas?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "Sariputra, the phenomena of all dharmas are the actions, forms, and features that represent different dharmas and allow people to distinguish, for instance, among the sights, sounds, smells, tastes, touches, and the mental-images; between the inner and

the outer dharmas, the flawed and the flawless dharmas, and the conditioned and the unconditioned dharmas.

(Well-Appearing One defined the meaning of the phenomena of all dharmas.)

“Furthermore, venerable Sariputra, in response to your question: What is prajna paramita? Sariputra, prajna paramita is a superior, exquisite wisdom that remains distant.”

(Well-Appearing One explained what prajna paramita is.)

Sariputra asked, “From which dharmas does prajna paramita remain distant?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Prajna paramita remains distant from various aggregates, spheres, realms, incorrect views of vexations, and the six destinies of rebirth. Therefore, it is called prajna paramita. Moreover, Sariputra, prajna paramita is a far-reaching superior and exquisite wisdom.”

Sariputra asked, “What distant dharmas can prajna paramita reach?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Prajna paramita is called prajna paramita because it can reach giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power; the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena.

“Furthermore, venerable Sariputra, you asked, ‘How do great bodhisattvas contemplate and investigate various dharmas?’ Sariputra, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas should contemplate and investigate matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness as neither permanent nor impermanent, neither pleasant nor painful, neither with selfness nor without selfness, neither pure nor impure, neither empty nor not empty, neither with form nor without form, neither with aspiration nor without aspiration, neither tranquil nor not tranquil, and neither far away nor not far away.

“The great bodhisattvas should contemplate and investigate the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere as neither permanent nor impermanent, neither pleasant nor painful, neither with selfness nor without selfness, neither pure nor impure, neither empty nor not empty, neither with form nor without form, neither with aspiration nor without aspiration, neither tranquil nor not tranquil, and neither far away or not far away.

“The great bodhisattvas should contemplate and investigate the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere as neither permanent nor impermanent, neither pleasant nor painful, neither with selfness nor without selfness, neither pure nor impure, neither empty nor not empty, neither with form nor without form, neither with aspiration nor without aspiration, neither tranquil nor not tranquil, and neither far away nor not far away.

“The great bodhisattvas should contemplate and investigate the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm as neither permanent nor impermanent, neither pleasant nor painful, neither with selfness nor without selfness, neither pure nor impure, neither empty nor not empty, neither with form nor without form, neither with aspiration nor without aspiration, neither tranquil nor not tranquil, and neither far away nor not far away.

“The great bodhisattvas should contemplate and investigate the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm as neither permanent nor impermanent, neither pleasant nor painful, neither with selfness nor without selfness, neither pure nor impure, neither empty nor not empty, neither with form nor without form, neither with aspiration nor without aspiration, neither tranquil nor not tranquil, and neither far away nor not far away.

“The great bodhisattvas should contemplate and investigate the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm as neither permanent nor impermanent, neither pleasant nor painful, neither with selfness nor without selfness, neither pure nor impure, neither empty nor not empty, neither with form nor without form, neither with aspiration nor without aspiration, neither tranquil nor not tranquil, and neither far away nor not far away.

“The great bodhisattvas should contemplate and investigate the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact as neither permanent nor impermanent, neither pleasant nor

painful, neither with selfness nor without selfness, neither pure nor impure, neither empty nor not empty, neither with form nor without form, neither with aspiration nor without aspiration, neither tranquil nor not tranquil, and neither far away nor not far away.

“The great bodhisattvas should contemplate and investigate the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact as neither permanent nor impermanent, neither pleasant nor painful, neither with selfness nor without selfness, neither pure nor impure, neither empty nor not empty, neither with form nor without form, neither with aspiration nor without aspiration, neither tranquil nor not tranquil, and neither far away nor not far away.

“The great bodhisattvas should contemplate and investigate giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita as neither permanent nor impermanent, neither pleasant nor painful, neither with selfness nor without selfness, neither pure nor impure, neither empty nor not empty, neither with form nor without form, neither with aspiration nor without aspiration, neither tranquil nor not tranquil, and neither far away nor not far away.

“The great bodhisattvas should contemplate and investigate internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature as neither permanent nor impermanent, neither pleasant nor painful, neither with selfness nor without selfness, neither pure nor impure, neither empty nor not empty, neither with form nor without form, neither with aspiration nor without aspiration, neither tranquil nor not tranquil, and neither far away nor not far away.

“The great bodhisattvas should contemplate and investigate the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path as neither permanent nor impermanent, neither pleasant nor painful, neither with selfness nor without selfness, neither pure nor impure, neither empty nor not empty, neither with form nor without form, neither with aspiration nor without aspiration, neither tranquil nor not tranquil, and neither far away nor not far away.

“The great bodhisattvas should contemplate and investigate the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power as neither permanent nor impermanent, neither pleasant nor painful, neither with

selfness nor without selfness, neither pure nor impure, neither empty nor not empty, neither with form nor without form, neither with aspiration nor without aspiration, neither tranquil nor not tranquil, and neither far away nor not far away.

“The great bodhisattvas should contemplate and investigate all samadhi gates and all dharani gates as neither permanent nor impermanent, neither pleasant nor painful, neither with selfness nor without selfness, neither pure nor impure, neither empty nor not empty, neither with form nor without form, neither with aspiration nor without aspiration, neither tranquil nor not tranquil, and neither far away nor not far away.

“The great bodhisattvas should contemplate and investigate the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena as neither permanent nor impermanent, neither pleasant nor painful, neither with selfness nor without selfness, neither pure nor impure, neither empty nor not empty, neither with form nor without form, neither with aspiration nor without aspiration, neither tranquil nor not tranquil, and neither far away nor not far away.

“Sariputra, this is named contemplating and investigating various dharmas. Sariputra, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas should contemplate and investigate various dharmas in this way.”

(Well-Appearing One elaborated how great bodhisattvas should contemplate and investigate various dharmas when cultivating prajna paramita.)

At that time, the long-lived sage Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, “The venerable one, why do you say that matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness without arising and extinction are not matter feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness? And so forth, the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena without arising and extinction are not the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Sariputra, matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness and their nature are also empty. In empty nature, arising and extinction do not exist; matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness do not exist either. Therefore, matter,

feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness without arising and extinction are not matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Sariputra, the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena and their nature are empty. In empty nature, arising and extinction do not exist; the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena do not exist. Therefore, the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena without arising and extinction are not the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena.”

(In response to the question why the dharmas without arising and extinction are not the dharmas, Well-Appearing One explained that the dharmas and their nature are empty; in empty nature, arising and extinction do not exist; the various dharmas do not exist either.)

At that time, the long-lived sage Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, “The venerable one, why do you say that the nondualistic matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are not matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness? And so forth, the nondualistic perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are not the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Sariputra, matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness and nonduality are neither correspondent nor not correspondent. They are all immaterial, invisible, and unsubstantial; they are with only one form, that is, formlessness. Therefore, it is said that the nondualistic matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are not matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Sariputra, the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena and nonduality are neither correspondent nor not correspondent. They are immaterial, invisible, and unsubstantial; they are with only one form, that is, formlessness. Therefore, the nondualistic perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are not the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena.”

(Well-Appearing One further explained why the nondualistic dharmas are not the dharmas. It is because the dharmas and nonduality are neither correspondent nor not correspondent. They are immaterial, invisible, and unsubstantial; they are with only one form: formlessness.)

At that time, the long-lived sage Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, “The venerable one, why do you say that matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena enter nondualistic dharma number?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Sariputra, matter is not different from nonarising and nonextinction, and nonarising and nonextinction are not different from matter. Matter is nonarising and nonextinction, and nonarising and nonextinction are matter. Feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are not different from nonarising and nonextinction, and nonarising and nonextinction are not different from feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are nonarising and nonextinction, and nonarising and nonextinction are feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Therefore, it is said that matter enters nondualistic dharma number, and feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness also enter nondualistic dharma number. Sariputra, the perfect knowledge of everything is not different from nonarising and nonextinction, and nonarising and nonextinction are not different from the perfect knowledge of everything. The perfect knowledge of everything is nonarising and nonextinction, and nonarising and nonextinction are the perfect knowledge of everything. The perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are not different from nonarising and nonextinction, and nonarising and nonextinction are not different from the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. The perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are nonarising and nonextinction, and nonarising and nonextinction are the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Therefore, it is said that the perfect knowledge of everything enters nondualistic dharma number, and the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena also enter nondualistic dharma number.”

(Well-Appearing One said that "the dharmas enter nondualistic dharma number" means the

dharmas are the same as nonarising and nonextinction.)

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, when cultivating prajna paramita and contemplating various dharmas, the great bodhisattvas see the ‘I,’ the sentient being, and so forth, and the viewer as without arising because of the purity in the final analysis. The great bodhisattvas see matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness as without arising because of the purity in the final analysis. The great bodhisattvas see the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere as without arising because of the purity in the final analysis. The great bodhisattvas see the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere as without arising because of the purity in the final analysis. The great bodhisattvas see the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm as without arising because of the purity in the final analysis. The great bodhisattvas see the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm as without arising because of the purity in the final analysis. The great bodhisattvas see the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm as without arising because of the purity in the final analysis. The great bodhisattvas see the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact as without arising because of the purity in the final analysis. The great bodhisattvas see the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact as without arising because of the purity in the final analysis. The great bodhisattvas see giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita as without arising because of the purity in the final analysis. The great bodhisattvas see internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature as without arising because of the purity in the final analysis. The great bodhisattvas see the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path as without arising because of the purity in the final analysis. And so forth, the great bodhisattvas see the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power as without arising because of the purity in the final analysis. The great bodhisattvas see all samadhi gates and all dharani gates as without arising because of the purity in the final analysis. The great bodhisattvas see the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena as without arising because of the purity in the final analysis. The great bodhisattvas see the dharma of

ordinary sentient being as without arising because of the purity in the final analysis. The great bodhisattvas see the dharma of stream-enterer as without arising because of the purity in the final analysis. The great bodhisattvas see the dharma of once-returner as without arising because of the purity in the final analysis. The great bodhisattvas see the dharma of nonreturner as without arising because of the purity in the final analysis. The great bodhisattvas see the dharma of arhat as without arising because of the purity in the final analysis. The great bodhisattvas see the dharma of the self-enlightened one as without arising because of the purity in the final analysis. The great bodhisattvas see the dharma of great bodhisattva as without arising because of the purity in the final analysis. The great bodhisattvas see the Buddha dharma as without arising because of the purity in the final analysis. And the great bodhisattvas see the dharma of sentient being as without arising because of the purity in the final analysis.”

Fascicle 424

Chapter 24

Getting Far Away

Section 2

(In the Second Assembly)

At that time, the long-lived sage Sariputra said to Well-Appearing One, “My understanding of what you say is that the ‘I,’ the sentient being, and so forth, and the viewer are without arising in the final analysis. Matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness are without arising in the final analysis. And so on, the Buddha dharma and the Buddhas are without arising in the final analysis; all sentient beings and the dharma of sentient beings are also without arising in the final analysis. If this is the case, then there will be no differences among the six destinies of rebirth; the stream-enterers will not attain the stream-entry effect, the once-returners will not attain the once-return effect, the nonreturners will not attain the nonreturn effect, the arhats will not attain the arhat effect, the self-enlightened ones will not attain the self-enlightenment bodhi, and the bodhisattvas will not attain the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths; the great bodhisattva will not be deeply disgusted with and tired of birth and death, nor will they cultivate diligently to attain the five kinds of bodhi to relieve sentient beings from rebirth in the six destinies.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, if all dharmas are without arising in the final analysis, then how can stream-enterers cultivate diligently to terminate permanently the three bonds to attain the stream-entry effect? How can once-returners cultivate diligently to eliminate greed, anger, and ignorance to attain the once-return effect? How can nonreturners cultivate diligently to terminate permanently the lower bonds to attain the nonreturn effect? How can arhats cultivate diligently to terminate permanently the upper bonds to attain the arhat effect? How can self-enlightened ones cultivate diligently and become awakened to the law of dependent origination? How can great bodhisattvas cultivate hundreds of thousands of difficult

actions and suffer innumerable intolerable hard times to ferry immeasurable and boundless sentient beings? How can Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi? How can the Buddhas turn the wonderful dharma wheel to relieve immeasurable sentient beings from suffering?”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One replied to Sariputra, “In the dharmas of nonarising, I do not see the differences among the six destinies of rebirth. In the dharmas of nonarising, I do not see anyone undertaking contemplation. In the dharmas of nonarising, I do not see stream-entry pursuer attaining stream-entry effect, once-returner pursuer attaining once-return effect, nonreturner pursuer attaining nonreturn effect, arhat pursuer attaining arhat effect, self-enlightened one practitioner attaining self-enlightenment bodhi, and bodhisattva-path pursuer attaining the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths. In the dharmas of nonarising, I do not see great bodhisattvas become disgusted with the cycle of birth and death and cultivate the bodhisattva path to attain the five kinds of bodhi; voice-hearers cultivate the voice-hearer path to terminate the bonds; the self-enlightened ones cultivate the self-enlightenment path to realize dependent origination. In the dharmas of nonarising, I do not see great bodhisattvas cultivate lots of difficult actions and suffer severely to rescue the sentient beings without thinking of the difficult and painful times. Why? Sariputra, undertaking difficult actions with a thought of hardship will hinder great bodhisattvas from bringing great benefits to immeasurable, countless, and boundless sentient beings. Sariputra, all bodhisattvas should adopt nonattainment as skillful means to show great compassion on various sentient beings and dwell in the thinking that all sentient beings should be treated as parents, brothers, families, or themselves. They should initiate an aspiration to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi so that they are able to bring great benefits to all sentient beings.

(Well-Appearing One advised great bodhisattvas to undertake challenging actions without thinking of what they are doing, to avoid hindering the benefit to sentient beings.)

“Sariputra, all bodhisattvas should keep this thought in mind, ‘I have sought my own self-nature everywhere and at all times, but I cannot find it. This also applies to all inner and outer dharmas; they are nonexistent and unattainable.’ If bodhisattvas can dwell in this thought, they

will not perceive anything as difficult or painful. This thought enables all bodhisattvas to cultivate hundreds of thousands of difficult actions and provide great benefits to immeasurable, countless, and boundless sentient beings. Why? The great bodhisattvas are not attached to all dharmas, all sentient beings, all methods, all places, and all times. Sariputra, in the dharmas of nonarising, we do not see the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones realizing the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and turning the wonderful dharma wheel to deliver innumerable sentient beings. Why? Sariputra, all dharmas and all sentient beings are unattainable.”

(As all dharmas are empty and unattainable, great bodhisattvas should not be attached to all dharmas when practicing the difficult bodhisattva actions.)

In the meantime, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, “What do you think about this? Is truth realized through the dharma of arising or the dharma of nonarising?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “I don’t think one can realize and attain something through the dharma of arising or the dharma of nonarising.”

Sariputra said, “If this is the case, will there be neither attainment nor intuitive contemplation?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “While there are attainment and intuitive contemplation, these will not be realized through dualistic dharma. Sariputra, it is in terms of the worldly language instead of ultimate meaning to establish attainment and intuitive contemplation. Sariputra, it is in terms of the worldly language instead of ultimate truth to establish stream-enterers and stream-entry effect, once-returners and once-return effect, nonreturners and nonreturn effect, arhats and arhat effect, self-enlightened ones and self-enlightenment bodhi, bodhisattvas and bodhisattva actions, and the Buddhas and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas.”

Sariputra asked, “If attainment, intuitive contemplation, stream-enterers, once-returners, and so forth, are established in terms of worldly language instead of ultimate meaning, then are the differences among the six destinies of rebirth also established in terms of the worldly language instead of the ultimate meaning?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Yes. Why? Sariputra, in the ultimate meaning there are neither the karmas that mature in different ways at different times nor the contaminated karmas and purified karmas.”

Meanwhile, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One again, “What do you think about this? Will you allow the dharmas that have not yet arisen to arise, or allow the dharmas that have already arisen to continue?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “I will not allow the dharmas that have not yet arisen to arise, nor let the dharmas that have already arisen continue.”

Sariputra, “Which dharmas have not yet arisen that you will prevent from arising?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Sariputra, I will not allow matter that has not yet arisen to arise. Why? Its self-nature is empty. I will not allow feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness that have not yet arisen to arise either. Why? Their self-nature is empty. And so on, I will not allow the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas that has not yet arisen to arise. Why? Its self-nature is empty.”

Sariputra asked, “Which dharmas have arisen that you will prevent from continuing?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Sariputra, as the matter has already arisen, I will not let it continue. Why? Its self-nature is empty. As the feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness have arisen, I will not let them continue. Why? Their self-nature is empty. And so forth, as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas has arisen, I will not let it continue. Why? Its self-nature is empty.”

In the meantime, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, “What do you think about this? Will you let arising arise or nonarising arise?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “I will not let arising arise or nonarising arise. Why? Sariputra, arising and nonarising are neither correspondent nor not correspondent. They are immaterial, invisible, unsubstantial, and with only one form, that is, formlessness. Because of this cause and condition, I will not let arising arise or nonarising arise.”

Meanwhile, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One again, “The benevolent one, are you fond of lecturing on and debating the phenomena of nonarising relevant to the dharma of nonarising?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Sariputra, I am not particularly fond of lecturing on and debating the phenomena of nonarising. Why? Sariputra, the dharma of nonarising, the phenomena of nonarising, and the fondness of lecturing and debating are neither correspondent nor not correspondent. They are immaterial, invisible, unsubstantial, and with only one form, that is, formlessness.”

Meanwhile, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One again, “As one talks about the dharma of nonarising, is this talk also without arising?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Yes. As one talks about the dharma of nonarising, the dharma and the statement are also without arising. Why? Sariputra, matter does not arise, and feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness do not arise either. Why? Their original nature is empty. The eye sphere does not arise, and the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres do not arise either. Why? Their original nature is empty. The sight sphere does not arise, and the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres do not arise either. Why? Their original nature is empty. The eye realm does not arise, and the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms do not arise either. Why? Their original nature is empty. The sight realm does not arise, and the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms do not arise either. Why? Their original nature is empty. The eye consciousness realm does not arise, and the ear consciousness realm, nose consciousness realm, tongue consciousness realm, body consciousness realm, and conscious consciousness realm do not arise either. Why? Their original nature is empty. The eye contact does not arise, and the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts do not arise either. Why? Their original nature is empty. The feelings produced by eye contact do not arise, and the feelings produced by ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts do not arise either. Why? Their original nature is empty. The earth realm does not arise, and the water, fire, wind, space, and consciousness realms do not arise either. Why? Their original nature is empty. The action of the body does not arise, and the speech and the mind do not arise either. Why? Their original nature is empty. Giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge

of all phenomena do not arise. Why? Their original nature is empty. Sariputra, because of this cause and condition, the dharma of nonarising does not arise, and the dharma and the statement do not arise either. Sariputra, the dharmas talked about, the language used, the speaker, and the listeners all are without the meaning of arising.”

At that time, the long-lived sage Sariputra admired Well-Appearing One, “Among all dharma lecturers, you are second only to the World-Honored One. Why? You can always answer questions regarding various dharma gates quickly without hindrance and hesitation.”

Well-Appearing One replied, “If the disciples of the Buddha do not rely on all dharmas, they will be able to answer any questions with confidence, freedom, and fearlessness. Why? All dharmas are independent and do not rely on anything.”

Sariputra asked, “Why do all dharmas not rely on anything?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Sariputra, because the original nature of matter is empty, matter does not rely on anything inside, outside, or in between. Because the original nature of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness is empty, they do not rely on anything inside, outside, or in between.

“Sariputra, because the original nature of the eye sphere is empty, the eye sphere does not rely on anything inside, outside, or in between. Because the original nature of the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres is empty, they do not rely on anything inside, outside, or in between.

“Sariputra, because the original nature of the sight sphere is empty, the sight sphere does not rely on anything inside, outside, or in between. Because the original nature of the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres is empty, they do not rely on anything inside, outside, or in between.

“Sariputra, because the original nature of the eye realm is empty, the eye realm does not rely on anything inside, outside, or in between. Because the original nature of the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms is empty, they do not rely on anything inside, outside, or in between.

“Sariputra, because the original nature of the sight realm is empty, the sight realm does not rely on anything inside, outside, or in between. Because the original nature of the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms is empty, they do not rely on anything inside, outside, or in between.

“Sariputra, because the original nature of the eye consciousness realm is empty, the eye consciousness realm does not rely on anything inside, outside, or in between. Because the original nature of the ear consciousness realm, nose consciousness realm, tongue consciousness realm, body consciousness realm, and conscious consciousness realm is empty, they do not rely on anything inside, outside, or in between.

“Sariputra, because the original nature of the eye contact is empty, the eye contact does not rely on anything inside, outside, or in between. Because the original nature of the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts is empty, they do not rely on anything inside, outside, or in between.

“Sariputra, because the original nature of the feelings produced by eye contact is empty, they do not rely on anything inside, outside, or in between. Because the original nature of the feelings produced by ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts is empty, they do not rely on anything inside, outside, or in between.

“Sariputra, because the original nature of giving paramita is empty, giving paramita does not rely on anything inside, outside, or in between. Because the original nature of pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas is empty, they do not rely on anything inside, outside, or in between.

“Sariputra, because the original nature of internal emptiness is empty, internal emptiness does not rely on anything inside, outside, or in between. Because the original nature of external emptiness, internal-external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature is empty, they do not rely on anything inside, outside, or in between.

“Sariputra, because the original nature of the four bases of mindfulness is empty, the four bases of mindfulness do not rely on anything inside, outside, or in between. Because the original

nature of the four correct endeavors, four bases of power, and so forth, and noble eightfold path is empty, they do not rely on anything inside, outside, or in between.

“Sariputra, because the original nature of the Buddha’s ten abilities is empty, the Buddha’s ten abilities do not rely on anything inside, outside, or in between. Because the original nature of the four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power is empty, they do not rely on anything inside, outside, or in between.

“Sariputra, because the original nature of the perfect knowledge of everything is empty, the perfect knowledge of everything does not rely on anything inside, outside, or in between. Because the original nature of the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena is empty, they do not rely on anything inside, outside, or in between.

“Sariputra, based on this cause and condition, I say that because the original nature of the dharmas is empty, the dharmas do not rely on anything.

(Well-Appearing One said to Sariputra that all dharmas do not rely on anything because the original nature of all dharmas is empty.)

“Furthermore, Sariputra, when cultivating the six paramitas, the great bodhisattvas should purify matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness. They should purify the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere. They should purify the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere. They should purify the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm. They should purify the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm. They should purify the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm. They should purify the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact. They should purify the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact. They should purify giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita. They should purify internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature. They should purify the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path. They should

purify the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power. They should purify the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. They should purify the path of the bodhi."

(Well-Appearing One said that the great bodhisattvas should purify various dharmas, including the path of the bodhi, when they cultivate the six paramitas.)

At that time, the long-lived sage Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, "How should the great bodhisattvas purify the path of the bodhi when they cultivate the six paramitas?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "Sariputra, there are two kinds of the six paramitas: the ones belonging to the world and the ones beyond the world."

Sariputra asked, "What is the giving paramita belonging to the world? What is the giving paramita beyond the world?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "Sariputra, some great bodhisattvas generously provide what sramanas, Brahmans, poor, lonely and helpless ones, homeless ones, and beggars need, such as food, drinks, vehicles, clothes, fragrant flowers, pretty instruments, houses, medicines, lamps, chairs and beds, and so forth. The great bodhisattvas also give boys, girls, wives, concubines, official positions, cities, countries, and kings' thrones to others upon their requests. They even give head, eyes, ears, nose, hands, feet, limbs, blood, flesh, bones, and marrows to others upon requests. They give servants, living beings, and so forth, and all internal and external things to those in need. But when practicing giving, the great bodhisattvas will rely on something and think, 'I am practicing giving. These people are receiving my offerings. I am the giver. I am not stingy. I love to renounce all I have as instructed by the Buddha. I am practicing giving paramita.' When practicing giving in this way, the great bodhisattvas will transfer the merits and virtues along with all sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi by adopting attainment as skillful means. These great bodhisattvas will also think, 'Owing to the merits and blessings produced by practicing giving to various sentient beings, I will enjoy peace and happiness in this life and in many lives to come until attaining the nirvana without remainder.' These great bodhisattvas are practicing giving with an attachment to the three

wheels. What are the three wheels? They are the giver, the recipient, and the things given. The giving paramita belonging to the world is practiced with an attachment to these three wheels. Why is it named the giving paramita belonging to the world? It is practiced in accordance with the worldly way; it does not transcend the dharma of the world, so it is named the giving paramita belonging to the world.

(Well-Appearing One explained the meaning of giving belonging to the world: generous giving practiced with attachment to the three wheels.)

“Sariputra, some great bodhisattvas will practice giving with pure three wheels. What are the pure three wheels? When practicing giving, the practitioners are not attached to the thought that they are the givers. They are not attached to the thought that others are recipients. And they are not attached to the practice of giving and its effects. This is how great bodhisattvas practice the giving with pure three wheels.

(Well-Appearing One explained the three pure wheels in practicing giving.)

“Furthermore, Sariputra, under the guidance of great compassion, the great bodhisattvas cultivate giving and bring the blessings thus derived universally to all sentient beings. These great bodhisattvas do not expect any rewards in return. Although transferring the merits and virtues along with sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, the great bodhisattvas do not see any phenomena in the transference. Because of practicing giving free from attachment, the great bodhisattvas practice the giving paramita beyond the world. Why is it named the giving paramita beyond the world? It is not in accordance with the ordinary worldly way of action. It is rather dynamic, transcending the dharma of the world. Therefore, it is named the giving paramita beyond the world.”

(Well-Appearing One explained practicing giving beyond the world, which is free from attachment and with pure three wheels, transcending the worldly way of action.)

Sariputra asked, “What are the pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas belonging to the world? What are the pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas beyond the world?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Sariputra, if the great bodhisattvas cultivate pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna with reliance, being attached to the three wheels, they practice worldly paramitas. They are not dynamic and cannot transcend worldly dharma. If the great bodhisattvas cultivate pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna without reliance and attachment, they practice paramitas beyond the world, becoming dynamic and transcending worldly limitations.

“Sariputra, this is how great bodhisattvas purify the bodhi path when cultivating the six paramitas.”

(To purify the bodhi path is purifying the six paramitas, practiced free from attachment to transcend the worldly path.)

At that time, the long-lived sage Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, “What is the bodhi path for the great bodhisattvas?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Sariputra, giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita belong to the bodhi path for the great bodhisattvas. The four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path belong to the bodhi path for the great bodhisattvas. The liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration belong to the bodhi path for the great bodhisattvas. Internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature belong to the bodhi path for the great bodhisattvas. Realness, dharma realm, reality, the realm of the inconceivable, and the realm of peace and stability belong to the bodhi path for the great bodhisattvas. All samadhi gates and all dharani gates belong to the bodhi path for the great bodhisattvas. The Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power belong to the bodhi path for the great bodhisattvas. Sariputra, immeasurable, countless, and boundless accumulations of great merits and virtues are included in the bodhi path for the great bodhisattvas.”

(Well-Appearing One enumerated the superior dharmas associated with the bodhi path.)

Meanwhile, Sariputra admired Well-Appearing One, “Excellent, excellent! It is as you say. Well-Appearing One, by what powers of paramitas are significant accumulations of merits and virtues achieved?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Sariputra, such accumulations of merits and virtues are caused by the powers of prajna paramita. Why? Sariputra, prajna paramita is the mother of all virtuous dharmas. All virtuous dharmas of the voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, bodhisattvas, and Buddhas are born from prajna paramita. Sariputra, prajna paramita can absorb all virtuous dharmas, and the virtuous dharmas of all voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, bodhisattvas, and various Buddhas have dwelled in prajna paramita. Sariputra, all great bodhisattvas in the past had cultivated and fulfilled prajna paramita to attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. All great bodhisattvas in the future will cultivate and fulfill prajna paramita to attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. All immeasurable great bodhisattvas in the present in various Buddha worlds of the ten directions are cultivating and fulfilling prajna paramita to attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.

“Furthermore, Sariputra, if the great bodhisattvas are not puzzled, skeptical, confused, or depressed when hearing the teachings of prajna paramita, you must know that these great bodhisattvas have always dwelled in the intention of rescuing all sentient beings by adopting nonattainment as skillful means; they have never abandoned or stayed away from this intention. You must know that these great bodhisattvas have achieved a superior intention in accordance with great compassion.”

Meanwhile, Sariputra said to Well-Appearing One, “If the great bodhisattvas have always dwelled in this way and never stayed away from the superior intention correspondent with great compassion, all sentient beings should be able to become great bodhisattvas too. Why? All sentient beings should have also dwelled in such an intention and never stayed away from it. If this is the case, then great bodhisattvas should not be different from sentient beings.”

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One replied to Sariputra, “Excellent, excellent! It is as you say. You really understand what I mean. Instead of challenging my arguments, you are actually helping me express myself thoroughly. Why?

“Sariputra, you must know that because sentient beings are nonexistent, this dwelling and intention are also nonexistent. Since sentient beings are unreal, this dwelling and this intention are also unreal. Since sentient beings are without nature, this dwelling and intention are also without nature. Since sentient beings are empty, this dwelling and intention are also empty. Since sentient beings are far away, this dwelling and intention are also far away. Since sentient beings are tranquil, this dwelling and intention are also tranquil. Since sentient beings are without awakening and knowledge, this dwelling and intention are also without awakening and knowledge.

“Sariputra, you must know that because matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness are nonexistent, this dwelling and intention are also nonexistent. Since matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness are unreal, this dwelling and intention are also unreal. Since matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness are without nature, this dwelling and intention are also without nature. Since matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness are empty, this dwelling and intention are also empty. Since matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness are far away, this dwelling and intention are also far away. Since matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness are tranquil, this dwelling and intention are also tranquil. Since matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness are without awakening and knowledge, this dwelling and intention are also without awakening and knowledge.

“Sariputra, you must know that because the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere are nonexistent, this dwelling and intention are also nonexistent. Since the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere are unreal, this dwelling and intention are also unreal. Since the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere are without nature, this dwelling and intention are also without nature. Since the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere are empty, this dwelling and intention are also empty. Since the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere are far away, this dwelling and intention are also far away. Since the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere are tranquil, this dwelling and intention are also tranquil. Since the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere are without awakening and knowledge, this dwelling and intention are also without awakening and knowledge.

“Sariputra, you must know that because the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere are nonexistent, this dwelling and intention are also nonexistent. Since the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere are unreal, this dwelling and intention are also unreal. Since the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere are without nature, this dwelling and intention are also without nature. Since the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere are empty, this dwelling and intention are also empty. Since the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere are far away, this dwelling and intention are also far away. Since the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere are tranquil, this dwelling and intention are also tranquil. Since the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere are without awakening and knowledge, this dwelling and intention are also without awakening and knowledge.

“Sariputra, you must know that because the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm are nonexistent, this dwelling and intention are also nonexistent. Since the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm are unreal, this dwelling and intention are also unreal. Since the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm are without nature, this dwelling and intention are also without nature. Since the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm are empty, this dwelling and intention are also empty. Since the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm are far away, this dwelling and intention are also far away. Since the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm are tranquil, this dwelling and intention are also tranquil. Since the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm are without awakening and knowledge, this dwelling and intention are also without awakening and knowledge.

“Sariputra, you must know that the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm are nonexistent, this dwelling and intention are also nonexistent. Since the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm are unreal, this dwelling and intention are also unreal. Since the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm are without nature, this dwelling and intention are also without nature. Since the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm are empty, this dwelling and intention are also empty. Since the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm are far away,

this dwelling and intention are also far away. Since the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm are tranquil, this dwelling and intention are also tranquil. Since the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm are without awakening and knowledge, this dwelling and intention are also without awakening and knowledge.

“Sariputra, you must know that because the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm are nonexistent, this dwelling and intention are also nonexistent. Since the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm are unreal, this dwelling and intention are also unreal. Since the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm are without nature, this dwelling and intention are also without nature. Since the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm are empty, this dwelling and intention are also empty. Since the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm are far away, this dwelling and intention are also far away. Since the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm are tranquil, this dwelling and intention are also tranquil. Since the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm are without awakening and knowledge, this dwelling and intention are also without awakening and knowledge.

“Sariputra, you must know that because the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are nonexistent, this dwelling and intention are also nonexistent. Since the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are unreal, this dwelling and intention are also unreal. Since the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are without nature, this dwelling and intention are also without nature. Since the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are empty, this dwelling and intention are also empty. Since the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are far away, this dwelling and intention are also far away. Since the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are tranquil, this dwelling and intention are also tranquil. Since the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are without awakening and knowledge, this dwelling and intention are also without awakening and knowledge.

“Sariputra, you must know that because the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are nonexistent, this dwelling and intention are also nonexistent. Since the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are unreal, this dwelling and intention are also unreal. Since the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are without nature, this dwelling and intention are also without nature. Since the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are empty, this dwelling and intention are also empty. Since the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are far away, this dwelling and intention are also far away. Since the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are tranquil, this dwelling and intention are also tranquil. Since the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are without awakening and knowledge, this dwelling and intention are also without awakening and knowledge.

“Sariputra, you must know that because the earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm are nonexistent, this dwelling and intention are also nonexistent. Since the earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm are unreal, this dwelling and intention are also unreal. Since the earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm are without nature, this dwelling and intention are also without nature. Since the earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm are empty, this dwelling and intention are also empty. Since the earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm are far away, this dwelling and intention are also far away. Since the earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm are tranquil, this dwelling and intention are also tranquil. Since the earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm are without awakening and knowledge, this dwelling and intention are also without awakening and knowledge.

“Sariputra, you must know that because giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita are nonexistent, this dwelling and intention are also nonexistent. Since giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita are unreal, this dwelling and intention are also unreal. Since giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita are without nature, this dwelling and intention are also without nature. Since giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita are empty, this

dwelling and intention are also empty. Since giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita are far away, this dwelling and intention are also far away. Since giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita are tranquil, this dwelling and intention are also tranquil. Since giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita are without awakening and knowledge, this dwelling and intention are also without awakening and knowledge.

“Sariputra, you must know that because internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are nonexistent, this dwelling and intention are also nonexistent. Since internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are unreal, this dwelling and intention are also unreal. Since internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are without nature, this dwelling and intention are also without nature. Since internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are empty, this dwelling and intention are also empty. Since internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are far away, this dwelling and intention are also far away. Since internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are tranquil, this dwelling and intention are also tranquil. Since internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are without awakening and knowledge, this dwelling and intention are also without awakening and knowledge.

“Sariputra, you must know that because the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path are nonexistent, this dwelling and intention are also nonexistent. Since the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path are unreal, this dwelling and intention are also unreal. Since the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path are without nature, this dwelling and intention are also without nature. Since the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path are empty, this dwelling and intention are also empty. Since the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path are far away, this dwelling and intention are also far away. Since the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path are tranquil, this dwelling and intention are also tranquil. Since the four bases of mindfulness, four correct

endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path are without awakening and knowledge, this dwelling and intention are also without awakening and knowledge.

“Sariputra, you must know that because the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power are nonexistent, this dwelling and intention are also nonexistent. Since the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power are unreal, this dwelling and intention are also unreal. Since the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power are without nature, this dwelling and intention are also without nature. Since the Buddha’s ten abilities, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power are empty, this dwelling and intention are also empty. Since the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power are far away, this dwelling and intention are also far away. Since the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power are tranquil, this dwelling and intention are also tranquil. Since the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power are without awakening and knowledge, this dwelling and intention are also without awakening and knowledge.

“Sariputra, you must know that because all samadhi gates and all dharani gates are nonexistent, this dwelling and intention are also nonexistent. Since all samadhi gates and all dharani gates are unreal, this dwelling and intention are also unreal. Since all samadhi gates and all dharani gates are without nature, this dwelling and intention are also without nature. Since all samadhi gates and all dharani gates are empty, this dwelling and intention are also empty. Since all samadhi gates and all dharani gates are far away, this dwelling and intention are also far away. Since all samadhi gates and all dharani gates are tranquil, this dwelling and intention are also tranquil. Since all samadhi gates and all dharani gates are without awakening and knowledge, this dwelling and intention are also without awakening and knowledge.

“Sariputra, you must know that because the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are nonexistent,

this dwelling and intention are also nonexistent. Since the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are unreal, this dwelling and intention are also unreal. Since the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are without nature, this dwelling and intention are also without nature. Since the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are empty, this dwelling and intention are also empty. Since the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are far away, this dwelling and intention are also far away. Since the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are tranquil, this dwelling and intention are also tranquil. Since the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are without awakening and knowledge, this dwelling and intention are also without awakening and knowledge.

“Sariputra, you must know that because the voice-hearer bodhi, self-enlightenment bodhi, and unsurpassed bodhi are nonexistent, this dwelling and intention are also nonexistent. Since the voice-hearer bodhi, self-enlightenment bodhi, and unsurpassed bodhi are unreal, this dwelling and intention are also unreal. Since the voice-hearer bodhi, self-enlightenment bodhi, and unsurpassed bodhi are without nature, this dwelling and intention are also without nature. Since the voice-hearer bodhi, self-enlightenment bodhi, and unsurpassed bodhi are empty, this dwelling and intention are also empty. Since the voice-hearer bodhi, self-enlightenment bodhi, and unsurpassed bodhi are far away, this dwelling and intention are also far away. Since the voice-hearer bodhi, self-enlightenment bodhi, and unsurpassed bodhi are tranquil, this dwelling and intention are also tranquil. Since the voice-hearer bodhi, self-enlightenment bodhi, and unsurpassed bodhi are without awakening and knowledge, this dwelling and intention are also without awakening and knowledge.

“Sariputra, because of this cause and condition, the great bodhisattvas will never stay away from this dwelling and intention. The great bodhisattvas thus are not different from various sentient beings because all dharmas are without differences.”

(Well-Appearing One said that because all dharmas are nonexistent, unreal, without nature, empty, far away, tranquil, and without awakening and knowledge, the dwelling in the intention of rescuing all sentient beings by adopting nonattainment as skillful means is also nonexistent, unreal, without nature, far away, tranquil, and without awakening and knowledge. If the great bodhisattvas can achieve such a superior intention in accordance with great compassion, dwell in this intention and never stay away from it, then these great bodhisattvas will attain the unsurpassed bodhi soon to turn the wonderful dharma wheel and deliver numberless sentient beings.)

At that time, the World-Honored One admired Well-Appearing One, “Excellent, excellent! You are so capable of lecturing on prajna paramita for various great bodhisattvas. You have done this with the support of Thus-Comer’s supernatural powers. Those who would like to lecture on prajna paramita for various great bodhisattvas should do as you do. Those who would like to learn prajna paramita should follow what you say. If the great bodhisattvas can learn prajna paramita as you say, they will realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi very soon, so that they will be able to turn the wonderful dharma wheel and deliver innumerable sentient beings.”

As the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One was lecturing on the fathomless prajna paramita for the great bodhisattvas, this large threefold thousand-world quaked in six different ways: move, powerful move, most powerful move; rise, powerful rise, most powerful rise; shake, powerful shake, most powerful shake; beat, powerful beat, most powerful beat; roar, powerful roar, most powerful roar; explosion, powerful explosion, most powerful explosion. The earth rises in the east and sinks in the west; rises in the west and sinks in the east; rises in the east and sinks in the west; rises in the west and sinks in the east; rises in the south and sinks in the north; rises in the north and sinks in the south; rises in the middle and sinks in the border, and rises in the border and sinks in the middle.

At that time, the World-Honored One smiled. When witnessing this, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “Based on what cause and condition did you smile?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “As I am teaching prajna paramita for the great bodhisattvas right here in this large threefold thousand-world, many Thus-Comers, Ones

Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones in immeasurable, countless, and boundless worlds in the east are also teaching prajna paramita for the great bodhisattvas. The Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones in immeasurable, countless, and boundless worlds in the south, west, north, northeast, northwest, southeast, southwest, above, and underneath are also teaching prajna paramita to the great bodhisattvas. Because of my teaching of prajna paramita to the great bodhisattvas in this large threefold thousand-world, twelve nayuta heavenly beings, human beings, asuras, and so forth have attained dharma forbearance of nonarising. It is also because of the Thus-Comers' teachings of prajna paramita to various great bodhisattvas in immeasurable, countless, and boundless worlds of the ten directions, immeasurable, countless, and boundless sentient beings have initiated aspiration to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and thus acquired great benefits and happiness."

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Chapter 25

Heavenly Emperor Indra

Section 1

(In the Second Assembly)

At that time, in this barely tolerably large threefold thousand-world, each of the four heavenly great kings led numberless hundreds of thousands of koti nayuta heavenly sons from the Heaven of Four Great Kings to the assembly. Each of the heavenly emperors led numberless hundreds of thousands of koti nayuta heavenly sons from the Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens to the assembly. Each of the Yama heavenly kings led numberless hundreds of thousands of koti nayuta heavenly sons from the Heaven of Yama to the assembly. Each of the heavenly kings led numberless hundreds of thousands of koti nayuta heavenly sons from the Heaven of Tusita to the assembly. Each of the heavenly kings led numberless hundreds of thousands of koti nayuta heavenly sons from the Heaven of Enjoying Self-Made Changes to the assembly. Each of the heavenly kings led numberless hundreds of thousands of koti nayuta heavenly sons from the Heaven of Enjoying Other-Made Changes to the assembly. Each of the heavenly kings led numberless hundreds of thousands of koti nayuta heavenly sons from the Heaven of Great Brahma Followers to the assembly. Each of the deities from the Heaven of Extremely Great Brightness and Purity came along with numberless hundreds of thousands of koti nayuta heavenly beings from the Heaven of Second Meditation to the assembly. Each of the deities from the Heaven of Universal Purity came along with numberless hundreds of thousands of koti nayuta heavenly beings from the Heaven of Third Meditation to the assembly. Each of the deities from the Heaven of Extensive Rewards came along with numberless hundreds of thousands of koti nayuta heavenly beings from the Heaven of Fourth Meditation to the assembly. All heavenly beings had emitted brilliant body lights caused by pure karmas that matured in different types and at different times. But in comparison with the constant lights of the Thus-Comer, the former lights were so weak and dim; they were much less bright than the latter lights

by one hundredth, one thousandth, one hundred thousandth, one kotith, one hundred kotith, one thousand kotith, one hundred thousand kotith. They were too weak to be counted, calculated, estimated, and expressed in metaphors. They were even weaker than the one upanisadam-api. Why? The constant lights emitting from the Thus-Comer's body always appear in flaming red. They are always the most honorable, the superior, the highest, and the most wonderful ones. They are incomparable, unequaled, and unsurpassed. Under the brilliant lights of the Thus-Comer, all heavenly lights are obscured and even disappear, like the burning torch in comparison with the Jambu gold.

At that time, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One, "Today in this large threefold thousand-world, all four great kings, heavenly kings, and the heavenly beings in the Heaven of Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and Heaven of Pure Residence have come to attend the assembly. The venerable one, they have come to hear your teaching about prajna paramita. The venerable one, we are looking forward to your teaching. The venerable one, please teach us what is prajna paramita for the great bodhisattvas? Why and how should great bodhisattvas dwell in prajna paramita? How should great bodhisattvas learn prajna paramita?"

(Heavenly Emperor Indra asked Well-Appearing One to explain the meaning of prajna paramita for great bodhisattvas, and how great bodhisattvas learn prajna paramita.)

In the meantime, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One replied to Heavenly Emperor Indra, "Kausika, heavenly beings, please listen to me carefully and reflect on what I will say. I will ride on the supernatural powers of the Buddha and follow the Thus-Comer's intention to lecture on prajna paramita for various great bodhisattvas so that they will know how to dwell in and learn prajna paramita. Kausika, those who have not initiated aspiration to the unsurpassed bodhi should initiate the aspiration today. Kausika, those who have already entered onto the path of nonarising for voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones will be very reluctant to convert to the great bodhi. Why? Kausika, it is because they have already ended the cycle of birth and death. If some of them would like to convert to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, I will be very glad to assist them. Why? Kausika, for the superior ones who are determined to pursue the higher stage of virtuous dharma, I am more willing to help them.

“Kausika, you asked, ‘What is prajna paramita for great bodhisattvas?’ Please listen to me carefully as I explain.

(Well-Appearing One elaborated how great bodhisattvas can cultivate prajna paramita in the following paragraphs.)

“Kausika, when initiating a mind correspondent with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, the great bodhisattvas should adopt nonattainment as skillful means to reflect on matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness as impermanent, painful, selfless, and empty; as illness, carbuncle, arrow, and boil; as anxiety, pressure, corruption, decay, change, and extinction; as scary and disgusting things, disaster, accident, epidemic disease, and plague; and as unstable and unreliable things. The great bodhisattvas will also reflect on the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere; the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere; the eye realm, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious realm; the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm; the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm; the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact; the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact; and the earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm in this way. Kausika, this is prajna paramita for great bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Kausika, when initiating a mind correspondent with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, the great bodhisattvas should adopt nonattainment as skillful means to reflect on matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness as tranquil, far away, and without arising, extinction, contamination, purification, making, and action. The great bodhisattvas should reflect on the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere; the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere; the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm; the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm; the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm; the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact; the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact; and the earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm as tranquil, far away, and without arising, extinction,

contamination, purification, making, and action. Kausika, this is prajna paramita for the great bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Kausika, when initiating a mind correspondent with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, the great bodhisattvas should adopt nonattainment as skillful means to reflect the cycle: ignorance will cause action, action will cause consciousness, consciousness will cause name and form, name and form will cause the six sense spheres, the six sense spheres will cause contact, contact will cause reception, reception will cause craving, craving will cause grasping, grasping will cause existence, existence will cause birth, birth will cause old age, death, and the aggregate of great suffering. The great bodhisattvas will also adopt nonattainment as skillful means to reflect that as ignorance extinguishes, action will extinguish; as action extinguishes, the consciousness will extinguish; as consciousness extinguishes, name and form will extinguish; as name and form extinguish, the six sense spheres will extinguish; as the six sense spheres extinguish, contact will extinguish; as contact extinguishes, reception will extinguish; as reception extinguishes, craving will extinguish; as craving extinguishes, grasping will extinguish; as grasping extinguishes, existence will extinguish; as existence extinguishes, birth will extinguish; as birth extinguishes, old age, death, and the aggregate of great suffering will extinguish too. Kausika, this is prajna paramita for great bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Kausika, when initiating a mind correspondent with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, the great bodhisattvas should adopt nonattainment as skillful means to dwell firmly in internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature. The great bodhisattvas also will dwell in realness, dharma realm, reality, the realm of the inconceivable, and the realm of peace and stability. Kausika, this is prajna paramita for great bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Kausika, when initiating a mind correspondent with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, the great bodhisattvas should adopt nonattainment as skillful means to cultivate the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration; the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power; all samadhi gates and all dharani gates; and the perfect knowledge of

everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Kausika, this is prajna paramita for great bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Kausika, when initiating a mind correspondent with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, the great bodhisattvas should adopt nonattainment as skillful means to cultivate giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, forbearance paramita, diligence paramita, meditation paramita, and prajna paramita. Kausika, this prajna paramita for great bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Kausika, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas should contemplate, ‘Although all dharmas nurture, foster, and fulfill each other, they are without selfness and the associated images.’ The great bodhisattvas should further contemplate, ‘The mind of transference does not combine with bodhi mind, and the bodhi mind does not combine with the mind of transference either. This means that in the bodhi mind possessed by the great bodhisattvas, the mind of transference is nonexistent and unattainable; and in the mind of transference, the bodhi mind is nonexistent and unattainable too. Although the great bodhisattvas contemplate and get to know various dharmas as they really are, they will not see the dharmas.’ Kausika, this is prajna paramita for great bodhisattvas.”

In the meantime, Heavenly Emperor Indra asked Well-Appearing One, “Why is the mind of transference of the great bodhisattvas not combined with the bodhi mind and the bodhi mind not combined with the mind of transference? Why is the mind of transference nonexistent and unattainable in the bodhi mind of the great bodhisattvas and the bodhi mind is also nonexistent and unattainable in the mind of transference?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Kausika, the mind of transference of the great bodhisattvas is not a mind, and the bodhi mind is not a mind either. We cannot transfer a nonmind toward another nonmind, nor transfer a mind toward a nonmind. We cannot transfer a nonmind toward a mind, nor transfer a mind toward another mind. Why? Kausika, nonmind is something inconceivable, and the inconceivable thing is not mind. Both are nonexistent; in nonexistence, the meaning of transference does not exist. Kausika, the mind does not have self-nature. Because the mind does not have self-nature, the associated images of the mind do not have self-nature either. Because the mind and its associated images do not have self-nature, the meaning of the

mind of transference does not exist. Kausika, to contemplate in this way is prajna paramita for great bodhisattvas.”

(Well-Appearing One replied to Heavenly emperor Indra, explaining the nature of the bodhi mind and the transference mind, and their relationship.)

At that time, the World-Honored One admired Well-Appearing One, “Excellent, excellent! You have lectured on prajna paramita very well for the great bodhisattvas. You have also done a good job to encourage great bodhisattvas to cultivate prajna paramita diligently and joyfully.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said, “World-Honored One, I knew what a great favor I have received. It is the right time for me to pay in return. Why? The Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones and their disciples in the past taught the six paramitas for the great bodhisattvas. The Thus-Comers had demonstrated, instructed, guided, admired, encouraged, celebrated the great bodhisattvas to provide them peace and confidence, so they could realize the ultimate truth. During that time, the World-Honored One also learned, realized, and attained the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and begun turning the wonderful dharma wheel, thus bringing benefits and happiness to us. Therefore, I will now follow the Buddha’s teachings to lecture on the six paramitas for various great bodhisattvas. As the Thus-Comer has done, I will demonstrate, instruct, guide, admire, encourage, and celebrate great bodhisattvas to establish them well in the pursuit of the ultimate truth, so they will be able to realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly. This is named repaying the favors granted by the Buddha.”

(Well-Appearing One said that he should teach and encourage great bodhisattvas as a way of repaying the favors the Buddha has granted on him.)

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, “Kausika, you asked, ‘How should great bodhisattvas dwell in prajna paramita?’ Here are the guidelines for great bodhisattvas when dwelling in prajna paramita. Please listen to me carefully.

“Kausika, matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are empty; bodhisattva is empty too. The emptiness of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness and the

emptiness of bodhisattva are not dualistic or separate. Kausika, the great bodhisattvas should dwell in prajna paramita in this way.

“Kausika, the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere are empty; bodhisattva is empty too. The emptiness of the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere and the emptiness of bodhisattva are not dualistic or separate. Kausika, the great bodhisattvas should dwell in prajna paramita in this way.

“Kausika, the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere are empty; bodhisattva is empty too. The emptiness of the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere and the emptiness of bodhisattva are not dualistic or separate. Kausika, the great bodhisattvas should dwell in prajna paramita in this way.

“Kausika, the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm are empty; bodhisattva is empty too. The emptiness of the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm and the emptiness of bodhisattva are not dualistic or separate. Kausika, the great bodhisattvas should dwell in prajna paramita in this way.

“Kausika, the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm are empty; bodhisattva is empty too. The emptiness of the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm and the emptiness of bodhisattva are not dualistic or separate. Kausika, the great bodhisattvas should dwell in prajna paramita in this way.

“Kausika, the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm are empty; bodhisattva is empty too. The emptiness of the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm and the emptiness of bodhisattva are not dualistic or separate. Kausika, the great bodhisattvas should dwell in prajna paramita in this way.

“Kausika, the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are empty; bodhisattva is empty too. The emptiness of the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact and the emptiness of bodhisattva are not dualistic or separate. Kausika, the great bodhisattvas should dwell in prajna paramita in this way.

“Kausika, the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are empty; bodhisattva is empty too. The emptiness of the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact and the emptiness of bodhisattva are not dualistic or separate. Kausika, the great bodhisattvas should dwell in prajna paramita in this way.

“Kausika, the earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm are empty; bodhisattva is empty too. The emptiness of the earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm and the emptiness of bodhisattva are not dualistic or separate. Kausika, the great bodhisattvas should dwell in prajna paramita in this way.

“Kausika, ignorance, action, and so forth, and old age and death are empty; bodhisattva is empty too. The emptiness of ignorance, action, and so forth, and old age and death and the emptiness of bodhisattva are not dualistic or separate. Kausika, the great bodhisattvas should dwell in prajna paramita in this way.

“Kausika, the extinction of ignorance, action, and so forth, and old age and death is empty; bodhisattva is empty too. The emptiness of the extinction of ignorance, action, and so forth, and old age and death and the emptiness of bodhisattva are not dualistic or separate. Kausika, the great bodhisattvas should dwell in prajna paramita in this way.

“Kausika, giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita are empty; bodhisattva is empty too. The emptiness of giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita and the emptiness of bodhisattva are not dualistic or separate. Kausika, the great bodhisattvas should dwell in prajna paramita in this way.

“Kausika, internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are empty; bodhisattva is empty too. The emptiness of internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature and the emptiness of bodhisattva are not dualistic or separate. Kausika, the great bodhisattvas should dwell in prajna paramita in this way.

“Kausika, the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power are empty; bodhisattva is empty too. The emptiness of the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and

eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power and the emptiness of bodhisattva are not different or separate. Kausika, the great bodhisattvas should dwell in prajna paramita in this way.

“Kausika, all samadhi gates and all dharani gates are empty; bodhisattva is empty too. The emptiness of all samadhi gates and all dharani gates and the emptiness of bodhisattva are not different or separate. Kausika, the great bodhisattvas should dwell in prajna paramita in this way.

“Kausika, voice-hearer vehicle is empty, self-enlightened one vehicle is empty, the unsurpassed vehicle is empty, and bodhisattva is empty too. The emptiness of voice-hearer, the emptiness of self-enlightened one, the emptiness of the unsurpassed vehicle, and the emptiness of bodhisattva are not different or separate. Kausika, the great bodhisattvas should dwell in prajna paramita in this way.

“Kausika, stream-enterer, once-returner, and so forth, and Thus-Comer are empty; bodhisattva is empty too. The emptiness of stream-enterer, once-returner, and so forth, and Thus-Comer and the emptiness of bodhisattva are not dualistic or separate. Kausika, the great bodhisattvas should dwell in prajna paramita in this way.

“Kausika, the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are empty; bodhisattva is empty too. The emptiness of the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena and the emptiness of bodhisattva are not dualistic or separate. Kausika, the great bodhisattvas should dwell in prajna paramita in this way.”

In the meantime, Heavenly Emperor Indra asked Well-Appearing One, “What dharmas in which the great bodhisattvas should not dwell when cultivating prajna paramita?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Kausika, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas should not dwell in matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. They should not dwell in the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere. They should not dwell in the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere. They should not dwell in the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm. They should not dwell in the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm. They should not dwell in

the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm. They should not dwell in the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact. They should not dwell in the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact. They should not dwell in the earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and the consciousness realm. They should not dwell in ignorance, action, and so forth, and old age and death. They should not dwell in the extinction of ignorance, action, and so forth, and old age and death. They should not dwell in giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita. They should not dwell in internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature. They should not dwell in the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power. They should not dwell in all samadhi gates and all dharani gates. They should not dwell in voice-hearer vehicle, self-enlightened one vehicle, and the unsurpassed vehicle. They should not dwell in stream-enterer, once-returner, and so forth, and Thus-Come. They should not dwell in the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Why? Kausika, this is not the way that great bodhisattvas should dwell because it is based on attainment.

(Well-Appearing One advised where great bodhisattvas should not reside.)

Furthermore, Kausika, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas should not keep thinking that this is matter and that is consciousness; this is eye sphere and that is conscious sphere; this is sight sphere and that is mental-image sphere; this is eye realm and that is conscious realm; this is sight realm and that is mental-image realm; this is eye consciousness realm and that is conscious consciousness realm; this is eye contact and that is conscious contact; these are the feelings produced by eye contact and those are the feeling produced by conscious contact; this is the earth realm and that is the consciousness realm; this is ignorance and those are old age and death; this is the extinction of ignorance and that is the extinction of old age and death. They should not keep thinking that these are giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth; these are internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth; these are the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth; these are all samadhi gates and all dharani gates; these are voice-hearer vehicle, self-enlightened one vehicle, and unsurpassed vehicle; these are stream-enterer, once-returner, and so forth; these are the perfect knowledge of

everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Why? Kausika, these thoughts are based on attainment.

(The great bodhisattvas should not have the thoughts based on attainment.)

“Furthermore, kausika, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas should not dwell on matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness as permanent or impermanent, pleasant or painful, with selfness or without selfness, pure or impure, empty or not empty, tranquil or not tranquil, and far away or not far away. They should not dwell on the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere; the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere; the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm; the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm; the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm; the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact; the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact; the earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm; ignorance, action, and so forth, and old age and death; the extinction of ignorance, action, and so forth, and old age and death; giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power; all samadhi gates and all dharani gates; voice-hearer vehicle, self-enlightened one vehicle, and unsurpassed vehicle; stream-enterer, once-returner, and so forth, and the Thus-Come; and the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena as permanent or impermanent, pleasant or painful, with selfness or without selfness, and so forth. Why? Kausika, these thoughts are based on attainment.

“Furthermore, Kausika, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas should not dwell on the stream-entry effect as conditioned dharma or as unconditioned dharma; the once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, self-enlightenment bodhi, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi as conditioned dharmas or unconditioned dharmas. Why? Kausika, these thoughts are based on attainment.

“Furthermore, kausika, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas should not dwell on the stream-enterer as the field of merits and virtues, or the once-returner, nonreturner, arhat, bodhisattva, and Thus-Come as the fields of merits and virtues. Why? Kausika, these thoughts are based on attainment.

“Furthermore, Kausika, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas should not dwell on the first stage, second stage, and so forth, and the tenth stages. Why? Kausika, these thoughts are based on attainment. Why? This dwelling is with movement and turning.

“Furthermore, kausika, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas should not keep thinking after dwelling in the initial aspiration, ‘I will fulfill giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita.’ Or ‘I will cultivate the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power.’ They should not dwell on this thought, ‘After making an extra effort and fulfilling the cultivation, I will enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising. After that, I will stay in the bodhisattva stage of nonregression.’ They should not dwell on this thought, ‘I will fulfill the five supernatural powers of bodhisattva and travel to numberless and countless Buddha lands to pay homage, make offerings, and offer services to various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones.’ Or ‘I will listen to the Buddhas’ dharma teachings, reflect reasonably on them, and disseminate the correct dharma extensively.’ Why? Kausika, all these thoughts are based on attainment.

“Furthermore, Kausika, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas should not dwell on these thoughts, ‘I will dignify and purify this land to make it as pure and dignified as the Buddhas’ lands in the ten directions. I will transform a land into a world as pure as the Buddhas’ lands in the ten directions. I will assist the sentient beings to mature, and realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, so they will enter nirvana or enjoy human or heavenly pleasures. I will visit innumerable and countless Buddha lands, pay respect to, admire, and acclaim various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, and make boundless flower fragrances, jewel necklaces, treasure banners, canopies, clothes, beds, bedding, drinks, food, lamps, hundreds of thousands of koti nayuta heavenly entertainments, and immeasurable best rarities

and properties as offerings to the Buddhas. I will establish innumerable, countless, and boundless sentient beings in peace and stability, so they will not regress in the pursuit of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Why? Kausika, all these thoughts are based on attainment.

“Furthermore, Kausika, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas should not dwell on these thoughts, ‘I will attain the pure human eye, heavenly eye, wisdom eye, dharma eye, and Buddha eye. I will fulfill all dharani gates and become free from bondages. I will attain the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, great equanimity, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power. I will achieve thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features to dignify and purify my body, so the sentient beings will look at me tirelessly with great joy; they will obtain happiness and benefits.’ Why? Kausika, it is because all these thoughts are based on attainment.

“Furthermore, Kausika, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas should not dwell on thinking that this is the eighth pudgala (arhat effect), this is the action in accordance with belief and that is the action in accordance with dharma; this is a stream-entry practitioner, this is a once-return practitioner (kulajkula), and that is a nonreturn practitioner (eka-vicīka); this is a nonreturner who will become an arhat when getting rid of all vexations, this is a stream-enterer who definitely will not regress from correct dharma, and that is a once-returner who will come back once before eliminating all suffering and vexations; this is a nonreturn aspirant and that is a nonreturner who will go to another world to enter nirvana; this is an arhat who will have no more birth and death and definitely will enter nirvana without remainder immediately; this is a self-enlightened one and that is the Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One. The great bodhisattvas should not dwell on all these thoughts.

“They should not dwell on these thoughts, ‘I have surpassed the stages of voice-hearer and self-enlightened one and now are entering the stage of bodhisattva. I must fulfill the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. After understanding the phenomena of all dharmas, I will permanently eliminate all long-rooted vexations in disposition. I must realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi; become a Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally

Enlightened One; turn the wonderful dharma wheel; and undertake all kinds of Buddhist services to relieve immeasurable, countless sentient beings, so they will enter the nirvana with ultimate peace and happiness. I must cultivate the four bases of power well; after fulfilling the cultivation, I will dwell peacefully in superior samadhi; because of the powers of samadhi, my life span will increase tremendously and last as many kalpas as the sands of the Ganges. I will acquire a boundless lifespan. I will attain thirty-two perfect major marks, and in each mark the dignity and beauty of one hundred blessings will be manifest. I will achieve eighty distinguishing minor features, and in each feature, countless rare superior things are manifest. These are the thoughts in which the great bodhisattvas should not dwell.

“They should not dwell in these thoughts, ‘I will live peacefully in a dignified and purified land with an area as wide as the worlds of the ten directions, and the worlds are as many as the sands of the Ganges. I will sit firmly on a diamond throne which is as wide as the threefold thousand-world. I will sit under a large bodhi tree, high and wide, beautifully decorated with varied treasures. Its sweet fragrance will flow to reach the sentient beings, free them from greed, anger, and ignorance and cure their innumerable diseases. Those who smell the fragrance will transcend the effects of voice-hearer and self-enlightened one to attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. These are the thought in which the great bodhisattvas should not dwell.

“The great bodhisattvas should not dwell in these thoughts, “I vow to acquire a dignified and purified Buddha land, which is so pure that the names and voices of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness do not exist. In that land, the names and voices of the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres; the sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres; the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms; the sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms; the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, nose consciousness realm, tongue consciousness realm, body consciousness realm, and conscious consciousness realm; the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts; the feelings produced by eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts; the earth, water, fire, wind, space, and consciousness realms; and ignorance, action, consciousness, name and form, six sense spheres, reception, craving, grasping, existence, birth, old age, and death do not exist. In that dignified and purified land, only the names and voices of giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; the names and voices of internal emptiness, external

emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the names and voices of realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable; and the names and voices of the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power exist and can be heard. The names and voices of the stream-enterer, once-returner, nonreturner, arhat, self-enlightened ones, and ordinary sentient being do not exist; only the names and voices of the bodhisattva and the Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One exist and can be heard." Why? All these thoughts are based on attainment. Why? When the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, they are aware that all dharmas are nonexistent. As all great bodhisattvas dwell in the state of nonregression, they also understand that all dharmas are nonexistent.

(Well-Appearing One said to Indra that when the great bodhisattvas practice prajna paramita, they should dwell in some thoughts but should not dwell in other thoughts. They should not dwell on dharmas with the mind of attainment.)

"Kausika, these are the phenomena in which great bodhisattvas should and should not dwell when they cultivate prajna paramita. Kausika, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas should learn this by adopting nonattainment as skillful means."

At that time, Sariputra had this thought in his mind, "If the great bodhisattvas should not dwell in all dharmas when cultivating prajna paramita, why should they dwell in prajna paramita?"

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One could read Sariputra's mind, so he asked, "What do you think about this? Where does the Thus-Comer's mind dwell?"

Sariputra replied, "The Thus-Comer's mind dwells nowhere. Why? Well-Appearing One, the Thus-Comer's mind does not dwell in matter, or in feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. The Thus-Comer's mind does not dwell in the eye sphere, or in the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres; in the sight sphere, or in the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres; in the eye realm, or in the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms; in the sight realm, or in the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms; in the eye

consciousness realm, or in the ear consciousness realm, nose consciousness realm, tongue consciousness realm, body consciousness realm, and conscious consciousness realm; in the eye contact, or in the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts; in the feelings produced by eye contact, or in the feelings produced by ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts. The Thus-Comer's mind does not dwell in the conditioned realms or in the unconditioned realms. The Thus-Comer's mind does not dwell in the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power, or in the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Why? All dharmas are unattainable. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, the Thus-Comer's mind neither dwell nor not dwell in all dharmas."

In the meantime, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to Sariputra, "When cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas will dwell in prajna paramita. But like Thus-Comers, they neither dwell nor not dwell in all dharmas. Why? Sariputra, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas do dwell in prajna paramita, but they neither dwell nor not dwell in matter, feeling, thinking, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Why? The dharmas, such as matter, feeling, and so forth, do not have dualistic forms. Sariputra, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas should neither dwell nor not dwell in dharmas. They should learn to adopt nonattainment as skillful means."

(As responding to Sariputra's question, Well-Appearing One stated that when practicing prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas should neither dwell nor not dwell in various dharmas, which are without dualistic forms.)

At that time, some heavenly sons in the assembly thought, "We can understand the language and the spells used by yaksas although they are very subtle and mystic, but we cannot understand what the venerable Well-Appearing One said about prajna paramita although he tried to elucidate it through various verbal expressions."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One could read these heavenly sons' minds, so he said to them, "Can you heavenly sons understand what I say?"

The heavenly sons replied, "No, we can't!"

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to them, “I haven’t said a word correspondent with the meanings of the fathomless prajna paramita, and you haven’t heard it either. It is not surprising that you cannot understand me. Why? Heavenly sons, all the meanings correspondent with the fathomless prajna paramita are apart from words and speech. Among them, the speaker, the hearers, and the ones who understand are all unattainable. So too is the subtle and fathomless unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi that all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones have realized and attained.

“Heavenly sons, if the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones made the transformed four kinds of followers and allowed them to attend the assembly to hear the dharma teaching, what do you think about this? Are there the real speakers, listeners, and the ones who can understand?”

The heavenly sons replied, “No, great virtuous one.”

Well-Appearing One continued, “Heavenly sons, so the dharmas are like the transformed things. In the meanings correspondent with the fathomless prajna paramita, the speakers, listeners, and the ones who understand are all unattainable.

“Heavenly sons, someone dreamed Buddha was teaching correct dharma to the public. What do you think about this? Are there real speaker, listeners, and ones who understand in the dream?”

The heavenly sons replied, “No, great virtuous one.”

