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The Great Prajna Paramita Sutra

Volume 27

(Fascicles 521-540)

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

Master Xuanzang

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Chapter 25

The Unmovable

Section 1

(In the Third Assembly)

At that meantime, Heavenly Emperor Indra thought to himself, “If great bodhisattvas cultivate giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, they will transcend all sentient beings, not to mention if they realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. If sentient beings hear the name of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and develop immediately a deep belief in and understanding of it, they will gain virtuous benefits in human world and superior lifespan, not to mention if they initiate an aspiration to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal enlightenment or if they can hear the fathomless prajna paramita. If great bodhisattvas initiate an aspiration to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal enlightenment and listen to the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, the rest of sentient beings will also be inspired to do so, then the merits and virtues thus acquired by them will be much more than heavenly beings, human beings, asuras, and so forth of the world can acquire.”

The World-Honored One could read Heavenly Emperor Indra’s mind, so said to him, “You are correct, it is as you thought.”

Meanwhile, Heavenly Emperor Indra rejoiced and danced and jumped. He made the exquisite and fragrant heavenly flowers as offerings to the Thus-Comer and various bodhisattvas and spread around them. After dispersing the flowers, he made this vow, “If good gentlepersons of bodhisattva vehicle are determined to aspire to the

unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, I am willing to assist them with all my virtuous roots, merits, and virtues, so they are able to fulfill quickly their aspiration, realize the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge very soon, fulfill quickly the unsurpassed Buddha dharma that they are pursuing, fulfill quickly the natural human dharma that they are pursuing, fulfill quickly the real flawless dharma that they are pursuing, and can hear all the dharmas that they are longing for. The pursuers of the voice-hearer vehicle and the self-enlightened one vehicle will also have their aspirations fulfilled soon."

After making such a wish, he said to the Buddha, "If good gentlepersons have initiated an aspiration to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal enlightenment, I will never let a thought of making them regress in the pursuit of the great bodhi arise, or a thought of making them disgusted with and thus stay far away from the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and regress to the stage of voice-hearer or the stage of self-enlightened one arise.

"World-Honored One, if great bodhisattvas have very keen interest in the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, I wish their aspirations will become doubly intense and will realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi soon. I wish these great bodhisattvas, after seeing various kinds of suffering in birth and death and becoming determined to bring benefits and happiness to all heavenly beings, human beings, asuras, and so forth of the world, will take a solid great vow, 'I have already delivered myself and ferried over the great ocean of birth and death; I should further work diligently to rescue those who have not be ferried. I have already untied myself from the bondage of birth and death; I should work hard to liberate those who are not liberated yet. I have already calmed myself down in the terrors of the birth and death; I should also work hard to soothe those who are not in rest. I have already realized

ultimate nirvana; I should also work hard to assist those who have not yet realized.'

"World-Honored One, how many blessings will be gained by the good gentlemen and gentlewomen if they have joyfully participated in the merits and virtues of the novice bodhisattvas who have just initiated aspiration to the great bodhi? How many blessings will be gained by the good gentlemen and gentlewomen if they have joyfully participated in the merits and virtues of the bodhisattvas who have aspired to the great bodhi for a long time? How many blessings will be gained by the good gentlemen and gentlewomen if they have joyfully participated in the merits and virtues of the nonregressive bodhisattvas? How many blessings will be gained by the good gentlemen and gentlewomen if they have joyfully participated in the merits and virtues of the bodhisattvas who have reached the final phase before becoming a Buddha?"

At that time, the Buddha replied to Heavenly Emperor Indra, "Kausika, the realm of the four continents is measurable, but the merits and virtues caused by joyful participation are immeasurable. Kausika, the small thousand-world is measurable, but the merits and virtues caused by joyful participation are immeasurable. The medium thousand-world is measurable, but the merits and virtues caused by joyful participation are immeasurable. Kausika, this threefold thousand-world is measurable, but the merits and virtues caused by joyful participation are immeasurable. Furthermore, Kausika, if we turn the entire large threefold thousand-world into an ocean, break each hair into one hundred small pieces, and use each of their points to dip the water of the ocean, we can measure how many drops of water in the ocean, but the merits and virtues caused by the joyful participation of these good gentlemen and gentlewomen are immeasurable. Why? Kausika, it is because the merits and virtues caused by joyful participation of these good gentlemen and gentlewomen are

boundless.”

In the meantime, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the Buddha, “If sentient beings do not joyfully participate in the superior merits and virtues of various bodhisattvas, these sentient beings are captivated and bewitched by demons, or they are the gang members of demons, or they are reborn from the realm of demons. Why? As great bodhisattvas are pursuing the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and cultivating the great bodhisattva actions, all demonic armies, palaces, and their followers will be defeated and ruined if sentient beings joyfully participate in the merits and virtues of these great bodhisattvas. World-Honored One, if sentient beings deeply respect and love the gems of the Buddha, the dharma, and the sangha, they would always like to see the Buddha, hear the dharma, and meet the sangha wherever they are born. They will also be delighted to take a part in the merits, virtues, and virtuous roots of the great bodhisattvas. After that, they will transfer the merits, virtues, and virtuous roots toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi without having a thought about duality or nonduality. If they can do this, they will realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi before long, bring benefits to all sentient beings, and defeat demonic armies and demonic followers.”

At that time, the Buddha said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, “Yes, it is as you say. Kausika, if various sentient beings deeply and joyfully participate in the merits and virtuous roots of great bodhisattvas and transfer them toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, they will fulfill various bodhisattva actions and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly. If sentient beings deeply and joyfully participate in the merits and virtuous roots of great bodhisattvas and transfer them toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, they will possess powerful abilities to serve all Thus-Comers and virtuous intellectuals frequently, always hear

the profound sutras of prajna paramita, and well understand their essential meanings. As the sentient beings achieve such merits and virtues caused by joyful participation and transference, all heavenly beings, human beings, asuras, and so forth of the world will esteem, acclaim, and make offerings respectfully to them. They will not see ugly matters, hear unpleasant sounds, smell bad odors, eat tasteless food, touch unpleasant surfaces, and think of bad dharmas. They will always stay with various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, from one Buddha country to the other, stay closely with various Buddhas, plant various virtuous roots, assist sentient beings to mature, and dignify and purify Buddha lands. Why?

"Kausika, these sentient beings can joyfully and deeply participate in the merits and virtuous roots of various great bodhisattvas when the bodhisattvas first initiate bodhi mind, and transfer the merits thus derived toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. These sentient beings can joyfully and deeply participate in numberless merits and virtuous roots of various great bodhisattvas when the bodhisattvas achieve first through tenth stages, and transfer the merits thus derived toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. These sentient beings can also joyfully and deeply participate in the merits and virtuous roots of various great bodhisattvas when the bodhisattvas achieve the last phase before becoming a Budda, and transfer the merits thus derived toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Because of this cause and condition, the virtuous roots of these sentient beings grow swiftly, and can attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly. They thus can benefit numberless and boundless sentient beings, allowing them to dwell in nirvana without remainder.

"Therefore, Kausika, the good gentlemen and gentlewomen who are dwelling in the bodhisattva vehicle should joyfully take part in the merits, virtues, and virtuous

roots of the novice bodhisattva aspirants, the bodhisattvas of nonregression, and the bodhisattvas who are in the final phase before becoming a Buddha and transfer the merits, virtues, and virtuous roots thus derived toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. When they undertake joyfully participation and transference, they should not be attached to the thought whether their minds are with or far apart from the joyful participation and transference, or whether their minds are with or far apart from the cultivation. If they can cultivate great bodhisattva actions through such joyful participation and transference without attachment, they will realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly, help various heavenly beings, human beings, asuras, and so forth get rid of birth and death, and attain nirvana."

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "As the World-Honored One has said, all dharmas are like illusions, how can great bodhisattvas attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi with the illusion-like mind?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One by asking him, "What do you think about this? Have you seen the illusion-like minds of great bodhisattvas?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "No, World-Honored One. I have never seen illusions or the illusion-like minds."

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, "What do you think about this? If there are neither illusions nor the illusion-like minds, can you see the mind attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "No, World-Honored One. But if I cannot see any illusion or the illusion-like mind, how can the mind attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi?"

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, "What do you think about this? If a dharma is far apart from the illusion and also far apart from the illusion-like mind, can

the dharma attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "No, World-Honored One. As I cannot see any dharma far apart from the illusion or far apart from the illusion-like mind, how can a dharma attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi?

"World-Honored One, if I cannot see the dharmas that are with or far apart from the mind, how can I say that the dharmas are existent or nonexistent? All dharmas will be far apart in the final analysis. If this is the case, we must not establish that the dharmas are existent or nonexistent, or say that one can attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. It is because nonexistent dharmas cannot attain the bodhi. Why? All dharmas are nonexistent. Their nature is unattainable and without contamination and purification. Why? It is because prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita are far apart in the final analysis. Internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are far apart in the final analysis. Realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable are far apart in the final analysis. The noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering are far apart in the final analysis. The four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path are far apart in the final analysis. The four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations are far apart in the final analysis. The liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration are far apart in the final analysis. The eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations are far apart in the final analysis. The stage of ecstasy, stage of freedom from defilement, and so forth, and stage of dharma cloud are far apartd in the final analysis. The dharani gates and samadhi gates are far

apart in the final analysis. The five eyes and six supernatural powers are far apart in the final analysis. The Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power are far apart in the final analysis. Great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity are far apart in the final analysis. The thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features are far apart in the final analysis. Staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times are far apart in the final analysis. The perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are far apart in the final analysis. All great bodhisattva actions are far apart in the final analysis. The unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas is far apart in the final analysis. The perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge is also far apart in the final analysis.

"World-Honored One, if the dharmas are far apart in the final analysis, they should not be cultivated, cast off, or activated. The fathomless prajna paramita is far apart in the final analysis, so it should not elicit and activate all dharmas.

"World-Honored One, if the fathomless prajna paramita is far apart in the final analysis, how can we say that great bodhisattvas can realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi based on the fathomless prajna paramita? World-Honored One, if the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas is far apart in the final analysis, how can the dharma far apart attain the dharma far apart? Therefore, it is unreasonable to say that prajna paramita will realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "Excellent, excellent! It is as you say. Prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita are far apart in the final analysis. And so on, the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge

is far apart in the final analysis. Well-Appearing One, you must know, as prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are far apart in the final analysis, it can be said that great bodhisattvas will realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas that is far apart in the final analysis. You must know, Well-Appearing One, if prajna paramita is not far apart in the final analysis, it should not be prajna paramita. If the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge is not far apart in the final analysis, it should not be the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. You must know, Well-Appearing One, because prajna parramita is far apart in the final analysis, it is called prajna paramita. If the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge is far apart in the final analysis, it is called the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas cannot realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi without relying on the fathomless prajna paramita. You must know, Well-Appearing One, the dharma far apart cannot attain the dharma far apart, but the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi can be realized only relying on the fathomless prajna paramita. Therefore, if great bodhisattvas would like to attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, they should cultivate and learn diligently the fathomless prajna paramita."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One then said to the Buddha, "The essential meanings great bodhisattvas practice are very profound."

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Yes. The essential meanings that great bodhisattvas practice are very profound. You must know, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas can do difficult things. Although they practice following the very profound essential meanings, they refrain from realizing the stage of voice-hearer or the stage of self-enlightened one.

At that time, Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, “My understanding of the meanings taught by the Buddha is that great bodhisattvas do not undertake difficult task, so we should not say that it is a challenging job. Why? The essential meanings that great bodhisattvas realize are all unattainable, so are the realization of prajna paramita, the way of realization, the one who realizes, the place of realization, and the time of realization. World-Honored One, as great bodhisattvas contemplate all dharmas as unattainable, how can the essential meanings be realized? Which prajna paramita can realize? How can one establish the way of realization, the people who realize, the place of realization, and the time of realization? As this is the case, how can one be attached to the assertion that this is the cause of realizing the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi? As the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi cannot be realized and attained, how can the stage of voice-hearer and the stage of self-enlightened one be realized and attained? World-Honored One, to practice this way is called practicing nonattainment. If great bodhisattvas can practice such actions without attainment, they will not encounter darkness and hindrances in all dharmas. World-Honored One, when hearing these words, if great bodhisattvas’ minds are not sinking and drowned, worried and regretful, nor are shocked, frightened, and scared, they do practice prajna paramita. World-Honored One, as great bodhisattvas practice this way, they do not see the phenomena. They do not see that ‘I am practicing,’ ‘I am not practicing,’ ‘I am practicing prajna paramita,’ ‘I am realizing the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi,’ the time when and the place where the realization happe

“World-Honored One, as great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they do not think, ‘I am far away from the stage of voice-hearer or the stage of self-enlightened one, while I am very close to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.’ Like empty space that does not think, ‘I am far away or close to that

thing.' Why? Empty space is unmovable and without differentiation. So are great bodhisattvas who practice the fathomless prajna paramita without thinking, 'I am far away from the stage of voice-hearer or self-enlightened one, but I am close to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.' Why? The fathomless prajna paramita does not differentiate among all dharmas. Like the transformed person who does not think, 'illusions and the magician are close to me, while the real things that I am faking are far away from me. Some magicians' followers are near, and some are far away.' So do great bodhisattvas who do not think, 'I am far away from the stage of voice-hearer or self-enlightened one, but I am very close to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.' Why? The fathomless prajna paramita does not differentiate among all dharmas. Like reflected images that do not think, 'I am very close to the original reality, while I am far away from the rest of matters.' Why? Reflected images do not differentiate among all dharmas. So do great bodhisattvas, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, they do not think, 'I am far away from the stage of voice-hearer or self-enlightened one, but I am very close to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.' Why? The fathomless prajna paramita does not differentiate among all dharmas.

"World-Honored One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas are free from fondness and dislike. Why? The self-natures of the fathomless prajna paramita and the fondness or dislike of all dharmas are unattainable. Like the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones who have no preference or dislike to all dharmas, so do great bodhisattvas who have no preference or dislike to all dharmas when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita. Why? The fathomless prajna paramita of the Buddhas and bodhisattvas is free from preference and dislike. The Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy

of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones have permanently terminated all kinds of delusions and perceptive differentiations. So do great bodhisattvas. When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, they will overcome and terminate all kinds of delusions and perceptive differentiations. Why? The fathomless prajna paramita of the Buddhas and bodhisattvas does not differentiate among all dharmas.

"Like the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones who do not think, 'I am far away from the stage of voice-hearer or self-enlightened one, while I am very close to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi,' so do great bodhisattvas, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, they do not think, 'I am far away from the stage of voice-hearer or self-enlightened one, while I am very close to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.' Why? The fathomless prajna paramita of the Buddhas and bodhisattvas does not differentiate among all dharmas. The transformed ones made by the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones do not think, 'I am far away from the stages of voice-hearer or self-enlightened one, while I am close to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.' Why? It is because the transformed ones made by the Buddhas do not differentiate. So do great bodhisattvas, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, they do not think, 'I am far away from the stage of voice-hearer or self-enlightened one, while I am close to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.' Why? It is because the fathomless prajna paramita does not differentiate among all dharmas. The Buddhas wanted to offer services, so they made transformed ones to do on their behalf. The transformed ones will not think, 'I can perform such services.' Why? These transformed ones do not differentiate when they perform the services. So do the great bodhisattvas who are practicing the fathomless

prajna paramita. They cultivate and learn diligently to achieve some purposes. As they accomplish what they intend to do, they do not differentiate between one from another. Why? The fathomless prajna paramita inherently do not differentiate among the dharmas. A skillful craftsman or his disciple made some art crafts, such as women, men, elephants, or horses to serve certain purposes. Although all art crafts can move or operate, they do not differentiate between one from another. Why? The crafts inherently do not differentiate. So do the great bodhisattvas who are practicing the fathomless prajna paramita. They establish something to serve certain purposes, but after performing what they intend to do they do not differentiate between them. Why? The fathomless prajna paramita inherently does not differentiate among all dharmas."

At that time, Sariputra asked the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One, "Does only prajna paramita not differentiate among all dharmas? Do meditation paramita and other paramitas also not differentiate among all dharmas?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "Prajna paramita is not the only paramita that does not differentiate among all dharmas; the other five paramitas do not differentiate among all dharmas either."

Meanwhile, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, "Do only the six paramitas not differentiate among all dharmas? Do other dharmas, such as the aggregate of matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness not differentiate among all dharmas? Do the eye sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere not differentiate among all dharmas? Do the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere not differentiate among all dharmas? Do the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm not differentiate among all dharmas? Do the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm not differentiate among all dharmas? Do the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious

consciousness realm not differentiate among all dharmas? Do the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact not differentiate among all dharmas? Do the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact not differentiate among all dharmas? Do the earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm not differentiate among all dharmas? Do cause and condition, consecutive thoughts, the conditions that stimulate the mind, and the conditions that reinforce main causes not differentiate among all dharmas? Do ignorance, action, consciousness, and so forth, and old age and death not differentiate among all dharmas? Do internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature not differentiate among all dharmas? Do realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable not differentiate among all dharmas? Do the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering not differentiate among all dharmas? Do the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path not differentiate among all dharmas? Do the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations not differentiate among all dharmas? Do the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration not differentiate among all dharmas? Do the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations not differentiate among all dharmas? Do the stages of pure contemplation, embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and Thus-Comer not differentiate among all dharmas? Do the stages of ecstasy, freedom from defilement, and so forth, and dharma cloud not differentiate among all dharmas? Do the dharani gates and samadhi gates not differentiate among all dharmas? Do the five eyes and six supernatural powers not differentiate among all dharmas? Do the Buddha’s ten

abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power not differentiate among all dharmas? Do great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity not differentiate among all dharmas? Do the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features not differentiate among all dharmas? Do staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times not differentiate among all dharmas? Do the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena not differentiate among all dharmas? Do stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi not differentiate among all dharmas? Do all great bodhisattva actions and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas not differentiate among all dharmas? Does the conditioned realm or the unconditioned realm not differentiate among all dharmas?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "In addition to the six paramitas, the dharmas such as matter, feeling, and so forth, and the unconditioned realm do not differentiate among all dharmas. Why? The nature and the phenomena of all dharmas are empty and without differentiation."

(Well-Appearing One stated that all dharmas, including the virtuous holy ones and all conditioned and unconditioned ones, do not differentiate among all dharmas because their nature and phenomena are empty and without differentiation.)

In the meantime, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, "If all dharmas are without differentiation, why are there the differences among the five destinies for the sentient beings who are drifting in the birth and death? Why are there the differences among the holy stages such as stream-enterers, once-returners, nonreturners, arhats, self-enlightened ones, bodhisattvas, and the Thus-Comers?"

Well-Appearing One replied, “Because of the upside-down vexations of the sentient beings, various kinds of body, speech, and mind karmas are initiated. The effects fundamentally caused by desires thus are brought about in different ways at different times. It is in this accord that the five destinies: hells, the realm of animals, the realm of hungry ghosts, the world of human beings, and the world of heavenly beings, are established.

“You also asked why the different stages of holy effects are established. Sariputra, because there are no differentiations, stream-enterers and stream-entry effect are established. Because there are no differentiations, once-returners and once-return effect are established. Because there are no differentiations, nonreturners and nonreturn effect are established. Because there are no differentiations, arhats and arhat effect are established. Because there are no differentiations, great bodhisattvas and the great bodhisattva actions are established. Because there are no differentiations, the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas are established.

“Sariputra, the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones in the past established the existent beings because of nondifferentiation and the termination of differentiation. The Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones in the future will establish the existent beings because of nondifferentiation and the termination of differentiation. All Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones in various Buddha worlds of the ten directions in the present are establishing the existent beings because of nondifferentiation and the termination of differentiation. Sariputra, because of this cause and condition, we must know that all dharmas are free from differentiation by virtue of realness, dharma

realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable of nondifferentiation. Sariputra, great bodhisattvas should practice such fathomless prajna paramita of nondifferentiation.

(Well-Appearing One explained why various inferior destinies, holy effects, and existent beings are established given the truth that all dharmas are without differentiation.)

"Sariputra, if great bodhisattvas can practice nondifferentiation in the fathomless prajna paramita, they will be able to realize and attain the pure, unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of nondifferentiation and bring benefits and happiness to all sentient beings in endless future."

(Well-Appearing One said that great bodhisattvas should practice nondifferentiation in the fathomless prajna paramita.)

In the meantime, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, "When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, do great bodhisattvas practice the solid dharmas or the nonsolid dharmas?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should practice the nonsolid dharmas rather than the solid dharmas. Why? Sariputra, prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita are not solid dharmas. Internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are not solid dharmas. Realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable are not solid dharmas. The noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering are not solid dharmas. The four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path are not the solid dharmas. The four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless

concentrations are not the solid dharmas. The liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration are not solid dharmas. The eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations are not the solid dharmas. The stages of ecstasy, freedom from defilement, and so forth, and dharma cloud are not solid dharmas. The dharani gates and samadhi gates are not solid dharmas. The five eyes and six supernatural powers are not solid dharmas. The Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power are not solid dharmas. Great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity are not solid dharmas. The thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features are not solid dharmas. Staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times are not solid dharmas. The perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are not the solid dharmas either. Why? When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas do not see any nonsolid dharma attainable in prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, let alone they can see the attainable solid dharmas."
(The "solid dharmas" means inexhaustible body, boundless lifespan, and endless property. But one's body is not inexhaustible, lifespan is not boundless, and property is never endless, so they are nonsolid.)

Meanwhile, numberless heavenly sons from the realm of desire and the realm of form thought, "If good gentlemen and gentlewomen can initiate an aspiration to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal enlightenment and practice justice actions as taught by the fathomless prajna paramita without realizing the reality and thus will not fall into the stage of voice-hearer or self-enlightened one, these good gentlemen and

gentlewomen are rare and unusual because they can do difficult things, so we should pay homage to them."

At that time, Well-Appearing One knew what various heavenly sons were thinking, so said to them, "These good gentlemen and gentlewomen do not realize the reality and will not fall into the stage of voice-hearer or self-enlightened one, but they are not rare, and what they do is not difficult either. Knowing that all dharmas and sentient beings are unattainable, great bodhisattvas still initiate an aspiration to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal enlightenment, wear the armors of diligence, and swear to deliver numberless and countless sentient beings to let them enter nirvana without remainder, these great bodhisattvas are rare; they can do difficult things.

"You must know, heavenly sons, although knowing that sentient beings are unattainable, the great bodhisattvas still initiate an aspiration to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal enlightenment. They wear the armors of diligence and try to tame sentient beings as taming empty space. Why? Heavenly sons, empty space is far apart, empty, not solid, and nonexistent, so all sentient beings are also far apart, empty, not sold, and nonexistent. Because of this cause and condition, these great bodhisattvas are rare because they can perform difficult things.

"You must know, heavenly sons, these great bodhisattvas wear the great armor of aspiration to tame all sentient beings. As various sentient beings are nonexistent, the great bodhisattvas wear the armor and fight with sentient beings as fighting with empty space.

"You must know, heavenly sons, these great bodhisattvas wear the great armor of aspiration to benefit all sentient beings while various sentient beings and the great armor of aspiration are unattainable. Why? As sentient beings are far apart, so is the great armor of aspiration; as sentient beings are empty, so is the great armor of

aspiration; as sentient beings are not solid, so is the great armor of aspiration; as sentient beings are nonexistent, so is the great armor of aspiration.

"You must know, heavenly sons, even the task itself that great bodhisattvas have accomplished to tame and benefit sentient beings is unattainable. Why? Heavenly sons, as sentient beings are far apart, so is the task of taming and benefiting sentient beings; as sentient beings are empty, so is the task of taming and benefiting sentient beings; as sentient beings are not solid, so is the task of taming and benefiting sentient beings; as sentient beings are nonexistent, so is the task of taming and benefiting sentient beings.

"You must know, heavenly sons, great bodhisattvas are also nonexistent. Why? Heavenly sons, as sentient beings are far apart, so are great bodhisattvas; as sentient beings are empty, so are great bodhisattvas; as sentient beings are not solid, so are great bodhisattvas; as sentient beings are nonexistent, so are great bodhisattvas.

"You must know, heavenly sons, when hearing these words, if great bodhisattvas' minds are not sinking, drowned, frightened, or scared, nor are they worried or regretful, they indeed practice the fathomless prajna paramita. Why? Heavenly sons, as the aggregate of matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness are far apart, so are sentient beings. As the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere are far apart, so are sentient beings. As the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere are far apart, so are sentient beings. As the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm are far apart, so are sentient beings. As the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm are far apart, so are sentient beings. As the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm are far apart, so are sentient beings. As the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious

contact are far apart, so are sentient beings. As the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are far apart, so are sentient beings. As the earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm are far apart, so are sentient beings. As cause and condition, consecutive thoughts, the conditions that stimulate the mind, and the conditions that reinforce main causes are far apart, so are sentient beings. As ignorance, action, consciousness, and so forth, and old age and death are far apart, so are sentient beings. As giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita are far apart, so are sentient beings. As internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are far apart, so are sentient beings. As the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering are far apart, so are sentient beings. As the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path are far apart, so are sentient beings. As the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations are far apart, so are sentient beings. As the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration are far apart, so are sentient beings. As the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations are far apart, so are sentient beings. As the stages of pure contemplation, embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and Thus-Comer are far apart, so are sentient beings. As the stages of ecstasy, freedom from defilement, and so forth, and dharma cloud are far apart, so are sentient beings. As dharani gates and samadhi gates are far apart, so are sentient beings. As the five eyes and six supernatural powers are far apart, so are sentient beings. As the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power are far apart, so are sentient beings. As great loving-kindness, great

compassion, great joy, and great equanimity are far apart, so are sentient beings. As thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features are far apart, so are sentient beings. As staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times are far apart, so are sentient beings. As the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are far apart, so are sentient beings. As stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi are far apart, so are sentient beings. As all great bodhisattva actions and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas are far apart, so are sentient beings. As the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge is far apart, so are sentient beings.

"You must know, heavenly sons, as the aggregate of matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness is far apart, so are the six paramitas. And so on, as the aggregate of matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness is far apart, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

"You must know, heavenly sons, as the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere are far apart, so are the six paramitas. And so on, as the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere are far apart, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

"You must know, heavenly sons, as the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere are far apart, so are the six paramitas. And so on, as the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere are far apart, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

"You must know, heavenly sons, as the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm are far apart, so are the six paramitas. And so on, as the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm are far apart, so is the perfect knowledge

of all perfect knowledge.

“You must know, heavenly sons, as the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm are far apart, so are the six paramitas. And so on, as the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm are far apart, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

“You must know, heavenly sons, as the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm are far apart, so are the six paramitas. And so on, as the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm are far apart, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

“You must know, heavenly sons, as the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are far apart, so are the six paramitas. And so on, as the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are far apart, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

“You must know, heavenly sons, as the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are far apart, so are the six paramitas. And so on, as the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are far apart, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

“You must know, heavenly sons, as the earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm are far apart, so are the six paramitas. And so on, as the earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm are far apart, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

“You must know, heavenly sons, as cause and condition, consecutive thoughts, the conditions that stimulate the mind, and the conditions that reinforce main causes are far apart, so are the six paramitas. And so on, as cause and condition, consecutive

thoughts, the conditions that stimulate the mind, and the conditions that reinforce main causes are far apart, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

"You must know, heavenly sons, as ignorance, action, consciousness, and so forth, and old age and death are far apart, so are the six paramitas. And so on, as ignorance, action, consciousness, and so forth, and old age and death are far apart, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

"You must know, heavenly sons, as giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita are far apart, so are internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature. And so on, as giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita are far apart, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

"You must know, heavenly sons, as internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are far apart, so are the six paramitas. And so on, as internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are far apart, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

"You must know, heavenly sons, as realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable are far apart, so are the six paramitas. And so on, as realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable are far apart, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

"You must know, heavenly sons, as the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering are far apart, so are the six paramitas. And so on, as the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering are far apart, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

"You must know, heavenly sons, as the four bases of mindfulness, four correct

endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path are far apart, so are the six paramitas. And so on, as the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path are far apart, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

“You must know, heavenly sons, as the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations are far apart, so are the six paramitas. And so on, as the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations are far apart, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

“You must know, heavenly sons, as the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration are far apart, so are the six paramitas. And so on, as the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration are far apart, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

You must know, heavenly sons, as the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations are far apart, so are the six paramitas. And so on, as the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations are far apart, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

“You must know, heavenly sons, as the stages of pure contemplation, embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and Thus-Comer are far apart, so are the six paramitas. And so on, as the stages of pure contemplation, embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and Thus-Comer are far apart, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

“You must know, heavenly sons, as the stages of ecstasy, freedom from defilement, and so forth, and dharma cloud are far apart, so are the six paramitas. And

so on, as the stages of ecstasy, freedom from defilement, and so forth, and dharma cloud are far apart, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

"You must know, heavenly sons, as the dharani gates and samadhi gates are far apart, so are the six paramitas. And so on, as the dharani gates and samadhi gates are far apart, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

"You must know, heavenly sons, as the five eyes and six supernatural powers are far apart, so are the six paramitas. And so on, as the five eyes and six supernatural powers are far apart, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

"You must know, heavenly sons, as the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power are far apart, so are the six paramitas. And so on, as the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power are far apart, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

"You must know, heavenly sons, as great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity are far apart, so are the six paramitas. And so on, as great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity are far apart, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

"You must know, heavenly sons, as the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features are far apart, so are the six paramitas. And so on, as the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features are far apart, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

"You must know, heavenly sons, as staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times are far apart, so are the six paramitas. And so on, as staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times are far apart, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

"You must know, heavenly sons, as the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are far apart, so are the six paramitas. And so on, as the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are far apart, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

"You must know, heavenly sons, as stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi are far apart, so are the six paramitas. And so on, as stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi are far apart, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

"You must know, heavenly sons, as all great bodhisattva actions are far apart, so are the six paramitas; as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas is far apart, so are the six paramitas. And so on, as all great bodhisattva actions are far apart, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge; as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas is far apart, so is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

"You must know, heavenly sons, as the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge is far apart, so are the six paramitas. And so on, as the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge is far apart, so is the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas.

"You must know, heavenly sons, when hearing that none of the dharmas is not far apart, if great bodhisattvas are not shocked, frightened, scared, worried, regretful, sinking, or drowned, you must know that these great bodhisattvas are practicing the fathomless prajna paramita."

(Well-Appearing One identified which great bodhisattvas indeed practice the fathomless prajna paramita.)

At that time, the World-Honored One asked Well-Appearing One, “Based on what cause and condition do you say that great bodhisattvas are not sinking and drowned when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita?”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One replied, “World-Honored One, because all dharmas are nonexistent, far away, tranquil, without arising and extinction, and without nature and phenomena, great bodhisattvas are not sinking or drowned when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita. World-Honored One, because of this cause and condition, great bodhisattvas are not sinking or drowned when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita. Why? Because all dharmas are unattainable, the issues such as ‘the great bodhisattvas are sinking and drowned,’ ‘making someone sink and drowned,’ ‘the time of sinking and drowned,’ ‘the place where sinking and drowning happen,’ and ‘the cause of sinking and drowning’ are all nonexistent. World-Honored One, when hearing these things, if great bodhisattvas are not scared, frightened, worried, and regretful, you must know that they are practicing the fathomless prajna paramita. Why? These great bodhisattvas have contemplated and realized that all dharmas are unattainable, so the issues such as ‘being sinking and drowned,’ ‘making someone sink and drowned,’ ‘the place where sinking and drowning happen,’ ‘the time of sinking and drowning,’ and ‘the cause of sinking and drowning’ will not be established. Because of this cause and condition, when hearing all these things, great bodhisattvas are not shocked, frightened, worried, and regretful. World-Honored One, if great bodhisattvas can practice the fathomless prajna paramita this way, Heavenly Emperor of various heavens, great Brahma king, the lords of the worlds, and so forth will pay homage and make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim them.”

(Well-Appearing One explained why great bodhisattvas are not sinking or drowned

when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita.)

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, “If great bodhisattvas can practice the fathomless prajna paramita this way, not only Heavenly Emperor of various heavens, the great Brahma king, the lords of the worlds, and so forth will pay homage to and make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim them, but also all deities of the Heaven of Extremely Great Brightness and Purity, Heaven of Universal Purity, Heaven of Extensive Rewards, Heaven of Pure Residence, and the rest of deities, dragons, asuras, and so forth will pay homage to and make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim them. Because these great bodhisattvas can practice the fathomless prajna paramita this way, they are also protected by and kept in the minds of all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One and various great bodhisattvas in numberless, countless, and boundless worlds of the ten directions. You must know, Well-Appearing One, because these great bodhisattvas can practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they will be able to fulfill perfectly the six paramitas, four bases of mindfulness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge quickly. You must know, Well-Appearing One, because these great bodhisattvas can practice the fathomless prajna paramita this way, they will always be protected by and kept in the minds of various Buddhas, great bodhisattvas, heavenly deities, dragons, asuras, and so forth and thus are able to fulfill perfectly all merits and virtues before long. These great bodhisattvas know the path on which the Buddhas walk and cultivate and practice as the Buddhas. Thus, they will realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi soon and become equivalent to the Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones.”

(The Buddha elaborated the benefits and merits gained by great bodhisattvas if they could practice following the fathomless prajna paramita.)

Fascicle 522

Chapter 25

The Unmovable

Section 2

(In the Third Assembly)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas have more solid minds than diamonds. Suppose the sentient beings in as many Buddha worlds in the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges were transformed into demons, and all these demons again made many transformed demons as their followers, and all demons had numberless and countless supernatural powers. These demons could not hinder these great bodhisattvas from practicing the fathomless prajna paramita even exhausting all their powers. Why? The great bodhisattvas have acquired expedient skillfulness of prajna paramita and realized that all dharmas are unattainable.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas can accomplish two things, all evil demons cannot hinder them from practicing the fathomless prajna paramita. What are the two things? One is contemplating and realizing that various dharmas are empty, the other is being reluctant to turn away from various sentient beings. You must know, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas can accomplish two other things, no evil demons can hinder them from practicing the fathomless prajna paramita. What are the two? One is they practice as the Buddha teaches, the other is they are always protected by and kept in the minds of various Buddhas.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas can practice the

fathomless prajna paramita this way, various heavenly sons will come to pay homage to them, stay with them, and make offerings respectfully to them very often. These heavenly sons will inspire them and say, ‘Excellent, great bodhisattvas! To realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, one should work diligently to dwell in emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration. Why? Good gentlemen, if great bodhisattvas work diligently to dwell in emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration, those who previously had no one to rely on can rely on them now; those who previously had no refuge can take refuge in them now; those who previously had no rescue and protection can have rescue and protection now; those who previously had no houses can have houses now; those who previously had no isles can have isles now; those who previously were in darkness are illuminated now; and those who previously were deaf and blind can hear and see now. Why? Good gentlemen, dwelling in emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration is equivalent to dwelling peacefully in the fathomless prajna paramita. Once dwelling peacefully in the fathomless prajna paramita, they will realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi before long.’ Well-Appearing One, you must know that if great bodhisattvas can dwell in the fathomless prajna paramita, various Buddhas presently in numberless, countless, and boundless worlds of the ten directions will spontaneously and joyfully admire and acclaim publicly their names, origins, and the merits and virtues. Their merits and virtues are genuine and pure because they are caused by dwelling peacefully in the fathomless prajna paramita.

“You must know, Well-Appearing One, as I am lecturing on the fathomless prajna paramita here and now, I spontaneously and joyfully admire and acclaim Treasure Banner Great Bodhisattva, Sikhin Great Bodhisattva, and other great bodhisattvas dwelling peacefully in the genuine and pure merits and virtues of the

fathomless prajna paramita, within the land of Unmovable Buddha, their names, origins, and the merits and virtues caused by cultivating pure actions of celibacy and dwelling in the fathomless prajna paramita are mentioned; so within the numberless, countless, and boundless worlds situated in the east, all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones are also lecturing on the fathomless prajna paramita. Various great bodhisattvas in these worlds are cultivating pure celibacy and dwelling in the fathomless prajna paramita, they are spontaneously and joyfully admired and acclaimed, and their names, origins, merits, and virtues are mentioned by the Thus-Comers. The great bodhisattvas possess genuine and pure merits and virtues because they are not far apart from the fathomless prajna paramita. Similar events also occur within the worlds situated in the south, west, north, northeast, southeast, northwest, southwest, zenith, and nadir.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, some great bodhisattvas have practiced the fathomless prajna paramita since the moment they began to aspire to the great bodhi. They have, step by step, fulfilled the path of the great bodhi, the fathomless prajna paramita, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. All Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones in the numberless, countless, and boundless worlds of the ten directions will also joyfully and spontaneously admire and acclaim the names, origins, merits, and virtues of these great bodhisattvas. Their merits and virtues are real and pure because they are caused by the fathomless prajna paramita. Why? These great bodhisattvas can do very difficult things to keep the seeds of the Buddha not discontinued, so bring benefits, peace, and happiness to all sentient beings."

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "What kinds of great bodhisattvas will be admired and acclaimed spontaneously and joyfully by the

Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, about their names, origins, merits, and virtues? Are they the great bodhisattvas of nonregression or regression?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Some great bodhisattvas have dwelled in nonregression when the practice the fathomless prajna paramita and are admired and acclaimed joyfully and spontaneously in public by the Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, about their names, origins, merits, and virtues. Some great bodhisattvas have not yet been conferred the prophecy of nonregression but have cultivated expedient skillfulness of the fathomless prajna paramita; they are also admired and acclaimed in public by various Buddhas about their names, origins, merits, and virtues."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "What bodhisattvas are they?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Some great bodhisattvas have learned what the Unmovable Buddha cultivated when he was still a bodhisattva and already dwelled peacefully in the state of nonregression. These great bodhisattvas will be admired and acclaimed joyfully and spontaneously in public by the Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, about their names, origins, merits, and virtues. Some other great bodhisattvas have learned what Treasure Banner Great Bodhisattva and Sikhin Great Bodhisattva had cultivated. These great bodhisattvas have not been conferred the prophecy of nonregression, but they are learning expedient skillfulness of the fathomless prajna paramita diligently, so they are also admired and acclaimed joyfully and spontaneously in public by various Buddhas about their names, origins, merits, and virtues.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, some great bodhisattvas are practicing the fathomless prajna paramita. They have deeply believed in and understood the nature

of nonarising of all dharmas, the fathomless prajna paramita, the nature of emptiness in the final analysis of all dharmas, the nature of tranquility of all dharmas, the nature of getting far away of all dharmas, the nature of nonexistence of all dharmas, the nature of uneasiness of all dharmas, or the nature of nonsolidity of all dharmas, but have not yet realized the dharma forbearance of nonarising. Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas will be admired and acclaimed joyfully and spontaneously in public by various Buddhas, and their names, origins, merits, and virtues will also be mentioned.

(The Buddha taught which great bodhisattvas would be admired and acclaimed by various Thus-Comers in the public.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas are admired and acclaimed in public joyfully and spontaneously by the Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, and their names, origins, merits, and virtues are mentioned, these great bodhisattvas should have transcended the stages of voice-hearer and self-enlightened one and certainly will attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. You must know, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas practice the expedient skillfulness of the fathomless prajna paramita and are admired and acclaimed joyfully and spontaneously by the Buddhas in public, and their names, origins, merits, and virtues are mentioned, these great bodhisattvas certainly will dwell peacefully in the state of nonregression and realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when hearing all essential meanings of the fathomless prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas are not skeptical, confused, lost, or suffocated, but think, 'The fathomless prajna paramita that the Buddha teaches has no upside-down meanings.' Because these great bodhisattvas have developed pure and deep belief in and understanding of prajna paramita, they will hear extensively

about prajna paramita in the Unmovable Buddha's and various great bodhisattvas' places and develop deep belief in and understanding of its essential meanings gradually and step by step. After that, they will dwell in the stage of nonregression and realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas, upon hearing the fathomless prajna paramita, can develop belief in and understanding of it without slandering it, they will gain many superior virtuous roots, not to mention if they can further read, recite, understand thoroughly, reflect reasonably on, stay in mindfulness of, dwell in the realness of, and cultivate diligently and attentively the fathomless prajna paramita. They will thus dwell peacefully in the stage of nonregression and realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly to benefit all sentient beings in the endless future."

(The steps great bodhisattvas will follow to advance toward the unsurpassed bodhi quickly and benefit sentient beings.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "As the real natures of all dharmas are unattainable, how can great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in realness to diligently and attentively cultivate and learn various bodhisattva actions, dwell peacefully in the state of nonregression before long, and realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly to benefit all sentient beings in the endless future?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "As transformed beings made by the Buddha can dwell peacefully in realness and cultivate various great bodhisattva actions, dwell peacefully in the state of nonregression before long, and realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly to bring great benefits to all sentient beings, so too can various great bodhisattvas accomplish these things in the same way.

They will dwell peacefully in realness and cultivate various great bodhisattva actions, dwell peacefully in the state of nonregression before long, and realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly to bring great benefits to all sentient beings."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, "If the transformed beings made by the Thus-Comers are nonexistent, and the dharmas far apart from realness are unattainable, then who can dwell in realness and cultivate great bodhisattva actions? Who can dwell peacefully in the state of nonregression? Who will realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi? And who can bring great benefits to all sentient beings? World-Honored One, as realness itself is unattainable, how can one dwell in realness to cultivate great bodhisattva actions, reach the stage of nonregression, realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, and bring great benefits to all sentient beings? It seems not reasonable."

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Yes, it is as you say. All the transformed beings made by the Thus-Comers are nonexistent, and the dharmas far apart from the realness are unattainable, then who can dwell in realness to cultivate the great bodhisattva actions? Who will dwell peacefully in the stage of nonregression? Who can realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi? And who will bring great benefits to all sentient beings? Well-Appearing One, as realness is unattainable, it does not make sense to say that one will dwell in realness to cultivate great bodhisattva actions, reach the state of nonregression before long, realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly, and bring great benefits to all sentient beings. Why? Whether the Thus-Comers appear in the world or not, all dharmas are not far apart from the realness, dharma realm, dharma nature, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable; they are intrinsically so. The things such as

dwelling in realness to cultivate great bodhisattva actions, reaching the state of nonregression before long, realizing the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly, and bringing great benefits to all sentient beings are nonexistent. Why? The realness of all dharmas is without arising and extinction. Within realness, no duration or decay is attainable. Well-Appearing One, if the dharmas are without arising, extinction, duration, and decay, who can dwell in them to cultivate great bodhisattva actions? Who can dwell peacefully in the state of nonregression? Who can realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi? And who can bring great benefits to the sentient beings? It does not make sense to say that they can. But it is in terms of the worldly perspective that they are established this way."

(The Buddha explained that it is in terms of the worldly perspective to establish that great bodhisattvas cultivate various holy dharmas to reach the unsurpassed bodhi to benefit sentient beings as all dharmas are nonexistent and unattainable.)

Meanwhile, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the Buddha, "This prajna paramita is subtle and exquisite, and is extremely difficult to believe and understand. When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas are aware that all dharmas are unattainable, but they still aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi to greatly benefit sentient beings. What they do is very difficult. Why? There is no such things as dwelling in realness to cultivate great bodhisattva actions, dwelling peacefully in the state of nonregression before long, and realizing the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly to help all sentient beings. When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas have contemplated all dharmas and realized that they are all nonexistent, but their minds are not sinking, drowned, confused, skeptical, shocked, frightened, lost, or suffocated because of the profound dharma nature. They indeed undertake a rare and unusual

task."

At that time, Well-Appearing One said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, "Kausika, you said that great bodhisattvas have practiced the fathomless prajna paramita, contemplated all dharmas, and realized that they are all nonexistent. Their minds are not sinking, drowning, confused, skeptical, shocked, frightened, lost, or suffocated because of the profound dharma nature, so they are rare or unusual. Kausika, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas have contemplated all dharmas and realized that their original natures are empty, and in this emptiness, nothing is existent, so who will sink? Who will be drowning? Who will be confused? Who will be skeptical? Who will be shocked? Who will be frightened? Who will get lost? And who will be suffocated? Therefore, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas' minds are not sinking, drowned, confused, skeptical, shocked, frightened, lost, or suffocated because of the profound dharma nature. But this is not unusual and rare."

In the meantime, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to Well-Appearing One, "What the venerable one says are all based on emptiness, so you can speak without hindrance. Like one who shoots arrows into the sky, the arrows are unhindered wherever they go, near or far. So is the speech of the venerable one. Who can and dare hinder you?"

In the meantime, Heavenly Emperor Indra asked the Buddha, "As I speak, admire, and memorize this way, do I say the real words of the dharma in accord with the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones? Do I memorize correctly?"

The Buddha replied to Heavenly Emperor Indra, "Kausika, what you say, admire, and memorize are the real words of the dharma words in accord with the

Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones; they are not upside down."

Meanwhile, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the Buddha again, "It is very rare and unusual, World-Honored One. What Well-Appearing One, the great virtuous one, says are based on emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration. They are also based on the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations; giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable; the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering; the stages of bodhisattva; all dharani gates and all samadhi gates; the five eyes and six supernatural powers; the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity; the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features; staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times; the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; and all great bodhisattva actions and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddha."

At that time, the World-Honored One said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, "Kausika, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One has dwelled in the emptiness of all dharmas, contemplated and realized that giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and

so forth, and prajna paramita are unattainable, so how can the practitioners of giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita be attainable? He has contemplated and realized that the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path are unattainable, so how can their practitioners be attainable? He has contemplated and realized that the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations are unattainable, so how can their practitioners be attainable? He has contemplated and realized that the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations are unattainable, so how can their practitioners be attainable? He has contemplated and realized that internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are unattainable, so how can the dwellers in internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature be attainable? He has contemplated and realized that realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable are unattainable, so how can the dwellers in realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable be attainable? He has contemplated and realized that the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering are unattainable, so how can the dwellers in the noble truths be attainable? He has contemplated and realized that the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration are unattainable, so how can the practitioners of the liberation gates be attainable? He has contemplated and realized that the stages of bodhisattva are unattainable, so how can the practitioners of the stages be attainable? He has contemplated and realized that the dharani gates and samadhi gates are unattainable, so how can the cultivators of the dharani and samadhi gates be attainable? He has contemplated and realized that the five eyes and six

supernatural powers are unattainable, so how can the initiators and activators of the five eyes and six supernatural powers be attainable? He has contemplated and realized that the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power are unattainable, so how can the initiators and activators of the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, be attainable? He has contemplated and realized that great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity are unattainable, so how can the dwellers in great loving-kindness, and so forth, be attainable? He has contemplated and realized that the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features are unattainable, so how can the ones who dignify themselves with these perfect marks and distinguishing features be attainable? He has contemplated and realized that staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times are unattainable, so how can their initiators and activators be attainable? He has contemplated and realized that the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are unattainable, so how can their initiators and activators be attainable? He has contemplated and realized that all great bodhisattva actions are unattainable, so how can the practitioners of all great bodhisattva actions be attainable? He has contemplated and realized that the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas is unattainable, so how can ones who realize it be attainable? He has contemplated and realized that the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge is unattainable, so how can ones who attain it be attainable? He has contemplated and realized that the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones are unattainable, so how can ones who turn the unsurpassed dharma wheel be attainable? He has contemplated and realized that the dharmas without

arising and extinction are unattainable, so how can those who realize this truth be attainable? Why? Kausika, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One has dwelled in the abodes of getting far away, tranquility, nonexistence, nonattainment, emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration.

"Kausika, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One has dwelled in such superior abodes of all dharmas, but in comparison, the great bodhisattvas dwelling in the abode of the profound and exquisite actions of prajna paramita are more superior by one hundred, one thousand, and so forth, and one upanisadam times. Why? The abode of the profound and exquisite actions of prajna paramita is only second to the abode of various Buddhas, but superior to, higher, nobler, more wonderful, subtler, and upper than the abode of voice-hearers or self-enlightened ones. Therefore, Kausika, if great bodhisattvas would like to dwell in an abode higher than where all sentient beings stay, they should dwell in the abode of the profound and exquisite actions of prajna paramita. Why? Kausika, as dwelling in this abode, the great bodhisattvas will transcend the stage of voice-hearer or self-enlightened one, realize and enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising, fulfill perfectly all Buddha dharmas before long, terminate permanently enduring dispositions of negative karmas, and realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge quickly. They will be called Thus-Comer, One Worthy of offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One, and will bring ultimate benefits and happiness to all sentient beings and allow them to dwell in the liberation of the three vehicles, heaven, or human world."

(The Buddha described how great bodhisattvas cultivate step by step, transcending two vehicles, to become a Buddha to help all sentient beings.)

In the meantime, numberless and countless heavenly beings from the Heaven

of Thirty-three Smaller Heavens rejoiced, danced, and jumped and each carried heavenly exquisite sound flowers as offerings to spread on Thus-Comer and his disciples. At that time, eight hundred bhiksus in the assembly stood up from their seats, bowed to the Buddha, knelt before the Buddha's feet with right knees touching the ground and left shoulders covered. Their bodies bent in respect, palms joined together and stared at the Buddha's face without blinking their eyes. Because of the Buddha's supernatural powers, all exquisite sound flowers spontaneously filled each bhiksu's palm. These bhiksus had never been so delighted before. So they again presented the flowers to spread over the Buddha and various bodhisattvas, and all vowed, "We would like to dwell peacefully by such virtuous roots in the abode of the exquisite and subtle actions of the fathomless prajna paramita always, in which the voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones cannot dwell. We also would like to pursue the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly and transcend the stages of voice-hearer and self-enlightened one."

At that time, the Thus-Comer knew that these bhiksus had pure intentions and would not regress, so he smiled, and as usual, various colorful lights in blue, yellow, scarlet, white, red, violet, fresh green, gold, silver, and crystal emitted from his face, shining over the large threefold thousand-world. These lights returned slowly, circling three times around the Buddha's body after traveling far away, and were absorbed into the top of the Buddha's head.

Meanwhile, witnessing what was happening, Ananda was greatly delighted. He danced and jumped, bowed to the Buddha with his palms joined together and said, "World-Honored One, what has made you smile? Various Buddhas do not smile without cause and condition. I beseech your mercy to tell us."

At that time, the Buddha replied to Ananda, "These bhiksus will become the

Buddhas in the upcoming Kalpa of Stellar; they will all be called Spreading Flowers along with other ten names. They will have similar lifespans, lands, and bhiksu disciples. These Thus-Comers will live for one thousand years. When they are born, leave the family, and become the Buddhas, the exquisite sound flowers will rain on them in five colors day and night wherever they are. I smile because of this cause and condition. Therefore, Joyfully Celebrating One, if great bodhisattvas would like to dwell peacefully in superior abode, they should learn prajna paramita. If great bodhisattvas would like to dwell peacefully in the abode resembling Thus-Comers, they should learn prajna paramita.

(The Buddha conferred the bhiksus the prophecy of achieving Buddhahood in the upcoming kalpa.)

"You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, if good gentlemen and gentlewomen diligently and attentively cultivate and learn the fathomless prajna paramita, they must be reborn here from human world or from the Heaven of Tusita. In their previous lives, they must have heard extensively the fathomless prajna paramita so they are able to diligently and attentively cultivate and learn the fathomless prajna paramita in present life. You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, as the Thus-Comer observes that the good gentlemen and gentlewomen can cultivate and learn diligently the fathomless prajna paramita without caring their own bodies, lives, and properties, they identify these good gentlemen and gentlewomen as great bodhisattvas.

(The Buddha identified such good gentleperson as great bodhisattvas.)

"Furthermore, Joyfully Celebrating One, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen love to hear the fathomless prajna paramita, and after hearing it, they accept, embrace, read, recite, understand thoroughly, cultivate and learn diligently,

and reflect reasonably on it. They will further lecture on, explain, teach, and give cautions about it for various good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and those who are pursuing the bodhisattva vehicle. You must know that these good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth, are great bodhisattvas, who had in previous lives heard the Thus-Comers' teachings on the fathomless prajna paramita, and after hearing it, they had accepted, embraced, read, recited, understood thoroughly, cultivated and learned diligently, and reflected reasonably on the fathomless prajna paramita. They had further lectured on, explained, taught, and given cautions about it for good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and ones who were pursuing the bodhisattva vehicle. That is why they can do the same things in this life. You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, these good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth, had in previous lives planted various virtuous roots in numberless Buddhas' places, so they can do the same things in this life. These good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth think, 'I did not hear the fathomless prajna paramita from the teachings of voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones; rather, I had heard it from the teachings given by various Buddhas. I did not stay close to voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones, made offerings to them, and planted various virtuous roots there; rather, I had stayed close to the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones, made offerings to them, and planted various virtuous roots there. Because of this cause and condition, I can hear such fathomless prajna paramita now and gladly accept, embrace, read, recite, understand thoroughly, cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on it, and further lecture on it extensively and tirelessly for sentient beings.'
(The Buddha further identified these god gentlepersons as great bodhisattvas.)

"You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, some good gentlemen and gentlewomen enjoy hearing the fathomless prajna paramita, and after that, they

accept, embrace, read, recite, understand thoroughly, learn diligently, and reflect reasonably on it. They further get to well know its methods, meanings, words, and implications, and cultivate and practice it accordingly. They thus can see the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones in present life.

"You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, if good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth hear the essential meanings of the fathomless prajna paramita and can deeply believe in and understand them without slandering, hindering, or destroying them, then these good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth must have made offerings to numberless Buddhas, planted many virtuous roots, and been absorbed by numberless virtuous friends in previous lives.