Well-Appearing One said, “Heavenly sons, all dharmas are like a dream. In the meanings correspondent with the fathomless prajna paramita, the speakers, listeners, and the ones who understand are all unattainable.

“Heavenly sons, two persons in the same valley admired the Buddha, the dharma, and the sangha simultaneously from two sides of the valley. What do you think about this? Did they hear each other and understand each other?”

The heavenly sons replied, “No, great virtuous one.”

Well-Appearing One said, “Heavenly sons, all dharmas are like an echo. In the meanings correspondent with the fathomless prajna paramita, the speakers, listeners, and the ones who understand are all unattainable.

“Heavenly sons, a conjurer or disciple made transformed four kinds of human beings and one transformed Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One at the intersection of the road. This transformed Thus-Comer was teaching correct dharma to the transformed beings. What do you think about this? Are the speaker, listeners, and the ones who understand real?”

The heavenly sons replied, “No, great virtuous one.”

Well-Appearing One said, “Heavenly sons, all dharmas are like illusions. In the meanings correspondent with the fathomless prajna paramita, the speaker, listeners, and the ones who understand are all unattainable.

“Heavenly sons, because of this cause and condition, I haven’t said a word correspondent with the fathomless prajna paramita, and you haven’t heard any word either. So how can you understand me?”

(Well-Appearing One said to heavenly beings in the assembly that all dharmas are like dream, echo, and illusions which are not real. In prajna paramita, the speaker, listeners, and the ones who understand the dharma are unattainable.)

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Chapter 25

Heavenly Emperor Indra

Section 2

(In the Second Assembly)

At that time, the heavenly sons thought to themselves again, “Although the venerable Well-Appearing One has tried all possible ways to explain for us about prajna paramita, its meanings remain too fathomless and subtle to measure and imagine.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One knew what the heavenly sons were thinking, so he said to them, “Heavenly sons, matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness is neither fathomless nor subtle; the self-nature of matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness is neither fathomless nor subtle. The eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere are neither fathomless nor subtle; the self-nature of the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere is neither fathomless nor subtle. The sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere are neither fathomless nor subtle; the self-nature of the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere is neither fathomless nor subtle. The eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm are neither fathomless nor subtle; the self-nature of the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm is neither fathomless nor subtle. The sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm are neither fathomless nor subtle; the self-nature of the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm is neither fathomless nor subtle. The eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm are neither fathomless nor subtle; the self-nature of the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm is neither fathomless nor subtle. The eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are neither fathomless nor subtle; the self-nature of the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact is neither fathomless nor subtle. The feelings

produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are neither fathomless nor subtle; the self-nature of the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact is neither fathomless nor subtle. Giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita are neither fathomless nor subtle; the self-nature of giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita is neither fathomless nor subtle. Internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are neither fathomless nor subtle; the self-nature of internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature is neither fathomless nor subtle. The four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power are neither fathomless nor subtle; the self-nature of the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power is neither fathomless nor subtle. All samadhi gates and all dharani gates are neither fathomless nor subtle; the self-nature of all samadhi gates and all dharani gates is neither fathomless nor subtle. The perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are neither fathomless nor subtle; the self-nature of the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena is neither fathomless nor subtle."

In the meantime, the heavenly sons again had this thought in their minds, "In the dharma teaching given by the venerable Well-Appearing One, matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness are not established; the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere are not established; the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere are not established; the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm are not established; the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm are not established; the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm are not established; the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are established; the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are not established; giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita are not established; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are not established; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power are not

established; the samadhi gates and dharani gates are not established; the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are not established; the stream-enterer and stream-entry effect, once-returner and once-return effect, and so forth, and arhat and arhat effect are not established; the self-enlightened one and self-enlightenment bodhi are not established; the bodhisattva and the stage of bodhisattva are not established; samyak-sambuddha and annutara-samyak-sambodhi are not established; language and words are not established.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One knew what the heavenly sons had in mind, so he said to them, “Yes, it is as you think. All dharmas, such as matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the unsurpassed, perfect and universal bodhi are apart from written and spoken language; they are unspeakable. Therefore, in prajna paramita, the speaker, listeners, and the ones who understand do not exist. You should cultivate profound and solid forbearance as you are taught in various dharmas. Those who would like to realize, attain, and dwell in stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, or arhat effect should first cultivate this forbearance. Those who would like to attain and dwell in the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi should first cultivate this forbearance too. Therefore, heavenly sons, since the time of beginning to aspire to until attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, the great bodhisattvas should cultivate diligently and dwell in the fathomless prajna paramita that is without speaking, listening, and understanding.”

(Well-Appearing One said to heavenly beings that forbearance is what the unsurpassed-bodhi pursuers should learn first. Prajna paramita is fathomless and difficult to understand because it is apart from language and speech.)

Chapter 26

Belief and Acceptance

(In the Second Assembly)

Meanwhile, the heavenly sons had another thought in their minds, “What dharma and for what sentient beings is the venerable Well-Appearing One going to teach now?”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One could read their minds, so he said to them, “Heavenly sons, I am now going to teach the illusory, transformed, and dream-like dharma to the illusory, transformed, and dream-like sentient beings. Why? Heavenly sons, when listening to the teaching, the listeners will hear nothing, understand nothing, and attain nothing.”

In the meantime, the heavenly sons asked again, “Are the speaker, the listeners, and the dharma taught also illusory, transformed, and like dreams?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Yes, it is as you say. The illusory sentient being will teach illusory dharma to illusory audience. The transformed sentient being will teach transformed dharma to transformed audience. The dream-like sentient being will teach dream-like dharma to dream-like audience. Heavenly sons, the ‘I,’ the sentient being, the living one, and so forth, and the viewer are illusory, transformed, and like dreams. Matter, feeling, thinking, and so forth, and consciousness are illusory, transformed, and like dreams. The eye, ear, and so forth, and conscious spheres are illusory, transformed, and like dreams. The sight, sound, and so forth, and mental-image spheres are illusory, transformed, and like dreams. Eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm are illusory, transformed, and like dreams. Eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are illusory, transformed, and like dreams. The feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are illusory, transformed, and like dreams. Giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita are illusory, transformed, and like dreams. Internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are illusory, transformed, and like dreams. The four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power are illusory, transformed, and like dreams. The stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and arhat effect are illusory, transformed, and like dreams. The self-enlightenment bodhi and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi are illusory, transformed, and like dreams.”

(Well-Appearing One taught heavenly beings that the sentient beings, the five aggregates, the sense roots and the process of perception, the fundamental components of the world, as well as various superior holy dharmas and holy effects are illusory, transformed, and like dreams.)

In the meantime, the heavenly sons asked Well-Appearing One, “The venerable one has said that matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi are illusory, transformed, and like dreams. Will you say that nirvana is also illusory, transformed, and like dreams?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Heavenly sons, not only matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi are illusory, transformed, and like dreams, but nirvana is also illusory, transformed, and like dreams. Heavenly sons, if there were any dharma superior to nirvana, I would also say that it is illusory, transformed, and like dreams. Why? Heavenly sons, the illusions, transformed things, dreams, and all dharmas, including nirvana, are neither different nor separate.”

(Even nirvana is illusory and like dream. Nirvana, the illusions, and so forth, and the rest of dharmas are all illusory.)

At that time, Sariputra, Mahamaudgalyāyana, Mahākauṣṭhila, Fully Loving-Kind One (Purna), Mahakatyayana, Mahākāśyapa, the rest of great voice-hearers, as well as immeasurable, countless great bodhisattvas asked the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One, “The prajna paramita you have talked about is fathomless, difficult to see, difficult to awake to, tranquil, subtle, deep, mystic, extraordinary, and exquisite, then who will be able to believe and accept?”

In the meantime, Ananda heard the question and said to the great voice-hearers and great bodhisattvas, “The great bodhisattvas who have reached the state of nonregression are able to believe and accept this fathomless, hard to see, hard to awake to, tranquil, subtle, deep, mystic, extraordinary, and exquisite prajna paramita. The arhats who have seen the holy truth, known the origin and the ultimate meaning of various profound dharmas, and fulfilled all their aspirations are able to believe and accept the fathomless, hard to see, hard to awake to, tranquil, subtle, deep, mystic, extraordinary, and exquisite prajna paramita. Moreover, innumerable great bodhisattvas who have stayed close to kotis of Buddhas’ places, made offerings to the Buddhas, and vowed to

plant virtuous roots are able to believe and accept the fathomless, difficult to see, difficult to awake to, tranquil, subtle, deep, mystic, extraordinary, and exquisite prajna paramita. Moreover, innumerable good gentlemen and gentlewomen who have made great vows to plant virtuous roots in countless Buddhas' places and have been absorbed by intelligent virtuous friends are also able to believe and accept the fathomless, hard to see, hard to awake to, tranquil, subtle, deep, mystic, extraordinary, and exquisite prajna paramita.

(Ananda explained who will believe and accept this fathomless, hard to see and hard to awaken to, tranquil, subtle, deep, mystic, extraordinary, and exquisite prajna paramita.)

“Why? These human beings do not distinguish among matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness based on emptiness, formlessness, nonaspiration, nonarising, nonextinction, tranquility, and getting far away; nor do they distinguish among emptiness, formlessness, nonaspiration, nonarising, nonextinction, tranquility, and getting far away based on matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness. They do not distinguish among the eye, ear, and so forth, and conscious spheres; the sight, sound, and so forth, and mental-image spheres; the eye consciousness, ear consciousness, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realms; the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact; the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact; giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; all samadhi gates and all dharani gates; the stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and arhat effect; the self-enlightenment bodhi; all bodhisattva actions and the unsurpassed, perfect and universal bodhi; the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; and the conditioned realms and unconditioned realms based on emptiness, formlessness, nonaspiration, nonarising, nonextinction, tranquility, and getting far away. They do not distinguish among emptiness, formlessness, nonaspiration, nonarising, nonextinction, tranquility, and getting far away based on the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres, and so forth, and the conditioned dharmas and unconditioned realms. Because of this cause and condition, they are able to believe and accept the fathomless, hard to see, hard to awake to, tranquil, subtle, deep and mystic, and extraordinary and exquisite prajna paramita.”

(Ananda further said, ones can believe and accept the fathomless prajna paramita because they do not distinguish among various dharmas based on the realization that all dharmas are empty, formless, without aspiration, without arising, without extinction, tranquil, and far away.)

Meanwhile, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to various heavenly sons, “The fathomless, hard to see, hard to awake to, tranquil, subtle, deep, mystic, extraordinary, and exquisite prajna paramita is beyond one’s thinking and reasoning. In the fathomless prajna paramita, nothing can be really believed and accepted. Why? Heavenly sons, in the fathomless prajna paramita, no dharma can manifest. Because no dharma can manifest, the ones who believe and accept thus are unattainable.”

(Well-Appearing One explained that the ones who believe and accept the fathomless prajna paramita are unattainable because in prajna paramita, no dharma can manifest.)

At that time, the long-lived sage Sariputra said to Well-Appearing One, “Is the dharma correspondent with the three vehicles, namely, the voice-hearer vehicle, the self-enlightened one vehicle, and the unsurpassed vehicle, extensively absorbed in this fathomless teaching of prajna paramita? Are the bodhisattva paths, including initial aspiration and the ten stages of cultivation, extensively absorbed in this fathomless teaching of prajna paramita? Are giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita extensively absorbed in this fathomless teaching of prajna paramita? Are the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power and all samadhi gates and all dharani gates extensively absorbed in this fathomless teaching of prajna paramita? Are the superior events of the great bodhisattvas caused by supernatural powers developed through diligent cultivation of prajna paramita also extensively absorbed in the fathomless teaching of prajna paramita? Do the superior events of the great bodhisattvas include that they are always reborn through transformation; they can employ supernatural powers freely without regression; they fully know and can master numberless dharma gates; they have traveled from one Buddha land to the other to make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones; they can cultivate and accumulate virtuous roots, and fulfill them as they wish; they can hear and practice correct dharma at various Buddhas’ places and never forget what they have heard until attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi; they can

always stay in superior concentrations and stay away from restless mind; and they have attained superior talent in the world to debate and defend quickly and correctly without hindrance, as well as to give lectures with rich meanings and tastes?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Yes, it is as you say. In the fathomless teaching of prajna paramita, the dharmas correspondent with the three vehicles and various superior things of great bodhisattvas, including their supernatural powers and so forth, and the most exquisite talent of debate in the world are absorbed and taught comprehensively by adopting nonattainment as skillful means. As prajna paramita is taught by adopting nonattainment as skillful means, what dharmas are regarded as unattainable? They are the ‘I,’ the sentient being, the living one, and so forth, and the knower and the viewer; matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness; the eye, ear, and so forth, and conscious spheres; the sight, sound, and so forth, and mental-image spheres; the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm; the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact; the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact; giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power; and the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. All these dharmas are taught in prajna paramita as unattainable.”

Meanwhile, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, “Based on what cause and condition do you say that the dharma correspondent with the three vehicles and the supernatural powers of the great bodhisattva, and so forth, and their most exquisite talent of debate in the world are absorbed and taught comprehensively and expediently as unattainable in the fathomless teaching of prajna paramita?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Sariputra, because internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and selfless self-nature, the dharma correspondent with the three vehicles is comprehensively and expediently taught as unattainable in the fathomless teaching of prajna paramita. Sariputra, because internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness

of selfless self-nature, the supernatural powers of the great bodhisattva, and so forth, and their most exquisite talent of debate in the world are absorbed and taught comprehensively and expediently as unattainable in the fathomless teaching of prajna paramita.”

(Well-Appearing One replied to Sariputra that in the fathomless prajna paramita, various superior events of the great bodhisattvas are absorbed and extensively and expediently taught as unattainable based on various kinds of emptiness.)

Chapter 27

Spreading Flowers

Section 1

(In the Second Assembly)

At that time, Heavenly Emperor Indra and the heavenly beings from the Heaven of Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and Heaven of Ultimate Form thought, “Today the venerable Well-Appearing One has showered great dharma rain on all sentient beings with the support of the Buddha’s authority and powers. It is now the time for us to express gratitude and return the favor by making transformed fragrant heavenly flowers as offerings to Sakyamuni Buddha, the great bodhisattvas, the bhiksus (monks), venerable Well-Appearing One, and the fathomless prajna paramita. Isn’t it wonderful?”

After having this thought, Heavenly Emperor Indra and each of heavenly beings made transformed fragrant heavenly flowers and spread them before Sakyamuni Buddha, the great bodhisattvas, the bhiksus, and Well-Appearing One as offerings to them and to the fathomless prajna paramita. At that moment, this threefold thousand-world was filled with flowers. Owing to Buddha’s supernatural powers, the flowers quickly assembled and turned into a very pretty,

exquisite, and unique floral table hanging in the air, which was as large as the entire threefold thousand-world.

At that time, Well-Appearing One witnessed what was happening and thought, “These spreading flowers have never been seen in heavens. They must not be grown from grass or trees on land or water but rather transformed by various heavenly beings from deep within their hearts.”

Heavenly Emperor Indra could read Well-Appearing One’s mind, so said to him, “These flowers are not grown from grass or trees on water or land, nor are they the real things coming out of the mind; they are transformed.”

At that time, Well-Appearing One responded to Heavenly Emperor Indra, “Kausika, you say that these flowers are not grown from grass or trees, nor the real things coming out of the mind. Then they should not be named flowers because they are not in accord with the natural law of arising.”

Meanwhile, Heavenly Emperor Indra asked Well-Appearing One, “Great virtuous one, are only the flowers or are all other dharmas without arising?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Not only the flowers but also the rest of dharmas are without arising. Why? Kausika, matter is without arising, so it should not be named matter; feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are without arising, so they should not be named feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. The eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere; the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental image sphere; the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm; the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and consciousness contact; and the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are with arising, so they are not what they are named. Kausika, giving paramita is without arising, so it is not giving paramita; pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas are without arising, so they are not pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas. Internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are without arising; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen

distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power are without arising; and the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are also without arising, so they are not as named."

At that time, Heavenly Emperor Indra thought, "The venerable Well-Appearing One has very profound wisdom and can teach dharma nature well without conflicting with provisional names."

The Buddha knew Heavenly Emperor's thought, so said to him, "Kausika, as you think, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One has very profound wisdom. He can teach dharma nature without being contrary to provisional names."

Meanwhile, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the Buddha, "What dharmas and their dharma nature are taught by the venerable Well-Appearing One without being contrary to provisional names?"

The Buddha replied, "Kausika, matter is merely a provisional name, and the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One teaches the dharma nature of matter in a way not contrary to the provisional name of matter. Feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are merely provisional names, and the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One teaches the dharma nature of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness in a way not contrary to the provisional names of feeling, thinking, and so forth, and consciousness. Why? The dharma nature of matter, feeling, and so forth, and their names are neither in accord nor in conflict, and Well-Appearing One's teaching is neither in accord nor in conflict with the dharmas or with the dharma nature. So too are the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere; the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere; the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm; the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact; and the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact. Their dharma nature and their names are neither in accord nor in conflict.

"Kausika, giving paramita is merely a provisional name, and the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One teaches the dharma nature of giving paramita in a way not contrary to the provisional name of giving paramita. Pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna

paramitas are merely provisional names, and the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One teaches the dharma nature of pure-precept paramita, forbearance paramita, and so forth in a way not contrary to the provisional names of pure-precept paramita, forbearance paramita, and so forth. Why? The dharma nature of giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and their names are neither in accord nor in conflict, and Well-Appearing One's teaching is neither in accord nor in conflict with the dharmas or with the dharma nature. So too are internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; the stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and arhat effect; the self-enlightenment bodhi; the unsurpassed, perfect and universal bodhi; the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; and the stream-enter, once-returner, nonreturner, arhat, self-enlightened one, bodhisattva, and Thus-Come. Their dharma nature and their names are neither in accord nor in conflict.

“Kausika, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One has taught the dharma nature of these dharmas in a way not contrary to their provisional names.”

(As Well-Appearing One pointed out that all dharmas are without arising, so they are not as named. Kausika thought that Well-Appearing One could teach dharma nature well without being contrary to provisional names. The Buddha knew what Kausika thought, so elaborated that the nature of the dharmas and the names of the dharmas are neither in accord nor in conflict.)

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, “Kausika, as the Buddha says, all dharmas are merely provisional names. Kausika, after knowing this, the great bodhisattvas should learn prajna paramita. When learning in this way, they do not learn matter, nor do they learn feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Why? Kausika, they do not see matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, so they cannot learn them. They cannot learn the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth; the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth; the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth; the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth; and the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth because they do not see them.

“Kausika, when learning in this way, the great bodhisattvas do not learn giving paramita, nor do they learn pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas. Why? Kausika, these great bodhisattvas do not see giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas, so they cannot learn them. They cannot learn internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth; the stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and arhat effect; the self-enlightenment bodhi; the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi; and the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena either because they do not see them.”

Meanwhile, Heavenly Emperor Indra asked Well-Appearing One, “Based on what cause and condition do the great bodhisattvas not see matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Kausika, matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are empty. Kausika, it is based on this cause and condition to say that the great bodhisattvas do not see matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Kausika, because the great bodhisattvas do not see them, they cannot learn them. Why? Kausika, empty matter cannot see empty matter, and the empty perfect knowledge cannot see the empty perfect knowledge either. Empty matter cannot learn empty matter, and the empty perfect knowledge of all phenomena cannot learn the empty perfect knowledge of all phenomena.

“Kausika, if the great bodhisattvas do not learn emptiness, they do learn emptiness. Why? They have adopted nonduality as skillful means. Kausika, if the great bodhisattvas do not learn empty matter, they do learn empty matter. Why? They have adopted nonduality as skillful means. If the great bodhisattvas do not learn the empty perfect knowledge of all phenomena, they do learn the empty perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Why? They have adopted nonduality as skillful means. Kausika, if the great bodhisattvas can adopt nonduality as skillful means to learn empty matter, empty feeling, and so forth, and empty perfect knowledge of all phenomena, then they will be able to adopt nonduality as skillful means to learn giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita. They will also be able to adopt

nonduality as skillful means to learn internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; the stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and arhat effect; the self-enlightenment bodhi; the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi; and the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Kausika, if the great bodhisattvas can adopt nonduality as skillful means to learn giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, then they will be able to adopt nonduality as skillful means to learn numberless, countless, and boundless inconceivable pure Buddha dharma.

(Well-Appearing One said to Kausika that all dharmas are merely provisional names, as taught by the Buddha. As the great bodhisattvas know this truth and learn prajna paramita, they do not learn various dharmas, because they do not see the dharmas. Why do they not see various dharmas? It is because the dharmas are empty. As they do not learn emptiness, they do learn emptiness. As they do not learn various empty dharmas, they do learn various empty dharmas. Why? They have adopted nonduality as skillful means. If the great bodhisattvas can adopt nonduality as skillful means to learn the six paramitas, they are able to adopt nonduality as skillful means to learn numberless inconceivable pure Buddha dharma.)

“Kausika, if the great bodhisattvas can learn numberless, countless, and boundless inconceivable pure Buddha dharma, then they will not learn to increase or decrease matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Kausika, if the great bodhisattvas do not learn to increase or decrease matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, then they will not learn to absorb or destroy matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena.”

(Well-Appearing One concluded that if the great bodhisattvas can learn numberless inconceivable pure Buddha dharma, they will not absorb or destroy various dharmas.)

At that time, the long-lived sage Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, “If the great bodhisattvas learn in this way, will they not learn to absorb or destroy matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Sariputra, if the great bodhisattvas learn in this way, they will not learn to absorb or destroy matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena.”

At that time, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One again, “Why will the great bodhisattvas not learn to absorb or destroy matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “It is because the great bodhisattvas do not see matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena absorbable or destructible, nor do they see anyone who can absorb or destroy matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Why? Sariputra, all dharmas, such as matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, and all their associated images are empty internally or externally. Sariputra, when learning prajna paramita, if the great bodhisattvas do not see any dharma absorbable or destructible and do not see anyone who can absorb or destroy, then they will fulfill the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.”

Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One again, “Will great bodhisattvas fulfill the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge when they learn prajna paramita in this way?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Sariputra, when the great bodhisattvas learn prajna paramita in this way, they will fulfill the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge without absorbing all dharmas or destroying all dharmas.”

Sariputra asked, “How will the great bodhisattvas learn prajna paramita and fulfill the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge without absorbing or destroying all dharmas?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Sariputra, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas do not see arising and extinction, grasping and renunciation, contamination and purification, and increase and decrease of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Why? It is because the self-nature of matter, feeling, and so forth is nonexistent and unattainable. Therefore, Sariputra, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas do not see arising and extinction, grasping and renunciation, contamination and purification, and increase and decrease of all dharmas. Because

they have adopted no learning and no fulfillment as skillful means when learning prajna paramita, they are able to fulfill the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.”

(Well-Appearing One further explained for Sariputra that when the great bodhisattvas do not see the arising and extinction, grasping and renunciation, contamination and purification, and increase and decrease of various dharmas and recognize their self-nature as nonexistent and unattainable, they are able to fulfill the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.)

At that time, Heavenly Emperor Indra asked Sariputra, “Great virtuous one, where should the great bodhisattvas seek prajna paramita when they learn prajna paramita?”

Sariputra replied, “Kausika, when learning prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas should seek prajna paramita as what Well-Appearing One has taught.”

Meanwhile, Heavenly Emperor Indra asked Well-Appearing One, “Is it because of your supernatural powers that make Sariputra say so?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Kausika, it is not because of my own supernatural powers that make Sariputra say so.”

Heavenly Emperor Indra asked, “Then have you relied on someone’s supernatural powers?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Yes, I have relied on Buddha’s supernatural powers.”

Heavenly Emperor Indra asked, “Great virtuous one, as all dharmas do not rely on anything, how can you say that you have relied on Buddha’s supernatural powers?”

Well-Appearing One said, “Kausika, it is as you say. All dharmas do not rely on anything. Therefore, we cannot rely on Thus-Comer, nor is there the so-called reliance. It is in terms of the worldly way to say that there is reliance.

(Well-Appearing One said to Kausika that all dharmas do not have reliance. Reliance is nonexistent, and we cannot rely on Thus-Comer.)

“Kausika, Thus-Comer cannot be attained without nonreliance. Thus-Comer cannot be attained without realness of nonreliance. Thus-Comer cannot be attained without dharma nature of nonreliance. Realness of Thus-Comer cannot be attained without nonreliance. Dharma nature of Thus-Comer cannot be attained without nonreliance. Realness of Thus-Comer cannot be attained without realness of nonreliance. Dharma nature of Thus-Comer cannot be attained without dharma nature of nonreliance.

“Kausika, Thus-Comer cannot be attained in nonreliance, and nonreliance cannot be attained in Thus-Comer. Thus-Comer cannot be attained in realness of nonreliance, and realness of nonreliance cannot be attained in Thus-Comer. Thus-Comer cannot be attained in dharma nature of nonreliance, and dharma nature of nonreliance cannot be attained in Thus-Comer. Realness of Thus-Comer cannot be attained in nonreliance, and nonreliance cannot be attained in realness of Thus-Comer. Dharma nature of Thus-Comer cannot be attained in nonreliance, and nonreliance cannot be attained in dharma nature of Thus-Comer. Realness of Thus-Comer cannot be attained in realness of nonreliance, and realness of nonreliance cannot be attained in realness of Thus-Comer. Dharma nature of Thus-Comer cannot be attained in dharma nature of nonreliance, and dharma nature of nonreliance cannot be attained in dharma nature of Thus-Comer.

“Kausika, Thus-Comer is unattainable apart from matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Thus-Comer is unattainable apart from realness of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Thus-Comer is unattainable apart from dharma nature of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Realness of Thus-Comer is unattainable apart from matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Dharma nature of Thus-Comer is unattainable apart from matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Realness of Thus-Comer is unattainable apart from realness of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Dharma nature of Thus-Comer is unattainable apart from dharma nature of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness.

“Kausika, Thus-Comer is unattainable in matter, and matter is unattainable in Thus-Comer. Thus-Comer is unattainable in feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness; feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are unattainable in Thus-Comer. Thus-Comer is unattainable

in realness of matter, and realness of matter is unattainable in Thus-Comer. Thus-Comer is unattainable in realness of feeling, thinking, action, or consciousness; realness of feeling, thinking, action, or consciousness is unattainable in Thus-Comer. Thus-Comer is unattainable in dharma nature of matter, and dharma nature of matter is unattainable in Thus-Comer. Thus-Comer is unattainable in dharma nature of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness; dharma nature of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness is unattainable in Thus-Comer. Realness of Thus-Comer is unattainable in matter, and matter is unattainable in realness of Thus-Comer. Realness of Thus-Comer is unattainable in feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness; feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are unattainable in realness of Thus-Comer. Dharma nature of Thus-Comer is unattainable in feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness; feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are unattainable in dharma nature of Thus-Comer. Realness of Thus-Comer is unattainable in the realness of matter, and realness of matter is unattainable in realness of Thus-Comer. Realness of Thus-Comer is unattainable in realness of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness; realness of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness is unattainable in realness of Thus-Comer. Dharma nature of Thus-Comer is unattainable in dharma nature of matter, and dharma nature of matter is unattainable in dharma nature of Thus-Comer. Dharma nature of Thus-Comer is unattainable in dharma nature of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness; dharma nature of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness is unattainable in dharma nature of Thus-Comer.

“And so on, Kausika. Thus-Comer is unattainable apart from the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Thus-Comer is unattainable apart from the realness of the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Thus-Comer is unattainable apart from the dharma nature of the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. The realness of Thus-Comer is unattainable apart from the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. The dharma nature of Thus-Comer is unattainable apart from the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. The realness of Thus-Comer is unattainable apart from the realness of the perfect

knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. The dharma nature of Thus-Comer is unattainable apart from the dharma nature of the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena.

“Kausika, Thus-Comer is unattainable in the perfect knowledge of everything, and the perfect knowledge of everything is unattainable in Thus-Comer. Thus-Comer is unattainable in the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena; the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are unattainable in Thus-Comer. Thus-Comer is unattainable in the realness of the perfect knowledge of everything, and the realness of the perfect knowledge of everything is unattainable in Thus-Comer. Thus-Comer is unattainable in the realness of the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena; the realness of the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena is unattainable in Thus-Comer. Thus-Comer is unattainable in the dharma nature of the perfect knowledge of everything, and the dharma nature of the perfect knowledge of everything is unattainable in Thus-Comer. Thus-Comer is unattainable in the dharma nature of the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena; the dharma nature of the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena is unattainable in Thus-Comer. The realness of Thus-Comer is unattainable in the perfect knowledge of everything, and the perfect knowledge of everything is unattainable in the realness of Thus-Comer. The realness of Thus-Comer is unattainable in the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena; the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are unattainable in the realness of Thus-Comer. The dharma nature of Thus-Comer is unattainable in the perfect knowledge of everything, and the perfect knowledge of everything is unattainable in the dharma nature of Thus-Comer. The dharma nature of Thus-Comer is unattainable in the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena; the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are unattainable in the dharma nature of Thus-Comer. The realness of Thus-Comer is unattainable in the realness of the perfect knowledge of everything, and the realness of the perfect knowledge of everything is unattainable

in the realness of Thus-Comer. The realness of Thus-Comer is unattainable in the realness of the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena; the realness of the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena is unattainable in the realness of Thus-Comer. The dharma nature of Thus-Comer is unattainable in the dharma nature of the perfect knowledge of everything, and the dharma nature of the perfect knowledge of everything is unattainable in the dharma nature of Thus-Comer. The dharma nature of Thus-Comer is unattainable in the dharma nature of the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena; the dharma nature of the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena is unattainable in the dharma nature of Thus-Comer.

“Kausika, Thus-Comer is neither correspondent nor not correspondent with matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Thus-Comer is neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the realness of matter, feeling, thinking, action, or consciousness. Thus-Comer is neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the dharma nature of matter, feeling, thinking, action, or consciousness. The realness of Thus-Comer is neither correspondent nor not correspondent with matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. The realness of Thus-Comer is neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the realness of matter, feeling, thinking, action, or consciousness. The dharma nature of Thus-Comer is neither correspondent nor not correspondent with matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. The dharma nature of Thus-Comer is neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the dharma nature of matter, feeling, thinking, action, or consciousness.

“Kausika, Thus-Comer is neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the faraway matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Thus-Comer is neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the realness of the faraway matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Thus-Comer is neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the dharma nature of the faraway matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. The realness of Thus-Comer is neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the faraway matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. The realness of Thus-Comer is neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the realness of the faraway matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. The dharma nature of Thus-Comer is neither correspondent nor not correspondent

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“And so on, Kausika, Thus-Comer is neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Thus-Comer is neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the realness of the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Thus-Comer is neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the dharma nature of the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. The realness of Thus-Comer is neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. The realness of Thus-Comer is neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the realness of the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. The dharma nature of Thus-Comer is neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. The dharma nature of Thus-Comer is neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the dharma nature of the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena.

“Kausika, Thus-Comer is neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the faraway perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Thus-Comer is neither corresponds nor not correspondent with the realness of the faraway perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Thus-Comer is neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the dharma nature of the faraway perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. The realness of Thus-Comer is neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the faraway perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. The realness of Thus-Comer is neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the

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“Kausika, what Sariputra says means that all dharmas are neither combined nor separate, and neither correspondent nor not correspondent. As you rely on nonreliance, you rely on Thus-Comer’s supernatural powers.”

(Well-Appearing One concluded that all dharmas, the realness of all dharmas, and the dharma nature of all dharmas are neither correspondent nor correspondent with Thus-Comer, realness of Thus-Comer, and dharma nature of Thus-Comer. All dharmas are neither combined nor separate, neither correspondent nor not correspondent. Depending on nonreliance is relying on Thus-Comer’s supernatural powers.)

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Chapter 27

Spreading Flowers

Section 2

(In the Second Assembly)

“Furthermore, Kausika, you asked earlier, ‘Where will the great bodhisattvas seek prajna paramita when they learn prajna paramita?’ Kausika, when learning prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas should not seek prajna paramita in matter or apart from matter; they should not seek it in feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness or apart from feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. And so forth, they should not seek prajna paramita in the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena or apart from the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Why? Kausika, all dharmas, such as prajna paramita, seeking, matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, are neither correspondent nor not correspondent. They are immaterial, invisible, and unsubstantial. They have only one form, that is, formlessness. But why?

“The prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn is not matter or apart from matter; it is not feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness or apart from feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. And so forth, the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn is not the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena or apart from the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. It is not the realness of matter or apart from the realness of matter; it is not the realness of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness or apart from the realness of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. And so forth, it is not the realness of the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena or apart from the

realness of the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. It is not the dharma nature of matter or apart from the dharma nature of matter; it is not the dharma nature of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness or apart from the dharma nature of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. And so forth, it is not the dharma nature of the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena or apart from the dharma nature of the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Why? Kausika, all these dharmas are nonexistent and unattainable. Because they are nonexistent and unattainable, prajna paramita is not matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena or apart from matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Prajna paramita is not the realness of matter or apart from the realness of matter. And so forth, it is not the realness of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena or apart from the realness of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. It is not the dharma nature of matter or apart from the dharma nature of matter. And so on, it is not the dharma nature of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena or apart from the dharma nature of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena.”

(To respond Kausika’s question, Well-Appearing One said that when the great bodhisattvas learn prajna paramita, they should not seek prajna paramita in various dharmas or apart from various dharmas. Why? The dharmas are formless; the dharmas are nonexistent and unattainable. Prajna paramita is neither the dharmas nor apart from the dharmas.)

At that time, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to Well-Appearing One, “Great virtuous one, the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn is the grand paramita, the immeasurable paramita, and the boundless paramita. If the stream-entry practitioners learn prajna paramita, they will attain stream-entry effect. If the once-return practitioners learn prajna paramita, they will attain once-return effect. If the nonreturn practitioners learn prajna paramita, they will attain nonreturn effect. If the arhat practitioners learn prajna paramita, they will attain arhat effect. If the self-enlightenment practitioners learn prajna paramita, they will attain self-enlightenment bodhi. If the great bodhisattvas learn prajna paramita, they will assist numberless hundreds of thousands of koti nayuta sentient beings to mature and establish them well onto the path of the

three vehicles according to individual inclinations and aspirations. The great bodhisattvas will also dignify and purify various Buddha lands and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.”

(Heavenly Emperor Indra commented that learning prajna paramita will allow learners to enter onto one of the three-vehicle paths suit to individual aspirations.)

Well-Appearing One responded, “Yes, it is as you say. Kausika, because matter is grand, the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn is grand. Because feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are grand, the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn is grand. And so forth, because the perfect knowledge of everything is grand, the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn is grand. Because the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are grand, the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn is grand. Why? Kausika, matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are unattainable in the past, present, and future, they thus are named grand. Because they are grand, the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn is grand. Based on this cause and condition, the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn should be named the grand paramita.

“Kausika, because matter is immeasurable, the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn is immeasurable. Because feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are immeasurable, the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn is immeasurable. And so forth, because the perfect knowledge of everything is immeasurable, the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn is immeasurable. Because the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are immeasurable, the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn is immeasurable. Why? Kausika, matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are like empty space that is unattainable, they are thus named immeasurable.

“Kausika, because empty space is immeasurable, matter, feeling, thinking, and so forth are immeasurable. Because matter, feeling, thinking, and so forth are immeasurable, the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn is immeasurable. Based on this cause and condition, the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn should be named the immeasurable paramita.

“Kausika, because matter is boundless, the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn is boundless. Because feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are boundless, the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn is boundless. And so forth, because the perfect knowledge of everything is boundless, the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn is boundless. Because the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are boundless, the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn is boundless. Why? Kausika, like the boundary of empty space, the boundary of matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena is unattainable. As the boundary of matter, feeling, and so forth is unattainable, it is said that matter, feeling, and so forth are boundless.

“Kausika, because empty space is boundless, matter, feeling, and so forth are boundless. Because matter, feeling, and so forth are boundless, the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn is boundless.

“Furthermore, Kausika, because the perceived dharmas are boundless, the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn is also boundless.”

Heavenly Emperor Indra asked, “Why is it said that because the perceived dharmas are boundless, the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn is also boundless?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “As the dharmas perceived by the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are boundless, the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn is also boundless.

“Furthermore, Kausika, because the dharmas perceived by dharma realm are boundless, the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn is also boundless.”

Heavenly Emperor Indra asked, “Why is it said that because the dharmas perceived by dharma realm are boundless, the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn is also boundless?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “As dharma realm is boundless, the dharmas perceived are also boundless. As the dharmas perceived are boundless, dharma realm is also boundless.

Because the dharmas perceived by dharma realm are boundless, the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn is also boundless.

“Furthermore, Kausika, because the dharmas perceived by realness are boundless, the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn is also boundless.”

Heavenly Emperor Indra asked, “Why is it said that because the dharmas perceived by realness are boundless, the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn is also boundless?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “As realness is boundless, the dharmas perceived are also boundless. As the dharmas perceived are boundless, realness is also boundless. Because the dharmas perceived by realness are boundless, the prajna paramita the great bodhisattvas learn is also boundless.”

“Furthermore, Kausika, because the sentient beings are boundless, the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn is also boundless.”

Heavenly Emperor Indra asked, “Why is it said that because the sentient beings are boundless, the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn is also boundless?”

Well-Appearing One replied by asking, “What do you think about this? As we talk about sentient being, what dharma does it represent as its designated name?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “The sentient being is neither a designated name of the dharma nor not a designated name of the dharma. Sentient being is a provisionally established name; it is a name not absorbed by real things and real conditions.”

Well-Appearing One asked again, “What do you think about this? Is the sentient being real as manifested in the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “No, great virtuous one.”

Well-Appearing One said, “In the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, no real sentient beings is manifested. Therefore, it is said that the sentient being is boundless; both the central part and the boundary of sentient being are unattainable.

“Kausika, what do you think about this? If the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones have dwelled for as many kalpas as the sands of the Ganges and kept saying the names of various sentient beings, do the sentient beings have arising and extinction?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra said, “No, great virtuous one. Why? It is because the original nature of various sentient beings is pure, the sentient being has never been existent.”

Well-Appearing One said, “Because of this reason, I will say that sentient beings are boundless, and the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn is also boundless. Kausika, owing to this cause and condition, the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn should also be boundless.”

(Well-Appearing One concluded that since the sentient beings are boundless, the prajna paramita that they learn is also boundless.)

Chapter 28

Conferring Prophecy

(In the Second Assembly)

At that time, in the assembly, Heavenly Emperor Indra and the deities from the realm of desire, King Brahma and the deities from the realm of form, and the fairies from the Heaven of Īśāna (Maheśvara) all admired the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One simultaneously three times for what he said. They acclaimed, “The venerable Well-Appearing One has explained the fathomless prajna paramita and the essential meaning of the Buddha’s birth in this world for us with the support of Buddha’s supernatural powers. To the great bodhisattva who cultivate as the fathomless prajna paramita teaches and never stay away from it, we will be delighted to pay respect and offer services as we do to the Buddha. Why? In the fathomless sutras of prajna

paramita, no dharma is attainable. Namely, in the sutras of prajna paramita, matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are not attainable. Although no dharma is attainable, the holy teachings of the voice-hearer vehicle, self-enlightened one vehicle, and unsurpassed vehicle are well established.”

(Various heavenly kings and heavenly beings acclaimed Well-Appearing One’s teaching about prajna paramita. They added that because no dharma is attainable, the holy teachings of the three vehicles are established. The god king of the Heaven of Isana, also known as the Heaven of Mahesvara, literally the Heaven of Great Easiness, has three eyes and eight arms, and has mighty supernatural powers to protect the world in the four level of meditation.)

At that time, the Buddha said to various heavenly beings, “Yes, it is as you say. In the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, matter, feeling, and other dharmas are unattainable, while the holy teachings of the three vehicles are established. If the great bodhisattvas can adopt nonattainment as skillful means to practice what prajna paramita teaches and never stay away from it, you heavenly beings should pay respect and offer services to them as you have done to the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones. Why? In the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, the holy teachings of the three vehicles are extensively taught; they all indicate that the Thus-Comer is not attainable either with or apart from giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power; and the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena.

“Heavenly beings, if the great bodhisattvas adopt nonattainment as skillful means to cultivate and learn diligently and attentively giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, then these great bodhisattvas will be able to correctly cultivate prajna paramita and never stay far away from it. Therefore, you must esteem and respect these great bodhisattvas and offer services to them as you have done to the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones.

“Heavenly beings, you must know that when I met Burning Lamp Buddha at the four-way intersection in the capital full of flowers, I made a bundle of five lotuses as offering to him. My hair was covered with mud, but I was fortunate to hear the most wonderful dharma from him. I had adopted nonattainment as skillful means since that time on, and never stayed away from giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, four bases of power, five roots, five powers, seven factors for enlightenment, and noble eightfold path; the four meditation, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; all dharani gates and all samadhi gates; the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, great equanimity, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power; and the rest of immeasurable, countless, and boundless Buddha dharmas. At that time the Burning Lamp Buddha conferred me the prophecy of attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi in the future. He said to me, “Good gentleman, after countless kalpas, you will become a Buddha in this realm during the Kalpa of the Sages, with Sakyamuni Buddha, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One as your name. You will teach prajna paramita to deliver innumerable sentient beings.”

(The Buddha approved what the heavenly beings said about prajna paramita and told them the story of how he met his master Burning Lamp Buddha and was conferred by him the prophecy of becoming a Buddha. He also advised the heavenly beings to pay homage and make offerings to the great bodhisattvas who can adopt nonattainment as skillful means to cultivate and learn diligently and consistently the six paramitas and the rest of holy dharmas.)

At that time, various heavenly beings said to the Buddha, “It is very unusual, World-Honored One! It is very unusual, Well-Gone One! Prajna paramita is so rare and unique. Because of prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas can absorb the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge quickly. By adopting nonattainment as skillful means, they do not grasp or renounce matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, as well as the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena.”

At that time, the Buddha saw that the four groups of followers, namely, the monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen, had gathered together. He also saw that the great bodhisattvas and the heavenly beings of the Heaven of Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and Heaven of Ultimate Form had come to attend the assembly. So the Buddha turned to Heavenly Emperor Indra and said, “Kausika, if the great bodhisattvas, the monks, nuns, laymen, laywomen, heavenly sons, heavenly ladies, and good gentlemen and good gentlewomen stay in the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and adopt nonattainment as skillful means to listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn prajna paramita diligently and attentively, reflect reasonably on it, teach it for others, and promulgate it extensively, then you must know that they will not be harmed by all demons or devil armies. Why? Kausika, it is because all these good gentlemen and gentlewomen, and so forth, will be able to dwell well in the emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Emptiness cannot do harm to emptiness; formlessness cannot do harm to formlessness; and nonaspiration cannot do harm to nonaspiration either. Why? All these dharmas have no self-nature; the ones to do harm and the ones to be harmed are all unattainable.

“Furthermore, Kausika, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will not be harmed by humans and nonhumans. Why? Kausika, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen have adopted nonattainment as skillful means to practice loving-kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity to all sentient beings.

“Furthermore, Kausika, these good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth, will not be harmed or annoyed by various perils and evil conditions; they will not die in accidents either. Why? Kausika, these good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth have cultivated giving paramita to bring peaceful and happy life to various sentient beings.

“Furthermore, kausika, in this large threefold thousand-world, the heavenly beings from the Heaven of Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and Heaven of Expansive Rewards who have aspired to the great bodhi but have not listened to, accepted, embraced, read, recited, cultivated and learned diligently and attentively, and reflected

reasonably on the prajna paramita, should adopt nonattainment as skillful means with a mind not apart from the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge to wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently and attentively, and reflect reasonably on prajna paramita.

(The Buddha encouraged heavenly beings to learn and cultivate prajna paramita diligently, telling them how sentient beings can greatly benefit from prajna paramita.)

“Furthermore, Kausika, if the good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth stay in a mind correspondent with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and adopt nonattainment as skillful means to wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently and attentively, and reflect reasonably on prajna paramita, then these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will not be scared, frightened, and terrified whether in an empty house, in wilderness, on perilous roads, or in dangerous places. Why? Kausika, it is because these good gentlemen and gentlewomen have cultivated internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature by adopting nonattainment as skillful means to stay with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.”

At that time, in this large threefold thousand-world, all heavenly beings from the Heaven of Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and Heaven of Ultimate Form put their palms together and said to the Buddha respectfully, “World-Honored One, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen stay in a mind correspondent with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and adopt nonattainment as skillful means to wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently and attentively, reflect reasonably on, write, explain, and promulgate extensively the fathomless prajna paramita, we the heavenly beings will at all times protect them, support them, and prevent them from all kinds of disasters. Why? It is because these good gentlemen and gentlewomen are great bodhisattvas.

(All heavenly beings present in the assembly vowed to protect and support the bodhisattvas who can stay in a mind correspondent with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and adopt nonattainment as skillful means to wholeheartedly accept, cultivate, and learn diligently and attentively, reflect reasonably on, write about, explain, and promulgate extensively the fathomless prajna paramita.)

“World-Honored One, because of these great bodhisattvas, the sentient beings can get rid of the inferior destinies, such as the hells, the realm of animals, the realm of ghosts, and the realm of asuras forever.

“World-Honored One, because of the great bodhisattvas, the heavenly beings, human beings, yaksas, dragons, and so forth become free from the suffering caused by disasters, illness, poverty, hunger, thirst, cold, and heat forever.

“World-Honored One, because of the great bodhisattvas, the heavenly beings, human beings, asuras, and so forth will stay away from all undesirable things forever. Wherever they live, there will be no war and fighting and all sentient beings will treat each other kindly and compassionately.

“World-Honored One, because of the great bodhisattvas, there are the path of the ten virtuous karmas; the four meditation, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power; and the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena appearing in the world.

“World-Honored One, because of the great bodhisattvas, there are the noble families of Ksatriya, Brahman, elders, and laypersons, as well as the kings of small countries, wheel-turning kings, and their associates in the world.

“World-Honored One, because of the great bodhisattvas, there are the heavenly beings of the Heaven of Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and Heaven of Enjoying Other-Made Changes; the Heaven of Brahma Followers, Heaven of Brahma Associates, and so forth, and Heaven of Ultimate Form; the Heaven of Boundless Emptiness, Heaven of Boundless Consciousness, and so forth, and the Heaven of Nonthinking and Not Nonthinking in the world.

“World-Honored One, because of the great bodhisattvas, there are the stream-enterers and stream-entry effect, once-returners and once-return effect, nonreturners and nonreturn effect, arhats and arhat effect, and self-enlightened ones and self-enlightenment bodhi in the world.

“World-Honored One, because of the great bodhisattvas, there are many great bodhisattvas in the world to assist the sentient beings to mature, dignify and purify the Buddha lands, realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, and turn the wonderful dharma wheel to deliver immeasurable sentient beings.

“World-Honored One, because of the great bodhisattvas, there are the Buddha, the dharma, and the sangha, namely the triple gem, in the world to bring peace, happiness, and benefits to all sentient beings.

“World-Honored One, because of this cause and condition, all our heavenly beings, asuras, dragons, yaksas, and the human-like nonhumans with great powers should at all times respectfully follow and protect the great bodhisattvas, so the great bodhisattvas will not be harassed and annoyed by all kinds of disasters and difficulties. In addition, we should also encourage them to incessantly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, learn, reflect reasonably on, and write prajna paramita.”

(The heavenly beings said that they wanted to protect and support the great bodhisattvas because the great bodhisattvas would bring the whole world numerous benefits and alleviate suffering for all sentient beings.)

At that time, the World-Honored One said to Heavenly Emperor Indra and the rest of heavenly beings, dragons, asuras, and so forth, “Yes, it is as you say. The great bodhisattvas will let the sentient beings not fall in the inferior and painful destinies, promulgate the triple gem in the world, and work together with various sentient beings to undertake great, beneficial things for all. Therefore, you heavenly beings, dragons, humans, and nonhumans with great powers should always follow and make offerings respectfully to them, and admire and protect them, so that they will not be harassed and annoyed by all kinds of disasters. If you can do all these to them, you are equally doing the same things to all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones in the ten directions. Therefore, you should always

follow these great bodhisattvas, make offerings respectfully to esteem, admire, and protect them diligently and consistently without interruption.

“Heavenly beings, suppose the entire large threefold thousand-world is full of voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones as if it were filled up with sugarcanes, reeds, bamboo forest, rice, hems, and bushes. Some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have made numberless most wonderful entertainments respectfully as offerings to esteem and acclaim the voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones for the rest of their lives. On the other hand, someone has made offerings respectfully during a short period of time to one great bodhisattva who has never stayed away from the original aspiration of pursuing the six paramitas, then the merits and virtues that the former ones obtain will be much less than the latter one by one hundredth, one thousandth, and so forth, and one upanisadam-api. Why? The great bodhisattvas and the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones appear in the world not because of the voice-hearers and self-enlightened one; it is rather because of the great bodhisattvas that the voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, and Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones appear in the world. Therefore, the heavenly beings, dragons, asuras, humans, and nonhumans should protect the great bodhisattvas, make offerings to esteem and acclaim them all the time, so that they will not be harassed and annoyed by all kinds of disasters. The merits and virtues thus gained will ensure you happiness and peace in the heavens and in the human world. The merits and virtues thus gained will last endlessly until the day when you finally attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.”

(The Buddha acknowledged Kausika and other heavenly beings’ statements on the importance of great bodhisattvas and their benefits to both heavenly beings and human beings.)

Chapter 29

Absorption

Section 1

(In the Second Assembly)

At that time, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, the great bodhisattvas are very rare and unique. They have wholeheartedly listened to, accepted, embraced, read, recited, cultivated and learned diligently and attentively, reflected reasonably on, written, explicated, and extensively disseminated prajna paramita. They thus have absorbed the unusual merits, virtues, and superior benefits in present dharmas, assisted the sentient beings to grow and mature, dignified and purified the Buddha lands, and traveled from one Buddha country to the other to stay close to various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, to offer services to them. Because they have made offerings to various Buddhas with esteem and acclamation, the virtuous roots thus gladly cultivated by them will be fulfilled before long. They will always stay in mindfulness of the correct dharma taught by the Buddhas; they will never forget or lose it until attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. They will be able to quickly absorb the perfect caste, perfect mother, perfect body, perfect family, perfect physical marks, perfect brightness, perfect superior eyes, perfect superior ears, perfect superior voices, perfect samadhi, and perfect dharani. They will, with the powers of expedient skillfulness, transform themselves into Buddha’s appearance to travel through all the worlds where there is no Buddha. They will teach and acclaim giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita for the sentient beings in the less privileged lands. They will teach and praise internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; and the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power. They will further use expedient and skillful powers to teach essential meanings of the dharma to various sentient beings and establish them appropriately in the dharmas of the three vehicles, so the sentient beings will get rid of birth, old age, illness, and death and attain the nirvana without remainder. They will also liberate the sentient beings from the suffering of inferior destinies and elevate them to live and enjoy happiness in heavens or human world.”

(Heavenly Emperor Indra continued admiring great bodhisattvas.)

In the meantime, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the Buddha again, “Such prajna paramita is so rare and unique. If the great bodhisattvas absorb prajna paramita, they will be able

to absorb the six paramitas, four bases of mindfulness, Buddha's ten abilities, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power. They will also absorb the stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, self-enlightenment bodhi, all great bodhisattva actions, the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena."

(Indra continued admiring prajna paramita.)

At that time, the Buddha said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, "Yes, it is as you say. As the great bodhisattvas absorb prajna paramita, they will also absorb the six paramitas, the Buddha's ten abilities, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena.

"Furthermore, Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen can wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently and attentively, reflect reasonably on, write, explicate, and disseminate extensively prajna paramita, they will absorb various merits, virtues, and superior benefits presently and in the future. Please listen to me carefully and attentively. I am going to explain why."

Heavenly Emperor Indra said, "Indeed, esteemed holy one. We look forward to receiving your instruction."

The Buddha said to Kausika, "If the other-path practitioners, demons, or arrogant ones try to harm these good gentlemen and gentlewomen by driving them away from prajna paramita and making them destroy, become disgusted with, and slander prajna paramita, their intentions will lead to immediate disaster and be stopped. Why? Kausika, these great bodhisattvas have long cultivated giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas. If the sentient beings have fought against each other for a long time because of stinginess and greed, the great bodhisattvas will renounce all they have internally and externally to expediently establish the sentient beings in giving paramita. If the sentient beings have violated precepts for a very long time, the great bodhisattvas will also renounce all they have internally and externally to expediently establish them in pure-precept paramita. If the sentient beings have been angry for a very long time, the great bodhisattvas will renounce all they have internally and externally to

expediently assist them to dwell peacefully in forbearance paramita. If the sentient beings have been lazy for a very long time, the great bodhisattvas will renounce all they have internally and externally to expediently assist them to dwell peacefully in diligence paramita. If the sentient beings have been restless in their minds for a very long time, the great bodhisattvas will renounce all they have internally and externally to expediently assist them to dwell peacefully in meditation paramita. If the sentient beings have been ignorant for a very long time, the great bodhisattvas will renounce all they have internally and externally to expediently assist them to dwell peacefully in prajna paramita. If the sentient beings have wandered in the reincarnation of birth and death and have been disturbed by all kinds of hidden vexations and bondages, such as greed, anger, ignorance, for a very long time and thus have done a lot of unbeneficial things, the great bodhisattvas will expediently and skillfully assist them to terminate all vexations and bondages and guide them to dwell peacefully in the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration; the stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and arhat effect; the self-enlightenment bodhi; the ten stages of bodhisattva; and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas. Kausika, this is how the great bodhisattvas have wholeheartedly listened to, accepted, embraced, read, recited, cultivated and learned diligently and attentively, reflected reasonably on, written, explicated, and disseminated extensively prajna paramita to attain the merits, virtues, and superior benefits presently.

(The Buddha elaborated for Kausika how great bodhisattvas would wholeheartedly cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on, explicate, and disseminate extensively prajna paramita to attain the merits, virtues, and superior benefits in the present.)

“Kausika, because of this cause and condition, these great bodhisattvas will realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly in the life to come. They will turn the wonderful dharma wheel, deliver immeasurable sentient beings, and establish them respectively according to each one’s wish to cultivate and learn the three vehicles, and finally attain the nirvana without remainder. Kausika, this is how the great bodhisattvas have wholeheartedly listened to, accepted, embraced, read, recited, cultivated and learned diligently and attentively,

reflected reasonably on, written, explicated, and disseminated extensively prajna paramita to attain the merits, virtues, and superior benefits in the future.

(The Buddha further explained how great bodhisattvas would attain the merits, virtues, and superior benefits in the future.)

“Furthermore, Kausika, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have wholeheartedly listened to, accepted, embraced, read, recited, learned assiduously, reflected reasonably on, written, explicated, and disseminated extensively prajna paramita. Meanwhile, the evil demons and their associates, the other-path practitioners, and the violent and arrogant ones are jealous of prajna paramita. They so hate prajna paramita that try to hinder, ruin, conceal, denounce, insult, and reject it. But their intentions can never be fulfilled. Once they have overheard the voices of reciting prajna paramita, they will gradually decrease evil conducts, while some virtues and merits will arise. If they can cultivate the three vehicles in later days, their suffering in inferior destinies will decrease and even cease, and they will be reborn as heavenly beings or human beings. Kausika, there was once an excellent antidote named Mahilā. Wherever there was this antidote, no poisonous insects could get close. A big poisonous snake was hungry and looking for food. As the snake aimed at an animal and was going to bite it, the animal was frightened and rushed to the antidote for help. The snake was scared away because of the smell of the antidote. Why? Kausika, it is because the antidote has powerful effect. So too is prajna paramita. If the good gentlemen and gentlewomen can wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, learn assiduously, reflect reasonably on, write, explicate, and disseminate extensively prajna paramita, no demons can do harm to them because of the mighty supernatural powers of prajna paramita. Why? The great powers of prajna paramita can destroy all evils and give rise to all virtuous dharmas.

“Kausika, how will prajna paramita destroy evils and give rise to virtuous dharmas? Kausika, prajna paramita can eliminate greed, anger, stupidity, ignorance, and so forth, and great aggregates of suffering, hindrances, coverings, hidden roots of vexations, defilements, and bonds. Prajna paramita can eliminate the incorrect views of selfness, sentient being, individual in reincarnation, discontinuation, permanence, existence, nonexistence, and so forth, and inferior destinies. Prajna paramita can eliminate the actions caused by greedy stinginess, violation of

precepts, anger, laziness, restlessness, stupidity, the thought of permanence, the thought of pleasure, the thought of selfness, the thought of purity, greed, hatred, ignorance, arrogance, and skepticism. Kausika, prajna paramita can remove one's attachment to matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness; the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere; the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere; the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm; the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact; and the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact. Prajna paramita can remove one's attachment to giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; and the nirvana in the bodhi. Kausika, prajna paramita can remove all these negative dharmas and increase one's ability to deal with negative dharmas. Therefore, with its great authority and powers, prajna paramita always appears as the noblest and superior one.

(The Buddha further taught how prajna paramita would destroy evils and give rise to virtuous dharmas.)

“Furthermore, Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen can wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, learn assiduously, reflect reasonably on, write, explicate, and disseminate extensively prajna paramita, they will always be supported and protected by the four great heavenly kings, Heavenly Emperor Indra, Great Brahma King the lord of this barely tolerable realm, the heavenly beings in the Heavens of Pure Residence, deities, dragons, yaksas, asuras, and the rest of virtuous gods in this large threefold thousand-world. These good gentlemen and gentlewomen thus will not be harmed and harassed by all kinds of disasters. Whatever is properly pursued will be fulfilled. In addition, all the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones in as many Buddha worlds of the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges will always oversee and protect these good gentlemen and gentlewomen, so that their negative dharmas decrease while virtuous ones increase. Namely, their cultivation of giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita will

grow because they have adopted nonattainment as skillful means. Their contemplation on internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature will be fostered because they have adopted nonattainment as skillful means. They will also grow and progress well in the cultivation of the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; all samadhi gates and all dharani gates; the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena when adopting nonattainment as skillful means.

Kausika, because of this cause and condition, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be widely accepted and respected. They have reasonable judgments and speeches, knowing how to repay the favors with gratitude and treat virtuous friends well. They will not be dominated by stinginess, jealousy, anger, hatred, upset, flattery, deception, or arrogance.

“Kausika, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen have not only broken the cycle of rebirth themselves but also encouraged others to do so; they have not only praised the way of breaking the cycle of rebirth publicly but also celebrated and acclaimed those who have broken the cycle of rebirth. They have not only removed incorrect views themselves but also encouraged others to do so; they have not only praised the way of removing incorrect views publicly but also celebrated and acclaimed those who have removed incorrect views. They have not only practiced giving paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita themselves but also encouraged others to do so; they have not only praised the way of practicing giving paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita publicly but also celebrated and acclaimed those who have practiced giving paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita. They have not only practiced internal emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature themselves but also encouraged others to do so; they have not only praised the way of practicing internal emptiness and so forth publicly but also celebrated and acclaimed those who have practiced internal emptiness and so forth. They have not only cultivated all samadhi gates and all dharani gates but also encouraged others to do so; they have not only praised the way of cultivating all samadhi gates and all dharani gates publicly but also celebrated and acclaimed those who have cultivated all samadhi gates and all dharani gates. They have not only cultivated the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations themselves but also encouraged others to do so; they have not only praised the way of cultivating the four meditations and so forth publicly but also celebrated and

acclaimed those who have cultivated the four meditations and so forth. They have not only cultivated the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path themselves but also encouraged others to do so; they have not only praised the way of cultivating the four bases of mindfulness and so forth publicly but also celebrated and acclaimed those who have cultivated the four bases of mindfulness and so forth. They have not only cultivated the three liberation gates themselves but also encouraged others to do so; they have not only praised the way of cultivating the three liberation gates publicly but also celebrated and acclaimed those who have cultivated the three liberation gates. They have not only cultivated the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations themselves but also encouraged others to do so; they have not only praised the way of cultivating the eight liberations, and so forth publicly but also celebrated and acclaimed those who have cultivated the eight liberations and so forth. They have not only cultivated the Buddha's ten abilities themselves, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power themselves but also encouraged others to do so; they have not only praised the way of cultivating the Buddha's ten abilities and so forth publicly but also celebrated and acclaimed those who have cultivated the Buddha's ten abilities and so forth. They have not only cultivated staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times themselves but also encouraged others to do so; they have not only praised the way of cultivating staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times publicly but also celebrated and acclaimed those who have cultivated to stay in correct mindfulness and dwell in equanimity at all times. They have not only cultivated the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena themselves but also encouraged others to do so; they have not only praised the way of cultivating the perfect knowledge of everything, and so forth publicly but also celebrated and acclaimed those who have cultivated the perfect knowledge of everything, and so forth.

(The Buddha further taught that the great bodhisattvas would not only cultivate various superior holy dharma's themselves but also encourage others to do so. They would not only praise the way of cultivating the superior holy dharma's publicly but also acclaim those who can cultivate these superior holy dharma's. This is also a way of practicing bodhisattva path.)

“Kausika, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen have cultivated giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita. They have further adopted nonattainment as skillful means to transfer the merits and virtues thus derived along with various sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.

(Furthermore, these great bodhisattvas would adopt nonattainment as skillful means to transfer the merits and virtues thus derived along sentient beings toward the unsurpassed bodhi.)

“Kausika, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen have often thought, ‘If I do not practice giving paramita, I will be reborn in a poor family, then how can I assist the sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify the Buddha lands with weak and insufficient powers and abilities? Let alone I can attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. If I do not observe pure-precept paramita, I will be reborn in inferior destinies; I even cannot be reborn as a human being in a very low class, how can I assist the sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify the Buddha lands? Let alone I can attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. If I do not cultivate forbearance paramita, I will be reborn in an imperfect body with deficient organs and ugly appearance instead of a perfect physical body of the bodhisattva. The ones with the perfect physical body of the bodhisattva will be welcomed by sentient beings; whatever they say will be easily accepted. They thus will certainly attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. If I cannot obtain a perfect physical body, how can I assist the sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify the Buddha lands? Let alone I can attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. If my mind is restless and cannot enter meditation paramita, I will not be able to elicit a superior concentration of bodhisattva, how can I assist the sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify the Buddha lands? Let alone I can attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. If I have no wisdom and do not learn prajna paramita, I will not be able to obtain expedient skillfulness to surpass the two vehicles, how can I assist the sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify the Buddha lands? Let alone I can attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.’”

(According to the Buddha, bodhisattvas need to cultivate the six paramitas in order to assist sentient beings to mature, dignify and purify the Buddha lands, and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.)

“Kausika, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen have often thought, ‘I should not be dominated by the powers of stinginess and greed, so that my cultivation of giving paramita will be fulfilled. I should not be dominated by the powers of violating precepts, so that my cultivation of pure-precept paramita will be fulfilled. I should not be dominated by the powers of anger and hatred, so that my cultivation of forbearance paramita will be fulfilled. I should not be dominated by the powers of laziness and tiredness, so that my cultivation of diligence paramita will be fulfilled. I should not be dominated by the powers of restless mind, so that my cultivation of meditation paramita will be fulfilled. I should not be dominated by the powers of wisdom abuse, so that my cultivation of prajna paramita will be fulfilled. If my cultivation of giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas is not fulfilled, I will not be able to attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.’

“Kausika, because these good gentlemen and gentlewomen have stayed in a mind in accordance with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and adopted nonattainment as skillful means to wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn assiduously, reflect reasonably on, write, explicate, and disseminate extensively prajna paramita, they definitely will attain the merits, virtues, and superior benefits presently and in the future.”

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Chapter 29

Absorption

Section 2

(In the Second Assembly)

At that time, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, such prajna paramita is very rare and unique. It can tame various great bodhisattvas so that they become humble and are able to transfer the merits and virtues toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.”

At that time, the Buddha asked Heavenly Emperor Indra, “Kausika, how does prajna paramita tame great bodhisattvas so that they become humble and are able to transfer the merits and virtues toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “World-Honored One, when practicing the worldly giving paramita, some great bodhisattvas go to Buddha’s place and think, ‘I can make offerings to the Buddha.’ They also practice giving to bodhisattvas, self-enlightened ones, voice-hearers, the poor, lonely ones, old people, sick ones, passengers on the roads, and beggars. They think, ‘I can practice giving to bodhisattvas, self-enlightened ones, and so forth.’ Because these great bodhisattvas do not have expedient skillfulness, they become arrogant when practicing giving and thus are unable to transfer the merits and virtues toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

“World-Honored One, when practicing the worldly pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas, some great bodhisattvas think, ‘I can cultivate pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas.’ They even think, ‘I can fulfill pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas.’ Because these great bodhisattvas do not have expedient skillfulness, they become arrogant when practicing pure

precept, forbearance, and so forth, and thus are unable to transfer the merits and virtues toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

“World-Honored One, when cultivating the worldly four bases of mindfulness, some great bodhisattvas think, ‘I can cultivate the four bases of mindfulness.’ They even think, ‘I can fulfill the four bases of mindfulness.’ Because these great bodhisattvas do not have expedient skillfulness, they become arrogant when practicing the four bases of mindfulness and thus are unable to transfer the merits and virtues toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

“World-Honored One, when cultivating the four correct endeavors, four bases of powers, five roots, five powers, seven factors for enlightenment, and noble eightfold path, some great bodhisattvas think, ‘I can cultivate the four correct endeavors, four bases of power, and so forth.’ They even think, ‘I can fulfill the four correct endeavors, four bases of power, and so forth.’ Because these great bodhisattvas do not have expedient skillfulness, they become arrogant when practicing the four correct endeavors, four bases of power, and so forth, and thus are unable to transfer the merits and virtues toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

“World-Honored One, when cultivating the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration, some great bodhisattvas think, ‘I can cultivate the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration.’ They even think, ‘I can fulfill the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration.’ Because the great bodhisattvas do not have expedient skillfulness, they become arrogant when practicing the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration and thus are unable to transfer the merits and virtues toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

“World-Honored One, when cultivating all samadhi gates and all dharani gates, some great bodhisattvas think, ‘I can cultivate all samadhi gates and all dharani gates.’ They even think, ‘I can fulfill all samadhi gates and dharani gates.’ Because they do not have expedient skillfulness, they become arrogant when practicing all samadhi gates and dharani gates and thus are unable to transfer the merits and virtues toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

“World-Honored One, when cultivating the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, great equanimity, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power, some great bodhisattvas think, ‘I can cultivate the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth.’ They even think, ‘I can fulfill the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth.’ Because they do not have expedient skillfulness, they become arrogant when practicing the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power and thus are unable to transfer the merits and virtues toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

“World-Honored One, when cultivating the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena, some great bodhisattvas think, ‘I can cultivate the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and so forth.’ They even think, ‘I can fulfill the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and so forth.’ Because they do not have expedient skillfulness, they become arrogant when practicing the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena and thus are unable to transfer the merits and virtues toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

“World-Honored One, when assisting sentient beings to mature and dignifying and purifying Buddha lands, some great bodhisattvas think, ‘I can assist the sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify the Buddha lands. No one else can do these.’ Because these great bodhisattvas do not have expedient skillfulness, they become arrogant when assisting the sentient beings to mature and dignifying and purifying the Buddha lands and thus are unable to transfer the merits and virtues toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

“World-Honored One, some great bodhisattvas have cultivated virtuous dharmas in accordance with the worldly mind without expedient skillfulness. Their minds are disturbed by an attachment to the ‘I’ and the associated images. They have cultivated prajna paramita, but they cannot fulfill it. They do not tame arrogance well and thus cannot transfer the merits and virtues toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

(Responding to Buddha's question, Heavenly Emperor Indra said that some bodhisattvas practice the six paramitas and other superior holy dharmas without expedient skillfulness and become attached to the "I" and the associated images; they cannot tame their arrogance and thus are unable to transfer the merits and virtues toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. They are practicing the worldly virtuous dharmas.)

"World-Honored One, when practicing giving paramita beyond the world, the great bodhisattvas can cultivate prajna paramita well without attaining the giver, the receiver, and the things given. These great bodhisattvas have cultivated giving based on prajna paramita, they are able to tame arrogance and thus can transfer the merits and virtues toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

"World-Honored One, when cultivating pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas beyond the world, the great bodhisattvas can cultivate prajna paramita well without attaining pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, prajna, and relevant dharmas. Because these great bodhisattvas have cultivated pure precept, forbearance, and so forth based on prajna paramita, they are able to tame arrogance and thus can transfer the merits and virtues toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

"World-Honored One, when cultivating the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena beyond the world, the great bodhisattvas can cultivate prajna paramita well without attaining the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, and relevant dharmas. Because these great bodhisattvas have cultivated the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena based on prajna paramita, they are able to tame arrogance and thus can transfer the merits and virtues toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

"World-Honored One, when assisting the sentient beings to mature and dignifying and purifying the Buddha lands, the great bodhisattvas can cultivate prajna paramita well without attaining what they do. Because these great bodhisattvas have assisted the sentient beings and dignified and purified the Buddha lands based on prajna paramita, they are able to tame

arrogance and thus can transfer the merits and virtues toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

“World-Honored One, based on this cause and condition, I say that prajna paramita is very rare and unique and can tame the great bodhisattvas, so that they will become humble and thus are able to transfer the merits and virtues toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.”

(Indra further explained why the practice of holy dharmas beyond the world would tame one’s arrogance to become free from attachment and thus are able to transfer the merits and virtues toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.)

Chapter 30

The Stupas

(In the Second Assembly)

At that time, the Buddha said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, “Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen can wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn assiduously, reflect reasonably on, write, explicate, and extensively disseminate the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, they will always have peace and joy in body and mind. They will not be disturbed and annoyed by accidents or disasters.

“Furthermore, kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen can wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn assiduously, reflect reasonably on, write, explicate, and extensively disseminate the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, the sentient beings will not be injured or killed. The enemies’ loving-kind minds will be elicited

when hearing the recital of prajna paramita. If the enemies have vicious minds arise again, they will be defeated immediately. It is unreasonable to say that these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be hurt or killed in the war. Why? Kausika, they have cultivated giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas for a long time by adopting nonattainment as skillful means. They will not only subjugate their own swords and rods of desire but also can defeat the swords and rods of others' desires. They will not only subjugate their own swords and rods of anger but also defeat the swords and rods of others' anger. They will not only subjugate their own swords and rods of ignorance but also defeat the swords and rods of others' ignorance. They will not only subjugate their own swords and rods of arrogance but also defeat the swords and rods of others' arrogance. They will not only subjugate their own swords and rods of incorrect views but also defeat the swords and rods of others' incorrect views. They will not only subjugate their own swords and rods of hidden vexations but also defeat the swords and rods of others' hidden vexations. They will not only subjugate their own swords and rods of defiled bondages but also defeat the swords and rods of others' defiled bondages. They will not only subjugate their own swords and rods of bad karma but also defeat the swords and rods of others' bad karma. Kausika, because of this reason, when fighting in wars, they will not be injured or killed by swords or rods, and their enemies will turn to be loving kind and compassionate. If the enemies have any vicious ideas arise in their minds, they will be defeated immediately. Because of the supernatural powers caused by attentive recital of the fathomless prajna paramita, it is unreasonable to say that these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be injured or killed in wars.

(The Buddha taught Indra that those who can wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, and recite the sutras of prajna paramita; cultivate and learn these sutras assiduously; reflect on these sutras reasonably; and further write, explicate, and extensively disseminate the sutras, would not be injured or killed in accidents or wars.)

“Furthermore, Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen stay in a mind in accordance with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and adopt nonattainment as skillful means to constantly and wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, learn and cultivate diligently, reflect reasonably on, make offerings respectfully to, esteem, acclaim, write, explicate, and disseminate extensively the fathomless prajna paramita, then these good

gentlemen and gentlewomen will not be harmed by poisonous medicine, poisonous insects, evil spirits, negative prayers, and curses. They will not be drowned, burnt, and hurt by swords and rods, fierce beasts, enemies, vicious deities, wicked ones, demons, and monsters. Why? Kausika, prajna paramita is the great holy spell, the supernatural spell, the great bright spell, the unsurpassed spell, and the unequaled spell. The prajna paramita is the king of all spells, the highest and most wonderful spell, the unequaled equal one. With the most powerful strength, prajna paramita is invincible and rather can overcome all. The good gentlemen and gentlewomen who have learned and cultivated diligently and attentively this king spell will not intend to do harm to themselves, others, or both. Why? Kausika, when learning prajna paramita, they understand that they and others are unattainable. They will not attain the 'I,' the sentient being, the living one, and so forth, and the knower and the viewer. They will not attain matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Because of nonattainment, they will not do harm to themselves, others, or both.

(The Buddha further taught how practitioners benefit from prajna paramita, the great and invincible Mandra, in this and the next paragraphs.)

“Kausika, when the good gentlemen and gentlewomen learn prajna paramita the great king Mandra, they will not attain the 'I' and the relevant dharmas, and thus are able to realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. They will contemplate the differences within the minds and actions of various sentient beings, and turn the unsurpassed dharma wheel expediently and properly, so that every follower will benefit greatly. Why? Kausika, the great bodhisattvas in the past had diligently and attentively learned prajna paramita the great king spell to realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and turn the wonderful dharma wheel to deliver numberless sentient beings. The great bodhisattvas in the future will diligently and attentively learn prajna paramita the great king spell to realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and turn the wonderful dharma wheel to deliver numberless sentient beings. The great bodhisattvas in the boundless worlds of the ten directions presently are diligently and attentively learning prajna paramita the great king spell to realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and turn the wonderful dharma wheel to deliver numberless sentient beings.”

“Furthermore, Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen can wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate diligently, learn assiduously, reflect reasonably on, write, explicate, and disseminate extensively prajna paramita, then these good gentlemen and gentlewomen and all the residents, humans and nonhumans, living in the same country or city, will not be harmed by disasters, accidents, and plagues. Why? Kausika, where these good gentlemen and gentlewomen live, the heavenly deities of the Heaven of Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and Heaven of Ultimate Form, dragons, and asuras in this large threefold thousand-world and the rest of boundless worlds of the ten directions will always protect, make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim them, and prevent all troubles and difficulties from prajna paramita.

“Furthermore, Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen write prajna paramita, the great magic king spell, put it in a clean and pure place, and make offerings to esteem and acclaim it, then all humans and nonhumans in that area will not be harmed by disasters, accidents, and plagues even if they do not listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, reflect reasonably on, or explicate it. Why? Kausika, wherever prajna paramita the great magic king spell is located, the heavenly deities from the Heaven of Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and Heaven of Ultimate Form, dragons, and asuras in this large threefold thousand-world and the rest of boundless worlds in the ten directions will always protect it, make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim it, so that the prajna paramita will not be in trouble. Kausika, if these good gentlemen and gentlewomen write prajna paramita, the great and magic king spell, put it in a clean and pure place, and make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim it, then they will obtain a lot of present benefits, not to mention if they can listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate diligently, learn assiduously, reflect reasonably on, and explicate extensively prajna paramita. You must know that these people will gain innumerable merits and virtues; they will not only attain the great bodhi but also bring benefits and happiness to all sentient beings.

“Furthermore, Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen are afraid of enemies, wild beasts, disasters, negative prayers, plagues, poisonous medicines, curses, and so on, they should write prajna paramita, the great magic king spell, store it in a small perfume bag, and put the bag in a treasure box. They should carry the king spell all the time, make offerings

respectfully to esteem and acclaim it, so that the things they fear will not happen. It is because the heavenly dragons, deities, and spirits will always protect them. Kausika, as the humans and animals come close to or get into the yard where the bodhi tree is located, no humans or nonhumans can do harm to the tree. Why? Kausika, all Buddhas have sat under the tree to attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. So too will the Buddhas in the future. After attaining the bodhi, the Buddhas will further teach the bodhi to all sentient beings, let them get rid of fear, terror, resentment, and damage in body and mind. The Buddhas have established and will establish numberless sentient beings to dwell in noble and exquisite actions of humans and heavenly beings; dwell in peaceful, happy, and exquisite actions of the three vehicles; realize and attain in present life the stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, and arhat effect; the self-enlightenment bodhi; or the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. All these superior things are produced by the power and authority of prajna paramita. Therefore, all heavenly deities, dragons, and asuras should protect the places where the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita are stored or displayed, make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim them, and prevent prajna paramita from all kinds of troubles.

“Kausika, where there are the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, there are the real Buddhist monasteries. All sentient beings should pay homage to the sutras, and make the most wonderful wreaths, spread perfumes, powdered incenses, clothes, jewel necklaces, treasure pennants, canopies, rarities and unique beautiful things, entertainments, and lamps as offerings to esteem and acclaim them.”

(Therefore, the Buddha said, where there are the sutras of prajna paramita, the sentient beings should pay homage and make offerings to them.)

At that time, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have written the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita and adorned the writing, and further made various best wreaths, spread perfumes, powdered incenses, clothes, jewel necklaces, treasure pennants, canopies, rarities, entertainments, and lamps as offerings to them. On the other hand, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have built a stupa decorated with seven treasures, in which the Buddha’s relics are stored in a treasure case after passing away. They also made the most wonderful wreaths, spread perfumes, powdered incenses,

clothes, jewel necklaces, treasure pennants, canopies, rarities, entertainments, and lamps as offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim the relics. Between these two groups of people, who will invite more merits and blessings?”

The Buddha said, “Let me ask you a question, and you may answer as you like. Through which dharma did the Thus-Comer cultivate, learn, and achieve the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, gaining the perfect major marks and distinguishing minor features?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “World-Honored One, it is through the cultivation and learning of the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita that the Thus-Comer achieved the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, the perfect major marks, and the distinguishing minor features.”

The Buddha said to Kausika, “Yes, it is as you say. I have attained the perfect knowledge of all phenomena and the perfect marks through the cultivation and learning of the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita. Why? Kausika, it does not make sense to say that one can achieve the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi without learning the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita. Kausika, one is named the Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One not only because he has attained the perfect physical features but also the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Kausika, the perfect knowledge of all phenomena that the Thus-Comer attains is caused by prajna paramita. But it also relies on the Buddha’s perfect physical features to initiate the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Prajna paramita is the major cause for the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, but in order to make this perfect knowledge present and endure, one should further cultivate the perfect physical features. Because the Buddha’s universal knowledge relies on the perfect physical features, to which all heavenly deities, dragons, humans, and nonhumans will make offerings respectfully. Based on this cause and condition, various heavenly deities, dragons, humans, and nonhumans will make offerings respectfully to my relics after I enter nirvana.”

“Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen make offerings respectfully to the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita with esteem and acclamation, it also means that they make offerings to the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, the perfect physical features, and the Buddha’s relics after his passing away. Why? Kausika, the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, the perfect physical features, and the Buddha’s relics are all based on prajna paramita. Kausika,

if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen only make offerings respectfully with esteem and admiration to the perfect physical features of the Buddha and his relics, it does not mean that they also make offerings respectfully to the perfect knowledge of all phenomena and prajna paramita. Why? Kausika, the Buddha's relics are not the foundation of prajna paramita and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Kausika, based on this cause and condition, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen would like to make offerings respectfully to Buddha's body, mind, and the rest of his merits and virtues, they should first listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate diligently, learn attentively, reflect reasonably on, write, and explicate the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita. They should further make various most wonderful things as offerings to the sutras of prajna paramita.

“Therefore, Kausika, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen wrote the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, then dignified and worshipped it. They further made various most wonderful wreaths, spread fragrances, powdered incenses, clothes, jewel necklaces, treasure banners, canopies, rarities, entertainments, and lamps as offerings to the writing of prajna paramita. On the other hand, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen built a pagoda after the Buddha entered nirvana. The pagoda was decorated with seven treasures, in which the relics are stored in a treasure case. They further made the most wonderful wreaths, spread fragrances, powdered incenses, clothes, jewel necklaces, treasure banners, rarities, entertainments, and lamps as offerings to the relics. Consequently, the blessings gained by the former ones are much more than the latter ones. Why? Kausika, the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita can bring about giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; demonstrate internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; give rise to the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; elicit all samadhi gates and all dharani gates; enable great bodhisattvas to assist the sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify the Buddha lands; and allow great bodhisattvas to be reborn in a wealthy perfect family and perfect caste with perfect physical features and powers. The fathomless sutras of prajna paramita can cause great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity; accomplish the noble family of Ksatriya, Brahman, elders, and lay believers perfect; benefit the Heaven of Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and Heaven of Ultimate Form, as well as

the Heaven of Boundless Emptiness, Heaven of Boundless Consciousness, and so forth, and Heaven of Nonthinking and Not Nonthinking. The sutras of prajna paramita can fulfill stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, self-enlightenment bodhi, great bodhisattva actions, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. They can also fulfill the superior and unequalled perfect knowledge of all phenomena possessed by all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones.”

(The Buddha explained that prajna paramita is the cause of the physical body and relics. Although bodhisattvas require a physical body to learn and cultivate prajna paramita, the physical body and relics are not considered the foundation of prajna paramita and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena.)

At that time, Heavenly Emperor Indra asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, some people in the continent of Jambudvipa do not make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita. Are they unaware that making offerings to esteem and acclaim the fathomless prajna paramita will gain great merits, virtues, and superior benefits?”

The Buddha said to Kausika, “Let me ask you some questions, and you may answer as you like. What do you think about these questions? How many people in the continent of Jambudvipa have realized and attained the purity of the Buddha, the purity of the dharma, and the purity of the sangha? How many have known the Buddha, the dharma, and the sangha well without puzzles? How many have fully known the Buddha, the dharma, and the sangha? How many have achieved the thirty-seven aids to enlightenment? How many have attained the three liberation gates, the eight liberations, the nine concentrations in sequence, the six supernatural powers, or the four unhindered understandings? How many have eliminated the three bonds permanently and attained the stream-entry effect? How many have diminished greed, anger, and ignorance and attained the once-return effect? How many have permanently terminated the five lower bonds and attained the nonreturn effect? How many have terminated the five upper bonds and attained the arhat effect? How many have aspired to self-enlightenment bodhi? How many have aspired to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddha?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “World-Honored One, in the continent of Jambudvipa very few people have realized and attained the purity of the Buddha, the purity of the dharma,

and the purity of the sangha. Very few have attained the thirty-seven aids to enlightenment, the three liberations, and so forth, and the four unhindered understandings. Very few have attained the stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and aspired to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddha.”

The Buddha said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, “Yes, it is as you say. Kausika, in the continent of Jambudvipa very few people have realized and attained the purity of the Buddha, the dharma, and the sangha. Even fewer have known the Buddha, the dharma, and the sangha without puzzles; aspired to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi; and decided to cultivate and learn the bodhi. Even fewer have cultivated and learned diligently and attained the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Why? Kausika, many sentient beings have reincarnated in the cycle of birth and death for innumerable generations. For a very long time they have not seen the Buddha, heard the correct dharma, stayed close to the sangha, practiced giving, observed precept, cultivated forbearance, initiated diligence, studied meditation, and learned prajna. They have not heard and cultivated internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power; all samadhi gates and all dharani gates; the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Kausika, because of this cause and condition, very few people in the continent of Jambudvipa have realized and attained the purity of the Buddha, dharma, and sangha. Even fewer have known the Buddha, the dharma, and the sangha without puzzles; aspired to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddha; and cultivated diligently toward the bodhi. There are even fewer who have realized and attained the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.

“Furthermore, Kausika, let us now put the human beings in the continent of Jambudvipa aside. What do you think about this? In this large threefold thousand-world, how many sentient beings have made offerings respectfully to their parents and teachers? How many sentient beings have made offerings respectfully to the monks and Brahmans? How many sentient beings have practiced giving, observed pure precept, been devoted to fasting, and cultivated for inviting bliss? How many sentient beings have become disgusted with flaws, disgusted with eating food, and have stayed in the mindfulness of impermanence, suffering, selflessness, impurity, and the

undesirability of the world? How many sentient beings have cultivated the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations? How many sentient beings have aspired to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas? How many sentient beings have assiduously cultivated and learned the actions leading to the bodhi? How many sentient beings have nurtured their bodhi-aspiring minds long enough? How many sentient beings have cultivated prajna paramita expediently and skillfully? How many sentient beings have attained the bodhisattva stage of nonregression? How many sentient beings have realized and attained the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “World-Honored One, in this large threefold thousand-world, only very few sentient beings have made offerings respectfully to their parents and teachers, monks and Brahmans. Even fewer sentient beings have realized and attained the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.”

The Buddha said, “Kausika, it is as you say. In this large threefold thousand-world, very few sentient beings have made offerings respectfully to their parents or teachers. Even fewer have made offerings to monks and Brahmans, dwelled in the bodhisattva stage of nonregression, and realized and attained the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly.”

“Furthermore, Kausika, I have looked at all the worlds in the ten directions universally with my unsurpassed Buddha eye, seeing that innumerable, countless, and boundless sentient beings have aspired to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. But because of lacking expedient skillfulness of prajna paramita, only one, two, or three sentient beings have dwelled in the bodhisattva stage of nonregression. Most of the bodhi pursuers have unfortunately regressed and fallen into the inferior stages of voice-hearer and self-enlightened one. Why? Kausika, the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas is very difficult to attain. If the sentient beings are inferior and cannot make wise judgment, work diligently and efficiently, and understand the dharma well enough, then they will not be able to attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas.”

“Kausika, because of this cause and condition, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen would like to pursue the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, cultivate the bodhisattva actions toward the bodhi diligently and assiduously, dwell in the bodhisattva stage of

nonregression, and realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly, they should listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, and reflect reasonably on the fathomless prajna paramita. They should often ask teachers about prajna paramita and are delighted to explain it to others. They should write prajna paramita and dignify and worship the writing. They should further make various most wonderful wreaths, spread fragrances, powdered incenses, clothes, jewel necklaces, treasure banners, canopies, rarities, entertainments, and lamps as offerings to the writing of prajna paramita.”

(Realizing that the unsurpassed bodhi is very difficult to attain and that few bodhi pursuers can achieve this goal, the Buddha thus taught the way to cultivate prajna paramita toward the unsurpassed bodhi based on his own experiences as a bodhisattva in the past.)

“Kausika, in addition, the good gentlemen and gentlewomen should also listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on, and ask teachers about the rest of superior virtuous dharmas that are absorbed in the fathomless prajna paramita. What are the superior virtuous dharmas absorbed in the fathomless prajna paramita? They are giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; all samadhi gates and all dharani gates; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power; great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity; and countless and boundless Buddha dharmas. All these are named superior virtuous dharmas absorbed in the fathomless prajna paramita.

“Kausika, the good gentlemen and gentlewomen should also listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, reflect reasonably on the rest of numberless dharma gates in compliance with the fathomless prajna paramita, such as the aggregates, spheres, and realms. They should not slander them to bring troubles to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Why? Kausika, the good gentlemen and gentlewomen should think, ‘When the Thus-Come was still in the stage of bodhisattva in the past, he had always cultivated and learned diligently the dharmas compliant with the bodhi. These dharmas include prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; all samadhi gates and all dharani gates; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct

endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity; the rest of innumerable and boundless Buddha dharma; and the rest of numberless dharma gates in accord with the fathomless prajna paramita, such as the aggregates, spheres, and realms. He had realized and attained the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi through the cultivation of these dharma. When pursuing the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, we should do as the Buddha did. Prajna paramita and the dharma in accordance with prajna paramita are our grand master. Learning from them certainly will fulfill our aspiration. Prajna paramita and the dharma in accordance with prajna paramita are the dharma seal for the Buddhas. All Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones had learned, will learn, and are learning them to achieve the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. They are also the dharma seals for all voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones. All stream-enters, once-returners, nonreturners, arhats, and self-enlightened ones had learned, will learn, and are learning them to reach the other shore of liberation.' Therefore, Kausika, whether the Buddha is alive or has entered nirvana, the good gentlemen and gentlewomen should diligently cultivate and learn prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Why? Kausika, prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are the dharma on which the voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, bodhisattvas, and the rest of deities, humans, asuras, and so forth can rely.

"Furthermore, Kausika, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen had built pagodas after Thus-Comers entered nirvana so that they could make offerings to esteem the Buddhas' relics. They built the pagodas with seven wonderful treasures decorated with different rarities. Each pagoda was one yojana tall and half yojana wide. They also made various wonderful heavenly floral wreaths, spread fragrances, powdered incenses, clothes, jewel necklaces, treasure banners, canopies, rarities, entertainments, and lamps as offerings to esteem and acclaim the Buddhas' relics for the rest of their lives. What do you think about this? Will the good gentlemen and gentlewomen gain many blessings because of this cause and condition?"

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, "Yes, they will gain many blessings, World-Honored One. They will gain many blessings, Well-Gone One."

The Buddha said to Kausika, “If the good gentlemen and gentlewomen stay in a mind in accordance with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and adopt nonattainment as skillful means to listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, diligently cultivate and learn, reasonably reflect on, and extensively disseminate prajna paramita; write prajna paramita and dignify, esteem, and acclaim it; and further make various most wonderful wreaths, spread fragrances, powdered incenses, clothes, jewel necklaces, treasure banners, canopies, rarities, entertainments, and lamps as offerings to the writing of prajna paramita, then the blessings gained by these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be much more than the former ones.

“Furthermore, Kausika, let us put this matter aside at this moment. Some good gentlemen and gentlewomen had built pagodas after Thus-Comers passed into nirvana to store the Buddhas’ relics, so that they could worship them. Each pagoda was one yojana tall and half yojana wide, decorated with seven treasures, mixed with various unique and beautiful rarities. Suppose that the entire continent of Jambudvipa, the four great continents, the small thousand-world, the medium thousand-world, and even the entire large threefold thousand-world were filled with various wonderful wreaths of heavenly flowers, spread fragrances, powdered incenses, and so forth, and lamps. The good gentlemen and gentlewomen would make all these wonderful things as offerings to esteem and acclaim the Buddhas’ relics for the rest of their lives. What do you think about this? Will these good gentlemen and gentlewomen accumulate many blessings because of this cause and condition?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “They will accumulate many blessings, World-Honored One. They will accumulate many blessings, Well-Gone One.”

The Buddha said to Kausika, “If the good gentlemen and gentlewomen can stay in a mind in accordance with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and adopt nonattainment as skillful means to listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on, and disseminate extensively prajna paramita; write prajna paramita and dignify and worship it; and further make various most wonderful wreaths, spread fragrances, powdered incenses, and so forth, and lamps as offerings to the writing of prajna paramita, then the blessings gained by these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be much more than the former ones.

“Furthermore, Kausika, let us put this threefold thousand-world aside. Suppose that all sentient beings in the large threefold thousand-world have each built a pagoda after various Thus-Comers passed into nirvana. They stored the Buddhas’ relics in the pagodas to worship them. The pagodas were decorated with seven treasures, mixed with various unique and beautiful rarities. Each pagoda was one yojana tall and half yojana wide. The entire large threefold thousand-world was filled with various wonderful wreaths of heavenly flowers, and so forth, and the lamps. They made all these as offerings to esteem and acclaim the Buddhas’ relics for the rest of their lives. What do you think about this? Will these good gentlemen and gentlewomen accumulate many blessings because of this cause and condition?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “They will accumulate many blessings, World-Honored One. They will accumulate many blessings, Well-Gone One.”

The Buddha said to Kausika, “If the good gentlemen and gentlewomen can stay in a mind in accordance with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and adopt nonattainment as skillful means to listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on, and disseminate extensively prajna paramita; write prajna paramita and dignify and worship it; and further make various most wonderful wreaths, spread fragrances, powdered incenses, and so forth, and lamps as offerings to the writing of prajna paramita, then the blessings gained by these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be much more than the former ones.”

(The Buddha taught that to stay in a mind in accordance with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and adopt nonattainment as skillful means to listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on, and disseminate extensively prajna paramita; write prajna paramita and dignify the writing; and make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim the writing will gain more blessings than building many pagodas for storing Buddha’s relics.)

In the meantime, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the Buddha, “Yes, World-Honored One. Yes, Well-Gone One. If the good gentlemen and gentlewomen make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim prajna paramita, they equally make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, in the past, present, and future. On the other

hand, suppose that the sentient beings in as many worlds of the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges have each built a pagoda after the Thus-Comers entered nirvana to store and worship the Buddha's relics. All pagodas are built with seven exquisite treasures and decorated with various unique and beautiful rarities. Each pagoda stands one yojana tall and half yojana wide. The entire threefold thousand-world will be filled with pagodas without empty space. These sentient beings will further make wonderful heavenly wreaths, spread fragrances, powdered incenses, and so forth, and lamps as offerings to esteem and acclaim the Buddhas' relics for a kalpa or even longer. World-Honored One, will these sentient beings gain many blessings because of this cause and condition?"

The Buddha replied, "The blessings will be immeasurable and boundless."

Heavenly Emperor Indra said, "If some good gentlemen and gentlewomen stay in a mind in accordance with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and adopt nonattainment as skillful means to listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on, and disseminate extensively prajna paramita for the sentient beings; write prajna paramita and dignify and worship the writing; and further make the most wonderful wreaths, spread fragrances, powdered incenses, and so forth, and lamps as offerings to the writing of prajna paramita. Then the blessings gained by these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be much more than the former ones by immeasurable times, even more than one can measure and imagine. Why? World-Honored One, prajna paramita has absorbed and stored all virtuous dharmas: the path of the ten virtuous karmas; the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; the contemplation of the four noble truths; the thirty-seven aids to enlightenment; the three liberation gates; the six supernatural powers; the eight liberations and nine concentrations in sequence; giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; all samadhi gates and all dharani gates; the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, great equanimity, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; and the rest of immeasurable and boundless Buddha dharmas. All these dharmas are absorbed by this fathomless prajna paramita."

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the real dharma seal of various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones. It is also the real dharma seal of all voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones. World-Honored One, all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones had attained, are attaining, and will attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi because of cultivating and learning the fathomless prajna paramita diligently. All voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones had reached, are reaching, and will reach the other shore of liberation because of cultivating and learning the fathomless prajna paramita diligently. World-Honored One, because of this cause and condition, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen can stay in a mind in accordance with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and adopt nonattainment as skillful means to wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on, and disseminate extensively prajna paramita; write prajna paramita, dignify and worship it; and make various wonderful things as offerings to the writing of prajna paramita; then the blessings thus brought about will be immeasurable and boundless, even beyond one can measure and imagine.”

(Building pagodas to store Buddha's relics brings great blessings. However, studying, writing, dignifying, and spreading prajna paramita yields even more blessings. This is because prajna paramita is key for attaining enlightenment and encompasses countless holy teachings.)

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Chapter 31

The Blessing

(In the Second Assembly)

At that time, the Buddha said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, “Yes, it is as you say. Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen stay in a mind in accordance with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and adopt nonattainment as skillful means to wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on, and disseminate extensively prajna paramita for all sentient beings; write prajna paramita, dignify, worship, esteem, and acclaim the writing; and further make various most wonderful wreaths, spread fragrances, powdered incenses, clothes, jewel necklaces, treasure banners, canopies, rarities, entertainments, and lamps as offerings to prajna paramita, then the blessings thus brought about will be immeasurable and boundless, and even more than one can measure and conceive. Why? Kausika, it is because prajna paramita can accomplish the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena of the Thus-Come, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One. It can enable one to accomplish giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power; the five eyes and six supernatural powers; and all samadhi gates and all dharani gates. It can enable great bodhisattvas to assist sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify Buddha lands. It can enable one to achieve the voice-hearer vehicle, self-enlightened one vehicle, or the unsurpassed vehicle. It also can enable Thus-Come, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones to realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.

“Therefore, Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen stay in a mind in accordance with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and adopt nonattainment as

skillful means to listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on, and disseminate extensively prajna paramita for all sentient beings; write prajna paramita and dignify, worship, esteem, and acclaim the writing; and further make the most wonderful things as offerings to prajna paramita, then the blessings thus derived will be more than building pagodas for storing and worshiping Buddha's relics by one hundred times, one thousand times, one hundred thousand times, and so forth, and one upanisadam times. Why? Kausika, if the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita are disseminated, the Buddha gem, dharma gem, and sangha gem will not discontinue in this human world. If the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita persevere in human world, the path of the ten virtuous karmas will not disappear; all superior dharmas, such as the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; all samadhi gates and all dharani gates; the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; the noble families of Ksatriya, Brahman, elders, and lay believers; the Heaven of Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and Heaven of Nonthinking and Not Nonthinking; the voice-hearer vehicle, self-enlightened one vehicle, and the unsurpassed vehicle; the stream-enters, once-returners, nonreturners, arhats, and self-enlightened ones; the bodhisattvas who are assisting the sentient beings to mature and dignifying and purifying the Buddha lands; and the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones who have attained the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and turned the wonderful dharma wheel to deliver immeasurable sentient beings, will not disappear."

(The Buddha confirmed Heavenly Emperor Indra's statement that if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen stay in a mind in accordance with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and adopt nonattainment as skillful means to listen to, accept, embrace, and so forth, and disseminate extensively prajna paramita; write prajna paramita and dignify and worship the writing; and further make the most wonderful things as offerings to prajna paramita, then the blessings thus derived will be more than building pagodas for storing and worshiping Buddha's

relics. It is because prajna paramita can give rise to innumerable superior dharmas and beneficial things, and allow various holy effects and correct dharma to continue in the world.)

Chapter 32

The Merits and Virtues

(In the Second Assembly)

At that time, in this large threefold thousand-world, all heavenly beings from the Heaven of Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and Heaven of Ultimate Form spoke to Heavenly Emperor Indra simultaneously, “Great immortal one, all should accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, and reflect reasonably on prajna paramita, and make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim it. Why? Great immortal one, if one can accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, and reflect reasonably on this prajna paramita, and make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim it, then the negative dharmas will decrease and positive dharmas will increase. The heavenly deities will increase and asura gangs will decrease. The Buddha eye, dharma eye, and sangha eye will also increase. The seeds of the Buddha, dharma, and sangha will endure and never discontinue.

“Great immortal one, because the seeds of the triple gem persevere, giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita will exist in the world. Internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power; all samadhi gates and all dharani gates; the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; the stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and arhat effect; the self-enlightenment bodhi, the great bodhisattva actions, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi will exist in the world. Therefore, Great immortal one, all sentient beings should accept,

embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on, and make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim prajna paramita.”

(All heavenly beings in the assembly also said that all should accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, and reflect reasonably on prajna paramita and make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim it based on the same reasons mentioned by Indra and confirmed by the Buddha.)

At that time, the Buddha said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, “Kausika, you should accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on, and make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim the fathomless prajna paramita. Why? Kausika, if the asuras and their evil gang followers had such a thought in their minds, ‘We must fight with the army of Heavenly Emperor Indra,’ you and your associates and followers in various heavens should sincerely recite the fathomless prajna paramita and make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim it. When you do this, the asuras and their followers will cease that evil thought immediately.

“Kausika, as the heavenly sons and daughters show the appearances of decay, they will be extremely shocked and horrified because they fear that they will fall into the inferior destinies. At that time, you and your associates from various heavens should go to their places and sincerely recite the prajna paramita in front of them. Because of the powers of the virtuous roots developed through hearing and believing in prajna paramita, their five signs of decay will immediately disappear, leading to physical and mental ease and comfort. At the end of their present lives, they will be reborn again in heaven with blessings that are doubled compared to their previous life. Why? Kausika, the powers of the merits and virtues caused by hearing and believing in prajna paramita are extremely great.

“Kausika, if the good gentlemen, gentlewomen, heavenly sons, and daughters have happened to hear the fathomless prajna paramita, they definitely will attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi because of the powers of the virtuous roots. Why? All the Buddhas and their disciples have attained the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and entered nirvana without remainder because of learning prajna paramita. Why? Kausika, prajna paramita

absorbs all factors leading to the great bodhi. The Buddha dharma, bodhisattva dharma, self-enlightened one dharma, and voice-hearer dharma are all absorbed in prajna paramita.”

In the meantime, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the great magic Mandra, the great bright spell, the unsurpassed spell, the unequalled spell, and the king of all spells. It is the noblest, superior, highest, and most wonderful spell. It is invincible and can subjugate all challenges. Why? World-Honored One, prajna paramita can eliminate all evil dharmas and foster all superior virtuous dharmas.”

At that time, the Buddha said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, “Yes, it is as you say. Why? Kausika, various Buddhas in the past, present, and future attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi because of the fathomless prajna paramita, the great magic king spell. Why? It is because of this great magic king spell that the path of the ten virtuous karmas; the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power; realness, dharma realm, dharma nature, reality, the nature of nonillusion, nature of changelessness, dharma concentration, dharma dwelling, and the realm of the inconceivable; the four noble truths; the five eyes and six supernatural powers; the stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and arhat effect; the self-enlightened one effect, various great bodhisattva actions, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas; and the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena exist in the world.

“Furthermore, Kausika, it is because of the great bodhisattva that the path of the ten virtuous karmas, four meditations, four immeasurable minds, four formless concentrations, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena exist in the world. It is because of the full moon that all stars turn out more brilliant. So it is because of the great bodhisattvas that the path of the ten virtuous karmas, four meditations, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge become significant. During the time when the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones were not yet born in the world, only the

bodhisattvas existed to teach the dharms of and beyond the world for various sentient beings by means of expedient skillfulness. The expedient skillfulness of all great bodhisattvas arises and grows because of the fathomless prajna paramita. The great bodhisattvas have the powers of expedient skillfulness to practice giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power. Owing to the powers of expedient skillfulness, the great bodhisattvas will not dwell in the stages of voice-hearer and self-enlightened one; they rather can assist sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify Buddha lands. Owing to the powers of expedient skillfulness, the great bodhisattvas will live a perfect lifespan in a perfect family within a perfect Buddha land. They have perfect bodies, appearances, and strengths. They can attain the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. They have achieved these great things because of prajna paramita.

(The Buddha said that because of the great bodhisattvas, various superior dharms appear in the world. It is due to prajna paramita that great bodhisattvas have expedient skillfulness to undertake various wonderful things to significantly benefit the world.)

“Furthermore, Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen can listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn assiduously, reflect reasonably on, write, explicate, and disseminate extensively prajna paramita, they will attain the superior merits and virtues presently and in future.”

Meanwhile, Heavenly Emperor Indra asked the Buddha, “What are the superior merits and virtues the good gentlemen and gentlewomen will attain presently and in future?”

The Buddha replied, “Kausika, as the good gentlemen and gentlewomen listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn assiduously, reflect reasonably on, write, explicate, and disseminate extensively prajna paramita, they will not be harmed by poisons, injured by weapons, burnt by fires, and drowned in waters; they will not die of the four hundred and four kinds of diseases except they have to pay karmic debt. Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen recite prajna paramita wholeheartedly, they will be relieved from the suffering caused by lawsuits, enemies, or robberies. Why? Kausika, it is because of the great powers,

authority, and virtues of prajna paramita. Kausika, when visiting with kings, princes, or high-ranking officials, the good gentlemen and gentlewomen who are wholeheartedly reciting prajna paramita will be respected and treated friendly and generously. Why? Kausika, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen have always treated sentient beings with loving-kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity. Kausika, these are the merits and virtues the good gentlemen and gentlewomen will attain in present life.

“Kausika, as the good gentlemen and gentlewomen wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn assiduously, reflect reasonably on, write, explicate, and extensively disseminate prajna paramita, no matter where they are reborn, they will never stay far away from the path of the ten virtuous karmas; the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power; all samadhi gates and all dharani gates; and the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. They will not fall into hells, the realm of animals, or the realm of ghosts except they want to do it willingly to assist sentient beings. Wherever they are born, their physical bodies will be complete. They will not be born in a family of poverty, low social class, technician, janitor, butcher, fisherman, robber, prison guard, pulkasa, candela, sudra, or small business. Wherever they are born, they will possess thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features, so that the sentient beings love to look at them and welcome them. Mostly they will be born in a pure and dignified land where there is the Buddha. They will be born through a transformation of the lotus. Because they haven’t done anything evil, they will not lose the supernatural powers of bodhisattva, thus they are able to travel freely as they wish from one Buddha country to the other, stay close to various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, and make offerings to them. They will also assist the sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify the Buddha lands. They will listen to correct dharma and cultivate as they are taught, thus they will gradually realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Kausika, these are the merits and virtues attained by the good gentlemen and gentlewomen in the future.

(The Buddha taught the superior merits and virtues the good gentlemen and gentlewomen will attain presently and in the future from learning, believing in, and practicing prajna paramita.)

“Therefore, kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen would like to attain such superior merits and virtues, and even the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi presently and in the future, they should always stay in a mind in accordance with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and adopt nonattainment as skillful means to wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn assiduously, reflect reasonably on, write, explicate, and extensively disseminate the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita. They should further make the most wonderful wreaths, spread fragrances, powdered incenses, clothes, jewel necklaces, treasure banners, canopies, rarities, entertainments, and lamps as offerings to the sutras of prajna paramita.”

Chapter 33

The Other-Path Practitioners

(In the Second Assembly)

At that time, many other-path practitioners came to Buddha’s place to find fault with him. Heavenly Emperor Indra thought, ‘So many other-path practitioners come to find fault with the Buddha. Will they not find fault with prajna paramita? I should recite the fathomless prajna paramita taught by the Buddha, so that these evil people will withdraw.’ Heavenly Emperor did as he thought. After he recited prajna paramita, these other-path practitioners paid homage to the Buddha, walked around him clockwise from far away, and left.

Meanwhile, Sariputra saw what happened and wondered, “Why did they arrive and leave?”

The Buddha said to Sariputra, “Those other-path practitioners came to find fault with me. They withdrew because Heavenly Emperor Indra recited *prajna paramita*. Sariputra, they did not come with any good intention. Sariputra, the heavenly beings, demons, Brahmas, sramanas, Brahmins, and so forth coming to my place with evil intentions have never been able to take the advantage and do anything harmful when I teach *prajna paramita*. Why? Sariputra, in this large threefold thousand-world, all heavenly deities of the Heaven of Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and Heaven of Ultimate Form; all voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, bodhisattvas, and Buddhas; and all dragons, yaksas, and nonhumans possessing mighty powers have worked together to protect *prajna paramita*, so no evil forces can do harm to it. Why? Sariputra, because *prajna paramita* has brought mighty powers to the heavenly deities, voice-hearers, and so forth.

(The other-path practitioners, demons, and other sentient beings with evil intentions cannot do harm to *prajna paramita* because *prajna paramita* has brought mighty powers to all correct dharma protectors.)

“Moreover, Sariputra, all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones, voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, bodhisattvas, heavenly deities, dragons, yaksas, humans, and nonhumans in as many worlds of the ten directions as the sand of the Ganges have worked together to protect *prajna paramita*, so no evil will bring troubles to it. Why? Sariputra, all Buddhas, voice-hearers, and so forth have gained mighty powers from *prajna paramita*.”

At that time, the demon was thinking, “Now the Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One is going to teach *prajna paramita*. The four groups of his followers, the heavenly beings, and the human beings from the realm of desire and the realm of form are gathering around him. Among them some great bodhisattvas have been conferred by Buddha the prophecy of attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi in the future. I will go there to destroy their dharma eyes.” After having this thought, the demon made four transformed armies of elephants, horses, chariots, and infantries moving aggressively and quickly to the Buddha’s place.

In the meantime, Heavenly Emperor Indra saw what was happening and thought, “Won’t the evil demon make such transformation to disturb and annoy the Buddha and hinder prajna paramita? Why? These four armies are well decorated and look pretty and solemn; they look superior to the four armies led by King Bimbisāra of Magadha, King Prasenajit of Kosala, King Sakya Seed of Kapilavastu, King Licchavi of Vaiśālī, or King Kuśinagara of the City of Kusa. I can tell they are transformed by the demon. The demon has for a long time tried to find fault with the Buddha to destroy the superior dharmas that the sentient beings have cultivated. I must recite the fathomless prajna paramita taught by the Buddha to drive the four armies away.” He recited the fathomless prajna paramita, the demon and his transformed armies thus were forced by the powers of prajna paramita to turn around and left.

(Heavenly Emperor Indra recited prajna paramita to drive demon’s armies away.)

Meanwhile, in the assembly all heavenly beings from the Heaven of Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and Heaven of Ultimate Form made various transformed heavenly flowers, fragrant wreaths, and other exquisite things as offerings to the Buddha. They jumped up high and scattered all these beautiful things in the air. They joined their palms together in reverence and said to the Buddha, “May this prajna paramita dwell in this continent of Jambudvīpa forever. Why? World-Honored One, as this fathomless prajna paramita continues to spread in the continent of Jambudvīpa, the Buddha gem, dharma gem, and sangha gem will dwell in this world forever; the triple gem will also dwell in this large threefold thousand-world and the immeasurable, countless, and boundless worlds of the ten directions forever. The great bodhisattvas and all their superior actions thus will persevere forever. World-Honored One, where the good gentlemen and gentlewomen write and embrace the fathomless prajna paramita with pure belief and make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim it, there are various superior benefits to bring about brilliant brightness and drive away darkness.”

(The heavenly beings made transformed exquisite heavenly flowers as offerings to the Buddha and made wish that the triple gem will exist forever in this and all other worlds.)

At that time, the Buddha said to Heavenly Emperor Indra and various heavenly beings, “Yes, it is as you say. If this fathomless prajna paramita continues to spread in this continent of Jambudvīpa, the Buddha gem, dharma gem, and sangha gem will dwell in this world forever. So

too are in this large threefold thousand-world and the immeasurable, countless, and boundless worlds of the ten directions. We can be sure that the great bodhisattvas and all their superior actions will also dwell in these worlds forever. Where there are good gentlemen and gentlewomen writing and embracing the fathomless prajna paramita with pure belief and making offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim it, there are various superior benefits to bring about brilliant brightness and drive away darkness.”

(The Buddha confirmed Indra’s statement.)

At that time, the heavenly beings again made various kinds of transformed heavenly flowers, fragrant wreaths, and so forth as offerings and spread them on the Buddha. They said to Buddha, “If the good gentlemen and gentlewomen wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on, write, explicate, and disseminate extensively the fathomless prajna paramita, the demons and their troops cannot take advantage to harm these good gentlemen and gentlewomen. Besides, we all heavenly beings will always keep an eye on them and do our best to protect them, so they will not be disturbed or harmed. Why? World-Honored One, we will respect these good gentlemen and gentlewomen as we do the Buddha; just like the Buddha who respects the dharma.”

(The heavenly beings vowed to respect and protect the ones who wholeheartedly embrace, cultivate, reflect reasonably on, write, explicate, and disseminate extensively the fathomless prajna paramita.)

In the meantime, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the Buddha, “These good gentlemen and gentlewomen must have accumulated a lot of virtuous roots in their previous lives. They must have vowed, made offerings to the Buddhas, and served virtuous friends very often in their past lives. No one can achieve this with few virtuous roots. Because they have many virtuous roots, they naturally can wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on, write, explicate, and disseminate extensively this fathomless prajna paramita. World-Honored One, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen would like to achieve the perfect knowledge of all phenomena as owned by the Buddhas, they should pursue prajna paramita. If they would like to attain prajna paramita, they should pursue the perfect knowledge of all phenomena of the Buddhas. Why? The perfect knowledge of all

phenomena that the Buddhas have attained comes out of prajna paramita, and prajna paramita comes out of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena of the Buddhas. Why? The perfect knowledge of all phenomena that the Buddhas have attained is not different from prajna paramita, and prajna paramita is not different from the perfect knowledge of all phenomena of the Buddhas. The perfect knowledge of all phenomena that the Buddhas have attained and prajna paramita are neither dualistic nor separate.”

At that time, the Buddha said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, “Yes, it is as you say. Therefore, prajna paramita has the noblest and superior merits, virtues, authority, and powers.”

(The Buddha agreed with what Kausika said that prajna paramita and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena possessed by the Buddhas are not dualistic and separate. Prajna paramita has the noblest and superior merits, virtues, authority, and powers.)

Chapter 34

Coming from Heavens

Section 1

(In the Second Assembly)

At that time, the long-lived sage Joyfully Celebrating One (Ananda) asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, why does the Thus-Come, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One only extensively praise prajna paramita, the sixth paramita, but not giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation paramitas, and so forth, and the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power?”

The Buddha replied to Joyfully Celebrating One, “I have only extensively praised prajna paramita because it is the noblest one; it is the leader of the first five paramitas and the eighteen

distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power. Furthermore, Joyfully Celebrating One, what do you think about this? If we do not transfer the merits and virtues produced by the cultivation of giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power toward the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, can we name this cultivation a real one?"

Joyfully Celebrating One replied, "No, World-Honored One. No, Well-Gone One."

The Buddha said, "Joyfully Celebrating One, the merits and virtues derived through the cultivation of giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power should be transferred toward the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, then this cultivation can be named a real cultivation. Therefore, prajna paramita is the noblest one; it can serve as the leader of the first five paramitas, and so forth, and the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power. That is why I have only extensively praised prajna paramita."

(The Buddha explained for Ananda why he only extensively praised prajna paramita.)

The long-lived sage Joyfully Celebrating One asked the Buddha again, "How should one cultivate giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power and transfer the merits and virtues thus derived toward the perfect knowledge of all phenomena?"

The Buddha replied, "Joyfully Celebrating One, one should adopt nonduality, nonarising, and nonattainment as skillful means to transfer the merits and virtues derived through the cultivation of giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power toward the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. This is a real cultivation of giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power."

The long-lived sage Joyfully Celebrating One asked the Buddha again, "What kinds of nonduality, nonarising, and nonattainment should be adopted in this real cultivation?"

The Buddha replied, “Joyfully Celebrating One, one should adopt nonduality, nonarising, and nonattainment of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi as skillful means to cultivate giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power, and transfer the merits and virtues thus derived toward the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. This is a real cultivation of giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth.”

(The Buddha taught how to cultivate the six paramitas and other holy dharmas and transfer the merits and virtues thus derived toward the perfect knowledge of all phenomena to fulfill the real cultivation.)

The long-lived sage Joyfully Celebrating One asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, why is it said that to cultivate giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power by adopting nonduality, nonarising, and nonattainment of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi as skillful means and transfer the merits and virtues thus derived toward the perfect knowledge of all phenomena is a real cultivation?”

The Buddha replied, “Joyfully Celebrating One, matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and their nature are empty. Why? The nature of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi is empty. This emptiness is not different or separate from giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power.

“You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, one can transfer the merits and virtues toward the perfect knowledge of all phenomena by means of prajna paramita. The practitioners thus can fulfill giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power. Therefore, prajna paramita is the noblest of all paramitas; it is the leader of all paramitas, and so forth, and the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power. That is why I have only extensively praised prajna paramita.

“You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, as scattering seeds on the vast land, one can expect the seeds to grow when causes and conditions combine. The earth that provides a basis for the seeds to rely on and grow. Prajna paramita and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena toward which prajna paramita transfers also provide a basis for the first five paramitas, and so forth, and the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power to rely on and grow. I have only praised prajna paramita because it is the noblest one of all the paramitas; it serves as the leader of all paramitas, and so forth, and the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power.”

(The Buddha explained why he always extensively praised prajna paramita.)

At that time, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, the Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One has taught a lot about the merits and virtues of prajna paramita today, but you have not yet taught all of them. Why? The merits and virtues of prajna paramita that I have received from the World-Honored One are fathomless, broad, immeasurable, and boundless. If the good gentlemen and gentlewomen wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on, lecture on, and disseminate extensively prajna paramita for all sentient beings, the merits and virtues gained by them will be boundless. If they write the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita and dignify them in various solemn and beautiful ways, and further respectfully make immeasurable most wonderful wreaths, spread fragrances, powdered incenses, clothes, jewel necklaces, treasure banners, canopies, rarities, entertainments, and lamps as offerings to the sutras, then the merits and virtues gained by them will be boundless.

“World-Honored One, the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have wholeheartedly listened to, accepted, embraced, read, recited, cultivated diligently, reflected reasonably on, written, explicated, and disseminated extensively the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita. As they do all these great merits, the path of the ten virtuous karmas; the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power; the stream-entry effect,

once-return effect, and so forth, and arhat effect; the self-enlightenment bodhi; various great bodhisattva actions; the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas; and all superior things appear in the world.”

At that time, the Buddha said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, “Kausika, I will not say that this fathomless prajna paramita has only the merits and virtues as I have mentioned. Why? Kausika, the fathomless prajna paramita has boundless superior merits and virtues. Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen can wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on, lecture on, and disseminate extensively this prajna paramita for all sentient beings; or if they can write this fathomless prajna paramita, dignify the writing in various solemn and beautiful ways, and further make immeasurable most wonderful wreaths, spread fragrances, powdered incenses, clothes, jewel necklaces, treasure banners, canopies, rarities, entertainments, and lamps as offerings to the sutras, I will say that the merits and virtues thus gained by them will be much more than what I have mentioned earlier. Why? Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen stay in a mind in accordance with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and adopt nonattainment as skillful means to wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on, and disseminate extensively the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita for all sentient beings; if they have written them and dignified the writings in various solemn ways, and further made innumerable most wonderful wreaths, spread fragrances, powdered incenses, and so forth, and lamps as offerings to the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, then these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will achieve immeasurable superior aggregates of precepts, concentrations, wisdom, liberation, and the knowledge and views of liberation.

“Kausika, you must know that these good gentlemen and gentlewomen are almost equivalent to the Buddhas. Why? Because they have accepted and embraced the unsurpassed path belonging to all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones in the past, present, and future; they have resolved to aspire to the Buddha bodhi; they have brought benefits and happiness to all sentient beings endlessly; and they have transcended the stages of voice-hearer and self-enlightened one. Kausika, the aggregates of precepts, concentrations, wisdom, liberation, and the knowledge and views of liberation possessed by the voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones are less than the aggregates of precepts,

concentrations, wisdom, liberation, and the knowledge and views of liberation possessed by these good gentlemen and gentlewomen by one hundredth, one thousandth, and even one upanisadam-api. Why? Kausika, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen have excelled the inferior thoughts owned by all voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones. They thus do not admire the dharmas of voice-hearer and self-enlightened one because they know everything about the dharmas correctly; namely, they realize that all dharmas are nonexistent.

“Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen stay in a mind in accordance with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and adopt nonattainment as skillful means to wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on, and disseminate extensively the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita for the sentient beings; or write the fathomless sutras, dignify it in various solemn ways, and further make immeasurable most wonderful wreaths, spread fragrances, powdered incenses, and so forth, and lamps as offerings to them, then they will gain innumerable and boundless merits, virtues, and superior benefits presently and in the future.”

(The Buddha acclaimed the good gentlemen and gentlewomen who can stay in a mind in accordance with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and adopt nonattainment as skillful means to learn, reflect on, explicate, lecture on, and write the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, and make the best offering to esteem and acclaim the sutras. He said they would gain numberless merits and virtues presently and in the future. They are almost equal to the Buddhas because they have always followed the path the Thus-Comers in the past walked through.)

Meanwhile, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the Buddha, “We all heavenly beings will always follow and protect these good gentlemen and gentlewomen so they will not be disturbed or harmed by various bad conditions.”

At that time, the Buddha said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, “Kausika, when the good gentlemen and gentlewomen stay in a mind in accordance with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and adopt nonattainment as skillful means to accept, embrace, read, and recite the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, immeasurable hundreds of thousands of heavenly sons will gather to listen to the dharma. The heavenly sons will be delighted and excited to accept the fathomless prajna paramita with respect. Kausika, when the good gentlemen and gentlewomen

stay in a mind in accordance with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and adopt nonattainment as skillful means to teach the dharma correspondent with the fathomless prajna paramita, immeasurable heavenly sons will gather to assist the dharma teachers with their heavenly powers; the teachers will improve their talent so that they can speak and debate fluently and endlessly. Kausika, when the good gentlemen and gentlewomen stay in a mind in accordance with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and adopt nonattainment as skillful means to teach the fathomless prajna paramita, immeasurable heavenly sons will gather to assist the dharma teachers with their heavenly powers, so that the teachers can speak and debate without hesitation and hindrance. Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen stay in a mind in accordance with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and adopt nonattainment as skillful means to wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on, and disseminate extensively the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita for sentient beings; or write the sutras, dignify the writing in various solemn ways, and further make the most wonderful wreaths, spread fragrances, powdered incenses, and so forth, and lamps as offerings to them, then they will gain boundless merits, virtues, and superior benefits in present life; they will not be disturbed and annoyed by demons and their armies.

“Furthermore, kausika, when the good gentlemen and gentlewomen lecture on the fathomless prajna paramita to the four groups of believers, they are fearless and will not be subjugated by challenges from audience. Why? Kausika, it is because they are under the protection of the fathomless prajna paramita. Moreover, in this profound and mystic storage of prajna paramita, all kinds of dharmas are contained. They are the virtuous dharmas and the not virtuous dharmas; the morally related dharmas and the morally unrelated dharmas; the flawed dharmas and the flawless dharmas; the dharmas of the world and the dharmas beyond the world; the conditioned dharmas and the unconditioned dharmas; the dharma of voice-hearer, the dharma of self-enlightened one, the dharma of great bodhisattva, and the dharma of Thus-Comer. Immeasurable and countless dharma gates are absorbed in prajna paramita. In addition, because the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have dwelled firmly in internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature, they do not see anyone who can argue against them, or anything that can be argued about. They even do not see prajna paramita.

Therefore, Kausika, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will not be subjugated by the arguments against them, or by various enemies with hatred.

“Furthermore, Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on, write, explicate, and extensively disseminate the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will not be scared and terrified; their minds will not be drowned; and they will not be worried or regretful. Why? Kausika, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen do not see anything that will make one scared, terrified, drowned, or worried. Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen would like to attain such boundless merits, virtues, and superior benefits in present life, they should wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on, write, explicate, extensively disseminate, make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim the fathomless prajna paramita. They should continue to do in this way, without exception even for a very short instant.

“Furthermore, Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen stay in a mind in accordance with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and adopt nonattainment as skillful means to wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on, write, explicate, disseminate extensively, make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, then they will always be adored by parents, teachers, relatives, kings, high-ranking officials, sramanas, and Brahmins. They will always be loved and kept by all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones, great bodhisattvas, self-enlightened ones, arhats, nonreturners, once-returners, and stream-enterers in the boundless worlds of the ten directions. They will always be protected by various heavenly deities, Mara, Brahmas, humans, nonhumans, asuras, and so forth in this world. These good gentlemen and gentlewomen thus will achieve the most superior and uninterrupted talent of debate. They will at all times cultivate giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; dwell peacefully in internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; cultivate the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power; cultivate all samadhi gates and all dharani gates; assist the sentient beings to grow and mature; dignify and purify the Buddha lands; and cultivate the perfect

knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena tirelessly. These good gentlemen and gentlewomen will not be subjugated by incorrect arguments and the enemies with hatred. Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen would like to attain all such merits, virtues, and superior benefits in present and future, they should stay in a mind in accordance with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and adopt nonattainment as skillful means to wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on, write, explicate, disseminate extensively, make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim the fathomless prajna paramita.

(The Buddha further said that these good gentlemen and gentlewomen would not be subjugated by enemies or the arguments against them. They will not be scared either. It is because they are under the protection of prajna paramita, which had absorbed all kinds of dharmas and dharma gates. They will not be scared or drowned because they have realized the emptiness and nonattainment of various dharmas well.)

“Furthermore, Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen write the fathomless prajna paramita, adorn the writing of prajna paramita in various solemn ways, place it in a pure location, and make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim the writing, then all the heavenly beings who have aspired to the unsurpassed bodhi from the Heaven of Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and Heaven of Extensive Rewards in this large threefold thousand-world and the rest of boundless worlds of the ten directions will constantly come to look and worship the writing of prajna paramita. They will read, recite, make offerings respectfully to, esteem, and acclaim the writing, walk around it clockwise, bow down to the ground with palms joined together to pay homage, and then leave. All the heavenly beings from the heavens of purity, namely, the Heaven of No Affliction, Heaven of No Aspiration, Heaven of Good Appearance, Heaven of Good Sight, and Heaven of Ultimate Form will also come to look at, worship, read, recite, and make offerings to esteem and acclaim the writing of prajna paramita. They will walk around it clockwise, bow down to the ground with palms joined to pay homage, and then leave. In the meantime, in this large threefold thousand-world and the rest of boundless worlds of the ten directions, various dragons, yaksas, gandharvas, asuras, garudas, kinnaras, mahoragas, and the human-like nonhumans with great powers and virtues will often

come to look at, worship, read, recite, and make offerings to esteem and acclaim the writing of prajna paramita. They will walk around the writing of prajna paramita clockwise, bow down to the ground with palms joined together to pay homage, and then leave.

“Kausika, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen should think, ‘Now in this large threefold thousand-world and the rest of boundless worlds of the ten directions, all heavenly beings from the Heaven of Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and Heaven of Ultimate Form and innumerable dragons, yaksas, gandharvas, asuras, garudas, kimnaras, mahoragas, and human-like nonhumans with great powers and virtues will often come to look at, worship, read, recite, and make offerings to esteem and acclaim the fathomless prajna paramita that we have written. They will walk around the prajna paramita clockwise, bow down to the ground and join their palms to pay homage, and then leave.’ After having this thought, they will dance and jump with great delight and excitement. The blessings gained by them will be doubled.

“Kausika, because the heavenly beings from the Heaven of Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and Heaven of Ultimate Form and the innumerable dragons, yaksas, gandharvas, asuras, garudas, kimnaras, mahoragas, and human-like nonhumans with great powers and virtues in this large threefold thousand-world and the rest of boundless worlds of the ten directions often come to follow and protect these good gentlemen and gentlewomen, who will not be annoyed and harmed by humans and nonhumans except they have to pay karmic debt that is due, or not due yet but are allowed to pay earlier with much less painfulness. Kausika, owing to the great supernatural powers of the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will gain such unique and superior benefits, merits, and virtues. The heavenly deities, dragons, and so forth who have aspired to the unsurpassed bodhi, or who have gained such unique and superior merits, virtues, benefits, and blessings owing to their dedication to the Buddha dharma, will also come often to follow and protect the good gentlemen and gentlewomen and help foster their powers. Why? Kausika, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen have resolved to aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal enlightenment to relieve sentient beings and assist them to mature. They have vowed never to stay away from sentient beings and will always do their best to bring benefits and happiness to all sentient beings. The heavenly deities have also resolved to do so. That is why

these heavenly deities will come often to follow and protect these good gentlemen and gentlewomen, to prevent them from annoyance and harm.”

(The Buddha said to Kausika how the heavenly beings and other Buddha dharma protectors would visit with the writing of prajna paramita very often not only to learn prajna paramita themselves but also protect these good gentlepersons. The merits, virtues, and the blessings gained by these good gentlepersons are so amazing.)

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Chapter 34

Coming from Heavens

Section 2

(In the Second Assembly)

At that time, Heavenly Emperor Indra asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, how do these good gentlemen and gentlewomen know that in this large threefold thousand-world and the rest of boundless worlds of the ten directions, the heavenly beings from the Heaven of Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and Heaven of Ultimate Form and dragons, yaksas, gandharvas, asuras, garudas, kimnaras, mahoragas, and humanlike nonhumans with great authority and virtues have visited to worship, read, and recite the fathomless prajna paramita that they have written and make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim the sutras, walk around them clockwise with their palms joined, and protect them and always keep them in mind joyfully?”

The Buddha replied to Heavenly Emperor Indra, “Kausika, when these good gentlemen and gentlewomen see brilliant lights shining where the fathomless prajna paramita is exhibited, smell special fragrance, or hear beautiful music from heaven, they should know that at that moment various heavenly deities, dragons, and so forth with mighty powers and great virtues are visiting to worship, read, and recite the writing of prajna paramita. These deities, dragons, and so forth will also make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim prajna paramita. They will walk around the written sutras clockwise with palms joined, protect them, and always keep them in mind joyfully.

“Furthermore, Kausika, if these good gentlemen and gentlewomen practice pure celibacy, dignify their residences, and sincerely make offerings to the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, the heavenly deities, dragons, and so forth with great supernatural powers, authority, and virtues will visit to worship, read, and recite the written fathomless sutras of prajna paramita. The

deities, dragons, and so forth will further make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim the writing. They will walk around the sutras clockwise with palms joined, protect it, and keep it in mind joyfully. The arrival of deities and dragons and so forth with great powers and authority will frighten and drive all evil spirits away. Because of this cause and condition, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen can broaden their minds and elicit definitive pure and superior understanding, so that the virtuous dharmas that they are cultivating will grow and increase doubly. Whatever they intend to do will be well done without hinderance. Therefore, Kausika, we should clean the area and prepare a treasure cushion for sutras. Then, spray perfume, burn incense, spread flowers, hang canopies and treasure banners, and adorn the place with bells. We should also add rarities, clothes, jewel necklaces, gold, silver, treasure-made objects, music, entertainments, and lamps. If you can worship prajna paramita in this way, the heavenly deities, dragons, and so forth with great powers, authority, and virtues will visit to worship, read, and recite the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, and make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim the sutras. They will walk around them clockwise with palms joined, protect them, and keep them in mind joyfully.

“Furthermore, kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen can make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim the fathomless prajna paramita in this way, they certainly will enjoy tirelessness, pleasure, relaxation, tenderness, and stability in body and mind. If they stay in mindfulness of prajna paramita, they will have auspicious dreams instead of nightmares. They will see in their dreams the golden body of the Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One with thirty-two perfect marks and eighty distinguishing minor features, and the brilliant lights emitting from the Thus-Comer’s body to illuminate everything in the world. They see in dreams the voice-hearers and bodhisattvas in the assembly, sitting around the Buddha, listening to the dharma teaching correspondent with giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; and the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power. They will also dream a bodhi tree, wide and tall, adorned with treasures, which looks beautiful and magnificent. They will see in their dreams a great bodhisattva walking toward the tree, then sitting under it. After subjugating demons and enemies, he attains the unsurpassed, perfect, and

universal bodhi and turns the wonderful dharma wheel to deliver immeasurable sentient beings. They will dream innumerable hundreds of thousands of koti nayuta great bodhisattvas who are discussing various dharma meanings, and finally they agree on some wise conclusions, suggesting that the bodhisattva practitioners should assist the sentient beings to mature, dignify and purify the Buddha lands, cultivate bodhisattva actions, subjugate demonic armies, terminate permanently disposition of vexations, and aspire to the realization of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. These good gentlemen and gentlewomen in their dreams will see numberless hundreds of thousands of koti nayuta Buddhas in the ten directions. They hear the voice saying that a Thus-Comer with such name in a world with such name is teaching the dharma to hundreds of thousands of koti nayuta great bodhisattvas and voice-hearers who are present and listening attentively to the Buddha. These good gentlemen and gentlewomen also in their dreams see immeasurable hundreds of thousands of koti nayuta Buddhas in the worlds of the ten directions who are entering nirvana, and the believers are building numberless hundreds of thousands of pagodas with wonderful seven treasures to store and worship the Buddhas' relics. In each pagoda, the believers make countless most exquisite wreaths, spread perfumes, powdered incenses, clothes, jewel necklaces, treasure banners, canopies, rarities, music, entertainments, and lamps as offerings to the Buddha's relics. They continue to do so for immeasurable kalpas.

“Kausika, after having these auspicious dreams, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will feel happy and peaceful in body and mind whether they are sleeping or awake. Various heavenly deities have also given them energy, so they feel comfortable and relaxed. Because of this cause and condition, they do not need to eat and drink much, nor heavily rely on medicine, clothes, and bedding. After entering exquisite superior concentration, a yogi master's body and mind will be nurtured. After getting out of concentration, this yogi will not need to eat much food. So too do the good gentlemen and gentlewomen. Why? Kausika, all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones, voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, bodhisattvas, heavenly deities, dragons, yaksas, gandharvas, asuras, garudas, kimnaras, mahoragas, and humanlike nonhumans with great powers and virtues in this large threefold thousand-world and the rest of boundless worlds of the ten directions have loving-kindly and compassionately protected these good gentlemen and gentlewomen and kept them in

mind; they also have brought them exquisite and subtle energy and powers to encourage their spirits and enrich their physical strengths.

“Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen would like to attain such merits, virtues, and superior benefits in present, they should initiate a mind in accordance with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and adopt nonattainment as skillful means to wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on, write, explicate, and disseminate extensively the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita.

(The Buddha taught Kausika in the paragraphs above the exquisite merits, virtues, and superior merits that the good gentlepersons would acquire if they could initiate a mind in accordance with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and adopt nonattainment as skillful means to wholeheartedly embrace, recite, reflect on, explicate, disseminate, and write the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita and make offerings to esteem and acclaim the writing. When they practice in this way, numberless heavenly beings will visit with them to read and learn the sutras; they will protect these good gentlepersons and give them energy and strengths.)

“Kausika, suppose that the good gentlemen and gentlewomen do not listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on, and disseminate extensively the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, but they do write the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita and solemnly adorn the writing with various treasures. They further make various wonderful wreaths, spread perfumes, powdered incenses, clothes, jewel necklaces, treasure banners, canopies, rarities, music, entertainments, and lamps as offerings to esteem and acclaim the writing. They can also attain the same merits, virtues, and superior benefits. Why? Kausika, it is because these good gentlemen and gentlewomen can bring benefits and happiness to immeasurable and boundless sentient beings.