"You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, if good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth can plant virtuous roots in the superior fields of bliss of the Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One, they certainly will attain voice-hearer effect, self-enlightened one effect, or the Thus-Comer effect and realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, but they must fully understand the profound meanings of prajna paramita, cultivate giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita. They must learn to dwell peacefully in internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; dwell peacefully in realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable; dwell peacefully in the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering; cultivate the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; cultivate the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; cultivate the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness,

and nonaspiration; cultivate the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, and ten universal contemplations; cultivate the stages of great bodhisattva; cultivate all dharani gates and all samadhi gates; cultivate the five eyes and six supernatural powers; cultivate the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; cultivate great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity; cultivate to stay in correct mindfulness and dwell in equanimity at all times; and cultivate the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena to their perfection.

"You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, if great bodhisattvas can well understand the profound essential meanings of prajna paramita without hindrance, and cultivate giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena to their perfection, it does not make sense to say that these great bodhisattvas will stay in the stage of voice-hearer or self-enlightened one without further pursuing the realization of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Therefore, if great bodhisattvas would like to attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, they should learn to well understand the profound essential meanings of prajna paramita without hindrance and cultivate giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita to their perfection. Therefore, Joyfully Celebrating One, now I am entrusting you with the very profound sutras of prajna paramita. You must correctly accept, embrace, read, recite, and thoroughly understand them; you should not forget or lose them.

(The Buddha taught that if great bodhisattvas would like to attain the unsurpassed bodhi, they should well understand the profound essential meanings of prajna paramita and fulfill the cultivation of the six paramitas, and so forth, and all other

superior virtues dharmas. He thus wanted to entrust the profound sutras of prajna paramita to Ananda.)

"You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, if you cannot accept and embrace well the rest of the dharmas that I have taught, or forget or lose them, your guilt will be much less heavy than forgetting or losing the profound sutras of prajna paramita. You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, those who can accept and embrace well and do not forget or lose even one sentence of the profound sutras of prajna paramita will be much blessed. Those who cannot accept and embrace well and thus forget or lose even one sentence of the profound sutras of prajna paramita, will incur sins equal to those previously blessed. Therefore, Joyfully Celebrating One, I am now entrusting you with the profound sutras of prajna paramita in great sincerity and earnestness. You should correctly accept, embrace, read, recite, understand thoroughly, reflect reasonably on, lecture extensively for others on, and explain respectively these sutras, so learners or practitioners can fully understand their words, meanings, and essential points.

"You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, if good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth can accept, embrace, read, recite, understand thoroughly, reflect reasonably on, lecture extensively for others on, and explain respectively the fathomless prajna paramita, so learners or practitioners can understand them, these good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth will absorb the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi that various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones in the past, future, and present had realized, will realize, and are realizing.

"You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, if good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth initiate a pure and earnest intention presently at my place to make various most wonderful wreaths, spread fragrances, powdered incenses, and so forth, and

bright lamps as offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim the Buddha tirelessly, they should also listen wholeheartedly to, accept, embrace, read, recite, understand thoroughly, reflect reasonably on, lecture extensively for others on, and explain respectively prajna paramita, so others will understand it well. They should further write, decorate, and dignify it and make various wonderful wreaths, fragrances, and so forth, and bright lamps as offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim it tirelessly. You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, if they can do this to the fathomless prajna paramita, they equally make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim me and various Buddhas in the past, future, and present in the worlds of the ten directions. You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, if good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth hear the fathomless prajna paramita and thus initiate a pure and earnest mind to pay homage to and become fond of it, they equally initiate a pure and earnest mind to pay homage to and become fond of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi that all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Ones in the past, future, and present had realized, will realize, and are realizing. Joyfully Celebrating One, as you love and are fond of me, and are not willing to leave me, so you should also love, become fond of, and be not willing to leave the profound sutras of prajna paramita and will not forget or lose even one sentence in the sutras.
(The Buddha taught that great bodhisattvas should respect and make offerings to the sutras of prajna paramita as they do to the Thus-Comers in the three phases of time and to the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.)

"Joyfully Celebrating One, the causes and conditions that explain why I am entrusting you with the profound sutras of prajna paramita are too many to be exhaustively spoken for innumerable hundreds of thousands of great kalpas. Let me give some instances. As I am your grand master, so is the fathomless prajna paramita.

As you heavenly and human beings esteem and respect me, so you should respect and esteem the fathomless prajna paramita. Therefore, Joyfully Celebrating One, I am now expediently and skillfully entrusting you with the profound sutras of prajna paramita, you should accept and embrace them and do not forget or lose them. In front of various heavenly beings, human beings, asuras, and so forth today, I am entrusting you with the very profound sutras of prajna paramita. You should accept and embrace them, and do not forget or lose them.

"Let me tell you this, Joyfully Celebrating One. All the pure believers who are not willing to turn away from the Buddha, the dharma, and the sangha, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi realized by various Buddhas in the past, future, and present, certainly will not turn away from the fathomless prajna paramita. This is what the various Buddhas will teach and caution their disciples.
(The Buddha reiterated why Ananda should accept and embrace the profound sutras of prajna paramita and do not forget or lose them or turn away from them.)

"You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, if good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth love to hear the fathomless prajna paramita and accept, embrace, read, recite, understand thoroughly, reflect reasonably on, lecture through innumerable gates for others on, explain respectively, and organize it, so others will be able to understand and cultivate diligently, then these good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth will realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly and thus become very close to fulfilling the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Why? The unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are born from the fathomless prajna paramita.

"You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, the Buddhas of the three phases of time give birth to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi because of the

fathomless prajna paramita. Therefore, Joyfully Celebrating One, if great bodhisattvas would like to attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, they should diligently and attentively cultivate and learn the fathomless prajna paramita. Why? The fathomless prajna paramita is the mother of great bodhisattvas; it gives birth to various great bodhisattvas.

(The Buddha stated that prajna paramita is the m other of great bodhisattvas.)

"You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, if great bodhisattvas diligently learn the six paramitas, they will realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi soon. Therefore, Joyfully Celebrating One, I am now entrusting you again with these six paramitas. You must accept and embrace them, and do not forget or lose them. Why? These six paramitas are the unexhausted dharma storage of various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Ones. All Buddha dharmas are born from them.

(The Buddha stated that all Buddha dharmas are born from prajna paramita.)

"You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, all the essential dharmas taught by the Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones of the three phases of time, flow from the dharma storage of the six paramitas. You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, the Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones of the three phases of time in the ten directions had cultivated and learned, will cultivate and learn, and are cultivating and learning diligently and attentively in accord with the unexhausted dharma storage of the six paramitas and thus had realized, will realize, and are realizing the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, all voice-hearer disciples of the Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, of the three phases of time in the ten directions had entered, will enter, and are entering nirvana without remainder in accord with the six paramitas.

(The Buddha said that all voice-hearers of the Thus-Comers in the past, future, and present enter nirvana without remainder because of prajna paramita and other five paramitas.)

"Furthermore, Joyfully Celebrating One, if you teach the dharma of the voice-hearer for all practitioners of the voice-hearer vehicle and all sentient beings of the large threefold thousand-world thus will attain arhat effect because of this dharma, then you still have not done the services that the Buddha's disciples should do. But if you can teach the bodhisattva vehicle practitioners even one sentence of the dharma correspondent with the fathomless prajna paramita, you indeed offer the services that a Buddha's disciple should do. I will be deeply happy and will celebrate what you will do in this matter. It is superior to teaching all sentient beings of the large threefold thousand-world to attain arhat effect.

(The Buddha said that teaching bodhisattva-vehicle practitioners the fathomless prajna paramita is the most important service great bodhisattvas can offer.)

"Furthermore, Joyfully Celebrating One, suppose that all sentient beings of the large threefold thousand-world have been reborn as human beings simultaneously due to the powers of other's teaching, and all have further realized and attained at the same time the arhat effect by practicing bliss-inviting giving and precepts within arhat path. What do you think about this? Will these sentient beings be much blessed?"

Joyfully Celebrating One replied, "They will be much blessed, World-Honored One. They will be much blessed, Well-Gone One. Their blessings caused by practicing these bliss-inviting karmas are innumerable and boundless."

The Buddha said to Joyfully Celebrating One, "If a voice-hearer can teach bodhisattvas the dharmas correspondent with prajna paramita, the blessings thus accumulated one day and one night will be much more than the former ones. Joyfully

Celebrating One, now let us put one day and night, one day, half a day, one hour, the time taken for a meal, or an instant aside. If voice-hearers can teach bodhisattvas the dharmas correspondent with prajna paramita for even as brief as the snaping fingers, they will be blessed much more than the former ones. Why? It is because these voice-hearer practitioners have gained more blessings than the virtuous roots of all voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones.

"Furthermore, Joyfully Celebrating One, if great bodhisattvas lecture on various voice-hearer dharmas for voice-hearer practitioners, and if all sentient beings of the large threefold thousand-world realize and attain arhat effect because of this teaching and all thus possess various kinds of superior merits and virtues, what do you think about this? Will these great bodhisattvas be much blessed because of this cause and condition?"

Joyfully Celebrating One replied, "They will be much blessed, World-Honored One. They will be much blessed, Well-Gone One. The blessings gained by these great bodhisattvas will be innumerable and boundless."

The Buddha said to Joyfully Celebrating One, "If great bodhisattvas lecture on the dharmas correspondent with prajna paramita for the good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth who are practicing voice-hearer vehicle, self-enlightened one vehicle, or the unsurpassed vehicle for only one day and night, the blessings gained by these great bodhisattvas will be much more than the former ones. You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, let us at this moment put one day and night, one day, half a day, one hour, the time for eating a meal, or an instant aside. If great bodhisattvas can lecture on the dharma correspondent with prajna paramita for the good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth who are practicing the three vehicles for even as brief as the snaping of fingers, the blessings gained by these great

bodhisattvas will be much more than the former ones by innumerable and countless times. Why? The dharma giving correspondent with the fathomless prajna paramita transcends all dharma giving and virtuous roots correspondent with voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones. Why? These great bodhisattvas have not only pursued the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi themselves, but also demonstrated, taught, admired, and acclaimed the dharma correspondent with the great vehicle for various sentient beings so that they will not regress in the pursuit of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.

"You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, these great bodhisattvas have not only cultivated the six paramitas, the four bases of mindfulness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge themselves, but also taught others to cultivate the six paramitas, the four bases of mindfulness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Because of this cause and condition, their virtuous roots grow and increase. It does not make sense to say that they will regress in the pursuit of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi."

(The Buddha explained why sharing prajna paramita with others and guiding them to cultivate bodhisattva actions will gain greater blessings than simply teaching the dharma correspondent with two vehicles.)

At that time, the World-Honored One was surrounded by the four groups of disciples. After admiring prajna paramita and entrusting it to Ananda, the Buddha again used his supernatural powers to allow all heavenly beings, dragons, asuras, yaksas, gandharvas, and so forth in the assembly to see the Unmovable Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One, who was also surrounded by voice-hearers, bodhisattvas, and others when teaching the subtle and exquisite dharma, which was powerfully inspiring and overwhelming all listeners.

The Buddha also manifested how dignified and magnificent the Unmovable Buddha's land was. All voice-hearer monks in that land were arhats, who had all removed flaws and attained real self-ease without being disturbed by vexations. Their minds and wisdom were well liberated, like well tamed smart horses or great dragons. They had done all that should be done, discarded all heavy burdens, and could always enjoy themselves. They had eliminated all bondages and gained freedom owing to correct knowledge and fully stayed in ultimate and uppermost self-ease. The bodhisattva monastics in the assembly were well known by the public. They had acquired dharani and could debate and speak fluently without hindrance. They had fulfilled immeasurable superior merits and virtues. As the Buddha withdrew his supernatural powers, all heavenly deities, dragons, yaksas, gandharvas, and so forth in the assembly could not see the Unmovable Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One, voice-hearers, bodhisattvas, others, and the magnificent pure Buddha land. The sentient beings in this land could not see them with their physical eyes. Why? As the Buddha withdrew his supernatural powers, the conditions serving to support their sights for seeing the objects far away were absent.

At that time, the Buddha asked Ananda, "Can you see the Unmovable Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One, his land, and the public in the assembly now?"

Ananda replied, "No, my physical eyes cannot see them."

The Buddha said to the long-lived sage Ananda, "Like physical eyes that cannot see the phenomena far away, people cannot see all dharmas with their physical eyes.

"You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, the dharma cannot practice the dharma, and the dharma cannot see the dharma. The dharma does not know the

dharma, and the dharma cannot realize the dharma.

"You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, no one can practice, see, know, or realize the dharma nature; the dharma nature is without movement and making. Why? All dharmas have no operation; the nature of grasping and the nature of being grasped are far away. Why? It is because all dharmas are unimaginable; the nature of imagining and the nature of being imagined are far away. All dharmas are like illusions, dreams, and so forth. They look as if they were existent, but they are not. They are caused by the combination of causes and conditions. All dharmas have no makers and receivers; they appear in a deluded existence without solidity. You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, if great bodhisattvas can practice, see, know, and realize this way, they do practice prajna paramita without attachment to various phenomena of the dharmas. You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, when great bodhisattvas learn this way, they indeed learn prajna paramita.

(The Buddha taught that great bodhisattvas should learn prajna paramita with the realization that all dharmas are like illusions; they appear as provisional combination of causes and conditions.)

"You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, if great bodhisattvas would like to attain all paramitas quickly and perfectly and reach the ultimate other shore of all dharmas, they should learn prajna paramita. Why? Learning this way is the superior, noblest, highest, most wonderful, subtlest, and uppermost learning of all. Learning this way will bring benefits, peace, and happiness to all sentient beings and serve as the refuges for the sentient beings in need. The Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, are glad to admire and acclaim those who cultivate and learn prajna paramita this way.

"You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, the Buddhas and bodhisattvas have learned and dwelled in this learning, so they can lift entire large threefold

thousand-world with just a finger or toe, move it to another place, and return it to its original position, without letting sentient beings living there noticing anything or experiencing any harm. Why? The powers of the merits and virtues of the fathomless prajna paramita are unimaginably great. The Buddhas and bodhisattvas in the past, future, and present attain the unhindered knowledge and views abouts the dharmas in the three phases of time and the unconditioned dharmas due to the learning of prajna paramita. Therefore, Joyfully Celebrating One, I say that the learning of the fathomless prajna paramita is the superior, noblest, highest, most wonderful, subtlest, and uppermost one among all kinds of learning.

"You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, those who would like to grab the quantity and boundary of the fathomless prajna paramita are like ignorant ones who would like to grab the quantity and boundary of empty space. Why? The merits and virtues of the fathomless prajna paramita are numberless and boundless.

"You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, I will not talk about the merits and virtues of the fathomless prajna paramita as talking about the names that have quantity and boundary. Why? Names, sentences, and words are the dharmas of quantity, while the merits, virtues, and superior benefits of the fathomless prajna paramita are not. Names, sentences, and so forth cannot measure the merits, virtues, and superior benefits of prajna paramita, nor can the merits, virtues, and superior benefits of prajna paramita measure names, sentences, and so forth."

At that time, Joyfully Celebrating One asked the Buddha, "Based on what cause and condition do we say that the fathomless prajna paramita is measureless?"

The Buddha replied to Joyfully Celebrating One, "Because the nature of the fathomless prajna paramita is inexhaustible, far away, tranquil, and like reality and empty space, the fathomless prajna paramita is measureless. You must know, Joyfully

Celebrating One, the Buddhas in the three phases of time realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and teach and explain it for various sentient beings because of learning prajna paramita, while prajna paramita has never exhausted. Why? It is because prajna paramita, like empty space, has never exhausted. Those who want to exhaust prajna paramita are like exhausting empty space.

"You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, the six paramitas, four bases of mindfulness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are inexhaustible. They did not exhaust in the past, will not exhaust in the future, and are not exhausting presently. Why? As all these dharmas have no arising, extinction, dwelling, and decay, how can exhaustion be established?"

(The Buddha in these paragraphs described the superior and unique qualities of prajna paramita.)

At that time, the long and broad tongue emerged from Thus-Comer's face and covered all his face. After showing this phenomenon, the tongue was pulled back into his mouth again. The Buddha asked Joyfully Celebrating One, "Does one with such huge tongue tell the lies?"

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

The Buddha said to Joyfully Celebrating One, "From now on, you must teach extensively the fathomless prajna paramita to four groups of people. You should explain and organize prajna paramita to make it understandable. You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, in this mystic and profound storage of prajna paramita, all factors for the bodhi and various dharma forms are comprehensively taught. Therefore, all pursuers of voice-hearer vehicle, self-enlightened one vehicle, and the unsurpassed vehicle should cultivate and learn diligently and tirelessly the dharma gates based on the fathomless prajna paramita. If they can cultivate and learn

diligently this way, they will successfully realize and attain the dharma they are pursuing in their individual vehicles.

(The Buddha instructed that the practitioners of all vehicles should learn and cultivate prajna paramita, within which all Buddha dharmas are contained.)

"Furthermore, Joyfully Celebrating One, the fathomless prajna paramita enables one to insightfully understand all dharma forms, all words and writings, and dharani gates. Various great bodhisattvas should consistently cultivate and learn dharani gates. If great bodhisattvas can accept and embrace dharani gates, they can quickly realize and develop a fluent and unhindered talent of debate. You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, the fathomless prajna paramita is an unexhausted treasury of various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, in the past, future, and present. Within it, all subtle and exquisite Buddha dharmas are contained. So let me tell you clearly today, those who accept, embrace, read, recite, understand thoroughly, and reflect reasonably on the fathomless prajna paramita equally accept and embrace the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi that various Buddhas in the three phases of time achieve. You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, this fathomless prajna paramita is a powerful foot that can afford to travel on the path leading toward the bodhi. It is also the great dharani for all unsurpassed Buddha dharmas. If you can accept and embrace the dharani of the fathomless prajna paramita, you equally embrace all Buddha dharmas through which you can bring benefits, peace, and happiness to all sentient beings."

(The Buddha said that embracing dharani gates equally embracing all Buddha dharmas, through which the bodhisattvas can benefit all sentient beings.)

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Chapter 26

Expedient Skillfulness

Section 1

(In the Third Assembly)

At that time, Well-Appearing One thought to himself, “This prajna paramita is extremely profound. So is the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas. I would like to inquire the Buddha about the very profound meanings in these two aspects.”

After having such a thought, he asked the Buddha, “The fathomless prajna paramita is the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas is the fathomless prajna paramita. Both prajna paramita and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas are extremely profound and inexhaustible. Based on what cause and condition do we say that both are inexhaustible?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “The fathomless prajna paramita and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi are like empty space that is inexhaustible, so are they called inexhaustible.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “How should great bodhisattvas initiate and activate prajna paramita?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “Great bodhisattvas should contemplate matter, feeling, thinking action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge as inexhaustible to initiate and activate prajna paramita.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should contemplate matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge as inexhaustible empty space to initiate and activate prajna paramita.

(The Buddha taught the way to initiate and activate prajna paramita.)

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the twelve links of dependent origination indicate a sequence of cause and effect connections; namely, ignorance causes action, action causes consciousness, consciousness causes name and form, name and matter cause six sense spheres, six sense spheres cause contact, contact causes reception, reception causes craving, craving causes grasping, grasping causes existence, existence causes birth, and birth causes old age, death, worry, sorrow, misery, anxiety, and upset. Great bodhisattvas should contemplate the twelve links of dependent origination as inexhaustible empty space to initiate and activate prajna paramita.

“You must know, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should initiate and activate prajna paramita this way. You must know, Well-Appearing One, staying far away from the two extremes to contemplate the twelve links of dependent origination is the exquisite contemplation made by great bodhisattvas rather than other sentient beings. You must know, Well-Appearing One, as sitting on the diamond throne under the bodhi tree and accurately contemplating the twelve links of dependent origination as inexhaustible empty space, great bodhisattvas are able to realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. You must know, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita to contemplate and investigate accurately the twelve links of dependent origination as inexhaustible empty space, they will not fall into the stage of voice-hearer or self-enlightened one, and thus will realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, many good gentlepersons of bodhisattva-vehicle cannot attain nonregression in the pursuit of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi because they do not initiate prajna paramita with the skillful and expedient intention. They do not know how great bodhisattvas should cultivate prajna paramita through the inexhaustible empty-space images to contemplate and investigate the twelve links of dependent origination as they really are. You must know, Well-Appearing One, if good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth of the bodhisattva vehicle regress in the pursuit of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, they must have stayed far away from the expedient skillfulness thus they cannot initiate prajna paramita. You must know, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas can attain nonregression in the pursuit of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, they must have initiated prajna paramita by means of expedient skillfulness. These great bodhisattvas must have cultivated prajna paramita based on expedient skillfulness and initiated prajna paramita through the inexhaustible empty-space images to contemplate and investigate the twelve links of dependent origination. Therefore, these great bodhisattvas can fulfill the fathomless prajna paramita before long.

(The Buddha taught that great bodhisattvas should contemplate the twelve links of dependent origination as inexhaustible empty space to initiate and activate expedient skillfulness of prajna paramita so that they can avoid regression in the pursuit of the unsurpassed bodhi.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, when contemplating and investigating the law of dependent origination, great bodhisattvas do not see dharmas arise or extinguish without causes, nor do they see the nature and the phenomena of dharmas endure permanently without arising and extinction. They do not see dharmas have the

‘I,’ the sentient being, and so forth, and the knower and the viewer. They do not see dharmas as permanent or impermanent, pleasant or painful, with or without selfness, pure or impure, tranquil or not tranquil, and far away or not far away. You must know, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should contemplate and investigate dependent origination to cultivate prajna paramita this way.

(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas contemplate various dharmas when cultivating prajna paramita.)

“You must know, Well-Appearing One, when great bodhisattvas contemplate and investigate the dharma gate of dependent origination as it really is to cultivate prajna paramita, they do not see the aggregate of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge as permanent or impermanent, pleasant or painful, with or without selfness, pure or impure, and far away or not far away. You must know, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas do not see the prajna paramita that they practice. They do not see any dharma that can see the prajna paramita, nor do they see nonseeing. Although great bodhisattvas practice meditation, diligence, forbearance, pure precept, and giving paramitas, they do not see meditation paramita, diligence paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita that they practice. They do not see any dharma that can see meditation paramita, diligence paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita, nor do they see nonseeing. And so on, although they practice the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, they do not see the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge that they practice. They do not see any dharma that can see the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, nor do they see nonseeing.

“You must know, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should practice

prajna paramita by adopting nonattainment as expediency in all dharmas. You must know, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas cultivate prajna paramita by adopting nonattainment as expediency in all dharmas, evil demons will be worried and annoyed as if they were shot by poisonous arrows. Like people who are severely painful in body and mind because their parents just died abruptly, so are the evil demons."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "Is only one evil demon worried and annoyed when seeing that great bodhisattvas have adopted nonattainment as expediency in all dharmas when cultivating prajna paramita, or are all evil demons in entire large threefold thousand-world so worried and annoyed?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "All evil demons in entire large threefold thousand-world will be worried and annoyed, even cannot be relaxed when sitting on their own seats.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should always dwell peacefully in the fathomless prajna paramita, the abode of genuine pure actions. If great bodhisattvas can dwell peacefully in the fathomless prajna paramita, the abode of genuine pure actions, all heavenly beings, human beings, asuras, and so forth of the world cannot find out their faults to harass and hinder them. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas would like to attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, they should dwell peacefully in the fathomless prajna paramita, the abode of genuine pure actions.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas can dwell peacefully in the fathomless prajna paramita, the abode of genuine pure actions, they will be able to cultivate and fulfill giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas. If great bodhisattvas correctly cultivate the

fathomless prajna paramita, they can fulfill all paramitas."

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "Why can great bodhisattvas cultivate and fulfill giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas if they correctly cultivate the fathomless prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "When correctly cultivating the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas stay in a mind correspondent with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge to practice giving, pure precept, and so forth, and prajna, and transfer the merits and virtues thus derived along with all sentient beings equally toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Well-Appearing One, because the great bodhisattvas can correctly cultivate the fathomless prajna paramita this way, they will be able to cultivate and fulfill giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas."

(The Buddha explained why great bodhisattvas could fulfill the six paramitas if they correctly practice prajna paramita.)

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "World-Honored One, how do great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in giving paramita to elicit and absorb pure-precept paramita, forbearance paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Great bodhisattvas should practice giving with a mind apart from craving and stinginess and transfer the merits thus derived along with all sentient beings equally toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. In the meantime, they should initiate loving-kindness in body, speech, and mind toward all sentient beings and stay far away from invalid evil precepts. This is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in giving paramita to elicit

and absorb pure-precept paramita.

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas dwell in giving paramita to elicit and absorb pure-precept paramita.)

"Some great bodhisattvas have practiced giving by staying in a mind without craving contamination and stinginess and transfer the merits thus derived along with all sentient beings equally toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. When encountering slander, reproach, loathing, and insult emotionally brought to them by receivers or other sentient beings, these great bodhisattvas do not retaliate with hatred in their thoughts, actions, or words; rather, they stay in a mind of mercy, loving-kindness, and compassion and speak tenderly to apologize. This is how great bodhisattvas practice giving paramita to elicit and absorb forbearance paramita.

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas dwell in giving paramita to elicit and absorb forbearance paramita.)

"Some great bodhisattvas have practiced giving by staying in a mind without craving contamination and stinginess, and transfer the merits thus derived along with all sentient beings equally toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. When facing reproach, slander, loathing, and insult emotionally brought to them by receivers or other sentient beings, these great bodhisattvas will think, 'All those karmas makers will receive their effects themselves. I must not care about what they have done to me. I should not discontinue my cultivation.' They will further think, 'I must give more to them and other sentient beings without worrying about myself.' After having these thoughts, they work more diligently in actions and thoughts, and practice giving more generously. This is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in giving paramita to elicit and absorb diligence paramita.

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas dwell in giving paramita to elicit and

absorb diligence paramita.)

"Some great bodhisattvas have practiced giving by staying in a mind without craving and stinginess and transfer the merits thus derived along with all sentient beings equally toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Their minds are not restless when facing and dealing with receivers and other phenomena, but are dedicated to the Buddha effect with no aspiration to three realms or two vehicles. This is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in giving paramita to elicit and absorb meditation paramita.

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas dwell in giving paramita to elicit and absorb meditation paramita.)

"Some great bodhisattvas have practiced giving by staying in a mind without craving and stinginess and transfer the merits thus derived along with all sentient beings equally toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. They have contemplated various receivers and givers as illusions and do not see giving will benefit or do harm to sentient beings. They thoroughly understand that all dharmas are empty and unattainable in the final analysis. This is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in giving to elicit and absorb prajna paramita."

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas dwell in giving paramita to elicit and absorb prajna paramita.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "How should great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in pure-precept paramita to elicit and absorb giving paramita, forbearance paramita, diligence paramita, meditation paramita, and prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Some great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in pure-precept paramita by abiding by the rules and demeanors

for body, speech, and mind and make various bliss-inviting karmas. Because of these karmas, they can stay away from killing, stealing, and so forth, and incorrect views. They do not aspire to the stage of voice-hearer or self-enlightened one but are merely dedicated to the pursuit of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. At that time, the bodhisattvas stay in pure precept and practice extensively generous giving by providing various sentient beings with food, drinks, and other living supplies to satisfy individual needs. They further transfer the virtuous roots caused by giving along with all sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi without seeking the stage of voice-hearer or self-enlightened one. This is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in pure-precept paramita to elicit and absorb giving paramita.

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas dwell in pure-precept paramita to elicit and absorb giving paramita.)

"Some great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in pure-precept paramita. Suppose that some sentient beings compete in cutting off their limbs, these bodhisattvas will not have hatred and anger in their minds, but just think, 'I have greatly benefited today because I threw away my filthy and vulnerable body and acquire a pure and diamond body instead.' This is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in pure-precept paramita to elicit and absorb forbearance paramita.

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas dwell in pure-precept paramita to elicit and absorb forbearance paramita.)

"Some great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in pure-precept paramita and always improve their actions and thoughts diligently and uninterruptedly. By putting on the armor of great compassion they swear, 'All sentient beings are floating on the ocean of suffering. I should deliver them with nirvana nectar.' This is how great

bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in pure-precept paramita to elicit and absorb diligence paramita.

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas dwell in pure-precept paramita to elicit and absorb diligence paramita.)

"Some great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in pure-precept paramita. Although they enter the first meditation, second meditation, and so forth, and the concentration of the extinction of thinking and feeling, they do not fall into the stage of voice-hearer or self-enlightened one, nor do they realize the reality. Motivated by their original aspiration, they think, 'Various sentient beings are drifting in the ocean of suffering and cannot get rid of it. Now I have already stayed in pure precept and can expediently activate supernatural meditations, so I will lift them into nirvana of permanent happiness.' This is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in pure-precept paramita to elicit and absorb meditation paramita.

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas dwell in pure-precept paramita to elicit and absorb meditation paramita.)

"Some great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in pure-precept paramita and do not see any dharma that is conditioned or unconditioned, nor do they see any dharma that is with or without form, countable or countless. They contemplate all dharmas and realize that they are not far apart from realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable, while realness, dharma realm and so forth are unattainable. Owing to the expedient skillfulness of prajna paramita, they will not fall into the stage of voice-hearer or self-enlightened one; they will rather be dedicated wholeheartedly to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. This is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in pure-precept paramita to elicit and absorb prajna paramita."

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas dwell in pure-precept paramita to elicit and absorb prajna paramita.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “How should great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in forbearance paramita to elicit and absorb giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, diligence paramita, meditation paramita, and prajna paramita?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “Some great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in forbearance paramita. Since the moment they began to aspire to the bodhi until sitting on the throne of the wonderful bodhi, various sentient beings come to slander, reproach, disdain, and insult them, or try to cut off their limbs, these bodhisattvas will not be angry at all, but rather think, ‘These sentient beings are pitiful. Their bodies and minds are disturbed by poisonous vexations and become restless. They are driven by poverty and suffering, cannot find shelter or anyone to rely on. I should give them whatever they need: food, drinks, clothes, or other living supplies.’ They further transfer the virtuous roots caused by generous giving along with all sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi by adopting nonattainment as expediency. When undertaking the transference, they do not think, ‘Who is transferring? Where does the transference go? What is transferred?’ This is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in forbearance paramita to elicit and absorb giving paramita.

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas dwell in forbearance paramita to elicit and absorb giving paramita.)

“Some great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in forbearance paramita. Since they are determined to aspire to the bodhi until sitting on the throne of the wonderful bodhi, they have not killed, stolen, lied, and so forth. They do not allow

incorrect views to arise, even to save their own lives. As bodhisattvas cultivate pure precept this way, they do not aspire to the stage of voice-hearer or self-enlightened one. They further adopt nonattainment as expediency to transfer the virtuous roots caused by observing pure precept along with all sentient beings equally toward to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. When undertaking the transference, they do not think, 'Who is transferring? Where does the transference go? What is transferred? This is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in forbearance paramita to elicit and absorb pure-precept paramita.

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas dwell in forbearance paramita to elicit and absorb pure-precept paramita.)

"Some great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in forbearance paramita and initiated powerful and intensified diligence when they think, 'If only one teachable sentient being lives as far as one yojana away, ten yojanas away, one hundred yojanas away, innumerable yojanas away, one world away, ten worlds away, one hundred worlds away, or even numberless worlds away, I will go there without hesitation and teach him or her tirelessly, so this sentient being can accept and embrace the eight precepts, five precepts, ten precepts, or all these precepts simultaneously; or dwell in stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, self-enlightenment bodhi, bodhisattva stages, or the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Not to mention if there are numberless, countless, and boundless sentient beings who are willing to learn. I will of course go to teach them tirelessly to bring benefits, peace, and happiness to them.' They further adopt nonattainment as expediency to transfer the virtuous roots of diligence along with all sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. As they are undertaking the transference, they do not think, 'Who is transferring? Where does the transference

go? What is transferred?' This is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in forbearance paramita to elicit and absorb diligence paramita.

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas dwell in forbearance paramita to elicit and absorb diligence paramita.)

"Some great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in forbearance paramita and absorbed their minds in rest. Now they have stayed away from various evil, unvirtuous dharmas. Their minds are focusing on general contemplation and specific investigation. With joy and pleasures produced by getting far away, they enter the first meditation. They then enter the second meditation, the third meditation, and so forth, and the concentration of the extinction of thinking and feeling. They further adopt nonattainment as expediency to transfer the ideas and the associated images arising during concentrations as well as the virtuous roots along with all sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. When undertaking the transference, they do not think, 'Who is transferring? Where does the transference go? What is transferred?' Rather, they realize that meditation and relevant factors are unattainable. This is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in forbearance paramita to elicit and absorb meditation paramita.

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas dwell in forbearance paramita to elicit and absorb meditation paramita.)

"Some great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in forbearance paramita to cultivate prajna paramita. They dwell in various dharmas to contemplate them with faraway mental images, with tranquil mental images, with endless mental images, or with permanent extinguishing mental images. But they do not realize dharma nature until they sit on the throne of exquisite bodhi and realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. They then rise from the throne to turn the wonderful

dharma wheel to bring benefits and happiness to all sentient beings. They further adopt nonattainment as expediency to transfer the virtuous roots of exquisite wisdom along with all sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. When undertaking the transference, they are not attached to these thoughts: Who is transferring? Where does the transference go? What is transferred? This is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in forbearance paramita to elicit and absorb prajna paramita without grasping and renunciation."

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas dwell in forbearance paramita to elicit and absorb prajna paramita.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "How should great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in diligence paramita to elicit and absorb giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, forbearance paramita, meditation paramita, and prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Some great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in diligence paramita to improve their bodies and minds and pursue the virtuous dharmas diligently and tirelessly. They always think, 'I certainly should attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. I should improve my body and mind diligently and tirelessly. I should pursue various virtuous dharmas tirelessly too.' To benefit all sentient beings, these great bodhisattvas often make vow, 'If one teachable sentient being lives as far as one yojana, ten yojanas, one hundred yojanas, innumerable yojanas, one world, ten worlds, one hundred worlds, or even immeasurable worlds away, I will go to teach him or her there. If this is a bodhisattva-vehicle practitioner, I will teach him or her to dwell in the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. If this is a voice-hearer vehicle pursuer, I will teach him or her to dwell in stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, or arhat effect. If this

is a self-enlightened one vehicle pursuer, I will teach him or her to dwell in self-enlightenment bodhi. For the vehicles other than these, I will teach him or her to dwell in the path of the ten virtuous karmas. I will nurture this person with dharma giving and property giving to elicit and absorb him or her expediently.' These great bodhisattvas will further adopt nonattainment as expediency to transfer the virtuous roots of giving along with all sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, but do not pursue the stage of voice-hearer or self-enlightened one. When undertaking the transference, they do not ask these questions, 'Who is transferring? Where does the transference go? What is transferred?' This is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in diligence paramita to elicit and absorb giving paramita.

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas dwell in diligence paramita to elicit and absorb giving paramita.)

"Some great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in diligence paramita. Since the moment aspiring to the bodhi until sitting on the throne of the exquisite bodhi, they have not only stayed away from killing, stealing, lying, and so forth, and incorrect views themselves, but also encouraged others to do so. They have admired correctly and publicly the way of staying away from killing, stealing, lying and so forth, and incorrect views, and joyfully praised and acclaimed those who do not kill, steal, lie, and so forth. They do not pursue the effects of two vehicles and three realms either. They will rather adopt nonattainment as expediency to transfer the virtuous roots of pure precept along with all sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. When undertaking the transference, they do not ask, 'Who is transferring? Where does the transference go? What is transferred? This is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in diligence paramita to elicit and absorb

pure-precept paramita.

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas dwell in diligence paramita to elicit and absorb pure-precept paramita.)

"Some great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in diligence paramita. During the time since they began to aspire to the bodhi until sitting on the throne of the exquisite bodhi, if human or nonhuman beings come to disturb them, or try to kill them by stabbing and piercing, or cut off their limbs and take them away, the bodhisattvas will not think, 'Who is disturbing, stabbing, piercing, and cutting me and taking my limbs away?' Rather, they will think, 'I have greatly benefited today. Those sentient beings came to stab and pierce me, cut my limbs off and took them away to benefit me. I received this body for the sake of sentient beings. Now they just took back the things originally belonging to them and thus fulfilled my wishes.' These bodhisattvas have cultivated forbearance by insightfully contemplating the real phenomena of all dharmas. They embrace the superior roots of forbearance, but they do not pursue the stage of voice-hearer or self-enlightened one. Rather, they will further adopt nonattainment as expediency to transfer the virtuous roots of forbearance along with all sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. When undertaking the transference, they do not ask who is transferring, where the transference goes, and what is transferred. This is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in diligence paramita to elicit and absorb forbearance paramita.

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas dwell in diligence paramita to elicit and absorb forbearance paramita.)

"Some great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in diligence paramita and cultivated various concentrations assiduously. They stay away from evil desires and

the not virtuous dharmas. With general contemplation and specific investigation, along with joy and pleasures produced by getting far away, they enter the first meditation. They will further enter the second meditation, the third meditation, and the fourth meditation. They initiate a mind to bring happiness to all sentient beings, so they enter immeasurable loving-kindness, immeasurable compassion, immeasurable joy, and immeasurable equanimity. As they become disgusted with matters, they enter the concentration of boundless emptiness, concentration of boundless consciousness, and so forth, and the concentration of the extinction of thinking and feeling. Although these great bodhisattvas have entered the meditations, the immeasurable minds, formlessness, and the concentration of extinction, they have not absorbed their effects that mature at different times and in different types. Rather, they will be reborn to where the sentient beings are teachable so they can bring benefits to them. They will assist them by means of the four approaches of absorption and the six paramitas. These great bodhisattvas thus have supernatural powers activated because of practicing the meditations. They will travel from one Buddha land to the other to stay close to and make offerings respectfully to various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, ask them about the fathomless nature and phenomena of various dharmas, and initiate diligently and assiduously the superior virtuous roots. By adopting nonattainment as expediency they transfer these virtuous roots along with all sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. When undertaking the transference, they do not think who is transferring, where the transference will go, and what will be transferred. This is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in diligence paramita to elicit and absorb meditation paramita.

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas dwell in diligence paramita to elicit and absorb meditation paramita.)

"Some great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in diligence paramita. They do not see the names and relevant things, and the nature and phenomena of giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita. They do not see the names and relative things, and the nature and phenomena of the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path, as well as the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and all dharmas. They are not attached to all dharmas and to the thinking of all dharmas. They do as they are taught. They will further adopt nonattainment as expediency to transfer the virtuous roots of exquisite wisdom along with all sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. When undertaking the transference, they do not think who is transferring, where the transference will go, and what is transferred. This is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in diligence paramita to elicit and absorb prajna paramita."

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas dwell in diligence paramita to elicit and absorb prajna paramita.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "How should great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in meditation paramita to elicit and absorb giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, forbearance paramita, diligence paramita, and prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Some great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in meditation paramita. They have practiced property giving and dharma giving to various sentient beings, stayed away from evil desires and the not virtuous dharmas, and with joy and pleasures produced by getting far away they enter the first meditation, in which they have both general contemplation and specific investigation going on in their minds. They further enter the second meditation, the

third meditation, and so forth, and the concentration of the extinction of thinking and feeling. These great bodhisattvas then teach correct dharma to various sentient beings with stable concentrative mind; they also practice property giving in addition to dharma giving. They will practice dharma giving and property giving themselves; they will also encourage others to do so. They will publicly admire the correct way of practicing dharma giving and property giving and joyfully praise and acclaim those who practice dharma giving and property giving. These great bodhisattvas do not pursue the stage of voice-hearer or self-enlightened one. Rather, they will adopt nonattainment as expediency to transfer the virtuous roots of generous giving along with all sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. When undertaking the transference, they do not think who is transferring, where the transference will go, and what is transferred. This is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in meditation to elicit and absorb giving paramita.

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas dwell in meditation paramita to elicit and absorb giving paramita.)

"Some great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in meditation paramita and stayed with pure precept. They learn to refrain from greed, anger, ignorance, stinginess, and precept violation at all times. They have initiated a mind in correspondence with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and stayed with the virtuous roots of pure precept, but they do not aspire to the stage of voice-hearer or self-enlightened one. Rather, they will adopt nonattainment as expediency to transfer virtuous roots thus derived along with all sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. When undertaking the transference, they do not think who is transferring, where the transference will go, and what is transferred. This is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in meditation to elicit and absorb

pure-precept paramita.

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas dwell in meditation paramita to elicit and absorb pure-precept paramita.)

"Some great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in meditation paramita and cultivated forbearance. They have contemplated matter as froths, feeling as floating bubbles, thinking as illusory images of water under sunlight, action as plantain, and consciousness as illusions. When undertaking the contemplations, the thought that the five aggregates are not solid and unreal often appears in their minds. They further think, 'All dharmas are empty and far apart from selfness and the associated images. Whose matter is this matter? Whose feeling is this feeling? Whose thinking is this thinking? Whose action is this action? Whose consciousness is this consciousness?' They further think, 'All dharmas are empty and without selfness and the associated images, then who cuts? Who is being cut? Who slanders? Who is slandered? Who is angry?' The bodhisattvas thus stay in meditations and forbearance when they contemplate and investigate. They will further adopt nonattainment as expediency to transfer the virtuous roots of forbearance along with all sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. When undertaking the transference, they do not think who is transferring, where the transference will go, and what is transferred. This is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in meditation paramita to elicit and absorb forbearance paramita.

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas dwell in meditation paramita to elicit and absorb forbearance paramita.)

"Some great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in meditation paramita and initiated diligent cultivation to stay away from evil desires and the not virtuous dharmas. With joy and pleasures produced by getting far away, they enter the first

meditation when their general contemplation and specific investigation of the dharmas continue. They then enter the second meditation, the third meditation, and so forth, and the fourth meditation. When cultivating the meditations, the bodhisattvas do not grasp the phenomena of various meditations and the related factors. But they activate the supernatural power of transformation and magic changes. They also activate the supernatural power of heavenly ear to hear clearly and accurately the voices and sounds of sentient beings and insentient beings in the worlds of the ten directions. They activate the supernatural power of reading and knowing accurately the minds and the associated images of all sentient beings in the worlds of the ten directions; the supernatural power of knowing accurately the previous lives of immeasurable sentient beings in the worlds of the ten directions; and the supernatural power of the heavenly eye to see accurately the sights and the karmic effects of sentient beings and insentient beings in the worlds of the ten directions. As dwelling peacefully in these five pure supernatural powers, the great bodhisattvas can travel from one Buddha country to the other to stay close and make offerings to various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, inquire them and learn from them about the profound meanings of the dharma, plant numberless genuine pure virtuous roots, assist sentient beings to mature, dignify and purify Buddha lands, and cultivate diligently various superior bodhisattva actions. But they do not seek the three realms or the effects of the two vehicles. Rather, they will adopt nonattainment as expediency to transfer the virtuous roots along with all sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. When undertaking the transference, they do not think who is transferring, where the transference will go, and what is transferred. This is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in meditation paramita to elicit and absorb diligence paramita.

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas dwell in meditation paramita to elicit

and absorb diligence paramita.)

"Some great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in meditation parramita and contemplated the aggregates of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, the conditioned realm, and the unconditioned realm as unattainable. When contemplating all dharmas as unattainable, the bodhisattvas realize that all dharmas are without actions and making. Because they are without actions and making, they are without arising and extinction. Because they are without arising and extinction, they are without grasping and renunciation. Because they are without grasping and renunciation, they are pure, changeless, and permanent in the final analysis. Why? Whether the Buddhas appear in the world or not, all dharmas always dwell peacefully in dharma nature, dharma realm, and dharma dwelling, and thus are without arising, extinction, and change. These great bodhisattvas always keep their minds in rest and nondistraction, stay in an intention correspondent with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, so they are able to contemplate all dharma natures and realize that they are nonexistent as they really are. They will further adopt nonattainment as expediency to transfer these virtuous roots of exquisite wisdom along with all sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. When undertaking this transference, they do not ask who is doing the transference, where the transference will go, and what will be transferred. This is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in meditation to elicit and absorb prajna paramita."

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas dwell in meditation paramita to elicit and absorb prajna paramita.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "How should great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in prajna paramita to elicit and absorb giving

paramita, pure-precept paramita, forbearance paramita, diligence paramita, and meditation paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "If great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in prajna paramita, they will contemplate all dharmas as empty and nonexistent."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "How do great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in prajna paramita and contemplate all dharmas as empty and nonexistent?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Great bodhisattvas should dwell peacefully in prajna paramita to contemplate internal emptiness and the nature of internal emptiness, external emptiness and the nature of external emptiness, internal-external emptiness and the nature of internal-external emptiness, emptiness of space and the nature of emptiness of space, emptiness of emptiness and the nature of emptiness of emptiness, emptiness of ultimate meaning and the nature of emptiness of ultimate, emptiness of conditioned phenomena and the nature of emptiness of conditioned phenomena, emptiness of unconditioned reality and the nature of emptiness of unconditioned reality, emptiness in the final analysis and the nature of emptiness in the final analysis, emptiness of nontemporality and the nature of emptiness of nontemporality, emptiness of nondeconstruction and the nature of emptiness of nondeconstruction, emptiness of original nature and the nature of emptiness of original nature, emptiness of forms and the nature of emptiness of forms, and emptiness of all dharmas and the nature of emptiness of all dharmas as unattainable. As great bodhisattvas dwell in these kinds of emptiness, they cannot attain matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, the conditioned realm, and the unconditioned

realm whether they are empty or not empty.

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas should contemplate all dharmas as empty and nonexistent.)

"Some great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in prajna paramita and contemplated all alms given to sentient beings, such as food, drinks, and other living supplies, as empty. They have also contemplated the givers, the things given, the bliss of giving, and the effects of giving as empty. Because the bodhisattvas have dwelled in emptiness, there is no room for the arising of craving, contamination, and stinginess in their contemplation. Why? These great bodhisattvas have cultivated prajna paramita since the moment began to aspire to the great bodhi; they are determined to continue the aspiration incessantly until sitting on the throne of the exquisite bodhi. During this period, they will not allow differentiation to arise in their minds. Like various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones who have never allowed the thoughts of craving or stinginess to arise even for an instant, so the great bodhisattvas who have cultivated prajna paramita will not allow the mind of craving or stinginess to arise. You must know, Well-Appearing One, prajna paramita is the teacher of great bodhisattvas. It does not allow them to initiate any delusion and differentiation. All kinds of giving that they practice should be free from contamination and attachment. These great bodhisattvas will further adopt nonattainment as expediency to transfer the virtuous roots along with all sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. When undertaking the transference, they do not ask who is doing transference, where the transference will go, and what is transferred. This is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in prajna paramita to elicit and absorb giving paramita.

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas dwell in prajna paramita to elicit and

absorb giving paramita.)

“Some great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in prajna paramita and abided by pure precept, so the mind aspiring to voice-hearer and self-enlightened one does not arise. Why? These great bodhisattvas have contemplated the stages of voice-hearer and self-enlightened one as unattainable, the transference toward these stages is unattainable, and the rules and demeanors of body and speech in transference are also unattainable. Since the moment beginning to aspire to the bodhi until sitting on the throne of the exquisite bodhi, these great bodhisattvas have always dwelled peacefully in prajna paramita. During this period, they not only stay away from killing, stealing, and so forth, and the incorrect views themselves, but also encourage others to do so. They publicly and correctly praise the way of staying away from killing, stealing, and so forth, and the incorrect views. They also joyfully admire and acclaim those who have stayed away from killing, stealing, and so forth, and incorrect views. These great bodhisattvas have further adopted nonattainment as expediency to transfer the virtuous roots caused by pure-precept along with all sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, but they do not aspire to the stage of voice-hearer or self-enlightened one. When undertaking the transference, they do not ask who is doing the transference, where the transference will go, and what will be transferred. This is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in prajna paramita to elicit and absorb pure-precept paramita.

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas dwell in prajna paramita to elicit and absorb pure-precept paramita.)

“Some great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in prajna parramita and initiated the forbearance of compliance. After attaining this forbearance, they often think, ‘In all dharmas, not a dharma has arising, extinction, birth, old age, illness, and

death. Those who reproach and those who are reproached, those who slander and those who are slandered, those who cut, pierce, beat, bind, annoy, disturb, and harm and those who are cut, pierced, beaten, bound, annoyed, disturbed, and harmed, as well as all such dharmas and their nature are empty. So, we should not differentiate or have delusions among them.' After attaining this forbearance, these great bodhisattvas will not change their minds when they are scolded, slandered, and insulted by sentient beings, or they are beaten, pierced, cut, and killed with sticks, swords, tiles, and rocks, even if their limbs are cut into many pieces, during the period since the moment determining to aspire to the bodhi until finally sitting on the throne of the exquisite bodhi. Rather, they will think, 'It is unusual! In various dharma natures, there are no such things as scolding, slander, insult, and harm, why are sentient beings obsessed with delusions and differentiation and insist that they are real, and thus initiate various negative karmas of vexations and suffer severely presently and in future?' These great bodhisattvas will further adopt nonattainment as expediency to transfer the virtuous roots along with all sentient beings equally toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. When undertaking the transference, they do not think who is doing transference, where the transference will go, and what is to be transferred. Well-Appearing One, this is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in prajna paramita to elicit and absorb forbearance paramita.

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas dwell in prajna paramita to elicit and absorb forbearance paramita.)

"Some great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in prajna paramita and worked diligently and bravely to lecture on correct dharma for various sentient beings, let them dwell in giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; in the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth,

and noble eightfold path, and in the rest of merits and virtues. These great bodhisattvas have achieved varied kinds of skillful expediency. They are diligent in body and mind; they apply their supernatural powers to travel to one world, ten worlds, one hundred worlds, and so forth, and numberless and boundless worlds to teach the correct dharma, and expediently guide and convert sentient beings to allow them to dwell in stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, self-enlightenment bodhi, or realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. But these great bodhisattvas do not dwell in the conditioned realm or the unconditioned realm. They will further adopt nonattainment as expediency to transfer the virtuous roots of diligence along with all sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. When undertaking the transference, they do not ask who is doing the transference, where the transference will go, and what will be transferred. This is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in prajna paramita to elicit and absorb diligence paramita.

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas dwell in prajna paramita to elicit and absorb diligence paramita.)

"Some great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in prajna paramita and are able to easily and freely enter and get out of all superior concentrations of the voice-hearer, self-enlightened one, and bodhisattva except the concentrations of the Buddha. As these great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in the superior concentrations of bodhisattva at ease, they can freely enter and get out of the eight liberations in both directions, either from the first to the eighth liberation, or from the eighth to the first liberation; namely, they can freely enter and get out of the liberation of contemplating the phenomena of inner body, the liberation of contemplating the phenomena of outer objects, and so forth, and the liberation of contemplating the extinction of all mental

activities. These great bodhisattvas also can freely and easily enter and get out of the nine concentrations in both directions, either from the first to the ninth or from the ninth to the first; namely, they can freely and easily enter and get out of the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, four formless concentrations, and the concentration of the extinction of thinking and feeling. After practicing entering and getting out of the eight liberations and the nine concentrations each in both directions very well, they will be able to enter the Samadhi of Lion Stretching Limbs. What is the Samadhi of Lion Stretching Limbs? That means these great bodhisattvas can leave evil desires and the not virtuous dharmas, stay with the joy and pleasures caused by getting far away, while general contemplation and specific investigation continue in their minds, and enter the first meditation. Then they enter the second meditation, the third meditation, and so forth, and the concentration of nonthinking and not nonthinking, as well as the concentration of the extinction of thinking and feeling. They will further go through this sequence of concentration in opposite direction; namely, they will rise from the concentration of the extinction of thinking and feeling, enter the concentration of nonthinking and not nonthinking, and then enter the concentration of nothingness, and so forth, and the first meditation. This is the Samadhi of Lion Stretching Limbs for great bodhisattvas.

(The Buddha explained the meaning of the Samadhi of Lion Stretching Limbs.)

"After mastering the Samadhi of Lion Stretching Limbs, these great bodhisattvas will further enter the Samadhi of Gathering and Dispersion of the great bodhisattva. What is the Samadhi of Gathering and Dispersion? It means the great bodhisattvas have stayed away from evil desires and the not virtuous dharmas; with joy and pleasures caused by getting far away, they enter the first meditation while their general contemplation and specific investigation of dharmas remain active.

Rising from the first meditation, they will enter each of all meditations in sequence until the concentration of the extinction of thinking and feeling. Then rising from the concentration of extinction, they enter the first meditation again. Rising from the first meditation, they will enter the concentration of extinction. Getting out of the concentration of extinction, they will enter the second meditation. Rising from the second meditation, they will enter the concentration of extinction again. Rising from that concentration, they will enter the third meditation. Then they get out of the third meditation and enter the concentration of extinction again. Rising from the concentration of extinction, they enter the fourth meditation. Again, they will get out of the fourth meditation and enter the concentration of extinction. After rising from the concentration of extinction, they enter the concentration of boundless emptiness. Getting out of the boundless emptiness, they again enter the concentration of extinction. Then they leave the concentration of extinction and enter the concentration of boundless consciousness. Rising from boundless consciousness, they enter the concentration of nothingness. Rising from nothingness they enter extinction. Rising from extinction, they enter the concentration of nonthinking and not nonthinking. Rising from nonthinking and not nonthinking, they enter extinction again. Rising from extinction, they return to nonthinking and not nonthinking. Rising from nonthinking and not nonthinking, they will dwell in a mind of no concentration. Then they will enter the concentration of extinction again from nonconcentration of mind. Again, they will return to the mind of nonconcentration from extinction. Then leaving nonconcentration, they enter the concentration of nonthinking and not nonthinking. Rising from the nonthinking and not nonthinking, they will return to nonconcentration. Rising from nonconcentration, they enter the concentration of nothingness. From nothingness they again return to nonconcentration. Leaving

nonconcentration, they enter the concentration of boundless consciousness. Rising from boundless consciousness, they return to nonconcentration. From nonconcentration, they enter the concentration of boundless emptiness. From the concentration of boundless emptiness, they return to dwell in nonconcentration. Rising from nonconcentration, they enter the fourth meditation. Rising from the fourth meditation, they dwell in nonconcentration. Rising from nonconcentration, they enter the third meditation. Rising from the third meditation, they return to dwell in nonconcentration. Rising from nonconcentration, they enter the second meditation. Rising from the second meditation, they return to nonconcentration. Rising from nonconcentration, they enter the first meditation. And from the first meditation, they will return dwelling in the mind of nonconcentration. This is the Samadhi of Gathering and Dispersion for great bodhisattvas.