“Furthermore, Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen stay in a mind in accordance with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and adopt nonattainment as skillful means to wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on, and disseminate extensively the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita; or if they write the sutras and solemnly adorn the writing with various kinds of

treasures, and further make various best wreaths, spread perfumes, powdered incenses, and so forth, and lamps as offerings to pay homage to the writing, then they will attain immeasurable and boundless blessings. The blessings gained by these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be more than those obtained by making respectfully innumerable most wonderful food, drinks, clothes, bedding, medicines, and living supplies as offerings to esteem and acclaim all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones and their disciples in the worlds of the ten directions for the rest of their lives. The blessings gained by these good gentlemen and gentlewomen also will be more than those obtained by building tall, wide, and magnificent pagodas with wonderful seven treasures to worship the Buddhas' relics after the Buddhas and their disciples entered nirvana, and further made innumerable wonderful wreaths of heavenly flowers, spread fragrances, and so forth, and the lamps as offerings to esteem and acclaim the relics for the rest of their lives. Why? It is because all Buddhas and their disciples in the worlds of the ten directions are born because of the fathomless prajna paramita."

(The Buddha taught that the Buddhas and their disciples are born in the worlds because of the fathomless prajna paramita. Based on this truth, the Buddha compared the blessings gained through different combinations of learning prajna paramita, explicating prajna paramita, disseminating prajna paramita, writing and worshipping prajna paramita, and worshipping the relics of Buddhas and Buddhas' disciples.)

Chapter 35

The Relics

(In the Second Assembly)

"Furthermore, Kausika, suppose that this continent of Jambudvipa is filled with Buddha's relics, while on the other hand, there is the writing of the fathomless prajna paramita. Which will you prefer between them?"

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “I will prefer the fathomless prajna paramita. Why? It does not mean that I do not believe in the Buddhas’ relics or that I am reluctant to make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim the relics. But various Buddhas’ bodies and their relics arise because of the fathomless prajna paramita. They are all permeated and cultivated gradually by the merits, virtues, and powers of the fathomless prajna paramita. That is why all heavenly beings, human beings, asuras, and so forth always make immeasurable most wonderful wreaths, spread fragrances, powdered incenses, and so forth, and lamps as offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim the relics.”

At that time, Sariputra said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, “Kausika, the fathomless prajna paramita is immaterial, invisible, and unsubstantial. It has only one form, that is formlessness. The formless dharma is ungraspable. So how can you say that you prefer it? Why? Kausika, the fathomless prajna paramita is without grasping or renunciation, increase or decrease, gathering or separation, gain or loss, and contamination or purification. The fathomless prajna paramita does not stay with the Buddha dharma, the dharma of self-enlightened one, the dharma of arhat, and the dharma of the practitioners who still need more learning, nor apart from the dharma of ordinary sentient beings. The fathomless prajna paramita does not stay with the unconditioned realm, nor apart from the conditioned realm. It does not stay with internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, nor apart from the contaminated dharmas.”

Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the long-lived sage Sariputra, “Yes, it is as you say. Great virtuous one, to accurately know that the fathomless prajna paramita is without grasping or renunciation, increase or decrease, and so forth, and contamination or purification and that the fathomless prajna paramita does not stay with the perfect knowledge of all phenomena nor apart from the contaminated dharmas, is to truly appreciate the fathomless prajna paramita and truly cultivate the fathomless prajna paramita. It is not only because prajna paramita lacks dualistic actions or dualistic forms but also meditation paramita, diligence paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita lack dualistic actions or dualistic forms.”

At that time, the Buddha praised Heavenly Emperor Indra, “Excellent, excellent! It is as you say. The fathomless prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita do not follow dualistic actions. Why? Kausika, all these six paramitas do not have dualistic forms. Kausika, any attempt to make the fathomless prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita appear in dualistic forms is like to make dharma realm, realness, dharma nature, reality, and the realm of the inconceivable appear in dualistic forms. Why? Kausika, the fathomless prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita are not different or separate from dharma realm, realness, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable.”

Meanwhile, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the Buddha again, “World-Honored One, all heavenly beings, human beings, asuras, and so forth of this world should walk around and make offerings to esteem and acclaim the fathomless prajna paramita. Why? It is because all great bodhisattvas have cultivated and learned diligently to attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi based on prajna paramita.

“World-Honored One, when I sat in Virtuous Dharma Hall in the Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens teaching correct dharma to heavenly beings, innumerable heavenly sons came to my place to pay homage and make offerings respectfully to me with esteem and admiration. They walked around me clockwise with their palms joined and then left. When I was not there, they would do the same as if I were there. They would say that this is the place where Heavenly Emperor Indra teaches correct dharma to heavenly beings, so we should do as if he were here to pay homage to him, walk around his seat clockwise with our palms joined and then leave.

“World-Honored One, when someone has written, accepted, embraced, read, recited, and extensively disseminated prajna paramita for the sentient beings, innumerable and countless heavenly deities, dragons, yaksas, gandharvas, asuras, garudas, kimnaras, mahoragas, and humanlike nonhumans from this and the rest of the boundless worlds in the ten directions will come and gather there. Even if there is no lecturer speaking there, they still make offerings respectfully to it with reverence and admiration and then leave. Why? All happy and wonderful things and events owned by the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones, great bodhisattvas, self-enlightened ones, voice hearers, and

sentient beings exist because of prajna paramita. The Buddha's relics are also produced through the permeation of the merits and virtues of prajna paramita; that is why they are worshipped.

“World-Honored One, the fathomless prajna paramita serves as the cause and condition for great bodhisattvas and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge realized and attained by great bodhisattvas. They have relied on and been inspired by the fathomless prajna paramita. That is why between the relics filling the entire continent of Jambudvipa and the writing of the fathomless prajna paramita, I will prefer the latter one.

(Kausika again explained why he preferred prajna paramita to relics.)

“World-Honored One, as I accept, embrace, read, recite, and stay in a correct mindfulness of the fathomless prajna paramita, my mind will be in accordance with the dharma, so I do not see the form of fright. Why? The fathomless prajna paramita is without form, shape, and speech. As prajna paramita is without form, shape, and speech, so are meditation, diligence, forbearance, pure precept, and giving paramitas, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. World-Honored One, if prajna paramita were not without form, shape, and speech, then the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones would not realize that all dharmas are without form, shape, and speech, nor would they attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and teach their disciples that all dharmas are without form, shape, and speech. World-Honored One, because prajna paramita is without form, shape, and speech, the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones can realize that all dharmas are without form, shape, and speech and thus are able to attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and teach their disciples that all dharmas are without form, shape, and speech. Therefore, World-Honored One, prajna paramita is worthy of the most wonderful offerings such as the wreaths of flowers, spread fragrances, and so forth made by the heavenly beings, human beings, asuras, and so forth. It is also worthy of their respect and admiration.

(Kausika further explained why prajna paramita is worthy of the respect, admiration, and the best offerings made by heavenly beings, human beings and so forth.)

“World-Honored One, those who wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on, and disseminate extensively the fathomless prajna paramita, or write prajna paramita and adorn it with various treasures, and make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim it definitely will not fall into hells, the realm of animals, and the realm of ghosts, or be reborn in remote borderlands as shallow-minded people or in very low social class. They will not fall into the stage of voice-hearer or self-enlightened one. Rather, they certainly will progress toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, see various Buddhas often, hear correct dharma constantly, and not stay away from virtuous friends. They will dignify and purify Buddha lands, assist sentient beings to mature, and travel from one Buddha country to the other to make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, and great bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, World-Honored One, suppose that this large threefold thousand-world is filled with Buddha’s relics while on the other hand, there is the writing of the fathomless prajna paramita; between them, I will rather choose the fathomless prajna paramita. Why? World-Honored One, all the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones and the relics filling entire large threefold thousand-world arise out of prajna paramita. In addition, the relics filling entire large threefold thousand-world are caused through the gradual permeation of the merits and virtues of prajna paramita. That is why various heavenly deities, human beings, asuras, and so forth will make offerings respectfully to them. Because of this cause and condition, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim the Buddha’s relics, they will never fall into the three inferior destinies. They will always be reborn in the human world or in heaven to enjoy wealth and happiness; more important, they will be able to ride as they wish on the three vehicles and work toward the nirvana.

(Kausika explained why he preferred prajna paramita over other choices.)

“World-Honored One, the merits and virtues of seeing the Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One are equal to the merits and virtues of seeing the writings on fathomless prajna paramita. Why? The fathomless prajna paramita and the

Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones are equal; they are neither dualistic nor separate.

“World-Honored One, some Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones have adopted the three steps of demonstration to teach sentient beings correct dharma in twelve ways, namely, the texts (sutra), short verses (geya), and so forth, and the discourses (upadesa). On the other hand, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have accepted, embraced, read, recited, and extensively taught prajna paramita for others. The merits and virtues gained by these Thus-Comers and by these good gentlemen and gentlewomen are equal. Why? The Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones, the three steps of demonstration, and the twelve divisions of teaching all arise out of prajna paramita.

“World-Honored One, all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones in as many worlds of the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges have adopted the three steps of demonstration to teach sentient beings correct dharma in twelve divisions, namely, the texts (sutra), short verses (geya), and so forth, and the discourses (upadesa). On the other hand, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have accepted, embraced, read, recited, and extensively taught prajna paramita for others. The merits and virtues gained by these Thus-Comers and by these good gentlemen and gentlewomen are equal. Why? The Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones in as many worlds of the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges, the three steps of demonstration, and the twelve divisions of teaching all arise out of prajna paramita.

(Kausika said that the Thus-Comer, the three steps of demonstration, and the twelve divisions of teaching all arise out of prajna paramita.)

“World-Honored One, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have made the most wonderful wreaths of flowers, spread fragrances, and so forth, and lamps as offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones in as many worlds of the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges. On the other hand, some other good gentlemen and gentlewomen have written prajna paramita and made innumerable most wonderful offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim the writing.

The merits and virtues gained by these two groups of good gentlemen and gentlewomen are equal. Why? The various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones arise out of prajna paramita.

“World-Honored One, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on, and teach extensively prajna paramita for all sentient beings, then these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will not fall into hells, the realm of animals, the realm of ghosts, the stage of voice-hearer, or the stage of self-enlightened one. Why? These good gentlemen and gentlewomen definitely will dwell in the bodhisattva stage of nonregression. They will stay far away from all disasters, plagues, suffering, and troubles too.

“World-Honored One, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on, write, explicate, and disseminate extensively prajna paramita and further make numberless most wonderful offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim prajna paramita, then they will be liberated from fears and terrors forever. A debtor is afraid of the creditor. As the debtor stays close to and offers services to the king, he can rely on the king to get rid of the creditor. World-Honored One, the king is prajna paramita, the debtor is the good gentlemen and gentlewomen, who can rely on prajna paramita to get rid of fear.

“World-Honored One, someone has a good relationship with the king. Because of the king, this person also receives offerings, esteem, and acclamation. So too are Buddha’s relics. Because of the gradual permeation of prajna paramita, the relics also receive the offerings made and homage paid by various heavenly beings, human beings, asuras, and so forth. World-Honored one, the king is prajna paramita, and the relics are those who rely on the king.

“World-Honored One, the Buddhas have attained the perfect knowledge of all phenomena because of prajna paramita. Between the Buddha’s relics filling the large threefold thousand-world and the writing of the fathomless prajna paramita, I will prefer the latter. Why? World-Honored One, the Buddhas’ relics that are more solid than diamond and have a variety of shapes and colors; the thirty-two perfect major marks; the eighty distinguishing minor physical features; and the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered

understandings, great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, great equanimity, eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are all caused by prajna paramita. World-Honored One, because of the supernatural powers of prajna paramita, giving, pure precept, forbearance, and so forth are named paramita. Why? World-Honored One, the cultivation of giving, pure precept, forbearance, and so forth without prajna paramita cannot help one ferry over to the other shore of liberation.

(Kausika used similes to explain the relationship between prajna paramita and sacred relics or other superior holy dharmas.)

“Furthermore, World-Honored One, if any person in this large threefold thousand-world or in the rest of the world has accepted, embraced, read, recited, explicated, and made offerings respectfully to esteem and admire prajna paramita, then all the sentient beings in the same city or village where this person lives will not be harmed or annoyed by humans and nonhumans except they have to pay the karmic debt from previous lives. The sentient beings in that area will also learn and practice the correct actions of the three vehicles step by step or attain nirvana quickly as they wish. World-Honored One, prajna paramita thus has brought great benefits to this large threefold thousand-world.

(As anyone has learned and embraced prajna paramita wholeheartedly, all sentient beings in the area where this person lives will also benefit greatly.)

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita has great supernatural powers. Where there is prajna paramita, there are the Buddhas undertaking Buddhist services to bring great benefits and happiness to all sentient beings. World-Honored One, it is like an invaluable great pearl which has innumerable exquisite powers and virtues. Where there is the pearl, there will be no disaster or trouble for all humans and nonhumans. If a man or a woman is seized forcefully by a ghost while he or she also happened to get a magic pearl, this person will easily get rid of physical and mental suffering since the ghost would be driven away by the pearl. All kinds of illness caused by heat, wind, phlegm, or the combination will be healed quickly because of this magic pearl. The pearl can illuminate darkness, cool down the heat, bring warmth to cold, and give people a mild temperature. Where there are pearls, there are no snakes or scorpions. A man or woman, being poisoned, painful and in coma, will be healed immediately by this magic pearl. Various

sentient beings have suffered from leprosy, malignant sore, swelling blebs, dizziness, corneal opacity, and other diseases of the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and limbs. If they carry this pearl with them, all diseases will be cured. Suppose that many ponds, wells, and springs are contaminated or are going to dry out. If we throw the magic pearl into the ponds, the water will be full again. The water will smell sweet, look pure and transparent, and fully with the eight virtues. If we wrap the magic pearl in a piece of cloth in green, yellow, dark red, white, red, violet, fresh green, or the mixture of colors and throw the cloth into water, then the water will show the same color as the cloth. Such an invaluable magic pearl has too many virtues and powers to be thoroughly described. If we put it in a box or suitcase, it will enable the box or suitcase to perform boundless functions. Even after taking the pearl out of the box, the empty box will be valued and loved by people.”

(Kausika again used similes to describe the magic powers of prajna paramita.)

At that time, Joyfully Celebrating One asked Heavenly Emperor Indra, “Do the wonderful magic pearls exist only in the heaven or also in the human world?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “The pearls exist both in human world and in heaven. Those in the human world are smaller but heavier, while the ones in heaven are larger but lighter. The shapes of the human pearls are not perfect while the heavenly ones are with perfect round shape, which also have much more virtues and powers than the ones in human world.”

Meanwhile, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the Buddha again, “World-Honored One, so too is the fathomless prajna paramita. It is the basis for all virtues, capable of eliminating innumerable not virtuous dharmas. Where there is prajna paramita, the pains and worries of sentient beings will be totally relieved and no human or nonhuman can do harm to them.

“World-Honored One, the so-called great precious magic pearl refers not only to the fathomless prajna paramita, but also to the perfect knowledge of all phenomena of the Thus-Comer. It also refers to meditation paramita, diligence paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita. It refers to internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature. It refers to the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power. It also refers to

dharma nature, dharma dwelling, dharma concentration, realness, reality, and the realm of the inconceivable. Why? World-Honored One, all merits and virtues of these superior virtues dharmas are activated and become manifest by the great supernatural powers of prajna paramita. These merits and virtues are profound, broad, immeasurable, and boundless. Because the relics of the Buddhas are caused by a gradual influence and permeation of various merits and virtues, they are worthy of the offerings made and respect paid by all heavenly beings, human beings, asuras, and so forth of the world after Buddha's entering nirvana.

(Kausika used the simile of magic pearls to describe the multi-functional values of prajna paramita and the rest of superior virtuous dharmas. These superior virtuous holy dharmas are activated and become manifest by prajna paramita.)

“Furthermore, World-Honored One, the Buddha's relics embody the perfect, superior, and purest prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita. The Buddha's relics also embody the perfect, superior, and purest internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature. They also embody the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity; staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times; the termination of enduring disposition of vexations; and the rest of innumerable and boundless Buddha dharmas. They are worthy of offerings made and respect paid by all heavenly beings, human beings, asuras, and so forth after Buddha's entering nirvana.

“World-Honored One, because the Buddha's relics are an embodiment of prajna paramita, the perfect, superior, and purest pearl of merits and virtues, they are worthy of the offerings made and respect paid by all heavenly beings, human beings, asuras, and so forth of the world.

“World-Honored One, because the Buddha's relics are an embodiment of the perfect, superior, and purest prajna paramita without contamination and purification, arising and extinction, entry and outgoing, increase and decrease, coming and going, motion and rest, and

differentiations, they are worthy of the offerings made and respect paid by all heavenly beings, human beings, asuras, and so forth of the world after Buddha's entering nirvana.

"World-Honored One, because the Buddha's relics are an embodiment of prajna paramita, the perfect, superior, and purest reality of various dharmas, they are worthy of the offerings made and respect paid by all heavenly beings, human beings, asuras, and so forth of the world after Buddha's entering nirvana.

"Furthermore, World-Honored One, let us put the Buddha's relics filling the large threefold thousand-world aside at this moment. Suppose that the worlds of the ten directions as many as the sands of the Ganges are filled with the Buddhas' relics. On the other hand, there is the writing of the fathomless prajna paramita. Between them I would prefer prajna paramita. Why? World-Honored One, the relics of all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones arise out of the fathomless prajna paramita; they are formed through gradual permeation and influence of the fathomless prajna paramita and thus are the embodiment of the fathomless prajna paramita. They are therefore worthy of the offerings made and respect paid by all heavenly deities, dragons, yaksas, gandharvas, asuras, garudas, kimnaras, mahoragas, humans, and nonhumans.

"World-Honored One, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim the Buddhas' relics, they will receive and enjoy various kinds of wealth and pleasures endlessly either in the heaven or in the human world. The noble families of Ksatriya, Brahman, elder, and lay believer in the human world, and the heavenly beings in the Heaven of Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and the Heaven of Enjoying Other-Made Changes will end all suffering upon reaching the final rebirth because of such superior virtuous roots.

"World-Honored One, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen can wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, write, explicate, and reflect reasonably on prajna paramita, they will fulfill prajna paramita quickly. If after that they move forward to cultivate and fulfill meditation paramita, diligence paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power, they will be able to transcend the stages of voice-hearer and self-enlightened

one, enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising, and attain the superior supernatural powers of bodhisattva. By riding the supernatural powers, they will travel from one Buddha land to the other, make offerings respectfully to various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, assist the sentient beings to grow and mature, and dignify and purify the Buddha lands. At that time, they will be reborn in different forms of life as they wish to bring great benefits to sentient beings. They will be reborn as a wheel-turning king, a smaller king, Ksatriya, Brahman, Vaiśravaṇa, heavenly emperor, or Brahma king to bring benefits, peace, and happiness to various sentient beings. Therefore, World-Honored One, I have always believed in and accepted relics and love to make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim them. But I know that I can gain more merits and virtues through making offerings to esteem and acclaim the fathomless prajna paramita. Because of this cause and condition, I rather choose the fathomless prajna paramita.

(Kausika reiterated why he would choose prajna paramita over others.)

“World-Honored One, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim prajna paramita, it equally means that they are learning more of Buddha dharma and absorbing wealth, happiness, and liberation in and beyond the world. When they do in this way, they have already made offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim the Buddha’s relics.

“Furthermore, World-Honored One, if one would like to see constantly the physical body and the dharma body of all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones in immeasurable, countless, and boundless worlds of the ten directions, they should wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on, write, explicate, and disseminate extensively the fathomless prajna paramita. Because they can constantly see the physical body and the dharma body of all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones in immeasurable, countless, and boundless worlds of the ten directions, they will be able to cultivate and fulfill prajna paramita step by step. For the time being, they should learn to contemplate Buddha and stay in mindfulness of the Buddha’s dharma nature.

(These good gentlepersons should contemplate Buddha and stay in the mindfulness of Buddha’s dharma nature.)

“World-Honored One, there are two kinds of dharma nature, the conditioned and the unconditioned. What is the conditioned dharma nature? It is the perfect knowledge of internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; the three liberation gates; the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power; the virtuous and not virtuous dharmas; the morally related and morally unrelated dharmas; the flawed and flawless dharmas; the conditioned and unconditioned dharmas; the dharmas of and beyond the world; and the contaminated and purified dharmas. The perfect knowledge of all these immeasurable gates is named the conditioned dharma nature. What is the unconditioned dharma nature? It means that all dharmas do not have arising and extinction, duration and decay, contamination and purification, addition and subtraction, and form and doing. That is the self-nature of all dharmas. What is the self-nature of all dharmas? It means that all dharmas do not have nature. These are named the unconditioned dharma nature.”

(Kausika distinguished two kinds of dharma nature: the conditioned and the unconditioned.)

At that time, the Buddha said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, “Yes, it is as you say. Kausika, various Buddhas in the past, future, and present had attained, will attain, and are attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi based on prajna paramita. Various voice-hearer disciples of the Buddhas in the past, present, and future had attained, will attain, and are attaining the stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, and arhat effect based on prajna paramita. The self-enlightened ones in the past, future, and present had attained, will attain, and are attaining self-enlightenment bodhi based on prajna paramita. Why? Kausika, in the profound secret storage of prajna paramita, the dharmas correspondent with the three vehicles are comprehensively taught. They are taught by adopting nonattainment, non-nature and non-form, non-arising and non-extinction, non-contamination and non-purification, non-making and non-doing, non-entering and non-outgoing, non-addition and non-subtraction, and non-grasping and non-renunciation as skillful means. All these dharmas are taught in terms of the worldly meaning instead of the ultimate truth. Why? Prajna paramita is neither this shore nor the other shore; neither the land nor the stream; neither high nor low; neither equal nor unequal; neither with form nor without form; neither in the world nor beyond the world; neither flawed nor flawless;

neither conditioned nor unconditioned; neither virtuous nor not virtuous; neither morally related nor morally unrelated; and neither in the past, future, or present. Kausika, prajna paramita does not stay with Buddha dharma, the dharma of great bodhisattva, the dharma of self-enlightened one, and the dharma of voice-hearer. Prajna paramita is not apart from the dharma of ordinary sentient being either.”

(The Buddha elaborated that in the profound, secret storage of prajna paramita, the dharmas correspondent with the three vehicles are comprehensively taught. He pointed out that prajna paramita is neither this shore nor other shore, neither in the world nor beyond the world, and so forth; it neither stays with various holy effects nor apart from ordinary sentient being.)

In the meantime, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the Buddha again, “World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the great, unsurpassed, and unequaled equal paramita. When cultivating the fathomless prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas realize the different levels of minds and actions of all sentient beings, but they will not attain the ‘I,’ the sentient being, and so forth, and the knower or the viewer. They will not attain matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness; the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and the conscious sphere; the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and the mental-image sphere; the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and the conscious consciousness realm; the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and the conscious contact; the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact; giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power; the bodhi; nirvana; and the Buddhas and the Buddha dharma. Why? World-Honored One, prajna paramita appears in the world not because of the attainment of the dharmas. Why? The fathomless prajna paramita is without self-nature; it is nonexistent and unattainable. The nature and the forms of the one who attains, one to be attained, and the relevant dharmas are empty and unattainable.”

(Heavenly Emperor Indra described the features of prajna paramita.)

At that time, the Buddha said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, “Yes, it is as you say. Kausika, the great bodhisattvas have cultivated and learned the fathomless prajna paramita for a very long time, but they cannot attain the bodhi, let alone the dharma of bodhisattva.”

At that time, Heavenly Emperor Indra asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, do great bodhisattvas only practice prajna paramita? Do they also practice the other five paramitas?”

The Buddha replied, “Kausika, the great bodhisattvas will practice the six paramitas simultaneously by adopting nonattainment as skillful means. Namely, when cultivating giving paramita, the great bodhisattvas do not attain giving paramita, almsgiver, and alms receiver. When cultivating pure-precept paramita, they do not attain pure-precept paramita, precept observer, and precept violator. And so forth, when cultivating prajna paramita, they do not attain prajna paramita, the one with exquisite wisdom, and the one who abuses wisdom.

(The Buddha taught how to cultivate six paramitas by adopting nonattainment as skillful means.)

“Furthermore, Kausika, if the great bodhisattvas cultivate all paramitas under the guidance of the fathomless prajna paramita, they will fulfill all paramitas quickly. If the great bodhisattvas practice giving, pure precept, and so forth, and prajna under the guidance of the fathomless prajna paramita, they will get rid of attachment and fulfill giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita quickly.

“Furthermore, Kausika, if the great bodhisattvas cultivate prajna paramita by adopting nonattainment of all dharmas as skillful means, they will fulfill the cultivation quickly because they are free from attachment. Namely, they will adopt nonattainment of matter, feeling, thinking, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena as skillful means. Kausika, the shapes and colors of all branches, twigs, stems, flowers, leaves, and fruits of the trees in the continent of Jambudvipa are different, but they all have the same shadows. The first five paramitas are different, but because they are absorbed by prajna paramita, they will be transferred toward the same perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Because they have all adopted nonattainment as skillful means, the different forms thus disappear and become unattainable.”

(The Buddha said that to cultivate all paramitas under the guidance of prajna paramita will fulfill them quickly. That is, they will be free from attachment.)

Meanwhile, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the Buddha again, “World-Honored One, such prajna paramita can accomplish broad, great, and superior merits and virtues, all superior merits and virtues, perfect superior merits and virtues, innumerable superior merits and virtues, countless superior merits and virtues, boundless superior merits and virtues, and unequaled superior merits and virtues. World-Honored One, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have written and practiced the fathomless prajna paramita, adorned the writing with various treasures, and made most wonderful offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim it. They have also reflected reasonably on the words of the sutras. On the other hand, some other good gentlemen and gentlewomen have written the fathomless prajna paramita to disseminate it; they have given the writing to others so that others can also practice it. What do you think about this? Which group of people will gain more blessings?”

The Buddha said, “Kausika, let me ask you some questions, and you may answer as you like. Some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have sincerely requested Buddha’s relics from others, stored them in a treasure case, and put the case in a high and wonderful location, and further made immeasurable most wonderful wreaths, spread fragrances, powdered incenses, and so forth, and lamps as offerings to esteem and admire them. On the other hand, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have also sincerely requested Buddha’s relics from others. They divided relics into many pieces as small as mustard seeds to share them with other people, so the others could also worship the relics by placing them in the high and wonderful locations. They further made various best wreaths, spread fragrances, powdered incenses, and so forth, and lamps as offerings to esteem and admire them. What do you think about this? Which group of people will gain more blessings?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “If my understanding of Buddha’s words is correct, the latter group of people will gain more blessings. Why? The Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones have watched the sentient beings and found that some will attain liberation by making offerings respectfully to the Buddhas’ relics. Therefore, before entering nirvana, the Thus-Comers crushed their diamond-like solid bodies into mustard-like small seeds with the diamond-like powers of samadhi. The Thus-Comers have further bestowed blessings on these relics with their supernatural powers of great compassion, allowing those making offerings respectfully to the mustard seed like small pieces of relic after

Thus-Comers' entering nirvana to gain boundless blessings and enjoy great wealth and happiness in heaven and in the human world until all their suffering finally end. Therefore, the latter ones will gain more blessings.”

At that time, the Buddha praised Heavenly Emperor Indra, “Excellent, excellent! It is as you say. Kausika, this also applies to prajna paramita. Those who disseminate prajna paramita extensively will gain more blessings than the ones who do nothing other than accepting and embracing it. Why? The giver will bring dharma joy to immeasurable and boundless sentient beings.

“Furthermore, kausika, those who accurately explicate and teach the essential meanings of the fathomless prajna paramita to let others correctly understand the meanings will gain more blessings by hundreds of thousands of times than those who just give the writing to others.

(The Buddha admired what Kausika said, further making the point that those who elaborate and teach the meanings of prajna paramita will gain more blessings than just giving writing to others.)

“Kausika, you should respect these dharma teachers as you do the Buddha; you should also do as the Buddha respects the great wise persons and the pure celibacy practitioners. Why? Kausika, you must know that prajna paramita is Buddha, and Buddha is prajna paramita. Prajna paramita is not different from Buddha, and Buddha is not different from prajna paramita. Why? The Buddhas in the three phases of time attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi through diligent cultivation and learning of prajna paramita. The voice-hearer aspirants and the self-enlightenment practitioners attain voice-hearer effect and self-enlightenment bodhi through diligent cultivation and learning of prajna paramita. The bodhisattva practitioners also transcend the stages of voice-hearer and self-enlightened one and enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising through the diligent cultivation and learning of prajna paramita. After cultivating all bodhisattva actions step by step, the great bodhisattvas will dwell in the bodhisattva stage of nonregression. Therefore, Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen would like to make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, they should write the fathomless prajna paramita, make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim it.

“Kausika, I had contemplated these meanings when I achieved the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal enlightenment. I thought, ‘On whom will I depend? Where can I reside? Who will deserve my offerings and respect?’ As I sought in my mind, I knew that no heavenly demon, Brahma, human, and nonhuman are equivalent to me, let alone superior to me. I reflected, ‘I have realized and attained the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi through this dharma. This dharma is profound, subtle, and tranquil. I should remain to dwell in this dharma and make offerings respectfully to this dharma. This dharma is prajna paramita.’

“Kausika, I have become a Buddha, but I am still making offerings respectfully to prajna paramita, let alone the good gentlemen and gentlewomen who would like to pursue the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Why? Kausika, the fathomless prajna paramita can give rise to great bodhisattvas. Because of great bodhisattvas, the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones are born. Because of Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones, the voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones are born. Therefore, Kausika, the good gentlemen and gentlewomen pursuing the bodhisattva vehicle, self-enlightened one vehicle, or voice-hearer vehicle should cultivate and learn prajna paramita diligently. In addition, they should make various most wonderful wreaths, and so forth, and lamps as offerings to esteem and acclaim prajna paramita.”

(The Buddha concluded that even after attaining the unsurpassed bodhi, he still relies on and make offerings to prajna paramita.)

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Chapter 36

The Texts

Section 1

(In the Second Assembly)

At that time, the Buddha asked Heavenly Emperor Indra, “Kausika, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have taught and guided all sentient beings in the continent of Jambudvīpa to dwell peacefully in the path of the ten virtuous karmas. What do you think about this? Will these good gentlemen and gentlewomen gain many blessings because of this cause and condition?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “They will gain many blessings, World-Honored One. They will gain many blessings, Well-Gone One.”

The Buddha said, “Kausika, if some other good gentlemen and gentlewomen have written the fathomless prajna paramita, given the writing to others so that they can read and recite, and further encouraged them to write and disseminate it extensively, then these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be much more blessed than the former ones. Why? Kausika, it is because in this profound and mystic storage of prajna paramita, all flawless dharmas are comprehensively taught. Some good gentlemen and gentlewomen learned, will learn, and are learning them; they entered, will enter, and are entering onto the voice-hearer path of nonarising and attained, will attain, and are attaining arhat effect step by step. Some good gentlemen and gentlewomen learned, will learn, and are learning them; they entered, will enter, and are entering onto the self-enlightened one path of nonarising and attained, will attain, and are attaining the self-enlightenment bodhi step by step. Some good gentlemen and gentlewomen learned, will learn, and are learning them and entered, will enter, and are entering onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising; they cultivated, will cultivate, and are cultivating bodhisattva actions step by step and attained, will attain, and are attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.

(The Buddha said that to write prajna paramita and give it to others and further encourage them to cultivate and disseminate prajna paramita will gain more blessings than teaching all sentient beings in the continent of Jambudvipa to dwell in the path of the ten virtuous karmas. It is because in prajna paramita, all flawless dharmas are comprehensively taught; those who cultivate prajna paramita will attain arhat effect, self-enlightenment bodhi, or the unsurpassed bodhi.)

“Kausika, what are the flawless dharmas? They are the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; the knowledge of four noble truths; the three liberation gates; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the Thus-Come’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, great equanimity, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power; and the rest of immeasurable and boundless Buddha dharmas. These are all flawless dharmas.

(The Buddha listed the flawless dharmas.)

“Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen teach a sentient being to dwell in stream-entry effect, they will be more blessed than those who teach all sentient beings in the continent of Jambudvipa to dwell peacefully in the path of the ten virtuous karmas. Why? Kausika, the sentient beings dwelling peacefully in the path of the ten virtuous karmas are not exempt from falling into hells, the realm of animals, or the realm of ghosts, while those dwelling peacefully in stream-entry effect will get rid of the three bad destinies forever. Those teaching sentient beings to dwell peacefully in once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, and self-enlightenment bodhi will gain more blessings than teaching them to dwell in stream-entry effect. Additionally, Kausika, suppose that some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have taught various sentient beings in the continent of Jambudvipa to dwell peacefully in stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, or self-enlightenment bodhi. The blessings gained by these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be less than those teaching a sentient being to aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Why? Kausika, teaching a sentient being to aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi will make the Buddha eye persevere permanently in the world. Why? The stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, and self-enlightenment bodhi exist due to the great bodhisattva. Because of the great

bodhisattvas, the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones appear in the world and turn the wonderful dharma wheel to ferry innumerable sentient beings to the other shore of liberation. The great bodhisattvas have become what they are because of prajna paramita. Therefore, Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen write the fathomless prajna paramita, give the writing to others, and encourage them to read, recite, write, and disseminate it extensively, the blessings thus gained by them will be immeasurable and boundless. Why? Kausika, it is because in this secret and mystic storage of prajna paramita, all superior and wonderful virtuous dharmas of and beyond the world are comprehensively taught. Because of these virtuous dharmas, the noble families of Ksatriya, Brahman, elders, and lay believers; the Heaven of Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and Heaven of Nonthinking and Not Nonthinking; and the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are established. It is also because of these virtuous dharmas that the stream-enterers, once-returners, nonreturners, arhats, self-enlightened ones, great bodhisattvas, and various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, are established.

(The Buddha further explained why prajna paramita is so valuable and why learning prajna paramita to become a great bodhisattva is so important.)

“Furthermore, kausika, let us put the sentient beings in the continent of Jambudvipa aside at this moment. Suppose that some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have taught various sentient beings in the four continents to dwell peacefully in the path of the ten virtuous karmas. What do you think about this? Will these good gentlemen and gentlewomen be much blessed because of this cause and condition?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “They will be much blessed, World-Honored One. They will be much blessed, Well-Gone One.”

The Buddha said, “Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen write this fathomless prajna paramita, give the writing to others, and encourage them to read, recite, write, and extensively disseminate it, then these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be much more blessed than the former ones. For the rest of the situations, the principle in the preceding paragraphs also applies.

“Furthermore, Kausika, let us put the sentient beings of the four continents aside at this moment. Suppose that the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have taught the sentient beings in the small thousand-world to dwell peacefully in the path of the ten virtuous karmas. What do you think about this? Will these good gentlemen and gentlewomen be much blessed because of this cause and condition?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “They will be much blessed, World-Honored One. They will be much blessed, Well-Gone One.”

The Buddha said, “Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen write this fathomless prajna paramita, give the writing to others, and encourage them to read, recite, write, and extensively disseminate it, then these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be much more blessed than the former ones. For the rest of the situations, the principle in the preceding paragraphs also applies.

“Furthermore, Kausika, let us put the sentient beings of the small thousand-world aside at this moment. Suppose that the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have taught the sentient beings in the medium thousand-world to dwell peacefully in the path of the ten virtuous karmas. What do you think about this? Will these good gentlemen and gentlewomen be much blessed because of this cause and condition?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “They will be much blessed, World-Honored One. They will be much blessed, Well-Gone One.”

The Buddha said, “Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen write this fathomless prajna paramita, give the writing to others, and encourage them to read, recite, write, and extensively disseminate it, then these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be much more blessed than the former ones. For the rest of the situations, the principle in the preceding paragraphs also applies.

“Furthermore, Kausika, let us put the sentient beings in the medium thousand-world aside at this moment. Suppose that the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have taught the sentient beings in the large threefold thousand-world to dwell peacefully in the path of the ten virtuous

karmas. What do you think about this? Will these good gentlemen and gentlewomen be much blessed because of this cause and condition?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “They will be much blessed, World-Honored One. They will be much blessed, Well-Gone One.”

The Buddha said, “Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen write this fathomless prajna paramita, give the writing to others, and encourage them to read, recite, write, and extensively disseminate it, then these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be much more blessed than the former ones. For the rest of the situations, the principle in the preceding paragraphs also applies.

“Furthermore, Kausika, let us put the sentient beings in the large threefold thousand-world aside at this moment. Suppose that the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have taught the sentient beings in as many worlds in one of the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges to dwell peacefully in the path of the ten virtuous karmas. What do you think about this? Will these good gentlemen and gentlewomen be much blessed?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “They will be much blessed, World-Honored One. They will be much blessed, Well-Gone One.”

The Buddha said, “Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen write this fathomless prajna paramita, give the writing to others, and encourage them to read, recite, write, and extensively disseminate it, then these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be much more blessed than the former ones. For the rest of the situations, the principle in the preceding paragraphs also applies.

“Furthermore, Kausika, let us put the sentient beings in as many worlds in one of the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges aside at this moment. Suppose that the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have taught the sentient beings in all the worlds of the ten directions to dwell peacefully in the path of the ten virtuous karmas. What do you think about this? Will these good gentlemen and gentlewomen be much blessed?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “They will be much blessed, World-Honored One. They will be much blessed, Well-Gone One.”

The Buddha said, “Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen write this fathomless prajna paramita, give the writing to others, and encourage them to read, recite, write, and extensively disseminate it, then these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be much more blessed than the former ones. For the rest of the situations, the principle in the preceding paragraphs also applies.

(The Buddha further taught that to guide all sentient beings in all the worlds of the ten directions to dwell peacefully in the path of the ten virtuous karmas will gain many blessings. But in comparison, writing prajna paramita, giving it to others and further encouraging them to cultivate and disseminate prajna paramita will gain more blessings than the former ones.)

“Furthermore, Kausika, suppose that the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have taught the sentient beings in the continent of Jambudvīpa to dwell peacefully in the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, four formless concentrations, and five supernatural powers. What do you think about this? Will these good gentlemen and gentlewomen be much blessed because of this cause and condition?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “They will be much blessed, World-Honored One. They will be much blessed, Well-Gone One.”

The Buddha said, “Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen write this fathomless prajna paramita, give the writing to others, and encourage them to read, recite, write, and extensively disseminate it, then these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be much more blessed than the former ones. For the rest of the situations, the principle in the preceding paragraphs also applies.

“Furthermore, Kausika, let us put the sentient beings in the continent of Jambudvīpa aside at this moment. Suppose that the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have taught the sentient beings in the four continents to dwell peacefully in the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, four formless concentrations, and five supernatural powers. What do you

think about this? Will these good gentlemen and gentlewomen be much blessed because of this cause and condition?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “They will be much blessed, World-Honored One. They will be much blessed, Well-Gone One.”

The Buddha said, “Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen write this fathomless prajna paramita, give the writing to others, and encourage them to read, recite, write, and extensively disseminate it, then these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be much more blessed than the former ones. For the rest of the situations, the principle in the preceding paragraphs also applies.

“Furthermore, Kausika, let us put the sentient beings in the four continents aside at this moment. Suppose that the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have taught the sentient beings in the small thousand-world to dwell peacefully in the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, four formless concentrations, and five supernatural powers. What do you think about this? Will these good gentlemen and gentlewomen be much blessed because of this cause and condition?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “They will be much blessed, World-Honored One. They will be much blessed, Well-Gone One.”

The Buddha said, “Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen write this fathomless prajna paramita, give the writing to others, and encourage them to read, recite, write, and extensively disseminate it, then these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be much more blessed than the former ones. For the rest of the situations, the principle earlier mentioned above also applies here.

“Furthermore, Kausika, let us put the sentient beings in the small thousand-world aside at this moment. Suppose that the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have taught the sentient beings in the medium thousand-world to dwell peacefully in the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, four formless concentrations, and five supernatural powers. What do you think about this? Will these good gentlemen and gentlewomen be much blessed because of this cause and condition?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “They will be much blessed, World-Honored One. They will be much blessed, Well-Gone One.”

The Buddha said, “Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen write this fathomless prajna paramita, give the writing to others, and encourage them to read, recite, write, and extensively disseminate it, then these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be much more blessed than the former ones. The principle mentioned earlier also applies to the rest of the situations in the context here.

“Furthermore, Kausika, let us put the sentient beings in the medium thousand-world aside at this moment. Suppose that the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have taught the sentient beings in the large threefold thousand-world to dwell peacefully in the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, four formless concentrations, and five supernatural powers. What do you think about this? Will these good gentlemen and gentlewomen be much blessed because of this cause and condition?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “They will be much blessed, World-Honored One. They will be much blessed, Well-Gone One.”

The Buddha said, “Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen write this fathomless prajna paramita, give the writing to others, and encourage them to read, recite, write, and extensively disseminate it, then these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be much more blessed than the former ones. For the rest of the situations in the context here, the principle mentioned earlier also applies.

“Furthermore, Kausika, let us put the sentient beings in the large threefold thousand-world aside at this moment. Suppose that the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have taught the sentient beings in as many worlds in one of the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges to dwell peacefully in the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, four formless concentrations, and five supernatural powers. What do you think about this? Will these good gentlemen and gentlewomen be much blessed because of this cause and condition?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “They will be much blessed, World-Honored One. They will be much blessed, Well-Gone One.”

The Buddha said, “Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen write this fathomless prajna paramita, give the writing to others, and encourage them to read, recite, write, and extensively disseminate it, then these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be much more blessed than the former ones. For the rest of the situations in the context here, the principle mentioned earlier also applies.

“Furthermore, Kausika, let us put the sentient beings in as many worlds in one of the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges aside at this moment. Suppose that the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have taught the sentient beings in all the world of the ten directions to dwell peacefully in the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, four formless concentrations, and five supernatural powers. What do you think about this? Will these good gentlemen and gentlewomen be much blessed because of this cause and condition?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “They will be much blessed, World-Honored One. They will be much blessed, Well-Gone One.”

The Buddha said, “Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen write this fathomless prajna paramita, give the writing to others, and encourage them to read, recite, write, and extensively disseminate it, then these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be much more blessed than the former ones. For the rest of the situations in the context here, the principle mentioned earlier also applies.

“Furthermore, Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently and attentively, and reflect reasonably on prajna paramita, then the blessings thus gained will be much more than the blessings gained by teaching various sentient beings in the continent of Jambudvipa, the four continents, the small thousand-world, the medium thousand-world, the large threefold thousand-world, all worlds in one of ten directions, or all the worlds in the ten directions to dwell in the path of the ten virtuous karmas, four meditations, four immeasurable minds, four formless concentrations, and five supernatural powers. Kausika, to reflect reasonably means to reflect on prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita neither with nor without nondualistic actions to pursue the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. It also means to reflect on internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature and the

four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena neither with nor without nondualistic actions to pursue the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.

(The Buddha further explained the meaning of reasonable reflection.)

“Furthermore, Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen extensively teach prajna paramita for others through numberless gates and disseminate, demonstrate, elaborate, explicate, manifest, and analyze its essential meanings to make it understandable, then the blessings thus gained will be more than merely hearing, listening to, accepting, embracing, reading, reciting, cultivating and learning diligently and attentively, and reflecting reasonably on prajna paramita by innumerable times. Kausika, the essential meanings of prajna paramita teach us that we should not contemplate prajna paramita as with dual forms or without dual forms; namely, we should not contemplate prajna paramita as with or without form, entering or going out, increase or decrease, contamination or purification, arising or extinction, grasping or renunciation, attachment or nonattachment, and dwelling or not dwelling. We should not contemplate prajna paramita as real or unreal, correspondent or not correspondent, combined or separate, and related to cause and condition or not related to cause and condition; nor contemplate prajna paramita as dharma or not dharma, realness or not realness, and reality or not reality. There are thus numberless gates to access the essential meanings of prajna paramita.

“Furthermore, Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, and reflect reasonably on prajna paramita, and further extensively teach, demonstrate, elaborate, manifest, explicate, and analyze its essential meanings by means of numberless gates to make it understandable, then the blessings thus gained will be much more than the former ones by innumerable and boundless times.”

At that time, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, good gentlemen and gentlewomen should lecture on the fathomless prajna paramita for others by using various exquisite and subtle words and meanings.”

The Buddha said, “Kausika, it is as you say. The good gentlemen and gentlewomen should lecture on the fathomless prajna paramita for others by using various exquisite and subtle words and meanings. Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen can do this, the merits and virtues thus accumulated by them will be innumerable, countless, boundless, and inconceivable.

“Kausika, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have made various best music and entertainments, clothes, drinks, food, medical services, and medicines respectfully as offerings to esteem and acclaim innumerable and boundless Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones in as many worlds of the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges. On the other hand, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have wholeheartedly listened to, accepted, embraced, read, recited, cultivated and learned assiduously, and reflected reasonably on prajna paramita. They have further taught, demonstrated, elaborated, explicated, manifested, and analyzed the essential meanings of prajna paramita for others through numberless gates to make prajna paramita understandable. Then the blessings thus accumulated will be much more than the former ones. Why? Kausika, all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones in as many worlds of the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges have realized and attained the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi through the diligent cultivation and learning of prajna paramita.

(The Buddha explained the essential features of prajna paramita. He further taught that although to listen to, read, embrace, and so forth, and reflect reasonably on prajna paramita will be much blessed, but in comparison, to explicate the essential meanings of prajna paramita for others through numberless gates to make it understandable will be much more blessed.)

“Furthermore, Kausika, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have adopted attainment as skillful means to cultivate giving, pure-precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas for immeasurable, countless, and boundless great kalpas. While on the other hand, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have adopted nonattainment as skillful means to wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn assiduously, and reflect reasonably on prajna paramita. They have defended and taught prajna paramita with various skillful and exquisite words and meanings for others for a very short time. They have

further disseminated, demonstrated, elaborated, manifested, explicated, and analyzed the essential meanings of prajna paramita to make prajna paramita understandable. Then the blessings thus accumulated will be much more than the former ones.

“Kausika, to adopt attainment as skillful means means that when cultivating giving, the good gentlemen and gentlewomen will think, ‘I am the almsgiver. That person is the alms receiver. These are the effects of practicing giving, the giving itself, and the things given.’ If they cultivate giving in this way, they are named dwelling in giving instead of giving paramita. When cultivating pure precept, they will think, ‘I can observe the precept because I have been protected by it. These are the effects of observing precept. This is the precept I have observed.’ If they cultivate precept in this way, they are named dwelling in pure precept instead of pure-precept paramita. When cultivating forbearance, they will think, ‘I cultivate forbearance because I want to protect someone. These are the effects of practicing forbearance. This is the self-nature of forbearance.’ If they cultivate forbearance in this way, they are named dwelling in forbearance instead of forbearance paramita. When cultivating diligence, they will think, ‘I have worked diligently to remove my vexations. These are the effects of practicing diligence. This is the self-nature of diligence.’ If they cultivate diligence in this way, they are named dwelling in diligence instead of diligence paramita. When cultivating meditation, they will think, ‘I can cultivate meditation. That is the level of meditation that I have reached so far. These are the effects of practicing meditation. This is the self-nature of meditation.’ If they cultivate meditation in this way, they are named dwelling in meditation instead of meditation paramita. When cultivating prajna, they will think, ‘I can cultivate wisdom. That is the level of wisdom that I have achieved so far. These are the effects of wisdom. This is the self-nature of wisdom.’ If they cultivate wisdom in this way, they are named dwelling in prajna instead of prajna paramita. Kausika, because these good gentlemen and gentlewomen have adopted attainment as skillful means, they are unable to fulfill giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas.”

(The Buddha distinguished the cultivation of the six paramitas by adopting nonattainment as skillful means. The cultivation of the six paramitas based on “attainment” are named giving, pure precept, forbearance, and so forth without paramitas.)

At that time, Heavenly Emperor Indra asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, how can great bodhisattvas cultivate and fulfill giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas?”

The Buddha replied, “Kausika, when cultivating giving, the great bodhisattvas should not attain the giver, the receiver, the effects of practicing giving, the giving itself, and the things given. Because they have adopted nonattainment as skillful means, they are able to fulfill giving paramita. When cultivating pure precept, they should not attain the precept observer, the effects of observing precept, and the precept itself. Because they have adopted nonattainment as skillful means, they are able to fulfill pure-precept paramita. When cultivating forbearance, they should not attain the practitioner of forbearance, the effects of practicing forbearance, and the self-nature of forbearance. Because they have adopted nonattainment as skillful means, they are able to fulfill forbearance paramita. When cultivating diligence, they should not attain the one who practices diligence, the effects of practicing diligence, and the self-nature of diligence. Because they have adopted nonattainment as skillful means, they are able to fulfill diligence paramita. When cultivating meditation, they should not attain the one in concentration, the level reached, the effects of practicing concentration, and the self-nature of concentration. Because they have adopted nonattainment as skillful means, they are able to fulfill meditation paramita. When cultivating prajna, they should not attain the wisdom practitioner, the level of wisdom, the effects of practicing wisdom, and the self-nature of wisdom. Because they have adopted nonattainment as skillful means, they are able to fulfill prajna paramita. Kausika, the great bodhisattvas should further use various exquisite and subtle words and meanings to teach prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth based on nonattainment. Why? Kausika, in the generations to come, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen will teach pseudo prajna paramita, pseudo meditation, and so forth, and pseudo giving paramita. When hearing the pseudo paramitas, the novice aspirants of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi will be confused and thus get lost and go astray. Therefore, we should teach prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita for the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi pursuers by means of the wisdom of nonattainment and various exquisite and subtle words and meanings.” (The Buddha taught the right way to cultivate the six paramitas by adopting nonattainment as skillful means to fulfill the real six paramitas instead of the pseudo ones.)

At that time, Heavenly Emperor Indra asked the Buddha again, “World-Honored One, what are the pseudo prajna, meditation, diligence, forbearance, pure precept, and giving paramitas?”

The Buddha replied, “Kausika, as the good gentlemen and gentlewomen teach prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita based on attainment, they teach pseudo prajna, meditation, diligence, forbearance, pure precept, and giving paramitas.”

(The Buddha explained the pseudo paramitas.)

In the meantime, Heavenly Emperor Indra asked the Buddha again, “World-Honored One, how do the good gentlemen and gentlewomen teach pseudo prajna paramita, pseudo meditation paramita, and so forth, and pseudo giving paramita based on attainment?”

(Refer to Fascicle 136 in Volume 7 for these paragraphs.)

The Buddha replied, “Kausika, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen will teach the unsurpassed bodhi aspirants that matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness are impermanent, painful, and without selfness; the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere are impermanent, painful, and without selfness; and the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere are impermanent, painful, and without selfness. They will also teach that the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm are impermanent, painful, and without selfness; the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm are impermanent, painful, and without selfness; the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm are impermanent, painful, and without selfness; the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are impermanent, painful, and without selfness; and the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are impermanent, painful, and without selfness. They will also teach that the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations are impermanent, painful, and without selfness; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are impermanent, painful, and without selfness. They will assert, ‘If you cultivate prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita in this way, you do practice

prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita.’ They will further say, ‘The ones who cultivate prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita should seek matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena as impermanent, painful, and without selfness. If they seek the dharmas in this way when cultivating prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita, they do practice prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita.’

“Kausika, if ones seek matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena in this way when cultivating prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita, they practice pseudo prajna paramita, pseudo meditation paramita, and so forth, and pseudo giving paramita.

(The Buddha cautioned the unsurpassed bodhi pursuers who practiced the pseudo six paramitas.)

“Furthermore, Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen teach prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita for the aspirants of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and say, ‘Come here, good gentlemen, I will teach you how to cultivate and learn prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita. If you do as I teach, you will be able to dwell peacefully in the first stage, the second stage, and so forth, and the tenth stage of bodhisattva.’ Kausika, since they teach prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita by adopting form and attainment as skillful means with the thought that the dharmas are combinable, they teach pseudo prajna paramita, pseudo meditation paramita, and so forth, and pseudo giving paramita.

(The Buddha taught that the teaching based on form and attainment is the pseudo paramita.)

“Furthermore, Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen teach prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita for the aspirants of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and say, ‘Come here, good gentlemen, I will teach you how to cultivate and learn prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita. If you cultivate and learn as I teach, you will transcend the stage of voice-hearer and the stage of self-enlightened one quickly.’ Kausika, since they teach prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita by adopting form and attainment as skillful means and with the

thought that dharmas are combinable, they teach pseudo prajna paramita, pseudo meditation paramita, and so forth, and pseudo giving paramita.

“Furthermore, Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen teach prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita for the aspirants of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and say, ‘Come here, good gentlemen, I will teach you how to cultivate and learn prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita. If you cultivate and learn as I teach, you will enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising quickly. Once you enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising, you will attain dharma forbearance of nonarising. Once you attain dharma forbearance of nonarising, you will attain the superior and unique supernatural powers of bodhisattva. Once you attain the superior and unique supernatural powers of bodhisattva, you will be able to travel from one Buddha land to the other, make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones. With such a good beginning, you will attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi before long.’ Kausika, since they teach prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita by adopting form and attainment as skillful means and with the thought that the dharmas are combinable, they teach pseudo prajna paramita, pseudo meditation paramita, and so forth, and pseudo giving paramita.

“Furthermore, Kausika, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen will say to the bodhisattva-path practitioners, ‘If you wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn assiduously, and reflect reasonably on prajna paramita, you definitely will attain immeasurable, countless, and boundless merits and virtues.’ Kausika, since they adopt form and attainment as skillful means, they teach pseudo prajna paramita, pseudo meditation, and so forth, and pseudo giving paramita.

“Furthermore, Kausika, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen will say to the bodhisattva-path practitioners, ‘You should always joyfully participate in the virtuous roots accumulated by all Thus-Comers, Ones Worth of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones in the past, present, and future since the time of beginning to aspire to until attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, and assemble all virtuous roots thus derived to transfer them toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi for the sake of

sentient beings.’ Kausika, since these good gentlemen and gentlewomen have adopted form and attainment as skillful means, they teach pseudo prajna paramita, pseudo meditation paramita, and so forth, and pseudo giving paramita.”

At that time, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, what are the real prajna, meditation, diligence, forbearance, pure precept, and giving paramitas?”

The Buddha replied, “Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen teach prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita based on nonattainment, then they teach real prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita.”

(The Buddha taught what the teaching of real six paramitas is.)

In the meantime, Heavenly Emperor Indra asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, how will the good gentlemen and gentlewomen teach prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita based on nonattainment?”

The Buddha replied, “Kausika, when teaching prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita, the good gentlemen and gentlewomen should say, ‘Come here, good gentlemen, you should cultivate prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita. But when cultivating the paramitas, you should not contemplate matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness; the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere; the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere; the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm; the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm; the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm; the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact; the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact; the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; and the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena as permanent or impermanent, pleasant or painful, and with or without selfness. Why? Good gentlemen, matter and the self-nature of matter are empty; feeling and the self-nature of feeling are empty; and so forth, the perfect knowledge of all phenomena and the self-nature of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are empty too. The self-nature of matter is not self-nature;

the self-nature of feeling is not self-nature; and so forth, the self-nature of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena is not self-nature either. The dharmas without self-nature are prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita. In the six paramitas, matter, feeling, and so forth, and their permanence, impermanence, pleasure, pain, selfness, and selflessness are also unattainable. Why? As matter, feeling, and so forth are unattainable, how can we say that their permanence, impermanence, pleasure, pain, selfness, and selflessness are attainable? Good gentleman, if you can cultivate prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita in this way, you do cultivate the real prajna, meditation, and so forth, and giving paramitas.’ Kausika, because these good gentlemen and gentlewomen teach in this way, we can tell that they teach the real prajna, meditation, and so forth, and giving paramitas.

(The Buddha taught how to teach the real six paramitas.)

“Furthermore, Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen teach prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita for the unsurpassed bodhi aspirants and say, ‘Come here, good gentleman, I will teach you how to cultivate and learn prajna, meditation, diligence, forbearance, pure precept, and giving paramitas. When cultivating and learning the paramitas, you should not contemplate various dharmas as you can dwell in them, or you can transcend, enter, attain, realize, and hear them and transfer the merits and virtues thus derived with a joyful mind of participation toward the bodhi. Why? In prajna, meditation, diligence, forbearance, pure precept, and giving paramitas, there is no dharma in which you can dwell, nor any dharma that you can transcend, enter, attain, realize, and hear, and further transfer the merits and virtues thus derived with a joyful mind of participation toward the bodhi. Why? It is because the self-nature of all dharmas is empty. Since the self-nature is empty, the dharmas are nonexistent. Since the dharmas are nonexistent, they are prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita. In prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita, the dharmas neither enter nor go out, neither arise nor extinguish, neither discontinue nor persevere. They are neither the same nor different. Therefore, no dharma is attainable.’

(The Buddha taught the right way to cultivate and learn the six paramitas. He also explained why no dharma is attainable.)

“Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen teach in this way, they do teach the real prajna, meditation, diligence, forbearance, pure precept, and giving paramitas. Therefore, Kausika, the good gentlemen and gentlewomen should adopt nonattainment as skillful means to wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn assiduously, and reasonably reflect on prajna paramita. They should further demonstrate, elaborate, explicate, analyze, lecture extensively on, and defend its essential meanings swiftly for others with various exquisite words and meanings to make prajna paramita understandable. If they can do in this way, they will gain much more blessings than the former ones.

(The Buddha concluded the perfect way of teaching the real six paramitas.)

“Furthermore, Kausika, suppose that the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have taught the sentient beings in the continent of Jambudvīpa to dwell in stream-entry effect. What do you think about this? Will these good gentlemen and gentlewomen be much blessed because of this cause and condition?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “They will be much blessed, World-Honored One. They will be much blessed, Well-Gone One.”

The Buddha said, “Kausika, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have extensively lectured on, demonstrated, elaborated, manifested, explicated, and analyzed the essential meanings of prajna paramita for others with numberless exquisite and skillful ways to make prajna paramita understandable and say, ‘Come here, good gentlemen, you should wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, thoroughly understand, reasonably reflect on, and diligently cultivate and learn this dharma gate.’ These good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be more blessed than the former ones. Why? Kausika, all stream-enterers and stream-entry effect flow from prajna paramita.

“Furthermore, Kausika, let us put the sentient beings in the continent of Jambudvīpa aside at this moment. Suppose that the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have taught all sentient beings in the four continents, the small thousand-world, the medium thousand-world, the large threefold thousand-world, the worlds as many worlds as the sands of the Ganges in one of ten

directions, and the boundless worlds of the ten directions to dwell in stream-entry effect. What do you think about this? Will these good gentlemen and gentlewomen be much blessed?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “They will be much blessed, World-Honored One. They will be much blessed, Well-Gone One.”

The Buddha said, “Kausika, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have extensively lectured on, demonstrated, elaborated, manifested, explicated, and analyzed the essential meanings of prajna paramita for others with numberless exquisite and skillful ways to make prajna paramita understandable and say, ‘Come here, good gentlemen, you should wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, thoroughly understand, reasonably reflect on, and diligently cultivate and learn this dharma gate.’ These good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be more blessed than the former ones. Why? Kausika, all stream-enterers and stream-entry effect flow from prajna paramita.

“Furthermore, Kausika, suppose that the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have taught the sentient beings in the continent of Jambudvipa to dwell in once-return effect, nonreturn effect, and arhat effect. What do you think about this? Will these good gentlemen and gentlewomen be much blessed because of this cause and condition?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “They will be much blessed, World-Honored One. They will be much blessed, Well-Gone One.”

The Buddha said, “Kausika, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have extensively lectured on, demonstrated, elaborated, manifested, explicated, and analyzed the essential meanings of prajna paramita for others with numberless exquisite and skillful ways to make prajna paramita understandable and say, ‘Come here, good gentlemen, you should wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, thoroughly understand, reasonably reflect on, and diligently cultivate and learn this dharma gate.’ These good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be more blessed than the former ones. Why? Kausika, all once-enterers and once-return effect, nonreturners and nonreturn effect, and arhats and arhat effect flow from prajna paramita.

“Furthermore, Kausika, let us put the sentient beings in the continent of Jambudvipa aside at this moment. Suppose that the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have taught all sentient

beings in the four continents, the small thousand-world, the medium thousand-world, the large threefold thousand-world, the worlds as many as the sands of the Ganges in one of ten directions, and the boundless worlds of the ten directions to dwell in once-return effect, nonreturn effect, and arhat effect. What do you think about this? Will these good gentlemen and gentlewomen be much blessed?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “They will be much blessed, World-Honored One. They will be much blessed, Well-Gone One.”

The Buddha said, “Kausika, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have extensively lectured on, demonstrated, elaborated, manifested, explicated, and analyzed the essential meanings of prajna paramita for others with numberless exquisite and skillful ways to make prajna paramita understandable and say, ‘Come here, good gentlemen, you should wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, thoroughly understand, reasonably reflect on, and diligently cultivate and learn this dharma gate.’ These good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be more blessed than the former ones. Why? Kausika, all once-enterers and once-return effect, nonreturners and nonreturn effect, and arhats and arhat effect flow from prajna paramita.

“Furthermore, Kausika, suppose that the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have taught the sentient beings in the continent of Jambudvipa to dwell in self-enlightenment bodhi. What do you think about this? Will these good gentlemen and gentlewomen be much blessed because of this cause and condition?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “They will be much blessed, World-Honored One. They will be much blessed, Well-Gone One.”

The Buddha said, “Kausika, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have extensively lectured on, demonstrated, elaborated, manifested, explicated, and analyzed the essential meanings of prajna paramita for others with numberless exquisite and skillful ways to make prajna paramita understandable and say, ‘Come here, good gentlemen, you should wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, thoroughly understand, reasonably reflect on, and diligently cultivate and learn this dharma gate.’ These good gentlemen and gentlewomen

will be more blessed than the former ones. Why? Kausika, all self-enlightened ones and self-enlightenment bodhi flow from prajna paramita.

“Furthermore, Kausika, let us put the sentient beings in the continent of Jambudvīpa aside at this moment. Suppose that the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have taught all sentient beings in the four continents, the small thousand-world, the medium thousand-world, the large threefold thousand-world, the worlds as many as the sands of the Ganges in one of ten directions, and the boundless worlds of the ten directions to dwell in self-enlightenment bodhi. What do you think about this? Will these good gentlemen and gentlewomen be much blessed?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “They will be much blessed, World-Honored One. They will be much blessed, Well-Gone One.”

The Buddha said, “Kausika, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have extensively lectured on, demonstrated, elaborated, manifested, explicated, and analyzed the essential meanings of prajna paramita for others with numberless exquisite and skillful ways to make prajna paramita understandable and say, ‘Come here, good gentlemen, you should wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, thoroughly understand, reasonably reflect on, and diligently cultivate and learn this dharma gate.’ These good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be more blessed than the former ones. Why? Kausika, all self-enlightened ones and self-enlightenment bodhi flow from prajna paramita.”

(The Buddha taught why the good gentlepersons who have extensively lectured on, elaborated, and so forth, and analyzed the essential meanings of prajna paramita with numberless exquisite and skillful ways to teach sentient beings to let them easily understand prajna paramita will be more blessed than teaching the sentient beings in numberless worlds of the ten directions to dwell in voice-hearer effects and the self-enlightenment bodhi. The reason is all voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, the voice-hearer effects, and the self-enlightenment bodhi flow from prajna paramita.)

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Chapter 36

The Texts

Section 2

In

The Second Assembly

“Furthermore, Kausika, suppose that the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have taught all sentient beings in the continent of Jambudvīpa to aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. What do you think about this? Will these good gentlemen and gentlewomen be much blessed?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “They will be much blessed, World-Honored One. They will be much blessed, Well-Gone One.”

The Buddha said, “Kausika, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have extensively lectured on, demonstrated, elaborated, manifested, explicated, and analyzed the essential meanings of prajna paramita with numberless skillful and exquisite ways for others to make prajna paramita understandable and say, ‘Come here, good gentlemen, you should wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, thoroughly understand, and reasonably reflect on the fathomless prajna paramita to develop correct belief in and understanding of it, so you will be able to cultivate and learn prajna paramita. If you can cultivate and learn prajna paramita, you will be able to realize and attain the perfect knowledge of everything. If you can realize and attain the perfect knowledge of everything, you will progress and fulfill prajna paramita. If you can progress and fulfill prajna paramita, you will realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.’ Kausika, the merits and virtues thus gained will be much more than those gained by the former ones. Why? Kausika, it is because both novice bodhisattvas and tenth-stage bodhisattvas flow from prajna paramita.

“Furthermore, Kausika, let us put the sentient beings in the continent of Jambudvipa aside at this moment. Suppose that the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have taught all sentient beings in the four continents, the small thousand-world, medium thousand-world, large threefold thousand-world, and the worlds as many as the sands of the Ganges in each of the ten directions to aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. What do you think about this? Will these good gentlemen and gentlewomen be much blessed?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “They will be much blessed, World-Honored One. They will be much blessed, Well-Gone One.”

The Buddha said, “Kausika, now some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have extensively lectured on, demonstrated, elaborated, manifested, explicated, and analyzed the essential meanings of prajna paramita with numberless skillful and exquisite ways for others to make prajna paramita understandable and say, ‘Come here, good gentlemen, you should wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, thoroughly understand, and reasonably reflect on the fathomless prajna paramita to develop correct belief in and understanding of it, so you will be able to cultivate and learn prajna paramita. If you can cultivate and learn prajna paramita, you will be able to realize and attain the perfect knowledge of everything. If you can realize and attain the perfect knowledge of everything, you will progress and fulfill prajna paramita. If you can progress and fulfill prajna paramita, you will realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.’ Kausika, the merits and virtues thus gained will be much more than the former ones. Why? Kausika, it is because the great bodhisattvas who have just begun to aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and those who have achieved the tenth stage all flow from prajna paramita.

“Furthermore, Kausika, suppose that the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have taught the sentient beings in the continent of Jambudvipa to dwell in the bodhisattva stage of nonregression. What do you think about this? Will these good gentlemen and gentlewomen be much blessed?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “They will be much blessed, World-Honored One. They will be much blessed, Well-Gone One.”

The Buddha said, “Kausika, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have extensively lectured on, demonstrated, elaborated, manifested, explicated, and analyzed the essential meanings of prajna paramita with numberless skillful and exquisite ways for others to make prajna paramita understandable and say, ‘Come here, good gentlemen, you should wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, thoroughly understand, and reasonably reflect on the fathomless prajna paramita to develop correct belief in and understanding of it, so you will be able to cultivate and learn prajna paramita. If you can cultivate and learn prajna paramita, you will be able to realize and attain the perfect knowledge of everything. If you can realize and attain the perfect knowledge of everything, you will progress and fulfill prajna paramita. If you can progress and fulfill prajna paramita, you will realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.’ Kausika, the merits and virtues thus gained will be much more than the former ones. Why? Kausika, it is because the great bodhisattvas of nonregression and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi flow from prajna paramita.

(The Buddha said that both the great bodhisattvas of nonregression and the unsurpassed bodhi flow from prajna paramita.)

“Furthermore, Kausika, let us put the sentient beings in the continent of Jambudvipa aside at this moment. Suppose that the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have taught all sentient beings in the four continents, the small thousand-world, medium thousand-world, large threefold thousand-world, and the worlds as many as the sands of the Ganges in each of the ten directions to dwell in the stage of nonregression. What do you think about this? Will these good gentlemen and gentlewomen be much blessed?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “They will be much blessed, World-Honored One. They will be much blessed, Well-Gone One.”

The Buddha said, “Kausika, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have extensively lectured on, demonstrated, elaborated, manifested, explicated, and analyzed the essential meanings of prajna paramita with numberless skillful and exquisite ways for others to make prajna paramita understandable and say, ‘Come here, good gentlemen, you should wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, thoroughly understand, and reasonably reflect on the fathomless prajna paramita to develop correct belief in and understanding of it, so

you will be able to cultivate and learn prajna paramita. If you can cultivate and learn prajna paramita, you will be able to realize and attain the perfect knowledge of everything. If you can realize and attain the perfect knowledge of everything, you will progress and fulfill prajna paramita. If you can progress and fulfill prajna paramita, you will realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.’ Kausika, the merits and virtues thus gained will be much more than those gained by the former ones. Why? Kausika, it is because the great bodhisattvas of nonregression and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi flow from prajna paramita.

“Furthermore, Kausika, suppose that all sentient beings in the continent of Jambudvipa have aspired to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. On the other hand, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have extensively lectured on, demonstrated, elaborated, manifested, explicated, and analyzed the essential meanings of prajna paramita with numberless skillful and exquisite ways for others to make prajna paramita understandable and say, ‘Come here, good gentlemen, you should wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, thoroughly understand, and reasonably reflect on the fathomless prajna paramita to develop correct belief in and understanding of it. If you can develop correct belief in and understanding of prajna paramita, you will be able to cultivate and learn prajna paramita. If you can cultivate and learn prajna paramita, you will be able to realize and attain the perfect knowledge of everything. If you can realize and attain the perfect knowledge of everything, you will be able to foster and fulfill prajna paramita. If you can foster and fulfill prajna paramita, you will be able to realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.’ Kausika, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be more blessed than the former ones.

“Furthermore, Kausika, let us put the sentient beings in the continent of Jambudvipa aside at this moment. Suppose that all sentient beings in the four continents, the small thousand-world, medium thousand-world, large threefold thousand-world, and as many worlds in each of the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges have aspired to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. On the other hand, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have extensively lectured on, demonstrated, elaborated, manifested, explicated, and analyzed the essential meanings of prajna paramita with numberless skillful and exquisite ways for others to make prajna paramita understandable and say, ‘Come here, good gentlemen, you should wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, thoroughly understand, and reasonably

reflect on the fathomless prajna paramita to develop correct belief in and understanding of it. If you can develop correct belief in and understanding of prajna paramita, you will be able to cultivate and learn prajna paramita. If you can cultivate and learn prajna paramita, you will be able to realize and attain the perfect knowledge of everything. If you can realize and attain the perfect knowledge of everything, you will be able to foster and fulfill prajna paramita. If you can foster and fulfill prajna paramita, you will be able to realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.’ Kausika, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be more blessed than the former ones.

“Furthermore, Kausika, suppose that all sentient beings in the continent of Jambudvipa have achieved nonregression in the pursuit of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. On the other hand, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have extensively lectured on, demonstrated, elaborated, manifested, explicated, and analyzed the essential meanings of prajna paramita with numberless skillful and exquisite ways for others to make prajna paramita understandable and say, ‘Come here, good gentlemen, you should wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, thoroughly understand, and reasonably reflect on the fathomless prajna paramita to develop correct belief in and understanding of it. If you can develop correct belief in and understanding of prajna paramita, you will be able to cultivate and learn prajna paramita. If you can cultivate and learn prajna paramita, you will be able to realize and attain the perfect knowledge of everything. If you can realize and attain the perfect knowledge of everything, you will be able to foster and fulfill prajna paramita. If you can foster and fulfill prajna paramita, you will be able to realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.’ Kausika, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be more blessed than the former ones.

“Furthermore, Kausika, let us put the sentient beings in the continent of Jambudvipa aside. Suppose that all sentient beings in the four continents, the small thousand-world, medium thousand-world, large threefold thousand-world, and as many worlds in each of the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges have achieved nonregression in the pursuit of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. On the other hand, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have extensively lectured on, demonstrated, elaborated, manifested, explicated, and analyzed the essential meanings of prajna paramita with numberless skillful and exquisite ways for others to make prajna paramita understandable and say, ‘Come here, good gentlemen, you should

wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, thoroughly understand, and reasonably reflect on the fathomless prajna paramita to develop correct belief in and understanding of it. If you can develop correct belief in and understanding of prajna paramita, you will be able to cultivate and learn prajna paramita. If you can cultivate and learn prajna paramita, you will be able to realize and attain the perfect knowledge of everything. If you can realize and attain the perfect knowledge of everything, you will be able to foster and fulfill prajna paramita. If you can foster and fulfill prajna paramita, you will be able to realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.’ Kausika, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be more blessed than the former ones.

“Furthermore, Kausika, suppose that some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have taught the sentient beings in the continent of Jambudvipa to aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. These good gentlemen and gentlewomen have further used numberless gates of skillful and exquisite words and meanings to extensively lecture on, demonstrate, elaborate, manifest, explicate, and analyze the essential meanings of prajna paramita to make it understandable. On the other hand, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have taught one sentient being to achieve the stage of nonregression in the pursuit of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and used numberless gates of skillful and exquisite words and meanings to extensively lecture on, demonstrate, elaborate, manifest, explicate, and analyze the essential meanings of prajna paramita to make prajna paramita understandable. Kausika, the merits and virtues thus gained will be much more than the former ones.

“Furthermore, kausika, let us put the sentient beings in the continent of Jambudvipa aside. Suppose that some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have taught the sentient beings in the four continents, the small thousand-world, medium thousand-world, large threefold thousand-world, and as many worlds in each of the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges to aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. These good gentlemen and gentlewomen have further adopted numberless gates of skillful and exquisite words and meanings to extensively lecture on, demonstrate, elaborate, manifest, explicate, and analyze the essential meanings of prajna paramita to make it understandable. On the other hand, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have taught one sentient being to achieve the stage of nonregression in the pursuit of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and adopted numberless gates of skillful

and exquisite words and meanings to extensively lecture on, demonstrate, elaborate, manifest, explicate, and analyze the essential meanings of prajna paramirta to make it understandable. Kausika, the merits and virtues gained by these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be much more than the former ones.

(The Buddha taught that to teach one sentient being to achieve the stage of nonregression in the pursuit of the unsurpassed bodhi and adopt numberless gates of exquisite and skillful words and meanings to make prajna paramita understandable will gain more blessings than teaching the sentient beings in as many worlds as the sands of the Ganges to aspire to the unsurpassed bodhi and further adopt numberless gates of skillful and exquisite words and meanings to extensively lecture on, elaborate, and so forth, and analyze the essential meanings of prajna paramita to make it understandable, although the latter ones will also gain numberless blessings.)

“Furthermore, Kausika, suppose that some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have taught the sentient beings in the continent of Jambudvīpa to achieve the stage of nonregression in the pursuit of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and further adopted numberless gates of skillful and exquisite words and meanings to extensively lecture on, demonstrate, elaborate, manifest, explicate, and analyze the essential meanings of prajna paramita to make it understandable. On the other hand, there is one sentient being who comes to say, ‘I would love to realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly so that I can relieve the sentient beings from the suffering of the bad destinies.’ In order to assist this sentient being, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen will adopt numberless gates of skillful and exquisite words and meanings to extensively lecture on, demonstrate, elaborate, manifest, explicate, and analyze the essential meanings of prajna paramita to make it understandable. Kausika, the merits and virtues thus gained will be much more than the former ones. Why? Kausika, the great bodhisattvas who have dwelled in the stage of nonregression do not need the dharma teaching so much because their orientation is already firmly established and their nonregression is for sure, while the one who is eager to attain the great bodhi quickly still relies very much on dharma teaching. This sentient being has initiated extremely great and deep compassion to relieve sentient beings from the suffering of birth and death, and is eager to realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.

“Furthermore, Kausika, let us put the sentient beings in the continent of Jambudvīpa aside. Suppose that the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have taught all sentient beings in the four continents, the small thousand-world, medium thousand-world, large threefold thousand-world, and as many worlds in each of the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges to achieve the stage of nonregression in the pursuit of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, and further adopted numberless gates of skillful and exquisite words and meanings to extensively lecture on, demonstrate, elaborate, manifest, explicate, and analyze the essential meanings of prajna paramita to make it understandable. On the other hand, there is one sentient being who comes and says, ‘I would love to realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly so that I can relieve sentient beings from the suffering in inferior destinies.’ In order to assist this sentient being, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen will adopt numberless gates of skillful and exquisite words and meanings to extensively lecture on, demonstrate, elaborate, manifest, explicate, and analyze the essential meanings of prajna paramita to make it understandable. Kausika, the merits and virtues thus gained will be much more than the former ones. Why? Kausika, the great bodhisattvas who have dwelled in the stage of nonregression do not need the dharma teaching so much because their orientation is already firmly established and their nonregression is for sure, while the one who is eager to attain the great bodhi quickly still relies very much on dharma teaching. This sentient being has initiated extremely great and deep compassion to relieve sentient beings from the suffering in birth and death, and is eager to realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.

At that time, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, as the great bodhisattvas get very close to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, we should caution and teach them about giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; and the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power. We should also make the best clothes, food, drinks, bedding, medicines, and whatever they need as offerings to them. World-Honored One, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen can make the dharma and the property as offerings to them, the merits and virtues thus gained will be much more than the former ones. Why? It is

because these great bodhisattvas need the dharma giving and property giving at this moment so that they will attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly.”

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, “Excellent, excellent! Kausika, you can not only encourage these great bodhisattvas but also absorb, assist, and protect them. You have done what a Buddha’s holy disciple should do. Why? All Thus-Comers’ holy disciples should expediently encourage the great bodhisattvas to quickly approach the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, so that they are able to bring benefits and happiness to various sentient beings before long. They should make dharma giving and property giving as offerings to these great bodhisattvas, offer cautions and teachings to them, and absorb, assist, and protect them, so that the great bodhisattvas will attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi soon. Why? All superior things undertaken by Thus-Comers, voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones appear in the world because of great bodhisattvas. Why?

(Well-Appearing One praised Kausika’s statement that when the great bodhisattvas near the unsurpassed bodhi, they particularly need dharma giving and property giving to achieve the unsurpassed bodhi and quickly help sentient beings.)

“Kausika, without a great bodhisattva aspiring to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, there will be no one to learn the six paramitas, the four bases of mindfulness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power. Without a great bodhisattva learning the six paramitas, four bases of mindfulness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power, there will be no one to attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, and the superior things brought about by Thus-Comers, voice-hearers, and self-enlightened ones will be impossible. Kausika, it is because of the great bodhisattvas who have aspired to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, there are the great bodhisattvas to learn the six paramitas, four bases of mindfulness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power. It is because of the great bodhisattvas who have learned the six paramitas, four bases of mindfulness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power, there are the great bodhisattvas to attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. As the great bodhisattvas attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and begin to turn the dharma wheel, the inferior destinies, such as hells, the realm of animals,

and the realm of the ghosts will be terminated; the gang members of asura will diminish; and the heavenly beings will increase. It is because of the great bodhisattvas that the noble families of Ksatriya, Brahman, elders, and lay believers appear in the world. It is because of the great bodhisattvas that the Heaven of the Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and Heaven of Nonthinking and Not Nonthinking appear in the world. It is because of the great bodhisattvas that giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; and the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power appear in the world. It is also because of the great bodhisattvas that the voice-hearer vehicle, the self-enlightened one vehicle, and the vehicle of perfect and universal bodhi appear in the world."

(Well-Appearing One stated that because of bodhisattvas, the inferior realms will decrease; the superior realms will grow; and various superior virtuous dharmas and holy effects will manifest in the world.)

Chapter 37

Joyful Participation and Transference

Section 1

(In the Second Assembly)

At that time, Great Bodhisattva Maitreya said to the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One, "Great Virtuous One, some great bodhisattvas have adopted nonattainment as skillful means to joyfully participate in the merits and virtues produced by various sentient beings to practice bliss-inviting karmas, and further transfer the merits and virtues thus derived along with

all sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. On the other hand, some ordinary sentient beings, voice-hearers, and self-enlightened ones have also joyfully participated in practicing various bliss-inviting karmas and undertaking transference. They will joyfully participate in practicing giving, observing precept, and cultivating virtuous dharmas; cultivating the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; and cultivating the three liberation gates, eight liberations, nine concentrations in sequence, four unhindered understandings, six supernatural powers, and so forth. In comparison, the merits and virtues produced in joyful participation and transference by the great bodhisattvas are superior, higher, nobler, more wonderful, and subtler than those undertaken by the ordinary sentient beings, voice-hearers, and self-enlightened ones. The merits and virtues gained by the great bodhisattvas in joyful participation and transference are the highest, utmost, unsurpassed, unequaled, and most universal ones. Why? Great virtuous one, the bliss-inviting karmas of ordinary sentient beings are cultivated merely for the sake of their own happiness, peace, ease, and benefits; the bliss-inviting karmas of the voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones are cultivated merely for their own peace, harmony, tranquility, and nirvana; while the joyfully participation and transference undertaken by the great bodhisattvas are for the sake of taming all sentient beings and bringing tranquility and nirvana to all of them.”

(Great Bodhisattva Maitreya pointed out that the bliss-inviting karmas made by voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, and ordinary sentient beings for their own sake are not as valuable as the joyful participation and transference undertaken by great bodhisattvas for the sake of all sentient beings.)

Meanwhile, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to Great Bodhisattva Maitreya, “Great Bodhisattva, the mind of joyful participation and transference of the great bodhisattvas is universally connected with numberless, countless, and boundless worlds. In each world, there are the virtuous roots correspondent with the six paramitas accumulated by countless, numberless, and boundless Buddhas since the time of aspiring to the unsurpassed bodhi, attaining the unsurpassed bodhi, until finally entering nirvana without remainders when the dharma was going to distinguish. There are also the virtuous roots correspondent with the countless, numberless, and boundless Buddha dharmas shared or not shared by the voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, bodhisattvas, and ordinary sentient beings. There are the bliss-inviting karmas of Buddhas’ lay

disciples caused by practicing giving, observing precept, and cultivating virtuous dharmas. There are the flawless virtuous roots of Buddhas' voice-hearer disciples who either need or need no more learning. There are the aggregates of precept, concentration, wisdom, liberation, and the knowledge and views of liberation accomplished by various Thus-Comers; the countless, numberless, and boundless Buddha dharmas of great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, great equanimity; the correct dharma taught by the Buddhas; the stream-entry, once-return, nonreturn, and arhat effects and the self-enlightenment bodhi attained through diligent cultivation and learning of Buddha dharma; the bodhisattva path of nonarsing and the rest of great bodhisattva actions. All these virtuous roots and other virtuous roots, planted by the rest of sentient beings when the Thus-Comers, voice-hearer disciples, and the bodhisattva disciples are still present in the world or when they enter nirvana, are gathered by the great bodhisattvas. The great bodhisattvas then will joyfully participate in all these virtuous roots and transfer the merits and virtues thus derived along with all sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. The great bodhisattvas will make vow, wishing all these virtuous roots will inspire all sentient beings to initiate an aspiration to the unsurpassed bodhi. I will say that the joyful participation and transference initiated by the great bodhisattvas in this way is the superior, noblest, highest, most exquisite, subtlest, uppermost, unequalled, and unequalled equal one among all bliss-inviting karmas. What do you think, Great Bodhisattva Maitreya? As the great bodhisattvas initiate such joyful participation and transference based on these conditions, are they attached to the forms?"

(As the great bodhisattvas, connected universally with various sentient beings of the world, assemble all virtuous roots of the Thus-Comers, voice-hearers, and so forth, joyfully participate in them and transfer the merits and virtues thus derived toward the unsurpassed bodhi along with all sentient beings equally, are they attached to the forms of all these dharmas? This is the question Well-Appearing One asked Great Bodhisattva Maitreya.)

At that time, Great Bodhisattva Maitreya replied to the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One, "Great Virtuous One, as the great bodhisattvas initiate such a joyful mind of participation and transference based on these conditions, they are not attached to the forms."

Meanwhile, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to Great Bodhisattva Maitreya, “Great Bodhisattva, if there are no forms, how can the great bodhisattvas adopt the forms as skillful means to connect their minds of joyful participation and transference universally with the numberless, countless, and boundless worlds of the ten directions? How can they connect with all virtuous roots of numberless, countless, and boundless Buddhas who have entered nirvana during the time since they began to aspire to until the dharma is going to extinguish? How can they connect with all virtuous roots of the Buddhas’ disciples? How can they assemble all these virtuous roots and joyfully participate in them and transfer all merits and virtues including their own thus derived toward the unsurpassed bodhi? Will it not be upside down to say that they have undertaken such transference without forms? To mistake impermanence for permanence, pain for pleasure, selflessness for selfness, impurity for purity are upside-down thoughts, upside-down minds, and upside-down views. So too is to mistake form for formlessness. Great bodhisattva, if the conditions are nonexistent, so too are the mind of joyful participation and transference, various virtuous roots, the unsurpassed bodhi, the six paramitas, and so forth, and the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power. Great bodhisattva, given this fact, what are the conditions? What are all these events? What is the mind of joyful participation and transference? What are the virtuous roots? What is the unsurpassed bodhi? What are the six paramitas, and so forth, and the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power when the great bodhisattvas initiate the mind of joyful participation and transference based on these conditions?”

(As Great Bodhisattva Maitreya replied that the great bodhisattvas were not attached to forms, Well-Appearing One asked how they could undertake such joyful participation and transference without forms.)

Great Bodhisattva Maitreya replied to the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One, “Great Virtuous One, if the great bodhisattvas have cultivated and learned the six paramitas long enough; have made offerings to innumerable Buddhas, planted virtuous roots, and vowed to aspire to the bodhi long enough; have been absorbed and accepted by various virtuous friends; and have learned well the meanings of the emptiness of particular phenomena of all dharmas, then they are able to initiate the mind to joyfully participate and transfer the virtuous roots toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi without being attached to the forms of the

events they are undertaking, their conditions, the mind of joyful participation and transference, the various virtuous roots, the unsurpassed bodhi, the Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, and all dharmas. Since these great bodhisattvas have adopted neither duality nor nonduality, neither formlessness nor not formlessness, neither attainment nor nonattainment, neither contamination nor purification, and neither arising nor extinction as skillful means, they will not grasp either the forms of the things they are undertaking, or the conditions, the joyful participation and transference, and so forth, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Because they do not grasp the forms, they do not absorb dharmas upside down. If the great bodhisattvas have not cultivated and learned the six paramitas long enough; have not made offerings to innumerable Buddhas; have not planted virtuous roots; have not vowed to aspire to the bodhi long enough; have not been absorbed and accepted by various virtuous friends; and have not learned well the meanings of the emptiness of particular phenomena of all dharmas, then they will grasp and be attached to the forms of the things they are undertaking, the conditions, the joyful participation and transference, the virtuous roots, the unsurpassed dharma, the Buddhas, and all dharmas. If they grasp and are attached to the forms, they will undertake joyful participation and transference upside down, they thus are unable to joyfully participate in virtuous roots and transfer them toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.

(Great Bodhisattva Maitreya replied that if the great bodhisattvas have learned the correct dharma long enough, realized emptiness well, and also vowed to aspire to the unsurpassed bodhi to relieve all sentient beings, they will not be attached to the forms.)

“Furthermore, Great Virtuous One, we should not teach novice practitioners of great-vehicle and the less developed ones the meaning of emptiness of the particular phenomena of prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power; and the rest of dharmas. Why? These novice bodhisattvas have vulnerable belief in the dharma; they do not deeply respect and love the dharma. To let them hear such fathomless meanings will scare and frighten them, make them get lost and withdraw from the correct dharma; they even will slander the correct dharma. On the other hand, we should teach comprehensively, elaborate, analyze, and explicate the emptiness of the particular phenomena of

prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita; the emptiness of the particular phenomena of internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the emptiness of the particular phenomena of the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; as well as the emptiness of the particular phenomena of the rest of dharmas for the great bodhisattvas who have reached the stage of nonregression, made offerings to innumerable Buddhas, made great vows long enough, planted many virtuous roots, and been absorbed and influenced by many virtuous friends. Why? Great virtuous one, the great bodhisattvas who have reached the stage of nonregression, made offerings to innumerable Buddhas, made great vows long enough, planted many virtuous roots, and been absorbed and influenced by many virtuous friends will not be shocked, scared, or confused when hearing this dharma, nor will they slander it. They will rather accept and embrace it and never forget or lose it. Great virtuous one, the great bodhisattvas should joyfully participate in various bliss-inviting karmas and transfer the merits and virtues thus derived toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi in this way."

(Great Bodhisattva Maitreya suggested that it is not appropriate to teach novice bodhisattvas the meaning of emptiness in prajna paramita; they will be frightened or will slander the correct dharma when hearing it. But he suggested to teach and explain comprehensively the emptiness of the phenomena of various dharmas based on prajna paramita for the great bodhisattvas who have achieved the stage of nonregression.)

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to Great Bodhisattva Maitreya, "Great Bodhisattva, the great bodhisattvas should joyfully participate in various bliss-inviting karmas and transfer the merits and virtues thus derived toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi in this way. That is, they should know that the mind, all the things done, and the virtuous roots will finally extinguish, depart, and perish. What is mind? What are the virtuous roots which the joyful mind participates in and transfers? And based on what conditions? The joyful participation and transference should not exist simultaneously in mind because two minds cannot arise at the same time; the mind cannot transfer toward the self-nature of the mind either. When cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas should understand that prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita are nonexistent; matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are nonexistent; the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi is also

nonexistent. Knowing that all dharmas are nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas still can joyfully participate in various bliss-inviting karmas and transfer the merits and virtues thus derived toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Their minds of joyful participation and transference are therefore not upside down because they have adopted nonattainment as skillful means.

(As the great bodhisattvas have realized that all dharmas, including the mind, are empty and nonexistent when undertaking the transference, they are not upside down doing it only because they have adopted nonattainment as skillful means.)

In the meantime, Heavenly Emperor Indra asked the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One, “Great Virtuous One, as the novice great-vehicle practitioners hear this dharma, they should be scared and puzzled. Great Virtuous One, how can the novice great-vehicle bodhisattvas transfer the virtuous roots they have accumulated toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi? Great Virtuous One, how can the novice great-vehicle bodhisattvas absorb various bliss-inviting karmas including what they have produced and transfer them all toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi?”

(Heavenly Emperor asked Well-Appearing One how novice bodhisattvas transfer virtuous roots toward the unsurpassed bodhi.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One, with the support of Great Bodhisattva Maitreya’s mighty powers, replied to Heavenly Emperor Indra, “Kausika, when cultivating prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita, novice great-vehicle bodhisattvas should adopt nonattainment and formlessness as skillful means to absorb prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita. Because of this cause and condition, most of these bodhisattvas will believe in and understand internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power. They will be absorbed by virtuous friends often. These virtuous friends will use numberless gates of subtle and exquisite words and meanings to comprehensively teach the dharmas correspondent with prajna, meditation, diligence, forbearance, pure precept, and giving paramitas for them. They will also give cautions and teachings to the novice bodhisattvas and

guide them onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising. Those who have not entered onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising will continue to cultivate prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; and the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power. These virtuous friends will also talk about what the demons usually do, so when hearing the stories, their minds will not be moved to increase or decrease. Why? The nature of various demonic hindrances is nonexistent and unattainable. This will be part of the cautions and teachings given to them, so they will not stay away from the Buddha and the virtuous roots planted by the Buddha until they enter onto the correct bodhisattva path of nonarising. Besides, because they are absorbed by virtuous roots, they will always be reborn in the families of great bodhisattva. They will never stay away from virtuous roots until they attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Kausika, if the novice great-vehicle bodhisattvas can adopt such nonattainment and formlessness as skillful means to absorb various merits and virtues, develop a deep belief in and understanding of the merits and virtues, and are always absorbed and guided by virtuous friends, they will not be scared and puzzled when hearing the dharma.

(Well-Appearing One suggested, with the support of Great Bodhisattva Maitreya's mighty powers, the right way to teach novice great-vehicle bodhisattvas prajna paramita, particularly using expedient and skillful assistance from virtuous friend.)

“Furthermore, Kausika, the novice practitioners of great vehicle should adopt nonattainment and formlessness as skillful means to accumulate merits and virtues through the cultivation of giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; through the peaceful dwelling in internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; and through the cultivation of the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power and the rest of innumerable and boundless Buddha dharma. Then they will transfer these merits and virtues toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi along with various sentient beings equally. In addition, Kausika, they should collect the virtuous roots from all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones, who have blocked the routes to incorrect views and nonsensical arguments, discarded various heavy burdens, taken off the

thorns of all aggregates, removed various bonds, and been perfectly equipped with correct knowledge and liberated minds and are able to teach the dharma skillfully and ingeniously. The novice bodhisattvas should also collect virtuous roots of the Buddhas' disciples, who have achieved the aggregates of precept, concentration, wisdom, liberation, and the knowledge and the views of liberation as well as other merits and virtues; the virtuous roots of the noble family of Ksatriya, the family of Brahman, and so forth, and the Heaven of Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and the Heaven of Pure Residence. The novice bodhisattvas thus will gather all virtuous roots together, esteem them, and reflect on them and then activate their own virtuous roots to joyfully participate in and transfer various bliss-inviting karmas, including those caused by themselves, along with sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi with the superior, noblest, highest, subtlest, and most wonderful mind."

(Well-Appearing One continued to elaborate the right way the novice bodhisattvas should follow in the great-vehicle cultivation.)

At that time, Great Bodhisattva Maitreya asked the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One, "Great Virtuous One, as staying in the mindfulness of the merits and virtues planted by various Buddhas, the Buddhas' disciples, and other humans and heavenly beings, the novice great bodhisattvas will gather all virtuous roots together, activate in themselves a superior, noblest, highest, most exquisite, subtlest, uppermost, unequaled, and unequaled equal joyful mind of participation, and transfer the virtuous roots along with sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. How will they not fall into upside-down thoughts, mind, and views?"

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One replied to Great Bodhisattva Maitreya, "Great Bodhisattva, as staying in the mindfulness of the merits and virtues of the Buddhas and their disciples, the novice great bodhisattvas will not think of these merits and virtues. They will not think of the humans and heavenly beings who have planted many virtuous roots. They will not think of the joyful mind of participation and transference either. Because of this cause and condition, their joyful participation and transference will not have upside-down thoughts, upside-down minds, and upside-down views. If the novice great-vehicle bodhisattvas think of the merits

and virtues of the Buddhas and their disciples, the humans and heavenly beings who have planted many virtuous roots, or the joyful participation and transference, then their participation and transference will be contaminated with upside-down thoughts, upside-down minds, and upside-down views.

(Well-Appearing One replied to Great Bodhisattva Maitreya's question to suggest the ways to avoid upside-down thoughts, minds, and views for novice bodhisattvas.)

“Furthermore, Great Bodhisattva, if the great bodhisattvas can stay in the mindfulness of the merits and virtues of all Buddhas and their disciples and realize that the mind will exhaust, extinguish, depart, and change so will not joyfully participate anymore; the nature of the dharmas will exhaust, extinguish, depart, and change so will not be joined by others anymore; the dharma nature of the mind of transference will exhaust, extinguish, depart, and change so will not transfer anymore; and the nature of the dharmas will exhaust, extinguish, depart, and change so will not be transferred anymore, then they indeed do the right participation and transference. The great bodhisattvas should joyfully participate and transfer in this way.

(Well-Appearing One stated the right way to do joyful participation and transference.)

“Furthermore, Great Bodhisattva, suppose that the great bodhisattvas can joyfully participate in the merits and virtues accumulated by all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones in the past, present, and future since the time of beginning to aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi until entering nirvana when the dharma is going to extinguish; all the virtuous roots that the Buddhas' disciples and the self-enlightened ones have initiated in accordance with the Buddha dharma; all the virtuous roots that ordinary sentient beings have planted owing to hearing the dharma teaching; all the virtuous roots that the heavenly deities, dragons, yaksas, gandharvas, asuras, garudas, kimnaras, mahoragas, and humanlike nonhumans have planted owing to hearing the dharma teaching; all the virtuous roots that the noble families of Ksatriya, Brahman, elders, and lay believers have planted owing to hearing the dharma teaching; all the virtuous roots that the Heaven of Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and Heaven of Ultimate Form have planted owing to hearing the dharma teaching; and the minds of the good gentlemen and gentlewomen who have aspired to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and

diligently cultivated all great bodhisattva actions owing to hearing the dharma teaching, and put all these merits, virtues, and virtuous roots together, measure and reflect on them, and activate in themselves the superior, noblest, highest, subtlest, most exquisite, uppermost, unsurpassed, unequaled, and unequaled equal joyful mind of participation. They further transfer the virtuous roots thus derived along with all sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. In the meantime, they also correctly understand that the dharmas and the self-nature of the dharmas joyfully joined and transferred will exhaust, extinguish, depart, and change. If they joyfully participate in and transfer the merits and virtues toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi with the realization that no dharma can really take part in and transfer another dharma because the self-nature of all dharmas is empty and in emptiness no dharma can transfer and no dharma can be transferred, then they are far away from the upside-down thoughts, minds, and views. Why? These great bodhisattvas are not attached to the mind of joyful participation, the merits and the virtuous roots in which they have joyfully participated, the minds of transference, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi toward which they transfer. Because they are free from attachment, they will not fall into upside-down dharmas. Their joyful minds of participation and transference thus are far away from all delusions and differentiations.”

(Well-Appearing One concluded that the not upside-down joyful participation and transference are far away from attachment, delusions, and differentiations.)

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Chapter 37

Joyful Participation and Transference

Section 2

(In the Second Assembly)

“Furthermore, Great Bodhisattva, if the great bodhisattvas accurately realize that their bliss-inviting karmas are apart from the aggregates, spheres, and realms; apart from prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita; apart from internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; and apart from the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power, then they are able to joyfully take part in and transfer the bliss-inviting karmas toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.

“Furthermore, Great Bodhisattva, if the great bodhisattvas accurately realize that the joyful participation in various bliss-inviting karmas is far away from the self-nature of this joyful participation; the Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, are far away from the self-nature of the Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones; the merits, virtues, and virtuous roots are far away from the self-nature of the merits, virtues, and virtuous roots; the voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, and ordinary sentient beings are far away from the self-nature of the voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, and ordinary sentient beings; the joyful mind of participation and transference is far away from the self-nature of the joyful mind of participation and transference; the great bodhisattvas are far away from the self-nature of the great bodhisattvas; prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita are far away from the self-nature of prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are far away from the self-nature of internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of

Buddha's wisdom and power are far away from the self-nature of the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; the great bodhisattva actions are far away from the self-nature of the great bodhisattva actions; and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas is far away from the self-nature of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, then these great bodhisattvas are able to correctly participate in and transfer the merits, virtues, and virtuous roots toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi because they have cultivated the fathomless prajna paramita far apart from the self-nature of all dharmas.

“Furthermore, Great Bodhisattva, if the great bodhisattvas would like to activate a joyfully mind to take part in the merits, virtues, and virtuous roots accumulated by all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones and their disciples who have entered nirvana, and transferred the merits and so forth thus derived toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, they should think, ‘Like the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones and their disciples who have all entered nirvana, and their self-nature is nonexistent, so too is the self-nature of the merits, virtues, and virtuous roots; the self-nature of the mind of joyful participation and the transference toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi; and the self-nature of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi toward which I will transfer.’ If they can participate joyfully in virtuous roots and transfer the merits and virtues thus derived toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi in this way, they are without upside-down thoughts, minds, and views. On the other hand, if the great bodhisattvas cultivate prajna paramita, participate in the merits, virtues, and virtuous roots of the Buddhas and their disciples who have entered nirvana, and transfer the merits and virtues thus derived toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi by grasping the forms, then they do not do it right. Even if they grasp the formlessness of the merits, virtues, and virtuous roots of the Buddhas and their disciples in the past to participate in and transfer the merits and virtues thus derived toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, they still do not do it right. Because of this cause and condition, they undertake the transference with upside-down thoughts, minds, and views. Therefore, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas should not be attached to all kinds of forms. If they joyfully participate in the merits, virtues, and virtuous roots of all Thus-Comers and their disciples and

transfer the merits and virtues thus derived toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi without attachment to forms, they do it right; they indeed undertake the transference without upside-down thoughts, minds, and views.”

(Well-Appearing One described the difference between the right and the upside-down participation and transference; The transference should not be performed with attachment to all kinds of forms, including formlessness.)

At that time, Great Bodhisattva Maitreya asked the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One, “Great Virtuous One, how should the great bodhisattvas joyfully take part in the merits, virtues, and virtuous roots of the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones and their disciples, practice bliss-inviting karmas without adopting forms as skillful means, and transfer the merits and virtues thus derived toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Great Bodhisattva, it must be known the prajna paramita that the great bodhisattvas learn is characterized by expedient skillfulness; that is, it should be fulfilled without grasping the forms. The correct initiation of the joyful mind to participate in practicing bliss-inviting karmas and transfer the merits and virtues thus derived toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi cannot be well achieved without prajna paramita. Therefore, if the great bodhisattvas would like to achieve this purpose successfully, they should learn prajna paramita.”

(Well-Appearing One said that learning prajna paramita is indispensable for initiating the correct participation and transference, as expedient skillfulness embodies prajna paramita.)

Great Bodhisattva Maitreya said, “Great Virtuous Well-Appearing One, do not say so. Why? In prajna paramita the merits, virtues, and virtuous roots achieved by various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, and their disciples are all nonexistent and unattainable. The bliss-inviting karmas the great bodhisattvas have joyfully involved and practiced are nonexistent and unattainable. Even the mind of transference initiated toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi is also nonexistent and unattainable. When cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas should contemplate, ‘The nature of the merits, virtues, and virtuous roots of the

Buddhas and the disciples in the past has extinguished. The nature of various bliss-inviting karmas the great bodhisattvas joyfully involved and practiced has extinguished. The mind of transference initiated toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi has extinguished. If I joyfully participate in the merits, virtues, and virtuous roots of all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones and their disciples and practice the bliss-inviting karmas by grasping the forms and with differentiation; and if I further transfer the merits and virtues thus derived toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi by grasping the forms and with differentiation, then the Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, will not approve what I do. Why? It is because what I do is based on the so-called great attainment.’ Therefore, if the great bodhisattvas would like to joyfully participate in the merits, virtues, and virtues of various Buddhas and their disciples to practice bliss-inviting karmas, and transfer the merits and virtues thus derived toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, they should stay away from the forms and differentiation. If they grasp the forms and are attached to differentiation, the Buddha will say that they cannot gain great justice and benefits. Why? Their minds of joyful participation and transference are the faked ones that are mixed with poisons. It is like the delicious food mixed with poisons that will please the less knowledgeable greedy eaters in the beginning but will later bring them pains and even kill them.

(Great Bodhisattva Maitreya suggested that Well-Appearing One should emphasized, in prajna paramita, the merits, virtues, and virtuous roots achieved by various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, and their disciples are all nonexistent and unattainable.)

“Some individuals in reincarnation did not well accept and embrace prajna paramita. They did not contemplate the words and the meanings of the fathomless prajna paramita; they did not read and recite them and understand their essential meanings thoroughly, but said to the great-vehicle practitioners, ‘Come here, good gentlemen, you should assemble all virtuous roots of all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones in the past, future, and present since the time they began to aspire to until attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, turning the wonderful dharma wheel to deliver numberless sentient beings, and entering nirvana without remainder when the dharma is going to extinguish. The virtuous roots also include those accumulated by all Thus-Comers through dwelling in internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; cultivating the

four meditation, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; cultivating the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; and cultivating the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power. The virtuous roots include those accumulated by dignifying and purifying the Buddha lands and assisting the sentient beings to mature. They also include all aggregates of precept, concentration, wisdom, liberation, and the perfect knowledge and the views of liberation; the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times; and the rest of countless and boundless superior merits and virtues possessed by various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones. You gentlemen should also assemble the flawed and flawless virtuous roots possessed by Buddhas' disciples. In addition, you should assemble the virtuous roots of various heavenly deities, dragons, yaksas, gandharvas, asuras, garudas, kimnaras, mahoragas, humanlike nonhumans, and good gentlemen and gentlewomen. Then put them together, measure and reflect on them, and initiate a joyful mind of participation in these virtuous roots and transfer the merits and virtues thus derived along with sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.'

"The so-called joyful mind of participation and transference which adopts attainment as skillful means is like the poisoned food that satisfies eaters' preference but will finally turn out extremely harmful. It is not good participation or transference at all. Why? It has grasped the forms and been attached to differentiation when initiating the mind, which has causes, conditions, intentions, nonsensical arguments, hindrances, and wrongdoings; the only thing it lacks is prajna paramita. The poisoned mind will slander Buddha. It does not say words in accordance with the Buddha's teachings and the correct dharma, or the words stated reasonably. The bodhisattva-path practitioners should not do in this way. Great Virtuous One, how should the good gentlemen and gentlewomen dwelling in bodhisattva vehicle take part in the merits, virtues, and the virtuous roots accumulated by all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones and their disciples in the past, future, and present, and transfer the merits and virtues thus derived? How should good gentlemen and gentlewomen dwelling in great vehicle take part in the virtuous roots accumulated by various Buddhas since

the time of aspiring to until attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, turning the wonderful dharma wheel, and entering nirvana when the dharma is going to extinguish? How should they take part in the virtuous roots accumulated by the Buddhas through the cultivation of prajna, meditation, diligence, forbearance, pure precept, and giving paramitas, and so forth, and the virtuous roots accumulated by good gentlemen and gentlewomen, then transfer the merits and virtues thus derived toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi?”

(Great Bodhisattva Maitreya criticized the participation and transference with attachment to forms and differentiation based on attainment are poisonous and extremely harmful. He asked Well-Appearing One how good gentlepersons dwelling in great vehicle should perform the participation and transference.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One replied, “Great Bodhisattva, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen dwelling in the bodhisattva vehicle would like to cultivate prajna paramita and initiate joyful mind of participation and transference without slandering various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, they should think, ‘As various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones have comprehensively known with their unsurpassed Buddha’s knowledge that the merits, virtues, and the virtuous roots have such self-nature and such forms, and there are such dharmas in which we can joyfully participate in, so I should also joyfully take a part like them. As various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones have comprehensively known with their unsurpassed Buddha’s knowledge that such bliss-inviting karmas should be transferred toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, so I should also transfer in this way.’ The good gentlemen and gentlewomen dwelling in the bodhisattva vehicle should joyfully participate in the merits, virtues, and the virtuous roots of various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones and their disciples, and undertake the transference in this way, then they will not slander the Buddha; rather they will follow the Buddha’s teaching to speak reasonably in accordance with the dharma. The mind of joyful participation and transference of these great bodhisattvas is thus pure and is not poisoned; it is as sweet as nectar tasted by those when entering great nirvana.

(Well-Appearing One replied that the good gentlepersons should stay in the mindfulness of what the Thus-Comers have taught and done to undertake the pure participation and transference.)

“Furthermore, Great Bodhisattva, the good gentlemen and gentlewomen dwelling in bodhisattva vehicle and cultivating prajna paramita should joyfully participate in the merits, virtues, and virtuous roots of various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones and their disciples and further undertake the transference in this way. That is, matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness do not fall into the realm of desire, the realm of form, and the realm of formlessness; because they do not fall into these three realms, they are not in the past, future, and present. The eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere do not fall into the realm of desire, the realm of form, and the realm of formlessness; because they do not fall into the three realms, they are not in the past, future, and present. The sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere do not fall into the realm of desire, the realm of form, and the realm of formlessness; because they do not fall into the three realms, they are not in the past, future, and present. The eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm do not fall into the realm of desire, the realm of form, and the realm of formlessness; because they do not fall into the three realms, they are not in the past, future, and present. The sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm do not fall into the realm of desire, the realm of form, and the realm of formlessness; because they do not fall into the three realms, they are not in the past, future, and present. The eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm do not fall into the realm of desire, the realm of form, and the realm of formlessness; because they do not fall into the three realms, they are not in the past, future, and present. The eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact do not fall into the realm of desire, the realm of form, and the realm of formlessness; because they do not fall into the three realms, they are not in the past, future, and present. The feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact do not fall into the realm of desire, the realm of form, and the realm of formlessness; because they do not fall into the three realms, they are not in the past, future, and present. Prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita do not fall into the realm of desire, the realm of form, and the realm of formlessness; because they do not fall into the three realms, they are not in the past, future, and present. Internal emptiness, external

emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature do not fall into the realm of desire, the realm of form, and the realm of formlessness; because they do not fall into the three realms, they are not in the past, future, and present. The four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path do not fall into the realm of desire, the realm of form, and the realm of formlessness; because they do not fall into the three realms, they are not in the past, future, and present. The Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power do not fall into the realm of desire, the realm of form, and the realm of formlessness; because they do not fall into the three realms, they are not in the past, future, and present. Realness, dharma realm, dharma nature, reality, dharma concentration, dharma dwelling, and the realm of the inconceivable do not fall into the realm of desire, the realm of form, and the realm of formlessness; because they do not fall into the three realms, they are not in the past, future, and present. The aggregates of precept, concentration, wisdom, liberation, and the perfect knowledge and the views of liberation do not fall into the realm of desire, the realm of form, and the realm of formlessness; because they do not fall into the three realms, they are not in the past, future, and present. The perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena do not fall into the realm of desire, the realm of form, and the realm of formlessness; because they do not fall into the three realms, they are not in the past, future, and present. Staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times do not fall into the realm of desire, the realm of form, and the realm of formlessness; because they do not fall into the three realms, they are not in the past, future, and present.

“So too do joyful participation and transference. Why? As the self-nature of the dharmas mentioned above is empty, these dharmas do not fall into the three realms. The joyful participation and transference thus do not fall into the three realms either. It means that the self-nature of various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones is empty, so the Thus-Comers do not fall into the three realms and thus are not absorbed by the three phases of time. The self-nature of the merits and virtues of various Buddhas is empty, so the merits and virtues do not fall into the three realms and thus are not absorbed by the three phases of time. The self-nature of the voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, human beings, and heavenly beings is empty, so the voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, and so

forth do not fall into the three realms and thus are not absorbed by the three phases of time. The self-nature of their virtuous roots is empty, so the virtuous roots do not fall into the three realms and thus are not absorbed by the three phases of time. The self-nature of joyful participation is empty, so the joyful participation does not fall into the three realms and thus is not absorbed by the three phases of time. The self-nature of the dharmas to be transferred is empty, so the dharmas do not fall into the three realms and thus are not absorbed by the three phases of time. The self-nature of the ones who transfer is empty, so the ones who transfer do not fall into the three realms and thus are not absorbed by the three phases of time. As the great bodhisattvas cultivate prajna paramita and accurately know that matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness do not fall into the three realms and are not absorbed by the three phases of time, they should not adopt the forms and attainment of matter, feeling, and so forth as skillful means to undertake joyful participation and transference. Why? The self-nature of matter, feeling, and so forth is without arising. As the dharmas do not arise, they are nonexistent. The nonexistent dharmas cannot joyfully participate in and transfer nonexistent dharmas toward nonexistent dharmas.

“When cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas should accurately know that the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and the conscious sphere do not fall into the three realms and thus are not absorbed by the three phases of time. They should also accurately know that the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere; the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm; the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm; the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm; the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact; and the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact do not fall into the three realms and thus are not absorbed by the three phases of time. They should also accurately know that prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; and the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power do not fall into the three realms and thus are not absorbed by the three phases of time. They should also accurately know that realness, dharma realm, dharma

nature, reality, dharma concentration, dharma dwelling, and the realm of the inconceivable; the aggregates of precept, concentration, wisdom, liberation, and the perfect knowledge and views of liberation; the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; and staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times do not fall into the three realms and thus are not absorbed by the three phases of time. If the great bodhisattvas accurately know this truth, they should not adopt their forms and attainment as skillful means to initiate the mind of joyful participation and undertake the transference toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Why? It is because the self-nature of all these dharmas is without arising. The dharmas without arising are nonexistent. The nonexistent dharmas cannot joyfully participate in and transfer nonexistent dharmas toward nonexistent dharmas. If the great bodhisattvas initiate the mind of joyful participation and undertake transference with such correct knowledge, they do undertake the pure, not poisonous participation and transference. They will finally drink the sweet nectar when entering great nirvana.

(Well-Appearing One said to Great Bodhisattva Maitreya that when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas should accurately know that various dharmas do not fall into the three realms and thus are not absorbed in the three phases of time. Upon knowing this truth, they should not be attached to form and attainment to initiate the mind of participation and transference because the self-nature of the dharmas is without arising and thus is nonexistent.)

“If the good gentlemen and gentlewomen dwelling in the bodhisattva vehicle adopt the forms and attainment as skillful means to initiate a joyful mind of taking part in the merits, virtues, and virtuous roots of various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones and their disciples, and undertake the transference toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, then what they do is an evil one, and they will not be admired by various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones. Because they are not admired by the Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, they are unable to fulfill giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power; the perfect knowledge of

everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; and staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times. Because they cannot fulfill various merits and virtues, they are unable to dignify and purify the Buddha lands and assist the sentient beings to mature. Because they are unable to dignify and purify the Buddha lands and assist the sentient beings to mature, they are unable to attain anuttara-samyak-sambodhi. Why? It is because the joyful participation and transference initiated by them are with forms and thus are poisoned.

(If the bodhisattva-vehicle practitioners adopt forms and attainment as skillful means to cultivate prajna paramita, they will not be able to fulfill various superior holy dharmas; they thus cannot assist the sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify the Buddha lands, and will not attain the unsurpassed bodhi.)

“Furthermore, Great Bodhisattva, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas should think, ‘As all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones have accurately and universally understood that those who follow this path can initiate correct joyful participation and transference, so we should also follow this path to initiate joyful participation and undertake transference toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. If we can so in this way, we certainly will be able to realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.’”

At that time, the World-Honored One praised the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One, “Excellent, excellent, Well-Appearing One! Today you have done what a Buddha should do for great bodhisattvas. You have taught them very well what a correct joyful participation and transference should be; that is, the correct joyful participation and transference should be done by adopting formlessness, nonattainment, nonarising, nonextinction, noncontamination, nonpurification, selfless self-nature, emptiness of particular characteristics, emptiness of self-nature, dharma realm, realness, dharma nature, the nature of nonillusion, reality, and the realm of the inconceivable as skillful means.

(The Buddha praised Well-Appearing One for he had done what a Buddha should do for great bodhisattvas; that is, he had taught that correct participation and transference should be

undertaken based on formlessness, nonattainment, and so forth, and various kinds of emptiness and realness.)

“Well-Appearing One, suppose that all sentient beings in the large threefold thousand-world have achieved the path of the ten virtuous karmas, four meditations, four immeasurable minds, four formlessness, and five supernatural powers. What do you think about this? Will the sentient beings gain many merits and virtues?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “They will gain many merits and virtues, World-Honored One. They will gain many merits and virtues, Well-Gone One.”

The Buddha said, “Well-Appearing One, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen initiate an uncontaminated joyful mind to take part in the merits, virtues, and virtuous roots of various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones and their disciples and undertake transference, the merits and virtues thus gained will be much more than the former ones by countess times. Well-Appearing One, the joyful participation and transference initiated by these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be superior, noblest, highest, most wonderful, subtlest, uppermost, unsurpassed, unequaled, and unequaled equal.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, suppose that all sentient beings in the large threefold thousand-world have attained stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, and self-enlightenment bodhi. Meanwhile, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have for the rest of their lifespans made numberless kinds of clothes, food, drinks, bedding, medicines, and other living supplies as offerings to esteem and acclaim the stream-enters, once-returners, and so forth, and the self-enlightened ones. What do you think about this? Will these good gentlemen and gentlewomen be much blessed because of this cause and condition?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “They will be much blessed, World-Honored One. They will be much blessed, Well-Gone One.”

The Buddha said, “Well-Appearing One, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen initiate an uncontaminated joyful mind to take part in the merits, virtues, and virtuous roots of various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones and their disciples and undertake transference, the merits and virtues thus gained will be much more than

the former ones by countess times. Well-Appearing One, the joyful participation and transference initiated by these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be the superior, noblest, highest, most wonderful, subtlest, uppermost, unsurpassed, unequaled, and unequaled equal.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, suppose that all sentient beings in the large threefold thousand-world have aspired to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. All sentient beings in as many worlds of the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges have made numberless kinds of clothes, food, drinks, bedding, medicines, and other living supplies to esteem and acclaim each great bodhisattva who is aspiring to the unsurpassed bodhi for many great kalpas. What do you think about this? Will these sentient beings be much blessed?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “They will be much blessed, World-Honored One. They will be much blessed, Well-Gone One. The blessings gained by them will be immeasurable, countless, boundless, and limitless, and even beyond one’s ability to measure and imagine. World-Honored One, if these blessings were tangible, they would occupy more space than the number of worlds equivalent to the sands of the Ganges in the ten directions.”

The Buddha said, “Well-Appearing One, excellent, excellent! Their blessings will be as many as you say. Well-Appearing One, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen initiate an uncontaminated joyful mind to take part in the merits, virtues, and virtuous roots of various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones and their disciples and undertake transference, the merits and virtues thus gained will be much more than the former ones by countess times. Well-Appearing One, the joyful participation and transference initiated by these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be the superior, noblest, highest, most wonderful, subtlest, uppermost, unsurpassed, unequaled, and unequaled equal.

“Well-Appearing One, in comparison, the former blessings are much less than the latter ones by one hundredth, one thousandth, and so forth, and one upanisadam-api. Why? Well-Appearing One, those sentient beings have cultivated the path of the ten virtuous karmas, four meditations, four immeasurable minds, four formless concentrations, and five supernatural powers by adopting forms and attainment as skillful means. As they make numberless kinds of clothes, food, drinks, bedding, medicines, and other living supplies to esteem and acclaim the stream-enters, once-returners, nonreturners, arhats, and the self-enlightened ones, they have also

adopted the forms and attainment as skillful means. As they provide numberless clothes, food, drinks, bedding, medicines, other living supplies, and the best entertainments to esteem and acclaim the great bodhisattvas who are pursuing the unsurpassed bodhi for as many kalpas as the sands of the Ganges, the blessings thus derived are all based on forms and attainment.”

(The Buddha explained that these sentient beings would receive fewer blessings because they have relied on forms and attainment.)

At that time, the four great kings of the heaven each led twenty thousand heavenly sons to bow down before the Buddha’s feet, and said with their palms joined, “World-Honored One, these great bodhisattvas have initiated such broad and great mind of joyful participation and transference by adopting formlessness, nonattainment, noncontamination, and nonthinking as skillful means to take part in the merits, virtues, and virtuous roots of various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones and their disciples, and transfer the merits and virtues thus derived toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Their joyful participation and transference are neither dualistic nor nondualistic; they are free from contamination and attachment.”

Meanwhile, Heavenly Emperor Indra and innumerable heavenly sons each made various wonderful wreaths, spread fragrances, powdered incenses, clothes, jewel necklaces, treasure banners, canopies, rarities, and heavenly music as offerings to the Buddha. They bowed down to the ground before the Buddha’s feet, and said with their palms joined, “World-Honored One, these great bodhisattvas have initiated such a broad and great mind of joyful participation and transference. They have adopted formlessness, nonattainment, noncontamination, and nonthinking as skillful means to joyfully take part in the merits, virtues, and virtuous roots of various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones and their disciples, and transfer the merits and virtues thus derived toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Their joyful participation and transference are neither dualistic nor nondualistic; they are free from contamination and attachment.”

In the meantime, the heavenly sons from Heaven of Yama, Heaven of Tusita, Heaven of Enjoying Self-Made Changes, and Heaven of Enjoying Other-Made Changes each came with one thousand family members and made various wonderful wreaths, spread fragrances,

powdered incenses, clothes, jewel necklaces, treasure banners, canopies, rarities, and heavenly music as offerings to the Buddha. They bowed down to the ground before the Buddha's feet, and said with their palms joined, "World-Honored One, these great bodhisattvas have initiated such a broad and great mind of joyful participation and transference. They have adopted formlessness, nonattainment, noncontamination, and nonthinking as skillful means to joyfully take part in the merits, virtues, and virtuous roots of various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones and their disciples, and transfer the merits and virtues thus derived toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Their joyful participation and transference are neither dualistic nor nondualistic; they are free from contamination and attachment."

In the meantime, the king of the Heaven of Great Brahma and numberless hundreds of thousands of koti nayuta Brahma followers came to pay homage to the Buddha. They bowed down on the ground before the Buddha's feet, joined their palms together, and said, "It is very rare and unique, World-Honored One. Because these great bodhisattvas have been absorbed and protected by the expedient skillfulness of prajna paramita, the virtuous roots that they receive are superior to the virtuous roots received by the good gentlemen and gentlewomen without expedient skillfulness."

Meanwhile, innumerable hundreds of thousands of koti nayuta heavenly beings of the Heaven of Extremely Great Brightness and Purity, Heaven of Purity, and so forth, and Heaven of Ultimate Form came to pay homage to the Buddha. They bowed down to the ground before the Buddha's feet, joined their palms together, and said, "It is very rare and unique, World-Honored One. Because these great bodhisattvas have been absorbed and protected by the expedient skillfulness of prajna paramita, the virtuous roots they received are superior to the virtuous roots received by the good gentlemen and gentlewomen without expedient skillfulness."

At that time, the Buddha said to the heavenly beings from the Heaven of Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and Heaven of Ultimate Form, "Suppose that all sentient beings in the large threefold thousand-world have aspired to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and joyfully taken part in the virtuous roots cultivated and accumulated by all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally

Enlightened Ones of the ten directions in the past, future, and present since the time of aspiring to until attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, turning the wonderful dharma wheel to deliver innumerable sentient beings, and entering nirvana when the dharma is going to extinguish. The virtuous roots occurring during this period include those caused by the cultivation correspondent with giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; caused by dwelling in internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; caused by the cultivation of the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; and caused by the cultivation of immeasurable and boundless Buddha dharma. In addition, the sentient beings have also joyfully taken in the virtuous roots of all Buddhas' disciples; the aggregates of precept, concentration, wisdom, liberation, and the perfect knowledge and views of liberation possessed by various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones; the rest of numberless and boundless Buddha dharma; the correct dharma taught by various Thus-Comers; the bliss-inviting karmas caused by practicing giving, observing precept, and cultivation; the stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, self-enlightenment bodhi, and the bodhisattva path of nonarising attained by diligent and attentive cultivation and learning in accordance with Buddha dharma; and the virtuous roots initiated by various sentient beings through the cultivation of giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas. Suppose that these sentient beings have gathered all these virtuous roots together, measure and reflect on them, and then take part in them and transfer the merits and virtues thus derived by adopting forms, attainment, contamination, thinking, and dualism and nondualism as skillful means toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.

“While on the other hand, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have aspired to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. They have joyfully taken part in the virtuous roots of all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones in the past, future, and present within the worlds of the ten directions accumulated since the time of aspiring to until attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, turning the wonderful dharma wheel to deliver innumerable sentient beings, and entering nirvana when the dharma is going to extinguish. These virtuous roots include those caused by the Thus-Comers' cultivation

of giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita. They also include the virtuous roots of the sentient beings initiated and activated by the cultivation of giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas. If these good gentlemen and gentlewomen gather all these virtuous roots together and take part in them by adopting formlessness, nonattainment, noncontamination, nonattachment, nonthinking, and neither dualism nor nondualism as skillful means to transfer the merits and virtues thus derived toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, the joyful participation and transference undertaken by these good gentlemen and gentlewomen are much better than the former ones by one hundred times, one thousand times, one hundred thousand times, and even one upanisadam times. Their joyful participation and transference undertaken in this way are the superior, the best, noblest, highest, subtlest, most wonderful, uppermost, unsurpassed, unequalled, and the unequalled equal.”

(The Buddha pointed out that the joyful participation and transference without grasping form, attainment, contamination, attachment, and thinking and with neither dualism nor nondualism are superior to the ones that are with form, attainment, and so forth. The participation and transference without form and attainment are the highest, noblest, and unequalled of all.)

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, as the Buddha says, the joyful participation and transference undertaken by the good gentlemen and gentlewomen without form, attainment, and so forth are the superior, the best, noblest, highest, subtlest, most wonderful, uppermost, unsurpassed, unequalled, and unequalled equal ones. World-Honored One, why are they the superior, the best, noblest, highest, subtlest, most wonderful, uppermost, unsurpassed, unequalled, and the unequalled equal ones?”

The Buddha replied, “Well-Appearing One, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen have neither grasped nor renounced, neither esteemed nor disdained, and neither attained nor not attained the virtuous roots possessed by all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones, voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, bodhisattvas, and the rest of sentient beings. Fully knowing that all dharmas have no arising and extinction, contamination and purification, increase and decrease, going and coming, combination and separation, and entering and going out, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen think, ‘Like the

realness, dharma realm, dharma nature, the nature of nonillusion, dharma concentration, and dharma dwelling of all dharmas in the past, future, and present, so too I initiate correct joyful participation in the virtuous roots of all dharmas by adopting nonattainment as skillful means, and transfer the merits and virtues thus derived along with all sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.’ Well-Appearing One, because of this reason, I say that such joyful participation and transference are the superior, the best, noblest, highest, subtlest, most wonderful, uppermost, unsurpassed, unequaled, and the unequaled equal of all. They are superior to the rest of participations and transferences by one hundred times, one thousand times, one hundred thousand times, and even one upanisadam times.

(The Buddha explained why such participation and transference without attainment are the superior, best, noblest, and so forth, and the unequaled unequal of all.)

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, suppose that the good gentlemen and gentlewomen dwelling in the bodhisattva vehicle would like to take part in the virtuous roots cultivated by all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones in the worlds of the ten directions in the past, future, and present, accumulated since the time of aspiring to until attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, turning the wonderful dharma wheel to deliver innumerable sentient beings, and entering nirvana when the dharma is going to extinguish. As these good gentlemen and gentlewomen assemble all virtuous roots of the Thus-Comers correspondent with giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita and the numberless and boundless Buddha dharma; the merits, virtues, and the virtuous roots cultivated by voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, and bodhisattvas; and the virtuous roots caused by various bliss-inviting karmas of the sentient beings through practicing giving, observing precepts and other virtuous roots; measure and reflect on them and initiate a joyful mind of participation and transference, then they will think, ‘Matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness are equivalent to liberation. The eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere are equivalent to liberation. The sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere are equivalent to liberation. The eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm are equivalent to liberation. The sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm are equivalent to liberation. The eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm are equivalent to liberation. The eye

contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are equivalent to liberation. The feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are equivalent to liberation. Giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita are equivalent to liberation. Internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are equivalent to liberation. The four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path are equivalent to liberation. And so on, the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power are equivalent to liberation. The aggregate of precepts, aggregate of precept, and so forth, and the aggregate of the perfect knowledge and views of liberation are equivalent to liberation. The definitive understanding of all dharmas is equivalent to liberation. The Buddhas in the past, future, and present are equivalent to liberation. The dharmas in the past, future, and present are equivalent to liberation. All joyful participations are equivalent to liberation. All transferences are equivalent to liberation. The maturation and change of various roots of the Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, and their disciples are equivalent to liberation. The nirvana attained by the Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, and their disciples is equivalent to liberation. The maturation and change of various roots of the self-enlightened ones are equivalent to liberation. The nirvana attained by all self-enlightened ones is equivalent to liberation. The dharma nature of the dharma of various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, the dharma nature of the dharma of the voice-hearers, and the dharma nature of the dharma of the self-enlightened ones are equivalent to liberation. All sentient beings and all dharmas and their dharma natures are equivalent to liberation. Like dharma nature that is without bondage and liberation, contamination and purification, initiation and exhaustion, arising and extinction, and grasping and renunciation, so I should joyfully participate in the merits, virtues, and virtuous roots present before me, and transfer the virtuous roots thus derived along with all sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. When undertaking joyful participation, I do not joyfully participate because there is no dharma in which I can joyfully take part. When undertaking transference, I do not transfer because there is no dharma toward which I can transfer. The joyful participation and transference thus are without turning and rest, arising and extinction.' Well-Appearing One, that is why the joyful participation and transference initiated by these great bodhisattvas are the superior, the noblest, highest, most exquisite, subtlest, uppermost, unsurpassed, unequalled, and the unequalled equal ones among all. Well-

Appearing One, if the great bodhisattvas can achieve such joyful participation and transference, they will realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi before long.

(The Buddha further elaborated why such participation and transference are the superior, best, noblest, and so forth, and the unequaled unequal ones.)

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, suppose that the good gentlemen and gentlewomen aspiring to the great vehicle have made various clothes, food, drinks, bedding, medicines, other living supplies, and the most wonderful music and entertainments as offerings to esteem and acclaim all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones and their disciples in as many worlds of the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges by adopting forms and attainment as skillful means for the rest of their lifespans. As the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones and their disciples pass into nirvana, they will further build tall and wide pagodas with exquisite seven treasures to store and worship the relics. They will walk around the relics clockwise day and night, and again make various most wonderful wreaths, spread fragrances, powdered incenses, clothes, jewel necklaces, treasure banners, canopies, rarities, entertainments, and lamps as offering to esteem and acclaim them. They will also adopt forms and attainment as skillful means to cultivate diligently giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna as well as other virtuous roots. On the other hand, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen aspiring to the great vehicle have adopted formlessness and nonattainment as skillful means to cultivate the virtuous roots correspondent with giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita. They have also expediently and skillfully taken part in the merits, virtues, and virtuous roots and transfer the virtuous roots thus derived along with all sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. In comparison, the merits and virtues gained by the good gentlemen and gentlewomen who have undertaken the participation and transference expediently and skillfully in accordance with prajna paramita will be much more than the former ones by one hundred, one thousand, and even one upanisadam times. That is why I say that the participation and transference based on formlessness and nonattainment are the superior, the noblest, highest, most exquisite, subtlest, uppermost, the unsurpassed, unequaled, and the unequaled equal ones among all. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, the great bodhisattvas who are aspiring to the great vehicle should adopt formlessness and nonattainment as skillful

means to assiduously cultivate and learn the virtuous roots correspondent with giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas. They should also initiate joyful participation in the merits, virtues, and the virtuous roots of various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones and their disciples with the expedient skillfulness of prajna paramita, and transfer the virtuous roots thus derived along with all sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Well-Appearing One, if the great bodhisattvas can do in this way, they will be able to realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly, so that they will be able to turn the wonderful dharma wheel and bring benefits and happiness to all sentient beings.”

(The Buddha concluded that the great bodhisattvas should initiate joyful participation in the merits, virtues, and virtuous roots of all Thus-Comers and their disciples through the expedient skillfulness of prajna paramita, characterized by formlessness and nonattainment. They will transfer the merits and virtues thus derived along with sentient beings toward the unsurpassed bodhi equally. By adhering to this approach, they will achieve the unsurpassed bodhi, turn the exquisite dharma wheel, and bring benefits and happiness to all sentient beings soon.)

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Chapter 38

The Grand Master

(In the Second Assembly)

At that time, the long-lived sage Sariputra said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, prajna paramita can illuminate us because of the purity in the final analysis. Prajna paramita is worthy of respect because various heavenly beings, human beings, and so forth have paid homage to esteem it. Prajna paramita is uncontaminated because no dharma in the world can pollute it. Prajna paramita is far away from all bewilderments of the three realms because it can remove all vexations and the darkness caused by incorrect views. Prajna paramita is the leader of all dharmas because it is the noblest and most dignified factor for enlightenment. Prajna paramita can bring us peace and comfort because it can terminate all terrors, pressures, and disasters permanently. Prajna paramita can bring us brightness because it can absorb various sentient beings and assist them to attain the five eyes. Prajna paramita can show us the middle way because it guides the ones going astray back on the path. Prajna paramita can well activate the perfect knowledge of all phenomena because it terminates all enduring vexations of disposition permanently. Prajna paramita is the mother of various great bodhisattvas because all Buddha dharma arises from it. Prajna paramita has neither arising nor extinction because its particular characteristics are empty. Prajna paramita is apart from all kinds of birth and death because it is neither permanent nor impermanent. Prajna paramita can provide reliable basis because it gives various sentient beings the gem of the dharma. Prajna paramita can fulfill the Buddha’s ten abilities because it is able to subjugate all arguments against it. Prajna paramita can turn the unsurpassed wonderful dharma wheel with the three steps in twelve forms because it can keep all dharmas from regression. Prajna paramita can demonstrate that various dharmas have no inverted self-natures because it can manifest the emptiness of selfless self-nature. World-Honored One, how should bodhisattvas and bodhisattva aspirants, voice-hearers and voice-hearer aspirants, and self-enlightened ones and self-enlightenment bodhi aspirants dwell in prajna paramita?”

(After praising the superior powers of prajna paramita, Sariputra asked Buddha how great bodhisattvas and bodhisattva-path aspirants, voice-hearers and voice-hearer aspirants, and self-enlightened ones and self-enlightenment bodhi aspirants should dwell in prajna paramita.)

The Buddha replied, “Sariputra, as various sentient beings dwell in prajna paramita, they should make offerings and pay homage to it as they will do to grand master. Why? Sariputra, grand master is not different from prajna paramita, and prajna paramita is not different from grand master. Grand master is prajna paramita, and prajna paramita is grand master. Sariputra, all Thus-Comers, Ones Worth of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones arise because of prajna paramita. Sariputra, all great bodhisattvas, self-enlightened ones, arhats, and so forth, and stream-enters appear because of prajna paramita. Sariputra, the path of the ten virtuous karmas appears because of prajna paramita. Sariputra, all four meditations, four immeasurable minds, four formless concentrations, and five powers appear because of prajna paramita. Sariputra, all giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita appear because of prajna paramita. Sariputra, all internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; the Thus-Comer’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power, and well as the perfect knowledge of all phenomena appear because of prajna paramita.”

(The Buddha stated explained why all holy effects aspirants should respect and make offerings to prajna paramita as they do to grand master.)

Meanwhile, Heavenly Emperor Indra thought, “Why did Sariputra ask Buddha this question?” After having this thought, he said to Sariputra, “Why did the great virtuous one ask Buddha this question?”