(The Buddha explained the meaning of the Samadhi of Gathering and Dispersion for great bodhisattvas.)

"Some great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in this Samadhi of Gathering and Dispersion and attained the equal real nature of all dharmas. These great bodhisattvas will further adopt nonattainment as expediency to transfer these virtuous roots of meditations along with all sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. When undertaking the transference, they do not ask who is doing the transference, where the transference will go, and what will be transferred. This is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in prajna paramita to elicit and absorb meditation paramita."

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas dwell in prajna paramita to elicit and absorb meditation paramita.)

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Chapter 26

Expedient Skillfulness

Section 2

(In the Third Assembly)

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, how long does it take great bodhisattvas to achieve such expedient skillfulness after aspiring to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “It takes numberless hundreds of thousands of kalpas for great bodhisattvas to achieve the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “How many Buddhas have these great bodhisattvas stayed with and made offerings respectfully to so that they can achieve such expedient skillfulness?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “These great bodhisattvas have stayed with and made offerings respectfully to as many Buddhas as the sands of the Ganges.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “Which subtle and exquisite virtuous roots have these great bodhisattvas planted so that they can achieve such expedient skillfulness?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “These great bodhisattvas have diligently and assiduously cultivated all virtuous roots elicited and activated by giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita to achieve such expedient skillfulness since aspiring to the bodhi.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha again, “It is very unusual that various great bodhisattvas can achieve such expedient skillfulness.”

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, “Yes, as you say, it is unusual that these various great bodhisattvas can achieve such expedient skillfulness.

“You must know, Well-Appearing One, like sun and moon that illuminate the four continents so that all sentient beings and insentient beings can accomplish what they intend to do relying on the lights, so can prajna paramita illuminate the rest of paramitas to help them accomplish they intend to do by following the powers of prajna paramita.

“You must know, Well-Appearing One, because of the absorption of prajna paramita, the five paramitas are called paramita. Like the king of turning dharma wheel, who is so called because of possessing the seven treasures, so are the five paramitas not called paramita if they far apart from prajna paramita. They are called paramita because of the absorption of prajna paramita.

“You must know, Well-Appearing One, a pretty and wealthy woman without the assistance and protection provided by a powerful man will easily encounters attacks or invasions. Similarly, the five paramitas without the assistance and protection provided by prajna paramita will be easily disturbed or harmed by heavenly demons and their associates.

“You must know, Well-Appearing One, an army led by a courageous and fearless commander who knows war well and can prepare various best armors and rods is invincible, so too the five paramitas guided by prajna paramita can overcome obstacles caused by heavenly demons, arrogant ones, and so forth, other bodhisattvas, or chandalas.

“You must know, Well-Appearing One, like smaller kings in the continent of

Jambudvipa, who are invited to accompany the wheel-turning holy king, can travel to the resorts, so the five paramitas, guided by prajna paramita, can approach the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, the rivers in the east of the continent of Jambudvipa all flow to the Ganges then into big ocean, so the five paramitas, guided and assisted by prajna paramita, can reach the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, like a person who can do many things with right hand, so prajna paramita can elicit all superior virtuous dharmas. It is also like a person who cannot do many things with left hand, so the five paramitas cannot elicit the superior virtuous dharmas alone.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, all rivers, large or small, flow into big ocean, and all taste the same as salt. So the five paramitas need to flow into prajna paramita to realize the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and reach the other shore.

(The Buddha in these paragraphs used similes to describe the relationship between the five paramitas and prajna paramita.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, wherever the wheel-turning king goes, the four armies will move with the treasure wheel as leading the way by following the king's orders. If the armies and the king want to eat or drink, the treasure wheel will halt immediately. After eating and drinking when the king wants to go, the treasure wheel will move forward. So, the treasure wheel halts or moves following king's order until reaching the destination. So the five paramitas move toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi along with various virtuous dharmas under the guidance until attaining the Buddha effect.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, a wheel-turning king with seven treasures would like to go somewhere. As they move, the treasure wheel will lead the procession while the four armies and seven treasures stay around either in the front or in the rear. It does not mean much which is in the front or in the back. If the five paramitas and various virtuous dharmas would like to move toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, they should follow prajna paramita as leader. But prajna paramita does not think, 'I am the leader of the five paramitas. They all follow me.' The five paramitas do not think, 'The fathomless prajna paramita is our leader and we are his followers.' Why? All these six paramitas and all dharmas have dull self-nature, which can do nothing, does not have a dominator; which is unreal, empty, and does not have the form of self-ease, much like the illusory images of water under sunlight, shadows, moon in the water, illusions, dreams, and so forth, within which, there is no differentiation, operations, real entities, or real phenomena."

(The Buddha described the inherent nature of six paramitas and all dharmas.)

The long-lived sage asked the Buddha again, "If the original nature of all dharmas is empty and without real entity and actions, then how can great bodhisattvas cultivate and learn the six paramitas and realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "When diligently cultivating and learning these six paramitas, great bodhisattvas should always think, 'The sentient beings in the world are upside down in their thoughts, so they are drowned in the suffering of birth and death and cannot get rid of it. If I do not cultivate the superior actions with skillful expediency, I will not relieve them from the suffering of birth and death. Therefore, for the sake of sentient beings, I must diligently cultivate the expedient skillfulness of giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and

prajna paramita to attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi soon and relieve sentient beings from the suffering of birth and death.'

"After having this thought, these great bodhisattvas are determined to renounce all their internal and external belongings. After giving away all they have, they again think, 'I truly have renounced nothing. Why? The self-nature of all these internal and external things is empty, so there is nothing that I can give away. All these things, internal or external, do not belong to me.' Based on this contemplation, these great bodhisattvas restart with purified mind to cultivate and fulfill giving paramita, and further realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly.

(The Buddha clarified why and how great bodhisattvas should practice expedient skillfulness of prajna paramita and various holy dharmas to fulfill giving paramita quickly.)

"For the sake of all sentient beings, these great bodhisattvas will not violate precepts. Why? They always think, 'I have aspired to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi for the sake of all sentient beings, so I absolutely should not kill sentient beings, steal their properties, and so forth, and hold incorrect views. I absolutely should not look after satisfaction of desires and the pleasures of heaven. I absolutely should not pursue self-liberation in the two vehicles.' Because of this contemplation and investigation, the great bodhisattvas will cultivate pure-precept paramita and fulfill it before long; they will realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly.

(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas practice expedient skillfulness to fulfill pure-precept paramita quickly.)

"For the sake of all sentient beings, these great bodhisattvas will not hate or be

angry even if they are slandered, reproached, insulted, killed by cutting limbs, or overwhelmed by various vexations. They will not allow even a single evil idea to arise in their minds. Why? These great bodhisattvas have realized that all sounds are like echoes and all matters are like froths, so deluded hatred and anger should not be allowed to arise. Because of this contemplation and investigation, these great bodhisattvas will cultivate forbearance paramita to its perfection before long and will realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly.
(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas practice expedient skillfulness to fulfill forbearance paramita quickly.)

"For the sake of all sentient beings, these great bodhisattvas will pursue virtuous dharmas diligently and tirelessly until they attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Why? These great bodhisattvas always think, 'If I get tired and become lazy, I will not be able to relieve all sentient beings from the severe suffering of birth and death, nor can I attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.' Because of this contemplation and investigation, these great bodhisattvas will cultivate diligence paramita to its perfection before long and will realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly.
(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas practice expedient skillfulness to fulfill diligence paramita quickly.)

"For the sake of all sentient beings, the great bodhisattvas will diligently cultivate superior concentrations and will not allow wandering and restless minds of greed, anger, and ignorance to arise until attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Why? These great bodhisattvas often think, 'If I let a restless and wandering mind of greed, anger, and ignorance arise, I will not be able to accomplish beneficial things for others, nor can I realize the Buddha effect that I am pursuing.'

Because of this contemplation and investigation, the great bodhisattvas will cultivate meditation paramita to its perfection before long and realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly.

(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas practice expedient skillfulness to fulfill meditation paramita quickly.)

"For the sake of all sentient beings, these great bodhisattvas will not stay away from prajna paramita but will always cultivate and learn diligently the subtle and exquisite superior wisdom until attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Why? These great bodhisattvas have always thought, 'If I stay away from prajna paramita, I will not be able to assist sentient beings to mature, nor can I realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.' Because of this contemplation and investigation, these great bodhisattvas will cultivate prajna paramita to its perfection before long and realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly. Because of this cause and condition, although realizing that the self-nature of all dharmas is empty and without real entities, phenomena, and operations, the great bodhisattvas still cultivate diligently the six paramitas and can realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi."

(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas practice expedient skillfulness to fulfill prajna paramita quickly.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "If the natures of these six paramitas are not different because they are all absorbed by prajna paramita, then how can we say that prajna paramita is superior to the other five paramitas and stands as the superior, noblest, highest, most wonderful, subtlest, and uppermost one among all?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "It is as you say. These six

paramitas are all absorbed by prajna parramita and so do not have different natures. If there is no prajna paramita, the other five paramitas will not be called paramita. The five paramitas are called paramita because of prajna paramita.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, although sentient beings have different physical appearances, all look the same if they live near Mt. Sumeru. So, although the five paramitas are different in characteristics, they are absorbed and fostered by prajna paramita, and are fulfilled because of prajna paramita, their names should not be differently established. Because they have relied on prajna paramita, they are able to realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Therefore, they are all called 'reaching the other shore' with the same taste and same nature. You should not assume that this is giving paramita, and that is pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, or prajna paramita. Why? Well-Appearing One, these six paramitas can realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and reach the other shore with same nature. Because of this cause and condition, these six paramitas should not be established with different names."

(The six paramitas share the same nature.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "There is no difference of superiority and inferiority among all paramitas and other dharmas in terms of ultimate meaning. Then, why is it said that prajna paramita is the best, noblest, highest, most wonderful, subtlest, and uppermost one of all paramitas and thus superior to other five paramitas?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Yes, as you say, no differences exist among all paramitas and all dharmas in terms of ultimate meaning, so we should not distinguish which is superior and which is inferior. While in terms of the worldly perspective, the differences of superiority and inferiority exist. To relieve all sentient

beings from birth, old age, illness, and death, the six paramitas are provisionally established, but birth, old age, illness, and death of all sentient beings are not real; they are all provisionally established. Why? Because sentient beings are nonexistent, all dharmas are also nonexistent. But through prajna paramita, we can realize that all dharmas are nonexistent, and such realization can liberate all sentient beings from birth, old age, illness, and death. Therefore, it is said that prajna paramita is the best, superior, noblest, highest, most wonderful, subtlest, and uppermost one of all paramitas.

(The Buddha explained why prajna paramita is regarded superior to other paramitas as all dharmas are nonexistent.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, among all women of the world, the woman treasure of wheel-turning king is the best, superior, noblest, highest, most wonderful, subtlest, and uppermost one. Similarly, among all paramitas, prajna paramita is the best, superior, noblest, highest, most wonderful, subtlest, and uppermost one."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Why do you only admire and acclaim the fathomless prajna paramita and say that it is superior to, better, nobler, higher, more wonderful, and subtler than other five paramitas?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "It is because prajna paramita can adopt nonattainment as expediency to absorb and accept universally all virtuous dharmas, help them approach the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, and dwell peacefully in it."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Then does prajna paramita choose to adopt some and renounce some from various virtuous dharmas?"

The Buddha replied, “No, prajna paramita neither adopts nor renounces any dharma. Why? The self-natures of all dharmas are empty, so nothing should be adopted or renounced.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “Which dharmas that prajna paramita neither adopts nor renounces?”

The Buddha replied, “Prajna paramita neither adopts nor renounces matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “Why does prajna paramita neither adopt nor renounce matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “Prajna paramita does not reflect on matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, so it neither adopts nor renounces matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “How does prajna paramita not reflect on matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “Prajna paramita does not reflect on phenomena and conditions of matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “If great bodhisattvas do not reflect on matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, how do their virtuous roots grow and increase? If their virtuous roots do not grow and increase, how do they fulfill the paramitas? If they do not fulfill the paramitas, how do they realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all

perfect knowledge?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "If great bodhisattvas do not reflect on matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, they will be able to foster the growth of the virtuous roots that they plant to make them increase. As the virtuous roots that they plant grow and increase, they will fulfill the paramitas. As the paramitas are fulfilled, they will realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Why? If great bodhisattvas do not reflect on matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, they will achieve completion in the cultivation of all great bodhisattva actions, and thus are able to realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi." (The Buddha taught that if great bodhisattvas do not reflect on various dharmas, their virtuous roots will grow and increase, they thus can fulfill the perfect knowledge.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Based on what cause and condition do you say that great bodhisattvas should not reflect on matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge so they will become complete in the cultivation of all great bodhisattva actions and thus are able to realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "If great bodhisattvas reflect on matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, they will attain something. If they attain something, they will be attached to the three realms. If they are attached to the three realms, they will not be perfect in their cultivation of all great bodhisattva actions and thus cannot realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas would like to be complete in the cultivation of all great bodhisattva actions and realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, they

should cultivate and learn the fathomless prajna paramita, but should not reflect on and be attached to various dharmas."

(The Buddha instructed that great bodhisattvas should cultivate and learn prajna paramita and other dharmas but should not reflect on them to avoid attachment to them.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "If great bodhisattvas would like to diligently cultivate and learn the fathomless prajna paramita, where should they dwell?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "If great bodhisattvas would like to diligently cultivate and learn the fathomless prajna paramita, they should not dwell in matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Based on what cause and condition do you say that if great bodhisattvas would like to diligently cultivate and learn the fathomless prajna paramita, they should not dwell in matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "If great bodhisattvas diligently cultivate and learn the fathomless prajna paramita, they should not be attached to all dharmas, so they will not dwell in matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Why? The great bodhisattvas do not see the dharma to which they can be attached or the dharma in which they can dwell. Well-Appearing One, because great bodhisattvas adopt nonattachment and nondwelling as expediency, they can diligently cultivate and learn the fathomless prajna paramita.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas will be attached to the phenomena and thus become far apart from prajna paramita if they think, 'To diligently and attentively cultivate and learn the fathomless prajna paramita without

attachment and dwelling is cultivating and practicing prajna paramita. If I can diligently and assiduously cultivate and learn the fathomless prajna paramita without attachment and dwelling, I do cultivate and practice the fathomless prajna paramita.' As they become far away from prajna paramita, they also become far away from giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Why? The fathomless prajna paramita is not attached to all dharmas because in prajna paramita, attachment and the nature of attachment are nonexistent. Why? The fathomless prajna paramita has no self-nature, so it cannot be attached to dharmas. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, as great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they should not be attached to all dharmas and the fathomless prajna paramita.

(The Buddha instructed that great bodhisattvas should adopt nonattainment and nondwelling as expediency in cultivation to avoid attachment. But he further cautioned that great bodhisattvas should not be attached to the thought that they should adopt nonattainment and nondwelling in cultivation to avoid another attachment.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas will withdraw from prajna paramita if they practice the fathomless prajna paramita with this thought: 'This is prajna paramita. As I practice prajna paramita, I equally practice the universal real phenomena of various dharmas.' If they withdraw from prajna paramita, they will withdraw from giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Why? The fathomless prajna paramita is the foundation of all virtuous dharmas. To withdraw from prajna paramita is withdrawing from all virtuous dharmas.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas think, 'The

fathomless prajna paramita absorbs giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge,' then these great bodhisattvas have withdrawn from prajna paramita. Withdrawing from prajna paramita makes one unable to absorb giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Why? Staying away from prajna paramita will hinder one from absorbing universally the factors for the bodhi or realizing and attaining the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas think, 'Dwelling peacefully in prajna paramita means that one certainly will be conferred the prophecy of attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi,' then these great bodhisattvas will withdraw from prajna paramita because of this thought. Once withdrawing from prajna paramita, one is not entitled to the prophecy of attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Why? No one can be conferred the prophecy of attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi as staying away from prajna parramita.

(The Buddha described various situations that make learners withdraw from prajna paramita and thus hinder them from realizing the perfect knowledge.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas think, 'Dwelling peacefully in prajna paramita will initiate and activate giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity,' then these great bodhisattvas will withdraw from prajna paramita because of this thought. Once withdrawing from prajna paramita, they will not be able to initiate and activate giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity. Why? No one can elicit and dwell peacefully in superior dharmas as separate from prajna paramita.

(The Buddha cautioned that as separating from prajna paramita, no one could elicit and dwell in superior holy dharmas.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas think, 'The Buddha knows that all dharmas do not have the form of absorption. Because of this knowledge, the Buddha has realized and attained the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. After attaining the bodhi, he lectures on, explains, and reveals the real forms of all dharmas for sentient beings.' Then, these great bodhisattvas will withdraw from the fathomless prajna paramita. Why? Thus-Comer is not aware of and awakened to the dharmas, nor does he teach and demonstrate the dharmas. Why? The real nature of all dharmas cannot be awakened to and established, so how can there be the awakened one to teach and demonstrate all dharmas? It does not make sense to say that there is truly the awakened one to teach and demonstrate all dharmas."

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "World-Honored One, how should great bodhisattvas stay away from all these faults when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should think, 'All dharmas are nonexistent and ungraspable. If the dharmas are nonexistent and ungraspable, there will be no awakened one or the dharma lecturer and demonstrator,' then they do practice the fathomless prajna paramita and get rid of all faults. If great bodhisattvas are attached to the nonexistent and the ungraspable dharmas, they are far apart from prajna paramita. Why? The fathomless prajna paramita is not attached to all dharmas, nor does it absorb all dharmas. If ones are attached to all dharmas or if they absorb all dharmas, they are far apart from prajna paramita."

(The Buddha taught that those who are not attached to all dharmas or do not absorb all

dharmas will not stay far away from prajna paramita.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “Is prajna paramita far away or not far away from prajna paramita? Is giving paramita far away or not far away from giving paramita? And so on, is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge far away or not far away from the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge? World-Honored One, if prajna paramita is far away or not far away from prajna paramita, then how can great bodhisattvas elicit prajna paramita without attachment? If giving paramita is far away or not far away from giving paramita, then how can great bodhisattvas elicit giving paramita without attachment? And so on, if the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge is far away or not far away from the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, how can great bodhisattvas elicit the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge without attachment?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “Because prajna paramita is neither far away nor not far away from prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas are able to elicit prajna paramita without attachment. Because giving paramita is neither far away nor not far away from giving paramita, great bodhisattvas are able to elicit giving paramita without attachment. And so on, because the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge is neither far away nor not far away from the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, great bodhisattvas are able to elicit the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge without attachment. Why? Great bodhisattvas cannot elicit and dwell peacefully in the self-nature that is with or far apart from self-nature.
(The Buddha taught that because prajna paramita and other superior dharmas are neither far apart nor not far apart, great bodhisattvas can elicit paramitas and other superior holy dharmas.)

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna

paramita, great bodhisattvas should not be attached to matter and say that this is matter and this matter belongs to them. And so on, they should not be attached to the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and say that this is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, and this perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge belongs to them. Because great bodhisattvas are not attached to all dharmas, they are able to elicit prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Why? If great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita and are attached to the dharmas and say that these are the dharmas and these dharmas belong to them, then they will not be able to elicit and dwell peacefully in the superior merits and virtues.

(The Buddha taught that great bodhisattvas should not be attached to the dharmas so that they can elicit or dwell in various superior holy dharmas.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should not contemplate matter as permanent or impermanent, pleasant or painful, with or without selfness, pure or impure, empty or not empty, and far away or not far away. And so on, they should not contemplate the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge as permanent or impermanent, pleasant or painful, with or without selfness, pure or impure, empty or not empty, and far away or not far away. If great bodhisattvas can do this way, they will be able to elicit prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge because they do not contemplate and investigate all dharmas. On the contrary, if great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita and contemplate all dharmas as permanent or impermanent, pleasant or painful, with or without selfness, pure or impure, empty or not empty, and far away or not far away, they will not be able to elicit and dwell peacefully in superior merits and virtues.

(The Buddha further taught that if great bodhisattvas do not contemplate all dharmas, including superior holy dharmas, as permanent or impermanent, pleasant or painful, with or without selfness, pure or impure, empty or not empty, and far away or not far away, they will elicit and dwell in various superior dharmas.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they do cultivate giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, wherever the fathomless prajna paramita goes, all paramitas and the rest of factors for the bodhi will follow. Wherever the fathomless prajna paramita is destined, all paramitas and the rest of factors for enlightenment will be destined too. It is like the wheel-turning king; wherever he goes, the four courageous armies will follow him. Wherever the king is destined, the four courageous armies will be destined. Therefore, wherever the fathomless prajna paramita goes and is destined for, the five paramitas and the rest of factors for enlightenment will follow and be destined--all will finally go to the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge as their destination. Like a good wagon driver, who can always avoid all perilous roads and keep the wagon running on the correct path and safely arrive in where they intend to go, so the fathomless prajna paramita can always give a good ride to all other paramitas and the rest of factors for the bodhi, avoid all perilous roads of birth and death, and stay on the correct path leading to nirvana to benefit themselves and others until arriving at the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge that they pursue."

(The Buddha explained why the fathomless prajna paramita is so superior and indispensable for great bodhisattvas.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "What are the paths for

great bodhisattvas? What are not the paths for them?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "The path of voice-hearer, the path of self-enlightened one, and the path of ordinary sentient being are not the paths for great bodhisattvas. Great bodhisattvas cannot attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge if they follow these paths. On the other hand, all factors elicited by the fathomless prajna paramita for enlightenment are the paths for various great bodhisattvas. If great bodhisattvas walk on these paths, they will be able to reach the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge."

(The Buddha indicated the paths for great bodhisattvas and the paths not for them.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, "The fathomless prajna paramita has appeared in this world to do a great thing: showing the characteristics of all correct paths and incorrect paths for all great bodhisattvas, so they will choose the right ones to fulfill the realization and attainment of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge quickly."

(The great event that the fathomless prajna parmita is supposed to accomplish is manifesting the right path for great bodhisattvas.)

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "Yes, it is as you say. The fathomless prajna paramita has appeared in this world to do a great thing: showing the characteristics of all correct paths and incorrect paths for all great bodhisattvas, so they will choose the right ones to realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge quickly.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the fathomless prajna paramita has appeared in the world to do a great thing: liberating innumerable, countless, and boundless sentient beings so they will acquire superior benefits, peace, and happiness. You must know, Well-Appearing One, the fathomless prajna paramita can do

boundless beneficial things for others, while it is not attached to these things. You must know, Well-Appearing One, when the fathomless prajna paramita manifest the things that it has accomplished, it does not grasp matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, or grasp the things that the voice-hearers and the self-enlightened ones have accomplished. You must know, Well-Appearing One, the fathomless prajna paramita can lead all great bodhisattvas toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and stay away from the stage of voice-hearer or self-enlightened one, but it neither gives birth to nor extinguishes all dharmas. It has just measured all dharmas by virtue of the nature of dharma dwelling."

(As a matter of fact, the fathomless prajna paramita appears in the world to accomplish many great things to help bodhisattvas and thus benefit all sentient beings, but, prajna paramita is not attached to all these things and relevant beings.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "If the fathomless prajna paramita neither gives birth to nor extinguishes all dharmas, how can great bodhisattvas practice giving, observe pure precept, initiate patience, work diligently, enter meditation, and cultivate prajna for the sake of sentient beings when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied, "When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should follow the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge to practice giving, observe pure precept, initiate patience, work diligently, enter meditation, and cultivate prajna for the sake of all sentient beings. They should further transfer these virtuous roots along with all sentient beings equally toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. They then cultivate the six paramitas and fulfill them quickly. They should also cultivate and fulfill great loving-kindness, great compassion, great

joy, and great equanimity quickly. Thus, they will realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge before long, never being far away from the six paramitas until sitting firmly and peacefully on the throne of the wonderful bodhi. If great bodhisattvas never stay far away from the six paramitas, they will not stay far away from the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas would like to realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge quickly, they should learn and cultivate diligently the six paramitas. If they can consistently learn and cultivate the six paramitas, they will attain all virtuous roots soon and thus will realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi before long. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should always remain correspondent with the six paramitas without even a brief interruption."

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "How should great bodhisattvas always remain correspondent with the six paramitas without interruption?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "If great bodhisattvas accurately contemplate and realize that matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are neither correspondent nor not correspondent, they do remain correspondent with the six paramitas. Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should think, 'I should not dwell in matter or nonmatter, feeling or nonfeeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge or nonperfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Why? Matter cannot dwell, nor can one dwell in it. And so on. The perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge cannot dwell, nor can one dwell in it,' then these great bodhisattvas can always remain correspondent with the six paramitas

without interruption.

(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas always remain correspondent with the six paramitas without interruption.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas adopt nondwelling as expediency to cultivate the six paramitas, they will realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, someone wanted to eat amalaki fruit or jackfruit, so planted seeds in fertilized soil, watered them frequently, and took good care of them while the seeds grew into stems, branches, and leaves. When appropriate season came, flowers bloomed and fruits became ripe, which were picked and eaten. Well-Appearing One, so do great bodhisattvas who want to realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. They should learn the six paramitas first, absorb sentient beings with four approaches, namely, practicing generous giving, speaking kind and good words, doing beneficial actions for others, and getting along with them in harmony and empathy. After successfully absorbing sentient beings, the great bodhisattvas will further teach them to dwell peacefully in giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas, as well as in the factors for the bodhi, such as the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors and so forth. After these, they will relieve sentient beings from birth, old age, illness, and death, let them dwell permanently in ultimate peace and happiness. These great bodhisattvas thus will realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, and turn the wonderful dharma wheel to bring benefits and happiness to all sentient beings in endless future.

(The Buddha delineated the process through which great bodhisattvas achieve the realization and attainment of the unsurpassed bodhi step by step.)

"Therefore, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas would like to attain enlightenment by themselves without relying on other conditions, assist sentient beings to mature, dignify and purify Buddha land that they pursue, sit on the throne of the exquisite bodhi quickly, subjugate various demonic armies, realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge soon, and turn the dharma wheel to deliver all sentient beings, they should learn the six paramitas and adopt four approaches to absorb various sentient beings to relieve them from all kinds of suffering caused by birth and death. If great bodhisattvas would like to diligently cultivate and learn, they should first cultivate and learn prajna paramita diligently and constantly."

(In this process, the cultivation of six paramitas and four approaches for absorbing sentient beings is essential. First, they should learn prajna paramita diligently.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Do you say that bodhisattvas should diligently cultivate and learn prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied, "Yes, Well-Appearing One. I say that bodhisattvas should cultivate and learn prajna paramita diligently and consistently.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas would like to attain great freedom and ease in all dharmas, they should learn prajna paramita. Why? The fathomless prajna paramita has great strength and authority to bring great freedom and ease to great bodhisattvas in all dharmas. You must know, Well-Appearing One, the fathomless prajna paramita is the gate toward which all virtuous dharmas will move, just like the ocean where all waters will flow to. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth, who are pursuing the voice-hearer vehicle, self-enlightened one vehicle, or the unsurpassed vehicle, should diligently and consistently cultivate and learn the fathomless prajna paramita.

(The Buddha explained why bodhisattvas should learn and cultivate prajna paramita diligently and consistently in these paragraphs.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, when diligently and constantly cultivating and learning the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should also consistently cultivate and learn giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita, as well as the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, like a master arrow shooter who wears good, solid armor and is well equipped with perfect arrows and bow, thus is not afraid of enemies. So great bodhisattvas, absorbing the expedient skillfulness of prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, cannot be subjugated by demonic armies or incorrect arguments holders. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas would like to realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, turn the wheel of wonderful dharma, and deliver all sentient beings, they should diligently cultivate and learn the fathomless prajna paramita. If great bodhisattvas can diligently cultivate and learn the fathomless prajna paramita, they will be protected by and kept in the mindfulness of various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, in the past, future, and present."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "Why will great bodhisattvas be protected by and kept in the mindfulness of various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, in the past, future, and present if they diligently and consistently cultivate and learn the fathomless prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "If great bodhisattvas diligently and consistently cultivate and learn the fathomless prajna paramita, they can cultivate giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, forbearance paramita, diligence paramita, meditation paramita, prajna paramitas, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all

perfect knowledge, so they will be protected by and kept in the mindfulness of various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, in the past, future, and present."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Why are great bodhisattvas protected by and kept in the mindfulness of various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, in the past, future, and present if they cultivate giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "As these great bodhisattvas have cultivated and contemplated giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge as unattainable, they will be protected by and kept in the mindfulness of various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, in the past, future, and present.

(Great bodhisattvas are protected and kept in the mindfulness of various Buddha because they contemplate the six paramitas and perfect knowledge as unattainable.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, various Buddhas in the past, future, and present always protect and keep these great bodhisattvas in mind, but they do this not because of matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. It is because matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are unattainable."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha again, "Great bodhisattvas have learned in many places, but they have learned nowhere."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "Yes. It is. Great bodhisattvas have learned in many places, but they have learned nowhere. Why? There are no dharmas in which great bodhisattvas can cultivate and learn."

At that time, Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, "For the sake of great

bodhisattvas, the Buddha has either taught briefly or elaborated the dharmas correspondent with the six paramitas. If great bodhisattvas would like to realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, turn the wonderful dharma wheel, and deliver all sentient beings, they should hear, accept, embrace, read, recite, and understand thoroughly the dharmas correspondent with the six paramitas whether they are taught briefly or comprehensively. They should further reflect reasonably on them, contemplate and investigate them correctly. After this, they should keep their minds and the associated images from turning around the mental images."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "Yes, it is as you say. Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should diligently cultivate and learn the dharmas correspondent with the six paramita taught briefly or elaborated by the Buddha. They should learn to know various dharmas, including their simplified and complicated forms."

(After affirming Well-Appearing One's statement, the Buddha further directed the method of learning the dharmas correspondent with the six paramitas.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "How should great bodhisattvas accurately know the simplified and complicated forms of all dharmas?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "If great bodhisattvas accurately know the form of the realness of matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, they do accurately know the simplified and complicated forms of all dharmas."

(The Buddha instructed that great bodhisattvas should accurately understand the forms of the realness of various dharmas.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "What is the form of the realness of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so

forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge? How do great bodhisattvas learn to accurately know the simplified and complicated forms of all dharmas?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "The realness of matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge does not have arising, extinction, duration, and decay that can be established. This is called the form of the realness of matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Great bodhisattvas should accurately know and learn from it to know the simplified and complicated forms of all dharmas as they really are.

(The Buddha explained the form of the realness of all dharmas as having no arising, no extinction, no duration, and no decay. Knowing this form enables one to know the simplified and complicated forms of all dharmas.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas accurately know the form of the reality of matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, they will know the simplified and complicated forms of all dharmas as they really are."

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "What is the form of the reality of matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge? How do great bodhisattvas get to know and learn from the simplified and complicated forms of all dharmas as they really are?

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Boundlessness is the form of the reality of matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. If great bodhisattvas get to accurately know and learn from the form of the reality, they will know the simplified and complicated forms of all dharmas as they really are.

(The Buddha further taught the form of the reality of all dharmas is boundlessness. Knowing this form enables one to know the simplified and complicated forms of all dharmas.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas accurately know the form of the dharma realm of matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, they will know the simplified and complicated forms of all dharmas as they really are."

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "What is the form of the dharma realm of matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge? How do great bodhisattvas get to know and learn from them so they will know the simplified and complicated forms of all dharmas as they really are?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are like empty space, in which no hindrance, obstacle, arising, extinction, discontinuation, and continuation can be established. This is called the form of the dharma realm of matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. If great bodhisattvas get to know and learn from them, they will know the simplified and complicated forms of all dharmas as they really are."

(The Buddha further taught the form of the dharma realm of all dharmas is like empty space, in which there are no hindrance, obstacle, and so forth. Knowing this form enables one to know the simplified and complicated forms of all dharmas.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "How should great bodhisattvas further get to know the simplified and complicated forms of all dharmas

as they really are?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “If great bodhisattvas accurately know that all dharmas neither combine nor far apart, they will know the simplified and complicated forms of all dharmas as they really are.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “Which dharmas neither combine nor far apart?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “Matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge neither combine nor far apart. Greed, anger, and ignorance neither combine nor far apart. The realm of desire, the realm of form, and the realm of formlessness neither combine nor far apart. The conditioned realm and unconditioned realm neither combine nor far apart. Why? All these dharmas are without self-natures. The dharmas without self-natures are nonexistent. The nonexistent dharmas do not have combination or separation. As great bodhisattvas know all dharmas this way, they will know the simplified and complicated forms of all dharmas as they really are.”
(The Buddha further taught that knowing all dharmas as without self-natures and thus being nonexistent, incapable of combining and separating, enables one to know the simplified and complicated forms of all dharmas as they really are.)

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Chapter 26

Expedient Skillfulness

Section 3

(In the Third Assembly)

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, "World-Honored One, this is called the absorbent prajna paramita. If great bodhisattvas learn from it, they make significant progress. World-Honored One, all novice great bodhisattvas, great bodhisattvas of the first stage, and so forth, and the great bodhisattvas of the tenth stage should learn diligently from the absorbent prajna paramita. If great bodhisattvas can learn and cultivate diligently the absorbent prajna paramita, they will be able to know accurately both brief and complicated forms of all dharmas. World-Honored One, only the sharp-rooted great bodhisattvas can enter this subtle and exquisite dharma gate of absorbent prajna paramita and attain insightful understanding."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "Not only the sharp-rooted great bodhisattvas but also the average-rooted and even the dull-rooted ones can enter this dharma gate without hindrance. The great bodhisattvas, with or without concentrative roots, can enter this dharma gate if they learn attentively. You must know, Well-Appearing One, such dharma gate is extremely subtle, wonderful, and pure. The lazy or less diligent ones, those who lose correct mindfulness, the restless ones, and the wisdom abusers will not be able to enter this dharma gate and attain insightful understanding. Only the tireless ones, those with superior diligence, those with correct mindfulness, the concentrative ones, and the wonderful wisdom cultivators can enter

this gate and attain insightful understanding. You must know, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas would like to dwell in the bodhisattva stage of nonregression, or even the tenth stage of great bodhisattva, they should cultivate diligently and expediently to enter this dharma gate. If great bodhisattvas would like to realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, they should cultivate diligently and expediently to enter this dharma gate.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas learn by following the teachings given in the profound sutras of prajna paramita, they will be able to learn, as they wish, giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable; the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration; the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations; the stages of ecstasy, freedom from defilement, and so forth, and dharma cloud; the dharani gates and samadhi gates; the five eyes and six supernatural powers; the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity; staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times; the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; all great bodhisattva actions, the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the

Buddhas, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. After learning all of these, they will be able to realize, as they wish, giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas learn by following the teachings given by the profound sutras of prajna paramita, they will be aware of the appearance of demonic hindrances, and the hindrances will disappear immediately. Therefore, if great bodhisattvas would like to eliminate all karma hindrances quickly and absorb correctly expedient skillfulness, they should learn prajna paramita.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, when great bodhisattvas cultivate and learn diligently such prajna paramita, they will be protected by and kept in the minds of all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones who are conducting and teaching the correct dharma. Why? The Buddhas in the past, future, and present are born from the fathomless prajna paramita. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas can practice prajna paramita, they should think, 'The dharma that the Buddhas in the past, future, and present realize I will also realize.' Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas thus should cultivate diligently the fathomless prajna paramita to realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should always stay in an intention correspondent with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and practice the fathomless prajna parramita.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas correctly cultivate the fathomless prajna paramita for as a brief instant as snapping fingers, the blessings accumulated by these great bodhisattvas will be a lot. On the other hand, someone has

taught expediently and skillfully all sentient beings in the entire large threefold thousand-world to dwell peacefully in giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas; dwell peacefully in all pure liberations and the knowledge and views of liberations; dwell peacefully in stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and arhat effect or self-enlightenment bodhi, then this person will attain boundless accumulation of blessings, while in comparison, the accumulated blessings thus gained will be less than the former ones who have practiced correctly the fathomless prajna paramita for as a brief instant as snapping fingers. Why? It is because the fathomless prajna paramita can give birth to giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas; all pure liberations and the knowledge and views of liberations; stream-entry effect, and so forth, and arhat effect or self-enlightenment bodhi. The Buddha in the past, future, and present appear in the world to deliver boundless and countless sentient beings because of this fathomless prajna paramita.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas can always stay in an intention correspondent with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and practice the fathomless prajna paramita for a brief instant, half a day, one day, half a month, one month, one hour, one year, one hundred years, one kalpa, one hundred kalpas, and so forth, as well as innumerable great kalpas, the blessings gained by these great bodhisattvas will be much more than those acquired by teaching various sentient beings in as many worlds as the sands of the Ganges to dwell peacefully in giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna; dwell peacefully in the pure liberations and the knowledge and views of the liberations; dwell peacefully in stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and arhat effect or self-enlightenment bodhi. Why? The fathomless prajna paramita gives birth to various

Buddhas in the past, future, and present. The fathomless prajna paramita can establish correctly, for the sake of all sentient beings, giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas; the pure liberations and the knowledge and views of the liberations; stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and arhat effect or self-enlightenment bodhi; and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas dwell as the fathomless prajna paramita teaches, they must have already dwelled in the stage of nonregression and are always protected by and kept in the minds of various Buddhas. They must have achieved superior expedient skillfulness and stayed in close connection with and made offerings respectfully to innumerable koti nayuta Buddhas. They must have planted numberless superior and wonderful virtuous roots in many Buddhas' places, been absorbed and protected by numberless genuine pure virtuous friends, and cultivated and learned the six paramitas, four bases of mindfulness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge for a very long time. You must know, Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas have dwelled in the stage of pure childhood, and whatever their wishes are will be fulfilled. They can see various Buddhas always without interruption. They have always stayed with virtuous roots, often assisted sentient beings guided by them to mature, and dignified and purified the Buddha land that they are pursuing. They will travel from one Buddha country to the other to make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, and listen to their teachings about the way of cultivating bodhisattva vehicle. You must know, Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas have acquired the talent of debate without disruption and exhaustion, obtained superior dharani ways, accomplished the uppermost exquisite physical

bodies, and been conferred by various Buddhas the prophecy of fulfilling all. Wherever they go, they will enjoy delivering sentient beings. They have attained freedom and ease in whatever bodies they are reborn with.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas can well enter insightfully the following dharmas: perceived objects, mental images, all gates of words and nonwords, the meanings of dharma with and without words, many designated names, designated names of woman and man and agender, designated statements of various dharmas in the three phases of time, words, meanings, aggregates, spheres, realms, dependent origination and the associated elements, world, nirvana, the phenomena of dharma realm, conditioned phenomena, unconditioned phenomena, mental images and non-mental images, the phenomena of images and non-images, non-nature, self-nature, other-nature, bondages, freedom from bondages, bondage and freedom from bondage, correspondence, non-correspondence, correspondence and non-correspondence, realness, the nature of nonillusion, nature of changelessness, dharma nature, dharma realm, dharma concentration, dharma dwelling, the nature of causes, the nature of non-causes, the nature of conditions, and the nature of non-conditions. The great bodhisattvas can also well enter insightfully the noble truths, meditations, the immeasurable, the invisible, six paramitas, thirty-seven aids to enlightenment, three kinds of liberation, eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, ten universal contemplations, all dharani gates, all samadhi gates, five eyes, six supernatural powers, ten stages of great bodhisattva, the Thus-Comer's ten abilities and so forth, great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, great equanimity, staying in correct mindfulness, always dwelling in equanimity, the perfect knowledge of everything, the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, the perfect knowledge of

all phenomena, the conditioned realm, the unconditioned realm, the realm of human beings, the realm of nonhuman beings, emptiness, non-emptiness, intention in accord with five aggregates, intentions in accord with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, the path without easiness and peace, arising, duration, decay, extinction, correct views, incorrect views, views, non-views, greed, hatred, ignorance, non-greed, non-hatred, non-ignorance, complexes, bonds, termination of views, complexes, name, form, name and form, the conditions that stimulate the mind, the conditions that reinforce main causes, cause and condition, consecutive thoughts, perceiving process, cause and effect, the noble truth of suffering, the noble truth of the cause of suffering, the noble truth of the cessation of suffering, the noble truth of the path for the cessation of suffering, five destinies, the paths for the five destinies, stream-entry effect and the path of stream-entry, once-return effect and the path of once-return effect, nonreturn effect and the path of nonreturn effect, arhat effect and the path of arhat effect, self-enlightenment bodhi and the path of self-enlightenment bodhi, the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and the path of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, the perfect knowledge of everything and the path of the perfect knowledge of everything, the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the path of the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, the perfect knowledge of all phenomena and the path of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, the roots and the perfect fulfillment of the roots, the superior roots and inferior roots, swift wisdom, sharp wisdom, quick wisdom, fluent wisdom, broad wisdom, deep wisdom, great wisdom, unhindered wisdom, the past, the future, the present, expediency, joyful intentions, the meanings of words, and the expedient establishment in the three vehicles.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas practice the

fathomless prajna paramita, elicit the fathomless prajna paramita, and cultivate the fathomless prajna paramita, they will attain such numberless and boundless merits, virtues, and superior benefits."

(The Buddha reiterated the fathomless prajna paramita as the core, indispensable and primary element for bodhisattva-path cultivation. He encouraged and inspired great bodhisattvas, including the novice across the tenth stage, by enumerating the exquisite benefits and merits gained by the great bodhisattvas who can cultivate and practice following the teachings given by prajna paramita.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "How will great bodhisattvas practice, elicit, and cultivate the fathomless prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Great bodhisattvas should contemplate matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge as tranquil, destructible, not at ease, not real, and not solid. Realizing this, they should practice the fathomless prajna paramita. As to your question, how great bodhisattvas elicit the fathomless prajna paramita, I will say that great bodhisattvas should elicit the fathomless prajna paramita as if eliciting the emptiness of empty space. As to your question, how great bodhisattvas cultivate the fathomless prajna paramita, I will say that they should cultivate the fathomless prajna paramita as driving something away."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "How long should great bodhisattvas practice, elicit, and cultivate the fathomless prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Great bodhisattvas should practice, elicit, and cultivate the fathomless prajna paramita since the moment they begin to aspire to the bodhi until they sit peacefully on the throne of the exquisite

bodhi."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "In which state of mind should great bodhisattvas dwell uninterruptedly when they practice, elicit, and cultivate the fathomless prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Since the moment they begin to aspire to the bodhi until finally they attain it, great bodhisattvas should dwell peacefully and solely in an intention correspondent with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge when they practice, elicit, and cultivate the fathomless prajna paramita. You must know, Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas should maintain a steadfast and undisturbed mind, unmoved by changing circumstances, so that they can practice, elicit, and cultivate the fathomless prajna paramita."
(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas practice, elicit, and cultivate prajna paramita.)

"World-Honored One, can great bodhisattvas attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge if they practice, elicit, and cultivate the fathomless prajna paramita?"

"No, Well-Appearing One."

"World-Honored One, can great bodhisattvas attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge if they do not practice, elicit, and cultivate the fathomless prajna paramita?"

"No, Well-Appearing One."

"World-Honored One, can great bodhisattvas attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge if they practice and do not practice, elicit and do not elicit, and cultivate and do not cultivate the fathomless prajna paramita?"

"No, Well-Appearing One."

"World-Honored One, can great bodhisattvas attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge if they neither practice nor not practice, neither elicit nor not elicit, and neither cultivate nor not cultivate the fathomless prajna paramita?"

"No, Well-Appearing One."

"World-Honored One, then how should great bodhisattvas attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge?"

"Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge as if they attain realness."

"World-Honored One, how do they attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge as if they attain realness?"

"Well-Appearing One, they should attain it as if they attain reality."

"World-Honored One, how do they attain it as if they attain reality?"

"Well-Appearing One, they should attain it as if they attain dharma realm."

"World-Honored One, how do they attain it as if they attain dharma realm?"

"Well-Appearing One, they should attain it as if they attain the realm of the 'I,' the realm of the sentient being, and so forth, and the realm of the individual in reincarnation."

"World-Honored One, how do they attain it as if they attain the realm of the 'I,' the realm of the sentient being, and so forth, and the realm of the individual in reincarnation?"

"Well-Appearing One, what do you think about this? Are the 'I,' the sentient being, and so forth, and the individual in reincarnation attainable?"

"No, World-Honored One."

"Well-Appearing One, if the 'I,' the sentient being, and so forth, and the individual in reincarnation are unattainable, how can I establish the realm of the 'I,'

the realm of the sentient being, and so forth, and the realm of the individual in reincarnation? Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas do not establish prajna paramita, the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, and all dharmas, they certainly will realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge." (The Buddha taught that great bodhisattvas should not establish prajna paramita, perfect knowledge, and all dharmas as they are all unattainable. By doing so, they will realize and attain perfect knowledge.)

The long-lived sage asked the Buddha again, "Is prajna paramita the only dharma that cannot be established? Are meditation paramita, diligence paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita also the dharmas that cannot be established?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Not only prajna paramita cannot be established, but the rest of six paramitas cannot be established. All dharmas, such as the dharma of voice-hearer, the dharma of self-enlightened one, the dharma of bodhisattva, the dharma of various Buddhas, the conditioned dharmas, and the unconditioned dharmas, cannot be established."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "If all dharmas cannot be established, how can we establish the realm of hells, the realm of animals, the realm of ghosts, human beings, and heavenly beings? How can we establish the stream-enterers, once-returners, nonreturners, arhats, self-enlightened ones, bodhisattvas, the Buddhas, and all dharmas?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One by asking, "What do you think about this? Are the establishment of sentient beings and the establishment of dharmas attainable?"

Well-Appearing One said, "No, World-Honored One."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "If the establishment of sentient

beings and the establishment of dharmas are unattainable, how can we establish that these are the realm of hells, the realm of animals, and so forth, and all dharmas? Therefore, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should learn that all dharmas cannot be established to move toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi."

(The Buddha taught Well-Appearing One that great bodhisattvas should realize all dharmas as unestablished to practice prajna paramita and approach the unsurpassed bodhi.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "Shouldn't great bodhisattvas learn matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should learn and understand that matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge neither increase nor decrease."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, how should great bodhisattvas learn and understand that matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge neither increase nor decrease?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should learn and understand that matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge neither arise nor extinguish."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "When

practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, how should great bodhisattvas learn and understand that matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge neither arise nor extinguish?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should learn not to initiate or do anything to drive away and cultivate."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, how should great bodhisattvas learn not to initiate or do anything to drive away and cultivate?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should contemplate the emptiness of the particular characteristics of all dharmas, so they will learn not to initiate or do anything to drive away and cultivate."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "How should great bodhisattvas contemplate the emptiness of the particular characteristics of all dharmas when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should contemplate matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness as empty because their particular characteristics are empty. And so on, they should contemplate the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge as empty because their particular characteristics are empty. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should contemplate the particular characteristics of all dharmas as empty."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "If matter,

feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are empty because their particular characteristics are empty, then how can great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "As great bodhisattvas do not practice anything, they do practice the fathomless prajna paramita."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Why do great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita if they do not practice anything?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "It is because the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas, practice itself, the one who practices, the cause of practice, and the time and place of the practice are all unattainable. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, as the great bodhisattvas do not practice anything, they do practice the fathomless prajna paramita; in it all nonsensical arguments are unattainable." (The Buddha taught that as the particular characteristics of all dharmas are empty, great bodhisattvas should not practice any dharma. By doing so, they do practice the fathomless prajna paramita. It is because the fathomless prajna paramita, practice itself, and so forth are unattainable.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "If great bodhisattvas do practice the fathomless prajna paramita when they practice nothing, how will novice great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "The novice great bodhisattvas should learn nonattainment of all dharmas from the beginning when they aspire to the bodhi. After learning this, they should further adopt nonattainment as expediency to cultivate giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, forbearance paramita, diligence

paramita, meditation paramita, prajna paramita, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge."

(The Buddha instructed how novice bodhisattvas learn prajna paramita.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "What is attainment? What is nonattainment?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "All those with duality are called attainment, while those without duality are called nonattainment."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Which are with duality? Which are without duality?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "The eye and the sight are duality, the ear and the sound are duality, and so forth, and the conscious and the mental-image are duality. And so on, the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and the Buddhas are duality. All nonsensical arguments fall into the category of duality, and all kinds of duality have attainment. Having no eye and sight, ear and sound, and so forth, and conscious and mental-image are nonduality. And so on, having no unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas and the Buddha are nonduality. All those far apart from nonsensical arguments are nonduality, and all kinds of nonduality are free from attainment."

(The Buddha taught how to distinguish nonduality from duality.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Does nonattainment come out of attainment? Does attainment come out of nonattainment?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Nonattainment does not come out of attainment, and attainment does not come out of nonattainment either. The nature of equality between attainment and nonattainment is called nonattainment. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should diligently cultivate and

learn the nature of equality between attainment and nonattainment. You must know, Well-Appearing One, as great bodhisattvas learn this way, they do learn the meaning of nonattainment of prajna paramita, and will stay far away from various faults and mistakes."

(Great bodhisattvas should learn equality between attainment and nonattainment to avoid faults and mistakes, according to the Buddha.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "If great bodhisattvas are not attached to attainment and nonattainment when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, how can they progress from one stage to the next stage, and finally, fulfill all stages and realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge step by step?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should not dwell in attainment or nonattainment, then they will progress from one stage to the next, fulfill all stages, and realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Why? The fathomless prajna paramita is unattainable, the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge is unattainable, the one who practices the fathomless prajna paramita is unattainable, the place where and the time when the practice happens are all unattainable. Even the nonattainment itself is unattainable. You must know, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should practice the fathomless prajna paramita this way."

(The Buddha explained why great bodhisattvas should not dwell in attainment and nonattainment when practicing prajna paramita.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "If the fathomless prajna paramita is unattainable, the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge is unattainable, the one who practices the fathomless prajna paramita is

unattainable, the place where and the time when the practice happens are unattainable, and even the practice itself is unattainable, then how will great bodhisattvas, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, joyfully discern and say that this is matter, those are feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and this is the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, and that is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas like to discern among all dharmas, but they will not attain matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge."

(Great bodhisattvas discern between dharmas but do not attain them.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "If great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita without attaining matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, how can they fulfill the six paramitas? If they cannot fulfill the six paramitas, how can they enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising? If they cannot enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising, how can they dignify and purify Buddha land and assist sentient beings to mature? If they cannot dignify and purify Buddha land and assist sentient beings to mature, how can they attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge? If they cannot attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, how can they turn the wheel of wonderful dharma and undertake various Buddhist services? If they cannot turn the wheel of wonderful dharma and undertake various Buddhist services, how can they liberate sentient beings from the suffering caused by birth and death and allow them to dwell in ultimate peace and happiness of nirvana?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “Great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita not for the sake of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness and so forth, the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, as well as the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.”

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, for what purposes do great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “Great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita for nothing. Why? All dharmas do not have action and doing; the fathomless prajna paramita does not have action and doing; the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas does not have action and doing; the great bodhisattvas do not have action or doing either. So, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should practice the fathomless prajna paramita by adopting non-action and non-doing as expediency.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha again, “If all dharmas do not have action and doing, then the differences among the three vehicles, namely the voice-hearer vehicle, self-enlightened one vehicle, and the unsurpassed vehicle should not be established.”

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, “It is not correct to say that as non-action and non-doing should not be established, action and doing should be established. Why? Ignorant ordinary sentient beings do not hear much and are attached to matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Because of attachment, they attain matter when they are mindful of matter; they attain feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness when they are mindful of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness.

And so on, they attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge when they are mindful of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Because of their mindfulness and attainment, they think, 'I certainly will attain the unsurpassed bodhi, liberate the sentient beings from the severe suffering of birth and death, and bring them ultimate peace and happiness of nirvana.' You must know, Well-Appearing One, these ignorant ordinary sentient beings do not hear much, and slander the Buddha when they think upside down. Why? The Buddha, with five eyes, cannot seek and attain matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. He cannot seek and attain sentient beings either. The ignorant ones do not hear much, and their wisdom eye is blind, so they are attached to all dharmas. It does not make sense to say that they will attain the unsurpassed bodhi, liberate the sentient beings from the severe suffering of birth and death, and bring them ultimate peace and happiness of nirvana."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "If various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One cannot seek and attain matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the unsurpassed bodhi of the Buddha, and even cannot seek and attain sentient beings, then they should not be able to realize the unsurpassed bodhi, liberate the sentient beings from the severe suffering of birth and death, and bring them ultimate peace and happiness of nirvana. If this is the case, how can the World-Honored One realize and attain the unsurpassed bodhi and establish the three different groups of sentient beings, namely, those who are certainly oriented toward correct path, those who are certainly oriented toward incorrect path, and those who are uncertain about their orientations?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "I have contemplated and

investigated with my five eyes and determined that no one can realize and attain the unsurpassed bodhi and establish the three different groups of sentient beings. But sentient beings are ignorant and think upside down. They mistake unreal dharmas for real dharmas, and mistake unreal sentient beings for real sentient beings. To remove their delusive attachments, I have taught them in terms of the worldly perspective instead of the ultimate meaning."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "Do the Thus-Comers dwell in ultimate meaning and realize the great bodhi?"