Sariputra said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, “Kausika, it is because of the absorption of prajna paramita that great bodhisattvas can joyfully, expediently, and skillfully take part in all merits, virtues, and virtuous roots accumulated by all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones. The Thus-Comers have accumulated them since the time of aspiring to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi until attaining it, turning the wonderful dharma wheel to deliver innumerable sentient beings, and entering the nirvana

without remainder when the dharma is going to disappear. The great bodhisattvas thus can also take part joyfully in the merits, virtues, and the virtuous roots caused by various voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, and the rest of the sentient beings. They will put all these merits, virtues, and virtuous roots together, measure them, and joyfully participate in them by adopting formlessness and nonattainment as skillful means to transfer the merits and virtues thus derived along with all sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. It is because of this cause and condition that I asked this question.

(Sariputra explained why he asked Buddha the right way for holy effects aspirants to dwell in prajna paramita.)

“Furthermore, Kausika, the prajna paramita that various great bodhisattvas learn is superior to giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, and meditation paramitas by innumerable times. Kausika, without the guidance of a cleared-sighted person, the blind cannot stay on the path without going astray, let alone to travel to as far as the capital of the country. The blind giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, and meditation paramitas cannot go straight on the correct path of bodhisattva unless they are guided by the pure-sighted prajna paramita, let alone to reach as far as the city of the perfect knowledge of everything.

“Furthermore, Kausika, the five paramitas, namely giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, can see clearly if they are absorbed and supported by prajna paramita. They can further go to the other shore of liberation as they are absorbed and supported by prajna paramita.”

(The five paramitas are like the blind; they cannot go on the right path to the other shore without the guidance of the clear-sighted prajna paramita.)

Meanwhile, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the long-lived sage Sariputra, “Great Virtuous One, you said that because the five paramitas are absorbed by prajna paramita, they are named ‘reaching the other shore’. Why don’t you say that because the five paramitas are absorbed by giving paramita or by meditation paramita that they are named ‘reaching the other shore’? Why do you merely admire prajna paramita?”

Sariputra replied, “As you say, these six paramitas indeed can assist each other to reach the other shore, but among all paramitas, prajna paramita has the greatest power of expedient skillfulness, so it can fulfill the cultivation of giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, and meditation paramitas quickly. Therefore, prajna paramita is the superior, the best, noblest, highest, subtlest, most exquisite, uppermost, unsurpassed, unequaled, and unequaled equal among all paramitas. It is because of this cause and condition that prajna paramita is superior to the other five paramitas.”

(Sariputra explained why prajna paramita is superior to the other five paramits.)

At that time, Sariputra asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, how should great bodhisattvas elicit prajna paramita?”

The Buddha replied, “Sariputra, the great bodhisattvas should elicit prajna paramita without eliciting matter, feeling, thinking, and so forth, and consciousness. They should elicit prajna paramita without eliciting the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere; the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere; the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm; the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm; the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm; the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact. The great bodhisattvas should elicit prajna paramita without eliciting giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power; the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. The great bodhisattvas should elicit prajna paramita without eliciting all dharmas.”

(The Buddha instructed that the great bodhisattvas should not elicit the five aggregates, six inner and outer spheres, and so forth, and all dharmas when eliciting prajna paramita.)

Meanwhile, Sariputra asked, “World-Honored One, why should great bodhisattvas elicit prajna paramita without eliciting matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and all dharmas?”

The Buddha replied, “Sariputra, matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and all dharmas have no making, arising, attainment, decay, and self-nature, so the great bodhisattvas should elicit prajna paramita without eliciting matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and all dharmas.”

(The Buddha explained that as all dharmas have no making, arising, attainment, decay, and self-nature, great bodhisattvas should not elicit them when eliciting prajna paramita.)

In the meantime, Sariputra asked the Buddha again, “World-Honored One, as great bodhisattvas elicit prajna paramita in this way, with what dharmas will prajna paramita combine?”

The Buddha replied, “Sariputra, when great bodhisattvas elicit prajna paramita in this way, prajna paramita will not combine with any dharma. Prajna paramita is so named because it does not combine with any dharma.”

Sariputra asked, “With what dharmas does prajna paramita not combine?”

The World-Honored One replied, “Prajna paramita does not combine with the virtuous dharmas and the not virtuous dharma. It does not combine with the dharmas of the world and the dharmas beyond the world. It does not combine with the guilty dharmas and the not guilty dharmas. It does not combine with the conditioned dharmas and the unconditioned dharmas. Why? Sariputra, prajna paramita does not attain any dharma, so we should not say that it can combine with any dharma.”

(The Buddha said that prajna paramita does not combine with any dharmas because it does not attain any dharma.)

In the meantime, Heavenly Emperor Indra asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, does prajna paramita combine with the perfect knowledge of all phenomena?”

The Buddha said, “No, Kausika, prajna paramita does not combine with the perfect knowledge of all phenomena because it does not attain the perfect knowledge of all phenomena.

“World-Honored One, why does prajna paramita not attain the perfect knowledge of all phenomena and thus not combine with this perfect knowledge?”

“Kausika, it is because prajna paramita does not attain or combine with the name, form, and actions of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena.”

“World-Honored One, why is it also said that prajna paramita can attain and combine with the perfect knowledge of all phenomena?”

“Kausika, because prajna paramita does not receive or grasp, dwell in or separate from, and become attached to or renounce the name, form, and so forth of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Although it is said that prajna paramita combines with and attain this perfect knowledge, it does not actually do so.”

“Kausika, prajna paramita does not receive or grasp, dwell in or separate from, and become attached to or renounce the names, forms, and so forth of all dharmas. Although it is said that prajna paramita combines with and attain them, it does not actually do so.”

(The Buddha further explained why prajna paramita does not combine with and attain the dharmas although it is said that prajna paramita does.)

Meanwhile, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the Buddha, “It is very rare and unusual, World-Honored One. Prajna paramita is present in front of us because all dharmas have no arising and extinction, action and achievement, attainment and decay, and self-nature. Prajna paramita encompasses combination and attainment, although it does not actually possess them. This fundamental meaning is inconceivable.”

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, if the great bodhisattvas cultivate prajna paramita and think, ‘Such prajna paramita combines with various dharmas or does not combine with various dharmas,’ then they have discarded and stayed far away from prajna paramita.”

The Buddha said, “Well-Appearing One, we may further say that if the great bodhisattvas cultivate prajna paramita and think, ‘Such prajna paramita is nonexistent, unreal, not solid, and not at ease,’ then these great bodhisattvas have discarded and stayed far away from prajna paramita.”

(But the Buddha warned that when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas should not think that prajna paramita combines with or not combines with the dharmas; or prajna paramita is nonexistent, unreal, and so forth.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, as believing in prajna paramita, do the great bodhisattvas also believe in other dharmas?”

The Buddha replied, “Well-Appearing One, as believing in prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas do not believe in matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. They do not believe in the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres. They do not believe in the sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres. They do not believe in the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms. They do not believe in the sight, sphere, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms. They do not believe in the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, nose consciousness realm, tongue consciousness realm, body consciousness realm, and conscious consciousness realm. They do not believe in the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts. They do not believe in the feelings produced by eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts. They do not believe in giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas. They do not believe in internal emptiness, external emptiness, internal-external emptiness, emptiness of emptiness, emptiness of space, emptiness of ultimate truth, emptiness of conditioned phenomena, emptiness of unconditioned reality, emptiness in the final analysis, emptiness of nontemporality, emptiness of deconstruction and nondeconstruction, emptiness of original nature, emptiness of particular and common characteristics, emptiness of all dharmas, emptiness of nonattainment, emptiness of selflessness, emptiness of self-nature, and emptiness of selfless self-nature. They do not believe in the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, four bases of power, five roots, five powers, seven factors for enlightenment, and noble eightfold path. They do not believe in the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, great loving-

kindness, great compassion, great joy, great equanimity, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power. They do not believe in the stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, and arhat effect. They do not believe in the self-enlightenment bodhi. They do not believe in all great bodhisattva actions and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of various Buddhas. They do not believe in the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena."

In the meantime, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "World-Honored One, why do the great bodhisattvas not believe in matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena when believing in prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied, "Well-Appearing One, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas contemplate that matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge as unattainable, so when believing in prajna paramita, they do not believe in matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena."

(The Buddha explained as believing in prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas do not believe in various dharmas, including the five aggregates, six inner and outer spheres, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge because they have contemplated that all dharmas are unattainable.)

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, "World-Honored One, such prajna paramita is the great paramita."

The Buddha asked, "Well-Appearing One, why do you say that such prajna paramita is the great paramita?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "World-Honored One, prajna paramita does not make matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness large or small. It does not make the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere large or small. It does not make the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere large or small. It does not make the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm large or small. It does not make the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm large or small. It does not make the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness

realm large or small. It does not make the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact large or small. It does not make giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita large or small. It does not make internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature large or small. It does not make the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path large or small. It does not make the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power large or small. It does not make the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of various Buddha large or small. It does not make the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones large or small. World-Honored One, because of this cause and condition, I say that prajna paramita is the great paramita.

“Furthermore, World-Honored One, prajna paramita does not make matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness, and so forth, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi gather or separate. It does not make various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones gather or separate either. World-Honored One, because of this cause and condition, I say that prajna paramita is the great paramita.

“Furthermore, World-Honored One, prajna paramita neither correctly nor incorrectly perceives matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas. It neither correctly nor incorrectly perceives various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones. World-Honored One, because of this cause and condition, I say that prajna paramita is the great paramita.

“Furthermore, World-Honored One, prajna paramita does not make matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi broad or narrow. It does not make various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones broad or narrow either. World-Honored One, because of this cause and condition, I say that prajna paramita is the great paramita.

“Furthermore, World-Honored One, prajna paramita does not make matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas strong or weak. It does not make various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of

Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones strong or weak either. World-Honored One, because of this cause and condition, I say that prajna paramita is the great paramita.

(Well-Appearing One said that prajna paramita does not make matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and various superior holy dharmas, the perfect knowledge, the unsurpassed bodhi, and the Thus-Comer large or small, gather or separate, broad or narrow, and strong or weak. Prajna paramita neither correctly nor incorrectly perceives these dharmas. Therefore, prajna paramita is the great paramita.)

“Furthermore, World-Honored One, some novice great bodhisattvas have just aspired to the great vehicle relying on prajna, meditation, and so forth, and giving paramitas. They think, ‘Prajna paramita does not make matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, as well as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones large or small. Prajna paramita does not make matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, as well as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones gather or separate. Prajna paramita neither correctly nor incorrectly perceives matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, as well as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones. Prajna paramita does not make matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, as well as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones broad or narrow. Prajna paramita does not make matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, as well as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones strong or weak.’ World-Honored One, these great bodhisattvas do not really practice prajna paramita because of having these thoughts.

“Furthermore, World-Honored One, some novice great bodhisattvas have just aspired to the great vehicle relying on prajna, meditation, and so forth, and giving paramitas. They think, ‘Prajna paramita makes matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, as well as

the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones large or small. Prajna paramita makes matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, as well as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones gather or separate. Prajna paramita correctly or incorrectly perceives matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, as well as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones. Prajna paramita makes matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, as well as the unsurpassed, perfect, as well as the universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones broad or narrow. Prajna paramita makes matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, as well as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones strong or weak.’ World-Honored One, these great bodhisattvas do not really practice prajna paramita because of having these thoughts.

“Furthermore, World-Honored One, some novice great bodhisattvas have just aspired to the great vehicle without relying on prajna, meditation, and so forth, and giving paramitas. They think, ‘Prajna paramita does not make matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, as well as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones large or small. Prajna paramita does not make matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, as well as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones gather or separate. Prajna paramita neither correctly nor incorrectly perceives matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, as well as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones. Prajna paramita does not make matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, as well as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones broad or narrow. Prajna paramita does not make matter, feeling, thinking,

action, consciousness, and so forth, as well as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones strong or weak.’ World-Honored One, these great bodhisattvas do not really practice prajna paramita because of having these thoughts.

“Furthermore, World-Honored One, some novice great bodhisattvas have just aspired to the great vehicle without relying on prajna, meditation, and so forth, and giving paramitas. They think, ‘Prajna paramita makes matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, as well as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones large or small. Prajna paramita makes matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, as well as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones gather or separate. Prajna paramita correctly or incorrectly perceives matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, as well as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones. Prajna paramita makes matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, as well as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones broad or narrow. Prajna paramita makes matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, as well as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones strong or weak.’ World-Honored One, these great bodhisattvas do not really practice prajna paramita because of having these thoughts. Why?

(Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha that as the novice great bodhisattvas have just aspired to the great vehicle either relying on or without relying on the six paramitas, but think that prajna paramita makes or does not make the five aggregates, and so forth, and the Thus-Comer large or small, gather or separate, and so forth; or think that prajna paramita correctly and incorrectly perceives, or neither correctly nor incorrectly perceives the five aggregates, and so forth, and the Thus-Comer, then they do not really practice the great vehicle because of having these thoughts.)

“World-Honored One, some great bodhisattvas think, ‘Prajna paramita makes or does not make matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, as well as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones large or small. Prajna paramita makes or does not make matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, as well as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones gather or separate. Prajna paramita correctly or incorrectly perceives, and neither correctly nor incorrectly perceives matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, as well as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones. Prajna paramita makes or does not make matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, as well as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones broad or narrow. Prajna paramita makes or does not make matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, as well as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones strong or weak. World-Honored One, all these are not within the same domain of prajna paramita.

“World-Honored One, some great bodhisattvas think, ‘Prajna paramita makes or does not make matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, as well as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones large or small. Prajna paramita makes or does not make matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, as well as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones gather or separate. Prajna paramita correctly or incorrectly perceives, and neither correctly nor incorrectly perceives matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, as well as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones. Prajna paramita makes or does not make matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, as well as the unsurpassed, perfect, and

universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones broad or narrow. Prajna paramita makes or does not make matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, as well as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones strong or weak.’ These great bodhisattvas are named having great attainment. They do not really practice prajna paramita. Why? It is because the thought of attainment cannot lead one to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. But why?

“World-Honored One, since sentient beings do not have arising, we should contemplate prajna paramita as without arising. Since matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness do not have arising, we should contemplate prajna paramita as without arising. And so forth, since the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi does not have arising, we should contemplate prajna paramita as without arising. Since all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones do not have arising, we should contemplate prajna paramita as without arising.

“World-Honored One, since the sentient beings do not have self-nature, we should contemplate prajna paramita as without self-nature. Since matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness do not have self-nature, we should contemplate prajna paramita as without self-nature. And so forth, since the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas does not have self-nature, we should contemplate prajna paramita as without self-nature. Since all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones do not have self-nature, we should contemplate prajna paramita as without self-nature.

“World-Honored One, since the sentient beings are nonexistent, we should contemplate prajna paramita as nonexistent. Since matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are nonexistent, we should contemplate prajna paramita as nonexistent. And so forth, since the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of various Buddhas is nonexistent, we should contemplate prajna paramita as nonexistent. Since all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones are nonexistent, we should contemplate prajna paramita as nonexistent.

“World-Honored One, since the sentient beings are empty, we should contemplate prajna paramita as empty. Since matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are empty, we should contemplate prajna paramita as empty. And so forth, since the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of various Buddhas is empty, we should contemplate prajna paramita as empty. Since all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones are empty, we should contemplate prajna paramita as empty.

“World-Honored One, since the sentient beings are far away, we should contemplate prajna paramita as far away. Since matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are far away, we should contemplate prajna paramita as far away. And so forth, since the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of various Buddhas is far away, we should contemplate prajna paramita as far away. Since all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones are far away, we should contemplate prajna paramita as far away.

“World-Honored One, since the sentient beings are unattainable, we should contemplate prajna paramita as unattainable. Since matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are unattainable, we should contemplate prajna paramita as unattainable. And so forth, since the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal Bodhi of various Buddhas is unattainable, we should contemplate prajna paramita as unattainable. Since all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones are unattainable, we should contemplate prajna paramita as unattainable.

“World-Honored One, since the sentient beings are inconceivable, we should contemplate prajna paramita as inconceivable. Since matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are inconceivable, we should contemplate prajna paramita as inconceivable. And so forth, since the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of various Buddhas is inconceivable, we should contemplate prajna paramita as inconceivable. Since all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones are inconceivable, we should contemplate prajna paramita as inconceivable.

“World-Honored One, since the sentient beings do not have no decay and extinction, we should contemplate prajna paramita as without decay and extinction. Since matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness do not have decay and extinction, we should contemplate

prajna paramita as without decay and extinction. And so forth, since the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of various Buddhas does not have decay and extinction, we should contemplate prajna paramita as without decay and extinction. Since all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones do not have decay and extinction, we should contemplate prajna paramita as without decay and extinction.

“World-Honored One, since the sentient beings do not have awakening, we should contemplate prajna paramita as without awakening. Since matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness do not have awakening, we should contemplate prajna paramita as without awakening. And so forth, since the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of various Buddhas does not have awakening, we should contemplate prajna paramita as without awakening. Since all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones do not have awakening, we should contemplate prajna paramita as without awakening.

“World-Honored One, since the sentient beings do not achieve abilities, we should contemplate prajna paramita as without abilities. Since matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness do not achieve abilities, we should contemplate prajna paramita as without abilities. And so forth, since the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of various Buddhas does not achieve abilities, we should contemplate prajna paramita as without abilities. Since all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones do not achieve abilities, we should contemplate prajna paramita as without abilities.”

(Well-Appearing One further said that since the sentient beings, the five aggregates, and so forth, and the unsurpassed bodhi and Thus-Comers do not have arising, self-nature, and are nonexistent, empty, far away, unattainable, and inconceivable, the great-vehicle practitioners should contemplate prajna paramita as without arising, without self-nature, nonexistent, empty, far away, unattainable, and inconceivable. Therefore, the great bodhisattvas should not have the thought of attainment when cultivating prajna paramita.)

Chapter 39

The Hells

Section 1

(In the Second Assembly)

At that time, the long-lived sage Sariputra asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, where are the great bodhisattvas having deep belief in and understanding of prajna paramita from? How long have they aspired to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi? How many Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones have they stayed close and made offerings to? How long have they cultivated giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita? How do they believe in and understand the fathomless essential meanings of prajna paramita?”

The Buddha replied to Sariputra, “The great bodhisattvas believing in and understanding prajna paramita are from the assemblies held in as many worlds of the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges in which innumerable, countless, and boundless Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones are teaching the correct dharma. These great bodhisattvas have aspired to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi for countless and boundless hundreds of thousands of koti nayuta kalpas. They have stayed close and made offerings to immeasurable, unimaginable, and measureless Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones. Since the time of aspiring to the bodhi, they have constantly cultivated and learned diligently giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas for immeasurable, countless, and boundless hundreds of thousands of koti nayuta kalpas. Sariputra, when seeing and hearing prajna paramita, they think, ‘I am seeing and hearing the grand master.’ Sariputra, these great bodhisattvas have adopted formlessness and nonattainment as skillful means, so they are able to believe in and understand the fathomless essential meanings of prajna paramita.”

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, as the Buddha says, when seeing and hearing prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas think, ‘I am seeing the grand master. I am hearing the grand master.’ World-Honored One, I am wondering, can the fathomless prajna paramita be seen and heard?”

The Buddha replied, “Well-Appearing One, the fathomless prajna paramita cannot be heard or seen. Why? Well-Appearing One, the fathomless prajna paramita is the dharma that cannot be seen or heard. Well-Appearing One, prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita cannot be seen or heard because the dharmas are dull. Internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature cannot be seen or heard because the dharmas are dull. The four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and the noble eightfold path cannot be seen or heard because the dharmas are dull. The Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power cannot be seen or heard because the dharmas are dull. The unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of various Buddhas cannot be seen or heard because the dharmas are dull. All Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones cannot be seen or heard because the dharmas are dull.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “World-Honored One, should great bodhisattvas practice the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi for a very long time before they are able to cultivate and learn the fathomless prajna paramita?”

The Buddha replied, “Well-Appearing One, let us talk about your question from various perspectives. Well-Appearing One, some great bodhisattvas have been able to cultivate and learn the fathomless prajna paramita and meditation, diligence, forbearance, pure precept, and giving paramitas since the time of beginning to aspire to the bodhi. These great bodhisattvas have expedient skillfulness, so they do not destroy the dharmas or see the dharmas increase or decrease. They have never been far away from the correct actions in accordance with giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita. They have never been far away from the Buddhas and great bodhisattvas. They have traveled from one Buddha country to the other, made various most wonderful offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim the Buddhas and great bodhisattvas. They can do these freely as they wish. They have also been able

to foster the virtuous roots that they have planted in various Thus-Comers' places and fulfill them quickly. Wherever the great bodhisattvas are reborn, they will not be given birth through a mother's womb. Their minds are always free from all kinds of vexations. They are always dedicated to only one vehicle. These great bodhisattvas have never stayed away from the superior and unique supernatural powers and thus are able to travel from one Buddha country to the other, assist the sentient beings to grow and mature, and dignify and purify the Buddha lands. Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas can correctly cultivate and learn the fathomless prajna paramita."

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Chapter 39

The Hells

Section 2

(In the Second Assembly)

“Well-Appearing One, some great bodhisattvas had visited hundreds, thousands, or hundreds of thousands of Buddhas and cultivated giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna across various Buddhas’ and their disciples’ places. Because these great bodhisattvas had adopted attainment as skillful means, they were unable to cultivate and learn the fathomless prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita. Well-Appearing One, when hearing the fathomless prajna paramita in the assembly, these great bodhisattvas would stand up from their seats and left. Well-Appearing One, as these great bodhisattvas disdained such fathomless prajna paramita, they also disdained the Buddhas. As they left the fathomless prajna paramita, they also left the Buddhas. Well-Appearing One, today in this assembly some of you who do not like what I say will leave. Why? These good gentlemen and gentlewomen in their previous lives had also left the assembly when hearing the teaching of the fathomless prajna paramita. They will do it again in this life because of the power of habit.

“Well-Appearing One, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen do not act, speak, and think in accord with the fathomless prajna paramita; their ignorance grow, and guilty karmas caused by wisdom abuse increase. When hearing the fathomless prajna paramita, they will slander, hinder, and discard it. As you know, to slander, hinder, and discard prajna paramita is equal to slandering, hindering, and discarding the perfect knowledge of all phenomena of the Buddhas in the past, future, and present. When slandering, hindering, and discarding the perfect knowledge of all phenomena of the Buddhas in the past, future, and present, they will make negative karmas to damage the correct dharma and thus will fall into great hells to experience various extremely intense pains and tortures; they will suffer for hundreds of years, thousands of

years, hundreds of thousands of years, hundreds of koti years, thousands of koti years, hundreds of thousands of koti years, and hundreds of thousands of koti nayuta years. Due to their heavy sins, they will be driven from one great hell to another, suffering severely before the arising of fire, water, and wind disasters. As their sins are not cleared, they will be reborn again in the worlds of other directions to experience similar tortures for numberless years after the arising of the fire, water, and wind disasters in this world. They thus will shift from one great hell to the other and suffer severely before the arising of the fire, water, and wind disasters in that world because of their heavy sins. If their sins remain when the fire, water, and wind disasters arise, they will be reborn in the worlds of other directions to experience similar extremely radical pains and tortures from one great hell to the other until the arising of the fire, water, and wind disasters in those worlds. They thus will be driven through the great hells in the ten directions and suffer extremely harsh pains and tortures. If their sins are not cleared when the fire, water, and wind disasters arise in these worlds, they will be reborn in the great hells of this world to go through one hell to the other and suffer severely until the arising of the fire, water, and wind disasters. When the disasters arise in these worlds and their sins remain unexhausted, they will be reborn in the rest of worlds and experience various radical pains in the great hells in the worlds of the ten directions.

(The Buddha taught how slandering prajna paramita would result in severe suffering in great hells across various worlds of the ten directions, and many kalpas would pass to exhaust their sins.)

“After reincarnating for innumerable kalpas, their negative karmas caused by damaging correct dharma become lessen, so they get out of the hells to be reborn in the realm of the animals. They will stay in this realm for many years, hundreds of years, thousands of years, and so forth, and hundreds of thousands of koti nayuta years and suffer from killing, oppression, and fright as animals usually encounter. With remaining karmas, they will be driven from one perilous place to another. Before the fire, water, and the wind disasters arise, they will experience all kinds of cruel injuries, killing, and terrors as animals usually encounter. As the three kinds of disasters appear in the world and their negative karmas are not yet removed, they will be reborn as animals in another world for many years, hundreds of years, thousands of years, and so forth, and hundreds of thousands of koti nayuta years. They will be driven from one

perilous place to the other and suffer from killing, injury, and oppression before the fire, water, and the wind disasters arise. If their negative karma remain after the arising of the three kalpas of disasters, they will be reborn again as animals in another world in the rest of the directions for many years, hundreds of years, thousands of years, and so forth, and hundreds of thousands of koti nayuta years. Carrying the remaining negative karma, they will be driven from one perilous place to the other and suffered from killing, injury, and oppression before the arising of the fire, water, and wind disaster. Thus, they will be driven through the rest of the worlds in the ten directions to suffer oppression, injury, and killing. As the three kinds of disasters appear in the rest of the worlds in the ten directions and their negative karmas are not yet removed, they will be reborn into this barely tolerable world as animals, and again they will be driven from one perilous place to the other and experience all kinds of suffering caused by killing, injury, and oppression before the fire, water, and the wind disasters arise. As the destruction of this world comes when the three disasters appear, their negative karmas are not completely removed; they will be reborn in another world and continue to suffer various kinds of pains in the realm of animals in the worlds of the ten directions.

“After cyclic repetition of suffering in numberless kalpas, their negative karmas caused by damaging correct dharma now become slighter, so they get rid of the realm of animals and are reborn in the realm of the ghosts, in which they will suffer from hunger, thirst, and so forth for many years, hundreds of years, thousands of years, and so forth, and hundreds of thousands of koti nayuta years. They will drift from one country of hungry ghosts to the other before the fire, water, and the wind disasters arise. As the three kinds of disasters of this world occur and their negative karmas persist, they will be reborn in the realm of hungry ghosts in another world and suffer for many years, hundreds of years, thousands of years, and so forth, and hundreds of thousands of koti nayuta years. They will be driven from one country of hungry ghosts to the other, and suffer severely from hunger, thirst, and so forth before the fire, water, and wind disasters arise. As the world begins to decay when the three disasters occur, and their negative karmas are not cleared yet, they will be reborn in the worlds in other directions, to experience the same suffering in the realm of the ghosts for many years, hundreds of years, thousands of years, and so forth, and hundreds of thousands of koti nayuta years. They again will be driven from one country of hungry ghosts to the other and suffer from hunger, thirst, and so forth before the fire,

water, and the wind disasters arise. They thus will pass through the rest of worlds in the ten directions to experience all kinds of suffering in the realm of the hungry ghosts. As those worlds in the ten directions finally begin to decay caused by three disasters, and their negative karmas are not fully removed, they will be reborn in other worlds in the ten directions to experience similar suffering in the realms of hungry ghosts.

“After numberless kalpas in reincarnation, their negative karmas caused by damaging correct dharma nearly come to an end. Then they will get rid of the realm of hungry ghosts and be reborn as humans in lower classes: in a family of the blind, the deaf, candāla (prison guard, butcher, and so forth), or pulkasa (droppings collector, corpses carrier, and so forth). They will be reborn in a family with incorrect views or killing animals for profit. They will be born with bodies deficient in eye, ear, nose, tongue, hand, or foot; born blind, deaf, or dumb; with ulcers or scabies. They are insane, difficult in urination, hunchbacked, short and ugly or have contracted hands and feet. Their physical organs are not complete, and their appearances are dark and yellow. They are poor, haggard, stubborn, and noisy; they lack common sense; whatever they do will be laughed at and held in contempt. They will be reborn into a place where the names of the Buddha, the dharma, the sangha, the bodhisattva, or the self-enlightened one cannot be heard. They will be reborn in a dark and closed world where there is no light day and night, or full of dangers, defilements, and poisonous thorns. Why? The negative karmas made by them are extremely deep-rooted and heavy, and the undesirable painful effects thus derived are too many to describe completely.”

At that time, Sariputra asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, the Thus-Come often says that the heaviest sins are the five grave sins. Now you are talking about the sixth grave sin of damaging the correct dharma. Is it the same as the five grave sins which will be punished without interruption?”

(The five grave sins include killing mother, killing father, killing arhat, breaking the harmonious sangha, and shedding Buddha’s blood. Those who commit these grave sins will be punished incessantly, including the time of punishment, the duration of suffering, the tortures to physical bodies, the torturing tools, and the time of reincarnation will last without interruption.)

The Buddha replied, “Sariputra, doing harm to and destroying correct dharma is the most serious negative karma, heavier and worse than the five grave sins. Some hearing the fathomless prajna paramita will not believe it; they will further slander prajna paramita, saying, ‘These words are not taught and elaborated by various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones. These words are not the dharma, the laws, or the teachings given by the grand master. Therefore, we should not learn them.’ Those who slander the dharma also slander prajna paramita. What they do will encourage other sentient beings to slander it. They not only destroy their own bodies but also teach others to destroy their bodies. They will not only drink poisons themselves but also encourage others to drink poisons. They will not only lose the enjoyable effects of liberation being reborn in heaven but also teach others to lose the same enjoyable effects. They will not only walk on the fires of the hells themselves but also make others walk on the fires of the hells. They will not only avoid believing in and understanding the fathomless prajna paramita themselves but also make others avoid believing in and understanding the fathomless prajna paramita. They will not only drown themselves in the ocean of pain but also make others drown in the ocean of pain.

(The Buddha explained why the sin of destroying correct dharma is heavier than the five grave sins.)

“Sariputra, I will not allow the slanders of the correct dharma to hear the name of the fathomless prajna paramita, let alone hear my teaching. Sariputra, I will not allow the good gentlemen and gentlewomen dwelling in bodhisattva vehicle to hear the names of the slanders, let alone see them. I absolutely will not allow those who slander the correct dharma to live together with these good gentlemen and gentlewomen. Why? Sariputra, those who defame the fathomless prajna paramita are named correct dharma destroyers. They are like snails loving to dig into dark and dirty mud. They will not only pollute themselves but also others. They are like smelly excrement. Those who believe in the destroyers of correct dharma will suffer great pains as mentioned above. Sariputra, all those who try to destroy and do harm to the fathomless prajna paramita are the species suffering in hells, the realm of animals, and the realm of hungry ghosts. It is certain that they will experience extremely heavy, violent, and boundless pains. Therefore, the wise ones will not slander the fathomless prajna paramita.”

(The Buddha described how correct-dharma slanders will destroy Buddha dharma and suffer.)

In the meantime, Sariputra asked the Buddha again, “World-Honored One, why do you just say that the correct dharma destroyers will fall into the great hells, the realm of animals, and the realm of hungry ghosts and suffer for a long time, but do not describe their appearances and statures?”

The Buddha replied, “Sariputra, stop, we should not describe their appearances and statures. Why? Sariputra, if I describe how they will become in appearances and statures, I am afraid my words will frighten people to spit blood and die. Those who hear my description will be worried and vexed as if they were shot by poisonous arrows and would wither as grass is covered and ruined by frost. I fear that they will be frightened to death when hearing how ugly the appearances and statures of those correct dharma destroyers look. It is because of my pity on the listeners that I do not talk about the appearances and statures of the correct dharma destroyers.”

(The Buddha refrained from describing the dharma destroyers’ appearances and statures to prevent causing extreme fear or harm to listeners.)

Sariputra said, “We hope the Buddha tells us about the appearances and the statures of the correct dharma destroyers so those intending to slander the dharma in the future will be cautious not to commit.”

The Buddha said, “Sariputra, what I have said is sufficient for warning them. I believe the good gentlemen and gentlewomen in the future hearing what I say about how the correct dharma destroyers fall into the great hells, the realm of animals, and the realm of hungry ghosts and suffer endlessly will get good advice, so they will not slander the correct dharma.”

Sariputra said to the Buddha, “Yes, World-Honored One. Yes, Well-Gone One. The good gentlemen and gentlewomen with pure nature will take the Buddha’s cautions as a good lesson and abide by the warning. They will not slander the dharma even if they must sacrifice their lives so that they will not experience violent pains in the future.”

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, when the wise good gentlemen and gentlewomen hear the Buddha’s teaching of how the destroyers of correct dharma suffer, they should purify their karmas of body, speech, and mind and never ever slander or destroy the correct dharma, so they will not fall and suffer in the three negative destinies; so they will be able to see the Buddha, hear the correct dharma, meet the monastic, and be reborn in a land where there is the Buddha. If the correct dharma destroyers are reborn in the human world, they will be constrained in a very poor, ugly, and stupid living situation. Their physical bodies are incomplete and whatever they say will not be believed and accepted.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, “Isn’t it because of the bad habit of lying and other negative speeches that one creates and nurtures the karma of destroying the dharma?”

The Buddha replied, “Well-Appearing One, it is actually because of the negative habitual chains of speech that nurture the negative karma of damaging the correct dharma. Some foolish monastics who call me grand master in my teaching of the correct dharma of the precepts will ignore, slander, and destroy my teaching of the fathomless prajna paramita. You must know, Well-Appearing One, any person who slanders the fathomless prajna paramita also slanders the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas. Those who slander the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas also slander the perfect knowledge of all phenomena of the Buddhas in the past, present, and future. Those who slander the perfect knowledge of all phenomena of the Buddhas in the past, present, and future also slander all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones. Those who slander all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones also slander the triple gem: the Buddha, the dharma, and the sangha. Those who slander the triple gem also slander the correct views of the world. Those who slander the correct views of the world also slander giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas. They also slander internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and the noble eightfold path; the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power; and the perfect knowledge of everything, the perfect

knowledge of the forms of the paths, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Because they slander the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, they will absorb immeasurable, countless, and boundless negative karmas. Because they absorb immeasurable, countless, and boundless negative karmas, they will also absorb immeasurable, countless, and boundless violent suffering of the hells, the realm of animals, the realm of hungry ghosts, and the human world.”

(The Buddha said that it is out of the negative habitual chains of speech that nurture the negative karma of damaging the correct dharma. The Buddha also taught that those who slander correct dharma equally slander various superior dharmas, the unsurpassed bodhi, the triple gem, and the Buddha.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “Based on what causes and conditions do the ignorant ones slander the fathomless prajna paramita?”

The Buddha replied, “Well-Appearing One, they slander the fathomless prajna paramita based on four causes and conditions. The first is that these ignorant ones are agitated by evil demons. The second is that they have not deeply believed in and understood the fathomless prajna paramita. The third is that they have indulged in the five aggregates and do not work and learn diligently so they are influenced by evil intellectuals. The fourth is that they always embrace hatred and anger, love to practice negative dharmas, and love to boast about themselves and look down on others. They slander the fathomless prajna paramita because of these four causes and conditions. They certainly will experience immeasurable suffering in endless future.”

(The Buddha identified four causes and conditions for producing prajna paramita slanders.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha again, “World-Honored One, if the ignorant persons of the world do not learn diligently, are absorbed by evil intellectuals, and do not plant virtuous roots but always do evil actions, it will be very difficult for them to believe in and understand the fathomless prajna paramita.”

The Buddha said, “Well-Appearing One, it is as you say. If the ignorant persons of the world do not learn diligently, are absorbed by evil intellectuals, and do not plant virtuous roots but always do evil actions, it will be very difficult for them to believe in and understand the fathomless prajna paramita that I teach.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “Why is it difficult to believe in and understand such prajna paramita?”

The Buddha replied, “Well-Appearing One, matter is without bondage and relief. Why? It is because matter has no nature, and this is the self-nature of matter. Feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are without bondage and relief. Why? It is because feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness have no nature, and this is the self-nature of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness.

“Well-Appearing One, the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and the conscious sphere are without bondage and relief. Why? It is because the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and the conscious sphere have no nature, and this is the self-nature of the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and the conscious sphere. The sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and the mental-image sphere are without bondage and relief. Why? It is because the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and the mental-image sphere have no nature, and this is the self-nature of the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and the mental-image sphere.

“Well-Appearing One, the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and the conscious realm are without bondage and relief. Why? It is because the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and the conscious realm have no nature, and this is the self-nature of the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and the conscious realm. The sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and the mental-image realm are without bondage and relief. Why? It is because the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and the mental-image realm have no nature, and this is the self-nature of the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and the mental-image realm. The eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and the conscious consciousness realm are without bondage and relief. Why? It is because the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and the conscious consciousness realm have no nature, and this is the self-nature of the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and the conscious consciousness realm. The eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and the conscious contact are without bondage and relief. Why? It is because the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and the conscious contact have no nature, and this is the self-nature of the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and the conscious contact. The feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and

conscious contact are without bondage and relief. Why? It is because the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact have no nature, and this is the self-nature of the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact.

“Well-Appearing One, giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita are without bondage and relief. Why? It is because giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita have no nature, and this is the self-nature of giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita.

“Well-Appearing One, internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are without bondage and relief. Why? It is because internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature have no nature, and this is the self-nature of internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature.

“Well-Appearing One, the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path are without bondage and relief. Why? It is because the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path have no nature, and this is the self-nature of the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path.

“Well-Appearing One, the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power are without bondage and relief. Why? It is because the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power have no nature, and this is the self-nature of the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power.

“Well-Appearing One, the perfect knowledge of everything is without bondage and relief. Why? It is because the perfect knowledge of everything has no nature, and this is the self-nature of the perfect knowledge of everything. The perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are without bondage and relief. Why? It is because the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena

have no nature, and this is the self-nature of the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the matter in the past is without bondage and relief. Why? It is because the matter in the past has no nature, and this is the self-nature of the matter in the past. The feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness in the past are without bondage and relief. Why? It is because the feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness in the past have no nature, and this is the self-nature of the feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness in the past. And so forth, the perfect knowledge of everything in the past is without bondage and relief. Why? It is because the perfect knowledge of everything in the past has no nature, and this is the self-nature of the perfect knowledge of everything in the past. The perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena in the past are without bondage and relief. Why? It is because the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena in the past have no nature, and this is the self-nature of the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena in the past.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the matter in the future is without bondage and relief. Why? It is because the matter in the future has no nature, and this is the self-nature of the matter in the future. The feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness in the future are without bondage and relief. Why? It is because the feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness in the future have no nature, and this is the self-nature of the feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness in the future. And so forth, the perfect knowledge of everything in the future is without bondage and relief. Why? It is because the perfect knowledge of everything in the future has no nature, and this is the self-nature of the perfect knowledge of everything in the future. The perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena in the future are without bondage and relief. Why? It is because the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena in the future have no nature, and this is the self-nature of the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena in the future.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the matter in the present is without bondage and relief. Why? It is because the matter in the present has no nature, and this is the self-nature of the

matter in the present. The feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness in the present are without bondage and relief. Why? It is because the feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness in the present have no nature, and this is the self-nature of the feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness in the present. And so forth, the perfect knowledge of everything in the present is without bondage and relief. Why? It is because the perfect knowledge of everything in the present has no nature, and this is the self-nature of the perfect knowledge of everything in the present. The perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena in the present are without bondage and relief. Why? It is because the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena in the present have no nature, and this is the self-nature of the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena in the present.

(The Buddha explained that the correct view should be applied in guiding prajna paramita learners; namely, they should realize that all dharmas in the past, future, and present are without bondage and relief; it is because they do not have nature, and no nature is their self-nature.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha again, “World-Honored One, if ones do not learn and cultivate diligently, do not plant virtuous roots but possess the not virtuous roots, are absorbed by evil friends, are particularly lazy, act in accord with demons’ powers, work diligently only on trivial and inferior matters, lose correct mindfulness, but stay in evil wisdom, it will be very difficult for them to believe in and understand the fathomless prajna paramita.”

(Well-Appearing One concluded why the ignorant ones could not believe in and understand the fathomless prajna paramita.)

The Buddha said, “Well-Appearing One, it is as you say. If ones do not learn and cultivate diligently, do not plant virtuous roots but possess not virtuous roots, are absorbed by evil friends, are particularly lazy, act in accord with demons’ powers, work diligently only on trivial and inferior matters, lose correct mindfulness, but stay in evil wisdom, it will be very difficult for them to believe in and understand the fathomless prajna paramita. Why? Well-Appearing One, as matter is pure, so is its effect. As the effect is pure, so is matter. Therefore, the purity of matter and the purity of effect are not dualistic, different, destructible, or

terminated. As feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are pure, so are their effects. As the effects are pure, so are feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Therefore, the purity of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness and the purity of the effects are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. And so forth, as all bodhisattva actions are pure, so are their effects. As the effects are pure, so are all bodhisattva actions. Therefore, the purity of all bodhisattva actions and the purity of their effects are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. As the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas is pure, so is its effect. As the effect is pure, so is the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas. Therefore, the purity of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas and the purity of its effect are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, as matter is pure, so is prajna paramita. As prajna paramita is pure, so is matter. Therefore, the purity of matter and the purity of prajna paramita are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. As feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are pure, so is prajna paramita. As prajna paramita is pure, so are feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Therefore, the purity of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness and the purity of prajna paramita are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. And so forth, as the perfect knowledge of everything is pure, so is prajna paramita. As prajna paramita is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of everything. Therefore, the purity of the perfect knowledge of everything and the purity of prajna paramita are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. As the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are pure, so is prajna paramita. As prajna paramita is pure, so are the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Therefore, the purity of the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena and the purity of prajna paramita are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, as matter is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. As the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge is pure, so is matter. Therefore, the purity of matter and the purity of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. As feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. As the perfect

knowledge of all perfect knowledge is pure, so are feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Therefore, the purity of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness and the purity of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. And so forth, as the perfect knowledge of everything is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. As the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of everything. Therefore, the purity of the perfect knowledge of everything and the purity of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. As the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. As the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge is pure, so are the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Therefore, the purity of the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena and the purity of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, as nonduality is pure, so is matter. As matter is pure, so is nonduality. Therefore, the purity of nonduality and the purity of matter are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. As nonduality is pure, so are feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. As feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are pure, so is nonduality. Therefore, the purity of nonduality and the purity of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. And so forth, as nonduality is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of everything. As the perfect knowledge of everything is pure, so is nonduality. Therefore, the purity of nonduality and the purity of the perfect knowledge of everything are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. As nonduality is pure, so are the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. As the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are pure, so is nonduality. Therefore, the purity of nonduality and the purity of the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, as the ‘I,’ the sentient being, and so forth, and the knower and the viewer are pure, so is matter. As matter is pure, so are the ‘I,’ the sentient being,

and so forth, and the knower and the viewer. Therefore, the purity of the 'I,' the sentient being, and so forth, and the knower and the viewer and the purity of matter are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. As the 'I,' the sentient being, and so forth, and the knower and the viewer are pure, so are feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. As feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are pure, so are the 'I,' the sentient being, and so forth, and the knower and the viewer. Therefore, the purity of the 'I,' the sentient being, and so forth, and the knower and the viewer and the purity of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. And so forth, as the 'I,' the sentient being, and so forth, and the knower and the viewer are pure, so is the perfect knowledge of everything. As the perfect knowledge of everything is pure, so are the 'I,' the sentient being, and so forth, and the knower and the viewer. Therefore, the purity of the 'I,' the sentient being, and so forth, and the knower and the viewer and the purity of the perfect knowledge of everything are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. As the 'I,' the sentient being, and so forth, and the knower and the viewer are pure, so are the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. As the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are pure, so are the 'I,' the sentient being, and so forth, and the knower and the viewer. Therefore, the purity of the 'I,' the sentient being, and so forth, and the knower and the viewer and the purity of the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, as greed, anger, and ignorance are pure, so is matter. As matter is pure, so are greed, anger, and ignorance. Therefore, the purity of greed, anger, and ignorance and the purity of matter are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. As greed, anger, and ignorance are pure, so are feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. As feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are pure, so are greed, anger, and ignorance. Therefore, the purity of greed, anger, and ignorance and the purity of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. And so forth, as greed, anger, and ignorance are pure, so is the perfect knowledge of everything. As the perfect knowledge of everything is pure, so are greed, anger, and ignorance. Therefore, the purity of greed, anger, and ignorance and the purity of the perfect knowledge of everything are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. As greed, anger, and ignorance are pure, so are

the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. As the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are pure, so are greed, anger, and ignorance. Therefore, the purity of greed, anger, and ignorance and the purity of the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, as matter is pure, so is feeling; as feeling is pure, so is matter. Therefore, the purity of matter and the purity of feeling are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. As feeling is pure, so is thinking. As thinking is pure, so is action. As action is pure, so is consciousness. As consciousness is pure, so are the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere. As the conscious sphere is pure, so are the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere. As the mental-image sphere is pure, so are the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm. As the conscious realm is pure, so are the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm. As the mental-image realm is pure, so are the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm. As the conscious consciousness realm is pure, so are the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact. As the conscious contact is pure, so are the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact. As the feelings produced by conscious contact are pure, so are ignorance, action, consciousness, and so forth, and old age, death, worry, sorrow, misery, anxiety, and upset. As old age, death, worry, sorrow, misery, anxiety, and upset are pure, so are prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita. As giving paramita is pure, so are internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature. As emptiness of selfless self-nature is pure, so are the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path. As the noble eightfold path is pure, so are the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power. As the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power are pure, so is the perfect knowledge of everything. As the perfect knowledge of everything is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths. As the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. As the perfect knowledge of all phenomena is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths. Therefore, the purity of the perfect

knowledge of the forms of the paths and the purity of the perfect of all phenomena are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, as prajna paramita is pure, so is matter. As matter is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. As prajna paramita is pure, so are matter and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. The purity of prajna paramita, the purity of matter, and the purity of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. And so forth, as prajna paramita is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. As the perfect knowledge of all phenomena is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. The purity of prajna paramita, the purity of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, and the purity of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. And so forth, as giving paramita is pure, so is matter. As matter is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. The purity of giving paramita, the purity of matter, and the purity of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. And so forth, as giving paramita is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. As the perfect knowledge of all phenomena is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. The purity of giving paramita, the purity of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, and the purity of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated.

“Well-Appearing One, as internal emptiness is pure, so is matter. As matter is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. The purity of internal emptiness, the purity of matter, and the purity of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. As internal emptiness is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. As the perfect knowledge of all phenomena is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. The purity of internal emptiness, the purity of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. And so forth, as emptiness of selfless self-nature is pure, so is matter. As matter is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. The purity of emptiness of selfless self-nature, the purity of matter, and the purity of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated.

As emptiness of selfless self-nature is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. As the perfect knowledge of all phenomena is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. The purity of emptiness of selfless self-nature, the purity of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, and the purity of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated.

“Well-Appearing One, as the four bases of mindfulness are pure, so is matter. As matter is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. The purity of the four bases of mindfulness, the purity of matter, and the purity of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. And so forth, as the four bases of mindfulness are pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. As the perfect knowledge of all phenomena is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. The purity of the four bases of mindfulness, the purity of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, and the purity of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. And so forth, as the noble eightfold path is pure, so is matter. As matter is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. The purity of the noble eightfold path, the purity of matter, and the purity of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. And so forth, as the noble eightfold path is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. As the perfect knowledge of all phenomena is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. The purity of the noble eightfold path, the purity of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, and the purity of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated.

“Well-Appearing One, as the Buddha’s ten abilities are pure, so is matter. As matter is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. The purity of the Buddha’s ten abilities, the purity of matter, and the purity of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. And so forth, as the Buddha’s ten abilities are pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. As the perfect knowledge of all phenomena is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. The purity of the Buddha’s ten abilities, the purity of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. As the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power are pure, so is matter. As

matter is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. The purity of the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power, the purity of matter, and the purity of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. As the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power are pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. As the perfect knowledge of all phenomena is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. The purity of the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power, the purity of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, and the purity of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated.

“Well-Appearing One, as the perfect knowledge of everything is pure, so is matter. As matter is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. The purity of the perfect knowledge of everything, the purity of matter, and the purity of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. And so forth, as the perfect knowledge of everything is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. As the perfect knowledge of all phenomena is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. The purity of the perfect knowledge of everything, the purity of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, and the purity of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, as the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge is pure, so is matter. As matter is pure, so is prajna paramita. The purity of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, the purity of matter, and the purity of prajna paramita are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. And so forth, as the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. As the perfect knowledge of all phenomena is pure, so is prajna paramita. The purity of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, the purity of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, and the purity of prajna paramita are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. As the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge is pure, so is matter. As matter is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. The purity of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, the purity of matter, and the purity of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. And so forth, as the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge is pure, so is the

perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths. As the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths is pure, so is the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. The purity of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, the purity of the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and the purity of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. The same is true with all similar sentences.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, as the conditioned phenomena are pure, so is the unconditioned reality. As the unconditioned reality is pure, so are the conditioned phenomena. The purity of the conditioned phenomena and the purity of the unconditioned reality are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, as the past is pure, so is the future. As the future is pure, so is the past. The purity of the past and the purity of the future are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. As the past is pure, so is the present. As the present is pure, so is the past. The purity of the past and the purity of the present are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. As the future is pure, so is the present. As the present is pure, so is the future. The purity of the future and the purity of the present are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. As the past is pure, so are the future and the present. As the future and the present are pure, so is the past. The purity of the past and the purity of the future and present are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. As the future is pure, so are the past and the present. As the past and the present are pure, so is the future. The purity of the future and the purity of the past and present are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated. As the present is pure, so are the past and the future. As the past and the future are pure, so is the present. The purity of the present and the purity of the past and future are not dualistic, different, destructible, or terminated.”

(The Buddha said that dharma A and dharma B are equally pure, in the past, future, or present. We are inspired that this purity is consistent across all times and three realms. It is the original form of all existents, toward which the Buddha dharma learners should return through the cultivation of numberless gates.)

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Chapter 40

The Purity

(In the Second Assembly)

At that time, Sariputra said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, the purity of the dharmas is most fathomless.”

The Buddha said, “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

Sariputra asked, “What dharmas are pure in the final analysis so that their purity is most fathomless?”

The Buddha said, “Because matter is pure in the final analysis, the purity of this dharma is most fathomless; because feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are pure in the final analysis, the purity of these dharmas is most fathomless. Because the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere are pure in the final analysis, the purity of these dharmas is most fathomless. Because the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere are pure in the final analysis, the purity of these dharmas is most fathomless. Because the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm are pure in the final analysis, the purity of these dharmas is most fathomless. Because the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm are pure in the final analysis, the purity of these dharmas is most fathomless. Because giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita are pure in the final analysis, the purity of these dharmas is most fathomless. Because internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are pure in the final analysis, the purity of these dharmas is most fathomless. Because the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path are pure in the final analysis, the purity of these dharmas is most fathomless. And so on, because the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power are pure in the final analysis, the purity of these dharmas is most

fathomless. Because all bodhisattva actions are pure in the final analysis, the purity of these dharmas is most fathomless. Because the great bodhisattvas are pure in the final analysis, the purity of these dharmas is most fathomless. Because the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas is pure in the final analysis, the purity of this dharma is most fathomless. Because all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones are pure in the final analysis, the purity of these dharmas is most fathomless. Because the perfect knowledge of everything is pure in the final analysis, the purity of this dharma is most fathomless. Because the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are pure in the final analysis, the purity of these dharmas is most fathomless.”

Meanwhile, Sariputra said to the Buddha again, “World-Honored One, the purity of these dharmas is very bright and clear.”

The Buddha said, “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

Sariputra asked, “What dharmas are pure in the final analysis so that their purity is very bright and clear?”

The Buddha replied, “Sariputra, because prajna paramita is pure in the final analysis, the purity of this dharma is very bright and clear. And so on, because giving paramita is pure in the final analysis, the purity of this dharma is very bright and clear. And so on, because the perfect knowledge of everything is pure in the final analysis, the purity of this dharma is very bright and clear. Because the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are pure in the final analysis, the purity of these dharmas is very bright and clear.”

Meanwhile, Sariputra said to the Buddha again, “World-Honored One, the purity of these dharmas neither turns nor persists.”

The Buddha said, “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

Sariputra asked, “What dharmas are pure in the final analysis so that their purity neither turns nor persists?”

The Buddha replied, “Sariputra, because matter neither turns nor persists and is pure in the final analysis, the purity of this dharma neither turns nor persists. Because feeling, thinking,

action, and consciousness neither turn nor persist and are pure in the final analysis, the purity of these dharmas neither turns nor persists. And so on, because the perfect knowledge of everything neither turns nor persists and is pure in the final analysis, the purity of this dharma neither turns nor persists. Because the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena neither turn nor persist and are pure in the final analysis, the purity of these dharmas neither turns nor persists.”

Meanwhile, Sariputra said to the Buddha again, “World-Honored One, the purity of these dharmas is originally uncontaminated.”

The Buddha said, “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

Sariputra asked, “What dharmas are pure in the final analysis so that their purity is originally uncontaminated?”

The Buddha replied, “Sariputra, because matter is pure in the final analysis, the purity of this dharma is originally uncontaminated. Because feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are pure in the final analysis, the purity of these dharmas is originally uncontaminated. And so on, because the perfect knowledge of everything is pure in the final analysis, the purity of this dharma is originally uncontaminated. Because the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are pure in the final analysis, the purity of these dharmas is originally uncontaminated.”

Meanwhile, Sariputra said to the Buddha again, “World-Honored One, these dharmas are pure and their original nature is brilliant and clean.”

The Buddha said, “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

Sariputra asked, “What dharmas are pure in the final analysis so that they are pure and their original nature is brilliant and clean?”

The Buddha replied, “Sariputra, because matter is pure in the final analysis, this dharma is pure and its original nature is brilliant and clean. Because feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are pure in the final analysis, these dharmas are pure and their original nature is brilliant and clean. And so on, because the perfect knowledge of everything is pure in the final

analysis, this dharma is pure and its original nature is brilliant and clean. Because the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are pure in the final analysis, these dharmas are pure and their original nature is brilliant and clean.”

Meanwhile, Sariputra said to the Buddha again, “World-Honored One, these dharmas are pure and without attainment and intuitive contemplation.”

The Buddha said, “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

Sariputra asked, “What dharmas are pure in the final analysis so that the purity of these dharmas is without attainment and intuitive contemplation?”

The Buddha replied, “Sariputra, because the emptiness of the original nature of matter is pure in the final analysis, the purity of this dharma is without attainment and intuitive contemplation. Because the emptiness of the original nature of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness is pure in the final analysis, the purity of these dharmas is without attainment and intuitive contemplation. And so on, because the emptiness of the original nature of the perfect knowledge of everything is pure in the final analysis, the purity of this dharma is without attainment and intuitive contemplation. Because the emptiness of the original nature of the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena is pure in the final analysis, the purity of these dharmas is without attainment and intuitive contemplation.”

Meanwhile, Sariputra said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, the purity of these dharmas is without arising and manifestation.”

The Buddha said, “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

Sariputra asked, “What dharmas are pure in the final analysis so that the purity of these dharmas is without arising and manifestation?”

The Buddha replied, “Sariputra, because the matter without arising and manifestation is pure in the final analysis, the purity of this dharma is without arising and manifestation. Because the feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness without arising and manifestation are pure in the final analysis, the purity of these dharmas is without arising and manifestation. And so on,

because the perfect knowledge of everything without arising and manifestation is pure in the final analysis, the purity of this dharma is without arising and manifestation. Because the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena without arising and manifestation are pure in the final analysis, the purity of these dharmas is without arising and manifestation.”

Meanwhile, Sariputra said to the Buddha again, “World-Honored One, these dharmas are pure so that they do not arise in the realms of desire, form, and formlessness.”

The Buddha said, “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

Sariputra asked, “Why are these dharmas pure and do not arise in the realms of desire, form, and formlessness?”

The Buddha replied, “Sariputra, because the self-nature of the three realms is unattainable, it is said that these dharmas are pure and do not arise in the realms of desire, form, and formlessness.”

(The Buddha taught that because the dharmas are pure in the final analysis, their purity is most fathomless; their purity is bright and clear; their purity neither turns nor persists; their purity is originally uncontaminated; and the dharmas are pure and their original nature is brilliant and clean. Because the emptiness of the original nature of the dharmas is pure in the final analysis, the purity of these dharmas is without attainment and intuitive contemplation. Because the dharmas are without arising and manifestation, their purity is without arising and manifestation. Because the self-nature of the three realms is unattainable, the dharmas are pure and do not arise in the three realms.)

Meanwhile, Sariputra said to the Buddha again, “World-Honored One, the pure original nature of these dharmas is without knowledge.”

The Buddha said, “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

Sariputra asked, “Why are the dharmas pure and originally without knowledge?”

The Buddha replied, “Sariputra, because the original nature of all dharmas is dull, the dharmas are pure and originally without knowledge.”

Sariputra asked, “What original nature is without knowledge so that the dharmas are pure and originally without knowledge?”

The Buddha replied, “Sariputra, because the original nature of matter is without knowledge and its particular characteristics are empty, this dharma is pure and originally without knowledge. Because the original nature of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness is without knowledge and their particular characteristics are empty, these dharmas are pure and originally without knowledge. And so on, because the original of the perfect knowledge of everything is without knowledge and its particular characteristics are empty, this dharma is pure and originally without knowledge. Because the original nature of the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena is without knowledge and their particular characteristics are empty, these dharmas are pure and originally without knowledge.”

(The Buddha further taught that because the original nature of the dharmas is without knowledge and their characteristics are empty, the dharmas are pure and originally without knowledge.)

Meanwhile, Sariputra said to the Buddha again, “World-Honored One, because the original nature of all dharmas is pure, the dharmas are pure.

The Buddha said, “It is because all dharmas are pure in the final analysis.”

Sariputra asked, “Why are the dharmas pure because the original nature of all dharmas is pure?”

The Buddha replied, “Sariputra, because all dharmas are unattainable, the purity of their original nature is named the purity of the dharmas.”

(The Buddha taught that all dharmas are unattainable. As the original nature of the dharmas is pure, the dharmas are purity.)

Meanwhile, Sariputra said to the Buddha again, “World-Honored One, prajna paramita thus will not make the perfect knowledge of all phenomena more or less.”

The Buddha replied, “Because the perfect knowledge of all phenomena is pure in the final analysis.”

Sariputra asked, “Why does prajna paramita not make the perfect knowledge of all phenomena more or less?”

The Buddha replied, “Sariputra, as the dharma nature is always as it has been, prajna paramita will not make the perfect knowledge of all phenomena more or less.”

In the meantime, Sariputra said to the Buddha again, “World-Honored One, prajna paramita does not grasp or receive all dharmas since its original nature is pure.”

The Buddha said, “It is because all dharmas are pure in the final analysis.”

Sariputra asked, “Why does prajna paramita not grasp or receive all dharmas since its original nature is pure?”

The Buddha replied, “Sariputra, since dharma realm is tranquil, profound, and transparent, the original nature of prajna paramita is pure and prajna paramita does not grasp or receive all dharmas.”

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, as the ‘I’ is pure, matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are pure.”

The Buddha replied, “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, why are matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness pure in the final analysis as the ‘I’ is pure?”

“Well-Appearing One, since the ‘I’ is nonexistent, matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are also nonexistent and thus are pure in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, as the ‘I’ is pure, the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and the conscious sphere are pure.”

The Buddha said, “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, why are the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and the conscious sphere pure in the final analysis as the ‘I’ is pure?”

“Well-Appearing One, since the ‘I’ is nonexistent, the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and the conscious sphere are also nonexistent and thus are pure in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, as the ‘I’ is pure, the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and the mental-image sphere are pure.”

The Buddha said, “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, why are the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and the mental-image sphere pure in the final analysis as the ‘I’ is pure?”

“Well-Appearing One, since the ‘I’ is nonexistent, the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and the mental-image sphere are also nonexistent and thus are pure in the final analysis.”

(The reasoning process is that because the purity in the final analysis, the “I” is nonexistent; as the “I” is nonexistent, all perception organs and relevant activities are also nonexistent; they thus are pure in the final analysis.)

“World-Honored One, as the ‘I’ is pure, the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and the conscious realm are pure.”

The Buddha said, “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, why are the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and the conscious realm pure in the final analysis as the ‘I’ is pure?”

“Well-Appearing One, since the ‘I’ is nonexistent, the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and the conscious realm are also nonexistent and thus are pure in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, as the ‘I’ is pure, the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and the mental-image realm are pure.”

The Buddha said, “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, why are the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and the mental-image realm pure in the final analysis as the ‘I’ is pure?”

“Well-Appearing One, since the ‘I’ is nonexistent, the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and the mental-image realm are also nonexistent and thus are pure in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, as the ‘I’ is pure, the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and the conscious consciousness realm are pure.”

The Buddha said, “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, why are the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and the conscious consciousness realm pure in the final analysis as the ‘I’ is pure?”

“Well-Appearing One, since the ‘I’ is nonexistent, the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and the conscious consciousness realm are also nonexistent and thus are pure in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, as the ‘I’ is pure, giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita are pure.”

The Buddha said, “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, why are giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita pure in the final analysis as the ‘I’ is pure?”

“Well-Appearing One, since the ‘I’ is nonexistent, giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita are also nonexistent and thus are pure in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, as the ‘I’ is pure, internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are pure.”

The Buddha said, “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, why are internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature pure in the final analysis as the ‘I’ is pure?”

“Well-Appearing One, since the ‘I’ is nonexistent, internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are also nonexistent and thus are pure in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, as the ‘I’ is pure, the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and the noble eightfold path are pure.”

The Buddha said, “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, why are the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and the noble eightfold path pure in the final analysis as the ‘I’ is pure?”

“Well-Appearing One, since the ‘I’ is nonexistent, the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and the noble eightfold path are nonexistent and thus are pure in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, as the ‘I’ is pure, the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power are pure.”

The Buddha said, “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, why are the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power pure in the final analysis as the ‘I’ is pure?”

“Well-Appearing One, since the ‘I’ is nonexistent, the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power are also nonexistent and thus are pure in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, as the ‘I’ is pure, the stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, self-enlightenment bodhi, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi are pure.”

The Buddha said, “It is because they are all pure in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, why are the stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, self-enlightenment bodhi, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi pure in the final analysis as the ‘I’ is pure?”

“Well-Appearing One, since the particular characteristics of the ‘I’ are empty, so the particular characteristics of the stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, self-enlightenment bodhi, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi are also empty and thus are pure in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, as the ‘I’ is pure, the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are pure.”

The Buddha said, “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, why are the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena pure in the final analysis as the ‘I’ is pure?”

“Well-Appearing One, since the ‘I’ is without form, attainment, mindfulness, and knowledge, the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are also without form, attainment, mindfulness, and knowledge and thus are pure in the final analysis.”

(As all superior holy dharma and holy effects are caused through the perceptive activities along with their speech and actions activated by perception, it is reasonable to say that as the “I” is pure, these superior dharma and effects are also pure. As the “I” is pure in the final analysis, all such holy elements initiated and fulfilled by the “I” are also pure in the final analysis.)

“World-Honored One, there are no attainment and intuitive contemplation as duality is pure.”

The Buddha said, “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, why are nonattainment and nonintuitive contemplation pure in the final analysis as duality is pure?”

“Well-Appearing One, since the contamination caused by upside-down views is nonexistent, nonattainment and nonintuitive contemplation are pure in the final analysis.”

(As all dualities are originally not dualistic, so duality is also pure in the final analysis.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, as the ‘I’ is boundless, matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are boundless.”

The Buddha said, “It is because they are purity in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, why is it said that as the ‘I’ is boundless, matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are boundless and thus are pure in the final analysis?”

“Well-Appearing One, they are pure in the final analysis because of the emptiness in the final analysis and the emptiness of nontemporality.”

“World-Honored One, as the ‘I’ is boundless, the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere are boundless.”

The Buddha said: “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, why is it said that as the ‘I’ is boundless, the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere are boundless and thus are pure in the final analysis?”

“Well-Appearing One, they are pure in the final analysis because of the emptiness in the final analysis and the emptiness of nontemporality.”

“World-Honored One, as the ‘I’ is boundless, the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere are boundless.”

The Buddha said, “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, why is it said that as the ‘I’ is boundless, the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere are boundless and thus are pure in the final analysis?”

“Well-Appearing One, they are pure in the final analysis because of the emptiness in the final analysis and the emptiness of nontemporality.”

“World-Honored One, as the ‘I’ is boundless, the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm are boundless.”

The Buddha said, “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, why is it said that as the ‘I’ is boundless, the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm are boundless and thus are pure in the final analysis?”

“Well-Appearing One, they are pure in the final analysis because of the emptiness in the final analysis and the emptiness of nontemporality.”

“World-Honored One, as the ‘I’ is boundless, the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm are boundless.”

The Buddha said, “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, why is it said that as the ‘I’ is boundless, the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm are boundless and thus are pure in the final analysis?”

“Well-Appearing One, they are pure in the final analysis because of the emptiness in the final analysis and the emptiness of nontemporality.”

“World-Honored One, as the ‘I’ is boundless, the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm are boundless.”

The Buddha said, “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, why is it said that as the ‘I’ is boundless, the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm are boundless and thus are pure in the final analysis?”

“Well-Appearing One, they are pure in the final analysis because of the emptiness in the final analysis and the emptiness of nontemporality.”

“World-Honored One, as the ‘I’ is boundless, giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita are boundless.”

The Buddha said, “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, why is it said that as the ‘I’ is boundless, giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and the prajna paramita are boundless and thus are pure in the final analysis?”

“Well-Appearing One, they are pure in the final analysis because of the emptiness in the final analysis and the emptiness of nontemporality.”

“World-Honored One, as the ‘I’ is boundless, the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path are boundless.”

The Buddha said, “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, why is it said that as the ‘I’ is boundless, the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path are boundless and thus are pure in the final analysis?”

“Well-Appearing One, they are pure in the final analysis because of the emptiness in the final analysis and the emptiness of nontemporality.”

“World-Honored One, as the ‘I’ is boundless, the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power are boundless.”

The Buddha said, “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, why is it said that as the ‘I’ is boundless, the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power are boundless and thus are pure in the final analysis?”

“Well-Appearing One, they are pure in the final analysis because of the emptiness in the final analysis and the emptiness of nontemporality.”

“World-Honored One, as the ‘I’ is boundless, the stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, self-enlightenment bodhi, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi are boundless.”

The Buddha said, “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, why is it said that as the ‘I’ is boundless, the stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, self-enlightenment bodhi, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi are boundless and thus are pure in the final analysis?”

“Well-Appearing One, they are pure in the final analysis because of the emptiness in the final analysis and the emptiness of nontemporality.”

“World-Honored One, as the ‘I’ is boundless, the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are boundless.”

The Buddha said, “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, why is it said that as the ‘I’ is boundless, the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are boundless and thus are pure in the final analysis?”

“Well-Appearing One, they are pure in the final analysis because of the emptiness in the final analysis and the emptiness of nontemporality.”

“World-Honored One, if the great bodhisattvas can be awakened in this way, they possess prajna paramita.”

The Buddha said, “It is because of the purity in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, why is it said that if the great bodhisattvas can be awakened in this way, they possess prajna paramita and thus are pure in the final analysis?”

“Well-Appearing One, they will be able to achieve the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths through this awakening.”

“World-Honored One, when cultivating prajna paramita expediently and skillfully, the great bodhisattvas think, ‘Matter does not know matter; feeling does not know feeling; thinking does not know thinking; action does not know action; and consciousness does not know consciousness. The eye sphere does not know the eye sphere; the ear sphere does not know the ear sphere; similarly, the conscious sphere does not know the conscious sphere. The sight sphere does not know the sight sphere; the sound sphere does not know the sound sphere; similarly, the mental-image sphere does not know the mental-image sphere. The eye realm does not know the eye realm; the ear realm does not know the ear realm; similarly, the conscious realm does not know the conscious realm. The sight realm does not know the sight realm; the sound realm does not know the sound realm; similarly, the mental-image realm does not know the mental-image realm. The eye consciousness realm does not know the eye consciousness realm; the ear consciousness realm does not know the ear consciousness realm; similarly, the conscious consciousness realm does not know the conscious consciousness realm. The dharmas in the past do not know the dharmas in the past; the dharmas in the future do not know the dharmas in the future; and the dharmas in the present do not know the dharmas in the present. Giving paramita does not know giving paramita; pure-precept paramita does not know pure-precept paramita; similarly, prajna paramita does not know prajna paramita. Internal emptiness does not know internal emptiness; external emptiness does not know external emptiness; similarly, emptiness of selfless self-nature does not know emptiness of selfless self-nature. The four bases of mindfulness do not know the four bases of mindfulness; the four correct endeavors do not know the four correct endeavors; similarly, the noble eightfold path does not know the noble eightfold path. The Buddha’s ten abilities do not know the Buddha’s ten abilities; the four kinds of fearlessness do not know the four kinds of fearlessness; similarly, the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power do not know the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power. The perfect knowledge of everything does not know the perfect knowledge of everything; the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths does not know the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths; and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena does not know the perfect knowledge of all phenomena.’ Then, these great bodhisattvas definitely are already on the right path to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.”

(The dharma does know itself because it is detached from itself. Besides, all dharmas are empty and nonexistent; empty dharma cannot know empty dharma.)

The Buddha said, “Yes, Well-Appearing One, it is as you say.”

At that time, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, “When cultivating prajna paramita with expedient skillfulness, do the great bodhisattvas have dualistic thinking about various dharmas?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Sariputra, when cultivating prajna paramita with expedient skillfulness, the great bodhisattvas do not think, ‘I can practice giving, and I am practicing giving in this way. I can observe precept; I am observing precept in this way, and I can practice forbearance; I am practicing forbearance in this way. I can practice diligence, and I am practicing diligence in this way. I can enter concentrations, and I am entering concentrations in this way. I can learn wisdom, and I am learning wisdom in this way. I can plant bliss, and I am planting bliss in this way. I can enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising, and I am entering onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising in this way. I can dignify and purify the Buddha lands, and I am dignifying and purifying the Buddha lands in this way. I can assist the sentient beings to mature, and I am assisting the sentient beings to mature in this way. I can attain the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, and I will attain the perfect knowledge of all phenomena in this way.’ Sariputra, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas do not have such differentiations because they have expedient skillfulness. It is also because they have thoroughly understood internal emptiness, external emptiness, internal-external emptiness, emptiness of emptiness, emptiness of space, emptiness of ultimate truth, emptiness of conditioned phenomena, emptiness of unconditioned reality, emptiness in the final analysis, emptiness of nontemporality, emptiness of deconstruction and nondeconstruction, emptiness of original nature, emptiness of all dharmas, and emptiness of particular and common characteristics. Sariputra, when cultivating prajna paramita with expedient skillfulness, the great bodhisattvas do not have any attachment.”

At that time, Heavenly Emperor Indra asked Well-Appearing One, “Great Virtuous One, how can we know that the good gentlemen and gentlewomen dwelling in bodhisattva vehicle have attachments when they cultivate prajna paramita?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Kausika, when cultivating prajna paramita, the good gentlemen and gentlewomen dwelling in bodhisattva vehicle without expedient skillfulness will initiate the thoughts about their own minds. They will initiate the thoughts about giving and giving paramita, pure precept and pure-precept paramita, forbearance and forbearance paramita, diligence and diligence paramita, meditation and meditation paramita, and prajna and prajna paramita. They will also initiate the thoughts about internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature. They will initiate the thoughts about the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path. They will initiate the thoughts about the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power. They will initiate the thoughts about the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. They will initiate the thoughts about the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas; various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened ones; and the virtuous roots planted by the Buddhas. They will also initiate the thoughts about the way to gather and plant virtuous roots, and transfer them along with all sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.

“Kausika, we can tell that these good gentlemen and gentlewomen dwelling in bodhisattva vehicle have attachments when they cultivate prajna paramita in this way. Kausika, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen are entangled by attachment, so they are unable to cultivate prajna paramita without attachment and transfer the merits and virtues toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Why? Kausika, none of the original nature of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena can be transferred.

“Furthermore, Kausika, if the great bodhisattvas would like to persuade, guide, admire, encourage, and celebrate the sentient beings to aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, they should contemplate the equal real nature of all dharmas and demonstrate it to the sentient beings. They should say to them, ‘You good gentlemen and gentlewomen should not differentiate and think that you can practice giving when cultivating giving paramita. You should not differentiate and think that you can observe pure precept when cultivating pure-precept

paramita; you can cultivate forbearance when cultivating forbearance paramita; you can practice diligence when cultivating diligence paramita; you can concentrate when cultivating meditation paramita; and you can learn wisdom when cultivating prajna paramita. You should not differentiate and think that you can dwell in internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature when practicing internal emptiness, external emptiness and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature. You should not differentiate and think that you can cultivate the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path when cultivating the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path. You should not differentiate and think that you can cultivate the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power when cultivating the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power. You should not differentiate and think that you can cultivate the perfect knowledge of everything, the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena when cultivating the perfect knowledge of everything, the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. You should not differentiate and think that you can cultivate the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi when cultivating the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.'

"Kausika, if the great bodhisattvas would like to demonstrate to, persuade, guide, admire, encourage, and celebrate the sentient beings to aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, they should do in this way. If the great bodhisattvas can demonstrate to, persuade, guide, admire, encourage, and celebrate the sentient beings to aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi in this way, they will not do harm to themselves and to others because this is the way approved by the Thus-Comers. If the good gentlemen and gentlewomen dwelling in bodhisattva vehicle can demonstrate to, persuade, guide, admire, encourage, and celebrate the sentient beings in this way, they will be able to stay far away from all attachments."

(Well-Appearing One talked to Heavenly Emperor Indra about the right way for great bodhisattvas to pursue the unsurpassed bodhi and fulfill the prajna paramita based on expedient skillfulness without attachment.)

At that time, the World-Honored One admired Well-Appearing One, “Excellent, excellent! You have lectured very well for various great bodhisattvas on the phenomena of attachment, so the good gentlemen and gentlewomen aspiring to the great vehicle are able to stay far away from the phenomena of attachments and cultivate various great bodhisattva actions successfully. Well-Appearing One, there are some other subtle attachments. I am going to teach you about them. Please listen to me carefully and reflect on them well.”

(The Buddha approved what Well-Appearing One said and further taught more about the subtle phenomena of attachment.)

Well-Appearing One said, “Yes, we are looking forward to your teaching!”

The Buddha said, “Well-Appearing One, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen have dwelled in the great vehicle and aspired to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. If they grasp and are mindful of the forms of the Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One, then they have attachment. If the good gentlemen and gentlewomen grasp and are mindful of the forms of the merits and virtues of nonattachment possessed by all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones in the past, future, and present; or if they grasp and are mindful of the virtuous roots accumulated by all Thus-Comers since the time of aspiring to until dwelling in the dharma, and further deeply and joyfully participate in the virtuous roots and transfer the merits and virtues thus derived along with various sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, then they are also named having attachment. Why? Well-Appearing One, we should not grasp and stay in the mindfulness of the forms of the merits, virtues, and virtuous roots accumulated by various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones, their disciples, and the rest of sentient beings. Those grasping the forms are attached to the illusions.

(The Buddha taught subtle things to avoid attachment.)

Meanwhile, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said, “World-Honored One, so prajna paramita is most fathomless.”

The Buddha said, “You are correct. It is because the original nature of all dharmas is far away.”

“World-Honored One, we should pay homage to this prajna paramita.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, because it brings about many merits and virtues. But this prajna paramita does not make or act, nor can it be realized.”

“World-Honored One, all dharma natures cannot be realized or enlightened.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is as you say. The original nature of all dharmas is only one nature. Those who realize and those to be realized are unattainable. Well-Appearing One, you must know that the only one nature of all dharmas is selflessness; the selflessness of all dharmas is the only one nature. This one nature or selflessness of all dharmas is the original real nature. This original real nature does not make or act. Well-Appearing One, if the great bodhisattvas accurately know that the one nature or selflessness of all dharmas does not make or act, then they are able to stay far away from all attachments.”

(The Buddha taught that to realize the original nature of all dharmas as without selfness leads to freedom from attachment.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, “It is very difficult to become awakened to prajna paramita.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is. Prajna paramita cannot be seen, heard, awakened to, or known. It has no form that one can realize.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is inconceivable.”

The Buddha said, “Prajna paramita cannot be grasped by one’s mind because it is apart from the images of the mind. Prajna paramita cannot be grasped by matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness because it is apart from the forms of matter, feeling, and so forth. It cannot be grasped by the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere because it is apart from the forms of the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth. It cannot be grasped by the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere because it is apart from the forms of the

sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth. It cannot be grasped by the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm because it is apart from the forms of eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth. It cannot be grasped by giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita because it is apart from the forms of giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth. It cannot be grasped by internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature because it is apart from the forms of internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth. It cannot be grasped by the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path because it is apart from the forms of the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth. It cannot be grasped by the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power because it is apart from the forms of the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth. It cannot be grasped by the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena because it is apart from the forms of the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. It cannot be grasped by all dharmas because it is apart from the forms of all dharmas. Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, prajna paramita does not arise out of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and all dharmas."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha again, "Prajna paramita does not make."

The Buddha said. "Yes, it is as you say. It is because the makers are unattainable. Well-Appearing One, matter is unattainable, so the maker is unattainable; feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are unattainable, so the makers are unattainable. And so on, all dharmas are unattainable, so the makers are unattainable. Well-Appearing One, because the makers and all dharmas, such as matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth are unattainable, prajna paramita does not make."

(The Buddha elaborated the characteristics of prajna paramita that it cannot be grasped, nor can it be seen, heard, awakened to, or known. It has no form for one to realize.)

Chapter 41

No Signs

Section 1

(In the Second Assembly)

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, how should great bodhisattvas practice prajna paramita?”

The Buddha replied, “Well-Appearing One, when practicing prajna paramita, if the great bodhisattvas do not practice matter, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, they do practice prajna paramita. And so on, if they do not practice the perfect knowledge of everything, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice matter as permanent or impermanent, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness as permanent or impermanent, they do practice prajna paramita. And so on, if they do not practice the perfect knowledge of everything as permanent or impermanent, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena as permanent or impermanent, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice matter as pleasant or painful, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness as pleasant or painful, they do practice prajna paramita. And so on, if they do not practice the perfect knowledge of everything as pleasant or painful, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena as pleasant or painful, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice matter as with or without selfness, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness as with or without selfness, they do practice prajna paramita. And so on, if they do not practice the perfect knowledge of everything as with or without selfness, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the perfect knowledge of the

forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena as with or without selfness, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice matter as pure or impure, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness as pure or impure, they do practice prajna paramita. And so on, if they do not practice the perfect knowledge of everything as pure or impure, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena as pure or impure, they do practice prajna paramita. Why? Well-Appearing One, when practicing prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas do not see matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, how can we say that they see matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness as permanent or impermanent, pleasant or painful, with or without selfness, and pure or impure? As they do not see the perfect knowledge of everything, the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, how can we say that they see the perfect knowledge of everything, the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena as permanent or impermanent, pleasant or painful, with or without selfness, and pure or impure?

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when practicing prajna paramita, if the great bodhisattvas neither practice matter perfectly nor imperfectly, they do practice prajna paramita. If they neither practice feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness perfectly nor imperfectly, they do practice prajna paramita. And so on, if they neither practice the perfect knowledge of everything perfectly nor imperfectly, they do practice prajna paramita. If they neither practice the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena perfectly nor imperfect, they do practice prajna paramita. Why? Well-Appearing One, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas do not see or attain matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, how can we say that they see and attain matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness as perfect or imperfect? As they do not see and attain the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena, how can we say that they see and attain the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena as perfect or imperfect?”

Meanwhile, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, it is very rare and unique! The Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones can teach the forms of attachment and the forms of nonattachment for various good gentlemen and gentlewomen who are learning the great vehicle.”

The Buddha said, “Well-Appearing One, it is as you say. All Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones can teach the forms of attachment and the forms of nonattachment for various good gentlemen and gentlewomen who are learning the great vehicle. Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when practicing prajna paramita, if the great bodhisattvas do not practice matter as with or without attachment, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness as with or without attachment, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere as with or without attachment, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere as with or without attachment, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm as with or without attachment, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita as with or without attachment, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature as with or without attachment, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path as with or without attachment, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power as with or without attachment, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena as with or without attachment, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, and self-enlightenment bodhi as with or without attachment, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do

not practice all great bodhisattva actions and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas as with or without attachment, they do practice prajna paramita.

(The Buddha taught Well-Appearing One the right way for great bodhisattvas to practice prajna paramita.)

“Well-Appearing One, when practicing prajna paramita in this way, the great bodhisattvas will be able to know accurately the forms of attachment and nonattachment to matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. They will also know accurately the forms of attachment and nonattachment to all great bodhisattva actions and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas.”

In the meantime, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, the fathomless dharma nature is very unusual and unique. It will not increase or decrease whether you talk or do not talk about it.”

The Buddha said, “Well-Appearing One, yes, it is as you say. The fathomless dharma nature is very unusual and unique. It will not increase or decrease whether you talk or do not talk about it. Well-Appearing One, if the Thus-Come, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One admires or reproaches empty space for the rest of his lifespan, empty space will not increase or decrease. So does the fathomless dharma nature. It will not increase or decrease whether you talk or do not talk about it. Well-Appearing One, the transformed person will not increase or decrease whether you admire or reproach him. So does the fathomless dharma nature. It will remain changeless as it has always been whether you talk or do not talk about it.”

(The Buddha said that prajna paramita will not increase or decrease whether you talk or do not talk about it. It is moveless and changeless.)

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha again, “World-Honored One, it is very difficult for the great bodhisattvas to cultivate prajna paramita. Whether the great bodhisattvas cultivate it or not, prajna paramita will not increase or decrease; it will not be worried or delighted; and it will not turn to them or turn away from them. But the great bodhisattvas should diligently cultivate and learn it without regression until attaining the

unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Why? World-Honored One, the great bodhisattvas cultivate prajna paramita as if cultivating the nonexistent empty space. World-Honored One, in empty space, you cannot perceive matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness; the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres; the sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres; the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms; the sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms; the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, nose consciousness realm, tongue consciousness realm, body consciousness realm, and conscious consciousness realm; giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; and so on, and the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; the stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, and self-enlightenment bodhi; and all great bodhisattva actions and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas. Therefore, you cannot perceive prajna paramita that you are cultivating. In this fathomless dharma of prajna paramita, no matter is attainable; no feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are attainable; and so on, no great bodhisattva actions and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas are attainable. The great bodhisattvas should diligently cultivate and learn prajna paramita without regression until attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi although no dharma is attainable during this process. Therefore, I say that it is very difficult for the great bodhisattvas to cultivate prajna paramita."

(Well-Appearing One said to Buddha that it is very difficult for great bodhisattvas to cultivate prajna paramita. He also explained why.)

Fascicle 437

Chapter 41

No Signs

Section 2

(In the Second Assembly)

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, all sentient beings should pay homage to great bodhisattvas because they wear the armor of great merits and virtues. World-Honored One, as the great bodhisattvas wear the armor of merits and virtues and work diligently for the sake of sentient beings, they are like wearing the armor of merits and virtues and working diligently for the sake of empty space. As the great bodhisattvas wear the armor of merits and virtues and work diligently to liberate the sentient beings and assist them to mature, they are like wearing the armor of merits and virtues and working diligently to liberate empty space and assist it to mature. As the great bodhisattvas wear the armor of merits and virtues and work diligently for all dharmas, they are like wearing the armor of merits and virtues and working diligently for empty space. World-Honored One, as the great bodhisattvas wear the armor of merits and virtues and work diligently to liberate sentient beings from birth and death, they are like wearing the great armor of merits and virtues and working diligently to relocate empty space in a higher and more superior position. World-Honored One, as the great bodhisattvas attain the powers of great diligence and bravery, they are like aspiring to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi to quickly liberate the empty-space like sentient beings from birth and death. World-Honored One, as the great bodhisattvas attain the unimaginable unequalled supernatural powers, they are like wearing the armor of merits and virtues to aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi for the sake of the empty-space like ocean of various dharma natures. World-Honored One, the great bodhisattvas are extremely brave and powerful when they wear the armor of merits and virtue and diligently aspire to the empty-space like unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.

“World-Honored One, the great bodhisattvas are unusual because they have cultivated ascetic actions diligently with an attempt to realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, so they can assist the empty-space like sentient beings to mature, become liberated, and gain great benefits and happiness. Why? World-Honored One, suppose that the large threefold thousand-world is full of Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones as if it were filled with bamboos, hems, reeds, and sugarcanes. These Thus-Comers have taught correct dharma for the sentient beings for one kalpa or longer, and each Thus-Comer has established innumerable and boundless sentient beings in ultimate peace and happiness of nirvana, but the sentient beings do not increase or decrease. Why? It is because the sentient beings are all nonexistent and their nature is far away. World-Honored One, suppose that all the worlds in the ten directions are full of Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones as if they were filled with bamboos, hems, reeds, and sugarcanes. These Thus-Comers have taught correct dharma for the sentient beings for one kalpa or even longer, and each Thus-Comer has established innumerable and boundless sentient beings in the ultimate peace and happiness of nirvana, while the sentient beings do not increase or decrease either. Why? It is because the sentient beings are all nonexistent and their nature is far away.

“World-Honored One, because of this cause and condition, I say that the great bodhisattvas are unusual. They have cultivated ascetic actions diligently with an attempt to realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi to assist the empty-space like sentient beings to mature, become liberated, and gain great benefits and happiness.”

(Well-Appearing One stated that although the sentient beings are like empty space whose nature is nonexistent, far away, invisible, and unattainable, the great bodhisattvas still work diligently and bravely to assist them to mature and bring them great benefits; so they are unusual.)

In the meantime, a bhikṣu in the assembly thought, “I must pay homage to the fathomless prajna paramita. In the fathomless prajna paramita, there is no arising and extinction of the dharmas, but the aggregates of precept, concentration, wisdom, liberation, and the knowledge and the views of liberation are established and become attainable. In the fathomless prajna paramita, the stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, and self-

enlightenment bodhi; the great bodhisattva actions and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi; the great bodhisattvas and the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones; and the Buddha gem, dharma gem, and sangha gem are established and become attainable. In the fathomless prajna paramita, there are Buddhas who are turning the exquisite dharma wheel and bringing benefits, peace, and happiness to all sentient beings.”

The Buddha could read his mind, so said to him, “Yes, it is as you think. The fathomless prajna paramita is subtle and fathomless; it is neither with dharmas nor without dharmas.”

In the meantime, Heavenly Emperor Indra asked Well-Appearing One, “Great Virtuous One, how should the great bodhisattvas learn prajna paramita?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Kausika, if the great bodhisattvas would like to learn prajna paramita, they should diligently cultivate and learn prajna paramita as they cultivate and learn empty space.”

Heavenly Emperor Indra asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, diligently and attentively cultivate and learn, reasonably reflect on, write, explicate, and extensively disseminate prajna paramita, how should I do to protect and keep them?”

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked Heavenly Emperor Indra, “Kausika, have you ever seen any dharma that can be protected and kept?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “No, Great Virtuous One, I have never seen any dharma that can be protected and kept.”

Well-Appearing One said, “Kausika, if the great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in prajna paramita as they are taught by the Buddha, they will be well protected. If the good gentlemen and gentlewomen dwell peacefully in prajna paramita and do not stay far away from it, you must know that no human and nonhuman being can successfully find an opportunity to do harm to them. Kausika, the efforts to protect good gentlemen and gentlewomen dwelling peacefully in prajna paramita are like trying to protect empty space. Kausika, any attempt to protect good

gentlemen and gentlewomen who are cultivating prajna paramita will turn out in vain. Kausika, what do you think about this? Can anyone protect illusions, dreams, echoes, images, shadows, illusory images of water under sunlight, transformed things, and mirages?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “No, Great Virtuous One.”

Well-Appearing One said, “Kausika, so any attempt to keep and protect the good gentlemen and gentlewomen who are cultivating prajna paramita will turn out in vain. Kausika, what do you think about this? Can one protect and keep the transformed things made by all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “No, Great Virtuous One.”

Well-Appearing One said, “Kausika, so any attempt to keep and protect the good gentlemen and gentlewomen who are cultivating prajna paramita will also turn out in vain. Kausika, what do you think about this? Can one protect the dharma realm, dharma nature, realness, reality, the realm of the inconceivable, and the realm of empty space?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “No, great virtuous one.”

Well-Appearing One said, “Kausika, so any attempt to keep and protect the good gentlemen and gentlewomen who are cultivating prajna paramita will be futile.”

Meanwhile, Heavenly Emperor Indra asked Well-Appearing One, “Great Virtuous One, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas know that various dharmas are like illusions, dreams, echoes, images, shadows, illusory images of water under sunlight, transformed things, and mirages, so they are not attached to illusions, dreams, and so forth, and mirages. They are not attached to the thought that various dharmas arise from illusions, dreams, and so forth, and mirages. They are not attached to the thought that various dharmas belong to illusions, dreams, and so forth, and mirages. They are not attached to the thought that various dharmas rely on illusions, dreams, and so forth, and mirages. How do they do these?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Kausika, as the great bodhisattvas cultivate prajna paramita, they are not attached to matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. They are not attached to the thought that the dharmas arise from matter, feeling, thinking, action, and

consciousness. They are not attached to the thought that the dharmas belong to matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. They are not attached to the thought that the dharmas rely on matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. And so on. They are not attached to the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. They are not attached to the thought that the dharmas arise from the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. They are not attached to the thought that the dharmas belong to the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. They are not attached to the thought that the dharmas rely on the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Owing to this cause and condition, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas know that various dharmas are like illusions, dreams, echoes, images, shadows, illusory images of water under sunlight, transformed things, and mirages, so they are not attached to the illusions, dreams, and so forth, and mirages. They are not attached to the thought that various dharmas arise from illusions, dreams, and so forth, and mirages. They are not attached to the thought that various dharmas belong to illusions, dreams, and so forth, and mirages. They are not attached to the thought that various dharmas rely on illusions, dreams, and so forth, and mirages.”

(Well-Appearing One said to Heavenly Emperor Indra that when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas are not attached to the five aggregates, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge because they realize that all dharmas are like illusions, dreams, and so forth, and mirages. So they work diligently to assist the sentient beings without being attached to all dharmas.)

At that time, because of the Thus-Come's supernatural powers and authority, all heavenly beings from the Heaven of Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and Heaven of Pure Residence in this large thousand-world had each presented the heavenly flowers, sandal-incense powders, and agaru-incense powders as offerings to the Buddha from afar. They then went to the Buddha's place and bowed down on the ground before the Buddha's feet and stood to the side.

Meanwhile, owing to the Buddha's supernatural powers, the heavenly beings could see the world of one thousand Buddhas far in the east. They saw each Thus-Come was teaching prajna paramita. All Thus-Come were teaching prajna paramita with same titles, meanings, and names as those in this land. The leading bhikṣu in the assembly who asked for Buddha's teaching and had conversations with the Buddha was named Well-Appearing One, and the head of the heavenly beings who asked questions and dialogued with Well-Appearing One was named Indra. Similar things occurred in the worlds of the ten directions.

At that time, the Buddha said to the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One, "When Great Bodhisattva Maitreya realizes and attains the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi in the future, he will teach prajna paramita here. Other Buddhas in the Kalpa of the Sages will also teach prajna paramita here."

In the meantime, the long-lived sage Well Appearing asked the Buddha, "World-Honored One, as Great Bodhisattva Maitreya realizes and attains the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, in what manner, form, or way will he teach prajna paramita?"

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "As Great Bodhisattva Maitreya realizes and attains the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and lecture on prajna paramita in the future, he will teach matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena as neither permanent nor impermanent. He will teach matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena as neither pleasant nor painful. He will teach matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so on, and the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena as neither with nor without selfness. He will teach matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena as neither pure nor impure. He will teach matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena as neither with bondage nor with relief. He will teach matter, feeling, thinking,

action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena as neither in the past nor in the future and present.”

(The Buddha taught that in the future when Great Bodhisattva Maitreya realizes and attains the unsurpassed bodhi and lectures on prajna paramita, he will teach the five aggregates, and so forth, and the three kinds of perfect knowledge as neither permanent nor impermanent, neither pleasant nor painful, neither with nor without selfness, neither pure nor impure, neither with bondage nor with relief, and neither in the past nor in the future and present.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, when realizing and attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi in the future, what will Great Bodhisattva Maitreya realize and attain? What will he teach?”

The Buddha replied, “When realizing and attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi in the future, Great Bodhisattva Maitreya will realize and teach that matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are pure in the final analysis.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “World-Honored One, why is prajna paramita pure?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “Because matter is pure, prajna paramita is pure; because feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are pure, prajna paramita is pure. Because the perfect knowledge of everything is pure, prajna paramita is pure; because the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are pure, prajna paramita is pure.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “Why is prajna paramita pure because matter is pure? Why is prajna paramita pure because feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are pure? Why is prajna paramita pure because the perfect knowledge of everything is pure? Why is prajna paramita pure because the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are pure?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “Matter is pure because it is without arising, extinction, contamination, and purification; as matter is pure, so is prajna paramita. Feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are pure because they are without arising, extinction, contamination, and purification; as feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are pure, so is prajna paramita. The perfect knowledge of everything is pure because it is without arising, extinction, contamination, and purification; as the perfect knowledge of everything is pure, so is prajna paramita. The perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are pure because they are without arising, extinction, contamination, and purification; as the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are pure, so is prajna paramita.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, empty space is pure, so prajna paramita is pure.”

“World-Honored One, why is prajna paramita pure because empty space is pure?”

“Well-Appearing One, empty space is pure because it is without arising, extinction, contamination, and purification. As empty space is pure, so is prajna paramita. Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, because matter is unpolluted, prajna paramita is pure; because feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are unpolluted, prajna paramita is pure. And so on, because the perfect knowledge of everything is unpolluted, prajna paramita is pure; because the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are unpolluted, prajna paramita is pure.”

(The Buddha taught that as the five aggregates, and so forth, and the three kinds of perfect knowledge are unpolluted, they are without arising, extinction, contamination, and purification, so they are pure. Thus, prajna paramita is pure.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, why is prajna paramita pure because matter is unpolluted? Why is prajna paramita pure because feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are unpolluted? Why is prajna paramita pure because the perfect knowledge of everything is unpolluted? Why is prajna paramita pure because the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are unpolluted?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “Matter cannot be grasped, so it is unpolluted; as matter is unpolluted, prajna paramita is pure. Feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness cannot be grasped, so they are unpolluted; as feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are unpolluted, prajna paramita is pure. And so on, the perfect knowledge of everything cannot be grasped, so it is unpolluted; as the perfect knowledge of everything is unpolluted, prajna paramita is pure. The perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena cannot be grasped, so they are unpolluted; as the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are unpolluted, prajna paramita is pure.

(The Buddha said that because the five aggregates and the three kinds of perfect knowledge cannot be grasped, they are unpolluted. Because they are unpolluted, they are pure. Because they are pure, prajna paramita is pure.)

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, empty space is unpolluted, so prajna paramita is pure.”

“World-Honored One, why is prajna paramita pure because empty space is unpolluted?”

“Well-Appearing One, empty space cannot be grasped, so it is unpolluted; as empty space is unpolluted, prajna paramita is pure.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, empty space is provisionally established, so prajna paramita is pure.

“World-Honored One, why is prajna paramita pure because empty space is provisionally established?”

“Well-Appearing One, as the term ‘empty space’ is pronounced, it means it is nothing other than a term provisionally established. Because it is provisionally established, prajna paramita is pure.

(Empty space is a term provisionally established, signifying that prajna paramita is pure. This implies that prajna paramita is as pure as empty space, which is merely a provisional term and without self-nature, just like prajna paramita.)

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, because empty space is unspeakable, prajna paramita is pure.”

“World-Honored One, why is prajna paramita pure because empty space is unspeakable?”

“Well-Appearing One, empty space is unspeakable because it has nothing to say. Therefore, prajna paramita is pure.

(Prajna paramita has nothing to say either.)

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, empty space is unattainable, so prajna paramita is pure.”

“World-Honored One, why is prajna paramita pure because empty space is unattainable?”

“Well-Appearing One, empty space cannot be attained because it has nothing that can be acquired. Therefore, prajna paramita is pure.

(Prajna paramita has nothing that can be acquired either.)

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, all dharmas are without arising, extinction, contamination, and purification, so prajna paramita is pure.”

“World-Honored One, why is prajna paramita pure because all dharmas are without arising, extinction, contamination, and purification?”

“Well-Appearing One, all dharmas are without arising, extinction, contamination, and purification because they are pure in the final analysis. Therefore, prajna paramita is pure.”

(Prajna paramita, like all dharmas, is pure in the final analysis.)

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, diligently and attentively cultivate and learn, reasonably reflect on, write, explicate, and extensively disseminate prajna paramita, they will have no diseases of eyes, ears, nose, and tongue; their limbs will have no deficiency; they will not get old quickly or die in

accidents; rather, they will always be surrounded, followed, guarded, and protected by numberless hundreds of thousands of heavenly deities. These good gentlemen and gentlewomen are used to read, recite, and teach prajna paramita in the six fasting days. In those days, all heavenly beings from the Heaven of Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and Heaven of Pure Residence will gather in these dharma teachers' places to listen to the teaching of prajna paramita. Because these good gentlemen and gentlewomen frequently appear in innumerable large assemblies to read, recite, and teach the fathomless prajna paramita, they will gain countless, boundless, and inconceivable superior merits and virtues."

(The six fasting days are the eighth, fourteenth, and fifteenth days of the first half month; the eighth and last two days of the second half month.)

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "Yes, it is as you say. If the good gentlemen and gentlewomen wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, diligently and attentively cultivate and learn, reasonably reflect on, write, explicate, and extensively disseminate prajna paramita, then they will have no diseases of eyes, ears, nose, and tongue; their limbs will have no deficiency; they will not get old quickly or die in accidents; rather, they will always be surrounded, followed, guarded, and protected by numberless hundreds of thousands of heavenly deities. These good gentlemen and gentlewomen are used to read, recite, and teach prajna paramita in the six fasting days. In those days, all heavenly beings from the Heaven of Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and Heaven of Pure Residence will gather in these dharma teachers' places to listen to the teaching of prajna paramita. Because these good gentlemen and gentlewomen frequently appear in innumerable large assemblies to read, recite, and teach the fathomless prajna paramita, they will gain countless, boundless, and inconceivable superior merits and virtues. Why? Well-Appearing One, it is because prajna paramita is a great treasure. Because of this great treasure, immeasurable, countless, and boundless sentient beings have gotten rid of rebirth in hells, the realm of animals, and the realm of hungry ghosts. Because of this great treasure, immeasurable, countless, and boundless heavenly beings, dragons, yaksas, and humanlike nonhumans have gotten rid of poverty and suffering. Prajna paramita can give immeasurable, countless, and boundless sentient beings wealth, peace, and happiness of the noble families of Ksatriya, Brahman, elders, and lay

believers. It can bring immeasurable, countless, and boundless sentient beings with wealth, peace, and the happiness of the Heaven of the Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and Heaven of Nonthinking and Not Nonthinking. It can give immeasurable, countless, and boundless sentient beings ease, freedom, peace, and happiness of stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, self-enlightenment bodhi, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Why? Well-Appearing One, in the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, the path of the ten virtuous karmas; the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; and the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are extensively taught, explicated, and manifested. Prajna paramita has such countless merits and treasures. As numberless, countless, and boundless sentient beings have learned and cultivated prajna paramita, they are able to be reborn in the noble families of Ksatriya, Brahman, elders, and lay believers. Because of cultivating and learning prajna paramita, numberless, countless, and boundless sentient beings will be reborn in the Heaven of the Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and Heaven of Nonthinking and Not Nonthinking. Because of cultivating and learning prajna paramita, numberless, countless, and boundless sentient beings will attain stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, and arhat effect. Because of cultivating and learning prajna paramita, numberless, countless, and boundless sentient beings will attain self-enlightenment bodhi. Because of cultivating and learning prajna paramita, numberless, countless, and boundless sentient beings will enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Well-Appearing One, based on this cause and condition, prajna paramita is named the great storage of treasures because all invaluable treasures of merits and virtues of and beyond the world are brought about from this fathomless prajna paramita.

(The Buddha taught Well-Appearing One that prajna paramita is a great storage of invaluable treasures, in which various superior holy dharmas are taught, explicated, and manifested. Those

who learn and cultivate prajna paramita attentively and assiduously will gain innumerable benefits of and beyond the world.)

“Well-Appearing One, in this great treasure storage of prajna paramita, no dharma is taught as with arising or extinction, contamination or purification, and grasping or renunciation. Why? Well-Appearing One, no dharma can arise or extinguish; no dharma can be contaminated, purified, grasped, and renounced. Well-Appearing One, in this great treasure storage of prajna paramita, no dharma is taught as virtuous or not virtuous, morally related or morally unrelated, of the world or beyond the world, flawed or flawless, and conditioned or unconditioned. Well-Appearing One, based on this cause and condition, prajna paramita is named the unattainable great treasure storage of dharma. Well-Appearing One, in this great storage of treasure of prajna paramita, no dharma is taught as capable of causing contamination. Why? It is because no dharma can be contaminated or can contaminate the treasure of prajna paramita. Why? Not a dharma that can bring about contamination is attainable. Well-Appearing One, because of this cause and condition, such prajna paramita is named the great storage of treasure without contamination.

(The Buddha further taught that in this great treasure of prajna paramita, no dharma is taught as with arising or extinction, contamination or purification, and grasping or renunciation; no dharma is taught as morally related or unrelated, of the world or beyond the world, flawed or flawless, and so forth. Prajna paramita is unattainable and uncontaminated.)

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, if the great bodhisattvas cultivate prajna paramita without thinking of, differentiating with, attaining, or speaking this nonsensical argument, ‘I can cultivate fathomless prajna paramita,’ then these great bodhisattvas will be able to cultivate fathomless prajna paramita as they should do and stay close to and offer services with reverence to the Buddhas. They will travel from one Buddha country to the other, make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones. They will absorb what they have seen when traveling through all Buddha countries, dignify and purify the Buddha lands, assist the sentient beings to mature, and cultivate great bodhisattva actions. They thus will attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly. Well-Appearing One, prajna paramita does not feel comfortable or not comfortable with all dharmas. It neither grasps nor

renounces all dharmas. It does not make the dharmas arise or extinguish, become contaminated or purified, or increase or decrease. Well-Appearing One, prajna paramita is not in the past, future, and present. It does not aspire to, renounce, or dwell in the realm of desire, the realm of form, or the realm of formlessness.

(The Buddha further described various features of prajna paramita.)

“Well-Appearing One, prajna paramita does not stay with or turn away from giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita. It does not stay with or turn away from internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power; the stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi; the bodhisattva path of nonarising and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi; and the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Well-Appearing One, prajna paramita does not stay with or turn away from the dharmas of ordinary sentient being, stream-enterer, and so forth, and arhat; the self-enlightenment bodhi; the dharma of great bodhisattva and the Buddha dharma. Well-Appearing One, prajna paramita does not stay with the dharma of voice-hearer or discard the dharma of ordinary sentient being. It does not stay with the self-enlightenment bodhi or discard the dharma of voice-hearer. It does not stay with the Buddha dharma or discard the self-enlightenment bodhi. It does not stay with the unconditioned dharmas or discard the conditioned dharmas. Why? Well-Appearing One, whether the Thus-Come appears or not, the dharmas remain unchanged. It is because dharma nature, dharma realm, dharma concentration, and dharma dwelling have never made mistakes or gotten lost.”

At that time, innumerable hundreds of thousands of heavenly sons stayed in empty heaven and rejoiced and danced. They spread all kinds of heavenly flowers, including blue lotuses (Utpala), white lotuses (Padma), red lotuses (Kumuda), snow white lotuses (Pundarika), exquisite sound flowers, and various kinds of powdered fragrances on the Buddha. They celebrated and greeted each other, and spoke loudly, “Now we have witnessed the Buddha’s

second turning of the wonderful dharma wheel in this continent of Jambudvīpa.” At that moment, numberless heavenly sons realized and attained the forbearance of nonarising.

(The heavenly rejoiced and celebrated the Buddha’s second turning of dharma wheel and realized and attained the forbearance of nonarising.)

At that time, the World-Honored One said to Well-Appearing One, “This is neither the first turning nor the second turning of the dharma wheel. Why? Well-Appearing One, prajna paramita does not appear in this world to turn or re-turn the dharmas only because of the emptiness of selfless self-nature.”

(But the Buddha said that there was nothing to do with the first turning or second turning of the dharma wheel because the self-nature of all dharmas is empty.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, you say that because of the emptiness of selfless self-nature, prajna paramita does not appear in the world to turn or re-turn the dharmas. What dharmas are empty in their selfless self-nature?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “Prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita and their nature are empty. Internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature and their nature are empty. The four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path and their nature are empty. The Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power and their nature are empty. The perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena and their nature are empty. The disposition of ordinary sentient being, stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, and self-enlightenment bodhi and their nature are empty. All great bodhisattva actions and their nature are empty. The unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas and its nature are empty. Well-Appearing One, because the selfless self-nature of these dharmas is empty, prajna paramita does not appear in the world to turn or re-turn all dharmas.”

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, for great bodhisattvas, prajna paramita is the great paramita. It is because they

have fully understood that the self-nature of all dharmas is empty. Although they have fully understood that the self-nature of all dharmas is empty, they still realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi through prajna paramita and turn the wonderful dharma wheel to deliver numberless sentient beings. They have realized the bodhi, but they do not really realize it because both realization and nonrealization are unattainable. They have turned the dharma wheel, but they do not really turn it because both turning and re-turning are unattainable. They have delivered the sentient beings, but they do not really deliver the sentient beings because both the visible and invisible dharmas are unattainable. World-Honored One, in this great paramita, the thing such as turning dharma wheel is unattainable because all dharmas never arise; the one who turns the dharma and the dharma to be turned are unattainable. Why? In the dharmas of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration, no dharma of turning or re-turning is attainable. World-Honored One, to lecture on, explicate, analyze, and manifest prajna paramita to make it understandable is a virtuous and pure way of disseminating prajna paramita. In this process, the lecturer, the listeners, and the dharma taught are all nonexistent. As the lecturer, listeners, and the dharma taught are nonexistent, ones who can realize are also unattainable. As the ones who can realize are nonexistent, the ones who can attain nirvana are also nonexistent. Therefore, in the wonderful teaching of prajna paramita, the field of bliss is also nonexistent because the nature of the giver, the receiver, and the thing given is empty. As the field of bliss is nonexistent, the nature of bliss is also empty, and the signs and designated names are all unattainable. This is thus named great paramita.”

(Well-Appearing One really understood what the Buddha taught about the empty self-nature of all dharmas, so he elaborated his exquisite comments in this paragraph to make the truth more understandable.)

Chapter 42

Nonattainment

(In the Second Assembly)

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the boundless paramita.”

The Buddha said, “Yes. It is like empty space that is boundless.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the equal paramita.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because all dharma natures are equal.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the faraway paramita.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because prajna paramita is empty in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is invincible.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because all dharma natures are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita has no other shore.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because there is no reality of the name.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is empty space.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because inhalation and exhalation are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is unspeakable.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because in prajna paramita both general contemplation and specific investigation are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita without name.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because feeling, thinking, intention, contact, and attentiveness are unattainable.”

(As prajna paramita is unknown, and the concomitant operation of feeling, thinking, and so forth in perception does not work, the name of prajna paramita thus is nonexistent.)

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita without action.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because all dharmas do not come and go.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita cannot be seized.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because prajna paramita cannot be subjugated by all dharmas.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is endless paramita.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because all dharmas are endless in the final analysis.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita without arising and extinction.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because all dharmas do not arise and extinguish.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita without making.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because the makers are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita without knowledge.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because all dharma natures are dull.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita without returning.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because no one can arise from death.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the indestructible paramita.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because all dharmas are without destruction and loss.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the dream-like paramita.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because all dharmas seen in dreams are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the echo-like paramita.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because hearing is unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the image-like paramita.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because all dharmas are like the images reflected in the mirror which are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita resembling the illusory images of water under sunlight.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because all dharmas are like the flowing and changing phenomena and are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita resembling the transformed things.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because all dharmas are like the transformed things and are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the mirage-like paramita.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because all dharmas are like mirages and are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita without contamination and purification.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because the causes of contamination and purification are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita cannot be attained and used to paint and dye.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because the dharmas relied on are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita without nonsensical arguments.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because prajna paramita will destroy all nonsensical arguments.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita without arrogance and attachment.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because prajna paramita will destroy all kinds of arrogance and attachment.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita without moving and turning.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because prajna paramita dwells in dharma realm.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita apart from contamination and turbidity.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because prajna paramita is aware that all dharmas are not illusory.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is an unequaled initiation.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because prajna paramita does not differentiate in all dharmas.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is tranquility.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because the forms of all dharmas are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is without greedy desire.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because the things of greedy desire are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is without hatred and anger.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because prajna paramita will destroy all kinds of hatred and anger.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is without ignorance.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because it will destroy all ignorant and gloomy things.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is without vexations.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because prajna paramita is apart from differentiation.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is apart from sentient beings.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because prajna paramita thoroughly understands that sentient beings are nonexistent.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita without termination and destruction.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because prajna paramita initiates all dharmas equally.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita without two extremes.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because prajna paramita stays away from two extremes.”

(Two extremes are existence and nonexistence, continuation or discontinuation, and so forth.)

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is without separation and destruction.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because prajna paramita knows that all dharmas do not belong to each other.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is without grasping and attachment.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because prajna paramita transcends the stage of voice-hearer and the stage of self-enlightened one.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is without differentiation.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because all kinds of differentiation are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita has unlimited quantity.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because difference and sameness of all dharmas are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita resembles empty space.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because prajna paramita fully knows all dharmas without hindrance and stagnation.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the impermanent paramita.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because prajna paramita can permanently extinguish and destroy all dharmas.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of suffering.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because prajna paramita always pushes and drives all dharmas.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita without selfness.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, because prajna paramita is not attached to all dharmas.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the empty paramita.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because all dharmas are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita without brief instant.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because all dharmas do not move or turn.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of internal emptiness.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because prajna paramita thoroughly understands that internal dharmas are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of external emptiness.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because prajna paramita thoroughly understands that external dharmas are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of internal-external emptiness.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because prajna paramita knows that internal-external dharmas are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of emptiness of emptiness.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because prajna paramita knows that the dharmas of emptiness of emptiness are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of emptiness of space.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because prajna paramita understands that all dharmas are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of emptiness of ultimate meaning.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because tranquil nirvana is unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is paramita of emptiness of conditioned phenomena.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because various conditioned dharmas are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of emptiness of unconditioned reality.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because various unconditioned dharmas are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of emptiness in the final analysis.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because the dharmas of emptiness in the final analysis are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of emptiness of nontemporality.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because the dharmas of emptiness of nontemporality are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of emptiness of deconstruction and nondeconstruction.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because the dharmas of emptiness of deconstruction and nondeconstruction are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of emptiness of original nature.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because the conditioned and unconditioned dharmas are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of emptiness of particular and common characteristics.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because prajna paramita thoroughly understands that the dharmas are far away from particular and common characteristics.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of emptiness of all dharmas.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because prajna paramita knows that both internal and external dharmas are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of emptiness of nonattainment.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because all dharma natures are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of emptiness of selflessness.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because the dharmas without nature are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of emptiness of self-nature.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because the dharmas without self-nature are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of emptiness of selfless self-nature.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because the dharmas without selfless self-nature are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of the four bases of mindfulness.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because body, feeling, mind, and dharmas are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of the four correct endeavors.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because the virtuous and not virtuous dharmas are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of the four bases of power.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because the natures of the four bases of power are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of the five roots.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because the self-natures of the five roots are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of the five powers.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because the self-natures of the five powers are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of seven factors for enlightenment.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because the natures of the seven factors for enlightenment are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of the noble eightfold path.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because the nature of the noble eightfold path is unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of the liberation of emptiness.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because the empty and apart mental images are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of the liberation of formlessness.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because the tranquil mental images are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of nonaspiration.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because the mental images of nonaspiration are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of the eight liberations.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because the natures of the eight liberations are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of the nine concentrations in sequence.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because the self-natures of the nine concentrations in sequence are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is giving paramita.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because in prajna paramita, both greed and stinginess are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is pure-precept paramita.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because in prajna paramita, precept violation is unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is forbearance paramita.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because in prajna paramita, hatred and anger are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is diligence paramita.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because in prajna paramita, laziness and tiredness are unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is meditation paramita.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because in prajna paramita, restless mind is unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, such prajna paramita is prajna paramita.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because in prajna paramita, wisdom abuse is unattainable.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of the Buddha’s ten abilities.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because prajna paramita thoroughly understands that it cannot be overcome by all dharmas.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of the four kinds of fearlessness.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths has been attained without regression.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of the four unhindered understandings.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because there is no hindrance in attaining the perfect knowledge of everything and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because prajna paramita is reluctant to turn away from various sentient beings.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because prajna paramita transcends the dharma of voice-hearer and the dharma of self-enlightened one.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of Thus-Come.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because prajna paramita can accurately teach all dharmas as they really are.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the natural paramita.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because in prajna paramita all dharmas turn freely and effortlessly.”

“World-Honored One, prajna paramita is the paramita of the perfect and universal bodhi.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is because prajna paramita can make one awakened intuitively to all dharmas and their images.”

(The Buddha commented on the features of prajna paramita described by Well-Appearing One from various perspectives.)

Fascicle 438

Chapter 43

In the Northeast

Section 1

In

The Second Assembly

In the meantime, Heavenly Emperor Indra thought, “If the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have the privilege to merely hear the names of the fathomless sutras and the dharma gates of prajna paramita, they must have in previous lives stayed close to numberless Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones; made offerings respectfully to them; made great vows to plant various virtuous roots; and been absorbed by many virtuous and learned ones, not to mention if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen are able to write, accept, embrace, read, recite, reasonably reflect on, lecture for others on, and cultivate the fathomless prajna paramita as they are taught in accord with personal capability. You must know that these persons must have in previous lives developed a close connection with and offered services to numberless Buddhas; they must have made offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim the Buddhas. They must have also planted various virtues roots and heard prajna paramita. After hearing prajna paramita, they have also accepted, embraced, read, recited, and taught it to others; cultivated it as they were taught and asked and answered questions regarding the sutras. It is because of the powers of the blessings that they can accomplish all these things. If the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have made offerings to immeasurable Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones and gained pure merits and virtues, then when hearing prajna paramita, they will not be shocked, frightened, or scared; rather, they will practice prajna paramita with great faith and joy after hearing it. You must know that these persons must have in previous lives cultivated giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita for hundreds of thousands of

kalpas, so that they will not be shocked, frightened, or scared when hearing prajna paramita in present life.”

(Heavenly Emperor Indra thought to himself of why the good gentlepersons would not be frightened when hearing prajna paramita.)

At that time, Sariputra said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, when hearing the essential meanings of the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, the good gentlemen and gentlewomen are not shocked, frightened, or scared; rather, they will accept, embrace, read, recite, reflect on, write, explicate, teach, and cultivate them as they are taught. You must know that they have achieved the stage of nonregression in the pursuit of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Why? World-Honored One, the essential meanings of prajna paramita are very profound and are difficult to believe and understand. Unless they have cultivated and learned in previous life giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas, they are unable to believe in and understand the essential meanings of prajna paramita only through hearing them. World-Honored One, if one hears the fathomless prajna paramita and slanders it, you must know that this person’s mind has been covered by greed, anger, and ignorance since previous lives. The person must have also slandered the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita before rebirth in present life. Why? World-Honored One, the ignorant persons do not have belief or joy when hearing the fathomless essential meanings of prajna paramita because of the negative power of habit. Their minds are not pure at all. In previous lives they did not have connection with various Buddhas, bodhisattvas, and the Buddhas’ disciples, nor did they ask such questions: How should one do to practice giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita? How should one dwell in internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature? How should one cultivate the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path? How should one learn the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power? Therefore, when hearing the fathomless prajna paramita in this life, these ignorant ones will do nothing other than slandering it; they do not have belief and joy, and their minds are not pure at all.”

(Sariputra talked why ignorant people could not believe in and understand prajna paramita but would slander the sutras.)

At that time, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, the essential meanings of prajna paramita are very profound and difficult to believe and understand. Suppose that the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have cultivated giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita with belief and joy but not for a long time. They have dwelled in internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature with belief and joy but not for a long time. They have cultivated the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path with belief and joy but not for a long time. They have cultivated the eight liberations, nine concentrations in sequence, and five supernatural powers with belief and joy but not for a long time. They have cultivated the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, great equanimity, eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power, and the rest of numberless and boundless Buddha dharma with belief and joy but not for a long time. Then it is not surprising that these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will not be able to believe in and understand the fathomless essential meanings of prajna paramita when hearing them. They will rather slander them. World-Honored One, I am paying homage to this fathomless prajna paramita today. World-Honored One, as I pay homage to the fathomless prajna paramita, I equally pay homage to the perfect knowledge of all phenomena.”

(Heavenly Emperor Indra also talked why ignorant people could not believe in and understand the essential meanings of prajna paramita but would slander them.)

At that time, the Buddha said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, “Yes, it is as you say. To pay homage to prajna paramita is equally paying homage to the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Why? Kausika, all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones as well as the perfect knowledge of everything, the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena arise from prajna paramita. Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen would like to dwell in the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, they should dwell in prajna paramita. If they would like to achieve the perfect

knowledge of everything and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena of the Thus-Come, as well as the rest of merits and virtues, they should learn prajna paramita. If they would like to permanently terminate the vexations of negative disposition, they should learn prajna paramita. If they would like to realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and further turn the wonderful dharma wheel to deliver all sentient beings, they should learn prajna paramita. Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen would like to attain stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, and self-enlightenment bodhi, they should learn prajna paramita. Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen would like to establish various sentient beings with voice-hearer orientation well in the voice-hearer vehicle, they should learn prajna paramita. If they would like to establish various sentient beings with self-enlightened one orientation well in the self-enlightened one vehicle, they should learn prajna paramita. If they would like to establish various sentient beings with great vehicle orientation well in the unsurpassed vehicle so they are able to attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi before long, they should learn prajna paramita. Kausika, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen would like to attain the most superior merits and virtues in the three realms, they should learn prajna paramita. If they would like to subjugate all dark mean gangs, they should learn prajna paramita. If they would like to absorb various bhiksus well, they should learn prajna paramita.”

(The Buddha taught that if the good gentlepersons would like to achieve many merits, virtues, and virtuous roots in the three vehicles and accomplish the holy benefits, they should learn and dwell in prajna paramita.)

At that time, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, when cultivating prajna paramita, how should great bodhisattvas dwell in matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness? How should they dwell in the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere? How should they dwell in the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere? How should they dwell in the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness? How should they dwell in prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita? How should they dwell in internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature? How should they dwell in the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth,

and noble eightfold path? How should they dwell in the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power? World-Honored One, when cultivating prajna paramita, how should great bodhisattvas learn matter? How should they learn feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness? And so on, how should they learn the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power?"

The Buddha replied to Heavenly Emperor Indra, "Kausika, excellent, excellent! Today you can ask about such fathomless meanings with the support of Buddha's supernatural powers. Now please listen carefully and think about it well, I am going to explain them respectively.

"kausika, when cultivating prajna paramita, if great bodhisattvas cultivate prajna paramita without dwelling in and learning matter, they do dwell in and learn matter. If they do not dwell in and learn feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, they do dwell in and learn feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. If they do not dwell in and learn the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere, they do dwell in and learn the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere. If they do not dwell in and learn the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image, they do dwell in and learn the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere. If they do not dwell in and learn the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm, they do dwell in and learn the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm. If they do not dwell in and learn prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita, they do dwell in and learn prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita. If they do not dwell in and learn internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature, they do dwell in and learn internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature. If they do not dwell in and learn the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path, they do dwell in and learn the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path. If they do not dwell in and learn the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power, they do dwell in and learn the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power.

Why? Kausika, when great bodhisattvas cultivate prajna paramita, all kinds of dwelling and learning, including the dwelling in and the learning of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power, are unattainable.

“Furthermore, kausika, if the great bodhisattvas cultivate prajna paramita neither dwelling in nor not dwelling in, and neither learning nor not learning matter, they do dwell in and learn matter; if they neither dwell in nor not dwell in, and neither learn nor not learn feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, they do dwell in and learn feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. If they neither dwell in nor not dwell in, and neither learn nor not learn the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere, they do dwell in and learn the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere. If they neither dwell in nor not dwell in, and neither learn nor not learn the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere, they do dwell in and learn the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere. If they neither dwell in nor not dwell in, and neither learn nor not learn the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm, they do dwell in and learn the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm. If they neither dwell in nor not dwell in, and neither learn nor not learn prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita, they do dwell in and learn prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita. If they neither dwell in nor not dwell in, and neither learn nor not learn internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature, they do dwell in and learn internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature. If they neither dwell in nor not dwell in, and neither learn nor not learn the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path, they do dwell in and learn the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path. If they neither dwell in nor not dwell in, and neither learn nor not learn the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power, they do dwell in and learn the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power. Why? Kausika, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas will contemplate matter, feeling, thinking, action, and

consciousness, and so on, the Buddha's ten abilities, and the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power, in the past, future, and present, as attainable."

(Replying to Indra's question of how great bodhisattvas should cultivate prajna paramita to dwell in and learn the five aggregates, six inner and outer spheres, and so forth, and the six paramitas and the rest of superior holy dharmas, they do dwell in and learn these dharmas. He further taught if the great bodhisattvas neither dwell in nor not dwell in these dharmas, and neither learn nor not learn these dharmas, they do dwell in and learn these dharmas. It is because when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas will not contemplate these dharmas in the past, future, and present as attainable.)

At that time, Sariputra said to the Buddha, "World-Honored One, prajna paramita is most profound."

The Buddha said, "Yes, Sariputra. Because the realness of matter is very profound, prajna paramita is most profound; because the realness of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness is very profound, prajna paramita is most profound. And so on, because the realness of eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power is very profound, prajna paramita is most profound."

Meanwhile, Sariputra said to the Buddha, "World-Honored One, it is difficult to measure prajna paramita."

The Buddha said, "Yes, Sariputra. Because it is difficult to measure the realness of matter, it is difficult to measure prajna paramita; because it is difficult to measure the realness of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, it is difficult to measure prajna paramita. And so on, because it is difficult to measure the realness of eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power, it is difficult to measure prajna paramita."

Meanwhile, Sariputra said to the Buddha again, "World-Honored One, prajna paramita is immeasurable."

The Buddha said, "Yes, Sariputra. Because the realness of matter is immeasurable, prajna paramita is immeasurable; because the realness of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness is

immeasurable, prajna paramita is immeasurable. And so on, because the realness of eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power is immeasurable, prajna paramita is immeasurable.

“Sariputra, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas do not practice the fathomless nature of matter, then they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the fathomless natures of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the fathomless natures of the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the fathomless natures of the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the fathomless natures of the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the fathomless natures of prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the fathomless natures of internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the fathomless natures of the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the fathomless natures of the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power, they do practice prajna paramita. Why? Sariputra, the fathomless nature of matter is not matter; the fathomless natures of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are not feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. And so on, the fathomless nature of the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power is not the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power.

(The Buddha further taught Sariputra that if the great bodhisattvas cultivate prajna paramita without practicing the fathomless natures of various dharmas, they do cultivate prajna paramita.)

“Furthermore, Sariputra, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas do not practice the difficult-to-measure nature of matter, then they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the difficult-to-measure natures of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the difficult-to-measure natures of the

eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and the conscious sphere, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the difficult-to-measure natures of the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and the mental-image sphere, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the difficult-to-measure natures of the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and the conscious consciousness realm, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the difficult-to-measure natures of prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the difficult-to-measure natures of internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the difficult-to-measure natures of the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the difficult-to-measure natures of the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power, they do practice prajna paramita. Why? Sariputra, the difficult-to-measure nature of matter is not matter; the difficult-to-measure natures of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are not feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness; and so on, the difficult-to-measure natures of the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power are not the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power.

(The Buddha further taught that if the great bodhisattvas cultivate prajna paramita without practicing the difficult-to-measure natures of various dharmas, they do practice various dharmas.)

“Furthermore, Sariputra, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas do not practice the immeasurable nature of matter, then they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the immeasurable natures of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the immeasurable natures of the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the immeasurable natures of the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the immeasurable natures of the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the immeasurable

natures of prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the immeasurable natures of internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the immeasurable natures of the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path, they do practice prajna paramita. If they do not practice the immeasurable natures of the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power, they do practice prajna paramita. Why? Sariputra, the immeasurable nature of matter is not matter; the immeasurable natures of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are not feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness; and so on, the immeasurable natures of the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power are not the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power."

(The Buddha further taught that if the great bodhisattvas cultivate prajna paramita without practicing the immeasurable natures of various dharmas, they do practice various dharmas.)

At that time, Sariputra said to the Buddha, "World-Honored One, prajna paramita is most profound, measureless, and immeasurable. It appears so difficult for learners to believe in and understand, particularly the novice bodhisattva learners. Therefore, we should not teach prajna paramita to novice learners. Otherwise, they will be shocked, frightened, and hesitated and will not be able to believe in and understand it. But to teach prajna paramita to the bodhisattvas of nonregression is different. They will not be shocked, frightened, scared, or hesitated when hearing it. Instead, they will believe in, understand, accept, embrace, read, recite, and reflect reasonably on prajna paramita, and will further lecture on it for others."

At that time, Heavenly Emperor Indra asked Sariputra, "Great Virtuous One, what negative effects will result if teaching novice great-vehicle learners about prajna paramita?"

Sariputra replied, "Kausika, teaching novice great-vehicle learners prajna paramita will shock and frighten them and will make them more hesitant to believe in and understand prajna paramita. They will rather slander it and thus create negative karmas leading to bad destinies, in which they will stay long in the cycle of birth and death, and it will turn out more difficult for

them to attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Therefore, the wise ones will not teach prajna paramita to the novice great-vehicle learners.”

(Sariputra explained why the wise teachers do not teach novice great-vehicle learners about prajna paramita.)

Meanwhile, Heavenly Emperor Indra asked the long-lived sage Sariputra again, “Great Virtuous One, are some bodhisattvas who have not yet been conferred the prophecy of attaining the great bodhi not shocked, frightened, scared, and hesitated when hearing prajna paramita?”

Sariputra replied, “Some bodhisattvas who have not yet been conferred the prophecy are not scared and frightened when hearing prajna paramita. Kausika, these great bodhisattvas will be conferred the prophecy of attaining the great bodhi soon. Kausika, if the great bodhisattvas are not shocked, frightened, scared, and hesitated when hearing the fathomless prajna paramita, they must have been conferred the prophecy of attaining the great bodhi. If they have not yet been conferred, they certainly will be conferred after taking one or two more visits with Buddha’s places. Those other than these two kinds of bodhisattva will be shocked, frightened, and hesitated when hearing the fathomless prajna paramita.”

At that time, the Buddha said to Sariputra, “Yes, it is as you say. Sariputra, if the great bodhisattvas have learned great vehicle for a long time, made great aspirations for a long time, cultivated the six paramitas and the rest of innumerable and boundless Buddha dharma for a long time, and made offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim numberless and boundless Thus-Comers and served numberless and boundless virtuous friends for a long time, then owing to these causes and conditions, they will not be shocked, frightened, scared, and hesitated when hearing the fathomless prajna paramita. They will rather believe in, understand, accept, embrace, read, recite, reflect reasonably on, and teach prajna paramita, or write it and practice it as they are taught.”

(The Buddha taught why the great bodhisattvas are not frightened upon hearing prajna paramita.)

At that time, Sariputra said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, I would like to say a few similes about great bodhisattvas. I am begging your kind permission.”

The Buddha replied, “Yes, you may say as you like.”

Sariputra said, “World-Honored One, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen of the bodhisattva vehicle in their dreams cultivate prajna, meditation, diligence, forbearance, pure precept, and giving paramitas; dwell in internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; cultivate the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; cultivate the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power; cultivate the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; and approach and sit under the bodhi tree on the exquisite bodhi throne, then you must know that these great bodhisattvas are very close to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Let alone if the great bodhisattvas stay awake and cultivate prajna, meditation, diligence, forbearance, pure precept, and giving paramitas; dwell in internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; cultivate the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; cultivate the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power; cultivate the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena, and are not in a hurry to realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi that they are pursuing, then World-Honored one, these great bodhisattvas will reach and sit under the bodhi tree on the exquisite bodhi throne soon. They will attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and turn the wonderful dharma wheel to bring benefits and happiness to all sentient beings. World-Honored One, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen hear the fathomless prajna paramita and can immediately and naturally accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently and attentively, and reflect reasonably on it, they must have learned the great vehicle for a long time. Their virtuous roots must have been mature. They must have made offerings to various Buddhas. They must have served many virtuous friends and planted various virtuous roots.

“World-Honored One, if the good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth hear the fathomless prajna paramita and believe in, understand, accept, embrace, read, recite, reflect reasonably on, and teach it to others, these good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth must

have been conferred or very close to be conferred the prophecy of attaining the great bodhi. World-Honored One, as the good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth have dwelled in the bodhisattva stage of nonregression and will attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi soon, they are able to develop a deep belief in and understanding of prajna paramita upon hearing it; accept, embrace, read, recite, and reflect reasonably on it; cultivate it as they are taught; and further teach it to others.

“World-Honored One, a person wandered in wilderness, walked on perilous roads, and went as far as one, two, three, four, or five hundred yojanas. As he saw fields, forests, and shepherds that foretold the existence of the big city or the capital ahead, he thought, ‘Now it is not very far from the city.’ He was relaxed and no longer afraid of the fierce beasts, wicked robbers, hunger, and thirst. So are various great bodhisattvas. If they hear the fathomless prajna paramita and are delighted to accept, embrace, read, recite, reflect reasonably on, and develop a deep belief in and understanding of it, you must know that they will be conferred soon or have already been conferred the prophecy of attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. These great bodhisattvas now are no longer fearful that they will fall into the stages of voice-hearing and self-enlightenment bodhi. Why? It is because these great bodhisattvas have seen, heard, and made offerings respectfully to the fathomless prajna paramita and this anticipates the attainment of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.”

(Sariputra talked about the signs that would foretell the attainment of the unsurpassed bodhi.)

At that time, the Buddha said to Sariputra: “Yes, it is as you say. You may go on talking about it with the support of the Buddha’s supernatural powers.”

Meanwhile, Sariputra said to the Buddha: “World-Honored One, a person would like to look at the sea. After walking a long way, the person saw fewer and fewer mountains and forests and thought, ‘The sea must be very near. Why? When getting close to the seashore, the land will lower down, and there will be no more mountains or forest.’ Although having not seen the sea by that time, this person was excited and jumped, and thought, ‘I am sure that I will see the sea soon.’ World-Honored One, so are the great bodhisattvas. They have not been conferred such prophecy by the Buddha, ‘After some kalpas, one hundred kalpas, one thousand kalpas, one hundred thousand kalpas, or hundreds of thousands of koti nayuta of kalpas, you definitely will

attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.’ But they have heard the fathomless prajna paramita and accepted, embraced, read, recited, and reflected reasonably on it. They thus have developed a deep belief in and understanding of it. They know that they are very close to be conferred the prophecy by the Buddha. Why? World-Honored One, it is because these great bodhisattvas have seen and heard the fathomless prajna paramita and made offerings respectfully to it; they have also accepted, embraced, read, recited, and reflected reasonably on it. This anticipates the attainment of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.

(Sariputra continued to talk about the good omen for being conferred the prophecy of becoming a Buddha in the future by the Buddha.)

“World-Honored One, as old leaves fell and new twigs grew fresh and became moist, people foresee that flowers will bloom, and fruit trees will flourish soon. They would say, ‘New flowers and leaves are coming soon. Why? The signs here have anticipated it.’ Young and old people in the continent of Jambudvipa rejoiced and jumped, and said, ‘We will see flowers blooming and fruits flourishing very soon.’ World-Honored One, so are the great bodhisattvas. If they have the opportunity to hear this fathomless prajna paramita and are able to accept, embrace, read, recite, reflect reasonably on, develop deep belief in and understanding of, and made offerings respectfully to it, they must have in previous lives planted virtuous roots that mature now; they must have made offerings to many Buddhas and served many good and virtuous friends. They will be granted the prophecy of attaining the great bodhi by the Buddha soon. World-Honored One, these great bodhisattvas will think, ‘I must have developed superior powers of virtuous roots in the past, and that powers can elicit the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. That is why I can see and hear the fathomless prajna paramita, make offerings respectfully to it, and further accept, embrace, read, recite, develop deep belief in and understanding of, reflect reasonably on, and cultivate it as I wish.’

“World-Honored One, today in this assembly, some heavenly sons who once witnessed the Buddha in the past teaching this dharma will rejoice and talk to each other, ‘Various great bodhisattvas heard such fathomless prajna paramita in the past and were granted the prophecy by the Buddha. Today, various great bodhisattvas are hearing such fathomless prajna paramita; they will be granted the prophecy by the Buddha soon.’