"No, Well-Appearing One."

"Do the Thus-Comers dwell in upside-down delusions and realize the great bodhi?"

"No, Well-Appearing One."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "If the Thus-Comers neither dwell in ultimate meaning nor in upside-down delusions to realize and attain the unsurpassed bodhi, then can the Thus-Comers realize and attain the unsurpassed bodhi?"

The Buddha replied, "I have realized and attained the unsurpassed bodhi, but I dwell nowhere; neither in the conditioned realm nor in the unconditioned realm." (The Buddha stated that Thus-Comers could attain the unsurpassed bodhi, but they dwelled nowhere.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, the transformed beings made by the Buddhas do not dwell in the conditioned realm or in the unconditioned realm, while they can go, come, sit, and lie. These transformed beings can practice giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita. They can dwell in internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature;

realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable; and the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering. They can cultivate the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration; and the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations. They can cultivate the stages of ecstasy, freedom from defilement, and so forth, and dharma cloud; all dharani gates and all samadhi gates; the five eyes and the six supernatural powers; the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity; staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times; and the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. They can cultivate the great bodhisattva actions and realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, turn the wonderful dharma wheel, and undertake various Buddhist services. These transformed beings can further make innumerable transformed sentient beings and establish three different groups among them. What do you think about this? Do these transformed beings really go, come, sit, lie, and so forth, and establish the three groups among sentient beings?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "No, World-Honored One."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "You are right. The Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, know that all dharmas are like transformed things, so they teach the truth they realize. Although transformed beings can do many things, they do nothing. Although they can deliver sentient beings, they deliver nobody. Therefore,

Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should do as transformed beings do; although they do something, they do them without attachment."

(The Buddha used simile to explain why great bodhisattvas should cultivate prajna paramita to achieve unsurpassed bodhi and deliver sentient beings, but they do nothing.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "If all dharmas are like transformed beings, and so are all Buddhas, then do the Buddhas differ from the transformed beings?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "There are no differences between the Buddhas, the transformed beings, and all dharmas. Why? The transformed beings made by the Buddhas can do all services as the Buddhas do, while the Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, can also do the services that the transformed beings do, so there are no differences between the Buddhas, the transformed beings, and all dharmas."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Can the Buddhas do all services alone without the transformed beings made by the Buddhas? Can the transformed beings do all services alone without the Buddhas?"

The Buddha replied, "Yes, they can."

Well-Appearing One asked again, "How can they do so?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "A Thus-Comer called Virtuous Tranquil and Benevolent One, who had delivered all should be delivered. At that time, no bodhisattva was entitled to be conferred the prophecy of becoming a Buddha, so he transformed one Buddha to dwell in the world on his behalf and he himself entered great nirvana without remainder. In the meantime, the transformed Buddha performed

various Buddhist services in the first half of the kalpa, while in the beginning of the second half of the kalpa, he conferred on a bodhisattva the prophecy of attaining the great bodhi and he himself again entered nirvana. At that time, various heavenly beings, human beings, asuras, and so forth all claimed that the Buddha had now entered nirvana. But the body of the transformed Buddha did not have arising or extinction. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, when great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they should believe that all dharmas are like transformed beings."

(The Buddha stated that no difference between Buddha and transformed Buddha or between Buddha and all dharmas; they are all like transformed beings.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, "If the bodies of the Buddhas are not different from the transformed beings, how can they serve as the genuine pure fields of bliss? If making offerings respectfully at the places of various Buddhas incessantly until they enter nirvana will gain endless blessings, then making offerings respectfully at the places of transformed Buddhas will also gain endless blessings."

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "The Buddhas can serve as the genuine pure fields of bliss for believers because of their dharma nature. So do the transformed Buddhas. They both allow believers to make offerings respectfully to them, so the believers will gain unexhausted blessings until the end of their lives. You must know, Well-Appearing One, let us now put the blessings gained by making offerings respectfully to the Buddhas and the transformed Buddhas aside. If good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth, reflect on and keep in the mindfulness of the Buddhas with loving-kindness and respect initiated at various Buddhas' places, then the merits and virtuous roots thus gained will sustain unexhausted even after the end

of their lives. You must know, Well-Appearing One, let us now put the blessings gained through the reflection on and the mindfulness of the Buddhas aside. If good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth, spread even a flower in empty space as an offering to the Buddha, their virtuous roots will last unexhausted even after the end of their lives. You must know, Well-Appearing One, let us put the virtuous roots gained by spreading a flower in empty space as an offering to the Buddha aside. If good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth, recite 'Namo Buddha (taking refuge in Buddha), the great loving-kind and compassionate one,' these good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth, will gain unexhausted virtuous roots in endless lives, always enjoy wealth and happiness in the realms of heavenly beings and human beings, and finally attain nirvana. Well-Appearing One, making offerings respectfully to the Buddhas and to the transformed Buddhas thus will bring about such great and broad benefits. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, you must know that both the Buddhas and the transformed Buddhas are all generous givers; their real and pure fields of bliss are without difference because dharma nature is the only criterion for measuring all dharmas.

(Both share the same dharma nature.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should adopt the dharma natures of all dharmas as objective to practice the expedient skillfulness of the fathomless prajna paramita. After entering the dharma natures of all dharmas, they will not destroy the dharma natures. Namely, they will not differentiate among prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita and their dharma natures. And so on, they will not differentiate between the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and the dharma nature of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. You must know, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless

prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should not differentiate among the dharma natures of all dharmas to destroy dharma nature."
(The Buddha stated that great bodhisattvas should differentiate among the dharma nature of all dharmas.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should not differentiate among the dharma natures of all dharmas and become dharma-nature destroyers. But why do World-Honored One often talk about the differences among the dharma natures of all dharmas and thus destroy the dharma-nature? I say so because you often say that these are matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness, and those are the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere; these are the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and that is mental-image sphere, and those are the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm; these are the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm, and those are the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm; these are the six contacts and those are the six feelings; these are the six realms and those are the four conditions; these are ignorance, action, consciousness, and so forth, and those are old age and death; these are the internal dharmas and those are the external dharmas; these are virtuous dharmas and those are not virtuous dharmas; these are flawed dharmas and those are flawless dharmas; these are the dharmas of the world and those are the dharmas beyond the world; these are the dharmas shared by all sentient beings and those are the dharmas not shared by all sentient beings; and these are the conditioned dharmas and those are the unconditioned dharmas. As the Buddha teaches very often about the differences among various kinds of dharmas, won't the World-Honored One destroy the dharma nature?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “I have not destroyed the dharma-natures of all dharmas. What I have done is teaching the names and their correspondent phenomena in an expedient way so all sentient beings can understand insightfully the equality of the dharma natures of all dharmas, so they can get rid of birth and death and realize and attain nirvana. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, although the Thus-Comer has taught about the dharma natures of all dharmas, he has done so without destroying dharma nature.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “If the Buddha has taught about the names and their correspondent phenomena of the dharma natures of all dharmas in an expedient way, so that sentient beings can understand insightfully the equality of the dharma natures, then how do Buddha teach about the dharmas without the names and phenomena by means of the names and phenomena, and will not destroy dharma nature?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “I have provisionally established the names and phenomena of all dharmas in terms of the worldly way to teach sentient beings expediently. I have not destroyed their dharma natures because I have not been attached to them.

(The Buddha taught that he could avoid destroying dharma nature when teaching the names and phenomena of all dharmas in terms of the worldly perspective because he is not attached to all names, phenomena, dharmas, and sentient beings. He explained why in the next paragraph.)

“You must know, Well-Appearing One, as ordinary ones hear about suffering, the cause of suffering, and so forth, they are attached to their names and the corresponding forms without realizing that these are provisional established names and forms. On the other hand, as the Thus-Comers and their disciples hear about

suffering, the cause of suffering, and so forth, they are not attached to them; they rather adopt those names to designate correspondent forms and realize that they are provisionally established and unreal. You must know, Well-Appearing One, if the holy ones are attached to the names as they encounter the names and are attached to the phenomena as they encounter phenomena, they must also be attached to emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration when encountering emptiness, formlessness and nonaspiration, and are attached to realness, reality, dharma realm, and the unconditioned reality when encountering realness, reality, dharma realm, and the unconditioned reality. You must know, Well-Appearing One, all dharmas have only provisionally established names that are not real; they have only provisionally established phenomena that are not real either. The holy ones are not attached to the provisionally established names and phenomena. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, as great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita and dwell in the provisionally established names and phenomena of all dharmas, they should stay away from attachment to their names and phenomena."

(The Buddha taught that all dharmas have only provisionally established names and established phenomena that are not real. Great bodhisattvas should not be attached to them.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "If all dharmas have only names and phenomena, why do great bodhisattvas initiate the bodhi mind to diligently cultivate celibacy actions, all bodhisattva actions, the six paramitas, and so on, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge to their perfection?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "All dharmas have only names and phenomena. These names and phenomena are provisionally established and their nature is empty. All sentient beings drift in birth and death, suffer severely, and cannot

get rid of it because of their upside-down attachment. To benefit the sentient beings, bodhisattvas initiate to aspire to the bodhi, practice difficult bodhisattva actions, and realize and attain step by step the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge to turn the wonderful dharma wheel, expediently liberate the sentient beings from birth and death with the three vehicles, allowing them to dwell in the realm of nirvana. But all names and phenomena do not have arising, extinction, duration, and decay. Such establishments are unattainable."

(The Buddha explained why great bodhisattvas undertake difficult actions to deliver sentient beings.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "Does the Buddha say that the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "I do say that the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "World-Honored One, you often teach that there are three kinds of perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge: the perfect knowledge of everything, the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. What are the phenomena of these three kinds of perfect knowledge? Are their phenomena different?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "The perfect knowledge of everything is shared by voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones. The perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths is shared by great bodhisattvas. The perfect knowledge of all phenomena is possessed by various Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of

Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones only, not shared by others."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Why is the perfect knowledge of everything shared by voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "The perfect knowledge of everything consists of different internal and external dharma gates. The voice-hearers and the self-enlightened ones can understand these different dharma gates, but they cannot understand the phenomena of all paths and the phenomena of all dharmas. So, the perfect knowledge of everything is shared by voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones."

(The Buddha distinguished three kinds of perfect knowledge and explained their meanings respectively.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Why is the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths shared by great bodhisattvas?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Great bodhisattvas should learn to universally know all phenomena of the paths; namely, the phenomena of the path of voice-hearer, the path of self-enlightened one, the path of bodhisattva, and the path of Thus-Comer. Great bodhisattvas should always cultivate and learn these various paths to their perfection. Although they will accomplish all these paths pursuers should do, they will not realize the reality. It is thus said that the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths is shared by great bodhisattvas."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Do great bodhisattvas realize the reality after cultivating and fulfilling the path of Thus-Comer?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "If great bodhisattvas have assisted sentient beings to mature and dignified and purified Buddha lands, but have

not cultivated and fulfilled their great aspirations, they will not realize the reality. They will realize the reality only when fulfilling all their aspirations."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Will great bodhisattvas dwell in paths to realize the reality?"

The Buddha replied, "No."

Well-Appearing One asked again, "Do great bodhisattvas dwell in nonpaths to realize the reality?"

The Buddha replied, "No."

Well-Appearing One asked again, "Do great bodhisattvas dwell in paths and nonpaths to realize the reality?"

The Buddha replied, "No."

Well-Appearing One asked again, "Do great bodhisattvas dwell in nonpaths and not nonpaths to realize the reality?"

The Buddha replied, "No."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Then where will great bodhisattvas dwell to realize the reality?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "What do you think about this? Do you dwell in paths to eliminate various flaws and attain freedom in mind?"

"No, World-Honored One."

"Well-Appearing One, do you dwell in nonpaths to eliminate various flaws and attain freedom in mind?"

"No, World-Honored One."

"Well-Appearing One, do you dwell in paths and nonpaths to eliminate various flaws and attain freedom in mind?"

"No, World-Honored One."

"Well-Appearing One, do you dwell in nonpaths and not nonpaths to eliminate various flaws and attain freedom in mind?"

"No, World-Honored One."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "Where do you dwell to eliminate various flaws and attain the permanent freedom in mind?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "It is not because of dwelling that I can eliminate various flaws and attain the permanent freedom in mind. It is because I dwell nowhere that I can eliminate various flaws and attain permanent freedom in mind."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "So do great bodhisattvas. When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, they dwell nowhere to realize the reality." (The Buddha concluded that great bodhisattvas dwell nowhere to realize the reality.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Why is the perfect knowledge of all phenomena called the perfect knowledge of all phenomena?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Knowing that all dharmas have the same form, the form of tranquil extinction, is called the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, all dharmas are manifested by their actions, features, and forms. The Thus-Comers are accurately and universally awakened to them, so they own the perfect knowledge of all phenomena."
(The Buddha explained the meaning of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena and how Thus-Comer attained it.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "Are there differences among the terminations of vexations in the perfect knowledge of everything, the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena? Are there the termination with remainder and the termination without remainder?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “There are no differences among the terminations of vexations in the three kinds of perfect knowledge. The only difference is that various Thus-Comers have permanently eliminated enduring disposition of vexations, while voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones have not yet.” (The Thus-Comers have permanently eliminated enduring disposition of vexations, but voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones have not yet.)

Well-Appearing One asked again, “When eliminating all vexations, will one attain the unconditioned reality?”

The Buddha replied, “Yes.”

Well-Appearing One asked again, “Do voice-hearers and self-enlightened one not attain the unconditioned reality because they have not eliminated vexations?”

The Buddha replied, “They have eliminated all vexations and have also attained the unconditioned reality.”

Well-Appearing One asked again, “Are there differences among the unconditioned dharmas?”

The Buddha replied, “No.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “If the unconditioned dharmas have no differences, why does the Buddha say that all Thus-Comers have eliminated permanently the enduring disposition of vexations while voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones have not yet?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “The enduring disposition is not vexations. The voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones have terminated their vexations, but few phenomena of body and speech resembling greed and hatred remain, the so-called enduring disposition. These factors will elicit improper actions for ordinary sentient beings, but not for voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones. The

Thus-Comers have terminated such enduring disposition forever."
(The Buddha explained why voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones have not yet terminated enduring disposition.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "As both the paths and nirvana lack inherent self-nature, why does the Buddha make distinctions among stream-enterers, once-returners, nonreturners, arhats, self-enlightened ones, great bodhisattvas, and Thus-Comers?"

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "Stream-enterers, once-returners, nonreturners, arhats, self-enlightened ones, great bodhisattvas, and Thus-Comers are all manifested by the unconditioned reality."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Are there different meanings among the stream-enterers, once-returners, and so forth, and the Thus-Comers in terms of unconditioned dharmas?

The Buddha replied, "No."

Well-Appearing One asked again, "If this is the case, why does the Buddha say that the stream-enterers, once-returners, and so forth, and the Thus-Comers are manifested by the unconditioned reality?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "It is in terms of the worldly perspective to say that stream-enterers, once-returners, and so forth have such differences. It is not in terms of ultimate meanings to say so. Why? It is not in the unconditioned realm that there is the path of language, the wisdom of differentiation, or both. It is in terms of worldly perspective to say that as various dharmas are going to end, 'the future' will be established to keep the dharmas not discontinue."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "If the particular characteristics of all dharmas are empty, there will be no past, let alone the

future, then how can we establish the future?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “It is as you say. As the particular characteristics of all dharmas are empty, there will be no past, let alone the future. It does not make sense to say that the future exists. But sentient beings cannot understand that the particular characteristics of all dharmas are empty. To benefit them, a provisional statement is established to say expediently that this is the past and that is the future. But in the emptiness of the particular characteristics of all dharmas, both the past and future are unattainable. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas have practiced the fathomless prajna paramita after fully understanding that the particular characteristics of all dharmas are empty, so they will not be attached to all dharmas. That is, they will not be attached to the internal dharmas or the external dharmas, the virtuous dharmas or the not virtuous dharmas, the dharmas of the world or the dharmas beyond the world, the flawed dharmas or the flawless dharmas, the conditioned dharmas or the unconditioned dharmas, the dharmas of the voice-hearer, the dharmas of the self-enlightened one, the dharmas of the bodhisattva, and the dharmas of the Buddha. Because great bodhisattvas have realized that these dharmas are provisionally established as existent in terms of the worldly perspective instead of the ultimate meanings, they are not attached to them.”

(The Buddha said that because great bodhisattvas, realizing all dharmas are provisionally established to help sentient beings, do not become attached to them.)

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Chapter 26

Expedient Skillfulness

Section 4

(In the Third Assembly)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “The World-Honored One often teaches about the fathomless prajna paramita. Based on what meaning is the fathomless prajna paramita called the fathomless prajna paramita?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “Starting with this prajna paramita one can reach the ultimate other shore of all dharmas. It is called the fathomless prajna paramita based on this meaning.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, because of this prajna paramita, the voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, bodhisattvas, and the Thus-Comers can reach the other shore. It is called the fathomless prajna paramita based on this meaning.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, as we analyze various dharmas in terms of ultimate superior meaning, we will see that not a little bit of dharma is attainable. It is called the fathomless prajna paramita based on this meaning.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, in this prajna paramita, realness, dharma realm, dharma nature, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable are absorbed and stored. It is called the fathomless prajna paramita based on this meaning.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, because of this prajna paramita, we will see that not a little bit of dharma is correspondent or not correspondent, material or immaterial, visible or invisible, and substantial or unsubstantial. It is called the fathomless prajna paramita based on this meaning. Why? The fathomless prajna

paramita is neither correspondent nor not correspondent. It is immaterial, invisible, and unsubstantial. It has only one form, and that is formlessness.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, because of prajna paramita, all superior virtuous dharmas are born, all intelligent talents of debate are activated, all pleasures of and beyond the world are elicited, and all very profound meanings and theories are illuminated. It is called prajna paramita based on this meaning.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, because the essential meanings of prajna paramita are solid, unmovable, and indestructible, it is called prajna paramita. (The Buddha provided several meanings to explain why prajna paramita is so called.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas will not be damaged by all evil demons and their associates, or by voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, other-path believers, celibacy practitioners, not virtuous friends, and enemies. Why? In the profound sutras of prajna paramita, the emptiness of the particular characteristics of all dharmas is taught, so the evil demons, their associates, and so forth, cannot take advantage of it. You must know, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should practice the fathomless prajna paramita in compliance with its solid meaning, namely, the emptiness of the particular characteristics of all dharmas, so that they will not be moved or damaged by evil conditions.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas would like to practice the profound essential meanings of prajna paramita, they should adopt nonattainment as expediency to practice the meanings of impermanence, suffering, emptiness, and selflessness; they should also practice the meanings of the knowledge of suffering, the knowledge of the cause of sufferings, the knowledge of the cessation of suffering, the knowledge of the path for the cessation of suffering, the knowledge

of the dharmas, the knowledge of the classes, the knowledge of the world, the knowledge of others' minds, the knowledge of elimination, the knowledge of nonarising, and the knowledge in accord with the Buddha's teachings. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas would like to practice the profound essential meanings of prajna paramita, they should practice prajna paramita."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "As the meanings and the incorrect meanings of the fathomless prajna paramita are unattainable, how do great bodhisattvas practice prajna paramita to understand its profound essential meanings?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "If great bodhisattvas would like to practice and understand the profound essential meanings of prajna paramita, they should think, 'I should not practice wrong meaning of greedy desires. I should not practice wrong meaning of hatred. I should not practice wrong meaning of ignorance. I should not practice wrong meaning of arrogance. I should not practice wrong meaning of incorrect views. I should not practice wrong meaning of negative effects of incorrect views. I should not practice the meanings of greed, hatred, ignorance, arrogance, incorrect views, the negative effects of incorrect views, and the rest of the dharmas either.' Why? The realness and the reality of greed, anger, and ignorance have nothing to do with their meanings or wrong meanings."

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas would like to practice the profound essential meanings of prajna paramita, they should think, 'I should not practice the meanings and wrong meanings of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal Bodhi of various Buddhas. I should not practice the meaning and wrong meaning of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge either.' Why? When the Buddha

attained the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal enlightenment, he sought and could not find either the meanings or wrong meanings of all dharmas.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, whether the Buddhas appear in the worlds or not, the dharma realm, dharma dwelling, and the dharma concentration of all dharmas dwell permanently as they have always done; there is nothing to do with meaning or wrong meanings. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should stay away from the attachment to meaning or wrong meaning when they practice the profound essential meanings of prajna paramita."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Why does the fathomless prajna paramita have nothing to do with the meanings or wrong meanings of all dharmas?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "The fathomless prajna paramita has done nothing to all conditioned and unconditioned dharmas. It has no preference or dislike to them. It will not benefit or do harm to them. Because of this cause and condition, it has nothing to do with the meaning or wrong meaning of various dharmas."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Do the Buddhas, their disciples, and all holy ones regard the unconditioned reality as ultimate meaning?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Yes, all holy ones regard the unconditioned reality as ultimate meaning, but the unconditioned dharmas neither benefit nor do harm to all dharmas. Like empty space, realness and the reality do not benefit or damage all dharmas, so does the fathomless prajna paramita of the great bodhisattvas, it neither benefits nor damages all dharmas. Therefore, prajna paramita has nothing to do with meaning or wrong meaning for all dharmas."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “Do great bodhisattvas learn the unconditioned prajna paramita to realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “Yes, they do. Great bodhisattvas should learn the fathomless unconditioned prajna paramita by adopting nonduality as expediency to realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.”

Well-Appearing One asked again, “Will they attain nondualistic dharma by adopting nondualistic dharma?”

The Buddha replied, “No.”

Well-Appearing One asked again, “Will they attain nondualistic dharma by adopting dualistic dharma?”

The Buddha replied, “No.”

Well-Appearing One asked, “How can great bodhisattvas attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge if the nondualistic dharma cannot be attained through the dualistic or nondualistic dharmas?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “Both dualistic and nondualistic dharmas are unattainable, so the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge cannot be attained by dualistic or nondualistic dharmas. Why? Both the fathomless prajna paramita and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are unattainable; the attainment based on nonattainment is the real attainment.”

(The Buddha taught that the attainment based on nonattainment is the real attainment.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, “Such prajna paramita is extremely profound. Great bodhisattvas can do very difficult things. They aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi for the sake of sentient beings without

attaining sentient beings and the establishment for sentient beings. It is as difficult as planting a tree in air. So do the great bodhisattvas, who can do very difficult things; they aspire to the unsurpassed bodhi for the sake of sentient beings without attaining sentient beings and establishment for sentient beings."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "Yes, it is as you say. Such prajna paramita is extremely profound. Great bodhisattvas can do very difficult things. They aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi for the sake of sentient beings but they do not attain sentient beings and establishment for sentient beings. You must know, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas do not see the real sentient beings and their establishment, but ordinary sentient beings have mistaken them for real because of their upside-down ignorance, so they are drowned in birth and death and suffer endlessly. To relieve them from suffering, great bodhisattvas have aspired to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. After attaining the bodhi, they deliver them expediently and skillfully.

(The Buddha explained how great bodhisattvas undertake very difficult things for sentient beings. They work hard to benefit them without attaining anything.)

"Someone planted a tree in a nice garden. Although this person would no longer recognize its roots, trunks, branches, leaves, flowers, and fruits, nor could he or she know the people who would enjoy the tree, this person kept watering and taking care of the tree diligently. Then the tree grew and became bigger, its roots, branches, leaves, flowers, and fruits became plentiful. Many people came to enjoy it, and some were cured so they were no longer ill. So do the great bodhisattvas, who do not see the Buddha effect and sentient beings, but for the sake of sentient beings, they aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, and step by step, they cultivate the six paramitas and the rest of the factors for enlightenment. After cultivating and

fulfilling them, they will realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi to bring various benefits of the branches, leaves, flowers, and fruits of the Buddha to all sentient beings.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, the benefits brought by the branches and leaves indicate that sentient beings will get rid of the suffering in negative destinies because of this big Buddha tree. The benefits brought by the flowers mean that sentient beings will be reborn in the noble family of Ksatriya, noble family if Brahman, and so forth, and the noble family of elders, or reborn in the Heaven of the Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and the Heaven of Nonthinking and Not Nonthinking because of this big Buddha tree. The benefits brought by the fruits mean that sentient beings will realize stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi, or the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. After attaining the bodhi, these sentient beings will further give the branches, leaves, flowers, and fruits of the Buddha tree to other sentient beings, let them get out of the negative destinies and enjoy the pleasures in heavenly realm or human realm; gradually and step by step, they will dwell peacefully in the three vehicles and reach the realm of nirvana.
(The Buddha taught with similes the journey great bodhisattvas experience in helping sentient beings.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, although great bodhisattvas have done such great beneficial things for others, they have not seen any sentient being who really attains nirvana. What they have seen is that the suffering that these sentient beings used to have is now all gone. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas do not attain sentient beings and their establishment. But to remove the upside-down delusions of various sentient

beings, these great bodhisattvas have aspired to pursue the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. This is an extremely difficult thing that they have undertaken."
(The Buddha described how great bodhisattvas undertake very difficult task.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha again, "Various great bodhisattvas must know that they should act as the Buddha does. Why? Because of the great bodhisattvas, all sufferings in hells, the realm of animals, the realm of ghosts, and other inferior realms, where sentient beings live in hardship, poverty, and without access the Buddha dharma, will be ended permanently."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "It is as you say. Great bodhisattvas must know that they should act as the Buddha does. If there were no great bodhisattvas in the world to initiate aspiration to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, there would be no Buddhas of the three phases of time in the ten directions; there would be no self-enlightened ones and voice-hearers; the suffering in hells, the realm of animals, the realm of ghosts, and other inferior realms, where sentient beings were in hardship and poverty without the access to the Buddha dharma, would not be ended. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, as you say, the great bodhisattvas should know that they can do like the Buddha.
(The Buddha inspired great bodhisattvas to act as the Buddha does.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, you must know that great bodhisattvas are Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones. Why? If the Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offering, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One is established from this realness, then the self-enlightened one is established from this realness too. If the self-enlightened one is established from this realness, then the voice-hearer is established from this realness too. If the voice-hearer is established from this realness, then all holy ones are also established from this

realness. If all holy ones are established from this realness, then the aggregate of matter is established from this realness. If the aggregate of matter is established from this realness, then the aggregate of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness is also established from this realness. If the aggregate of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness is established from this realness, then the eye sphere is established from this realness. If the eye sphere is established from this realness, then the ear, nose, tongue, body, and conscious spheres are also established from this realness. And so on, if the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge is established from this realness, then the conditioned realm is established from this realness. If the conditioned realm is established from this realness, then the unconditioned realm is established from this realness. If the unconditioned realm is established from this realness, then all dharmas are also established from this realness. If all dharmas are established from this realness, then all sentient beings are also established from this realness. If all sentient beings are established from this realness, then all great bodhisattvas are also established from this realness. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, the realness of Thus-Comer, the realness of self-enlightened one, the realness of voice-hearer, the realness of all holy ones, the realness of matter, feeling, and so forth, the realness of sentient being, and the realness of great bodhisattva are the same realness. Because there are no differences among them, they are called the realness. As great bodhisattvas cultivate and learn this realness to its perfection and realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, they will be called the Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, you must know that great bodhisattvas are the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones; all dharmas and all sentient beings have adopted realness as fundamental and definitive

criterion.

(The Buddha explained why great bodhisattvas are like Thus-Comers.)

"Therefore, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should learn the fathomless prajna paramita of realness. If they learn the fathomless prajna paramita of realness, they will be able to learn the realness of all dharmas. If they learn the realness of all dharmas, they will be able to fulfill the realness of all dharmas. If they fulfill the realness of all dharmas, they will attain self-easiness in the realness of all dharmas. If they attain self-easiness in the realness of all dharmas, they will be able to know superior and inferior natures of the roots of all sentient beings. If they know the superior and inferior natures of the roots of all sentient beings, they will be able to explore and get to know the differences among the definitive understandings of all sentient beings. If they explore and get to know the differences among the definitive understandings of all sentient beings, they will be able to know all sentient beings how they receive effects caused by their karmas. If they know how all sentient beings receive effects caused by their karmas, they will be able to fulfill the wonderful knowledge as they wish. If they fulfill the wonderful knowledge as they wish, they will be able to cultivate purely the wonderful knowledge of the three phases of time. If they cultivate purely the wonderful knowledge of the three phases of time, they will be able to fulfill the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. If they fulfill the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, they will be able to practice the bodhisattva actions correctly. If they practice the bodhisattva actions correctly, they will be able to assist sentient beings to mature. If they assist sentient beings to mature, they will be able to dignify and purify Buddha lands. If they dignify and purify Buddha lands, they will be able to realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi that they pursue. If they realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect,

and universal bodhi that they pursue, they will be able to turn the wheel of the wonderful dharma. If they turn the wheel of the wonderful dharma, they will be able to correctly and firmly establish sentient beings on the paths of the three vehicles. If they correctly and firmly establish sentient beings on the paths of the three vehicles, they will be able to guide sentient beings into the realm of nirvana without remainder. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, as reat bodhisattvas see such merits and virtues that are beneficial for themselves and for others, they should initiate to pursue the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and practice the fathomless prajna paramita diligently, bravely, correctly, and steadily without withdrawal."

(The Buddha again explained why great bodhisattvas should pursue the unsurpassed bodhi and practice the fathomless prajna paramita.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, "If great bodhisattvas initiate to pursue the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal enlightenment in order to benefit sentient beings and cultivate the fathomless prajna paramita as they are taught by the Buddha, then heavenly beings, human beings, asuras, and so forth, should pay homage to them."

The Buddha replied, "Yes, Well-Appearing One, it is as you say. If great bodhisattvas initiate to pursue the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal enlightenment in order to benefit various sentient beings and cultivate the fathomless prajna paramita as they are taught by the Buddha, then heavenly beings, human beings, asuras, and so forth, should pay homage to them."

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "If great bodhisattvas initiate to pursue the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal enlightenment in order to benefit sentient beings, then how many blessings will they gain?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "These great bodhisattvas will

gain innumerable blessings, and the quantity will be too large to count or express in similes. You must know, Well-Appearing One, if all sentient beings filling the entire large threefold thousand-world have aspired to the stage of voice-hearer or the stage of self-enlightened one, what do you think about this? Will these sentient beings be much blessed?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "World-Honored One, the blessings gained by them will be innumerable and boundless."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "But the blessings thus gained by all sentient beings will be much less than those gained by one great bodhisattva who has initiated to pursue the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal enlightenment to benefit various sentient beings by one hundredth, one thousandth, and so forth, and one hundreds of thousands of koti-nayuta-th. Why? Voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones exist because of great bodhisattvas. It is not because of voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones that great bodhisattvas exist.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, let us at this moment put aside the sentient beings who have filled the entire large threefold thousand-world and aspired to the stage of voice-hearer or self-enlightened one and thus gained a lot of blessings. Suppose that all sentient beings filling the entire large threefold thousand-world have dwelled in the stage of pure contemplation, what do you think about this? Will these sentient beings be much blessed?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "World-Honored One, the blessings gained by these sentient beings will be innumerable and boundless."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "The blessings gained by these sentient beings will be much less than those gained by one great bodhisattva who has initiated to pursue the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal enlightenment to benefit

various sentient beings by one hundredth, one thousandth, and so forth, and one hundreds of thousands of koti-nayuta-th. Why? It is because of great bodhisattvas that voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones appear in the world. It is not because of voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones that great bodhisattvas appear in the world.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, let us now put aside the sentient beings who have filled the entire large threefold thousand-world and dwelled in the stage of pure contemplation and thus are much blessed. Suppose that all sentient beings have filled the entire large threefold thousand-world and dwelled in the stage of embryonic Buddha nature, eight-forbearance, insight, slight vexation, being far apart from desires, arhat, or the self-enlightened one, then what do you think about this? Will these sentient beings be much blessed?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "World-Honored One, the blessings gained by them will be innumerable and boundless."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "But the blessings gained by these sentient beings will be much less than those gained by one great bodhisattva who has initiated to pursue the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal enlightenment by one hundredth, one thousandth, and so forth, and one hundreds of thousands of koti-nayuta-th. Why? It is because of great bodhisattvas that voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones appear in the world. It is not because of voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones that great bodhisattvas appear in the world.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, suppose that all sentient beings filling the entire large threefold thousand-world have initiated to pursue the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi to benefit various sentient beings, then the blessings gained by these great bodhisattvas will be much less than those gained by one great bodhisattva who has entered onto the correct path of nonarising by one hundredth, one

thousandth, and so forth, and one hundreds of thousands of koti-nayuta-th.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, suppose that all sentient beings filling the entire large threefold thousand-world have entered onto the correct path of nonarising, then the blessings gained by these great bodhisattvas will be much less than those gained by one great bodhisattva who has aspired to the bodhi by one hundredth, one thousandth, and so forth, and one hundreds of thousands of koti-nayuta-th.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, suppose that all sentient beings filling the entire large threefold thousand-world have aspired to the bodhi, then the blessings gained by these great bodhisattvas will be much less than those gained by one Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One by one hundredth, one thousandth, and so forth, and one hundreds of thousands of koti-nayuta-th."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "What should great bodhisattvas reflect when they begin to aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal enlightenment?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "These great bodhisattvas should always reflect correctly on the perfect knowledge of all phenomena."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "What is the nature of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena? What is its condition? How is it reinforced? What is its image? What is its form?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "The nature of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena is nonmature. It is without forms and causes. It is not on alert. It has no awakening. It is without arising and appearance. You also asked, 'What is the condition of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena? How will it be reinforced? What is its image and form?' You must know, Well-Appearing One, the

condition of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena is nonmature. Correct mindfulness will reinforce it. Tranquility is its image. Formlessness is its form."
(The Buddha described the characters of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Does only the perfect knowledge of all phenomena adopt nonnature as its nature? Do matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness adopt nonnature as their natures? Does the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas adopt nonnature as its nature? Do the conditioned realm and the unconditioned realm also adopt nonnature as their natures?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "It is not only the perfect knowledge of all phenomena that adopts nonnature as its nature, but also matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the conditioned realm and the unconditioned realm adopt nonnature as their natures."
(The self-nature of all dharmas is non-nature.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Why does the perfect knowledge of all phenomena adopt nonnature as its nature? Why do matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the conditioned realm and the unconditioned realm adopt nonnature as their natures?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "The self-nature of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena is nonexistent. As the dharmas have no self-natures, these dharmas will have nonnature as their natures. The self-natures of matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the conditioned and the unconditioned realm are nonexistent. As the dharmas have no self-natures, they will have nonnature as their natures."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Why as

the self-nature of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena is nonexistent, the self-natures of matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the conditioned and the unconditioned realms are also nonexistent?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "The self-nature of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena does not combine. As the self-nature of all dharmas does not combine, their nature is nonnature. The self-nature of matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the conditioned and unconditioned realms does not combine. As the self-nature of dharmas does not combine, their nature is nonnature. Because of this cause and condition, great bodhisattvas should know that the nature of all dharmas is nonnature. Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the self-nature of all dharmas is empty, formless, and without aspiration. Because of this cause and condition, great bodhisattvas should know the nature of all dharmas is nonmature. Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the self-nature of all dharmas is realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable. Because of this cause and condition, great bodhisattvas should know that the nature of all dharmas is nonnature."

(The Buddha taught that great bodhisattvas should know that the nature of all dharmas is nonmature, because the self-nature of all dharmas does not combine; it is empty, formless, and without aspiration; it is realness, dharma realm, and so forth.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "If all dharmas have no nature, then what expedient skillfulness should great bodhisattvas achieve when they begin to aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, so that they can practice giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, assist sentient beings to mature, and dignify and purify Buddha lands?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “These great bodhisattvas should achieve very subtle expedient skillfulness. Although they realize that all dharmas adopt nonnature as their nature, they work diligently to assist sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify Buddha lands. Although they work diligently to assist sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify Buddha lands, they always fully understand that all sentient beings and the Buddha lands have adopted nonnature as their self-nature. You must know, Well-Appearing One, although these great bodhisattvas have practiced giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita and learned the path of the bodhi, they realize that giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita and the path of the bodhi all adopt nonnature as their self-nature. And so on, although they have practiced the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and learned the path of the bodhi, they always realize that the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and the path of the bodhi adopted nonnature as their self-nature.

(The Buddha taught that great bodhisattvas should realize the nature of all dharmas is nonmature when they work diligently to assist sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify Buddha lands.)

“You must know, Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas should cultivate the six paramitas, the four bases of mindfulness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, and learn the path of the bodhi this way. If they have not achieved 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, staying in correct mindfulness, dwelling in equanimity at all times, the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, perfect knowledge of all

phenomena, and the rest of innumerable and boundless Buddha dharmas, they are called having not yet fulfilled the path of the bodhi. If they have fulfilled the path of the bodhi, they must have fulfilled the six paramitas. Because they have fulfilled the six paramitas, they will be able to realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all phenomena through an instantaneous intuitive correspondence with prajna. At that time, all very subtle and fine vexations of enduring disposition will never arise. This is called the termination without remainder. These great bodhisattvas then will become the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones. As they observe universally all dharmas of the ten directions in the three phases of time with their unhindered pure dharma eye, they will not see nothingness, let alone existent beings. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should practice prajna paramita and contemplate all dharmas, getting to know that the self-nature of all dharmas is nonnature. Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas are called achieving subtle and fine expedient skillfulness; namely, as they practice prajna paramita and contemplate all dharmas, they will not attain nothingness, let alone existent beings.

(The Buddha explained the meaning of achieving subtle and fine expedient skillfulness.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, when great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita and cultivate giving, they will not see nothingness of the giving, the giver, the receiver, the things given, and the aspiration to the bodhi, let alone their existence. When cultivating pure precept, they will not see nothingness of the pure precept, the place where the precept is protected, the one who observes the precept, and the mind of observing the precept, let alone their existence. When cultivating forbearance, the great bodhisattvas will not see nothingness of the

forbearance, the place where the forbearance is cultivated, the one who can practice forbearance, and the mind of cultivating forbearance, let alone their existence. When cultivating diligence, the great bodhisattvas will not see nothingness of the diligence, the place where diligence is cultivated, the one who can work diligently, and the mind of cultivating diligence, let alone their existence. When cultivating meditation, the great bodhisattvas will not see nothingness of the meditation, the place where meditation is cultivated, the one who can cultivate meditation, and the mind of cultivating meditation, let alone their existence. When cultivating prajna, the great bodhisattvas will not see nothingness of the prajna, the place where prajna is cultivated, the one who can cultivate prajna, and the mind of cultivating prajna, let alone their existence. And so on, when attaining the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, the great bodhisattvas will not see nothingness of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, the one who can attain it, the cause of the attainment, the time of the attainment, and the place where the attainment happens, let alone their existence. Why? These great bodhisattvas have always thought, 'Various dharmas have adopted nonnature as their natures. Such nonnature is inherently their self-nature; it is not made by the Buddhas, self-enlightened ones, voice-hearers, or the rest of holy ones. All dharmas have no makers; they are far apart from the makers.'" (Nonnature is inherent self-nature of all dharmas. This truth is not created by any one. All dharmas are not made; they have no makers.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Are all dharmas far apart from the dharma nature?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Yes, they are."

Well-Appearing One asked again, "If all dharmas are far apart from their nature, then how can one who is far apart dharma know another who is far apart

dharma and say that the latter one is existent or nonexistent? Why? One nonexistent dharma should not be able to know another nonexistent dharma; one existent dharma should not be able to know another existent dharma; one nonexistent dharma should not be able to know another existent dharma; and one existent dharma should not be able to know another nonexistent dharma. As all these dharmas adopt nonknowing as their nature, how can great bodhisattvas, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, manifest various dharmas as existent or nonexistent?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas will manifest various dharmas as existent or nonexistent in terms of the worldly perspective instead of the ultimate meaning."

Well-Appearing One asked again, "Are the worldly perspective and the ultimate meaning different?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "No ultimate meaning is existent far apart from the worldly perspective. Why? The realness of the worldly perspective is ultimate meaning. But sentient beings are upside down and attached to delusions, they cannot realize realness. To benefit these sentient beings, great bodhisattvas have manifested various dharmas as existent or nonexistent in terms of the worldly perspective instead of the ultimate meaning. Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, sentient beings have mistaken the nonexistent five aggregates, six internal spheres, and so forth, for real and existent. To benefit these sentient beings, great bodhisattvas have manifested the five aggregates, six internal spheres, and so forth, as existent or nonexistent, so that sentient beings can fully understand that the dharmas, such as the five aggregates, six internal spheres, and so forth, are neither existent nor nonexistent, so that they will not be attached to the forms of existence or nonexistence any longer. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should diligently practice the

fathomless prajna paramita and stay away from the attachment to existence and nonexistence to bring great benefits to sentient beings."

(The Buddha explained why great bodhisattvas teach sentient beings the phenomena of all dharmas in terms of worldly perspective.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "The Thus-Comer often teaches about various bodhisattva actions. What are the bodhisattva actions?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "The bodhisattva actions mean the actions undertaken to attain the bodhi and benefit sentient beings."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Where should great bodhisattvas practice the bodhisattva actions?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Great bodhisattvas should practice bodhisattva actions in the emptiness of matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of everything. They should practice the bodhisattva actions in the emptiness of the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. They should practice the bodhisattva actions in the emptiness of dignifying and purifying Buddha lands. They should practice the bodhisattva actions in the emptiness of assisting sentient beings to mature. They should practice the bodhisattva actions in the emptiness of eliciting the talent of debate dharani. They should practice the bodhisattva actions in the emptiness of eliciting the word dharani. They should practice the bodhisattva actions in the emptiness of understanding insightfully the word dharani. They should practice the bodhisattva actions in the emptiness of understanding insightfully the nonword dharani. They should practice the bodhisattva actions in the emptiness of the conditioned realm. They should practice the bodhisattva actions in the emptiness of the unconditioned realm.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, when great bodhisattvas cultivate the bodhisattva actions this way, they do not view all dharmas as dualistic forms, like the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas. You must know, Well-Appearing One, as great bodhisattvas cultivate the fathomless prajna paramita this way, they are called practicing the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi; they are also practicing the bodhisattva actions for the sake of sentient beings."
(The Buddha taught about the meaning of bodhisattva actions and how great bodhisattvas should practice them.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "You have often talked about the Buddha. Why is the Buddha called by this name?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "One who can be awakened to the real meanings is called Buddha. One who can be awakened universally to the real dharmas is called Buddha. One who can fully understand the real meanings is called Buddha. One who can be awakened intuitively and universally to the nature of all dharmas and to the fully developed nature of all dharmas is called Buddha. One who can enlighten all sentient beings to liberate them from upside-down thinking is called Buddha."
(The Buddha explained why the Buddha is called by this name.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "You have always talked about the bodhi. Why is the bodhi called by this name?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "The bodhi means emptiness, realness, reality, dharma realm, and dharma nature. Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the bodhi means creating provisional names and forms, establishing words and speech. It also means being awakened to reality and to the uppermost and most wonderful truth. Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the bodhi means the true one, the

real one, the not illusory one, and the changeless one. Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the bodhi means the one indestructible and the one who does not differentiate. Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the bodhi means the real, pure, and universal awakening of various Buddhas. Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, it is because of the bodhi that the Buddhas become perfectly and universally awakened to all dharmas and all phenomena. Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the bodhi means that all worldly beings are provisionally established names and languages, none is real or attainable."

(The Buddha explained the meaning of bodhi.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "As great bodhisattvas, the sake of the bodhi, cultivate the six paramitas, four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, which dharmas benefit or become damaged, increase or decrease, arise or extinguish, and become contaminated or purified?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "As great bodhisattvas cultivate the six paramitas, four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge to accumulate virtuous roots for the sake of the bodhi, no dharmas benefit or become damaged, increase or decrease, arise or extinguish, and become contaminated or purified. Why? Great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita for the sake of the bodhi without relying on any conditions, so all dharmas do not benefit or become damaged, increase or lose, arise or extinguish, and become contaminated or purified."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "If great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita for the sake of the bodhi with relying on any conditions, and all dharmas do not benefit or become damaged,

increase or decrease, arise or extinguish, and become contaminated or purified, then how do the great bodhisattvas absorb and receive giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita? How do they transcend the stages of voice-hearer, self-enlightened one, and ordinary sentient being, enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising, cultivate the stages of bodhisattva, and realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge step by step?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "When great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they do not absorb and receive giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita to realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge based on duality."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "If great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita without absorbing and receiving giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita to realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge based on duality, then how can great bodhisattvas foster their superior virtuous roots to continuously grow since the time first aspiring to the bodhi?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "If great bodhisattvas practice with duality, various virtuous dharmas will not grow and expand. Why? Ignorant sentient beings always embrace duality to hinder the growth of their virtuous roots. Because great bodhisattvas stay away from duality, their virtuous roots grow and expand continuously since the time first aspiring to the bodhi. Well-Appearing One, the great bodhisattvas thus can possess solid and virtuous roots, which cannot be destroyed by heavenly beings, human beings, asuras, and so forth. Therefore, they will not fall into the stage of voice-hearer or self-enlightened one. Not virtuous

dharmas of the world cannot hinder the growth and expansion of the six paramitas, the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, and the rest of virtuous dharmas. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should practice the fathomless prajna paramita based on nonduality."

(The Buddha explained why great bodhisattvas should practice the fathomless prajna paramita apart from duality.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Do great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita for the sake of virtuous roots?"

The Buddha replied, "No. You must know, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas do not practice the fathomless prajna paramita for the sake of virtuous roots or not virtuous roots. Why? This is the great bodhisattva path: If great bodhisattvas do not stay close and make offerings respectfully to the Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, if their virtuous roots have not fully developed, and if they are not absorbed by genuine virtuous friends, they will not be able to attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge."

(The Buddha described the required conditions for attaining the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "How should great bodhisattvas stay close and make offerings respectfully to various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, foster and fulfill their virtuous roots, connect with genuine virtuous friends, and realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge swiftly?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Since the moment first aspiring to the bodhi, great bodhisattvas should stay close and make offerings respectfully to various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones. They should hear the teachings given by

the Buddhas of the sutras, verses, and so forth, and discourses. Upon hearing them, they should accept, embrace, read, review, thoroughly understand, and reasonably reflect on them. After acquiring insightful understanding of their essential meanings, they should further practice to fully master the dharani and initiate unhindered understanding until realizing the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Before attaining the unsurpassed bodhi, they should always hear and embrace the meanings of the correct dharma wherever they are reborn and keep the dharma in mindfulness without losing or forgetting it. They should extensively plant virtuous roots at various Buddhas' places, and with the support of these virtuous roots, they can avoid falling into the inferior destinies or being reborn in the areas where the access to the Buddha dharma is unavailable. Because they are absorbed by virtuous roots, their intentions will become pure and joyful. Being absorbed by the powers of pure and joyful intentions, they can always correctly assist sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify Buddha lands. Because of their accumulated virtuous roots, they will not stay away from the genuine pure virtuous friends, namely, Thus-Comers, bodhisattvas, self-enlightened ones, voice-hearers, and the rest of sentient beings who admire and acclaim the Buddha, the dharma, and the sangha. Well-Appearing One, because these great bodhisattvas stay close and make offerings respectfully to various Buddhas, their various virtuous roots continuously grow and become perfect. Besides, they are helped and motivated by genuine virtuous friends. They thus realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge swiftly. Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas would like to realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge quickly when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, they should work diligently to stay close and make offerings to various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones. They should also tirelessly absorb superior virtuous roots and offer services to

the real virtuous friends."

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas stay close and make offerings respectfully to various Buddhas, foster and fulfill their virtuous roots, connect with genuine virtuous friends, and realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge swiftly.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "If great bodhisattvas do not stay close and make offerings to various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones; if they do not fulfill the superior virtuous roots and offer services to real and pure virtuous friends, can they attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "If great bodhisattvas do not stay close and make offerings to various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, do not fulfill the superior virtuous roots, and do not offer services to the real and pure virtuous friends, then they will not be qualified the title of mahasattva (the great), let alone realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Why? Some great bodhisattvas have stayed close and made offerings to various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, extensively planted virtuous roots, and offered services to many virtuous friends, and still cannot realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Not to mention those who do not stay close and make offerings to various Buddhas, do not plant virtuous roots, and do not offer services to the virtuous friends. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas would like to be called great bodhisattva, and realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge quickly, they should consistently stay close and make offerings to various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, absorb and plant superior virtuous roots, and offer services to genuine virtuous friends perfectly and tirelessly."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Why are

some great bodhisattvas still unable to attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge although they have stayed close and made offerings to various Buddhas, extensively planted virtuous roots, and offered many services to virtuous friends?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "These great bodhisattvas must have stayed far away from the expedient skillfulness of prajna paramita. Therefore, although they have stayed close and made offerings to various Buddhas, extensively planted virtuous roots, and offered many services to virtuous friends, they still cannot attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge."

(The Buddha taught that staying away from expedient skillfulness will prevent bodhisattvas from attaining the perfect knowledge even if they have stayed close and make offerings to Buddhas, planted virtuous roots, and connected with virtuous friends.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "What is expedient skillfulness? Will great bodhisattvas certainly realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge if they can achieve expedient skillfulness?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Some great bodhisattvas have, since the time first aspiring to the bodhi, practiced giving with an intention in accord with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge to various Buddhas, bodhisattvas, self-enlightened ones, voice-hearers, and the rest of human and nonhuman beings. Because these great bodhisattvas have developed an intention in accord with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, they practice giving without thinking of giving, the receiver, and the 'I' and the associated images. Why? These great bodhisattvas have contemplated all dharmas and realized that their nature and phenomena are empty, and that all dharmas are without arising, formation, decay, and extinction. So, they can enter insightfully various dharma phenomena. Realizing

that all dharmas are without action and ability, they enter insightfully various mental images. These great bodhisattvas have achieved such expedient skillfulness, so their wonderful virtuous roots can always grow and increase. Because their virtuous roots have grown and increased, they are able to practice giving paramita, assist sentient beings to mature, and dignify and purify Buddha lands. They have practiced giving, but they do not ask for the effects caused by giving practice; namely, they are not attached to birth and death and superior rewards. To rescue and protect those who are in need, and liberate those who are not liberated yet, they have diligently cultivated giving paramita.

(The Buddha taught about the expedient skillfulness for practicing giving paramita.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, some great bodhisattvas have, since the time first aspiring to the bodhi, practiced pure precept with an intention in accord with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Because these great bodhisattvas have developed an intention in accord with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, they accept and observe pure precept. They do not allow the hidden roots of vexations and complex bondages, such as greed, anger, and ignorance to arise, or the not virtuous dharmas, such as stinginess, incorrect and invalid rules and inhibitions, hatred, laziness, tiredness, inferior mind, restless mind, wisdom abuse, and arrogance to arise and hinder the path to the bodhi. They will not allow the intention correspondent with voice-hearer or self-enlightened one to arise either. Why? These great bodhisattvas have contemplated all dharmas and realized that their nature and phenomena are empty, and without arising, formation, decay, and extinction. So, the great bodhisattvas can enter insightfully the dharma phenomena. They have realized that all dharmas are without action and ability, so they can enter insightfully the mental images. Because of achieving such expedient skillfulness, their

wonderful virtuous roots can always grow and increase. Because their virtuous roots continue to grow and increase, they can practice pure-precept paramita, assist sentient beings to mature, and dignify and purify Buddha lands. As they practice pure precept, they do not seek the effects caused by observing pure precept; namely, they are not attached to the superior effects and birth and death. To rescue and protect those in need and liberate those who are not liberated yet, they cultivate diligently pure-precept paramita. They cultivate forbearance paramita, diligence paramita, meditation paramita, and prajna paramita in the same way.

(The Buddha taught about the expedient skillfulness for practicing pure precept paramita and other paramitas.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, some great bodhisattvas have, since the moment first aspiring to the bodhi, stayed in a mind correspondent with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and entered expediently and skillfully the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations. Although they enter and get out of the meditations, immeasurable minds, and formless concentrations freely and at ease, they do not absorb and receive the effects that mature in different types and at later times. Why? These great bodhisattvas have achieved the most superior expedient skillfulness to contemplate various meditations, immeasurable minds, and formless concentrations. They have realized that all their nature and phenomena are empty and without arising, formation, decay, and extinction, they thus can enter and understand insightfully the phenomena of all dharmas. They have realized that all dharmas are without actions and abilities, so they can enter and understand insightfully the mental images caused by the actions of all dharmas. Because of achieving such expedient skillfulness, their superior and wonderful virtuous roots grow and increase at all times. Because of the continuous

growth and increase of the virtuous roots, they can practice various meditations, immeasurable minds, and formless concentrations well. Because they have practiced meditations, immeasurable minds, and formless concentrations well, they can assist sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify Buddha lands freely and at ease.
(The Buddha taught about the expedient skillfulness for cultivating other superior virtuous dharmas for great bodhisattvas.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, since the moment first aspiring to the bodhi, some great bodhisattvas have stayed in a mind correspondent with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Although they have practiced the stage of seeing the truth and the stage of cultivation, they do not attain stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, or self-enlightenment bodhi. Why? These great bodhisattvas have contemplated all dharmas and realized that all their nature and phenomena are empty and without arising, formation, decay, and extinction, they thus can enter and understand insightfully the phenomena of all dharmas. They have realized that all dharmas are without actions and abilities, so they can enter and understand insightfully the mental images caused by the actions of all dharmas. Because of achieving such expedient skillfulness, their superior and wonderful virtuous roots will grow and increase at all times. Because of the continuous growth and increase of the virtuous roots, they can practice all factors for enlightenment and surpass the stages of voice-hearer and self-enlightened one and enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising. This is called the dharma-forbearance for the bodhisattvas. Because of this forbearance, they can assist sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify Buddha lands freely and at ease.
(The Buddha taught about the expedient skillfulness of dharma forbearance for great bodhisattvas.)

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the expedient skillfulness of the fathomless prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas have stayed in a mind in accord with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. They can enter freely and at ease the eight liberations and the nine concentrations in sequence through the direction from the first to the last one and the opposite direction, without grasping stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, and self-enlightenment bodhi. Why? These great bodhisattvas have contemplated all dharmas and realized that all their nature and phenomena are empty and without arising, formation, decay, and extinction, thus, they can enter and understand insightfully the phenomena of all dharmas. They have realized that all dharmas are without actions and abilities, so, they can enter and understand insightfully the mental images caused by the actions of all dharmas. Because of achieving such expedient skillfulness, their superior and wonderful virtuous roots will grow and increase at all times. Because of the continuous growth and increase of the virtuous roots, they can assist sentient beings to mature, dignify and purify Buddha lands, realize the bodhisattva stage of nonregression, and are conferred by the Buddha the prophecy of attaining the forbearance.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, some great bodhisattvas have cultivated the expedient skillfulness of prajna paramita, stayed in a mind in accord with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, and diligently and attentively cultivated the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and the rest of innumerable and boundless Buddha dharmas. They have assisted sentient beings to mature and dignified and purified Buddha lands but have not yet realized and attained the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Why? These great bodhisattvas have contemplated all dharmas and realized that all their nature and phenomena are empty

and without arising, formation, decay, and extinction, they thus can enter insightfully the phenomena of all dharmas. They have realized that all dharmas are without actions and abilities, they thus can enter insightfully the mental images caused by the actions of all dharmas. Because of achieving such expedient skillfulness, their superior and wonderful virtuous roots will grow and increase at all times. Because of the continuous growth and increase of the virtuous roots, they are well equipped and ready to assist sentient beings to mature, dignify and purify Buddha lands, and realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge step by step. This is called the expedient skillfulness. If great bodhisattvas can achieve such expedient skillfulness, they certainly can realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge through what they have accomplished. This superior expedient skillfulness can be achieved through prajna paramita. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should cultivate and learn diligently the fathomless prajna paramita."
(The Buddha indicated that expedient skillfulness came out of prajna paramita.)

Fascicle 527

Chapter 27

The Wisdom Paramita

(In the Third Assembly)

At that time, upon hearing Buddha's words, Well-Appearing One said, "The great bodhisattvas possessing superior wisdom enlightenment will practice the fathomless dharma, but do not seek its superior rewards."

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Yes, it is as you say. As the great bodhisattvas possessing such superior wisdom enlightenment will practice the fathomless dharma without seeking the superior rewards. Why? These great bodhisattvas stay in unmovable self-nature."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "In which unmovable self-nature do the great bodhisattvas stay?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "These great bodhisattvas stay in the unmovable self-nature of the dharmas without nature."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked again, "In which unmovable self-nature of the dharmas without nature do the great bodhisattvas stay?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "These great bodhisattvas stay in the unmovable self-nature of matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of the eye sphere, eat sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-

image realm. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of the earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of cause and condition, consecutive thoughts, conditions that stimulate the mind, and the conditions that reinforce main causes. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of ignorance, action, consciousness, and so forth, and old age and death. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of the stage of pure contemplation, stage of embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and the stage of Thus-Comer. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of the stage of ecstasy, stage of

freedom from defilement, and so forth, and the stage of dharma cloud. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of all dharani gates and all samadhi gates. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of the five eyes and six supernatural powers. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of staying in correct mindfulness and always dwelling in equanimity. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth and self-enlightenment bodhi. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of all great bodhisattva actions. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. They stay in the unmovable self-nature of the conditioned realm and unconditioned realm. Why? The self-nature of these dharmas is no nature. The great bodhisattvas stay in the unmovable self-nature of the dharmas without nature, while the dharmas without nature cannot realize intuitively the dharmas without nature."

(The great bodhisattvas who possess superior wisdom enlightenment can stay in the unmovable self-nature of various dharmas, which do not have nature, so they do not seek superior rewards caused by their merits.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "Can nature realize non-nature?"

The Buddha replied, “No.”

Well-Appearing One asked again, “Can non-nature realize nature?”

The Buddha replied, “No.”

Well-Appearing One asked again, “Can nature realize nature?”

The Buddha replied, “No.”

Well-Appearing One asked again, “Can non-nature realize non-nature?”

The Buddha replied, “No.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “If this is the case, then nature cannot understand intuitively non-nature, nature cannot understand intuitively nature, and non-nature cannot understand intuitively non-nature. As a result, does the World-Honored One possess attainment and intuitive understanding?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “Although I possess attainment and intuitive understanding, I am far away from the four dialectical phrases.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “How can you possess attainment and intuitive understanding when you are far away from the four dialectical phrases?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “Both attainment and intuitive understanding are neither existent nor nonexistent; they are without forms and names, and completely rid of the nonsensical arguments. Therefore, I possess attainment and intuitive understanding, but I am far away from the four dialectical phrases.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “Which dharmas are regarded nonsensical arguments for great bodhisattvas?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “As great bodhisattvas contemplate matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the

perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and wonder if they are permanent or impermanent, pleasant or painful, with selfness or without selfness, pure or impure, tranquil or not tranquil, far away or not far away, and universally known or not universally known, then these great bodhisattvas are holding nonsensical arguments. (The Buddha explained nonsensical arguments.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas think, 'The noble truth of suffering should be universally known, the cause of suffering should be ceased, the cessation of suffering should be realized, and the path for the cessation of suffering should be cultivated and learned,' then they are holding a nonsensical argument. Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas think, 'I must cultivate giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita,' then they are holding a nonsensical argument. If they think, 'I must dwell in internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; I must dwell in realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable; I must dwell in the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering,' then they have the nonsensical arguments. If they think, 'I must cultivate the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; I must cultivate the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; I must cultivate the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration; I must cultivate the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations,' then they have the nonsensical arguments. If they think, 'I must transcend stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi, enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising, fulfill the great bodhisattva actions of the ten stages, assist sentient

beings to mature, and dignify and purify Buddha lands,' then they have the nonsensical arguments. If they think, "I must initiate all dharani gates and samadhi gates; activate the five eyes and the six supernatural powers; elicit the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; elicit great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity; fulfill the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features; activate staying in correct mindfulness and always dwelling in equanimity; and elicit the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena,' then they have the nonsensical arguments. If they think, 'I must practice all great bodhisattva actions and realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas,' then they have a nonsensical argument. If they think, 'I must eliminate the enduring negative disposition of vexations permanently; I must realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge,' then they have the nonsensical arguments. You must know, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas cause such nonsensical arguments because they have such various differentiations.

(The Buddha enumerated examples of holding nonsensical arguments.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita and contemplating all dharmas, great bodhisattvas should not argue nonsensically whether the aggregates of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are permanent or impermanent, pleasant or painful, with or without selfness, pure or impure, tranquil or not tranquil, far away or not far away, and universally known or not universally known.

(The Buddha provided examples of avoiding nonsensical arguments.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita and contemplating all dharmas, great bodhisattvas should not nonsensically argue whether the noble truth of suffering should be universally known or not, whether the cause of suffering should be ceased or not, whether the cessation of suffering should be realized or not, and whether the path for the cessation of suffering should be cultivated and practiced or not. And so on. They should not nonsensically argue whether the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge should be realized and attained or not. You must know, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should not nonsensically argue about such various dharmas and sentient beings when contemplating them. Why? It is because in all dharmas and sentient beings, the dharmas with nature cannot argue nonsensically about the dharmas with nonnature, the dharmas with nonnature cannot argue nonsensically about the dharmas with nature, the dharmas with nonnature cannot argue nonsensically about the dharmas with nature, and the dharmas with nonnature cannot argue nonsensically about the dharmas with nonnature. All dharmas and sentient beings are far apart from existence and nature; one who can argue nonsensically, the things to be argued nonsensically, the place where and the time when the nonsensical arguments happen are all unattainable. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, in the aggregates of matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, there are no nonsensical arguments. Thus, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should practice the fathomless prajna paramita without stating nonsensical arguments."

(The Buddha taught that all dharmas and sentient beings are without nature, including those relevant to nonsensical arguments. Great bodhisattvas should practice the fathomless prajna paramita without nonsensically arguing about them.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, how great bodhisattvas contemplate matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge without arguing about them nonsensically?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should contemplate matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge as without self-nature, and thus they cannot be argued nonsensically. Well-Appearing One, because you cannot argue about matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, you should not argue about them nonsensically. You must know, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas can practice the expedient skillfulness of the fathomless prajna paramita without having nonsensical arguments about all dharmas, they will be able to enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising, quickly fulfill various stages of bodhisattva, realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi soon, and bring benefits and happiness to all sentient beings in endless future.”
(The Buddha taught why great bodhisattvas should avoid nonsensical arguments, and how.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “If all dharmas have no self-nature and nonsensical arguments are unattainable, then through which path do great bodhisattvas enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising? Is it through the path of voice-hearer, path of self-enlightened one, or the path of the Buddha?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “Great bodhisattvas do not enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising through the path of voice-hearer, path of self-

enlightened one, or the path of the Buddha. They should first comprehensively learn various paths, then enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising through the path of bodhisattva. Well-Appearing One, let us take eight-forbearance as an example. The practitioners should first comprehensively learn various paths to enter onto the eight-forbearance path of nonarising through the path suitable for them. They cannot realize and attain the best effects of the path they are seeking until they fulfill that path. Therefore, great bodhisattvas should learn all paths universally to enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising through the bodhisattva path. They cannot attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi that they are pursuing until they have initiated the diamond-like concentration. Based on this concentration, they can realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi with an instantaneous intuitive correspondence with the exquisite wisdom."

(The Buddha taught that great bodhisattvas should first comprehensively learn all paths and then enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising through the path of bodhisattva.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha again, "If great bodhisattvas would like to fulfill the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, they should first learn all paths comprehensively to enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising through the path of bodhisattva, then the paths of eight-forbearance orientation and effect, stream-entry orientation and effect, once-return orientation and effect, nonreturn orientation and effect, arhat orientation and effect, self-enlightened one orientation and effect, and the Thus-Comer orientation and effect should be different. If this is the case, why should great bodhisattvas comprehensively learn all paths to enter onto the path of nonarising through the path of bodhisattva in their pursuit of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge? It seems that if great

bodhisattvas would like to initiate the eight-forbearance path, they should first become stream-entry aspirants; if they would like to initiate the path of seeing the truth, they should first become stream-enterers; if they would like to initiate the path of cultivation, they should first become once-returners and nonreturners; if they would like to initiate the path of non-learning, they should first become arhats; and if they would like to initiate the path of self-enlightened one, they should first become self-enlightened ones.

"World-Honored One, if great bodhisattvas become stream-entry aspirants, they will not enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising. If they do not enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising, they will not realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. World-Honored One, if great bodhisattvas attain the stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, or self-enlightenment bodhi, they will not enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising. If they do not enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising, they will not realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. How can I accurately understand the statement, 'great bodhisattvas, in pursuing the fulfillment of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, should first comprehensively learn all paths before entering onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising' makes sense?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Yes, it is as you say. If great bodhisattvas have become stream-entry aspirants, stream-enterers, and so forth, and self-enlightened ones, they will not enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising. If they do not enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising, they will not realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. But it is not contrary to the reason why they should learn comprehensively all paths before entering onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising. Namely, great bodhisattvas have cultivated bravely

and diligently giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita since they first aspire to the bodhi. Their superior wisdom and views must have already transcended the eight stages: the stage of pure contemplation, stage of embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and the stage of the self-enlightened one. Although they will learn all these stages comprehensively, they have transcended these stages owing to their superior wisdom and views. They thus will enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising by means of the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths. After entering onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising, they will further eliminate their enduring negative disposition of vexations by means of the perfect knowledge of all phenomena to realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. You must know, Well-Appearing One, the perfect knowledge that they have learned and the vexations that they have eliminated in the stage of the eight-forbearance, stage of stream-enterer, and so forth, and the self-enlightened one are all the forbearance for the great bodhisattva. Thus, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas will learn comprehensively all paths and then enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising through their own path. After entering onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising, they will cultivate various great bodhisattva actions step by step, realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, and benefit all sentient beings."
(The Buddha explained why the outcomes Well-Appearing One feared would not occur.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "As the World-Honored One says, great bodhisattvas should comprehensively learn the forms of all paths, such as the path of voice-hearers, the path of self-enlightened ones, the path of bodhisattvas, and the path of the Buddhas. How do great bodhisattvas initiate the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “Great bodhisattvas should initiate the perfect knowledge of the forms of all pure paths. How should they do this? All actions, features, and forms can correctly manifest and elicit the perfect knowledge of the forms of all pure paths. Great bodhisattvas should become perfectly and universally awakened to all actions, features, and forms. Then they will further lecture on and explain them for sentient beings and well guide them to attain the not upside-down understanding to approach the benefits, peace, and happiness appropriate for them. The great bodhisattvas should learn to master various voices and languages and skillfully use them to teach correct dharma for sentient beings in the large threefold thousand-world, so whatever they hear will be like echoes in valley; they can understand what they hear without attachment.

(The Buddha responded to Well-Appearing One’s question of how great bodhisattvas initiate the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths.)

“You must know, Well-Appearing One, because of this cause and condition, great bodhisattvas should learn to fulfill the genuine knowledge of the forms of the paths. After learning and fulfilling this perfect knowledge, they will learn to accurately know the different hidden roots of vexations and intentions of all sentient beings and bring appropriate benefits, peace, and happiness to them accordingly. Namely, they will learn to accurately know the hidden roots of vexations, intentions, and their causes and effects of the sentient beings in hells and try to benefit them expediently. They will also learn to accurately know the hidden roots of vexations, intentions, and their causes and effects of animals, ghosts, dragons, yaksas, asuras, and so forth, and try to benefit all of them expediently. They will learn to accurately know the hidden roots of vexations, intentions, and their causes and effects of heavenly beings in the realm of desire, realm of form, and so forth, and the realm of

nonthinking and not non-thinking, and try to benefit them expediently. They will learn to accurately know the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path and their causes and effects. They will learn to accurately know the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations and their causes and effects. They will learn to accurately know the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration and their causes and effects. They will learn to accurately know the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations and their causes and effects. They will learn to accurately know the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering and their causes and effects. They will learn to accurately know the six paramitas and their causes and effects. They will learn to accurately know internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature and their causes and effects. They will learn to accurately know realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable and their causes and effects. They will learn to accurately know the stage of pure contemplation, stage of embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and stage of Thus-Comer and their causes and effects. They will learn to accurately know the stage of ecstasy, stage of freedom from defilement, and so forth, and stage of dharma cloud and their causes and effects. They will learn to accurately know the five eyes and six supernatural powers and their causes and effects. They will learn to accurately know the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power and their causes and effects. They will learn to accurately know great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity and their causes and effects. They will learn to accurately know

staying in correct mindfulness and always dwelling in equanimity and their causes and effects. They will learn to accurately know the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena and their causes and effects. They will also learn to accurately know the voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, bodhisattvas, and Thus-Comers and their causes and effects.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, after accurately knowing the paths of the voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, and bodhisattvas and their causes and effects, the great bodhisattvas will accordingly establish sentient beings in the three vehicles, and let them diligently cultivate and fulfill what they are pursuing. You must know, Well-Appearing One, the great bodhisattvas should initiate such real knowledge of the forms of the paths. If great bodhisattvas can cultivate and learn such genuine knowledge of the forms of the paths, they will know well the characteristics of various realms of sentient beings, their hidden roots of vexations, and their intentions. After attaining such insightful understanding, they will teach them correct dharma accordingly, so sentient beings will not waste their time in pursuing the superior effects they cannot reach. Why? These great bodhisattvas have known very well the superior and inferior roots of various sentient beings; they have also thoroughly understood how their minds and the associated images orient in birth and death. They will teach sentient beings appropriately so they will not spend their time in vain. Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should practice the prajna paramita of various paths. Why? All the factors for enlightenment in the paths of voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, and bodhisattvas are contained in the fathomless prajna paramita. All voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, and bodhisattvas should learn diligently through the fathomless prajna paramita to fulfill their own paths."

(The Buddha instructed in these paragraphs how great bodhisattvas guided sentient beings expediently according to individual differences to let each attain suitable benefits.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “If all factors for enlightenment and various kinds of bodhi are neither correspondent nor not correspondent, they are immaterial, invisible, and unsubstantial and are with only form, namely, formlessness, then how can these factors assist one to attain the bodhi? As all dharmas are neither correspondent nor not correspondent, they are immaterial, invisible, and unsubstantial and with only one form, namely, formlessness, then how can they grasp or renounce dharmas? Like empty space that does not grasp or renounce the dharmas because their self-nature is empty, so various dharmas do not grasp or renounce dharmas because their self-nature is empty too, then how can we say that the factors for enlightenment can assist one to attain the bodhi?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “You are correct. It is as you say. All dharmas do not grasp or renounce other dharmas because their self-nature is empty, but sentient beings cannot understand this meaning. To benefit them, the statement is expediently established that the factors for enlightenment can assist one to attain the bodhi.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, in the holy dharmas of vinaya (precept for monastics), matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are neither correspondent nor not correspondent; they are immaterial, invisible, and unsubstantial. They have only one form and that is formlessness. To benefit sentient beings so that they can correctly understand the real phenomena of the dharmas, the Buddha has taught in terms of the worldly way of speech instead of ultimate meaning. You must know, Well-Appearing

One, great bodhisattvas should learn the knowledge and the views of various dharmas. After learning and gaining the correct understanding of the dharmas, they will contemplate and know accurately which dharmas they should absorb and receive and which they should not."

(The Buddha encouraged great bodhisattvas to learn various dharmas and understand them thoroughly so that they could guide sentient beings most suitably.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "Which dharmas should they not absorb and receive after contemplating the knowledge and views of the dharmas? Which dharmas should they absorb and receive? "

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Great bodhisattvas should not absorb and receive the dharmas of voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones after accurately contemplating, learning, and knowing them. On the other hand, they should absorb and receive various dharmas correspondent with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge after contemplating their various phenomena. You must know, Well-Appearing One, in the holy dharmas of vinaya, great bodhisattvas should learn the fathomless prajna paramita this way."

(The Buddha instructed which dharmas great bodhisattvas should choose and which they must renounce.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "The Buddha has talked about the holy dharmas of vinaya. What are the holy dharmas of vinaya? Why are they so called?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "The voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, bodhisattvas, and the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones are neither correspondent nor not correspondent with greed, hatred, and ignorance. They are neither correspondent nor

not correspondent with the three bonds: incorrect view of regarding selfness as permanent and real, observing invalid and erroneous ‘precepts,’ and skepticism. They are neither correspondent nor not correspondent with greedy desires and angry hatred. They are neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the craving for forms, craving for formlessness, the restless and wandering minds, arrogance, and ignorance. They are neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and the four formless concentrations. The voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, bodhisattvas, and the Thus-Comers are neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path. They are neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering. They are neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration. They are neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations. They are neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the six paramitas. They are neither correspondent nor not correspondent with internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature. They are neither correspondent nor not correspondent with realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable. They are neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the stage of pure contemplation, stage of embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and the stage of the Thus-Comer. They are neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the stage of ecstasy, stage of freedom from defilement, and so forth, and the stage of dharma cloud. They are neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the dharani gates and samadhi gates. They are neither

correspondent nor not correspondent with the five eyes and six supernatural powers. The voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, bodhisattvas, and the Thus-Comers are neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power. They are neither correspondent nor not correspondent with great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity. They are neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features. They are neither correspondent nor not correspondent with staying in correct mindfulness and always dwelling in equanimity. They are 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. They are neither correspondent nor not correspondent with stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi. They are neither correspondent nor not correspondent with all great bodhisattva actions and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas. They are neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the termination of enduring negative disposition of vexations and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. They are neither correspondent nor not correspondent with the conditioned and the unconditioned realms.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, the voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, bodhisattvas, and Thus-Comers are the holy ones, and these dharmas are the holy dharmas of vinaya. Why? These dharmas are immaterial, invisible, and unsubstantial; they have only one form, and that is formlessness. This truth is intuitively and accurately realized by the holy ones. You must know, Well-Appearing One, such immaterial dharmas and other immaterial dharmas are neither

correspondent nor not correspondent. Such invisible dharmas and other invisible dharmas are neither correspondent nor not correspondent. Such unsubstantial dharmas and other unsubstantial dharmas are neither correspondent nor not correspondent. Such one-form dharmas and other one-form dharmas are neither correspondent nor not correspondent. Such formless dharmas and other formless dharmas are neither correspondent nor not correspondent. You must know, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should consistently cultivate and learn the immaterial, invisible, unsubstantial, one-form, and formless fathomless prajna paramita. After that, they should not be attached to the forms of all dharmas."

(Great bodhisattvas should learn all dharmas without being attached to them. The Buddha explained the holy dharmas of vinaya.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "Shouldn't great bodhisattvas learn various forms of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge? Shouldn't they learn various forms of knowing suffering, ceasing cause of suffering, realizing the extinction, and cultivating the path? Shouldn't they learn various forms of contemplating the twelve links of dependent origination from cause down effect and opposite direction? Shouldn't they learn various forms of the holy ones and holy dharmas? Shouldn't they learn various forms of the conditioned realm and unconditioned realm?

"World-Honored One, if great bodhisattvas do not learn the forms of various dharmas, they will not learn various mental images either. If they do not learn the forms of various dharmas and various mental images, how can they transcend the stage of voice-hearer and the stage of self-enlightened one? If they cannot transcend the stage of voice-hearer and the stage of self-enlightened one, how can they enter

onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising? If they cannot enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising, how can they realize the unsurpassed bodhi? If they cannot realize the unsurpassed bodhi, how can they turn the exquisite dharma wheel? If they cannot turn the exquisite dharma wheel, how can they establish all sentient beings in the vehicle of voice-hearer, the vehicle of self-enlightened one, or the unsurpassed vehicle, assist them to get rid of the severe suffering of birth and death and allow them to dwell peacefully in the pure, permanent, and happy nirvana?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "If all dharmas really have forms, great bodhisattvas should learn from them. But all dharmas have no real forms; they are immaterial, invisible, and unsubstantial and with only one form, that is formlessness. Therefore, great bodhisattvas should not learn from forms and formlessness. Why? Whether the Thus-Comer appears in the world or not, the dharma realm has always dwelled as one-form, and that is formlessness. As this formlessness is neither with form nor without form, nobody can learn from it. Why? It is not that all dharmas have forms in the beginning and then become formless; rather, it has always been formless from the beginning to the end. Therefore, great bodhisattvas should not learn from form or formlessness. The dualistic view that dharmas with forms and the formless dharmas are mutually dependent is not established based on the ultimate meaning."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha again, "If all dharmas are neither with forms nor without forms, then they should not be with one form or with different forms. If this is the case, how can great bodhisattvas cultivate prajna paramita? If great bodhisattvas cannot cultivate prajna paramita, they should not be able to transcend the stage of voice-hearer or the stage of self-enlightened one. If they cannot transcend the stage of voice-hearer or the stage of self-enlightened one,

they should not be able to enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising, so they will not be able to transcend the dharma forbearance of bodhisattva. If they cannot transcend the dharma forbearance of bodhisattva, they will not be able to elicit the superior supernatural powers of bodhisattva. If they cannot elicit the superior supernatural powers of bodhisattva, they will not be able to dignify and purify Buddha lands and assist sentient beings to mature. If they cannot dignify and purify Buddha lands and assist sentient beings to mature, they will not be able to attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. If they cannot attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, they will not be able to turn the wheel of the wonderful dharma. If they cannot turn the wheel of the wonderful dharma, they will not be able to establish sentient beings, let them dwell peacefully in the effect of voice-hearer vehicle, effect of self-enlightened one vehicle, or the effect of the unsurpassed vehicle; nor can they expediently establish sentient beings to let them dwell in the bliss caused by practicing giving, observing precept, and cultivation, and enjoy ease, wealth, and happiness in heaven or human world."

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Yes, it is as you say. All dharmas are neither with nor without forms; neither with one form nor with different forms. If great bodhisattvas realize that all dharmas, with form or without form, with one form or with many different forms, have only one form, namely, formlessness, and cultivate the formless dharmas, then they are called cultivating prajna paramita."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Why are great bodhisattvas called cultivating prajna paramita if they cultivate formless dharmas?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "If great bodhisattvas cultivate to drive away all dharmas, they are called cultivating prajna paramita."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “Why are great bodhisattvas called ones cultivating prajna paramita if they drive away all dharmas?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “When cultivating to drive away matter, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away the earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away cause and condition, consecutive thoughts, conditions that stimulate the mind, and the conditions that reinforce main causes, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away ignorance, action,

consciousness, and so forth, and old age and death, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away 'entering and getting out of birth and death' as well as 'the stage of pure contemplation,' they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away the mindfulness in compliance with the Buddha, dharma, sangha, and so forth, and the mindfulness in compliance with inhalation and exhalation, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away the thought of impermanence, painfulness, and so forth, and the thought of extinction, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away the thought of the 'I,' the sentient being, and so forth, and the thought of the knower and the viewer, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away the thought of dependent origination and not dependent origination, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away the thought of permanence, pleasure, selfness, and purity and the thought of impermanence, non-pleasure, selflessness, and impurity, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming

meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away the thought of the noble truths and the thought of not noble truths, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away the samadhi with general contemplation and specific investigation, the samadhi with specific investigation only, and the samadhi without general contemplation and specific investigation, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away the perfect knowledge of anguish and suffering, and so forth, as well as the perfect knowledge of the uppermost truth, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away the stage of pure contemplation, stage of embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and stage of Thus-Comer, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away the stage of ecstasy, stage of freedom from defilement, and so forth, and stage of dharma cloud, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When

cultivating to drive away dharani gates and samadhi gates, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away five eyes and six supernatural powers, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away staying in correct mindfulness and always dwelling in equanimity, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away all great bodhisattva actions, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away the permanent elimination of enduring disposition of vexations, they also drive away this cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita. When cultivating to drive away the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, they also drive away this

cultivation; this is called cultivating prajna paramita."

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "How do great bodhisattvas also drive away the cultivation when they cultivate to drive away matter and thus are called cultivating prajna paramita? How do great bodhisattvas also drive away the cultivation when they cultivate to drive away feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness and thus are called cultivating prajna paramita? And so on, how do great bodhisattvas also drive away the cultivation when they cultivate to drive away the permanent elimination of enduring disposition of vexations and thus are called cultivating prajna paramita? How do great bodhisattvas also drive away the cultivation when they cultivate to drive away the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and thus are called cultivating prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, if great bodhisattvas keep matter and this cultivation in their minds, they do not drive away matter, nor do they cultivate prajna paramita. If they keep feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness and this cultivation in their minds, they do not drive away feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, nor do they cultivate prajna paramita. And so on, if they keep the permanent elimination of enduring disposition of vexations and this cultivation in their minds, they do not drive away the permanent elimination of enduring disposition of vexations, nor do they cultivate prajna paramita. If they keep the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and this cultivation in their minds, they do not drive away the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, nor do they cultivate prajna paramita. When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, if great bodhisattvas do not keep matter and this cultivation in their minds, they do drive away matter and cultivate prajna paramita. If they do not keep feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness and this cultivation in their minds, they do

drive away feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness and cultivate prajna paramita. And so on. If they do not keep the permanent elimination of enduring disposition of vexations and this cultivation in their minds, they do drive away the permanent elimination of negative disposition of vexations and cultivate prajna paramita. If they do not keep the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and this cultivation in their minds, they do drive away the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and cultivate prajna paramita. Why? Those who are attached to the existence of all dharmas cannot really cultivate prajna paramita when eliminating greed, anger, ignorance, the hidden roots of vexations, and the complex defilement. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas cultivate to drive matter and also drive this cultivation, they are called cultivating prajna paramita. If they cultivate to drive away feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness and this cultivation, they are called cultivating prajna paramita. And so on, if they cultivate to drive away the permanent elimination of enduring disposition of vexations and this cultivation, they are called cultivating prajna paramita. If they cultivate to drive away the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and this cultivation, they are called cultivating prajna paramita.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, those who dwell in the thought of the existence of the dharmas cannot cultivate giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita. And so on. Those who dwell in the thought of the existence of the dharmas cannot terminate permanently enduring disposition of vexations, nor can they cultivate the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Why? Those who dwell in the thought of the existence of the dharmas will certainly be attached to the 'I' and the associated images. Because of this attachment, they will also be attached to the two extremes. Because of the attachment to the two extremes, they will not be able to get rid of the birth and death, non-path, and non-nirvana, then

how can they cultivate the six paramitas, various kinds of emptiness, and so forth, and the permanent termination of enduring disposition of vexations and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge as they should do?"

(The Buddha taught when cultivating various dharmas, great bodhisattvas should not keep the dharmas and the cultivation in their minds, so they will be free from attachment and can really cultivate to drive away the dharmas. Cultivating this way is cultivating prajna paramita.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "What are the existent beings of the dharmas? What are the nonexistent beings of the dharmas?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Duality is existent beings, while nonduality is nonexistent beings."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Which is duality? Which is nonduality?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "The thought of matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness is duality, while the emptiness of the thought of matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness is nonduality. The thought of the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere is duality, while the emptiness of the thought of the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere is nonduality. The thought of the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere is duality, while the emptiness of the thought of the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere is nonduality. The thought of the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm is duality, while the emptiness of the thought of the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm is nonduality. The thought of the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm is duality, while the emptiness of the thought of the sight realm, sound

realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm is nonduality. The thought of the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm is duality, while the emptiness of the thought of the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm is nonduality. The thought of the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact is duality, while the emptiness of the thought of the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact is nonduality. The thought of the earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm is duality, while the emptiness of the thought of the earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm is nonduality. The thought of cause and condition, consecutive thoughts, conditions that stimulate the mind, and the conditions that reinforce main causes is duality, while the emptiness of the thought of cause and condition, consecutive thoughts, conditions that stimulate the mind, and the conditions that reinforce main causes is nonduality. The thought of ignorance, action, consciousness, and so forth, and old age and death is duality, while the emptiness of the thought of ignorance, action, consciousness, and so forth, and old age and death is nonduality. The thought of giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita is duality, while the emptiness of the thought of giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita is nonduality. The thought of internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature is duality, while the emptiness of the thought of internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature is nonduality. The thought of realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable is duality, while the emptiness of the thought of realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable is nonduality.

The thought of the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering is duality, while the emptiness of the thought of the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering is nonduality. The thought of the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path is duality, while the emptiness of the thought of the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path is nonduality. The thought of the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations is duality, while the emptiness of the thought of the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations is nonduality. The thought of the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration is duality, while the emptiness of the thought of the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration is nonduality. The thought of the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations is duality, while the emptiness of the thought of the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations is nonduality. The thought of the stage of pure contemplation, stage of embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and stage of the Thus-Comer is duality, while the emptiness of the thought of the stage of pure contemplation, stage of embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and stage of the Thus-Comer is nonduality. The thought of the stage of ecstasy, stage of freedom from defilement, and so forth, and stage of dharma cloud is duality, while the emptiness of the thought of the stage of ecstasy, stage of freedom from defilement, and so forth, and stage of dharma cloud is nonduality. The thought of dharani gates and samadhi gates is duality, while the emptiness of the thought of dharani gates and samadhi gates

is nonduality. The thought of the five eyes and six supernatural powers is duality, while the emptiness of the thought of the five eyes and six supernatural powers is nonduality. The thought of the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power is duality, while the emptiness of the thought of the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power is nonduality. The thought of great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity is duality, while the emptiness of the thought of great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity is nonduality. The thought of the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features is duality, while the emptiness of the thought of the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features is nonduality. The thought of staying in correct mindfulness and always dwelling in equanimity is duality, while the emptiness of the thought of staying in correct mindfulness and always dwelling in equanimity is nonduality. The thought of the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena is duality, while the emptiness of the thought of the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena is nonduality. The thought of stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi is duality, while the emptiness of the thought of stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi is nonduality. The thought of all great bodhisattva actions and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas is duality, while the emptiness of the thought of all great bodhisattva actions and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas is nonduality. The thought of the conditioned realm and unconditioned realm is duality, while the

emptiness of the thought of the conditioned realm and unconditioned realm is nonduality.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, all kinds of thinking are duality; all kinds of duality are existent beings; all kinds of the existent beings have birth and death; and those who have birth and death will not be liberated from birth, old age, illness, death, worry, sorrow, misery, anxiety, and upset. You must know, Well-Appearing One, all kinds of the emptiness of thinking are nonduality; all kinds of nonduality are nonexistent; all nonexistent beings do not have birth and death; and those who do not have birth and death will be liberated from birth, old age, illness, death, worry, sorrow, misery, anxiety, and upset. Because of this cause and condition, you must know that all those with dual thinking do not have giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita, nor do they have the paths, attainment, and intuitive contemplation. They do not have forbearance in compliance with the dharma, not to mention they have the universal knowledge of matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. They will not be able to cultivate the holy paths, not to mention they will attain stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi. Thus, they will not be able to terminate permanently the enduring disposition of vexations, nor will they realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and turn the wheel of the wonderful dharma to deliver all sentient beings."

(The Buddha distinguish between duality and nonduality. All kinds of thinking are duality, which exist, while all kinds of emptiness of thinking are nonduality, which is nonexistent. Nonduality can become free from birth, old, illness, and death, duality cannot. Nonduality can cultivate superior holy dharmas and attain the unsurpassed bodhi, duality cannot.)

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Chapter 28

The Exquisite Phenomena

Section 1

(In the Third Assembly)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “Those dwelling in the thought of the existence of dharmas will have no forbearance in compliance with the dharma, so they will not cultivate the path, gain the effects, and attain intuitive contemplation. But will those who dwell in the thought of the nonexistence of dharmas attain forbearance in compliance with the dharma? Can they achieve the stage of pure contemplation, stage of embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and the stage of Thus-Comer? Will they be able to cultivate the holy path and eliminate vexations through cultivating holy path? If they cannot, they will not be able to attain the stages correspondent with voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones because of the hindrances caused by their vexations, let alone enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising. If they cannot enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising, how can they attain the perfect knowledge of all phenomena? If they cannot attain the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, how can they terminate enduring disposition of vexations? World-Honored One, if all dharmas are nonexistent in the final analysis and without arising and extinction, contamination and purification so all dharmas do not arise, then how can Buddha dharma practitioners realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “Those dwelling in the thought of the nonexistence of dharmas seemingly cannot achieve the forbearance in compliance

with the dharma and attain the stage of pure contemplation, stage of embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and the permanent termination of enduring disposition of vexations, so they will not attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge either. But if they can cultivate the formless, unreal dharmas, they will attain the forbearance in compliance with the dharma, the stage of pure contemplation, and so forth, and the permanent termination of enduring disposition of vexations; as a result, they will realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, do great bodhisattvas have the thought of the existence of dharmas or the nonexistence of dharmas? Do they have the thought of matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness? And so on, do they have the thought of the permanent termination of the disposition of vexations? Do they have the thought of realizing and attaining the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge? World-Honored One, do they have the thought of matter or the thought of the termination of matter? Do they have the thought of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness or the thought of the termination of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness? Do they have the thought of the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere or the thought of the termination of the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere? Do they have the thought of the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere or the thought of the termination of the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere? Do they have the thought of the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm or the thought of the termination of the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm? Do they have the thought of the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image or the thought of the termination of the sight realm, sound realm, and so

forth, and mental-image realm? Do they have the thought of the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm or the thought of the termination of the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm? Do they have the thought of the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact or the thought of the termination of the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact? Do they have the thought of the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact or the thought of the termination of the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact? Do they have the thought of the earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm or the thought of the termination of the earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm? Do they have the thought of cause and condition, consecutive thoughts, conditions that stimulate the mind, and the conditions that reinforce main causes or the thought of the termination of cause and condition, consecutive thoughts, conditions that stimulate the mind, and the conditions that reinforce main causes? Do they have the thought of greed, anger, and ignorance or the thought of the termination of greed, anger, and ignorance? Do they have the thought of ignorance, action, consciousness, and so forth, and old age and death or the thought of the termination of ignorance, action, consciousness, and so forth, and old age and death? Do they have the thought of the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering or the thought of the termination of the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering? And so on, do they have the thought of removing the enduring disposition of vexations or the thought of the termination of removing the enduring disposition of vexations? Do they have the thought of the

perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge or the thought of the termination of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "If great bodhisattvas, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, have neither the thought nor the nonthought of all dharmas, you must know that they have achieved the bodhisattva forbearance in compliance with the dharma, and have also cultivated the path and attained intuitive contemplation.

(The Buddha described the holy effects gained by great bodhisattvas who practice prajna paramita with neither the thought nor the nonthought of all dharmas.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, as great bodhisattvas adopt non-nature as holy path, non-nature as effect, and non-nature as intuitive contemplation, you must know that all dharmas indeed adopt non-nature as their nature with no exception."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "If all dharmas adopt non-nature as their nature, how can the World-Honored One be awakened perfectly and universally to the non-nature of all dharmas and called the Buddha, and thus is able to turn all dharmas and various phenomena in complete freedom and ease?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "As you say, all dharmas adopt non-nature as their nature. When I was in the stage of the bodhisattva path, because I had cultivated giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita, I could stay away from the greedy, not virtuous dharmas. With the samadhi of both general contemplation and specific investigation, and with joy and pleasure caused by getting away, I entered the first meditation and fully dwelled in it. And so on, when my previously existent joy and worries disappeared, I was free from all

pleasures and pains; with a pure mind of equanimity, I entered the fourth meditation and fully dwelled in it. At that time, I could well understand the phenomena of various meditations and their factors, but I was not attached to them or indulged in their tastes, nor did I attain various meditations and their factors. At that time, I stayed in the pure mental images of the four meditations without differentiations and could master the meditations and their factors. Nevertheless, I did not receive the effects thus derived. What I did was based on the meditations to let my mind elicit the supernatural powers of transformation, heavenly ear, reading others' minds, knowing previous lives, and heavenly eye. Although I could grasp the phenomena of the five supernatural powers very well, I was not attached to them or indulged in their tastes, nor did I attain them. I merely dwelled in emptiness without differentiation. At that time, I contemplated all dharmas and saw that they were all equal and without nature. With an instantaneous correspondence with exquisite wisdom, I attained the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. That was an intuitive awakening to realize that the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering were all in the same form, namely, formlessness. But even the formlessness itself was unattainable. Because of this, I achieved the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power, and the rest of the boundless merits and virtues. I then established sentient beings with the Buddha's exquisite wisdom peacefully in each of the three different groups of orientations and expediently taught them in accord with individual differences, so they would gain superior benefits, benefits, peace, and happiness."

(The Buddha recounted his journey to enlightenment, becoming a Buddha and helping sentient beings by teaching them exquisite wisdom.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “How do the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones elicit four meditations and activate five supernatural powers in the non-nature of all dharmas, realize the great bodhi, fulfill various merits and virtues, and establish sentient beings peacefully in three different orientations?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “If various desires, evils, or other not virtuous dharmas had existent self-nature or other-nature, then when I was a bodhisattva and cultivating the bodhisattva path, I would not be able to fully understand that all not virtuous dharmas had adopted non-nature as nature, nor would I stay away from the not virtuous dharmas to enter and fully dwell in various meditations. Because the desires, evils, and other not virtuous dharmas have no self-nature or other-nature, but adopt non-nature as their self-nature, when I was a bodhisattva and cultivating the bodhisattva path, I could fully understand that all not virtuous dharmas adopt non-nature as their nature, and I could stay away from the not virtuous dharmas to enter and fully dwell in various meditations.

“You must know, Well-Appearing One, if the five supernatural powers had any self-nature or had adopted other-nature as their self-nature, then, when I was a bodhisattva and cultivating the bodhisattva path, I would not be able to fully understand that all supernatural powers adopted non-nature as their self-nature to initiate and apply various supernatural powers freely without hindrance. Because the supernatural powers have adopted non-nature as their self-nature, I could initiate various supernatural powers freely and apply them without hindrance when I was a bodhisattva.

“You must know, Well-Appearing One, if the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas had any self-nature or had adopted other-nature as its

self-nature, then when I was a bodhisattva and cultivating the bodhisattva path, I would not be able to fully understand that the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas and various merits and virtues had adopted non-nature as their self-nature, nor could I realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and possess various merits and virtues. Because the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas and various merits and virtues have adopted non-nature as their self-nature, when I was a bodhisattva and cultivating the bodhisattva path, I could fully understand that the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi have adopted non-nature as its self-nature to realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and various merits and virtues through an instantaneous intuitive correspondence with the exquisite wisdom.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, if sentient beings had any self-nature or had adopted other-nature as their self-nature, then when I became a Buddha, I would not be able to establish all sentient beings peacefully in the three different orientations based on non-nature to teach them expediently, and let them gain superior benefits, peace, and happiness. Because all sentient beings have no self-nature or other-nature, but have adopted non-nature as their self-nature, when I became a Buddha, I was able to fully understand this truth, establish them peacefully in the three different orientations, and teach them expediently to let them gain superior benefits, peace, and happiness."

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "If great bodhisattvas know that all dharmas have adopted non-nature as their nature and initiate the four meditations, activate the five supernatural powers, realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, possess various merits and virtues, establish sentient beings peacefully in the three different aspirations, and teach them

expediently in accord with individual differences, so they will gain benefits and happiness, then how do novice great bodhisattvas, in the non-nature of all dharmas, make their virtuous karmas, cultivate various kinds of learning, and practice their actions, step by step, to realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and bring benefits, peace, and happiness to various sentient beings?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "The novice great bodhisattvas have heard this teaching either from the Buddhas, or from bodhisattvas, self-enlightened ones, arhats, nonreturners, once-returners, and stream-enterers who have made offerings very frequently to the Buddhas: 'Those who have realized perfectly and thoroughly that the nature of all dharmas is without nature are called the Buddha. Those who are realizing that the nature of all dharmas is without nature are called bodhisattva. And so forth, those who deeply believe that the nature of all dharmas is without nature are called virtuous gentleperson. Therefore, all dharmas and sentient beings have adopted non-nature as their nature. For all dharmas and sentient beings, not even a little piece of nature as the tip of the hair is attainable.'

"Upon hearing this message, these novice great bodhisattvas will reflect, 'All dharmas and sentient beings have adopted non-nature as their nature. Those who have perfectly and universally realized this truth are called the Buddha. And so on, those who believe in this truth are called virtuous gentleperson. I should realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. If I have not yet, I should aspire to it because all dharmas and sentient beings have adopted non-nature as their self-nature. After attaining the bodhi, I will establish those used to practice based on the thought of the existence of all dharmas to dwell peacefully in the thought of nonexistence of the dharma.' After having this reflection, they will aspire to pursue the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. To universally guide all sentient beings to attain nirvana,

they will make virtuous karmas, cultivate all kinds of learning, and practice all great bodhisattva actions step by step. They will do as many novices had done in the past, and they will finally attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi as many novices had previously achieved. These novice great bodhisattvas should first learn giving paramita, then pure-precept paramita, and then forbearance paramita, diligence paramita, meditation, and prajna paramita in sequence.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, since the time first aspiring to giving paramita, these great bodhisattvas should practice giving themselves, encourage others to do so, always correctly and publicly praise the merits and virtues of giving, and joyfully admire and acclaim those who have practiced giving. Because of this cause and condition, they will fulfill giving and gain great wealth and high position. They will stay away from the mind of stinginess and practice giving very often. They will give various sentient beings food, drinks, and other living supplies depending on what they need. Because of practicing giving, these great bodhisattvas will also accept and observe the aggregate of precepts, and as a result, they will be reborn in heavens or human worlds and enjoy nobility and dignity. Because of practicing giving and observing the precepts, they will attain the aggregate of concentrations. Because of practicing giving, precepts, and concentrations, they will further attain the aggregate of wisdom. Because of practicing giving, precepts, concentrations, and wisdom, they will attain the aggregate of liberation. Because of practicing giving, precepts, concentrations, wisdom, and liberation, they will further attain the knowledge and the views of liberation. Because of the perfect fulfillment of giving, precepts, concentrations, wisdom, liberation, and the knowledge and the views of liberation, they will transcend the stages of voice-hearer and self-enlightened one and enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising. After entering onto the bodhisattva path of

nonarising, they will be able to assist sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify the Buddha lands. After accomplishing all these practices, they will realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, turn the wonderful dharma wheel, deliver various sentient beings by establishing them peacefully in the three vehicles, and allow them to get rid of birth and death and attain nirvana. These great bodhisattvas have, based on giving, accomplished virtuous karmas, cultivated various kinds of learning, and practiced the bodhisattva actions step by step, while they have attained nothing. Why? It is because all dharmas have no self-nature.
(The Buddha described how novice bodhisattvas should cultivate and fulfill the path of bodhisattva through practicing giving.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas should, since the time first aspiring to pure-precept paramita, practice pure precept themselves, encourage others to do so, always praise correctly and publicly the merits and virtues of pure precept, and joyfully admire and acclaim those who have practiced pure precept. Because of this cause and condition, their aggregate of the precepts will become pure, and thus they will be reborn in heavens or human world to enjoy nobility and dignity. They will also give property and living supplies to those in need. After practicing generous giving, they will dwell peacefully in the aggregates of precepts, concentrations, wisdom, liberation, and the knowledge and the views of liberation. Because of the purity of precepts, concentrations, wisdom, liberation, and the knowledge and the views of liberation, they will transcend the stages of voice-hearer and self-enlightened one and enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising. After entering onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising, they will be able to assist sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify Buddha lands. After accomplishing all these practices, they will realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect

knowledge, turn the wonderful dharma wheel, and deliver various sentient beings by establishing them peacefully in the three vehicles, let them get rid of birth and death and attain nirvana. These great bodhisattvas have based on pure precept accomplished the virtuous karmas, cultivated various kinds of learning, and practiced the bodhisattva actions step by step, while they have attained nothing. Why? It is because all dharmas have no self-nature.

(The Buddha described how novice bodhisattvas should cultivate and fulfill the path of bodhisattva through practicing pure precept and giving.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas should, since the time first aspiring to forbearance paramita, practice forbearance themselves, encourage others to practice forbearance, always praise correctly and publicly the merits and virtues of forbearance, and joyfully admire and acclaim those who have practiced forbearance. As practicing forbearance, these great bodhisattvas will also give properties and living supplies to various sentient beings in needs. After practicing giving, they will dwell peacefully in the aggregates of precepts, concentrations, wisdom, liberation, and the knowledge and the views of liberation. Because of the purity of their aggregates of precepts, concentrations, wisdom, liberation, and the knowledge and the views of liberation, they will transcend the stages of voice-hearer and self-enlightened one and enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising. After entering onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising, they will be able to assist sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify Buddha lands. After accomplishing all these practices, they will realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, turn the wonderful dharma wheel, deliver various sentient beings by establishing them peacefully in the three vehicles, so let them get rid of birth and death and attain nirvana. These great bodhisattvas have based on forbearance accomplished virtuous

karmas, cultivated various kinds of learning, and practiced the bodhisattva actions step by step, while they have attained nothing. Why? It is because all dharmas have no self-nature.

(The Buddha described how novice bodhisattvas should cultivate and fulfill the path of bodhisattva through practicing forbearance and giving.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas should, since the time they first aspire to diligence paramita, practice diligence themselves, encourage others to practice diligence, always praise correctly and publicly the merits and virtues of diligence, and joyfully admire and acclaim those who have practiced diligence. When practicing diligence, these great bodhisattvas will also give properties and living supplies to various sentient beings in need. After practicing giving, they will dwell peacefully in the aggregates of precepts, concentrations, wisdom, liberation, and the knowledge and the views of liberation. Because of the purity of their aggregates of precepts, concentrations, wisdom, liberation, and the knowledge and the views of liberation, they will transcend the stages of voice-hearer and self-enlightened one and enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising. After entering onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising, they will be able to assist sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify Buddha lands. After accomplishing all these practices, they will realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, turn the wonderful dharma wheel, and deliver various sentient beings by establishing them peacefully in the three vehicles, so they will be able to get rid of birth and death and attain nirvana. These great bodhisattvas have based on diligence accomplished virtuous karmas, cultivated various kinds of learning, and practiced the bodhisattva actions step by step, while they have attained nothing. Why? It is because all dharmas have no self-nature.

(The Buddha described how novice bodhisattvas should cultivate and fulfill the path of bodhisattva through practicing diligence and giving.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas should, since they first aspire to meditation paramita, enter the meditations, the immeasurable minds, and the formless concentrations; encourage others to enter the meditations, the immeasurable minds, and the formless concentrations; always praise correctly and publicly the merits and virtues of the meditations, the immeasurable minds, and the formless concentrations; and joyfully admire and acclaim those who have entered the meditations, the immeasurable minds, and the formless concentrations. As these great bodhisattvas practice meditation, they will also give properties and living supplies to various sentient beings in need. After practicing giving, they will dwell peacefully in the aggregates of precepts, concentrations, wisdom, liberation, and the knowledge and the views of liberation. Because of the purity of the aggregates of precepts, concentrations, wisdom, liberation, and the knowledge and the views of liberation, they will transcend the stages of voice-hearer and self-enlightened one and enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising. After entering onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising, they will further assist sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify Buddha lands. After accomplishing all these practices, they will realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, turn the wonderful dharma wheel, and deliver various sentient beings by establishing them peacefully in the three vehicles, so they will be able to get rid of birth and death and attain nirvana. These great bodhisattvas have based on meditation accomplished virtuous karmas, cultivated various kinds of learning, and practiced the bodhisattva actions step by step, while they have attained nothing. Why? It is because all dharmas have no self-nature.

(The Buddha described how novice bodhisattvas should cultivate and fulfill the path

of bodhisattva through practicing meditation and giving.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas should, since they first aspire to prajna paramita, establish sentient beings by means of precepts, concentrations, wisdom, liberation, and the knowledge and the views of liberation. They should adopt nonattainment as expediency to practice the six paramitas themselves, encourage others to practice the six paramitas, always praise correctly and publicly the merits and virtues of the six paramitas, and joyfully admire and acclaim those who have practiced the six paramitas. Because of the expedient skillfulness of giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita, these great bodhisattvas will transcend the stages of voice-hearer and self-enlightened one and enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising. After accomplishing all these practices, they will realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, turn the wonderful dharma wheel, and deliver various sentient beings by establishing them peacefully in the three vehicles, so they will be able to get rid of birth and death and attain nirvana. These great bodhisattvas have based on prajna accomplished virtuous karmas, cultivated various kinds of learning, and practiced the bodhisattva actions step by step, while they have attained nothing. Why? It is because all dharmas have no self-nature.

(The Buddha described how novice bodhisattvas should cultivate and fulfill the path of bodhisattva through practicing prajna and other five paramitas.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, this is how novice great bodhisattvas, based on the learning of the six paramitas, accomplish virtuous karmas, cultivate various kinds of learning, and practice the actions beneficial for all sentient beings, step by step.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, as great bodhisattvas work to accomplish

the virtuous karmas, cultivate various kinds of learning, and undertake bodhisattva actions step by step since the time they first aspire to the bodhi, they should stay in a mind correspondent with the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge to develop a belief and understanding that all dharmas have adopted non-nature as their self-nature. They should cultivate and learn the mindfulness in compliance with the Buddha, dharma, and so forth, and heaven.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, how do great bodhisattvas cultivate and learn the mindfulness in compliance with the Buddha? When great bodhisattvas cultivate and learn the mindfulness of the Buddha, they should not reflect on the Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One by virtue of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Why? Matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness have no self-nature. The dharmas without self-nature are nonexistent. The nonexistent dharmas cannot be kept in mindfulness or reflected. Why? Staying away from mindfulness and reflection is the mindfulness in compliance with the Buddha.