“World-Honored One, a woman was pregnant, and after quite a while, her body became heavy and could not move freely. She neither ate much nor slept much. She did not talk and disliked doing daily chores. She even could not do anything because she did not feel comfortable. Another mother saw this and knew that the woman was going to give birth to a child soon. World-Honored One, so are the great bodhisattvas. Because they have planted many virtuous roots, made offerings to the Buddhas often, served many virtuous friends, and their virtuous roots have become mature, so when hearing such fathomless prajna paramita, they are ready to accept, embrace, read, recite, reflect reasonably on, develop deep belief in and understanding of, and cultivate it as they wish. World-Honored One, it is clear that these great bodhisattvas will be granted the prophecy of attaining the great bodhi by the Buddha soon.”

At that time, the Buddha praised Sariputra, “Excellent, excellent! You can say these similes about the great bodhisattvas who are able to accept, embrace, read, recite, reflect reasonably on, and develop deep belief in and understanding of the fathomless prajna paramita after hearing it. You must know that it is because of the Buddha’s mighty supernatural powers that your talent of lecturing and debate is activated.”

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha: “World-Honored One, it is very rare and unique! The Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones are very capable of absorbing various great bodhisattvas; they are also very capable of giving advice to and entrusting various great bodhisattvas with great tasks.”

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One: “Yes, it is as you say. Why? Well-Appearing One, it is because various great bodhisattvas have aspired to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. It is also because they are loving-kind and compassionate and would like to bring benefits and happiness to more sentient beings, including heavenly and human beings. When cultivating and learning bodhisattva actions diligently, the various great bodhisattvas have adopted four approaches to benefit immeasurable hundreds of thousands of sentient beings and absorb immeasurable hundreds of thousands of great bodhisattvas. What are these four approaches? The first is giving, the second is speaking good and kind words, the third is doing actions beneficial to others, and the fourth is getting along with others in harmony and empathy.

These great bodhisattvas have not only dwelled in the path of the ten virtuous karmas themselves but also encouraged others to dwell in and learn diligently the path of the ten virtuous karmas. They have not only entered the first meditation, and so forth, and the concentration of nonthinking and not nonthinking themselves but also taught others to do so. They have not only practiced giving themselves but also taught others to do so. They have not only practiced pure precept themselves but also taught others to do so. They have not only practiced forbearance themselves but also taught others to do so. They have not only practiced diligence themselves but also taught others to do so. They have not only practiced meditation themselves but also taught others to do so. They have not only practiced prajna themselves but also taught others to do so. By adopting expedient skillfulness of prajna paramita as foundation, these great bodhisattvas teach sentient beings to attain stream-entry effect, but they do not attain it themselves; they teach sentient beings to attain once-return effect, but they do not attain it themselves; they teach sentient beings to attain nonreturn effect, but they do not attain it themselves; they teach sentient beings to attain arhat effect, but they do not attain it themselves; they teach sentient beings to attain self-enlightenment bodhi, but they do not attain it themselves. These great bodhisattvas have not only cultivated giving paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita themselves but also encouraged immeasurable hundreds of thousands of bodhisattvas to do so. They have not only dwelled in the bodhisattva stage of nonregression themselves but also encouraged immeasurable hundreds of thousands of bodhisattvas to do so. They have not only worked diligently to dignify and purify the Buddha Lands themselves but also encouraged immeasurable hundreds of thousands of bodhisattvas to do so. They have not only worked diligently to assist the sentient beings to mature themselves but also encouraged immeasurable hundreds of thousands of bodhisattvas to do so. They have not only initiated diligently the supernatural powers of bodhisattva themselves but also encouraged immeasurable hundreds of thousands of bodhisattvas to do so. They have not only worked diligently to dignify and purify the dharani gates themselves but also encouraged immeasurable hundreds of thousands of bodhisattvas to do so. They have not only worked diligently to dignify and purify the samadhi gates themselves but also encouraged immeasurable hundreds of thousands of bodhisattvas to do so. They have not only developed perfect talent of lecturing and debate themselves but also encouraged immeasurable hundreds of thousands of bodhisattvas to do so. They have not only absorbed perfect bodies themselves but also encouraged immeasurable hundreds of thousands of

bodhisattvas to do so. They have not only absorbed perfect physical marks themselves but also encouraged immeasurable hundreds of thousands of bodhisattvas to do so. They have not only absorbed the perfect pure-child stage themselves but also encouraged immeasurable hundreds of thousands of bodhisattvas to do so. These great bodhisattvas have not only cultivated the four bases of mindfulness, and so forth, and noble eightfold path themselves but also encouraged others to do so. They have not only dwelled in internal emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature themselves but also encouraged others to do so. They have not only cultivated the Buddha's ten abilities, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power themselves but also encouraged others to do so. They have not only cultivated the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena themselves but also encouraged others to do so. They have not only terminated enduring negative disposition of vexations themselves but also encouraged others to do so. They have not only realized and attained the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi to turn the wonderful dharma wheel and bring benefits and happiness to all sentient beings themselves but also encouraged others to do so."

(The Buddha taught that the great bodhisattvas have adopted four approaches to absorb, teach, and encourage sentient beings to practice the superior holy dharmas that they have practiced themselves with an attempt to benefit them. They have also encouraged others to cultivate and dwell in various superior holy dharmas and attain various holy effects. As they encourage others to attain the voice-hearer effects and self-enlightened one effect, they will not attain such effects themselves.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha: "It is wonderful, World-Honored One! It is rare and unique, Well-Gone One! These great bodhisattvas have achieved such a great accumulation of merits and virtues intending to benefit all sentient beings. They have cultivated such fathomless prajna paramita, realized the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, and turned the wonderful dharma wheel to bring benefits and happiness to all sentient beings. World-Honored One, how will the great bodhisattvas cultivate and fulfill prajna paramita quickly?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One: “When cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas do not see that matter increases or decreases, nor do they see increase or decrease in feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. They do not see increase or decrease in the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres; in the sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres; in the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms; in the sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms; in the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth; in the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts; in various feelings produced by eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts; in giving, pure-precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas; in internal emptiness, external emptiness, internal-external emptiness, emptiness of emptiness, emptiness of space, emptiness of ultimate truth, emptiness of conditioned phenomena, emptiness of unconditioned reality, emptiness in the final analysis, emptiness of nontemporality, emptiness of deconstruction and nondeconstruction, emptiness of original nature, emptiness of particular and common characteristics, emptiness of all dharmas, emptiness of nonattainment, emptiness of selflessness, emptiness of self-nature, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; in the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, four bases of power, five roots, five powers, seven factors for enlightenment, and noble eightfold path; in the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, great equanimity, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power; in all dharani gates and all samadhi gates; and in the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Therefore, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas can fulfill the cultivation of prajna paramita quickly.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas do not see dharma and non-dharma; past, future, and present; virtuous dharmas and not virtuous dharmas; morally related dharmas and morally unrelated dharmas; conditioned dharmas and unconditioned dharmas; the realm of desire, realm of form, and realm of formlessness; giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power; all

dharani gates and all samadhi gates; and the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Therefore, they are able to cultivate and fulfill prajna paramita quickly. Why? Well-Appearing One, all dharmas have no forms of nature; they cannot be turned; they are illusory, deceptive, not solid, not free, and not at ease; they have no awareness and feeling; they are apart from the 'I', the sentient being, the living one, the one who gives birth, and so forth, and the knower and the viewer."

(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas cultivate and fulfill prajna paramita quickly.)

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha: "World-Honored One, the words of the Thus-Comer are inconceivable."

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One: "Yes, it is as you say. The words of the Thus-Comer are inconceivable. Well-Appearing One, because matter is inconceivable, words of the Thus-Comer are inconceivable; because feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are inconceivable, the words of the Thus-Comer are inconceivable. Because the eye sphere is inconceivable, the words of the Thus-Comer are inconceivable; because the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres are inconceivable, the words of the Thus-Comer are inconceivable. Because the sight sphere is inconceivable, the words of the Thus-Comer are inconceivable; because the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres are inconceivable, the words of the Thus-Comer are inconceivable. Because the eye realm is inconceivable, the words of the Thus-Comer are inconceivable; because the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms are inconceivable, the words of the Thus-Comer are inconceivable. Because the sight realm is inconceivable, the words of the Thus-Comer are inconceivable; because the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms are inconceivable, the words of the Thus-Comer are inconceivable. Because the eye consciousness realm is inconceivable, the words of the Thus-Comer are inconceivable; because the ear consciousness realm, nose consciousness realm, tongue consciousness realm, body consciousness realm, and conscious consciousness realms are inconceivable, the words of the Thus-Comer are inconceivable. Because the eye contact is inconceivable, the words of the Thus-Comer are inconceivable; because the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts are inconceivable, the words of the Thus-Comer are inconceivable. Because various feelings produced by eye contact are inconceivable, the words of the Thus-

Comer are inconceivable; because various feelings produced by ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts are inconceivable, the words of the Thus-Comer are inconceivable. Because giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita are inconceivable, the words of the Thus-Comer are inconceivable. Because internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are inconceivable, the words of the Thus-Comer are inconceivable. Because the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path are inconceivable, the words of the Thus-Comer are inconceivable. Because the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power are inconceivable, the words of the Thus-Comer are inconceivable. Because all dharani gates and all samadhi gates are inconceivable, the words of the Thus-Comer are inconceivable. Because the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are inconceivable, the words of the Thus-Comer are inconceivable. Well-Appearing One, when cultivating prajna paramita, if the great bodhisattvas know accurately that matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are inconceivable, then they will be able to cultivate and fulfill prajna paramita before long.

(The Buddha explained why the words of the Thus-Comer are inconceivable.)

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas do not think that matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are conceivable or inconceivable; the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres are conceivable or inconceivable; the sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres are conceivable or inconceivable; the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms are conceivable or inconceivable; the sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms are conceivable or inconceivable; the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, nose consciousness realm, tongue consciousness realm, body consciousness realm, and conscious consciousness realm are conceivable or inconceivable; the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts are conceivable or inconceivable; the feelings produced by eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts are conceivable or inconceivable; giving, pure precept, and so forth, and prajna paramitas are conceivable or inconceivable; internal emptiness, external

emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are conceivable or inconceivable; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path are conceivable or inconceivable; the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power are conceivable or inconceivable; all dharani gates and all samadhi gates are conceivable or inconceivable; the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are conceivable or inconceivable. If they do not think so, they will cultivate and fulfill prajna paramita quickly."

(The Buddha further taught how great bodhisattvas can cultivate and fulfill prajna paramita quickly.)

Fascicle 439

Chapter 43

In the Northeast

Section 2

(In the Second Assembly)

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, the essential meanings of prajna paramita are very profound. Who will believe in and understand them?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “The great bodhisattvas who have cultivated giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas, planted virtuous roots for a long time, made offerings to the Buddhas often, and served many virtuous friends will be able to believe in and understand the fathomless prajna paramita.”

(The Buddha explained who were able to believe in and understand the very found essential meanings of prajna paramita.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “World-Honored One, how can we distinguish if the great bodhisattvas have cultivated giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas and planted virtuous roots for a long time, made offerings to the Buddhas often, and served many virtuous friends?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “When cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas will neither distinguish nor not distinguish among matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness and their forms and self-natures. They will neither distinguish nor not distinguish among the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres and their forms and self-natures. They will neither distinguish nor not distinguish among the sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres and their forms and self-natures; They will neither distinguish nor not distinguish among the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms and

their forms and self-natures. They will neither distinguish nor not distinguish among the sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms and their forms and self-natures. They will neither distinguish nor not distinguish among the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, nose consciousness realm, tongue consciousness realm, body consciousness realm, and conscious consciousness realm and their forms and self-natures. They will neither distinguish nor not distinguish among the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts and their forms and self-natures. They will neither distinguish nor not distinguish among the feelings produced by eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts and their forms and self-natures. They will neither distinguish nor not distinguish among the realms of desire, form, and formlessness and their forms and self-natures. They will neither distinguish nor not distinguish among giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita and their forms and self-natures. They will neither distinguish nor not distinguish among internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature and their forms and self-natures. They will neither distinguish nor not distinguish among the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path and their forms and self-natures. They will neither distinguish nor not distinguish among the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power and their forms and self-natures. They will neither distinguish nor not distinguish among the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena and their forms and self-natures. Why? Well-Appearing One, matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of everything, the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are inconceivable. Well-Appearing One, if the great bodhisattvas neither distinguish nor not distinguish among these dharmas, they must have cultivated giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas and planted virtuous roots for a long time, made offerings to the Buddhas often, and served many virtuous friends."

(The Buddha taught how to tell if the great bodhisattvas have cultivated the six paramitas, planted virtuous roots, made offerings to the Buddhas, and served many virtuous friends for a long time.)

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, so prajna paramits is extremely profound.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, Well-Appearing One, as matter is very profound, prajna paramita is extremely profound; as feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are very profound, prajna paramita is extremely profound. As the eye sphere is very profound, prajna paramita is extremely profound; as the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres are very profound, prajna paramita is extremely profound. As the sight sphere is very profound, prajna paramita is extremely profound; as the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres are very profound, prajna paramita is extremely profound. As the eye realm is very profound, prajna paramita is extremely profound; as the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms are very profound, prajna paramita is extremely profound. As the sight realm is very profound, prajna paramita is extremely profound; as the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms are very profound, prajna paramita is extremely profound. As the eye consciousness realm is very profound, prajna paramita is extremely profound; as the ear consciousness realm, nose consciousness realm, tongue consciousness realm, body consciousness realm, and conscious consciousness realm are very profound, prajna paramita is extremely profound. As the eye contact is very profound, prajna paramita is extremely profound; as the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts are very profound, prajna paramita is extremely profound. As the feelings produced by eye contact are very profound, prajna paramita is extremely profound; as the feelings produced by ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts are very profound, prajna paramita is extremely profound. As giving paramita is very profound, prajna paramita is extremely profound; as pure precept, forbearance, diligence, and meditation paramitas are very profound, prajna paramita is extremely profound. As internal emptiness, external emptiness and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are very profound, prajna paramita is extremely profound. As the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path are very profound, prajna paramita is extremely profound. As the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power are very profound, prajna paramita is extremely profound. As the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are very profound, prajna paramita is extremely profound.”

(The Buddha stated that as various dharmas are very profound, prajna paramita is extremely profound.)

At that time, the venerable Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha again, “World-Honored One, prajna paramita is a great accumulation of treasures.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, because it can bring great treasures of merits and virtues to sentient beings. Well-Appearing One, the great accumulation of rare and invaluable treasures can bring the path of the ten virtuous karmas, four meditations, four immeasurable minds, four formless concentrations, and five supernatural powers to sentient beings. It can bring great, rare, and invaluable treasures of giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas to sentient beings. It can bring great, rare, and invaluable treasures of internal emptiness, external emptiness, internal-external emptiness, emptiness of emptiness, emptiness of space, emptiness of ultimate truth, emptiness of conditioned phenomena, emptiness of unconditioned reality, emptiness in the final analysis, emptiness of nontemporality, emptiness of deconstruction and nondeconstruction, emptiness of original nature, emptiness of particular and common characteristics, emptiness of all dharmas, emptiness of nonattainment, emptiness of selflessness, emptiness of self-nature, and emptiness of selfless self-nature to sentient beings. It can bring great, rare, and invaluable treasures of the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, four bases of power, five roots, five powers, seven factors for enlightenment, and noble eightfold path to sentient beings. It can bring great, rare, and invaluable treasures of the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration to sentient beings. It can bring great, rare, and invaluable treasures of the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations to sentient beings. It can bring the great, rare, and invaluable treasures of realness, dharma realm, dharma nature, reality, and the realm of the inconceivable to sentient beings. It can bring great, rare, and invaluable treasures of the four noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering to sentient beings. It can bring great, rare, and invaluable treasures of the ten stages of bodhisattva, dharani gates, and samadhi gates to sentient beings. It can bring great, rare, and invaluable treasures of five eyes and six supernatural powers to sentient beings. It can bring great, rare, and invaluable treasures of the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, great loving-kindness, great

compassion, great joy, great equanimity, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power to sentient beings. It can bring great, rare, and invaluable treasures of staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times to sentient beings. It can bring great, rare, and invaluable treasures of perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena to sentient beings. It can bring great, rare, and invaluable treasures of stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, and self-enlightenment bodhi to sentient beings. And it can bring great, rare, and invaluable treasures of all great bodhisattva actions, the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddha, and the correct dharma-wheel turning to sentient beings."

(The Buddha further said that prajna paramita can bring great, rare, and invaluable treasures of various superior holy dharmas to sentient beings.)

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha again, "World-Honored One, prajna paramita is a pure accumulation."

The Buddha said, "Yes, Well-Appearing One, as matter is pure, prajna paramita is a pure accumulation; as feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are pure, prajna paramita is a pure accumulation. As eye sphere is pure, prajna paramita is a pure accumulation; as ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres are pure, prajna paramita is a pure accumulation. As sight sphere is pure, prajna paramita is a pure accumulation; as sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres are pure, prajna paramita is a pure accumulation. As eye realm is pure, prajna paramita is a pure accumulation; as ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms are pure, prajna paramita is a pure accumulation. As eye realm is pure, prajna paramita is a pure accumulation; as ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms are pure, prajna paramita is a pure accumulation. As sight realm is pure, prajna paramita is a pure accumulation; as sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms are pure, prajna paramita is a pure accumulation. As eye consciousness realm is pure, prajna paramita is a pure accumulation; as ear consciousness realm, nose consciousness realm, tongue consciousness realm, body consciousness realm, and conscious consciousness realm are pure, prajna paramita is a pure accumulation. As eye contact is pure, prajna paramita is a pure accumulation; as ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts are pure, prajna paramita is a pure accumulation. As the feelings produced by eye

contact are pure, prajna paramita is a pure accumulation; as the feelings produced by ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts are pure, prajna paramita is a pure accumulation. As giving paramita is pure, prajna paramita is a pure accumulation; as pure precept, forbearance, diligence, and meditation paramitas are pure, prajna paramita is a pure accumulation. As internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are pure, prajna paramita is a pure accumulation. As four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path are pure, prajna paramita is a pure accumulation. As Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power are pure, prajna paramita is a pure accumulation. As perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are pure, prajna paramita is a pure accumulation."

(The Buddha taught that as the five aggregates, the six inner and outer spheres, and so forth, and various superior virtuous dharms are pure, prajna paramita is a pure accumulation.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha again, "It is extraordinary, World-Honored One. It is rare, Well-Gone One. Because prajna paramita is extremely profound, it has many difficulties and hindrances. But it can be taught extensively without being hindered."

The Buddha replied, "Yes, Well-Appearing One, it is as you say. The fathomless prajna paramita has many difficulties and hindrances. With the support of the Buddha's supernatural powers, it can be extensively taught without being hindered. If the good gentlemen and gentlewomen adore the dharma and would like to write the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, they should write them right away. If they would like to read and recite them, they should do it right away. If they would like to accept and embrace them, they should do it right away. If they would like to cultivate it, they should do it right away. If they would like to reflect on it, they should do it right away. If they would like to teach it, they should do it right away. Why? Well-Appearing One, because the fathomless prajna paramita has many difficulties and hindrances, so don't hesitate to write, read, recite, accept, embrace, cultivate, reflect on, and lecture on it before the difficulties arise to hinder you from doing all these things.

(The Buddha taught that if the great bodhisattvas would like to write, read, recite, cultivate, and teach prajna paramita, they should do right away before the hindrances arise.)

“Well-Appearing One, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen would like to write the fathomless prajna paramita for one, two, three, four, five, six, seven months, or one year, they should work diligently and always keep this in mind until they complete the writing. Well-Appearing One, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen would like to accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, learn, reflect on, and teach the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita for one, two, three, four, five, six, seven months, or one year, they should work diligently and keep this in mind until they finish them. Why? Well-Appearing One, prajna paramita is an invaluable treasure that often encounters difficulties and hindrances.”

(The Buddha further advises the good gentlepersons who wish to write, read, recite, and so forth, and teach the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita for a longer time should keep such intentions in mind until completion to avoid encountering difficulties.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, “It is extraordinary, World-Honored One. It is unusual, Well-Gone One. The fathomless prajna paramita is an invaluable treasure that often encounters difficulties and hindrances. But those who write, read, recite, reflect on, cultivate, learn, and teach it will not be troubled or hindered by demons.”

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, “Although evil demons will do as many things as possible to disturb and hinder the great bodhisattvas from writing, reading, reciting, accepting, embracing, reflecting on, cultivating, learning, and teaching the fathomless prajna paramita, the demons’ attempts will fail at last.”

At that time, Sariputra said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, whose supernatural powers will stop evil demons from disturbing and hindering various great bodhisattvas when they write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, learn, reflect on, and extensively lecture on the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita?”

The Buddha replied to Sariputra, “The Buddha’s supernatural powers will stop evil demons from hindering various great bodhisattvas when they write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, learn, reflect on, and extensively lecture on the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita. Moreover, Sariputra, because of the supernatural powers of various Buddhas in the worlds of the ten directions, the evil demons cannot obstruct the great bodhisattvas when they write, accept,

embrace, read, recite, cultivate, learn, reflect on, and extensively lecture on the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita. Furthermore, Sariputra, because all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones have protected and stayed in the mindfulness of the bodhisattvas who are cultivating prajna paramita, the evil demons cannot hinder the good gentlemen and gentlewomen dwelling in the bodhisattva vehicle from writing, accepting, embracing, reading, reciting, cultivating, learning, reflecting on, and lecturing extensively on the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita. Why? Sariputra, because all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones have always protected and stayed in the mindfulness of the virtuous karmas made by the great bodhisattvas who are cultivating prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas thus will not be hindered by the evil demons.

(Since the Thus-Comers have always protected these great bodhisattvas when they read, write, recite, and so forth, and teach prajna paramita, the hindrances and difficulties caused by demons will finally fail.)

“Sariputra, if the great bodhisattvas write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, learn, reflect on, and extensively teach the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, they definitely will be protected by and kept in the minds of innumerable, countless, and boundless Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones who are peacefully conducting and teaching the dharma in the worlds of the ten directions. The great bodhisattvas who are protected by and kept in the minds of the Buddhas certainly will not be hindered and disturbed by evil demons. Sariputra, when the good gentlemen and gentlewomen write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, learn, reflect on, and extensively teach the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, they should think, ‘It is because of the protection and the mindfulness of the supernatural powers of the innumerable, countless, and boundless Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones that I can make virtuous karmas through writing, accepting, embracing, reading, reciting, cultivating, learning, reflecting on, and extensively teaching the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita without being hindered by evil demons.’”

Meanwhile, Sariputra said to the Buddha again, “If the good gentlemen and gentlewomen write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, learn, reflect on, and lecture on the fathomless

sutras of prajna paramita, they will be protected and kept by the supernatural powers of various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, so all virtuous karmas made by them will not be harmed or hindered by evil demons.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, it is as you say. If the great gentlemen and gentlewomen write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, learn, reflect on, and lecture on the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, you must know that they are protected by the supernatural powers of all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones.”

Sariputra said to the Buddha again, “If the good gentlemen and gentlewomen write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, learn, reflect on, and lecture on the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, innumerable, countless, and boundless Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones who are stably and peacefully conducting the worlds in the ten directions and teaching the dharma will be aware of what these good gentlemen and gentlewomen are doing, and will be delighted to protect and keep them. World-Honored One, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, learn, reflect on, and lecture on the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, they will be watched by the Buddha eyes of innumerable, countless, and boundless Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones who are stably and peacefully conducting the worlds in the ten directions and teaching the dharma. Because of this cause and condition, these great bodhisattvas will always be protected and kept loving-kindly and compassionately by all Buddhas. Therefore, all virtuous things they undertake will be accomplished well.”

At that time, the Buddha said to Sariputra, “Yes, it is as you say. If the good gentlemen and gentlewomen write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, learn, reflect on, and lecture on the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, they will be always overseen, known, and protected by innumerable, countless, and boundless Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones who are stably conducting the worlds in the ten directions and teaching the dharma, so that no evil demons can disturb or annoy them. All virtuous karmas that they are doing will be accomplished successfully. Sariputra, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen dwelling in the vehicle of bodhisattva can write, accept, embrace, read, recite,

cultivate, learn, reflect on, and lecture on the fathomless prajna paramita, you must know that these good gentlemen and gentlewomen have been very close to the attainment of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, and no demonic army can hinder them or do harm to them.

“Furthermore, Sariputra, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen dwelling in the vehicle of bodhisattva can write the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita in solemn ways and further accept, embrace, read, and recite them, you must know that they have already developed a deep belief in and understanding of prajna paramita. They will make most wonderful flower wreaths, spread and powdered fragrances and incenses, clothes, jewel necklaces, treasure banners, canopies, music and entertainment, and lamps as offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita. These good gentlemen and gentlewomen will always be overseen, known, and protected by the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones. Because of this cause and condition, they definitely will obtain great wealth, great superior benefits, great fruits, and great maturation that occur in different times through different ways.

“Furthermore, Sariputra, because these good gentlemen and gentlewomen can write, accept, embrace, read, recite, make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim the virtuous roots of the fathomless prajna paramita, they will never stay away from the Buddha. They always are able to hear correct dharma and never fall into bad destinies until they achieve the stage of nonregression. Sariputra, because of the virtuous roots, the good gentlemen and gentlewomen will not stay far away from giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power; the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; and the rest of numberless and boundless Buddha dharma until attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi before long. Sariputra, because of this cause and condition, the good gentlemen and gentlewomen dwelling in the vehicle of bodhisattva should diligently write, accept, read, recite, cultivate, learn, reflect on, and explain for others the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, and

make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim the fathomless sutras at all times without a brief interruption.

(The Buddha elaborated to teach how great bodhisattvas could avoid demonic hindrances.)

“Furthermore, Sariputra, the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita will flourish gradually in the southeast of this land after I enter nirvana. Many bhiksus (monks), bhiksunīs (nuns), upāsakas (laymen), and upāsikās (laywomen) dwelling in the vehicle of bodhisattva in the southeast will deeply believe in and understand the fathomless prajna paramita. They will write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, learn, reflect on, and lecture on prajna paramita. They will further make various most wonderful flower wreaths, spread fragrance and powdered incenses, clothes, jewel necklaces, treasure banners, canopies, music and entertainment, and lamps as offerings to esteem and acclaim the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita. Because of such virtuous roots, they will not be reborn in perilous and bad destinies; rather, they will be reborn in heavenly realm or human realm and enjoy wealth, nobility, and happiness. Because of the powers and authority thus derived, they will cultivate and fulfill giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas before long. They will further make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, follow one of the three vehicles suitable for them to cultivate and learn, and get rid of all bondages gradually. They will realize and attain the nirvana of voice-hearer, the nirvana of self-enlightened one, or the unsurpassed nirvana with ultimate peace and happiness.

“Sariputra, after I enter nirvana, the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita will flourish first in the southeast, and gradually spread and flourish in the south, in which many monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen dwelling in the vehicle of bodhisattva will deeply believe in and understand the fathomless prajna paramita. They will write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, learn, reflect on, and lecture on prajna paramita. They will further make various most wonderful flower wreaths, spread fragrance and powdered incenses, clothes, jewel necklaces, treasure banners, canopies, music and entertainment, and lamps as offerings to esteem and acclaim the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita. Owing to such virtuous roots, they will not be reborn in perilous and bad destinies; rather, they will be reborn in heavenly realm or human realm and enjoy wealth, nobility, and happiness. Because of the powers and authority thus

derived, they will cultivate and fulfill giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas before long. They will further make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, follow one of the three vehicles suitable for them to cultivate and learn, and get rid of all bondages gradually. They will realize and attain the nirvana of voice-hearer, the nirvana of self-enlightened one, or the unsurpassed nirvana with ultimate peace and happiness.

“Sariputra, after I enter nirvana, the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita will flourish and spread gradually from the south to the southwest. Many monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen dwelling in the vehicle of bodhisattva in the southwest will deeply believe in and understand the fathomless prajna paramita. They will write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, learn, reflect on, and lecture on prajna paramita. They will further make various most wonderful flower wreaths, spread fragrance and powdered incenses, clothes, jewel necklaces, treasure banners, canopies, music and entertainment, and lamps as offerings to esteem and acclaim the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita. Owing to such virtuous roots, they will not be reborn in perilous and bad destinies; rather, they will be reborn in heavenly realm or human realm and enjoy wealth, nobility, and happiness. Because of the powers and authority thus derived, they will cultivate and fulfill giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas before long. They will further make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, follow one of the three vehicles suitable for them to cultivate and learn, and get rid of all bondages gradually. They will realize and attain the nirvana of voice-hearer, the nirvana of self-enlightened one, or the unsurpassed nirvana with ultimate peace and happiness.

“Sariputra, after I enter nirvana, the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita will flourish and spread gradually from southwest to northwest. Many monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen dwelling in the vehicle of bodhisattva in the northwest will deeply believe in and understand the fathomless prajna paramita. They will write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, learn, reflect on, and lecture on prajna paramita. They will further make various most wonderful flower wreaths, spread fragrance and powdered incenses, clothes, jewel necklaces, treasure banners, canopies, music and entertainment, and lamps as offerings to esteem and acclaim the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita. Owing to such virtuous roots, they will not be reborn in perilous and bad destinies; rather, they will be reborn in heavenly realm or human realm and enjoy wealth,

nobility, and happiness. Because of the powers and authority thus derived, they will cultivate and fulfill giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas before long. They will further make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, follow one of the three vehicles suitable for them to cultivate and learn, and get rid of all bondages gradually. They will realize and attain the nirvana of voice-hearer, the nirvana of self-enlightened one, or the unsurpassed nirvana with ultimate peace and happiness.

“Sariputra, after I enter nirvana, the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita will flourish and spread gradually from northwest to north. Many monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen dwelling in the vehicle of bodhisattva in the north will deeply believe in and understand the fathomless prajna paramita. They will write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, learn, reflect on, and lecture on prajna paramita. They will further make various most wonderful flower wreaths, spread fragrance and powdered incenses, clothes, jewel necklaces, treasure banners, canopies, music and entertainment, and lamps as offerings to esteem and acclaim the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita. Owing to such virtuous roots, they will not be reborn in perilous and bad destinies; rather, they will be reborn in heavenly realm or human realm and enjoy wealth, nobility, and happiness. Because of the powers and authority thus derived, they will cultivate and fulfill giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas before long. They will further make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, follow one of the three vehicles suitable for them to cultivate and learn, and get rid of all bondages gradually. They will realize and attain the nirvana of voice-hearer, the nirvana of self-enlightened one, or the unsurpassed nirvana with ultimate peace and happiness.

“Sariputra, after I enter nirvana, the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita will flourish and spread gradually from north to northeast. Many monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen dwelling in the vehicle of bodhisattva in the northeast will deeply believe in and understand the fathomless prajna paramita. They will write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, learn, reflect on, and lecture on prajna paramita. They will further make various most wonderful flower wreaths, spread fragrance and powdered incenses, clothes, jewel necklaces, treasure banners, canopies, music and entertainment, and lamps as offerings to esteem and acclaim the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita. Owing to such virtuous roots, they will not be reborn in perilous and bad destinies; rather, they will be reborn in heavenly realm or human realm and enjoy wealth,

nobility, and happiness. Because of the powers and authority thus derived, they will cultivate and fulfill giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas before long. They will further make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, follow one of the three vehicles suitable for them to cultivate and learn, and get rid of all bondages gradually. They will realize and attain the nirvana of voice-hearer, the nirvana of self-enlightened one, or the unsurpassed nirvana with ultimate peace and happiness.

“Furthermore, Sariputra, five hundred years after I enter nirvana, the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita will offer tremendous Buddhist services in the northeast. Why? Sariputra, the dharma that all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones value and esteem is the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita. All Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones have protected and kept in the mindfulness of the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita. Sariputra, the dharma, the unsurpassed vinaya (laws and rules for monastics) not attained by the Buddha will decline, but the dharma, the unsurpassed vinaya attained by the Buddha will remain powerful. This unsurpassed correct dharma, the vinaya, is the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita. Sariputra, in the northeast, the good gentlemen and gentlewomen will believe in, enjoy, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, learn, reflect on, and lecture on this fathomless prajna paramita. I will protect and keep these good gentlemen and gentlewomen in my mind, so that they will be free from disturbance and annoyance.

(The Buddha predicted the spread of Buddha dharma after he entered nirvana, particularly in the northeast.)

“Sariputra, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen in the northeast can write the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita and further make various most wonderful flower wreaths, spread fragrance and powdered incenses, clothes, jewel necklaces, treasure banners, canopies, music and entertainment, and lamps as offerings to esteem and acclaim the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, I must say that they will never fall in perilous and bad destinies; they will rather be reborn in heaven or human world to enjoy wonderful happiness. Because of the powers and authority thus derived, their cultivation in the six paramitas will be strengthened and fostered. They will further make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim various Buddhas, the World-

Honored Ones. By following one of the three vehicles suited to them, they will gradually and finally attain nirvana. Why? Sariputra, I can see with my Buddha eye and testify to, admire, and acclaim the merits and virtues gained by these good gentlemen and gentlewomen. All Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones who are conducting peacefully in the numberless and boundless worlds of the ten directions and teaching the dharma will also see with their Buddha eyes and testify to, admire, and acclaim the merits and virtues gained by these good gentlemen and gentlewomen.”

Meanwhile, Sariputra said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, will these fathomless sutras of prajna paramita disseminate widely in the northeast five hundred years after the Buddha enters nirvana?”

The Buddha said, “Yes, Sariputra, it is as you say. Five hundred years after I enter nirvana, the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita will extensively disseminate in the northeast. Sariputra, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen in the northeast at that time hear the fathomless prajna paramita and develop a deep belief in and understanding of the fathomless prajna paramita, and further write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, reflect reasonably on, and teach it, they must have aspired to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and cultivated bodhisattva actions for a long time. They must have made offerings to many Buddhas, served many virtuous friends, cultivated and learned the precepts related to the body and the wisdom of the mind for a long time, and all virtuous roots they planted now become mature. It is because of the powers caused by these blessings that they can hear and form a deep belief in prajna paramita; they enjoy it, and further write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, learn, reflect reasonably on, and lecture on prajna paramita for others.”

In the meantime, Sariputra asked the Buddha, “Five hundred years after you enter nirvana when the dharma is going to extinguish, how many good gentlemen and gentlewomen dwelling in the vehicle of bodhisattva will deeply believe in and enjoy prajna paramita without fear, regret, or worry when hearing it, but rather will write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, learn, reflect on, and lecture on it?”

The Buddha replied, “Sariputra, five hundred years after I enter nirvana when the dharma is going to extinguish, immeasurable good gentlemen and gentlewomen will dwell in the vehicle

of bodhisattva, but only very few of them will not be shocked, frightened, scared, worried, and regretful when hearing the fathomless prajna paramita, not to mention many of them will write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, learn, reflect on, and lecture on it. It is very unusual that when hearing the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, the good gentlemen and gentlewomen will not be shocked, scared, frightened, worried, and regretful, but will deeply believe in, enjoy, write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, learn, reflect on, and lecture on it. Why? These few good gentlemen and gentlewomen must have stayed close to and made offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim immeasurable Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones and great bodhisattvas. They must have asked the Thus-Comers and the great bodhisattvas about the essential meaning correspondent with the fathomless prajna paramita.

“Sariputra, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen definitely will fulfill giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita before long. They certainly will fulfill internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature before long. They will fulfill the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power; and the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena before long. Sariputra, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi because they are protected and kept by all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones; they will be absorbed by numberless virtuous friends and supported by superior virtuous roots as they are dedicated to bringing benefits and happiness to sentient beings. Why? Sariputra, I have often taught these good gentlemen and gentlewomen the dharma correspondent with the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. All Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones in the past had taught these good gentlemen and gentlewomen the dharma correspondent with the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Because of this cause and condition, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will be able to aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi in the lives to come and teach the correspondent dharma so that other sentient beings can also aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Sariputra,

these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will always stay in peace and stability in body and mind, so the evil demons and their associates cannot destroy their aspiration to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, not to mention hinder their diligent pursuit of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi by slandering prajna paramita.”

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Chapter 43

In the Northeast

Section 3

(In the Second Assembly)

“Sariputa, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen of great vehicle had attained vast and great joy and pleasure when hearing the exquisite fathomless dharma of prajna paramita in the past. They also established numberless sentient beings well in superior virtuous dharma and made them aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Sariputa, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen now have also made great vows in front of me, saying, ‘I will establish numberless hundreds of thousands of sentient beings well and let them aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and cultivate various great bodhisattva actions. I will also demonstrate for, persuade, guide, encourage, admire, and celebrate them so that they will be conferred by the Buddha the prophecy of attaining and dwelling in the bodhisattva stage of nonregression.’ Sariputa, I am joyful to participate in their aspirations. Why? Sariputa, I have watched and known that these good gentlemen and gentlewomen of the bodhisattva vehicle have spoken out what they really have in their minds. In the upcoming generation these good gentlemen and gentlewomen will establish numberless hundreds of thousands of sentient beings well, let them aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal enlightenment and cultivate various great bodhisattva actions, and further demonstrate for, persuade, guide, admire, encourage, and celebrate them so that they will be conferred by the Buddha the prophecy of attaining and dwelling in the bodhisattva stage of nonregression.

“Sariputa, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen also had in their past lives made great vows in front of immeasurable Buddhas, ‘I vow to establish numberless hundreds of thousands of sentient beings well, let them aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and cultivate various great bodhisattva actions. In the meantime, I will demonstrate for, persuade,

guide, admire, encourage, and celebrate them so that they will be conferred by the Buddha the prophecy of attaining and dwelling in the bodhisattva stage of nonregression.’ Sariputra, various Buddhas in the past were also joyful to participate in their aspirations. Why? Sariputra, the Buddhas in the past had watched and known that these good gentlemen and gentlewomen of the bodhisattva vehicle had spoken out what they really thought. These good gentlemen and gentlewomen certainly would in their future lives establish numberless hundreds of thousands of sentient beings well, let them aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, and cultivate various great bodhisattva actions. They would also demonstrate for, persuade, guide, admire, encourage, and celebrated them so that they would be conferred by the Buddha the prophecy of attaining and dwelling in the bodhisattva stage of nonregression.

“Sariputra, because these good gentlemen and gentlewomen have deep belief and extensive understanding, they can practice broad and great giving with their exquisite sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch. After cultivating giving, they will further plant broad and great virtuous roots. They will absorb the broad and great effects caused by these virtuous roots to bring benefits and happiness to all sentient beings. The generous givers are willing to give whatever they have internally and externally without reluctance, and transfer the virtuous roots thus derived toward rebirth in another Buddha country where the Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One is teaching the unsurpassed fathomless prajna paramita. After hearing the fathomless prajna paramita, they will establish numberless hundreds of thousands of sentient beings well, inspire them to aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and cultivate all great bodhisattva actions. They will demonstrate for, persuade, guide, admire, encourage, and celebrate them, so that they will attain nonregression in the pursuit of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. These good gentlemen and gentlewomen will realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi soon because they have fulfilled the task that they have vowed to accomplish.”

Meanwhile, Sariputra said to the Buddha again, “It is extraordinary. The Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones can realize all dharmas in the past, future, and present. They can realize realness, dharma realm, dharma nature, reality, and the realm of the inconceivable of all dharmas. They can realize different dharma teachings; they can also realize different thoughts and actions of sentient beings. They can realize all great

bodhisattvas, all Thus-Comers, the Buddhas' disciples, and the Buddha lands in the past. They can realize all great bodhisattvas, all Thus-Comers, the Buddhas' disciples, and the Buddha lands in the future. They can realize the differences of the cultivations made by various great bodhisattvas in the realms of the ten directions in the present. They can realize all Thus-Comers who are dwelling in and conducting peacefully innumerable, countless, and boundless worlds of the ten directions and teaching the dharma in the present. They can also realize the Buddhas' disciples and the Buddha lands in the present. World-Honored One, when cultivating and pursuing the six paramitas bravely, diligently, and incessantly, do the great bodhisattvas have good times and not good times for undertaking such cultivation?"

The Buddha replied, "Sariputra, when the good gentlemen and gentlewomen cultivate and pursue the six paramitas bravely, diligently, and incessantly, all times are good times for their cultivation. Why? Sariputra, when the good gentlemen and gentlewomen cultivate and pursue the six paramitas bravely, diligently, joyfully, and incessantly, various Buddhas and bodhisattvas will always protect them and keep them in mind."

Sariputra asked, "World-Honored One, when the good gentlemen and gentlewomen cannot access the sutras correspondent with the six paramitas, how can they attain the six paramitas?"

The Buddha replied, "Sariputra, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have believed in and pursued the six paramitas so bravely and diligently that they even forget their own bodies and lives, then it does not make sense that they cannot access the sutras correspondent with the six paramita sometimes. Why? Sariputra, as pursuing the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen have demonstrated for, persuaded, guided, admired, encouraged, admired, and celebrated various sentient beings and assisted them to accept, embrace, read, recite, reflect on, cultivate, and learn the six paramitas. Because of these virtuous roots, the sutras correspondent with the six paramitas will always be available for them wherever they are reborn, so that they can accept, embrace, read, and recite them, cultivate them bravely and diligently as they are taught, assist the sentient beings to mature, and dignify and purify the Buddha lands incessantly until they finally attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi."

(The Buddha said that if the good gentlepersons believe in and pursue the six paramitas bravely and diligently, it does not make sense that they cannot access the sutras correspondent with the six paramita.)

Chapter 44

The Demonic hindrances

(In the Second Assembly)

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, the Buddha has praised the merits and virtues accomplished by the good gentlemen and gentlewomen who have aspired to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi; cultivated and practiced giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas bravely and diligently; assisted the sentient beings to mature; and dignified and purified the Buddha lands. World-Honored One, as these good gentlemen and gentlewomen have aspired to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and cultivated various great bodhisattva actions, how can they get to know that they are encountering demonic hindrances?”

The Buddha replied, “Well-Appearing One, when the great bodhisattvas delightedly teach the essential meanings of the dharma for the sentient beings, they suddenly cannot speak and debate smoothly and fluently. You must know that they are having demonic hindrance.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, why is it said that this is a demonic hindrance when teaching delightedly the essential meanings of the dharma for the sentient beings, the great bodhisattvas suddenly cannot speak and debate smoothly and fluently?”

The Buddha replied, “Well-Appearing One, if the great bodhisattvas cannot speak and debate fluently and smoothly when teaching the essential meanings of the dharma, they will be

not able to fulfill the cultivation of prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita, so it is said that this is a demonic hindrance for great bodhisattvas.

(The Buddha taught the bodhisattvas about various kinds of potential demonic hindrance when teaching, writing, or cultivating prajna paramita.)

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when joyfully cultivating the superior actions, the great bodhisattvas abruptly initiate debates. You must know that this is also a demonic hindrance.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked, “World-Honored One, why is it said that when joyfully cultivating the superior actions the great bodhisattvas’ abrupt initiation of debates is a demonic hindrance?”

The Buddha replied, “Well-Appearing One, when cultivating giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita, because of the lack of expedient skillfulness, the great bodhisattvas initiate debates abruptly and thus destroy the superior actions. So, this is a demonic hindrance.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when writing the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, the good gentlemen and gentlewomen stretch their bodies and yawn frequently, laugh and tease without reason, and scorn and harass each other; they are restless in mind and body; they make mistakes in writing words and sentences; they are confused by meanings; they cannot enjoy writing; or something unexpectedly happens so that they cannot finish writing. You must know that these are all demonic hindrances.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, as the good gentlemen and good gentlewomen accept, embrace, read, recite, reflect on, cultivate, learn, speak, and listen to the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, they stretch bodies and yawn frequently, laugh and tease for no reason, and scorn and harass each other; they are restless in their minds and bodies; they make mistakes in writing words and sentences; they are confused by the meanings; they cannot enjoy the writing; or something unexpectedly happens so that they cannot finish what they are doing. You must know that these are all the demonic hindrances.”

Meanwhile, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, why do the good gentlemen and gentlewomen of the bodhisattva vehicle have such a thought when hearing the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, ‘I do not enjoy the taste of this sutra, so why should I work hard to hear this sutra?’ After having this thought, they immediately give up and leave. Why do they have the same thought when they are trying to accept, embrace, read, recite, reflect on, cultivate, learn, write, and explicate the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita?”

The Buddha replied, “Well-Appearing One, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen had not cultivated prajna, meditation, diligence, forbearance, pure precept, and giving paramitas long enough in their previous lives. Thus, they cannot experience and enjoy the taste when hearing or trying to accept the fathomless prajna paramita. They will finally choose to give up and leave.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have such a thought when hearing the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, ‘I cannot be conferred by the Buddha the prophecy of attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, so why should I hear and accept these sutras?’ Owing to their impure minds, they are unable to enjoy the taste, so they will give up and leave. You must know that this is a demonic hindrance.”

In the meantime, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, why do the good gentlemen and gentlewomen choose to give up and leave when they think they cannot be conferred the prophecy of attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi?”

The Buddha replied, “Well-Appearing One, these bodhisattvas have not entered onto the correct path of nonarising, so they should not receive the prophecy now, as it would increase their arrogance.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have this thought when hearing the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, ‘My name is not mentioned in these sutras, why should I listen to them?’ Because of their impure minds, they cannot enjoy the taste of the sutras, they will give up and leave. You must know that this is a demonic hindrance.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, why are their names not mentioned in the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita?”

The Buddha replied, “Well-Appearing One, these bodhisattvas have not been conferred the prophecy by the Buddha, their names thus are not mentioned in the sutras.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the good gentlemen and gentlewomen have this thought when hearing the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, ‘My birthplace is not mentioned in these sutras, why should I listen to them?’ Because of their impure minds, they cannot enjoy the taste of the sutras, they thus will give up and leave. You must know that this is a demonic hindrance.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, why are their birthplaces not mentioned in the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita?”

The Buddha replied, “Well-Appearing One, since these bodhisattvas’ names are not mentioned in the sutras, their birthplaces are not mentioned in the sutras.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, if the great bodhisattvas give up and leave when hearing the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita because they cannot enjoy the taste of the sutras owing to their impure minds, then their merits and virtues will decrease depending on how far they have walked away, and their guilt for hindering the bodhi will increase. They need to cultivate much harder to make up for what they lost. Therefore, the great bodhisattvas should not get tired of and give up the fathomless prajna paramita if they want to attain the unsurpassed bodhi quickly.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when the good gentlemen and gentlewomen give up the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita and turn to other sutras, they are encountering a demonic hindrance. Why? Well-Appearing One, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen have discarded the fathomless prajna paramita, the foundation of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Those turning to other less valuable twigs and leaves certainly cannot attain the great bodhi.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “World-Honored One, why the sutras that are like twig and leaf cannot elicit the perfect knowledge of all phenomena?”

The Buddha replied, “Well-Appearing One, learning the dharmas correspondent with the stage of voice-hearer and the stage of self-enlightened one, such as the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, four bases of power, five roots, five powers, seven factors for enlightenment, noble eightfold path, the liberation gate of emptiness, the liberation gate of formlessness, and the liberation gate of nonaspiration, leads to stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, or self-enlightenment bodhi instead of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. That is why the twig-and-leaf sutras cannot elicit the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. What really matters is the root of the trees. Those who discard the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita and turn to other minor sutras are unable to attain the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Why? It is the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita that give birth to all merits and virtues of the great bodhisattvas in and beyond the world. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, for great bodhisattvas, the cultivation and learning of the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita are equivalent to the cultivation and learning of all merits, virtues, and virtuous dharmas both within and beyond the world.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, like a family dog who does not eat at home but follow servants to look for food outside, so do the good gentlemen and gentlewomen who ride on the bodhisattva vehicle but give up the fundamental roots of all Buddha dharma, the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, and turn to learn the sutras in accord with the two vehicles. You must know that this is a demonic hindrance.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, someone is looking for a fragrant elephant. When this person found the elephant, he turned away to look for the elephant’s footprints. What do you think about this? Is this person wise?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “No, this person is not wise.”

The Buddha said, “Well-Appearing One, in the generation to come, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen of the bodhisattva vehicle will discard the fundamental root of all Buddha dharma, the fathomless prajna paramita, but turn to learn the sutras in accord with the two vehicles. They are not wise at all. This is a demonic hindrance.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, a person wants to see the ocean. When seeing the ocean, this person walked away and turned to look at the footprints of the ox, and thought, ‘Are the waters in the ocean as deep and wide as these footprints?’ What do you think about this? Is this person wise?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “No, this person is not wise.”

The Buddha said, “Well-Appearing One, in the future, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen will discard the fundamental root of Buddha dharma, the fathomless prajna paramita, but turn to learn the sutras in accord with the two vehicles. They are not wise at all. This is a demonic hindrance.”

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, a carpenter and his disciples are going to build a great hall as spacious as Heavenly Emperor Indra’s palace. When watching the Heavenly Emperor’s palace, they walked away and turned to imitate the palace of the sun or the moon. What do you think about this? Can the carpenter and his disciples build a great hall like the Heavenly Emperor’s one?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “No, World-Honored One. No, Well-Gone One.”

The Buddha asked again, “Well-Appearing One, what do you think about this? Are they wise?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “No. They are not.”

The Buddha said, “Well-Appearing One, so are some good gentlemen and gentlewomen in the generation to come. As they intend to pursue the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, they discard the fathomless prajna paramita but choose the sutras in accord with the two vehicles. They certainly cannot attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi they pursue. You must know that this is a demonic hindrance.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, someone sought to see the wheel-turning king, but when he saw the king, he could not well recognize the demeanors and physical features of the king, but turned to an ordinary little king, and thought, ‘I do not see any difference between the

features, demeanors, and virtues of this ordinary little king and the wheel-turning king.’ What do you think about this? Is this a wise person?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “No, this person is not wise.”

The Buddha said, “Well-Appearing One, so are some good gentlemen and gentlewomen in the generation to come. They intend to ride on the bodhisattva vehicle and pursue the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, but they discard the fathomless prajna paramita and choose to learn the sutras in accord with the two vehicles instead. They will say, ‘These sutras are not different from those sutras. Why should I learn those sutras?’ These good gentlemen and gentlewomen definitely cannot attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. You must know that this is also a demonic hindrance.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, a person was hungry and fortunately got one hundred different dishes. But this person discarded them and ate rough rice instead. What do you think about this? Is this person wise?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “No.”

The Buddha said, “Well-Appearing One, so are some good gentlemen and gentlewomen in the generation to come. They ride the bodhisattva vehicle but discard the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita and turn to the sutras in accord with the two vehicles, although they intend to pursue the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Their effort will turn out in vain. They definitely cannot attain the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. You must know that this is a demonic hindrance.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, a poor person acquired an invaluable treasure. But this person discarded it and chose a piece of ordinary crystal instead. What do you think about this? Is this person wise?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “No, this person is not wise.”

The Buddha said, “Well-Appearing One, so are some good gentlemen and gentlewomen who pursue the bodhisattva vehicle in the generation to come. As they choose to discard the

fathomless sutras of prajna paramita and turn to learn the sutras in accord with the two vehicles, their effort will turn out in vain. You must know that this is a demonic hindrance.

(The Buddha used various similes to make demonic hindrance understandable.)

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when writing the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, the good gentlemen and gentlewomen of the bodhisattva vehicle abruptly stop the writing to do inferior investigations. What are inferior investigations? They are the investigations of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness; giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna; and so forth, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. You must know that this is a demonic hindrance. Why? The fathomless prajna paramita is inconceivable and apart from investigation, reflection, arising and extinction, contamination and purification, and concentration and restlessness. It is apart from the names and words. It is also unspeakable and unattainable. Why? Well-Appearing One, in the fathomless prajna paramita, no dharma is existent or attainable. When writing the fathomless prajna paramita, the good gentlemen and gentlewomen of the bodhisattva vehicle will be disturbed by the investigation of these dharmas and cannot finish the writing. This is a demonic hindrance.”

(The Buddha explained why the inferior investigations are the demonic hindrance.)

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “World-Honored One, can the fathomless prajna paramita be written?”

The Buddha replied, “Well-Appearing One, the fathomless prajna paramita cannot be written. Why? Well-Appearing One, the self-nature of prajna paramita is nonexistent and unattainable; the self-natures of meditation, diligence, forbearance, pure precept, and giving paramitas are also nonexistent and unattainable. The self-natures of internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are nonexistent and unattainable. The self-natures of the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power are nonexistent and unattainable. The self-natures of the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are also nonexistent and unattainable. Well-Appearing One, the self-natures of all dharmas are nonexistent and unattainable. It means that all

dharmas are without nature; they are selfless. Selflessness is prajna paramita. The selfless dharmas cannot write selflessness. Therefore, prajna paramita cannot be written. On the other hand, Well-Appearing One, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen of the bodhisattva vehicle think that the fathomless prajna paramita is selfless, you must know that they are having demonic hindrance.”

(The Buddha said that all dharmas, including prajna paramita, are selfless. But if the great bodhisattvas think that prajna paramita is selfless, they are having demonic hindrance.)

Meanwhile, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, when the good gentlemen and gentlewomen of the bodhisattva vehicle write the fathomless prajna paramita and have this thought, ‘I am writing the fathomless prajna paramita.’ Since they are attached to the writing of prajna paramita, you must know that this is also a demonic hindrance.”

The Buddha said, “Well-Appearing One, yes, it is as you say. Why? Well-Appearing One, in these fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, matter does not have written language, and feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness do not have written language either. The eye sphere does not have written language, and the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres do not have written language either. The sight sphere does not have written language, and the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image spheres do not have written language either. The eye realm does not have written language, and the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious realms do not have written language either. The sight realm does not have written language, and the sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image realms do not have written language either. The eye consciousness realm does not have written language, and the ear consciousness realm, nose consciousness realm, tongue consciousness realm, body consciousness realm, and conscious consciousness realm do not have written language either. The eye contact does not have written language, and the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts do not have written language either. The feelings produced by eye contact do not have written language, and the feelings produced by ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious contacts do not have written language either. Prajna paramita does not have written language, and meditation, diligence, forbearance, pure precept, and giving paramitas do not have written language either. Internal emptiness does not

have written language, and external emptiness, internal-external emptiness, emptiness of emptiness, emptiness of space, emptiness of ultimate truth, emptiness of conditioned phenomena, emptiness of unconditioned reality, emptiness in the final analysis, emptiness of nontemporality, emptiness of deconstruction and nondeconstruction, emptiness of original nature, emptiness of particular and common characteristics, emptiness of all dharmas, emptiness of nonattainment, emptiness of selflessness, emptiness of self-nature, and emptiness of selfless self-nature do not have written language either. The four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power do not have written language. The perfect knowledge of everything does not have written language; the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena do not have written language either. Therefore, one should not be attached to the written language when writing prajna paramita.

(The Buddha approved what Well-Appearing One said that the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita and various dharma do not have written languages. Therefore, the great bodhisattvas should not be attached to the written languages when writing prajna paramita. Such attachment is also a demonic hindrance.)

“Well-Appearing One, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen of the bodhisattva vehicle are attached to this thought, ‘In these fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, no written language in matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and in the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena.’ Then these good gentlemen and gentlewomen have also encountered demonic hindrance.

(The Buddha further taught that to be attached to no written languages in various dharmas is also a demonic hindrance.)

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when the gentlemen and gentlewomen of the bodhisattva vehicle write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, learn, reflect on, and lecture on the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, they simultaneously have the thoughts about the territory of the country, cities, capitals, directions, teachers as role models, classmates, virtuous friends, kings, high-ranking officials, robberies, evil people, wild animals, evil ghosts, people

gathering together and playing, having fun with licentious girls, and revenge or paying back for favors, or the thought about the thoughts arising in mind, then all these phenomena are initiated by evil demons to hinder their boundless superior virtuous dharmas inspired by prajna paramita. You must know that these are also demonic hindrances.

(The demonic hindrance occurs as one has the thoughts about outside world, their past living experiences, or about the thoughts that arise when they write, read, reflect on, or lecture on prajna paramita.)

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, as the good gentlemen and gentlewomen of the bodhisattva vehicle have written, accepted, embraced, read, recited, cultivated, learned, reflected on, and lectured on the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita and gained great reputation along with the offerings respectfully made by others, including the clothes, food, drinks, beds, bedding, medicines, and other properties, and became indulged in these offerings and reputation, so that they lost boundless superior virtuous dharmas inspired by prajna paramita, you must know that they are encountering a demonic hindrance.

(The great bodhisattvas who got lost and became indulged in reputation and offerings was encountering a demonic hindrance.)

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the good gentlemen and gentlewomen of the bodhisattva vehicle were writing, accepting, embracing, reading, reciting, cultivating, learning, reflecting on, and lecturing on the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita when some evil demons pretended as their relatives or friends and gave them the essays of worldly theories or the texts in accord with the two vehicles. In these essays and texts, the superior worldly things, such as various aggregates, realms, spheres, four noble truths, thirty-seven aids to enlightenment, three liberation gates, four meditations, and so forth, were extensively explained. These demons further asserted that these texts had profound meanings and must be learned and persuaded the bodhisattvas to discard what they were learning. If the good gentlemen and gentlewomen of the bodhisattva vehicle have expedient skillfulness, they should reject the essays and the texts given by the evil demons. Why? The essays of the worldly theories and the texts of the two vehicles are incapable of inspiring the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. They are not the right expedient skillfulness providing access to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. They

will hinder the attainment of the unsurpassed, perfect and universal bodhi. Well-Appearing One, I have taught extensively in these fathomless sutras of prajna paramita the expedient skillfulness of the path of the great bodhisattva. If the great bodhisattvas seek expedient skillfulness in prajna paramita and diligently cultivate and learn various great bodhisattva actions, they will realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi very soon. Well-Appearing One, if the good gentlemen and gentlewomen of the bodhisattva vehicle discard the expedient skillfulness of the path of great bodhisattva taught in the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita but turn to receive the worldly essays given by the evil demons, or the texts correspondent with the two vehicles, they are encountering a demonic hindrance.

(The Buddha said that to discard the expedient skillfulness in the sutras of prajna paramita but turn to worldly essays or the texts correspondent with two vehicles is a hindrance caused by the demon.)

Chapter 45

The Discordance

Section 1

(In the Second Assembly)

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the dharma listeners love to hear the dharma and write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita, but the dharma teacher is indulged in pleasures and is lazy and not willing to teach, you must know that this is a demonic hindrance for bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the dharma teacher is not attached to pleasures, and is not lazy; rather, the teacher loves to teach the fathomless prajna paramita and can skillfully and expediently encourage others to write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn. But

the dharma listeners are indulged in pleasures; they are lazy and are not willing to learn. You must know that this is a demonic hindrance for bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the dharma listeners love to hear, write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita, but the dharma teacher is traveling to other places and thus is not available. You must know that this is also a demonic hindrance for bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the dharma teacher loves to teach and expediently encourage others to write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita, but the listeners are not available because they travel to other places. You must know that this is also a demonic hindrance for bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the dharma teacher is greedy and enthusiastic to pursue fame, wealth, clothes, food, drinks, bedding, medicines, property, goods, and other offerings, while the dharma listeners are not covetous and are easily satisfied. The dharma listeners concentrate on the cultivation of getting away, learn diligently and correctly, and possess correct mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom. Besides, they do not like to pursue wealth, offerings, and fame. Because they are so different from the teacher, the listeners are not allowed to hear, write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita. You must know that this is a demonic hindrance for bodhisattvas too.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the dharma teacher is not covetous and is easily satisfied. The teacher also concentrates on the cultivation of getting away, studies diligently and correctly, and possesses correct mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom and dislikes chasing wealth, offerings, and fame. On the other hand, the dharma listeners are greedy in pursuing fame, wealth, clothes, food, drinks, bedding, medicines, property, goods, and other offerings. Because they are so different, it turns out that the listeners are unable to hear, write, accept, embrace, read, chant, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita. You must know that this is a demonic hindrance for bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the dharma teacher practices the twelve categories of ascetic cultivation: staying in a hermitage in quiet wilderness; begging for food; wearing

clothes made from the used, discarded, and broken pieces; receiving one alms giving a day; having only one meal a day; eating only whatever is given; sleeping in the grave; sleeping on the open ground; staying under the tree; sleeping without lying down; using whatever materials are available as bedding; and owning only three pieces of clothing. On the other hand, the dharma listeners do not practice ascetic cultivation; they do not stay in hermitage, nor do they own only three pieces of clothing. Because they are so different, the listeners are unable to hear, write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita. You must know that this is a demonic hindrance for bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the dharma listeners practice the twelve categories of ascetic cultivation, like staying in a hermitage in the quiet wilderness, begging for food, and owning only three pieces of clothing. However, the dharma teacher dislikes such practices. Because they are so different, the listeners are unable to hear, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita. You must know that this is a demonic hindrance for bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the dharma teacher holds correct belief, possesses virtuous dharmas, and loves to teach and encourage expediently others to write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita; while on the other hand, the dharma listeners do not have correct belief, do not possess virtuous dharmas, and dislike to speak, hear, write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita. Because they are so different, the listeners thus are not privileged to hear, accept, write, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita. You must know that this is a demonic hindrance for bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the dharma listeners hold correct belief, possess virtuous dharmas, and love to hear, ask, write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita, while the dharma teacher does not have correct belief, virtuous qualities, and dislikes teaching. Because they are so different, the listeners are not able to hear, receive, write, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita. You must know that this is also a demonic hindrance for bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the dharma teacher is not stingy and likes to renounce all possessions without reluctance, while the dharma listeners are stingy and cannot give. Because they are so different, the listeners are not privileged to hear, accept, write, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita. You must know that this is a demonic hindrance for bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the dharma listeners are not stingy and can renounce all possessions without reluctance, while the dharma teacher is stingy and reluctant to give. Because they are so different, the dharma listeners are unable to hear, accept, write, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita. This is also a demonic hindrance for bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the dharma listeners are willing to make clothes, food, drinks, beds, bedding, medicines, money, and goods as offerings to the dharma teacher, but the dharma teacher is very reluctant to receive. Because they are so different, the dharma listeners cannot hear, accept, write, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita. You must know that this is also a demonic hindrance for bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the dharma teacher is willing to make clothes, food, drinks, beds, bedding, medicines, money, and goods to the dharma listeners, but the dharma listeners are very reluctant to receive. Because they are so different, the dharma listeners are not privileged to hear, accept, write, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita. You must know that this is also a demonic hindrance for bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the dharma teacher prefers to explain meanings briefly and dislikes giving detailed and extensive explanations, while the dharma listeners expect elaborated interpretations. Because they are so different, the dharma listeners cannot hear, accept, write, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita. You must know that this is also a demonic hindrance for bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the dharma listeners expect to learn brief and succinct meanings, while the dharma teacher prefers to explain meanings with detailed and extensive interpretations. Because they are so different, the dharma listeners cannot hear, accept,

write, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita. You must know that this is also a demonic hindrance for bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the dharma teacher is only interested in giving extensively the twelve categories of the Buddha’s teaching, namely, the texts (sutra), short verses (geya), prophecy (vyakarana), long verses (gatha), self-statement (udana), origins (nidana), anecdotes (itivrttaka), past lives (jataka), broad teaching (vaipulya), unusual ways (abdhuta-dharma), similes (avadana), and discourses (upadeśa). But the dharma listeners do not like this teaching style. Because they are so different, the dharma listeners are not privileged to hear, accept, write, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita. This is also a demonic hindrance for bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the dharma listeners are only interested in the extensive twelve categories of Buddha’s teaching, namely, the texts, short verses, prophecy, and so forth, while the dharma teacher dislikes the extensive twelve categories of Buddha’s teaching. Because they are so different, the dharma listeners cannot hear, accept, write, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita. This is also a demonic hindrance for bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the dharma teacher has achieved giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas, while the dharma listeners have not. Because they are so different, the dharma listeners cannot hear, accept, write, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita. You must know that this is also a demonic hindrance for bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the dharma listeners have achieved giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita, while the dharma teacher has not. Because they are so different, the dharma listeners cannot hear, accept, write, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita. You must know that this is also a demonic hindrance for bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the dharma teacher has expedient skillfulness in teaching the six paramitas, while the dharma listeners do not have expedient skillfulness in

hearing the six paramitas. Because they are so different, the dharma listeners are not privileged to hear, accept, write, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita. You must know that this is a sort of demonic hindrance for bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the dharma listeners have expedient skillfulness in hearing the six paramitas, while the dharma teacher does not have the expedient skillfulness in teaching the six paramitas. Because they are so different, the dharma listeners cannot hear, accept, write, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita. You must know that this is a demonic hindrance for bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the dharma teacher has attained dharani, while the dharma listeners have not yet attained dharani. Because they are so different, the dharma listeners are not privileged to hear, accept, write, embrace, receive, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita. You must know that this is a demonic hindrance for bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the dharma listeners have attained dharani, while the dharma teacher has not yet attained dharani. Because they are so different, the dharma listeners cannot hear, accept, write, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita. You must know that this is a demonic hindrance for bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the dharma teacher pushes the listeners to respectfully write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita, while the dharma listeners do not have the motive to do so. Because they are so different, the dharma listeners are not privileged to hear, accept, write, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita. You must know that this is a demonic hindrance for bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the dharma listeners wish to respectfully write, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita, while the dharma teacher is not interested in guiding the listeners to do so. Because they are so different, the dharma listeners cannot hear, accept, write, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita. You must know that this is a demonic hindrance for bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the dharma teacher has been free from greed, anger, drowsiness, sleepiness, restlessness, remorse, and doubt, while the dharma listeners have not been free from greed, anger, drowsiness, sleepiness, restlessness, remorse, and doubt. Because they are so different, the dharma listeners cannot hear, accept, write, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita. You must know that this is a demonic hindrance for bodhisattvas.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the dharma listeners have been free from greed, anger, drowsiness, sleepiness, restlessness, remorse, and doubt, while the dharma teacher has not yet been free from greed, anger, drowsiness, sleepiness, restlessness, remorse, and doubt. Because they are so different, the dharma listeners cannot hear, accept, write, embrace, read, recite, cultivate, and learn the fathomless prajna paramita. You must know that this is a demonic hindrance for bodhisattvas.

(The Buddha elaborated how the discordance between the dharma listeners and dharma teacher would result in the hindrance for learning prajna paramita.)

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when the good gentlemen and gentlewomen of the bodhisattva vehicle are writing, accepting, embracing, reading, reciting, cultivating, learning, reflecting on, or lecturing on the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, someone came to speak about the suffering in hells, the realm of animals, and the realm of ghosts, ‘You must work diligently to cease suffering and attain nirvana. Why are you still staying in the ocean of birth and death and suffer from hundreds of thousands of painful things just in order to pursue the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi?’ Because of these words, these good gentlemen and gentlewomen gave up writing, accepting, embracing, reading, reciting, cultivating, learning, reflecting on, or lecturing on the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita. You must know that this is a demonic hindrance for bodhisattvas.”