(The Buddha explained the meaning and the method of staying in the mindfulness in compliance with the Buddha.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, as great bodhisattvas cultivate and learn the mindfulness in compliance with the Buddha, they should not reflect on the Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One by virtue of the thirty-two perfect major marks, the body in authentic golden color surrounded by a circle of constant radiant lights as wide as one joyana, and the eighty distinguishing minor features. Why? It is because the perfect marks, distinguishing features, and the body in golden color are without self-nature. The dharmas without self-nature are nonexistent. The nonexistent dharmas cannot be kept in mindfulness or

reflected. Why? Staying away from mindfulness and reflection is the mindfulness in compliance with the Buddha.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing Ones, when cultivating and learning the mindfulness in compliance with the Buddha, great bodhisattvas should not reflect on the Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One by virtue of the aggregates of precepts, concentrations, wisdom, liberation, and the knowledge and the views of liberation. Why? These various aggregates are without self-nature. The dharmas without self-nature are nonexistent. The nonexistent dharmas cannot be kept in mindfulness or reflected. Why? Staying away from mindfulness and reflection is the mindfulness in compliance with the Buddha.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when cultivating and learning the mindfulness in compliance with the Buddha, great bodhisattvas should not reflect on the Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One by virtue of the five eyes, six supernatural powers, Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power, great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, great equanimity, staying in correct mindfulness, dwelling in equanimity at all times, the perfect knowledge of everything, the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, and the rest of innumerable and boundless Buddha dharmas. Why? These various dharmas are without self-nature. The dharmas without self-nature are nonexistent. The nonexistent dharmas cannot be kept in mindfulness or reflected. Why? Staying away from mindfulness and reflection is the mindfulness in compliance with the Buddha.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when cultivating and learning the mindfulness in compliance with the Buddha, great bodhisattvas should not reflect on

the Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One by virtue of the laws of dependent origination. Why? Various laws of dependent origination are without self-nature. The dharmas without self-nature are nonexistent. The nonexistent dharmas cannot be kept in mindfulness or reflected. Why? Staying away from mindfulness and reflection is the mindfulness in compliance with the Buddha.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should cultivate and learn the mindfulness in compliance with the Buddha this way. If they can do this, they do accomplish the virtuous karmas, cultivate various kinds of learning, and practice all bodhisattva actions step by step. If they can accomplish virtuous karmas, cultivate various kinds of learning, and practice all bodhisattva actions step by step this way, they will be able to fulfill the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path. And so on, they will be able to fulfill the perfect knowledge of all phenomena and realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Supported by the power produced by adopting non-nature nature as expediency, these great bodhisattvas can be awakened to the truth that all dharmas are without self-nature. They will neither think nor do not think of all dharmas. Well-Appearing One, you must know that great bodhisattvas should cultivate and learn the mindfulness in compliance with the Buddha this way; namely, they should realize that as the Buddha is unattainable, the mindfulness in compliance with the Buddha is also unattainable.

(The Buddha had taught about the mindfulness in compliance with the Buddha.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, how do great bodhisattvas cultivate and learn the mindfulness in compliance with the dharma? When cultivating and learning the mindfulness in compliance with the dharma, great bodhisattvas should not reflect

on the virtuous or the not virtuous dharmas, the dharmas of the world or beyond the world, the dharmas with desirable tastes or without desirable tastes, the holy or the not holy dharmas, the flawed or the flawless dharmas, the dharmas in the three realms or not in the three realms, and the conditioned or the unconditioned realm. Why? All such dharmas have no self-nature. The dharmas without self-nature are nonexistent. The nonexistent dharmas cannot be kept in mindfulness or reflected. Why? Staying away from mindfulness and reflection is mindfulness in compliance with the dharma. You must know, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should cultivate and learn the mindfulness in compliance with the dharma this way. If they can cultivate and learn the mindfulness in compliance with the dharma this way, they do accomplish virtuous karmas, cultivate various kinds of learning, and practice all bodhisattva actions step by step. If great bodhisattvas can accomplish, cultivate, and practice this way, they will be able to fulfill the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path. And so on, they will be able to fulfill the perfect knowledge of all phenomena and thus can realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. This is how great bodhisattvas adopt non-nature of all dharmas as expediency to become awakened to the truth that all dharmas have no self-nature and there is neither thinking nor nonthinking of them. You must know, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should cultivate and learn the mindfulness in compliance with the dharma with this thought: as dharmas are unattainable, how can the mindfulness compliant with the dharma be attainable?

(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas cultivate and learn the mindfulness in compliance with the dharma.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, how do great bodhisattvas cultivate and

learn the mindfulness in compliance with the sangha? When cultivating and learning the mindfulness in compliance with the sangha, great bodhisattvas should think, ‘All Buddha’s disciples have fully possessed various merits and virtues. All stream-entry aspirants and stream-enterers, once-return aspirants and once-returners, nonreturn aspirants and nonreturners, and arhat aspirants and arhats are manifested by the unconditioned reality; they have all adopted non-nature as self-nature. Because of this cause and condition, we must not think or stay in mindfulness of them. Why? All these holy ones are without self-nature. Ones without self-nature are nonexistent. The nonexistent ones cannot be kept in mindfulness or reflected. Why? Staying away from mindfulness and reflection is the mindfulness in compliance with the sangha.’ You must know, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should cultivate and learn the mindfulness in compliance with the sangha this way. As they cultivate and learn this way, they do accomplish virtuous karmas, cultivate various kinds of learning, and practice all bodhisattva actions step by step. If great bodhisattvas can accomplish, cultivate, and practice this way, they will be able to fulfill the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path. And so on, they will be able to fulfill the perfect knowledge of all phenomena and thus realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Because these great bodhisattvas have adopted non-nature of all dharmas as expediency, they are able to become awakened to the truth that all dharmas have no self-nature; there is neither thinking nor nonthinking of them. You must know, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should cultivate and learn the mindfulness in compliance with the sangha with this thought: as the sangha is unattainable, how can the mindfulness compliant with the sangha be attainable? (The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas should stay in the mindfulness in

compliance with the sangha.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, how do great bodhisattvas cultivate and learn the mindfulness in compliance with the precepts? When cultivating and learning the mindfulness in compliance with the precepts, great bodhisattvas should, since the moment first aspiring to the bodhi, stay in the mindfulness of the holy precepts as they are without defect and crack, flaw and filth; they should not be grasped or attached to; they are worthy of offerings; they are admired by the wise ones and accepted and embraced by them; and they are the ultimate, virtuous, wonderful, and compliant with superior concentrations. The great bodhisattvas should reflect and realize that the precepts have adopted non-nature as their nature so should not be kept in mindfulness or reflected. Why? All these holy precepts have no self-nature. The dharmas without self-nature are nonexistent. The nonexistent dharmas should not be kept in mindfulness or reflected. Why? Staying away from the mindfulness and reflection is the mindfulness in compliance with the precepts. You must know, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should cultivate and learn the mindfulness in compliance with the precepts this way. As they cultivate and learn this way, they do accomplish virtuous karmas, cultivate various kinds of learning, and practice all bodhisattva actions step by step. If great bodhisattvas can accomplish, cultivate, and practice this way, they will be able to fulfill the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path. And so on, they will be able to fulfill the perfect knowledge of all phenomena and thus realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Because these great bodhisattvas have adopted non-nature of all dharmas as expediency, they are able to become awakened to the truth that all dharmas have no self-nature; there is neither thinking nor nonthinking of them. You must know, Well-

Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should cultivate and learn the mindfulness in compliance with the precepts with this thought: as the precepts are unattainable, how can the mindfulness in compliance with the precepts be attainable?
(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas cultivate and learn the mindfulness in compliance with the precepts.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, how do great bodhisattvas cultivate and learn the mindfulness in compliance with equanimity and renunciation? When cultivating and learning the mindfulness in compliance with equanimity and renunciation, great bodhisattvas should adopt non-nature as expediency to renounce their properties and dharmas since the moment they first aspire to the bodhi. They will not think, 'I can or cannot renounce and give.' When giving their bodies and limbs, they will not think, 'I can or cannot renounce and give.' They will not think about the things given, or the blessings and effects that giving will produce either. Why? All these dharmas have no self-nature. The dharmas without self-nature are nonexistent. The nonexistent dharmas should not be kept in mindfulness or reflected. Why? Staying away from mindfulness and reflection is the mindfulness in compliance with equanimity and renunciation. You must know, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should cultivate and learn the mindfulness in compliance with equanimity and renunciation this way. As they cultivate and learn this way, they do accomplish virtuous karmas, cultivate various kinds of learning, and practice all bodhisattva actions step by step. If great bodhisattvas can accomplish, cultivate, and practice this way, they will be able to fulfill the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path. And so on, they will be able to fulfill the perfect knowledge of all phenomena and thus realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect

knowledge. Because these great bodhisattvas have adopted non-nature of all dharmas as expediency, they are able to become awakened to the truth that all dharmas have no self-nature; there is neither thinking nor nonthinking of them. You must know, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should cultivate and learn the mindfulness in compliance with equanimity and renunciation with this thought: as equanimity and renunciation are unattainable, how can the mindfulness in compliance with equanimity and renunciation be attainable?

(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas cultivate and learn the mindfulness in compliance with the equanimity and renunciation.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, how do great bodhisattvas cultivate and learn the mindfulness in compliance with heaven? When cultivating and learning the mindfulness in compliance with the heaven, great bodhisattvas should, since the moment they first aspire to the bodhi, adopt non-nature as expediency to think, 'The stream-enterers will be reborn in the six heavens of the realm of desire, while the nonreturners will be reborn in the two upper realms. But all these are unattainable and should not be reflected and kept in mindfulness. Why? These various heavens have no self-nature. The dharmas without self-nature are nonexistent. The nonexistent dharmas should not be kept in mindfulness or reflected. Why? Staying away from mindfulness and reflection is the mindfulness in compliance with heaven.' Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should cultivate and learn the mindfulness in compliance with heaven this way. As they cultivate and learn this way, they do accomplish virtuous karmas, cultivate various kinds of learning, and practice all bodhisattva actions step by step. If great bodhisattvas can accomplish, cultivate, and practice this way, they will be able to fulfill the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble

eightfold path. And so on, they will be able to fulfill the perfect knowledge of all phenomena and thus realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Because these great bodhisattvas have adopted non-nature of all dharmas as expediency, they are able to become awakened to the truth that all dharmas have no self-nature; there is neither thinking nor nonthinking of them. You must know, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should cultivate and learn the mindfulness in compliance with heaven with this thought: as the heaven is unattainable, how can the mindfulness in compliance with heaven be attainable?

(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas cultivate and learn the mindfulness in compliance with heaven.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, this is how novice great bodhisattvas accomplish virtuous karmas, cultivate various kinds of learning, and practice all bodhisattva actions based on the six kinds of mindfulness step by step to bring benefits and happiness to sentient beings.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, to fulfill virtuous karmas, various kinds of learning, and all bodhisattva actions, great bodhisattvas should, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, adopt non-nature as expediency to learn internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable; the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path. And so on, they should learn the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. When cultivating and learning the bodhi path this way, great bodhisattvas will be awakened to the truth that all dharmas have adopted non-nature

as their self-nature; there is not a little bit of mindfulness is attainable in them, let alone the mindfulness of matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge is existent and attainable. It is nonsensical to say that mindfulness and dharmas are existent. Therefore, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, although great bodhisattvas have accomplished virtuous karmas, cultivated various kinds of learning, and practiced all bodhisattva actions, their minds do not move or turn. Why? It is because all dharmas have no self-nature."

(The Buddha taught that great bodhisattvas should adopt non-nature as expediency to learn and cultivate various dharmas to fulfill virtuous karmas, various kinds of learning, and all bodhisattva actions.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, "If all dharmas have no self-nature, there should be no matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. If this is the case, the Buddha, dharma, sangha, the effects of contaminated or purified paths, attainment, and the intuitive contemplation would be nonexistent; then all dharmas should be nonexistent too."

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One by asking, "What do you think about this? Are nature and non-nature attainable in the non-nature of all dharmas?"

Well-Appearing One said, "No, World-Honored One."

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, "If both nature and non-nature are unattainable in the non-nature of all dharmas, why do you say that because all dharmas have no self-nature, matter, feeling, thinking, action, consciousness, and so forth, and all dharmas are nonexistent?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "I am not puzzled or skeptical about this

meaning. But the bhiksus in the future, when pursuing to be a voice-hearer or a self-enlightened one, or pursuing the Buddha effect, may think, ‘If all dharmas have no self-nature, then, who is contaminated? Who is purified? Who is tied up? Who is relieved?’ Because they do not understand the meanings of contamination, purification, bondage, and liberation, they will violate precepts, correct views, good demeanors, and pure livelihood and thus will fall into the three inferior destinies and suffer there. They will reincarnate in birth and death and cannot attain liberation. Anticipating the possibility of such horrible outcomes in the future, I have raised this question, not out of my own doubt or puzzlement.”

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, “Excellent, excellent. Now you can ask this question for the generations to come. In the non-nature of all dharmas, neither existence nor nonexistence is attainable. Therefore, one should not be attached to the existence or the nonexistence of the nature.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “If all dharmas have adopted non-nature as self-nature, then based on what meanings do great bodhisattvas aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and bring benefits and happiness to various sentient beings?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “Because all dharmas have adopted non-nature as self-nature, great bodhisattvas are able to aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and bring benefits and happiness to sentient beings. Why? Those sentient beings who are dwelling in the incorrect views of permanence or discontinuation of life seek attainment. It is difficult to convince them. They thus are not easy to become liberated because of their upside-down ignorance. Well-Appearing One, you must know that those dwelling in attainment will have no attainment and intuitive contemplation because of their thought of attainment, and

thus will not attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi either."
(The Buddha said those dwelling in attainment will not attain intuitive contemplation and the unsurpassed bodhi.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "If the ones who are attached to attainment have no attainment or intuitive contemplation, and thus will not be able to attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, then will ones far apart from attainment have attainment, intuitive contemplation, and thus be able to attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Nonattainment is attainment. Nonattainment is intuitive contemplation and unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Why? Nonattainment will not destroy the phenomena of dharma realm. You must know, Well-Appearing One, those who intend to gain something in nonattainment, to attain intuitive contemplation and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi in nonattainment, will destroy dharma realm."
(The Buddha said that nonattainment is attainment. He also explained why.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Those intending to attain something will not attain anything; they will not attain intuitive contemplation or the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, while those not intending to attain something will attain something; they will attain the intuitive contemplation and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. As in nonattainment there is no attainment, intuitive contemplation, or the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, how can great bodhisattvas attain the first stage, second stage, and so forth, and the tenth stage of bodhisattva? How can they attain the dharma forbearance of nonarising? How can they attain the supernatural powers that mature in different types and at different times? How can they attain giving paramita, pure-precept

paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita that mature in different types and at different times? How can they dwell in the dharmas that mature in different types and at different times, assist sentient beings to mature, and dignify and purify Buddha lands? How can the powers of their virtuous roots caused by staying close and making the best offerings to various Buddhas endure endlessly until attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, and even remain unexhausted after they pass away and enter nirvana when their relics and disciples continue to receive worship and offerings?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Because all dharmas are without attainment, great bodhisattvas are able to attain the first stage, the second stage, and so forth, and the tenth stage. Because all dharmas are without attainment, they are able to attain the dharma forbearance of nonarising. Because all dharmas are without attainment, they are able to attain the supernatural powers that mature in different types and at different times. Because all dharmas are without attainment, they are able to attain giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita that mature in different types and at different times. Because all dharmas are without attainment, they are able to dwell in the dharmas that mature in different types and at different times to assist sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify Buddha lands. Because all dharmas are without attainment, the powers of their virtuous roots caused by staying close and making best offerings to various Buddhas endure endlessly until attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, and even remain unexhausted after they pass away and enter nirvana when their relics and disciples continue to receive worship and offerings."

(The Buddha stated that all these superior holy effects are caused by nonattainment instead of attainment.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “If all dharmas are without attainment, then what are the differences among the six paramitas and various supernatural powers?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “For ones who are free from attainment, there are no differences between the six paramitas and the supernatural powers. But in order to assist those attached to attainment to get rid of various kinds of contamination, the great bodhisattvas teach expediently about the different forms between the six paramitas and the supernatural powers.”

佛告善現：「無所得者布施等六波羅蜜多及諸神通皆無差別，為欲令彼有所得者離諸染著，方便宣說布施等六波羅蜜多及諸神通有差別相。」

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “Based on what cause and condition do you say that there are no differences between the six paramitas and various supernatural powers for ones who are free from attainment?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas practice giving without attaining giving, the giver, the receiver, the things given, and the effects of practicing giving. They observe pure precept without attaining pure precept. They cultivate forbearance without attaining forbearance. They work diligently without attaining diligence. They enter meditation without attaining meditation. They learn prajna without attaining prajna. They initiate supernatural powers without attaining supernatural powers. They cultivate the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path without attaining the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path. And so on, they cultivate the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena without attaining the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge

of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. They assist sentient beings to mature without attaining sentient beings. They dignify and purify Buddha lands without attaining Buddha lands. They realize the bodhi without attaining the Buddha dharma. Thus, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should practice the fathomless prajna paramita without attainment. If great bodhisattvas can practice the fathomless prajna paramita without attainment, they will not be destroyed by heavenly demons and other-path practitioners."

(The Buddha emphasized that great bodhisattvas are superior because they cultivate various superior holy dharmas, assist sentient beings to mature, and dignify and purify Buddha lands without attaining all these dharmas.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "How do great bodhisattvas absorb simultaneously giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, prajna paramitas, and so forth, and the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features with the arising of a single mind when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "As great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, all holy dharmas, such as giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, prajna paramitas, and so forth, and the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features will be absorbed by prajna paramita and thus will be fulfilled by prajna paramita. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas can absorb simultaneously the six paramitas, various kinds of emptiness, and so forth, and the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features with the arising of a single mind."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Why can

great bodhisattvas absorb simultaneously the six paramitas, various kinds of emptiness, and so forth, and the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features with the arising of a mind if the dharmas they practice are absorbed by prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "When great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, the six paramitas, various kinds of emptiness, and so forth, and the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features that they are cultivating are absorbed by prajna paramita, then they can stay away from dualistic thinking."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Why can great bodhisattvas stay away from dualistic thinking when they practice the six paramitas, various kinds of emptiness, and so forth, and the thirty-two perfect marks and eighty distinguishing minor features during practicing the fathomless prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "As great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they absorb all paramitas, various kinds of emptiness, and so forth, and the eighty distinguishing minor features to fulfill giving paramita. Because of this cause and condition, they can stay away from dualistic thinking.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, as great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita and dwell in a flawless mind to practice giving paramita, and so forth, and dwell in a flawless mind to elicit the eighty distinguishing minor features but are free from dualistic thinking, then they can practice giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and elicit the eighty distinguishing minor features without a dualistic thinking."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "How do great

bodhisattvas dwell in a flawless mind to practice giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and elicit the eighty distinguishing minor features when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "As great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they also practice giving paramita with a mind far apart from the phenomena and thus do not see various phenomena. Namely, they do not see the one who can practice giving, the things given, and the one who receives the giving. Nor do they see the cause of giving, the purpose of giving, and the way of practicing giving. Dwelling in this flawless mind far apart from the phenomena they practice giving without craving and stinginess. At that time, they do not see giving or the flawless mind. They even do not see the Buddha dharma. These great bodhisattvas thus can dwell in the flawless mind to practice giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth. They will also elicit the eighty distinguishing minor features with a flawless mind far apart from the phenomena when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita. They will not see the one who can elicit the dharma, the dharma to be elicited, the cause of this elicitation, the reason for this elicitation, and how the eighty distinguishing minor features are elicited. As dwelling in this flawless mind, which is far apart from the phenomena, they will elicit the eighty distinguishing minor features without contamination and attachment. At that time, they do not see the eighty distinguishing minor features or the flawless mind. They even do not see the Buddha dharma. This is how great bodhisattvas dwell in a flawless mind to elicit the eighty distinguishing minor features."

(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas dwell in a flawless mind to elicit the eighty distinguishing minor features. This explains why great bodhisattvas can stay away from dualistic thinking to dwell in flawless mind.)

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Chapter 28

The Exquisite Phenomena

Section 2

(In the Third Assembly)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “If, when great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita and realize that all dharmas do not have forms, attainment, and actions, how will they fulfill the six paramitas? How will they fulfill internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature? How will they fulfill realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable? How will they fulfill the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering? How will they fulfill the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path? How will they fulfill the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations? How will they fulfill the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration? How will they fulfill the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations? How will they fulfill the stage of ecstasy, stage of freedom from defilement, and so forth, and stage of dharma cloud? How will they fulfill dharani gates and samadhi gates? How will they fulfill five eyes and six supernatural powers? How will they fulfill Buddha’s ten abilities, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power? How will they fulfill great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity? How will they fulfill staying in correct mindfulness and always

dwelling in equanimity? How will they fulfill the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena? How will they fulfill all great bodhisattva actions? How will they fulfill the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas? How will they fulfill the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita and realizing that all dharmas do not have forms, attainment, and actions, the great bodhisattvas should cultivate giving paramita with a flawless mind detached from phenomena. They will give sentient beings food when they need food, drinks when they need drinks, and the rest of living supplies when they need them. These great bodhisattvas will give their heads, eyes, marrows, brains, skins, muscles, limbs, tendons, bones, bodies, and lives to various sentient beings if they need them. They will also delightedly give countries, cities, wives, sons, the relatives they love, and all kinds of magnificent gardens upon others' requests. As great bodhisattvas practice giving this way, and someone appears to reproach them, 'Why do you practice such useless giving? Those who practice giving this way will get tired in body and mind and will have endless vexations.' If these great bodhisattvas are practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, they will not withdraw from what they are doing upon hearing these words, but will think, 'Although that person rebuked me, I should not worry or regret what I have done. I must practice almsgiving bravely and tirelessly in body and mind to the sentient beings in need.'

"These great bodhisattvas further transfer the blessings caused by giving along with sentient beings equally toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. When they practice giving and undertake the transference, they do not see their forms; namely, they do not see the one who practices giving, the one who transfers, the

things to be transferred, and why, where, and how the transference is made. Why? All these various dharmas are empty because of internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of particular characteristics.

"After contemplating all dharmas and realizing that they are empty, these great bodhisattvas further think, 'Who can transfer? What can be transferred? Why is the transference? Where is the transference? How is the transference made? All these dharmas are unattainable.' As the great bodhisattvas initiate transference based on the contemplation and mindfulness like this, they are doing 'virtuous transference.' Starting from this, they will further assist sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify Buddha lands. They will be able to fulfill giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas, and so forth, and the eighty distinguishing minor features that they are cultivating.

(The Buddha described how great bodhisattvas practice giving paramita and undertake virtuous transference based on the realization of the emptiness of all dharmas.)

"Although these great bodhisattvas can fulfill giving paramita this way, they will not absorb and receive the effects of practicing giving that will mature in different types and at different times. Although they do not receive and absorb the effects occurring in different types and at different times, they can, like heavenly beings in the Heaven of Enjoying Other-Made Changes, create whatever properties and supplies as they wish due to the virtuous and pure giving paramita, and provide them for sentient beings in need. Because of practicing giving, their powers increase, they can make various best offerings to the Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, and assist more sentient beings to be reborn in heaven and human world. It is also because of giving paramita, they can absorb sentient beings expediently and skillfully and

establish them firmly in one of the three vehicles suited to individuals, let each greatly benefit.

"Therefore, Well-Appearing One, as great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, due to the power of flawless mind detached from various phenomena, they can fulfill giving paramita and the rest of virtuous dharmas given all dharmas are without form, attainment, and action.

(The Buddha said that great bodhisattvas can fulfill various superior dharmas with flawless mind detached from phenomena since all dharmas are formless, unattainable, and without actions.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they stay in a flawless mind detached from various phenomena to cultivate pure-precept paramita, namely, the factors absorbed by the flawless holy path. The pure precept that they attain is without defects and cracks, flaws and filths; it cannot be grasped or attached to; it is worthy of offerings and admirations by the wise ones. The great bodhisattvas do not grasp all dharmas because of pure precept; that is, they do not grasp matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features. They do not grasp the noble families of Ksatriya, Brahman, and so forth, and lay believers. They do not grasp the Heaven of the Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and Heaven of Nonthinking and Not Nonthinking. They do not grasp the stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi. They do not grasp the thrones of wheel-turning king and smaller kings, or the positions of high-ranking officials. They rather transfer the pure precept that they are observing along with various sentient beings equally toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect

knowledge. When they undertake transference, they adopt formlessness, nonattainment, and nonduality instead of existence, form, attainment, and duality as expediency. They have done this in terms of the worldly way rather than the ultimate meaning. Because of this cause and condition, all Buddha dharmas can be fulfilled. (The Buddha described how great bodhisattvas practice pure-precept paramita with a flawless mind detached from form, attainment, and action.)

"Because of the expedient skillfulness of pure-precept paramita, the great bodhisattvas can initiate diligence to foster four meditations. By adopting noncontamination and nonattachment as expediency, they elicit supernatural powers. With the pure heavenly eye that matures in different types and at different times, they can see the Buddhas in the worlds of the ten directions and will never lose or forget what they have seen until realizing insightfully and attaining the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. With the superior pure heavenly ear, they can hear the dharma teaching given by various Buddhas in the worlds of the ten directions; they will never lose or forget what they have heard until they realize insightfully and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, so that they can perform various beneficial things for themselves and for others, none will be in vain. With the knowledge of reading others' minds, they can know the minds and the associated images of the Buddhas and the sentient beings in the worlds of the ten directions, so they are able to initiate various beneficial things suitable for individual sentient beings. With the knowledge of previous lives, they can know the karmas that sentient beings made previously and how they suffered because the karmas they created are not eliminated. The great bodhisattvas thus will teach them about the causes and conditions of their karmas, let them remember what they did to benefit them. They will further use their flawless knowledge to well establish sentient beings and let them dwell in stream-

entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and the unsurpassed bodhi. In summary, these great bodhisattvas, wherever they are reborn, can assist sentient beings to dwell in various virtuous stages according to individual differences.

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas use pure-precept paramita to initiate supernatural powers to help sentient beings.)

"Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas will stay in a flawless mind that is far apart from phenomena to fulfill pure-precept paramita and the rest of virtuous dharmas as all dharmas are without form, attainment, and action.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they should stay in a flawless mind detached from phenomena to cultivate forbearance paramita.

"Since the moment first aspiring to the bodhi until finally sitting on the throne of the wonderful bodhi, the great bodhisattvas do not let a mind of hatred and anger arise if each of sentient beings carries weapons to harm them. At that time, the great bodhisattvas will cultivate two kinds of forbearance: refraining from anger and hatred as facing the sentient beings who are doing harm to them or scolding them, or initiating dharma forbearance of nonarising.

(Two kinds of forbearance.)

"As great bodhisattvas encounter insult and reproach, or the harm and injury done by someone with swords and rods, they should carefully reflect on these questions: Who receives insult and reproach? Who is doing harm? Who will be harmed? Who will be angry? Who will receive the suffering with patience? The great bodhisattvas reflect and investigate carefully and get to realize that the nature of all dharmas is empty in the final analysis. As the dharmas are unattainable, how can the

nature of dharmas be existent? As the dharma nature is nonexistent, how can sentient beings be existent? If they can contemplate this way, they will see that the one who reproaches and insults, one to be insulted and scolded, one who will injure and do harm to others, and the one to be injured are all nonexistent. Even if their bodies and limbs are cut off piece by piece, they will remain in forbearance without hatred. As they contemplate various dharmas as they really are, they will insightfully realize and attain dharma forbearance of nonarising. What is called dharma forbearance of nonarising? It means that all vexations never arise, the exquisite knowledge and wisdom are active uninterruptedly, and the realization that all dharmas are in the final analysis without arising is attained.

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas develop dharma forbearance of nonarising; its meaning was clarified.)

"When dwelling in these two kinds of forbearance, great bodhisattvas will be able to fulfill the six paramitas, and so forth, and the eighty distinguishing minor features quickly.

"When dwelling peacefully in these Buddha dharmas, the great bodhisattvas will fulfill the flawless holy path, the dharma beyond the world, and the supernatural powers not shared by voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones. When dwelling peacefully in the superior supernatural powers, they can always see various Buddhas present in the world of the ten directions with their pure heavenly eye. They can always stay in the mindfulness in compliance with the Buddha until they realize insightfully and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. With their pure heavenly ear, they can always hear the dharma teachings given by various Buddhas in the worlds of the ten directions. Once hearing the teachings, they will never forget or lose them. They can further teach sentient beings accurately what they have heard.

With the supernatural power of reading others' minds, they can get to know accurately the minds and the associated images of various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones. They can also accurately know the minds and the associated images of sentient beings, and accordingly teach correct dharma suited to them, let them develop definitive understanding. With the supernatural power of knowing previous lives, they will know different virtuous roots that sentient beings had planted in the past, so they can demonstrate to, guide, celebrate, encourage, advise them expediently to benefit them. With the supernatural power of flawless knowledge, they will establish sentient beings in one of the three vehicles suitable for each of them.

(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas developed supernatural powers to help sentient beings.)

"As great bodhisattvas have practiced the fathomless prajna paramita, dignified and purified Buddha lands, and assisted sentient beings to mature in an expedient and skillful way, they will before long possess the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, realize insightfully and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, and turn the wonderful dharma wheel to benefit all sentient beings.

"Therefore, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas can stay in a flawless mind far apart from phenomena to fulfill forbearance paramita and the rest of virtuous dharmas, as all dharmas are without form, attainment, and action.

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas stay in a flawless mind detached from phenomena to fulfill forbearance paramita and other dharmas to help sentient beings.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should stay in a flawless mind far apart from phenomena to cultivate diligence paramita. They should achieve a brave diligence in body and

mind and enter the first, second, third, and fourth meditations. Based on the four meditations, they will initiate supernatural power to make various kinds of transformation, and so forth, and touching and turning the sun and moon with their hands easily. Because of the brave diligence, they can use their supernatural powers to instantaneously go to as many Buddhas' worlds in the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges. They will make the best offerings respectfully to the Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones. Owing to these unexhausted rewards caused by virtuous roots, they will realize insightfully and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge step by step. Because of the intensified powers of these virtuous roots, they will become the Buddhas and thus receive the best offerings made respectfully by heavenly beings, human beings, asuras, and so forth of the world. Because of these virtuous roots, their relics and disciples will continue to receive the best offerings made respectfully by immeasurable heavenly beings, human beings, asuras, and so forth of the world even after they pass away.

(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas fulfill diligence paramita with a flawless mind apart from phenomena and initiate supernatural powers, make offerings to Buddhas, accumulate merits and virtues, and finally become the Buddha.)

"Owing to the supernatural powers possessed by these great bodhisattvas, they are also able to go to as many Buddha worlds in the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges to hear the correct dharma teachings given by various Buddhas. They will accept and embrace the teachings and never forget or lose them until attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. they further use supernatural powers to go to various Buddha worlds, assist sentient beings to mature, dignify and purify Buddha lands, and cultivate diligently and assiduously the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. After realizing insightfully and attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and

universal bodhi, they will turn the wonderful dharma wheel to deliver sentient beings.

"Well-Appearing One, because the great bodhisattvas have achieved brave diligence in body and mind, they are able to fulfill diligence paramita quickly.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, because the great bodhisattvas have achieved the brave diligence, they are able to fulfill quickly diligence paramita absorbed in various flawless holy paths and their factors. Because of this reason, no unvirtuous karmas of body, speech, and mind are allowed to arise.

"These great bodhisattvas will not grasp or be attached to all dharmas, and regard them as permanent or impermanent, pleasant or painful, with or without selfness, and pure or impure. They will not grasp or be attached to the conditioned realm and the unconditioned realm; the realm of desire, the realm of form, and the realm of formlessness; 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 three liberation gates; and the rest of innumerable and boundless Buddha dharma, and regard them as permanent or impermanent, pleasant or painful, with or without selfness, and pure or impure. They will not grasp or be attached to stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, and regard them as permanent or impermanent, and so on. They will not grasp or be attached to stream-enterer, once-returner, and so forth, and the Buddha. They will not grasp or be attached to the knowledge that the sentient beings whose views are correct are called stream-enterer, the sentient beings whose vexations become slight are called once-returner, the sentient beings whose lower bonds are terminated are called nonreturner, the sentient beings whose upper bonds are terminated are called arhat, the sentient beings who attain the self-enlightenment path are called self-enlightened one, the sentient beings

who attain the path of the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths are called bodhisattva, and the sentient beings who attain the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are called the Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, perfectly and Universally Enlightened One. These great bodhisattvas neither grasp nor are attached to these dharmas and these sentient beings. Why? It is because all dharmas and sentient beings are without self-nature.

(The Buddha said that the great bodhisattvas who have realized the truth of all phenomena as empty would not grasp or be attached to all dharmas and regard them as permanent or impermanent, pleasant or painful, and so forth.)

"Because these great bodhisattvas have achieved brave diligence, they can do many beneficial things for sentient beings without thinking about their own bodies and lives, but they will not attain anything from sentient beings. They can fulfill diligence paramita that they are cultivating, but they will attain nothing from diligence paramita. They can fulfill all Buddha dharmas, but they will attain nothing from the Buddha dharmas. They can dignify and purify Buddha lands, but they will attain nothing from the Buddha lands.

(The diligent great bodhisattvas can offer numberless services for sentient beings but they do not attain anything from all dharmas or sentient beings.)

"These great bodhisattvas have achieved diligence in body and mind, so they can stay far away from all unvirtuous dharmas and absorb and receive all virtuous dharmas without grasping or being attached to them. To benefit sentient beings, they will manifest supernatural powers and relevant matters freely without hindrance, traveling from one Buddha land to the other, from one world to the other, but they offer various services without grasping and attachment. Namely, they will manifest the wonderful flowers that rain from heaven, fragrances that spread everywhere,

entertainment and music that are played, and sounds of thunder that shock the earth. They will also manifest a magnificent world decorated by seven treasures, the bright lights that emit from their bodies to drive away darkness and enlighten ignorant sentient beings, as well as the wonderful fragrances that spread from their bodies and turn all smelly things into pure and fresh. They will also manifest building a great temple, in which they will guide without annoying immeasurable sentient beings to walk on correct path and stay away from killing, lying, and so forth, and incorrect views. They will absorb various sentient beings with giving, pure precept, and so forth, and prajna. To benefit sentient beings, they will renounce properties and treasures, wives, the thrones of kings, limbs, bodies, or lives. They will bring benefits and happiness to sentient beings expediently after understanding individual needs.

"Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas will stay in a flawless mind apart from phenomena to fulfill diligence paramita and the rest of virtuous dharmas although all dharmas are without form, attainment, and action.

(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas fulfill diligence paramita and other superior dharmas with a flawless mind apart from phenomena.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they can adopt a flawless mind detached from phenomena to cultivate meditation paramita.

"These great bodhisattvas can fulfill all concentrations except the concentration of the Thus-Comer. They leave the not virtuous dharmas behind and enter and fully dwell in the first meditation with general contemplation and specific investigation along with the joy and pleasure caused by nonarising. And so on, they enter the fourth meditation and fully dwell in it.

“These great bodhisattvas fully dwell in a concomitant mind of loving-kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity to become universally connected with the ten directions.

“These great bodhisattvas transcend the thinking of matters and substances and all other kinds of thinking to enter the spheres of boundless emptiness, boundless consciousness, and so forth, and nonthinking and not nonthinking.

“Because of dwelling peacefully in meditation paramita, the great bodhisattvas can also fully dwell in the eight liberations and the nine concentrations in sequence, entering either from the first to the ninth concentration or the opposite direction.

“These great bodhisattvas can fully and peacefully dwell in the samadhi of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration. They can also fully dwell in various concentrations uninterruptedly, such as lightning-like concentration, diamond-like concentration, and holy correct concentration.

“These great bodhisattvas can dwell peacefully in meditation paramita to cultivate and fulfill the thirty-seven factors for the bodhi and the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths. They absorb all kinds of samadhi into the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, cultivate step by step to transcend the stage of pure contemplation, stage of embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and the stage of self-enlightened one, and then enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising. After entering onto the bodhisattva path, they cultivate various stages and finally fulfill the stage of the Buddha. Although these great bodhisattvas have cultivated to transcend each previous stage, they do not grasp or be attached to the effect of each stage until attaining the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

(The Buddha described the stapes that great bodhisattvas go through on their path leading to the unsurpassed bodhi.)

“These great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in meditation. They have traveled from one Buddha land to the other, stayed close to Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, and made offerings respectfully to them. They have, at various Buddhas’ places, planted virtuous roots, assisted sentient beings to mature, and dignified and purified Buddha lands tirelessly from one world to the other, bringing benefits and happiness to sentient beings. They absorb sentient beings with giving, pure precept, and so forth, and prajna, or with the aggregates of precept, concentration, and so forth, and the knowledge and the views of liberation. They teach sentient beings to dwell in stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. They expediently guide various sentient beings to dwell peacefully suited to individual difference for developing virtuous roots and virtuous dharmas.

“Because these great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in meditation paramita, they can elicit all dharani gates and samadhi gates, attain superior four unhindered understandings, and attain superior supernatural powers that mature in different types and at different times.

“Because these great bodhisattvas have achieved superior supernatural powers that mature in different types and at different times, they certainly will not be reborn through a mother’s womb, certainly will not receive the pleasures of sex, certainly will not absorb the vehicle of birth, and certainly will not be contaminated by the faults of the birth. Why? These great bodhisattvas have seen and known clearly that all dharma natures are like transformed things. Although they know that all actions are like transformed things, they ride on the aspiration based on compassion to bring benefits and happiness to all sentient beings. Although they have ridden on the aspiration based on compassion to bring benefits and happiness to all sentient beings,

they realize that sentient beings and their establishments are unattainable. Although they realize that sentient beings and their establishments are unattainable, they well establish all sentient beings to let them dwell peacefully in the unattainable dharmas. This truth is demonstrated in terms of the worldly way instead of the ultimate meanings.

"These great bodhisattvas have thus dwelled peacefully in meditation paramita, cultivated all meditations, liberations, samadhi, and samapatti and never stay apart from the meditation that they are cultivating until fulfilling the unsurpassed bodhi.

"These great bodhisattvas have practiced the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, expediently elicited the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, and dwelled peacefully in it to eliminate permanently enduring disposition of vexations. They correctly benefit themselves and others. They work together with all heavenly beings, human beings, asuras, and so forth of the world to establish pure fields of bliss, so they are worthy of the offerings made respectfully by the world.

"Well-Appearing One, this is how great bodhisattvas, when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita, stay in a flawless mind far apart from phenomena to fulfill meditation paramita and the rest of virtuous dharmas although all dharmas are without form, attainment, and action.

(The Buddha outlined whole process how great bodhisattvas fulfill meditation paramita and other superior dharmas with a flawless mind apart from phenomena as all dharmas are formless, unattainable, and without action.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they can stay in a flawless mind far apart from phenomena to cultivate prajna paramita.

“These great bodhisattvas have not seen any dharma that can really achieve something. They have not seen matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the flawed and flawless dharmas that have really achieved something. Nor have they seen all dharmas that arise or extinguish, increase or decrease, and assemble or disperse. They have accurately contemplated matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the flawed and flawless dharmas and realize that they are all illusory, not solid, and without self-nature.

“As they contemplate this way, they do not attain the self-nature of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the self-nature of the flawed and flawless dharmas.

“As they practice the fathomless prajna paramita and contemplate this way, they develop a deep belief and insightful understanding, realizing that all dharmas adopt non-nature as their self-nature. With such belief and understanding, they can practice internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature. When practicing this way, they do not grasp the dharmas. Namely, they do not grasp and become attached to matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and all great bodhisattva actions, nor grasp and become attached to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas.

“When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, these great bodhisattvas can fulfill the path of the bodhi; namely, they can fulfill giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas, and so forth, and the eighty distinguishing minor features.

“After dwelling peacefully in this path of the bodhi, these great bodhisattvas can further fulfill the path of the Buddha that matures in different ways and at different times; namely, they can fulfill giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence,

meditation, and prajna paramita as well as the rest of innumerable factors for the bodhi.

"When dwelling peacefully in the path of the Buddha that matures in different types and at different times, their superior supernatural powers mature so they can expediently benefit sentient beings. They absorb sentient beings by giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita when these are most suitable for sentient beings. They absorb sentient beings with the aggregates of precept, concentration, and so forth, and the knowledge and the views of liberation when these are most suitable for sentient beings. They absorb sentient beings with a peaceful dwelling in stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi when these are most suitable for sentient beings.

"These great bodhisattvas can apply the supernatural power of transformation. If they would like to visit as many worlds as the sands of the Ganges, they can depend on this power to travel around easily. If they would like to create different kinds of treasures and rarities for various worlds, they can use it freely. If they would like to give rarities and treasures to sentient beings they visit, they can do it freely to please them.

"These great bodhisattvas will travel from one world to the other to bring benefits, peace, and happiness to innumerable sentient beings. As they find pure and magnificent lands that they favor, they can absorb those stately and dignified Buddha lands. Like the Heaven of Enjoying Other-Made Changes, in which the heavenly beings may have their favorite amusements present right away as they wish. So do these great bodhisattvas, who can absorb innumerable magnificent, exquisite, pure, and dignified Buddha lands and manifest them as they wish.

"Because of giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and

prajna paramita that mature in different types and at different times, and also because of various wonderful supernatural powers and the path of the bodhi that mature in different types and at different times, these great bodhisattvas can practice the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths. As they have fully achieved the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, they will further realize insightfully and attain the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. After attaining this perfect knowledge, they will not absorb all dharmas; namely, they will not absorb matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the virtuous and not virtuous dharmas. They will not absorb the dharmas of and beyond the world, the flawed and flawless dharmas, and the conditioned and unconditioned dharmas. They will not absorb the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi that they have realized. They will not absorb the things that they used in all Buddha lands, or the sentient beings and all dharmas. Why? It is because these great bodhisattvas do not absorb or receive anything, do not attain all dharmas, and because they have taught sentient beings that all dharma natures cannot absorb and receive.

"Well-Appearing One, this is how great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita with a flawless mind far apart from phenomena to fulfill prajna paramita and the rest of virtuous dharmas, as all dharmas are without form, attainment, and action."

(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas fulfill prajna paramita and other superior dharmas with a flawless mind apart from phenomena as all dharmas are formless, unattainable, and without action.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "How can great bodhisattvas fulfill giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita as the dharmas are uncontaminated, formless, and their characteristics are

empty? How can they establish differences in the dharmas that are flawless and without differences? How can they realize and recognize the differences of the phenomena of dharmas? How can they absorb the six paramitas and the rest of dharmas in and beyond the world into prajna paramita? How can they establish the formless one-form in different phenomena of all dharmas and establish different phenomena in the formless one-form dharmas?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "When great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they should dwell in the five aggregates that are like dreams, echoes, images, shadows, illusory images under sunlight, illusions, transformed things, and mirages to cultivate giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita for the sake of sentient beings. They should realize accurately that the five aggregates resembling dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages are formless. Why? Dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages are all without self-nature. The dharmas without self-nature are formless dharmas. The formless dharmas are with only one form, namely, formlessness. Because of this cause and condition, you must know that the giver, receiver, the things given, the nature of giving, the effects of giving, and the conditions of giving are all formless.

"As great bodhisattvas practice giving with such realization, they can fulfill giving paramita. If they can fulfill giving paramita, they will always stay with pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, prajna paramitas. Once dwelling peacefully in the six paramitas, they will fulfill the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations. They will also fulfill the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path, the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena.

“As great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in the flawless holy dharmas that mature in different types and at different times, they will, by means of supernatural powers, go to as many Buddha worlds in the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges and make innumerable best offerings respectfully to the Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones. They will perform many beneficial things for the sentient beings living there. For those who should be absorbed by giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita, they will absorb them with giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita. For those who should be absorbed by other virtuous dharmas, great bodhisattvas will also absorb them with these virtuous dharmas.

“Because these great bodhisattvas have achieved such superior virtuous roots, they are always at ease with all dharmas. They still stay with birth and death, but they are not contaminated by the faults of birth and death. To benefit sentient beings, they receive and absorb wealth, nobility, and freedom of human beings and heavenly beings. Because of the powers of wealth, nobility, and freedom, they can accomplish many beneficial things for sentient beings. They absorb them with the four approaches.

“These great bodhisattvas realize that all dharmas are formless. Although they well understand stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi, they do not dwell in them. Why? With accurate realization of all dharmas, these great bodhisattvas have aspired to pursue and attain the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths that are not shared by voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones.

“Well-Appearing One, realizing that all dharmas are formless, the great bodhisattvas accurately understand that the six paramitas and the rest of innumerable

and boundless Buddha dharmas are formless. Because of this cause and condition, they can fulfill all Buddha dharmas, realize insightfully and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, and bring benefits and happiness to all sentient beings endlessly.

(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas fulfill giving paramita as the dharmas are uncontaminated, formless, and their characteristics are empty to help sentient beings and dignify and purify Buddha lands.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they should dwell peacefully in the five aggregates that are like dreams, echoes, images, shadows, illusory images under sunlight, illusions, transformed things, and mirages to fulfill pure-precept paramita. Because they accurately understand that the five aggregates are like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages, they can fulfill the formless pure-precept paramita. Pure precept is free from defects, cracks, flaws, and impurity; it is worthy of offerings, and the admiration, acceptance, embrace, and thorough understanding by the wise ones. It is flawless holy dharma, absorbed by the path beyond the world. If great bodhisattva dwell peacefully in pure precept, they can accept and embrace the established precept, natural precept, the precept for behaviors, the precept manifested in the rules, the spirit of the precept, the precept for here and now, the precept not for here and now, the precept for demeanors, and the precept not for demeanors.

"Although the great bodhisattvas have achieved all these kinds of precept, they are not attached to them. They do not think, 'Because of observing these precepts, I will be reborn in the noble families of Ksatriya, Brahman, and so forth, and the lay believers to enjoy wealth and ease.' They do not think, 'Because of observing these precepts, I will become a small king, a great king, a wheel-turning king, or a premier

to enjoy wealth and ease.' They do not think, 'Because of observing these precepts, I will be reborn in the Heaven of the Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and the Heaven of Nonthinking and Not Nonthinking to enjoy wealth and ease.' They do not think, 'Because of observing these precepts, I will attain stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.' Why? All these dharmas have only one form; namely, formlessness. They are without form, duration, and attainment. The formless dharma cannot attain formless dharma. The dharma with form cannot attain the dharma with form either. The formless dharma cannot attain the dharma with form, and the dharma with form cannot attain the formless dharma. Because of this cause and condition, no attainment exists.

"Therefore, Well-Appearing One, when great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they fulfill the formless pure-precept paramita quickly. Once fulfilling the formless pure-precept paramita, they can enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising quickly. After entering onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising, they can further attain the dharma forbearance of nonarising for bodhisattvas. Once attaining the dharma forbearance of nonarising for bodhisattvas, they will continue to cultivate the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths toward the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, attain the superior five supernatural powers that mature in different types and at different times, followed by attaining the five hundred dharani gates and the five hundred samadhi gates. Upon dwelling in these gates, they can attain the four unhindered understandings. They will travel from one Buddha land to the other to stay close and make offerings respectfully to various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, assist sentient beings to mature, and dignify and purify Buddha lands.

"With an intention to teach and help improving sentient beings, they willingly appear in birth and death and drift through various destinies without being contaminated by their faults. Like a transformed person, they show themselves walking, staying, sitting, and lying, but they have no such actions. Although they bring benefits and happiness to all sentient beings, they attain nothing from these sentient beings and their establishments. A Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One called Good and Tranquil One turned the wonderful dharma wheel after attaining the great bodhi, and delivered innumerable sentient beings to let them get rid of birth and death and realize insightfully and attain nirvana. But at that time, no sentient being in his land was qualified to be conferred the prophecy of becoming a Buddha as his successor. So, the Good and Tranquil One transformed a Buddha and let the transformed being dwell in his world while he himself passed into nirvana. After one kalpa, the transformed Buddha conferred on a bodhisattva the prophecy of attaining the great bodhi, and he himself passed into the nirvana without remainder. Although the transformed Buddha had done and accomplished many things beneficial for sentient beings, he did not attain anything; namely, he did not attain matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the flawed dharmas, flawless dharmas, and sentient beings. So do great bodhisattvas. Although they have accomplished many things, they have attained nothing.

"Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas have thus fulfilled pure-precept paramita when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita. Because they have fulfilled pure-precept paramita, they can absorb and receive all Buddha dharmas and further realize insightfully and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge to bring benefits and happiness to all sentient beings endlessly.

(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas fulfill pure-precept paramita as the dharmas are uncontaminated, formless, and their characteristics are empty to help sentient beings.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they should dwell peacefully in the five aggregates that are like dreams, echoes, images, shadows, illusory images of water under sunlight, illusions, transformed things, and mirages to fulfill forbearance paramita. Realizing that the five aggregates are like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages, great bodhisattvas can fulfill the formless forbearance paramita.

"Well-Appearing One, how do great bodhisattvas fulfill the formless forbearance paramita after accurately realizing that the five aggregates are like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita? Well-Appearing One, after accurately realizing that the five aggregates do not have real phenomena, they can cultivate two kinds of forbearance, which will lead them to fulfill the formless forbearance paramita. What are the two kinds of forbearance? One is the forbearance of acceptance in calmness without reluctance, the other is the forbearance of contemplation and investigation.

"The forbearance of acceptance in calmness without reluctance means that since the moment first aspiring to the wonderful bodhi until sitting peacefully on the throne of the wonderful bodhi, great bodhisattvas do not let a thought of hatred or revenge arise even when they face slanders, insults, scorns, and rebukes, or the attacks with stones, tiles, and swords by others, but rather think, 'Those sentient beings should be pitied. They are tortured by turbulent minds and not in peace, so they initiated such bad karma. I should not get angry or hate them.' The great bodhisattvas further think, 'It is because I have absorbed various aggregates of these adversaries

that they initiated such bad karma against me. I should blame myself instead of them.' When contemplating and investigating carefully this way, these bodhisattvas will have compassionate mind arise. This is called the forbearance of acceptance in calmness without reluctance.

"In the forbearance of contemplation and investigation, bodhisattvas will think, 'All phenomena and beings are like illusions, they are illusory, unreal, not free. and not at ease. They are also like empty space. The 'I,' sentient being, and so forth, and the knower and the viewer do not exist. All dharmas arise out of deluded differentiations; they are created by our minds. So, who is scolding me? Who is doing harm to me? Who is scolded? Who is injured? All are caused by illusory differentiations. From now on, I should not let any attachment or grasping arise. All dharmas are nonexistent because of the emptiness of original nature and the emptiness of ultimate meaning.' When bodhisattvas contemplate and investigate this way, they will realize accurately that all phenomena and beings are empty and tranquil, so they will not have incorrect thoughts. This is the forbearance of contemplation and investigation.

(The Buddha explained two kinds of forbearance.)

"Because these great bodhisattvas have cultivated and learned these two kinds of forbearance, they can fulfill the formless forbearance paramita and attain the dharma forbearance of nonarising."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "What is the dharma forbearance of nonarising? Which dharmas will be terminated? What kind of wisdom is this?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Because of its power, no evil or unvirtuous dharma can arise, so it is called the dharma forbearance of nonarising. This

forbearance can permanently eliminate the vexations caused by arrogance and the attachment to 'I' and associated images. It helps one accept the truth that all phenomena and beings are like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages, it is thus called the perfect knowledge of forbearance. Attaining this perfect knowledge means attaining dharma forbearance of nonarising."

(The Buddha explained dharma forbearance of nonarising.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Is the dharma forbearance of nonarising for voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones different from the dharma forbearance of nonarising for bodhisattvas?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "The termination of vexations and the perfect knowledge for stream-enterers, once-returners, and so forth, and self-enlightened ones are also contained in the dharma forbearance of nonarising for great bodhisattvas. But there is another forbearance for great bodhisattvas, which is the forbearance of all dharmas without arising in the final analysis. The forbearance for bodhisattvas is thus different from the forbearance for voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, because great bodhisattvas have achieved such superior forbearance, they transcend all voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones. Because great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in this forbearance that matures in different types and at different times to practice the bodhisattva path, they can fulfill the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths. After fulfilling the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, great bodhisattvas can stay with the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration; and the supernatural powers that mature in different types and at

different times. Due to the supernatural powers, they can travel from one Buddha land to the other to stay close and make offerings respectfully to various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones. They thus can assist sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify Buddha lands. After that, they can further realize insightfully and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

"Well-Appearing One, this is how great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita to fulfill the formless forbearance paramita. Because of the fulfillment of forbearance paramita, they can fulfill all Buddha dharmas, realize insightfully and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge to bring benefits and happiness to all sentient beings in endless future.

(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas practice prajna paramita to fulfill forbearance paramita and achieve perfect knowledge to benefit sentient beings endlessly.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they should dwell peacefully in the five aggregates that are like dreams, echoes, images, shadows, illusory images of water under sunlight, illusions, transformed things, and mirages. After accurately realizing that the five aggregates are like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages, they should initiate a brave diligence in body and mind.

"Because these great bodhisattvas initiate brave diligence in body and mind, they can elicit superior and swift supernatural powers to go to various Buddha worlds in the ten directions to stay close and make offerings to various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones. They plant virtuous roots at various Buddhas' places to bring benefits, peace, and happiness to sentient beings. They also dignify and purify various Buddha lands. Because of the diligence of body, these great bodhisattvas can assist sentient

beings to mature and establish them expediently in the three vehicles.

"Well-Appearing One, when great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they can fulfill the formless diligence paramita quickly through the diligence of body. By activating the brave diligence of mind, they can elicit the holy paths established by flawless paths of various holy ones, to fulfill diligence paramita and absorb various virtuous dharmas; namely, they absorb the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Because of the diligence of the mind, these great bodhisattvas can fulfill perfect features and emit great, brilliant lights to illuminate boundless realms. Because of the fulfillment of the mind diligence, they can permanently eliminate enduring disposition of vexations, realize insightfully and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, turn the wonderful dharma wheel, possess the thirty-two perfect major marks, and make the large threefold thousand-world shake in different ways. When witnessing what is happening, sentient beings will be illuminated and touched by the brilliant lights and the voices of correct dharma, so they can attain nonregression in the three vehicles until attaining the ultimate bodhi.

"Well-Appearing One, this is how great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita to fulfill diligence paramita. Because of diligence paramita, they can perform many beneficial things for themselves and others, fulfill all Buddha dharmas quickly, and realize insightfully and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge to bring benefits and happiness to all sentient beings in endless future." (The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas practice prajna paramita to fulfill diligence paramita and achieve unsurpassed bodhi to benefit sentient beings endlessly.)

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Chapter 28

The Exquisite Phenomena

Section 3

(In the Third Assembly)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, as great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they should dwell peacefully in the five aggregates that are like dreams, echoes, images, shadows, illusory images of water under sunlight, illusions, transformed things, and mirages to fulfill meditation paramita."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked, "World-Honored One, how do great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in the five aggregates that are like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages to fulfill meditation paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "When great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they should get to realize accurately that the five aggregates are like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages; they all have no real forms. Then they enter the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; cultivate the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration; cultivate lightning-like concentration, diamond-like concentration, and the correct holy samadhi and dwell in the diamond-like samadhi. They further enter and fully dwell in all concentrations, including those shared by the two vehicles and other superior concentrations, except the concentration of the Thus-Comer. But they will not be attached to the tastes of various kinds of samadhi or indulged in their effects. Why? These great bodhisattvas have realized accurately that all concentrations and all dharmas are without forms and nature; their natures are non-

nature. The formless dharma should not be attached to other formless dharma, and the dharma without nature should not be attached to other dharma without nature. Because these great bodhisattvas have been rid of attachment, they will not be restricted and compelled by the powers of various concentrations to be reborn in the realm of form or the realm of formlessness. Why? They will not attain any realm, the ones who enter the concentrations, the concentrations ones enter, the cause of entering concentrations, the purpose of entering concentrations, and the time when and the place where concentrations take place.

"Because the great bodhisattvas attain nothing in all dharmas, they can fulfill the formless meditation paramita quickly. Because of the fulfillment of meditation, they can transcend the stage of voice-hearer and the stage of self-enlightened one."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "How do the great bodhisattvas transcend the stage of voice-hearer and the stage of self-enlightened one because of the fulfillment of the formless meditation paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "If great bodhisattvas well learn internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature, they will be able to fulfill the formless meditation paramita and transcend the stage of voice-hearer and the stage of self-enlightened one. As they dwell in various kinds of emptiness, they do not attain any dharma or see any dharma which is far apart from various kinds of emptiness. When dwelling in emptiness, the great bodhisattvas do not attain stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi, nor do they attain all great bodhisattva actions and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas. Why? In emptiness, there is neither dharma nor emptiness. Great bodhisattvas can transcend the stage of voice-hearer and the stage of self-enlightened one and enter onto the bodhisattva path of

nonarising when they dwell in these kinds of emptiness."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "What is arising and what is nonarising for great bodhisattvas?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "For great bodhisattvas all kinds of attainment are arising, while all kinds of nonattainment are nonarising."
(The Buddha distinguished between arising and nonarising as considered by great bodhisattvas.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "What is attainment and what is nonattainment for great bodhisattvas?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "For great bodhisattvas all dharmas are attainment. They regard matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge as attainment. They regard various dharma gates as attainment. Attainment is regarded as arising, like eating raw food or drinking polluted water that will bring about trouble.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, all great bodhisattvas view no action, no gaining, no speech, and no manifestation as nonattainment. It means great bodhisattvas regard no action, no gaining, no speech, and no manifestation of matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge as nonattainment. Why? All self-natures of matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge cannot be acted on, gained, spoken, and manifested.
(The Buddha distinguished between attainment and nonattainment.)

"Great bodhisattvas regard no action, no gaining, no speech, and no manifestation of various dharma gates as nonattainment, and nonattainment is nonarising. As great bodhisattvas entered onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising and

fulfill all meditations, liberations, samadhi, and samapatti, they will not be compelled by these forces to be reborn, not to mention they will be compelled by the powers of vexations, such as greed, anger, and ignorance, to be reborn. It is unreasonable to say that they will be forced by vexations to be reborn, or by the karmas they made when they dwell in the state of nonarising, to reincarnate in various destinies. Although the great bodhisattvas have dwelled in various illusory aggregates of action and done many things to bring benefits, peace, and happiness to all sentient beings, they do not attain illusions and sentient beings. They always assist sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify Buddha lands tirelessly without attaining anything.
(Great bodhisattvas help sentient beings and purifying Buddha lands without seeking personal attainment.)

"Well-Appearing One, this is how great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita to quickly fulfill the formless meditation paramita, further fulfill all Buddha dharmas, realize insightfully and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, turn the wonderful dharma wheel, and bring benefits and happiness to all sentient beings uninterruptedly and endlessly. The turning of the unsurpassed dharma wheel can give many teachings without attainment. Those who teach and the teaching itself do not have self-nature.
(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas practice prajna paramita to fulfill meditation paramita, fulfill all Buddha dharmas, and help sentient beings endlessly without attainment.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should dwell peacefully in the five aggregates that are like dreams, echoes, images, shadows, illusory images of water under sunlight, illusions, transformed things, and mirages to fulfill prajna paramita. If great

bodhisattvas can accurately realize that all dharma natures, like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages, are not real, they will be able to fulfill the formless prajna paramita."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "How do great bodhisattvas get to accurately understand all dharma natures as dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages when they cultivate the fathomless prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "When great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they do not see dreams or those who dream. They do not hear echoes or see those who hear echoes. They do not see images or those who see images. They do not see shadows or those who see shadows. They do not see illusory images of water under sunlight or those who see illusory images. They do not see illusions or those who see illusions. They do not see transformed things or those who see transformed things. They do not see mirages or those who see mirages. Why? Those who see dreams, hear echoes, and so forth, and see mirages are ignorant and attached to upside-down views. Why? All dharma natures are non-nature. All dharmas have no formation and are not real; they have no forms, actions, and real natures. They are nirvana. If all dharma natures are non-nature, all dharmas are unreal, without forms, and so forth, and equivalent to nirvana, it is unreasonable to say that great bodhisattvas should regard all dharmas as with nature and formation, or think that they are real, existent, active, and have real nature when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita. Why? If the dharmas have a little bit of self-nature and formation; if the dharmas are real, with forms and actions, and have attainable real nature, then the fathomless prajna paramigta that they are cultivating is not prajna paramita. The real nature and phenomena of all dharmas are unattainable.

"Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great

bodhisattvas thus should not be attached to matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.
(The Buddha taught bodhisattvas the correct knowledge of the nature of all dharmas and cautioned that they should not be attached to all dharmas.)

"Detached from all dharma gates, great bodhisattvas can fulfill the first, second, and so forth, and tenth stage of bodhisattva, but do not become attached to or crave for them. Why? As great bodhisattvas do not attain the ten stages or those who attain the ten stages, they would not be attached to or craving for these stages. They practice prajna paramita, but do not attain prajna paramita. Because they do not attain prajna paramita, they will not attain all dharmas. They contemplate and realize that prajna paramita can absorb all dharmas, they do not attain the dharmas. Why? It is because all dharmas and prajna paramita are not far apart or different. Why? All dharma natures are not different from realness, dharma realm, or reality. All dharmas are not mixed or different."
(The Buddha further described the nature of all dharmas.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "If the self-natures of all dharmas are not mixed or different, then how can we make innumerable differentiations among the virtuous and the not virtuous dharmas, the flawless and the flawed dharmas, the dharmas of the world and beyond the world, the conditioned and the unconditioned dharmas, and so forth?"

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "What do you think about this? Can the real nature of all dharmas be said as virtuous, not virtuous, and so forth? Can real nature be said as stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "No, World-Honored One."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, “Because of this cause and condition, you must know that dharma natures are not mixed or different; they are formless; they are without arising, extinction, hindrance, speech, and manifestation.

“You must know, Well-Appearing One, when I was cultivating and learning the bodhisattva path, I did not attain dharma natures. Namely, I did not attain matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. I did not attain 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 conscious contact; and the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact. I did not attain the earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm. I did not attain cause and condition, consecutive thoughts, conditions that stimulate the mind, and the conditions that reinforce main causes. I did not attain various dharmas that are caused by conditions. I did not attain ignorance, action, and so forth, and old age and death. I did not attain the realm of desire, the realm of form, and the realm of formlessness. I did not attain the virtuous and the not virtuous dharmas, the flawed and the flawless dharmas, the dharmas of the world and beyond the world, and the conditioned dharmas and the unconditioned dharmas. And so on, I did not attain stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi, all bodhisattva actions, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.

“Well-Appearing One, when great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they should well learn the self-natures of various dharmas since the moment they first aspire to until attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. If they

well learn well the self-natures of various dharmas, they can well purify the path of the great bodhi, fulfill all great bodhisattva actions, assist sentient beings to mature, dignify and purify Buddha lands, dwell peacefully in this correct dharma, and realize insightfully and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi before long. Then they will tame and subjugate various sentient beings expediently with the three vehicles, help them get rid of the reincarnate in three realms to attain ultimate peace and happiness in nirvana.

"Well-Appearing One, this is how great bodhisattvas should adopt formlessness as expediency to cultivate, learn, and fulfill prajna paramita. If they can cultivate and fulfill prajna paramita quickly, they can absorb all Buddha dharmas, realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, and bring benefits and happiness to all sentient beings in endless future."

(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas practice prajna paramita to fulfill prajna paramita, fulfill all Buddha dharmas, and help sentient beings endlessly without attainment.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "If all dharmas are like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages and unreal; if all dharmas adopt non-nature as nature, and their particular characteristics are empty, then how can we establish the virtuous and the not virtuous dharmas, the flawed and the flawless dharmas, the dharmas of the world and beyond the world, the conditioned and the unconditioned dharmas? How can we establish stream-entry effect, stream-enterer, and so forth, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddha and ones who can realize and attain the bodhi of the Buddha?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "The ignorant ordinary sentient beings of the world have not heard the dharma, they attain dreams and those who see

dreams, and so forth, and mirages, and those who see mirages. These ignorant ordinary sentient beings have many upside-down attachments caused by attaining dreams, echoes, and so forth. Their actions, words, and thoughts are either virtuous, not virtuous, or neutral. They engage in actions, words, and thoughts that either invite bliss-inviting, not bliss-inviting, or neutral. As a result, they drift in birth and death repeatedly and suffer endlessly.

"As practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should dwell in two kinds of emptiness to contemplate and investigate various dharmas: emptiness in the final analysis and emptiness of nontemporality. After dwelling peacefully in these two kinds of emptiness, great bodhisattvas will teach this correct dharma to various sentient beings.

(The Buddha instructed great bodhisattvas to contemplate two kinds of emptiness and teach this dharma gate to sentient beings.)

"They will so teach, 'Matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness are empty and nonexistent. The eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere are empty and nonexistent. The sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere are empty and nonexistent. The eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm are empty and nonexistent. They sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm are empty and nonexistent. The eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm are empty and nonexistent. The eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are empty and nonexistent. The feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are empty and nonexistent. The earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm are empty and nonexistent. Cause and condition, consecutive thoughts, conditions that stimulate the mind, and the

conditions that reinforce main causes are empty and nonexistent. Various dharmas produced by conditions are empty and nonexistent. Ignorance, action, and so forth, and old age and death are empty and nonexistent.'

"They will further teach, 'Matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages, are without self-nature. The eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere, like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages, are without self-nature. The sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere, like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages, are without self-nature. The eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm, like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages, are without self-nature. The sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm, like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages, are without self-nature. The eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm, like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages, are without self-nature. The eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact, like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages, are without self-nature. The feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact, like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages, are without self-nature. The earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm, like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages, are without self-nature. Cause and condition, consecutive thoughts, conditions that stimulate the mind, and the conditions that reinforce main causes, like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages, are without self-nature. Various dharmas produced by conditions, like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages, are without self-nature. Ignorance, action, and so forth, and old age and death, like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages, are without self-nature.'

“They will further teach, ‘In these two kinds of emptiness, there are no matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness; no eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere; no sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere; no eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm; no sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm; no eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm; no eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact; no feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact; no earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm; no cause and condition, consecutive thoughts, conditions that stimulate the mind, and conditions that reinforce main causes; no dharmas produced by conditions; and no ignorance, action, and so forth, and old age and death.’

“They will further teach, ‘In these two kinds of emptiness, there are no dreams and ones who see dreams, no echoes and ones who hear echoes, and so forth, and no mirages and ones who see mirages.’

“They will again teach, ‘All these dharmas are not real. Their natures are non-nature. With deluded differentiation, one will mistake nonexistent matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness for existent; mistake the nonexistent eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere for existent; mistake the nonexistent sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere for existent; mistake the nonexistent eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm for existent; mistake the nonexistent sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm for existent; mistake the nonexistent eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm for existent; mistake the nonexistent eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact

for existent; mistake the nonexistent feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact for existent; mistake the nonexistent earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm for existent; mistake cause and condition, consecutive thoughts, conditions that stimulate the mind, and conditions that reinforce main causes for existent; mistake nonexistent dharmas produced by conditions for existent; and mistake nonexistent ignorance, action, and so forth, and old age and death for existent.'

"They will further teach, 'All dharma natures, such as the aggregates, spheres, and the realms, arise out of the upside-down establishment based on the combination of conditions and are absorbed by various karmas that mature in different types and at different times. Why do you misunderstand these delusions for real?'

"At that time, the bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita expediently and skillfully to relieve greedy and stingy sentient beings from greed and stinginess and further encourage them to cultivate giving. After cultivating giving diligently, these sentient beings gain great wealth, nobility, and self-ease. The bodhisattvas further expediently encourage them to cultivate pure precept. Due to the cultivation of pure precept, these sentient beings are reborn in superior destinies to enjoy wealthy, noble, and easy life. The bodhisattvas further expediently encourage these sentient beings to cultivate meditation. Because of practicing meditation, they are reborn in the age of Brahma and dwell in the self-ease of first meditation. Rising from the first meditation, the sentient beings are guided expediently to enter and dwell peacefully in the second concentration, third concentration, and so forth, and the concentration of nonthinking and not nonthinking.

"But so far, the superior rewards gained from practicing giving, pure precept, and meditation by these sentient beings are contaminated. The bodhisattvas thus

expediently and skillfully guide them to get out of such inferior situations and relocate them in the realm of nirvana without remainder. Namely, the bodhisattvas guide them to cultivate diligently the holy paths of the three vehicles according to individual differences, help them dwell peacefully in the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration; the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations; the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering; the contemplation of the twelve links of dependent origination from cause down to effect and the opposite direction; the six paramitas; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable; various bodhisattva stages; dharani gates and samadhi gates; five eyes and six supernatural powers; the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity; staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times; and the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena.

"These great bodhisattvas have practiced the fathomless prajna paramita and expediently achieved and dwelled in the genuine flawless dharmas, which are immaterial, invisible, and unsubstantial. For the sentient beings suited to stream-entry effect, they will expediently teach, demonstrate for, encourage, guide, acclaim, and celebrate them and allow them to attain stream-entry effect. And so on, they also do the same for the sentient beings suited to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal

bodhi, and allow them to attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.

"Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita and contemplate the two kinds of emptiness and realize that all dharmas are like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages and unreal; their natures are non-nature; their particular characteristics are empty. Nevertheless, these great bodhisattvas establish the virtuous and not virtuous, the flawed and flawless dharmas, the dharmas of the world and beyond the world, and the conditioned and the unconditioned dharmas, and so forth, and stream-entry effect and stream-enterer, once-return effect and once-returner, nonreturn effect and nonreturner, self-enlightenment bodhi and self-enlightened one, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas and those who realize and attain the unsurpassed Bodhi without mess and disorder."

At that time, Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, "It is rare and exquisite, great bodhisattvas can practice the fathomless prajna paramita and contemplate and dwell peacefully in the two kinds of emptiness: emptiness in the final analysis and emptiness of nontemporality. Although they realize that all dharmas, like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages, are unreal, their natures are non-nature, and their particular characteristics are empty, they can establish innumerable dharma gates, such as the virtuous and the not virtuous, the flawed and the flawless, and so forth well without mess and disorder."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "Yes, it is as you say. It is rare and exquisite, great bodhisattvas can practice the fathomless prajna paramita to realize that all dharmas, like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages, are unreal, their particular characteristics are empty, and their natures are non-nature. Nevertheless, they can well establish innumerable dharma gates, such as the virtuous and not

virtuous, and so forth without mess and disorder. When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, all unusual and wonderful dharmas that various great bodhisattvas have achieved cannot be achieved or measured by voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones. You voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones cannot successfully challenge and subjugate the arguments made by great bodhisattvas, let alone the rest of sentient beings."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "World-Honored One, what are the rare and exquisite dharmas that voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones cannot achieve and measure, but great bodhisattvas can achieve when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "I am going to explain respectively the rare and exquisite dharmas that great bodhisattvas can achieve when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita to please all of you. Now listen carefully and have a good reflection.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, when great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they dwell in the real, pure merits and virtues of the six paramitas that mature in different types and at different times, the five wonderful supernatural powers, the thirty-seven factors for enlightenment, the dharani gates, the unhindered understandings, and so forth. They travel around the worlds of the ten directions with their supernatural powers. For the sentient beings suited to be absorbed with giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas will absorb and benefit them with giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita. For the sentient beings suited to be absorbed with the first, second, third, and the fourth meditation, great bodhisattvas will absorb and benefit them with the first, second, third, and the fourth meditation.

For the sentient beings suited to be absorbed with great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity, great bodhisattvas will absorb and benefit them with great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity. For the sentient beings suited to be absorbed with the concentrations of boundless emptiness, boundless consciousness, nothingness, and nonthinking and not nonthinking, great bodhisattvas will absorb and benefit them with the concentrations of boundless emptiness, boundless consciousness, nothingness, and nonthinking and not nonthinking. For those suited to be absorbed with the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path, great bodhisattvas will absorb and benefit them with the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path. For those suited to be absorbed with the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration, great bodhisattvas will absorb and benefit them with the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration. For those suited to be absorbed with the rest of superior virtuous dharmas, great bodhisattvas will absorb and benefit them with the rest of superior virtuous dharmas."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "How do great bodhisattvas dwell in the real pure merits and virtues of the six paramitas, the five supernatural powers, and so forth to absorb and benefit sentient beings with giving, pure precept, and so forth when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should give living supplies to sentient beings in need. Namely, they will give food and drinks to those who are hungry and thirsty and give vehicles, clothing, fragrant flowers, and other living supplies to those in need. They will also make offerings to voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, bodhisattvas,

and the Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones. When practicing giving, their minds will stay in equality and nondifferentiation. They give ones observing precept and ones violating precept equally. They give humans and nonhumans equally. They give Buddhists and non-Buddhist believers equally. They give holy ones and ordinary sentient beings equally. They give noble ones and inferior ones equally. They give Buddhas, heavenly beings, human beings, and so forth, and animals equally. They stay in equality and nondifferentiation, do not contemplate superior field of bliss and inferior field of bliss as different. Why? The great bodhisattvas have realized insightfully that the particular characteristics of all dharmas and various sentient beings are empty and without difference, therefore, they practice giving with equality in their thoughts. Because great bodhisattvas practice giving this way, they certainly will attain the effects of nondifferentiation; namely, they will fulfill the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and the rest of immeasurable and boundless Buddha dharmas.

(The Buddha taught that great bodhisattvas should practice giving without differentiations; they should treat all sentient beings equally.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, seeing a beggar come to ask for food, the bodhisattva thinks, 'If this beggar is the Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One, I should give him upon his request because he can bring me the field of bliss. If the beggar is not the Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One, I should not give him because he cannot bring me the field of bliss.' This thought of differentiation is contrary to bodhisattva path. Why? Great bodhisattvas should purify their minds before purifying their field of bliss. When seeing the beggar, they should not think, 'I will give alms to this beggar, but I will not give alms to that beggar.' Such a thought is

contrary to the great bodhi they are aspiring to. As great bodhisattvas aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal enlightenment, they vow, ‘I swear to serve as islet, house, and asylum for sentient beings. I swear to serve as the one they can rely on.’ When they see beggars, they should think, ‘These sentient beings are poor and lonely, I should help and absorb them with giving, so they will learn to practice giving to others and become less covetous and more easily satisfied. They will learn to stay away from killing, lying, and so forth, and speaking filthy words. They will also learn to overcome greed, anger, and incorrect views. Because of this cause and condition, they will be reborn in the noble family of Ksatriya, Brahman, and so forth, and layperson, or in other wealthy and noble families to enjoy rich and happy life and further cultivate various virtuous karmas. Because of practicing giving, they will gain liberation gradually and step by step through the three vehicles.’
(The Buddha taught that great bodhisattvas should stay in the mind of equality toward all sentient beings without differentiation.)

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when enemies or other sentient beings come to their places to ask for compensations or for help, great bodhisattvas should not differentiate in thinking that they like to give this person, but not that person. Rather, they should initiate a sense of equality to give bodies, money, property, cities, and wives upon their requests. Why? These great bodhisattvas have aspired to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi to bring benefits and happiness universally to all sentient beings. If they think with a mind of differentiation, ‘This I should give, and that I should not give,’ then the holy ones or sages, such as the Buddhas, self-enlightened ones, voice-hearers, bodhisattvas, heavenly beings, human beings, asuras, and so forth will scold them, ‘You have aspired to the great bodhi to bring benefits and happiness to all sentient beings, and vowed to serve as refuge, house, rescuer, and

islet for sentient beings in fear and restlessness, but now you say that this one I will give and that one I will not give?'

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, if humans and nonhumans come to ask for bodies, hands, feet, and limbs, great bodhisattvas do not think with differentiation, 'Will I give or not give?' Rather, they think, 'I will give them whatever they ask for.' Why? These great bodhisattvas have always thought, 'I received this body to benefit sentient beings. Therefore, I should always give them whatever they request. I should not say no to them.' When seeing the beggars, they think, 'I received this body for their sake. I should give them without request, not to mention if they have asked for that.' After thinking this way, great bodhisattvas will joyfully cut their limbs off and give them to others. The great bodhisattvas will celebrate, 'I have gained a lot today. I have discarded the filths, and my body now becomes pure and clean.'

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should pursue the great bodhi this way.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when seeing various beggars come, great bodhisattvas should have these thoughts appeared in their minds, 'Hear and now, who are the givers? Who are the receivers? What are given? What is the cause of giving? How is giving done? The self-natures of all dharmas are unattainable. Why? The dharmas are empty in the final analysis, and in empty dharmas, there is no giving or taking, no almsgiving or alms receiving.' Well-Appearing One, you must know that when great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they should learn the emptiness of all dharmas this way. The dharmas are empty because of internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature. If great bodhisattvas always dwell in emptiness uninterruptedly when they practice giving, they can fulfill giving paramita. Because fulfilling giving paramita, they can

remain calm without anger and hatred when their bodies are cut, and all their internal and external things are taken away. They will only think, ‘As all sentient beings and dharmas are empty, who is cutting me? Who is stealing from me? Who has all these feelings? Who is contemplating emptiness?’

(The Buddha taught that when great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they should learn that all dharmas are empty to avoid anger and hatred.)

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, I have used my Buddha eye to observe universally as many Buddha worlds in the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges. I saw some great bodhisattvas who willingly went to great hells to benefit various sentient beings. They found sentient beings were in great suffering, so tried to demonstrate to and guide sentient beings through three different ways: supernatural transformation, conferring prophecies, and giving teachings and cautions. These great bodhisattvas first manifested supernatural powers to eliminate and destroy various torture devices in hells, such as the pot of boiling water, fires, and swords. Secondly, they would manifest supernatural powers to prophesy how sentient beings would attain the bodhi in the future and teach them the dharma in accord with their mindfulness. And finally, they would manifest supernatural powers to give them teachings and cautions, initiate their great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity, so these sentient beings in hells would develop pure belief in the bodhisattvas. Because of this cause and condition, these sentient beings would be able to get out of hells and be reborn in heaven or human world to attain liberation through the three vehicles gradually.

(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas relieved sentient beings from hells.)

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, I have used my Buddha eye to observe universally as many Buddha worlds in the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges. I

saw some great bodhisattvas who had stayed close and made offerings to various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, with sincere fondness and deep respect. They listened respectfully to the correct dharma taught by the Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, accepted, embraced, read, and recited it and never forgot or lost it until attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. They would correctly explain the dharma they had heard to sentient beings to bring superior benefits, peace, and happiness to them tirelessly until attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.

(Great bodhisattvas explained correct dharma learned from Thus-Comer for sentient beings.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, I have used my Buddha eye to observe universally as many Buddha worlds in the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges. I saw some great bodhisattvas who had sacrificed their own lives to benefit sentient beings in the realm of animals. They found animals killed each other because of hunger, so bodhisattvas cut and dispersed their own limbs out of compassion to feed animals. After eating the bodhisattvas' bodies, the animals were grateful and felt shame. Because of this cause and condition, they got out of the realm of animals and were reborn as heavenly beings or human beings, and later they were fortunate to encounter the Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One, heard correct dharma, and practiced as they were taught, they gradually and step by step attained liberation through the three vehicles. Well-Appearing One, the great bodhisattvas have thus undertaken many difficult but beneficial things to bring happiness to sentient beings. The great bodhisattvas not only initiate to aspire to the great bodhi themselves, but also encourage others to practice various correct actions to get out of birth and death and attain happiness in nirvana.

(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas helped animals.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, I have used my Buddha eye to observe universally as many Buddha worlds in the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges. I saw some great bodhisattvas who willingly went to the realm of hungry ghosts to help sentient beings there, expediently relieving them from hunger and thirst. After their suffering was relieved, the hungry ghosts became fond of and began to respect the bodhisattvas. They felt shame for themselves. The bodhisattvas thus taught them the essential meanings of the dharma and guided them to practice giving. Riding on the virtuous roots, these sentient beings would get out of the realm of hungry ghosts and were reborn in heaven or human world. As later encountering the Thus-Comer, they could stay close and make offerings to the Buddha, hear his teachings of correct dharma. Because of this cause and condition, they would cultivate correct actions of the three vehicles, and step by step, they would enter the nirvana without remainder. Well-Appearing One, the great bodhisattvas thus have dwelled in great compassion for sentient beings, initiated boundless expedient skillfulness, relieved them from suffering, and let them enter the nirvana of three vehicles.

(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas relieved sentient beings from the realm of hungry ghosts.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, I have observed universally with my Buddha eye as many Buddha worlds in the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges. I saw some great bodhisattvas who taught correct dharma expediently and skillfully to the heavenly beings in the Heaven of the Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and the Heaven of Enjoying Other-Made Changes. Those heavenly beings thus cultivated diligently in accord with the three vehicles, and gradually they entered nirvana in the vehicle most suitable for them. Among these

heavenly sons, some were indulged in the pleasures caused by five desires and the treasured palaces in which they lived, so great bodhisattvas would set fire on the palaces to show cautions, let them become disgusted with the palaces, and so forth. The great bodhisattvas would further teach them, ‘Heavenly sons, you should contemplate and investigate carefully to see that all existent beings are impermanent, painful, empty, and without selfness; nothing is sure or reliable. So, will any wise one be indulged in pleasures?’ At that time, various heavenly sons became disgusted with the pleasures caused by five desires upon hearing the dharma voice. As they looked at themselves, they saw that their bodies were unreal and impermanent, much like plantain, lightning, and illusory image of water under sunlight. As they looked at the palaces, they saw jails. After having such contemplation, they began to cultivate the correct actions in accord with the three vehicles, and gradually they approached nirvana.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, I have observed universally with my Buddha eye as many Buddha worlds in the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges. I saw some great bodhisattvas who found that the heavenly beings from the Heaven of Brahma were attached to incorrect views. These great bodhisattvas would teach and guide them expediently, let them become disgusted with and abandon incorrect views. They would further teach, ‘Heavenly immortal ones, why do you initiate such incorrect views about various beings that are empty, formless, illusory, and unreal? You should abandon erroneous views immediately and accept correct dharma, so you can enjoy the unsurpassed sweet dews.’ Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas thus have practiced the unusual and exquisite dharma of the fathomless prajna paramita.

(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas helped heavenly beings.)

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, I have observed universally with my pure and unhindered Buddha eye as many Buddha worlds in the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges. I saw that some great bodhisattvas adopted four approaches to absorb sentient beings. What are the four? They are practicing giving generously, speaking kind and virtuous words, doing beneficial things for all, and working together with others in harmony and with empathy.

(Four approaches to form good connections with sentient beings.)

“Well-Appearing One, how do great bodhisattvas absorb sentient beings with generous giving? They should practice generous giving to absorb various sentient beings through two ways. One is property giving, the other is dharma giving.

(Two ways of giving to sentient beings.)

“How do great bodhisattvas practice property giving to sentient beings when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita? When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, they give various kinds of food, drinks, clothing, houses, bedding, vehicles, lamps, entertainment, fragrant flowers, gold and silvers, treasures, and other beautiful things to various sentient beings. They give wives and concubines, boys and girls, servants, guards, elephants, horses, cows, sheep, and medicines to various sentient beings. They give stores of goods, cities, villages, and thrones of kings to various sentient beings. They give bodies, limbs, hands, feet, head, eyes, brain, and marrows to various sentient beings. These great bodhisattvas will place all kinds of materials on the raised table at four-way intersection and speak loudly, ‘All sentient beings, please come and take whatever you need. Don’t be hesitant. Just take what you need as if they were your own belongings. You can even take away my body, life, hands, feet, head, eyes, marrows, and brain as you wish. I will give you all without reservation or reluctance.’

(This is property giving.)

"After giving sentient beings all things they need, great bodhisattvas further offer advice and encourage sentient beings to take refuge in the triple gem, the Buddha, dharma, and sangha. Great bodhisattvas further encourage sentient beings to accept and embrace the five precepts, eight precepts, or the path of the ten virtuous karmas; cultivate and learn the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; cultivate and learn the six kinds of mindfulness, the contemplation of impurity, the mindfulness with inhalation and exhalation, or the ten kinds of virtuous thinking. They also encourage sentient beings to cultivate and learn the thirty-seven factors for the bodhi, the three liberation gates, the eight liberations, and so forth, and the ten universal contemplations. They encourage sentient beings to cultivate and learn the six paramitas, dwell peacefully in internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; dwell in realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable, or in the four noble truths. The great bodhisattvas will encourage sentient beings to cultivate and learn the stage of pure contemplation, stage of embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and stage of Thus-Comer; the stage of ecstasy, stage of freedom from defilement, and so forth, and stage of dharma cloud; the dharani gates and samadhi gates; the five eyes and six supernatural powers; the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity; the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features; staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times; the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-

enlightenment bodhi; all great bodhisattva actions; or the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas.

(After giving sentient beings the things they need, namely property giving, great bodhisattvas further teach and guide them with Buddha dharmas; this is dharma giving.)

"Therefore, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas practice the expedient skillfulness of the fathomless prajna paramita to establish sentient beings well in the unsurpassed dharma of stability and peace after giving them properties, so that these sentient beings will, step by step, finally attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. This is the unusual and wonderful way that great bodhisattvas undertake when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, how do great bodhisattvas absorb sentient beings with dharma giving when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita? There are two kinds of dharma giving for great bodhisattvas: the dharma giving of the world and the dharma giving beyond the world.

(Two kinds of dharma giving.)

"What is the dharma giving of the world for great bodhisattvas? When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas explain and manifest the wonderful dharma of the world respectively for various sentient beings, including the contemplation of impurity, mindfulness with inhalation and exhalation, four meditations, four immeasurable minds, four formless concentrations, five supernatural powers, and the rest of dharmas shared by ordinary sentient beings. All these belong to the dharma giving of the world.

(The Buddha explained the meaning of dharma giving of the world.)

"After practicing the wonderful worldly dharma giving, great bodhisattvas

should further teach and guide sentient beings expediently to let them dwell in the holy dharmas and the effects of holy dharmas. What are the holy dharmas and the effects of holy dharmas? You must know, Well-Appearing One, the thirty-seven factors for the bodhi and the concentrations of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration are the holy dharmas. The effects of the holy dharmas are stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the holy dharmas for great bodhisattvas are the knowledge of stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and the knowledge of self-enlightenment bodhi; the knowledge of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas; the knowledge of the thirty-seven factors for the bodhi, and so forth, and the Buddha's ten abilities; the knowledge of great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity; the knowledge of the rest of innumerable and boundless Buddha dharmas; the knowledge of the dharmas of and beyond the world, and the knowledge of the conditioned and unconditioned dharmas. All these dharmas, contained in the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, are called holy dharmas. The elimination of enduring disposition of vexations is the effect of the holy dharmas.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the holy dharmas for great bodhisattvas are the flawless dharmas, including the six paramitas, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. The effects of the holy dharmas are the dharmas of ultimate nirvana, such as realness, dharma realm, and so forth. These are the real effects of holy dharmas."

(The Buddha explained the meanings of holy dharmas and the real effect of holy dharmas.)

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Chapter 28

The Exquisite Phenomena

Section 4

(In the Third Assembly)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “Can great bodhisattvas also attain the perfect knowledge of all phenomena?”

Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “Yes, great bodhisattvas can also attain the perfect knowledge of all phenomena.”

The Long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “If great bodhisattvas can also attain the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, is there difference between great bodhisattvas and Thus-Comers?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “There is difference. What is it? Great bodhisattvas have not yet attained but will attain the perfect knowledge of all phenomena soon, while Thus-Comers have already attained the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Why? It does not mean that there is difference between the minds of great bodhisattvas and the minds of Thus-Comers. Both great bodhisattvas and Thus-Comers dwell in nondifferentiation of all dharmas. Bodhisattvas are still pursuing to universally understand the phenomena of the dharmas, while Thus-Comers have already thoroughly and perfectly understood the phenomena of the dharmas. Bodhisattvas have fully and purely illuminated the particular and common characteristics of all dharmas with no darkness left but still dwell in the state of causes, while Thus-Comers have reached the state of effects. Therefore, both great bodhisattvas and Thus-Comers can attain the perfect knowledge of all phenomena,

while difference remains.

(The Buddha indicated the sameness and difference between bodhisattvas and Thus-Comers in attaining the perfect knowledge of all phenomena.)

"Well-Appearing One, dharma giving of the world for great bodhisattvas is so called means that they should further cultivate dharma giving beyond the world based on dharma giving of the world. Namely, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should adopt expedient skillfulness to first teach sentient beings about virtuous dharmas of the world, then make them disgusted with these worldly dharmas and turn to dwell in the flawless holy dharmas beyond the world, and so forth, and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. What are the holy dharmas beyond the world? As great bodhisattvas teach, explain, analyze, and demonstrate the dharma to sentient beings, they practice dharma giving. Well-Appearing One, all virtuous dharmas not shared by ordinary sentient beings enable practitioners and learners to dwell peacefully in a state beyond the world, so these are the virtuous dharmas beyond the world. They are the thirty-seven factors for the bodhi, the three liberation gates, eight liberations, nine concentrations in sequence, four noble truths, six paramitas, the knowledge of various kinds of emptiness, the ten stages of bodhisattva, five eyes, six supernatural powers, Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power, great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, great equanimity, thirty-two perfect major marks, eighty distinguishing minor features, the dharani gates, the samadhi gates, and the rest of the flawless virtuous dharmas. All these are called the holy dharmas beyond the world. When teaching, explaining, analyzing, and demonstrating these dharmas to various sentient beings, great bodhisattvas are practicing the giving of the dharma beyond the world.

(The Buddha taught about two kinds of dharma giving, of the world and beyond the world. He further indicated which dharmas were beyond the world.)

"Well-Appearing One, what are the thirty-seven factors for the bodhi? They are 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 Buddha taught about thirty-seven factors for enlightenment, or thirty-seven aids to enlightenment, and explained each respectively in these paragraphs.)

"Well-Appearing One, what are the four bases of mindfulness? Great bodhisattvas dwell in and contemplate the dharmas inside the body, the dharmas outside the body, and their interaction. Fully equipped with correct diligence, knowledge, and mindfulness, they remove greed and worries of the world and contemplate the causes of the bodily activities; then ceasing the causes, they neither rely on, nor are attached to anything. This is the first base of mindfulness, the mindfulness of the body. They further contemplate feeling, mind, and dharmas the same way. These are the four bases of mindfulness.
(The four bases of mindfulness.)

"Well-Appearing One, what are the four correct endeavors? Great bodhisattvas initiate incentives to work delightedly, diligently, and continuously, ensuring that the evil, not virtuous dharmas that have not arisen yet will never arise, and the evil, not virtuous dharmas that have arisen will be eliminated immediately; the virtuous dharmas that have not arisen yet will arise, and the virtuous dharmas that have arisen will increase and expand. These are the four correct endeavors.
(The four correct endeavors.)

"Well-Appearing One, what are the four bases of power? Great bodhisattvas cultivate and develop these four bases: samadhi of motives, samadhi of diligence,

samadhi of concentrative mind, and samadhi of contemplation--all related to terminating negative karma--to increase their powers to fulfill wisdom and meditation that they pursue.

(The four bases of power.)

"Well-Appearing One, what are the five roots? The root of belief, the root of diligence, the root of mindfulness, the root of concentration, and the root of wisdom are the five roots for great bodhisattvas.

(The five roots.)

"Well-Appearing One, what are the five powers? The power caused by belief, the power caused by diligence, the power caused by mindfulness, the power caused by concentration, and the power caused by wisdom are the five powers for great bodhisattvas.

(The five powers.)

"Well-Appearing One, what are the seven factors for enlightenment? The universal enlightenment of mindfulness, the universal enlightenment of intelligent choice, the universal enlightenment of diligence, the universal enlightenment of joy, the universal enlightenment of ease and peace, the universal enlightenment of concentration, and the universal enlightenment of equanimity are the seven factors for enlightenment for great bodhisattvas.

(Seven factors for enlightenment.)

"Well-Appearing One, what are the noble eightfold path? The right view, right thinking, right speech, right karma, right livelihood, right diligence, right mindfulness, and right concentration are the noble eightfold path for great bodhisattvas.

(Noble eightfold path for great bodhisattvas.)

"Well-Appearing One, what are the three liberation gates? Emptiness,

formlessness, and nonaspiration are the three liberation gates for great bodhisattvas. (The three liberation gates for great bodhisattvas.)

"Well-Appearing One, what is the liberation gate of emptiness? Absorbing one's mind with empty and selfless mental images toward one objective is called the liberation gate of emptiness for great bodhisattvas. Well-Appearing One, what is the liberation gate of formlessness? Absorbing one's mind with tranquil and extinguishing mental images toward one objective is called the liberation gate of formlessness for great bodhisattvas. Well-Appearing One, what is the liberation gate of nonaspiration? Absorbing one's mind with painful and impermanent mental images toward one objective is called the liberation gate of nonaspiration for great bodhisattvas. (The liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration.)

"Well-Appearing One, what are the eight liberations? Contemplating the inner phenomena is called the first liberation for great bodhisattvas. Contemplating the outer phenomena is called the second liberation for great bodhisattvas. Contemplating and definitively realizing the purity of inner body is called the third liberation for great bodhisattvas. Fully dwelling in the concentration of boundless emptiness is called the fourth liberation for great bodhisattvas. Fully dwelling in the sphere of boundless consciousness is called the fifth liberation for great bodhisattvas. Fully dwelling in the sphere of nothingness is called the sixth liberation for great bodhisattvas. Fully dwelling in the sphere of nonthinking and not nonthinking is the seventh liberation for great bodhisattvas. Fully dwelling in the concentration of the extinction of thinking and feeling is called the eighth liberation for great bodhisattvas. (The eight liberations.)

"Well-Appearing One, what are the nine concentrations in sequence? Leaving desires and the evil and not virtuous dharmas behind, great bodhisattvas, with general

contemplation and specific investigation, as well as the joys caused by getting far away, enter and fully dwell in the first meditation. This is the first concentration. And so on. Great bodhisattvas transcend the sphere of nonthinking and not nonthinking and enter and dwell fully in the concentration of the extinction of thinking and feeling, namely the ninth concentration. These are the nine concentrations in sequence.

(The nine concentrations in sequence.)

"Well-Appearing One, what are the four noble truths? The noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering are the four noble truths for great bodhisattvas.

(The four noble truths.)

"Well-Appearing One, what are the paramitas? Giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and perfect knowledge paramita are called the paramitas for great bodhisattvas.

(The paramitas.)

"Well-Appearing One, what is the knowledge of various kinds of emptiness? The knowledge of internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature and the knowledge of realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable are the perfect knowledge of various kinds of emptiness for great bodhisattvas.

(The knowledge of various kinds of emptiness.)

"Well-Appearing One, what are the ten stages of bodhisattva? The stage of ecstasy, stage of freedom from defilement, and so forth, and the stage of dharma cloud are the ten stages of bodhisattva.

(The ten stages of bodhisattva.)

“Well-Appearing One, what are the five eyes? The physical eye, heavenly eye, wisdom eye, dharma eye, and Buddha eye are the five eyes for great bodhisattvas. (The five eyes.)

“Well-Appearing One, what are the six supernatural powers? The supernatural power of transformation, the supernatural power of heavenly ear, the supernatural power of knowing others’ minds, the supernatural power of knowing previous lives, the supernatural power of heavenly eye, and the supernatural power of flawlessness are the six supernatural powers for great bodhisattvas.
(The six supernatural powers.)

“Well-Appearing One, what are the Thus-Comer’s ten abilities? The ten abilities possessed by the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones, but not shared by the rest of sentient beings. To know accurately the right and wrong is the first ability. To know accurately the karmas and their causes and effects that mature into different types and at different times of all sentient beings in the past, future, and present is the second ability. To know accurately various realms and their differences in various worlds is the third ability. To know accurately the differences among definitive understandings of all sentient beings is the fourth ability. To know accurately the superior and inferior roots of all sentient beings is the fifth ability. To always know accurately the characteristics of the five universal functions concomitant with perceptive activities is the sixth ability. To know accurately the establishment of and the differences among all kinds of meditation, liberation, samadhi, samapatti, contamination, and purification is the seventh ability. To know accurately one, ten, one hundred, one thousand, or innumerable previous lives of various sentient beings, or their previous lives in the last one, ten, one hundred, one thousand, or innumerable kalpas, including all their

actions, speeches, and forms, is the eighth ability. To know accurately, with heavenly eye, the births and deaths of all sentient beings and their virtuous and not virtuous deeds, and so forth, and the destinies of their rebirths caused by their karmas is the ninth ability. To know accurately the perfect extinction of various flaws, the liberation caused by flawless mind, and the liberation caused by flawless wisdom and achieve self-realization of real flawless liberation and dwell fully in it, and so forth, and attain the freedom from arising is the tenth ability.

(The Buddha's ten abilities.)

"Well-Appearing One, what are the four kinds of fearlessness? The Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones declare that they are the fully enlightened ones. In case some sramanas (monks of various religions), Brahmans, heavenly demon kings, or other ordinary sentient beings of the world stand up to challenge and argue against them, saying that their attainment of the perfect enlightenment is not true, they will not be scared at all, because they can see clearly that the challengers' arguments are wrong. Instead, they will stay calm and in comfort and again declare that they are already a great immortal being of the highest position. They are thus turning the unsurpassed, wonderful, and purest dharma wheel in the public like a roaring lion that none of the sramanas, Brahmans, heavenly demon kings, or ordinary sentient beings of the world can turn as they do. This is the first kind of fearlessness. The Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones declare that their flaws and vexations have been fully eliminated. In case some sramanas, Brahmans, heavenly demon kings, or other ordinary sentient beings of the world stand up to challenge and argue against them, saying that their flaws and vexations are not completely removed, they will not be scared at all, because they can see clearly that the challengers' arguments are wrong.

Instead, they stay calm and in comfort and again declare that they are already a great immortal being of the highest position. They thus are turning the unsurpassed, wonderful, and purest dharma wheel in the public like a roaring lion that none of the sramanas, Brahmans, heavenly demon kings, or ordinary sentient beings of the world can turn as they do. This is the second kind of fearlessness. The Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones declare that they have taught the disciples that the contaminated dharmas will certainly hinder the pursuit of the truth. In case some sramanas, Brahmans, heavenly demon kings, or other ordinary sentient beings of the world stand up to challenge and argue against them, saying that the contaminated dharmas will not hinder the pursuit of the truth, the Thus-Comers will not be scared at all, because they can see clearly that the challengers' arguments are wrong. Instead, they will stay calm and in comfort and again declare that they are already a great immortal being of the highest position. They thus are turning the unsurpassed, wonderful, and purest dharma-wheel in the public like a roaring lion that none of the sramanas, Brahmans, heavenly demon kings, or ordinary beings of the world can turn as they do. This is the third kind of fearlessness. The Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One have taught the disciples the path of ceasing suffering and attaining liberation. In case some sramanas, Brahmans, heavenly demon kings, or other ordinary sentient beings of the world stand up to challenge and argue against them, saying that their methods do not work for ceasing suffering and attaining liberation, they will not be scared at all, because the Thus-Comers can see clearly that the challengers' arguments are wrong. Instead, the Thus-Comers will stay calm and in comfort and again declare that they are already a great immortal being of the highest position. They thus are turning the unsurpassed, wonderful, and purest dharma wheel

in the public like a roaring lion that none of the sramanas, Brahmans, heavenly demon kings, or ordinary beings of the world can turn as they do. This is the fourth kind of fearlessness.

(The four kinds of fearlessness.)

"Well-Appearing One, what are the four unhindered understandings? They are the unhindered ability to understand the meanings of the teachings, the unhindered ability to understand the dharmas, the unhindered ability to understand and use various languages, and the unhindered ability to lecture and debate. What is the unhindered ability to understand the meanings of the teachings? It means the unhindered knowledge of the meanings. What is the unhindered ability to understand the dharmas? It means the unhindered knowledge of the dharmas. What is the unhindered ability to understand and use various languages? It means the unhindered knowledge of the languages. What is the unhindered ability to lecture and debate? It means the unhindered knowledge of debate and lecture.

(The four unhindered understandings.)

"Well-Appearing One, what are the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power? It means that the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones have no flawed actions, flawed speeches, and flawed thoughts. They always treat all beings equally. They always stay in concentration. They always stay in equanimity. Their aspirations never diminish. Their diligence never diminishes. Their correct mindfulness never diminishes. Their wisdom never diminishes. Their liberation never diminishes. Their knowledge and views of liberation never diminish. They always act in compliance with wisdom. They always speak in compliance with wisdom. They always think in compliance with wisdom. They know the past without hindrance. They know the present without

hindrance. They know the future without hindrance. These are the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power.

(The eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power.)

"Well-Appearing One, what are the thirty-two perfect major marks? The Buddha's feet have flat and full soles, which are exquisite and are as firm and stable as the bottom of a solid makeup case; wherever they walk, the soles touch the ground evenly and completely. This is the first perfect major mark. There is perfect thousand-spoke wheel sign on their soles. This is the second perfect major mark. The Buddha's hands and fingers are as flexible and soft as tula cottons, the most flexible and softest of all. This is the third perfect major mark. The Buddha has slender and round fingers and toes that are superior to ordinary sentient beings; they have the sign of living a long life. This is the fourth perfect major mark. The Buddha's fingers and toes are webbed, resembling those of wild goose king. This is the fifth perfect major mark. The Buddha has wide, long, and perfect heels, matching the insteps very well, and superior to those of the rest of sentient beings. This is the sixth perfect major mark. The Buddha has slender, high, and full insteps, matching the heels very well. This is the seventh perfect major mark. The Buddha has slender and round shins in good proportion, like that of the deer king. This is the eighth perfect major mark. The Buddha's slender and long arms extend past the knees like the trunk of the elephant king. This is the ninth perfect major mark. The Buddha's male sex organ is concealed, resembling that of a dragon, a horse, or the elephant king. This is the tenth perfect major mark. There is one hair in each of the Buddha's pores; all are tender, moist, and red and green in color, and in right-hand rotation. This is the eleventh perfect major mark. All the Buddha's hairs are tender, moist, and green, standing up in right-handed rotation and embellishing his golden body, all look so lovely. This is the twelfth

perfect major mark. The Buddha's skin is delicate, moist, and smooth that no dust or water remains on it. This is the thirteenth perfect major mark. The Buddha's skin is in a golden color and is pure, bright, clean, and looks joyful, shining magnificently like exquisite gold platform decorated with various treasures. This is the fourteenth perfect major mark. The Buddha's legs, palms, shoulders, and neck are delicate, full, soft, bright, clean, and lovable. This is the fifteenth perfect major mark. The Buddha has perfect and wonderful shoulders and neck. This is the sixteenth perfect major mark. The Buddha's shoulder blades and armpits are full and round. This is the seventeenth perfect major mark. The Buddha's face and demeanors are grand, proper, and upright. This is the eighteenth perfect major mark. The shape of the Buddhas' bodies is slender, wide, solemn, and upright. This is the nineteenth perfect major mark. The span of each Buddha's two arms equals the height of his body; the profile of his body is as perfect as a nyagrodha tree. This is the twentieth perfect major mark. The Buddha's upper body, chin, and chest are big, wide, strong, and with authority, resembling that of the lion king. This is the twenty-first perfect major mark. Bright light always radiates from his face, extending as wide as one yojana on each side. This is the twenty-second perfect major mark. The Buddha has forty neat and white teeth that are as white as a jade or snow. This is the twenty-third perfect major mark. The Buddha has four fresh white canine teeth. This is the twenty-fourth perfect major mark. The Buddha has flavored saliva, swallows smoothly, and always has the most delicious taste when eating. This is the twenty-fifth perfect major mark. The Buddha's tongue is long, slender, pure, and broad and can reach the edge of his hair. This is the twenty-sixth perfect major mark. The Buddha's voice is as loud and powerful as the heavenly drum. When he recites, his voice is so graceful and far-reaching that all listeners can hear him clearly and evenly. When he speaks, his voice vibrates with

resonance. This is the twenty-seventh perfect major mark. The Buddha's eyelashes are deep blue and neat, like that of a bull king. This is the twenty-eighth perfect major mark. The Buddha's eyes are deep blue and fresh white, decorated with purple circles and look so clear, pure, and bright. This is the twenty-ninth perfect major mark. The Buddha's face is like a full moon, and his eyebrows are bright and pure, resembling the bows used by Heavenly Emperor. This is the thirtieth perfect major mark. There are white hairs between the Buddha's eyebrows, all in right-handed rotation; they are as soft, light, and thin as the best silks or cottons and are in bright white color even purer than a jade or snow. This is the thirty-first perfect major mark. The Buddha has a bump on the top of the head that is high, significant, and round as the canopy in the heavens. This is the thirty-second perfect major mark. These are the thirty-two perfect major marks of various Buddhas.

(The thirty-two perfect marks.)

"Well-Appearing One, what are the eighty distinguishing minor features? The Buddha's fingernails are long, narrow, smooth, bright, fresh, pure, and clean and are of copper color. This is the first feature. His fingers are round, fine, and long, and the joints are concealed. This is the second feature. All his limbs are of the same length; no space is left between the fingers or the toes. This is the third feature. His limbs are round, dexterous, free, soft, and clean; they look bright and colorful as a lotus. This is the fourth feature. The Buddha's sinews, arteries, and veins are well connected, but concealed. This is the fifth feature. Both his ankles are concealed. This is the sixth feature. When moving straight forward, his gait resembles a dragon king or an elephant king. This is the seventh feature. His gait is neat and solemn, which resembles a lion king. This is the eighth feature. His peaceful and moderate gait is like an ox king. This is the ninth feature. His graceful gait is like a swan king. This is the

tenth feature. He looks back by turning his body around, resembling what a dragon king or elephant king does; when doing this, he always takes a right turn. This is the eleventh feature. His limbs and their parts are well proportioned. This is the twelfth feature. His joints fit together nicely, like a dragon coiling itself up. This is the thirteenth feature. His knees are firm and round and well proportioned. This is the fourteenth feature. His sex organs are pure and complete and are with exquisite lines and wrinkles. This is the fifteenth feature. His body and limbs are moist, soft, pure, and shining without dust. This is the sixteenth feature. He looks solemn and fearless, never timid. This is the seventh feature. His body and limbs are thick, with strength, and well proportioned. This is the eighteenth feature. His body and limbs are steady, heavy, and complete, and never become loose. This is the nineteenth feature. His appearance is like a king of celestial beings, surrounded by solemn and pure light, while all kinds of darkness are driven away. This is the twentieth feature. His body is surrounded by a light circle that always shines. This is the twenty-first feature. His abdomen is square, upright, soft, complete, and hidden. This is the twenty-second feature. His navel looks like a clockwise spiral, which is deep, round, pretty, pure, and brilliant. This is the twenty-third feature. He has a thick navel, neither bulging nor hollow, with a pretty periphery. This is the twenty-fourth feature. His skin is free from scabs, freckles, and black spots. This is the twenty-fifth feature. The Buddha's palms are full and soft; his soles are flat. This is the twenty-sixth feature. The lines of his palms are long, straight, moist, bright, and not disconnected. This is the twenty-seventh feature. His lips are as bright and red as a bimba fruit; his upper and lower lips are well proportioned. This is the twenty-eighth feature. His face is neither too long nor too short, neither too big nor too small, but is just the right size. This is the twenty-ninth feature. His tongue is soft, thin, broad, and long, and it is copper in

color. This is the thirtieth feature. His voice is clear and bright and can spread far away like a roaring elephant king. This is the thirty-first feature. His voice has a rhythm that sounds like an echo in a deep valley. This is the thirty-second feature. His nose is tall, prominent, and thin, and his nostrils are concealed. This is the thirty-third feature. His teeth are square, even, and fresh white. This is the thirty-fourth feature. His teeth are round, white, and sharp. This is the thirty-fifth feature. His eyes are clear and bright. This is the thirty-sixth feature. His eyes are long and broad, resembling the petals of a green lotus. This is the thirty-seventh feature. His eyelashes are trim and thick and are not white in color. This is the thirty-eight feature. His eyebrows are slender, thin, and soft, but not white. This is the thirty-ninth feature. His eyebrows are beautiful, smooth, and neat, and dark red glazed in color. This is the fortieth feature. His eyebrows are high, prominent, bright, and moist, shining like a new moon. This is the forty-first feature. He has large, slender, and thick ears with perfect lobes. This is the forty-second feature. His ears are beautiful, neat, and without any defect. This is the forty-third feature. His appearance and demeanor will never disappoint or pollute any viewer; they are pure, perfect, and attractive, and always invite respect and admiration. This is the forty-fourth feature. His forehead is broad, full, even, and neat, and the shape is uniquely wonderful. This is the forty-fifth feature. His upper body is perfectly composed; it is incomparably magnificent, resembling a lion king. This is the forty-sixth feature. His hair is slender and thick, dark purple in color, but not white. This is the forty-seventh feature. His hair is fragrant, clean, soft, thin, pliable, moist, and coiled. This is the forty-eighth feature. His hair is even and neat, not twisted or messy. This is the forty-ninth feature. His hair is strong, not broken or falling. This is the fiftieth feature. His hair is bright and smooth, with no dust on it. This is the fifty-first feature. His body is sturdy and full, even stronger than Narayana,

the powerful god. This is the fifty-second feature. His body is tall and upright. This is the fifty-third feature. All his organs are pure and perfect. This is the fifty-fourth feature. His body and limbs are incomparably superior and powerful. This is the fifty-fifth feature. His body and appearance always attract people; people always like to look at him. This is the fifth-sixth feature. His face has a perfectly proportioned length and width; it looks as bright, clear, and pure as a full moon. This is the fifth-seventh feature. He has a bright, easy, and peaceful face; he always smiles before he speaks; and he looks at people when he speaks. This is the fifth-eighth feature. His face is bright, easy, and pleasant; he never knits his brows, and no colors such as green indicating illness or red ever appear on his face. This is the fifty-ninth feature. His body and skin are pure and clean, having no bad smell or filthy things. This is the sixtieth feature. In all his pores there is always a kind of sweet and gratifying fragrance. This is the sixty-first feature. His face smells of the most pleasant fragrance. This is the sixty-second feature. His head is rounded and in perfect shape, like a canopy or a madana fruit. This is the sixty-third feature. His hair is purple, bright, and pure, resembling the beautiful iridescent hair on a peacock's neck. This is the sixty-fourth feature. His voice reaches the listeners just loud enough to make each one satisfied. This is the sixty-fifth feature. The top of his head has never been overlooked. This is the sixty-sixth feature. His finger and toe webs are clear, solemn, and good looking; they are in beautiful copper-red color. This is the sixty-seventh feature. He walks with his feet off the ground, and a four-finger wide imprint is left on the ground when he passes. This is the sixty-eighth feature. He walks steadily, not staggering, and no guard is needed. This is the sixty-ninth feature. His powers and virtues are far-reaching but always keep people from fear and worry and make them happy and carefree. This is the seventieth feature. His voice pitch always pleases

sentient beings when talking with them. This is the seventy-first feature. His lectures can always gratify sentient beings' needs and favors. This is the seventy-second feature. Although he speaks in one voice, listeners can each gain the understanding they need. This is the seventy-third feature. His lectures are given in a reasonable order, and whatever he says is always good and based on causes and conditions. This is the seventy-fourth feature. He treats all sentient beings equally, admires good conduct and blames bad conduct, but has no love or hatred. This is the seventy-fifth feature. He watches and makes a perfect plan before taking actions. His own actions are a good model and purify sentient beings' minds. This is the seventy-sixth feature. Sentient beings do not tire of looking at his good appearance. This is the seventy-seventh feature. His skull is solid and complete. This is the seventy-eighth feature. His appearance always looks young; he likes to visit the places he used to live in previously. This is the seventy-ninth feature. His palms, soles, and chest are marked with auspicious and pleasant symbols in a red color. This is the eightieth feature. These are the eighty distinguishing minor features of the Buddhas.
(The eighty distinguishing minor features of the Buddhas.)

"Well-Appearing One, as the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones achieve the perfect marks, their bodily lights illuminate spontaneously entire large threefold thousand-world, leaving no area untouched. The lights can go farther to universally illuminate innumerable, countless, and boundless worlds. But for the sake of sentient beings, the Buddha restricts the illumination to within one yojana. If the Buddha lets the lights go, they will darken all kinds of lights, including sun and moon; in that case, sentient beings will not be able to know day and night, days, months, and years, and they cannot do anything. The Buddha's voices can spontaneously reach entire large threefold thousand-world. His

voices can go farther to reach innumerable, countless, and boundless worlds. But for the sake of sentient beings, he moderates his voice to please sentient beings' ears, neither too loud nor too soft.

"Well-Appearing One, when I was still a bodhisattva and practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, I had already achieved these merits, virtues, and superior benefits, so that I can have these perfect marks, and all sentient beings will be delighted when seeing me and thus gain broad and great benefits.

"Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas can absorb sentient beings with property giving and dharma giving. This is an unusual dharma gate.

"Well-Appearing One, how should tgreat bodhisattvas absorb sentient beings with kind and virtuous words? When great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they should first teach them giving paramita with tender words. Then they will teach them pure-precept paramita, forbearance paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita. This is an expedient way of absorbing sentient beings. You must know, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas can absorb sentient beings by teaching them six paramitas with tender and kind voices. Why? All virtuous dharmas are absorbed by these six paramitas.

"Well-Appearing One, how should great bodhisattvas absorb sentient beings by doing things beneficial for them? When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should use various expedient ways to tirelessly and continuously encourage sentient beings to diligently cultivate giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita and the rest of various subtle and exquisite virtuous dharmas.

"Well-Appearing One, how should great bodhisattvas absorb the sentient

beings by getting along with them in harmony and treat them with empathy? When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should use their supernatural powers and great aspirations to appear in hells, the realm of animals, realm of ghosts, human world, and heaven to get along with sentient beings in harmony and treat them with empathy, to expediently absorb and benefit them. (The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas use four approaches to help sentient beings.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, it is unusual that great bodhisattvas can absorb sentient beings expediently and skillfully with these four approaches to bring benefits and happiness to all of them.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, I have universally observed various Buddha worlds in the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges with my Buddha eye, discovering that some great bodhisattvas are teaching other great bodhisattvas, saying, 'Come here, good gentlemen, you should learn well to initiate various dharani gates of the words; namely, one word, two words, and so forth, and forty-two words to elicit self-ease and freedom. You should further learn well to merge all languages into one word, two words, and so forth, and forty-two words to elicit self-ease and freedom. You should again learn well to absorb forty-two words with one word or absorb one word with forty-two words to elicit self-ease and freedom.' Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should learn well to merge forty-two words into one word, or merge one word into forty-two words. After learning this way, they will initiate expedient skillfulness in various word gates. Based on this foundation, they will further initiate expedient skillfulness in nonword. The great bodhisattvas will be much liked Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones, who attain skillfulness in dharmas and words, and with skillfulness

in dharmas and words, they can attain skillfulness in nonword. Because of the skillfulness, they can teach sentient beings the dharmas of the word and nonword; they will also teach them the dharmas of word for the sake of the dharmas of nonword. Why? There is no Buddha dharma apart from the dharmas of word and nonword, but the genuine Buddha dharma transcends all words. Why? All dharmas and sentient beings are empty in the final analysis and empty in nontemporality." (The Buddha taught that the genuine Buddha dharma is based on the skillful expediency of words and nonwords.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "If all dharmas and sentient beings are empty in the final analysis, and nontemporality is also empty--transcending the words--then the self-nature of all dharmas and sentient beings should be unattainable in the final analysis. If this is the case, how can great bodhisattvas cultivate prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita; cultivate the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; cultivate the thirty-seven factors for the bodhi; cultivate the samadhi of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration; dwell peacefully in internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; dwell peacefully in realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable; dwell peacefully in the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering; cultivate the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations; cultivate the stage of ecstasy, stage of freedom, and so forth, and the stage of dharma cloud; cultivate the dharani gates and samadhi gates; cultivate the five eyes and six supernatural powers; cultivate the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of

Buddha's wisdom and power; cultivate great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity; cultivate staying in correct mindfulness and always dwelling in equanimity; cultivate the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; and cultivate the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features? How can great bodhisattvas dwell in the six paramitas that mature in different types and at different times, dwell in supernatural powers, and teach correct dharma to sentient beings?

"World-Honored One, in addition, all sentient beings are unattainable; the establishment for sentient beings is unattainable too. Because all sentient beings are unattainable, matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness are unattainable; the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere are unattainable; the sight sphere, sound sphere. and so forth, and mental-image sphere are unattainable; the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm are unattainable; the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm are unattainable; the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm are unattainable; the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are unattainable; the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are unattainable; the earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm are unattainable; cause and condition, consecutive thoughts, conditions that stimulate the mind, and the conditions that reinforce main causes are unattainable; various dharmas produced by conditions are unattainable; ignorance, action, and so forth, and old age and death are unattainable; the six paramitas, and so forth, and the eighty distinguishing minor features are also unattainable.

"World-Honored One, in nonattainment, sentient beings and their establishment, matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness and their establishment, and so forth, and the eighty distinguishing minor features and their establishment are all nonexistent. How can great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita and teach sentient beings about various dharmas? Isn't it possible that great bodhisattvas who dwell in incorrect dharma themselves, would teach incorrect dharma to sentient beings, encourage sentient beings to dwell in incorrect dharma, and establish the sentient beings in upside-down dharma? Why? When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas cannot attain the bodhi, let alone they can attain the factors for the bodhi. They cannot attain the bodhisattva, let alone the dharma of the bodhisattva. If this is the case, how can they cultivate the path of the bodhi and teach correct dharma?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Yes, it is as you say. All sentient beings, the establishment of all sentient beings, all dharmas, and the establishment of all dharmas are unattainable. Because they are unattainable, they are nonexistent. Because they are nonexistent, you must know, internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are empty; realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable are empty; the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering are empty; the aggregates of matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness are empty; the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere are empty; the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere are empty; the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm are empty; the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm are empty; the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious

consciousness realm are empty; the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are empty; the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are empty; the earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm are empty; cause and condition, consecutive thoughts, conditions that stimulate the mind, and the conditions that reinforce main causes are empty; various dharmas produced by conditions are empty; ignorance, action, and so forth, and old age and death are empty; the 'I,' sentient being, and so forth, and viewer are empty; giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita are empty; the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations are empty; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path are empty; the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration are empty; the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations are empty; the stage of pure contemplation, stage of embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and the stage of Thus-Comer are empty; the stage of ecstasy, stage of freedom from defilement, and so forth, and the stage of dharma cloud are empty; the dharani gates and samadhi gates are empty; the five eyes and six supernatural powers are empty; the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power are empty; great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity are empty; the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features are empty; staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times are empty; the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are empty; stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi are empty; all great

bodhisattva actions are empty; the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas are empty; dignifying and purifying Buddha lands are empty; and assisting sentient beings to mature are also empty.

(The Buddha confirmed Well-Appearing One's statement that all dharmas are empty and unattainable.)

"Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas have understood that all dharmas are nothing other than emptiness, so they lecture on various dharmas to let sentient beings stay away from upside-down thinking. Although they teach sentient beings about various dharmas, they attain nothing. They do nothing to increase, decrease, grasp, or renounce the phenomena of emptiness. Because of this cause and condition, they have taught about various dharmas, but they have not taught anything.

"Well-Appearing One, you must know that when contemplating all dharmas this way, great bodhisattvas attain unhindered knowledge. Because of this knowledge, they do not ruin the nonduality and nondifferentiation of all dharmas. They teach sentient beings what the dharmas really are and guide them to get rid of the upside-down attachment, reach the effects of the three vehicles suitable for them. Suppose that the Thus-Comer made a transformed Buddha, and this transformed Buddha further made immeasurable koti nayuta of transformed sentient beings, and guided these sentient beings to cultivate giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. He also allowed them to dwell peacefully in stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi; all great bodhisattva actions; or the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas. What do you think about this? Would the transformed Buddha and the transformed sentient beings

differentiate and destroy various dharmas?”

(The Buddha said that great bodhisattvas did not teach although they taught. Those who contemplate all dharmas this way will attain unhindered knowledge and guide sentient beings to understand all dharmas as they really are.)

Well-Appearing One replied, “No, World-Honored One. All transformed beings will not differentiate among dharmas.”

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, “Because of this cause and condition, when great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita and teach correct dharma to sentient beings according to individual differences, they will not differentiate or destroy the phenomena of the dharmas, but they can well establish the sentient beings and let them dwell peacefully in the stage they deserve. They will attain nothing from all sentient beings and dharmas, but they can let the sentient beings get rid of delusions, upside-down ideas, and attachment. It is because the great bodhisattvas have adopted neither bondage nor relief as expediency. Why? The original nature of matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness is without bondage and relief. If the original nature of dharmas is without bondage and relief, they are not matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness. Why? Matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness are pure in the final analysis. The original nature of conditioned and unconditioned dharmas is without bondage and relief. If the original nature of the dharmas is without bondage and relief, then they are not conditioned or unconditioned dharmas. Why? The conditioned and unconditioned dharmas are pure in the final analysis. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, as great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita and teach various dharmas for sentient being, they do not attain the dharmas or the sentient beings. Why? All sentient beings and all dharmas are unattainable.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they should adopt non-dwelling as expediency to dwell in the nonattainment of all dharmas. Namely, they should adopt non-dwelling as expediency to dwell in the emptiness of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the emptiness of conditioned dharmas and unconditioned dharmas.

“You must know, Well-Appearing One, matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness dwell nowhere, and the emptiness of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness dwells nowhere. And so on. The conditioned dharmas and unconditioned dharmas dwell nowhere, and the emptiness of the conditioned dharmas and unconditioned dharmas dwell nowhere. Why? All dharmas and the emptiness of all dharmas have no self-nature and are unattainable. The unattainable dharmas without self-nature dwell nowhere.

(The dharmas without self-nature dwell nowhere.)

“You must know, Well-Appearing One. The dharmas without nature do not dwell in the dharmas without nature. The dharmas with nature do not dwell in the dharmas with nature. The dharmas without nature do not dwell in the dharmas with nature. The dharmas with nature do not dwell in the dharmas without nature. The dharmas with self-nature do not dwell in the dharmas with self-nature. The dharmas with other-nature do not dwell in the dharmas with other-nature. The dharmas with self-nature do not dwell in the dharmas with other-nature. The dharmas with other-nature do not dwell in the dharmas with self-nature. Why? As all dharmas are unattainable, where can the unattainable dharmas dwell?

“Well-Appearing One, when great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they should adopt these kinds of emptiness as expediency to cultivate and

drive away all dharmas. They also teach and demonstrate what they really are for sentient beings.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas can practice the fathomless prajna paramita this way, they will not feel shame or guilty when facing the holy ones, such as the Buddhas, bodhisattvas, self-enlightened ones, and voice-hearers. Why? The Buddhas, bodhisattvas, self-enlightened ones, and voice-hearers can be awakened to these dharma natures anytime. They can further correctly teach sentient beings about dharma natures. Although they teach dharma natures to sentient beings, they neither turn dharma natures nor go beyond them. Why? The real nature of all dharmas is dharma realm, realness, and reality. Dharma realm, realness, and reality cannot be turned or transcended. Why? Dharma realm, realness, and reality have no self-nature and are unattainable. The unattainable ones cannot be turned or transcended."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "If the genuine dharma realm, realness, and reality cannot be turned or transcended, are matter, feeling, and so forth, and the conditioned and unconditioned dharmas different from the genuine dharma realm, realness, and reality?"

The Buddha replied, "No. Matter, feeling, and so forth, and the conditioned and unconditioned dharmas are not different from dharma realm, realness, and reality."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "If matter, feeling, and so forth, and the conditioned and unconditioned dharmas are not different from dharma realm, realness, and reality, why do World-Honored One establish the negative karmic causes and effects that mature in different types and at different times, such as hells, the realm of animals, and the realm of ghosts; the positive karmic

causes and effects that mature in different types and at different times, such as human beings and heavenly beings; the realm of half negative and half positive karmic causes and effects, such as the realm of half animals and half human beings or the realm of half ghosts and half human beings; and the realm of neither negative nor positive karmic causes and effects, such as stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "I establish such different causes and effects in terms of worldly perspective instead of ultimate meaning. In ultimate meaning, different causes and effects do not exist. Why? In ultimate meaning, the nature and phenomena of all dharmas are undifferentiated, unspeakable, and cannot be demonstrated. How can there be different causes and effects?

(The Buddha distinguished between worldly meaning and ultimate meaning of all dharmas.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, in ultimate meaning, the aggregates of matter, feeling, and so forth, and the conditioned and unconditioned dharmas are without arising, extinction, contamination, and purification because of emptiness in the final analysis and emptiness of nontemporality."

(The Buddha described the nature of all dharmas in terms of ultimate meaning.)

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Chapter 28

The Exquisite Phenomena

Section 5

In

The Third Assembly

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, "World-Honored One, if different causes and effects are established in terms of the worldly perspective instead of ultimate meaning, then ignorant sentient beings should also attain stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, self-enlightenment bodhi, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "What do you think about this? Are ignorant ordinary sentient beings really awakened to the truths of the world and the ultimate meaning? If they are, they should also attain stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. But because all ignorant ordinary sentient beings have not been really awakened to the truths of the world and the ultimate meaning, they even have not aspired to or cultivated the holy path, therefore, they should not have attained the holy effects. Only the holy ones can be really awakened to the truths of the world and the ultimate meaning; they have aspired to and cultivated the holy path, therefore, they can achieve various holy effects."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Will the holy-path cultivators certainly attain the holy effects?"

The Buddha replied, "No."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “Can those who have not cultivated the holy path attain the holy effects?”

The Buddha replied, “No.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “If this is the case, then no one will attain the holy effects?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “It is by virtue of the worldly perspective rather than the ultimate meaning to assume that the attainment of the holy effects is existent. In terms of the ultimate meaning we will say that the holy-path cultivators cannot attain the holy effects, the ones who do not cultivate the holy path cannot attain the holy effects, the ones who stay away from the holy path cannot attain the holy effects, and the ones who dwell in the holy path cannot attain the holy effects. Why? The path, the path effects, the cultivation, and the noncultivation are all unattainable in terms of the ultimate meaning. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, although great bodhisattvas have established different holy effects for sentient beings, they will not differentiate between the holy effects of the conditioned realm and of the unconditioned realm.” (The Buddha explained why the ones who have attained holy effects do not really attain the holy effects.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “If we cannot distinguish between the holy effects in conditioned realm and unconditioned realm, then why does the World-Honored One say that those who have eliminated the three bonds will attain stream-entry effect, those who have diminished greed and anger will attain once-return effect, those who have eliminated the lower five bonds will attain nonreturn effect, those who have eliminated the upper five bonds will attain arhat effect, those who have realized that all causes of suffering should be removed

will attain self-enlightenment bodhi, and those who have terminated permanently the enduring disposition of vexations will attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddha? World-Honored One, how can I follow the very profound essential meanings that the Buddha has taught to differentiate among stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth in conditioned and unconditioned realms?"

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, "What do you think about this? Are stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, self-enlightenment bodhi, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi that you mentioned in conditioned or in unconditioned realm?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "All these holy effects are in the unconditioned instead of the conditioned realm."

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, "What do you think about this? Is there differentiation in unconditioned realm?"

Well-Appearing One said, "No, World-Honored One."

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, "What do you think about this? If good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth have thoroughly understood that all conditioned and unconditioned dharmas are with only one form, namely, formlessness, then will these good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth differentiate between the conditioned dharmas and unconditioned dharmas?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "No, World-Honored One."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "So do great bodhisattvas. When they practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they have taught sentient beings about various dharmas, but they themselves do not differentiate among the phenomena of the dharmas that they teach, due to internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature.

"These great bodhisattvas do not grasp or are attached to various dharmas themselves. They also encourage others not to grasp or become attached to various dharmas; namely, not to grasp or become attached to the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; not to grasp or become attached to the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; not to grasp or become attached to internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; not to grasp or become attached to realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable; not to grasp or become attached to the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering; not to grasp or become attached to the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration; not to grasp or become attached to the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentration in sequence, and ten universal contemplations; not to grasp or become attached to the stage of ecstasy, stage of freedom from defilement, and so forth, and the stage of dharma cloud; not to grasp or become attached to all dharani gates and all samadhi gates; not to grasp or become attached to the five eyes and six supernatural powers; not to grasp or become attached to the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; not to grasp or become attached to great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity; not to grasp or become attached to the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features; not to grasp or become attached to staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times; not to grasp or become attached to the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; not to grasp or become attached to all great bodhisattva

actions; not to grasp or become attached to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi; and not to grasp or become attached to the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

"These great bodhisattvas do not grasp or become attached to these various dharmas themselves. They also teach others not to grasp or become attached to all these dharmas. Because of the nongrasping and nonattachment, the great bodhisattvas can go anywhere without hindrance. Much like the transformed ones made by the Buddha, the World-Honored One; they have practiced giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, but they do not grasp nor become attached to the effects of their practices. They have practiced this way to bring nirvana to all sentient beings. So do great bodhisattvas. They have practiced the fathomless prajna paramita, but they do not grasp nor be attached to all flawed and flawless dharmas, the dharmas of the world and beyond the world, and the conditioned and unconditioned dharmas. Nor do they dwell in or hinder all these dharmas. Why? These great bodhisattvas have thoroughly understood the exquisite and subtle phenomena of all dharmas."

(The Buddha taught that because great bodhisattvas have understood the exquisite phenomena of all dharmas, they can practice various dharmas without being attached to them; they also teach sentient beings to think and do this way.)

Chapter 29

Giving and Others

Section 1

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “How do great bodhisattvas thoroughly understand the exquisite and subtle phenomena of all dharmas?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas do not practice greed, anger, and ignorance, just like the transformed ones made by the Buddha, the World-Honored One. Great bodhisattvas do not practice matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. They do not practice internal dharmas, external dharmas, the hidden roots of vexations, complexes, the flawed and flawless dharmas, the dharmas of the world and beyond the world, the conditioned and unconditioned dharmas, and the holy path and the effects of this path. If great bodhisattvas do not practice all dharmas when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they should have thoroughly understood the exquisite and subtle phenomena of all dharmas; namely, no differentiation among dharma natures.” (The Buddha taught that great bodhisattvas have understood the subtle and exquisite phenomena of all dharmas so that they do not practice the dharmas. What is exquisite and subtle phenomena? It is, no differentiation among various dharma natures, or the nature of all dharmas.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “How do transformed beings cultivate the holy path?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “The transformed beings cultivate the holy path without contamination and purification. They do not reincarnate through birth and death in the five destinies, nor realize and attain nirvana in the three vehicles.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “How do great bodhisattvas thoroughly understand that all dharmas are not real when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita?”

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, “What do you think about this? Are transformed beings made by various Buddhas real? Do they have contamination and purification and reincarnate through birth and death in the five destinies and attain nirvana of the three vehicles?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “No, World-Honored One. The transformed beings made by the Buddhas are not real. They do not have contamination and purification, do not reincarnate through birth and death in the five destinies, and do not realize and attain nirvana in the three vehicles.”

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, “So do great bodhisattvas when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita. They have thoroughly understood the real phenomena of all dharmas and realized that all dharmas are not real, and the nature and the phenomena of all dharmas are empty.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “Are all matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the conditioned and unconditioned dharmas like transformed beings?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “Yes, the five aggregates, and so forth, and the conditioned and unconditioned dharmas are all like transformed beings.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “If all dharmas are like transformed beings, matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the conditioned or unconditioned dharmas are not real; they do not have contamination and purification, do not reincarnate in the five

destinies, and need not to be relieved from the reincarnation of birth and death, then how can great bodhisattvas, the superior gentlepersons, serve sentient beings?"

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "What do you think about this? When great bodhisattvas practice the path of the bodhisattva, do they see sentient beings get rid of hells, the realm of animals, the realm of ghosts, human world, and heaven?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "No, World-Honored One."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "It is as you say. When great bodhisattvas practice the path of the bodhisattva, they do not see sentient beings get rid of the five destinies and the three realms. Why? The great bodhisattvas have thoroughly understood and observed that all dharmas are like transformed beings; they are not real."

(The Buddha said that great bodhisattvas and sentient beings are like transformed beings. He explained why.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "If great bodhisattvas have thoroughly understood and observed that all dharmas are like transformed beings that are not real, then why do they cultivate giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita? Why do they assist sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify Buddha lands?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "If sentient beings can thoroughly understand by themselves that all dharmas are like transformed beings that are not real, then great bodhisattvas need not to practice the bodhisattva path for immeasurable great kalpas for the sake of sentient beings. Because sentient beings cannot thoroughly understand by themselves that all dharmas are like transformed beings that are not real, great bodhisattvas must practice the bodhisattva path for

immeasurable kalpas for the sake of sentient beings.

(The Buddha explained why great bodhisattvas feel obliged to teach sentient beings the truth of all dharmas although they know that sentient beings are not real.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas do not thoroughly understand that all dharmas are unreal, they cannot cultivate giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita for immeasurable great kalpas for the sake of sentient beings, nor can they assist sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify Buddha lands. Because great bodhisattvas have thoroughly and accurately understood that all dharmas, like transformed beings, are unreal, they can cultivate giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita for immeasurable great kalpas for the sake of sentient beings; they can also assist sentient beings to mature, dignify and purify Buddha lands, realize insightfully and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, and bring benefits and happiness to all sentient beings in endless future."

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked, "World-Honored One, if all dharmas are like dreams, illusions, echoes, images, shadows, illusory images of water under sunlight, transformed things, and mirages, where do sentient beings live so various great bodhisattvas can expediently and skillfully deliver them when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "The sentient beings that great bodhisattvas are going to deliver live in delusive differentiation of names and forms. Great bodhisattvas will work to relieve them expediently and skillfully from delusive differentiation of names and forms when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "What are names? What are forms?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “Names are guests, provisionally established for designating meanings. Matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are names; the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere are names; the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere are names; the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm are names; the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm are names; the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm are names; man and woman are names; large one and small one are names; hells, realm of animals, realm of ghosts, human world, and heaven are names; the flawed and the flawless are names; the worldly and going beyond the world are names; the conditioned and the unconditioned are names; stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi are names; ordinary sentient being, voice-hearer, self-enlightened one, bodhisattva, and Thus-Comer are names.

“Well-Appearing One, all these names are provisionally established to designate specific meanings, therefore they are not real. All conditioned dharmas are merely names. Because of this reason, all unconditioned dharmas are not real either. But ignorant ordinary sentient beings wrongly think that all dharmas are real. When great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they skillfully teach sentient beings out of great compassion to help them get rid of incorrect understanding, and teach, ‘Names are caused by differentiation. They are not real. They are established based on the combination of causes and conditions. You should not be attached to them. Names are unreal and their self-natures are empty. The wise ones should not be attached to empty dharmas.’ Well-Appearing One, when practicing the expedient skillfulness of the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas will

teach sentient beings the way of casting away names. These are all about names.
(The Buddha explained the meaning and nature of name.)

"What are forms? You must know, Well-Appearing One, there are two kinds of forms to which the ignorant ordinary sentient beings are attached: material forms and immaterial forms. What are material forms? They are all matters, including thick ones, thin ones, superior ones, and inferior ones. All their self-natures are empty, but ignorant ordinary sentient beings are mistakenly attached to them and say that they are matters. These are material forms. Immaterial forms are phenomena of all immaterial dharmas. Ignorant ones also grasp these phenomena and differentiate among them, thus invite various vexations. When great bodhisattvas practice the expedient skillfulness of the fathomless prajna paramita, they teach sentient beings to cast away these two kinds of forms. Although teaching them to dwell in formless realm, great bodhisattvas do not allow them to fall into two extremes and say that these are with forms and those are formless. Well-Appearing One, when practicing the expedient skillfulness of the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should let sentient beings stay far away from various forms and dwell in the formless realm without attachment."
(The Buddha explained the meaning of forms and taught how great bodhisattvas guide sentient beings to avoid two extreme views and attachment to form and formlessness.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "If all dharmas are only names and forms, and all names and forms are provisionally established, then why can great bodhisattvas, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, enhance various virtuous dharmas themselves, encourage others to enhance their virtuous dharmas, fulfill various stages step by step due to enhancement, and establish sentient beings firmly in the effects of the three vehicles suited to them?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “If in all dharmas, there is a little thing that is not unreal, but is more than name and form, then great bodhisattvas, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, would not improve virtuous dharmas themselves and further encourage others to improve their virtuous dharmas. Because in all dharmas, there is not a little thing is real, and all are nothing other than names and forms, great bodhisattvas are able to foster their own virtuous dharmas, encourage others to foster their virtuous dharmas, and adopt formlessness as expediency to fulfill prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita. They are also able to adopt formlessness as expediency to fulfill 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; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable; the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration; the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations; the stages of great bodhisattva; all dharani gates and all samadhi gates; the five eyes and the six supernatural powers; the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power; great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity; the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features; staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times; the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; great bodhisattva actions and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddha; the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge; and assisting sentient beings to mature and dignifying and purifying

Buddha lands. Well-Appearing One, all dharmas thus are unreal, and no more than provisionally established names and forms. Great bodhisattvas are not attached to them; rather, they can adopt formlessness as expediency to foster their own virtuous dharmas and make others foster their virtuous dharmas.
(Great bodhisattvas can improve themselves and help others due to the unreal nature of all dharmas.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, if in all dharmas there is a phenomenon of the dharma as small as the tip of a hair, then great bodhisattvas, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, would not be awake and so realize that all dharmas are flawless and without forms, minds, and intentions; they thus would not be able to attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and establish sentient beings firmly in flawless dharmas. Why? It is because the flawless dharmas are without forms, minds, and intentions. Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas thus should practice the expedient skillfulness of the fathomless prajna paramita to establish all sentient beings well in flawless dharmas. This is the way they can really benefit sentient beings."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "If all dharmas are really flawless and without forms, minds, and intentions, then why do the World-Honored One frequently teach in the sutras that these are the flawless dharmas and those are the flawed dharmas; these are the dharmas of the world and those are the dharmas beyond the world; these are the conditioned dharmas and those are the unconditioned dharmas; and these are the dharmas for voice-hearer and self-enlightened one, and those are the dharmas for bodhisattva and the Thus-Comer?"

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "What do you think about this? Are the flawed dharmas different from the formless flawless dharma nature?"

Well-Appearing One replied, “No, World-Honored One.”

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, “What do you think about this? Are the dharmas of voice-hearer, and so forth different from the formless flawless dharma nature?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “No, World-Honored One.”

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, “Are the flawed dharmas, and so forth equivalent to the flawless dharma nature that is without forms, minds, and intentions?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Yes, World-Honored One.”

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, “Are stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi equivalent to the flawless dharma nature that is without forms, minds, and intentions?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Yes, World-Honored One.”

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, “So you must know that all dharmas are the flawless dharma nature that is without forms, minds, and intentions. You must know, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas can learn the flawless dharma nature of all dharmas that is without forms, minds, and intentions, then they will be able to foster the growth and increase of virtuous dharmas. Namely, they will be able to foster the growth and increase of giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena; they will be able to do better in assisting sentient beings to mature, and dignifying and purifying Buddha lands. All the Buddha dharma will grow and increase owing to the cultivation and learning of the flawless dharma nature that is without forms, minds, and intentions. Why? The liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration are the crucial and essential dharmas that great bodhisattvas should

learn. Why? The three liberation gates consist of all exquisite, virtuous dharmas. Why? Through the liberation gate of emptiness, one will contemplate and realize that the particular characteristics of all dharmas are empty. Through the liberation gate of formlessness, one will contemplate and realize that all dharmas are far away from phenomena. Through the liberation gate of nonaspiration, one will contemplate and realize that all dharmas are far away from aspirations. Great bodhisattvas can absorb all superior virtuous dharmas through the three liberation gates. If they stay far away from these three gates, all superior virtuous dharmas that they should cultivate and learn will not grow and increase.

(The Buddha taught that great bodhisattvas should learn the flawless dharma nature of all dharmas that is without forms, minds, and intentions to enhance virtuous dharmas.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas can learn these three liberation gates, they will be able to learn the five aggregates, twelve spheres, and eighteen realms. They will also be able to learn the four noble truths; the twelve links of dependent origination; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable; and giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita. They can also learn the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; assist sentient beings to mature, dignify and purify Buddha lands, and learn the rest of immeasurable and boundless Buddha dharmas."

(Great bodhisattvas should also learn the three liberations to absorb more superior virtuous dharmas.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "How will great bodhisattvas learn the five aggregates when practicing the fathomless prajna

paramita?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should accurately understand the phenomena, arising and extinction, and realness of matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness. This is how great bodhisattvas learn the five aggregates when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita.

(The Buddha instructed the way of learning five aggregates for great bodhisattvas.)

“Well-Appearing One, how will great bodhisattvas accurately understand the phenomena of matter? Great bodhisattvas should know that matter has holes and cracks in the final analysis, its nature is like bubble that is not solid. This is how great bodhisattvas accurately understand the phenomena of matter.

(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas know the phenomena of matter.)

“Well-Appearing One, how will great bodhisattvas accurately understand the arising and extinction of matter? Great bodhisattva should know that matter comes from nowhere when it arises and will go nowhere when it extinguishes. Although it comes from nowhere and goes nowhere, its arising corresponds with its extinction. This is how great bodhisattvas accurately understand the arising and extinction of matter.

(The Buddha taught how to understand the arising and extinction of matter.)

“Well-Appearing One, how will great bodhisattvas accurately understand the realness of matter? Great bodhisattvas should know that the realness of matter is without arising and extinction, coming and going, contamination and purification, and increase and decrease; it is always as it has been, with no illusion and change, so it is called realness. This is how great bodhisattvas accurately understand the realness of matter.

(The Buddha taught how to understand the realness of matter.)

"Well-Appearing One, how will great bodhisattvas accurately understand the phenomena of feeling? Great bodhisattvas should know that feeling is in the final analysis like a boil or an arrow that arises and extinguishes swiftly; it is also like a froth that is illusory and not enduring. All feelings arise dependently. This is how great bodhisattvas accurately understand the phenomena of feeling.

(The Buddha taught how to understand the phenomena of feeling.)

"Well-Appearing One, how will great bodhisattvas accurately understand the arising and extinction of feeling? Great bodhisattvas should know that feeling comes from nowhere when it arises and will go nowhere when it extinguishes. Although it comes from nowhere and goes nowhere, its arising corresponds with its extinction. This is how great bodhisattvas accurately understand the arising and extinction of feeling. Well-Appearing One, how will great bodhisattvas accurately understand the realness of feeling? Great bodhisattvas should know that the realness of feeling is without arising and extinction, coming and going, contamination and purification, and increase and decrease; it is always as it has been, with no illusion and change, so it is called realness. This is how great bodhisattvas accurately understand the realness of feeling.

(The Buddha taught how to understand the arising and extinction of feeling and the realness of feeling.)

"Well-Appearing One, how will great bodhisattvas accurately understand the phenomena of thinking? Great bodhisattvas should know that thinking is like illusory images of water under sunlight that are unattainable. The causes and condition of craving bring about thinking, which is expressed through provisional speech. This is how great bodhisattvas accurately understand the phenomena of thinking.

(The Buddha taught how to understand the phenomena of thinking.)

"Well-Appearing One, how will great bodhisattvas accurately understand the arising and extinction of thinking? Great bodhisattvas should know that thinking comes from nowhere when it arises and goes nowhere when it extinguishes. Although it comes from nowhere and goes nowhere, its arising corresponds with its extinction. This is how great bodhisattvas accurately understand the arising and extinction of thinking.

(The Buddha taught how to understand the arising and extinction of thinking.)

"Well-Appearing One, how will great bodhisattvas accurately understand the realness of thinking? Great bodhisattvas should know that the realness of thinking is without arising and extinction, coming and going, contamination and purification, and increase and decrease. It is as it has always been, with no illusion and change, so it is called realness. This is how great bodhisattvas accurately understand the realness of thinking.

(The Buddha taught how to understand the realness of thinking.)

"Well-Appearing One, how will great bodhisattvas accurately understand the phenomena of action? Great bodhisattvas should know that action is like a plantain tree that is unattainable in the final analysis when all its leaves are taken off piece by piece. This is how great bodhisattvas accurately understand the phenomena of action.

(The Buddha taught how to understand the phenomena of action.)

"Well-Appearing One, how will great bodhisattvas accurately understand the arising and extinction of action? Great bodhisattvas should know that action comes from nowhere when it arises and goes nowhere when it extinguishes. Although it comes from nowhere and goes nowhere, its arising corresponds with its extinction. This is how great bodhisattvas accurately understand the arising and extinction of

action.

(The Buddha taught how to understand the arising and extinction of action.)

"Well-Appearing One, how will great bodhisattvas accurately understand the realness of action? Great bodhisattvas should know that the realness of action is without arising and extinction, coming and going, contamination and purification, and increase and decrease. It is always as it has been, with no illusion and change, so it is called realness. This is how great bodhisattvas accurately understand the realness of action.

(The Buddha taught how to understand the realness of action.)

"Well-Appearing One, how will great bodhisattvas accurately understand the phenomena of consciousness? Great bodhisattvas should know that consciousness is like transformed thing that is a combination of causes and conditions. Its existence is provisionally established. It is unattainable. It is like a master magician and disciple, who transformed four armies, elephants, horses, vehicles, and infantry, or other things at the intersection of the roads. Transformed things look real, but they are not. So is consciousness that is unreal and unattainable. This is how great bodhisattvas accurately understand the phenomena of consciousness.

(The Buddha taught how to understand the phenomena of consciousness.)

"Well-Appearing One, how will great bodhisattvas accurately understand the arising and extinction of consciousness? Great bodhisattvas should know that consciousness comes from nowhere and goes nowhere. Nevertheless, its arising corresponds with its extinction. This is how great bodhisattvas accurately understand the arising and extinction of consciousness.

(The Buddha taught how to understand the arising and extinction of consciousness.)

"Well-Appearing One, how will great bodhisattvas accurately understand the

realness of consciousness? Great bodhisattvas should know that the realness of consciousness is without arising and extinction, coming and going, contamination and purification, and increase and decrease. It is always as it has been, with no illusion and change, so it is called realness. This is how great bodhisattvas accurately understand the realness of consciousness."

(The Buddha taught how to understand the realness of consciousness.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "How will great bodhisattvas learn the twelve spheres when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should accurately understand that the internal spheres and the self-nature of internal spheres are empty, and the external spheres and the self-nature of external spheres are empty. This is how great bodhisattvas learn the twelve spheres when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita."

(The Buddha taught how to understand the twelve spheres.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "How will great bodhisattvas learn the eighteen realms when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should get to know accurately that the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm and their self-nature are empty; the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm and their self-nature are empty; and the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm and their self-nature are empty. This is how the great bodhisattvas get to learn the eighteen realms when practicing the fathomless prajna

paramita."

(The Buddha taught how to learn the eighteen realms.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "How will great bodhisattvas learn the four noble truths when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should get to know accurately that suffering is the phenomenon of pressure, the cause of suffering is the phenomenon of arising, the cessation of suffering is the phenomenon of tranquility, and the path for the cessation of suffering is the phenomenon of getting far away. Great bodhisattvas should further get to know accurately that the self-nature of the suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering is empty and far away from duality, and that this is the truth for the holy ones. They will get to know accurately that the four noble truths are realness, and realness is the four noble truths; they are not dualistic or separate. Only the genuine holy ones can realize this truth. This is how great bodhisattvas learn the four noble truths when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita."

(The Buddha taught how to understand the four noble truths.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "How will great bodhisattvas learn the twelve links of dependent origination when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should know accurately that ignorance, action, and so forth, and old age and death are without arising, extinction, contamination, and purification; their self-nature is empty, and far away from duality. This is how great

bodhisattvas learn the twelve links of dependent origination when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita."

(The Buddha taught how to learn the twelve links of dependent origination.)

The long-lived sage asked the Buddha again, "How will great bodhisattvas learn internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should know accurately that internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are without self-nature. They are all unattainable, but in which one can dwell peacefully. This is how great bodhisattvas learn internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita."

(The Buddha taught how to learn various kinds of emptiness.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "How will great bodhisattvas learn realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "When great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they should know accurately that realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable are without nonsensical arguments; they are without differentiation, but in which one can dwell peacefully. This is how great bodhisattvas learn realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita."

(The Buddha taught how to learn realness, dharma realm, and so forth.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "How will

great bodhisattvas learn giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and immeasurable and boundless Buddha dharmas when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "When great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they should know accurately that giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and immeasurable and boundless Buddha dharmas are without addition and subtraction, contamination and purification. They are without self-nature and are unattainable, but they can be cultivated and learned. This is how great bodhisattvas learn giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and immeasurable and boundless Buddha dharma when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita."

(The Buddha taught how to learn six paramitas and other numberless Buddha dharmas.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, "When great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they thus should realize accurately that each dharma has its specific characteristics, which are not in a mess. Will these dharmas, matter, feeling, and so forth not destroy the real dharma realm? Why? The dharma realm is neither dualistic nor different."

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "If dharmas are attainable as separate from dharma realm, then you can say that the dharmas may destroy dharma realm. But no attainable dharmas are separate from dharma realm, so no dharmas can destroy dharma realm. Why? The Buddhas, bodhisattvas, self-enlightened ones, and voice-hearers know that there are no dharmas attainable if they are separate from dharma realm. Knowing that no dharmas are attainable if they are separate from dharma realm, great bodhisattvas will teach others this truth. Therefore, dharma realm

cannot be destroyed. Well-Appearing One, when great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they should learn that dharma realm is neither dualistic nor different; it is indestructible."

(The Buddha taught why dharma realm cannot be destroyed.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Where do great bodhisattvas learn dharma realm?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Great bodhisattvas should learn dharma realm in all dharmas. Why? All dharmas are in dharma realm."

(The Buddha taught how to learn dharma realm.)

The long-lived sage asked the Buddha again, "Why is it said that all dharmas are in dharma realm?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Whether the Thus-Comer appears in the world or not, all dharmas are in dharma realm as they have always been. They are without different forms. This is the truth independent of Buddha's teaching. Why? The virtuous and not virtuous dharmas, flawed and flawless dharmas, the dharmas of and beyond the world, and the conditioned and unconditioned dharmas are all in this formless, unconditioned, and empty-natured dharma realm. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas would like to learn dharma realm when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they should learn all dharmas. learning all dharmas is learning dharma realm."

(The Buddha taught that great bodhisattvas should learn all dharmas if they would like to learn dharma realm.)

The long-lived sage asked the Buddha again, "If all dharmas are in dharma realm and are not dualistic or different, then why should great bodhisattvas learn the six paramitas? Why should they learn the four meditations, four immeasurable minds,

and four formless concentrations? Why should they learn the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path? Why should they learn internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature? Why should they learn realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable? Why should they learn the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering? Why should they learn the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration? Why should they learn the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations? Why should they learn the stage of ecstasy, stage of freedom from defilement, and so forth, and the stage of dharma cloud? Why should they learn the dharani gates and samadhi gates? Why should they learn the five eyes and six supernatural powers? Why 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? Why should they learn great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity? Why should they learn staying in correct mindfulness and always dwelling in equanimity? Why should they learn the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena? Why should they learn to fulfill the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features? Why should they learn to be reborn in the noble families of Ksatriya, Brahman, and so forth, and lay believers? Why should they learn to be reborn in the Heaven of the Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and Heaven of Enjoying Other-Made Changes? Why should they learn to be reborn in the Heaven of Brahma Followers, Heaven of Brahma Subordinates, and so forth, and Heaven of Extensive Rewards? Why should they learn

the way of being reborn in the Heaven of No Thinking although they do not like to be reborn there? Why should they learn the way to be reborn in the Heaven of Pure Residence although they do not like to be reborn there? Why should they learn the way to be reborn in the Heaven of Boundless Emptiness, Heaven of Boundless Consciousness, and so forth, and the Heaven of Nonthinking and Not Nonthinking although they do not like to be reborn there? Why should they learn to initiate the first, second, and so forth, and the tenth aspiration to the bodhi? Why should they learn to enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising? Why should they learn the stages of voice-hearer and self-enlightened one without realizing them? Why should they learn to assist sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify Buddha lands? Why should they learn various kinds of dharani and unhindered talent of debate? Why should they learn all bodhisattva paths and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas? And how will they realize the perfect knowledge of all phenomena and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge after fulfilling all these kinds of learning?

"Furthermore, World-Honored One, in dharma realm, there are no such differentiations. Will there not be some great bodhisattvas who will initiate nonsensical arguments because of the upside-down differentiation? Why? In the real dharma realm, there is no differentiation or nonsensical argument.

"Furthermore, World-Honored One, dharma realm is not matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, while it is not far apart from matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are dharma realm, and dharma realm is matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness. And so on. Dharma realm is not conditioned dharmas and unconditioned dharmas, while not far apart from conditioned dharmas and

unconditioned dharmas. Conditioned dharmas and unconditioned dharmas are dharma realm, and dharma realm is conditioned dharmas and unconditioned dharmas."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "Yes, it is as you say. In the real dharma realm, there are no differentiations and nonsensical arguments. Dharma realm is not matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, while dharma realm is not apart from matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Dharma realm is matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness; and matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are dharma realm. And so on, dharma realm is not conditioned and unconditioned dharmas, while dharma realm is not apart from conditioned and unconditioned dharmas. Dharma realm is conditioned and unconditioned dharmas, and conditioned and unconditioned dharmas are dharma realm.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas see any dharma apart from dharma realm when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they are not on the right path toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi that they are pursuing. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should not see all dharmas as apart from real dharma realm when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita.

(The Buddha taught that great bodhisattvas should not stay apart from dharma realm when cultivating various dharmas. All dharmas are in dharma realm; they are dharma realm. Great bodhisattvas should learn all dharmas to understand dharma realm.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas know that all dharmas are the real dharma realm. They are the dharmas without names and forms. But for the sake of various sentient beings, great bodhisattvas expediently and skillfully teach the designated names and forms of

dharmas, and establish differentiations among 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 earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm; cause and condition, consecutive thoughts, conditions that stimulate the mind, and the conditions that reinforce main causes; the dharmas produced by conditions; ignorance, action, and so forth, and old age and death; the virtuous and not virtuous dharmas; the flawed and flawless dharmas; the dharmas of and beyond the world; the conditioned and unconditioned dharmas; and giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas, and so forth, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.

(The Buddha said that for the sake of sentient beings, great bodhisattvas expediently and skillfully teach various dharmas separately although all dharmas are dharma realm and are not different.)

"A magician and disciple made some transformed things in front of the public with various large and small images: transformed men and women, elephants, horses, cows, sheep, camels, donkeys, chickens, and other animals; transformed cities, villages, gardens, forests, and ponds, all looked so loveable and gorgeous; transformed clothes, drinks, food, houses, beds and bedding, fragrant flowers, jewel necklaces, and rarities; money, cereals, and stored goods; various entertainments, music, and performers, which amuse people and bring them a lot of fun. The magician

also made transformed figures, let them practice giving, observe precept, cultivate forbearance, cultivate diligence, learn concentration, and learn wisdom. These transformed beings appeared in rebirth, they were born in the noble families of Ksatriya, Brahman, and so forth, and lay believer. The images of mountains, oceans, Mount Sumeru, and Great Circular Iron Enclosure were manifested. Heaven of the Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and Heaven of Nonthinking and Not Nonthinking were manifested. Stream-enterers, once-returners, non-returners, arhats, and self-enlightened ones were transformed. Some great bodhisattvas were transformed, showing that since they first aspired to the bodhi, they had cultivated giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; cultivated the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; cultivated the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; cultivated the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration; learned to dwell in internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; learned to dwell in realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable; learned to dwell in the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering; entered onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising; cultivated the stage of ecstasy, stage of freedom from defilement, and so forth, and the stage of dharma cloud; elicited various superior supernatural powers; emitted great lights to illuminate various worlds; dignified and purified Buddha lands; assisted sentient beings to mature; practiced all meditations, liberations, samadhi, and samapatti freely; and cultivated various merits and virtues of the Buddha. The transformed images of the Thus-Comer appeared with thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features. This transformed Thus-

Comer had achieved ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, eighteen distinctive features, great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, great equanimity, and the rest of immeasurable and boundless merits and virtues.

"This magician and disciple made such transformed things to puzzle and amuse audience. Those who were not wise would be surprised and acclaim, 'It is bizarre. This person has mastered all kinds of tricks and can do many unusual things. He can even make a transformed Thus-Comer who has magnificent perfect marks and possessed various merits and virtues.' Intelligent ones reflected, 'It is very strange. How can this person show such things? Although nothing is real, people are misled and entertained, mistaking unreal for real.' Only the very wise ones can thoroughly understand that all are empty. Although they have seen them, they are not attached to them.

"So do great bodhisattvas. They practice the fathomless prajna paramita, without seeing that dharma realm is existent apart from dharmas, or dharmas are existent apart from dharma realm. They do not see that all sentient beings and their establishment are real and attainable. They initiate expedient skillfulness to cultivate the six paramitas themselves, encourage others to cultivate the six paramitas, praise publicly and correctly the way of cultivating the six paramitas, and rejoice and acclaim those who have cultivated the six paramitas. And so on. They fulfill the perfect knowledge of all phenomena themselves, encourage others to do so, praise publicly and correctly the way of fulfilling the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, and celebrate and acclaim those who have fulfilled the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. They fulfill the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features themselves, encourage others to do so, praise publicly and correctly the

way of fulfilling the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features, and celebrate and acclaim those who have fulfilled the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, if real dharma realm has differentiation among past, future, and present, then great bodhisattvas could not establish expedient skillfulness to teach sentient beings about the real dharma realm, dignify and purify Buddha lands, assist sentient beings to mature, cultivate various bodhisattva actions, and realize insightfully and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Because the real dharma realm has no differentiation among past, future, and present, great bodhisattvas are able to expediently and skillfully teach sentient beings about the real dharma realm, dignify and purify Buddha lands, assist sentient beings to mature, cultivate various bodhisattva actions, realize insightfully and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, and turn the wonderful dharma wheel to deliver all sentient beings."

(The Buddha said that because dharma realm is without differentiation, great bodhisattvas can cultivate and fulfill various superior virtuous dharmas to realize the unsurpassed bodhi, and expediently teach and deliver sentient beings.)

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Chapter 29

Giving and Others

Section 2

(In the Third Assembly)

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, if sentient beings and their establishment are unattainable in the final analysis, for whose sake do great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “Great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita for the sake of reality. You must know, Well-Appearing One, if sentient beings are different from reality, great bodhisattvas should not practice the fathomless prajna paramita. Because sentient beings are not different from reality, they should practice the fathomless prajna paramita. Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they should well establish sentient beings to let them dwell in reality without destroying reality.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “If sentient beings are not different from reality, why do great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita without destroying reality to well establish sentient beings and let them dwell in reality? World-Honored One, if great bodhisattvas, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, well establish sentient beings and let them dwell in reality, then they are establishing reality and let it dwell in reality. If they establish reality and let it dwell in reality, then they equally establish self-nature and

let it dwell in self-nature. But it does not make sense to let self-nature dwell in self-nature. How can we say that great bodhisattvas, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, do not destroy reality to well establish sentient beings and let them dwell in reality?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "To put it reasonably, we should not establish reality to let it dwell in reality or establish self-nature to let it dwell in self-nature. But great bodhisattvas, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, can expediently and skillfully establish sentient beings and let them dwell in reality without making them different from reality. Thus, Well-Appearing One, sentient beings and reality are not different or separate."

(The Buddha clarified why sentient beings are not different from reality.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Why is it said that great bodhisattvas can expediently and skillfully establish sentient beings and let them dwell in reality without destroying the forms of reality when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas have achieved such expedient skillfulness since the time they first aspire to the bodhi. Because of the power of expedient skillfulness, they are able to well establish sentient beings and let them dwell in giving. After sentient beings have practiced giving, great bodhisattvas will further teach them that the phenomena of giving in the past, future, and the present are not different. They will say, 'Giving in the past, future, or the present is empty. The giver, the receiver, and the effects of practicing giving are also empty. All these are nonexistent and unattainable in the reality. So, you should not be attached to the thinking that the realities of giving, the giver, the receiver, and the effects of practicing giving are

different. If you are not attached to the thinking that the realities of giving, the giver, the receiver, and the effects of practicing giving are different, you will be blessed to approach and attain the effects of nectar and will enjoy the sweet effects in your future.'

(The Buddha described how great bodhisattvas expediently and skillfully guided sentient beings to practice giving and taught them that the relevant factors in giving are all empty, they should refrain from becoming attached to them.)

"Great bodhisattvas will further teach, 'Although receiving the blessings gained through practicing giving, you should not grasp the aggregates of matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness. You should not grasp eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere. You should not grasp sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere. You should not grasp eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm. You should not grasp sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm. You should not grasp eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm. You should not grasp eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact. You should not grasp the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact. You should not grasp earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm. You should not grasp cause and condition, consecutive thoughts, the conditions that stimulate the mind, and the conditions that reinforce main causes. You should not grasp the dharmas caused by the conditions. You should not grasp ignorance, action, and so forth, and old age and death. You should not grasp giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita. You should not grasp internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature. You should not grasp realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm

of the inconceivable. You should not grasp the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering. You should not grasp the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path. You should not grasp the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations. You should not grasp the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration. You should not grasp the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations. You should not grasp the stage of pure contemplation, stage of embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and the stage of Thus-Comer. You should not grasp the stage of ecstasy, stage of freedom from defilement, and so forth, and the stage of dharma cloud. You should not grasp all dharani gates and all samadhi gates. You should not grasp the five eyes and the six supernatural powers. You should not grasp 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 grasp great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity. You should not grasp the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features. You should not grasp staying in correct mindfulness and always dwelling in equanimity. You should not grasp the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. You should not grasp stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi. You should not grasp great bodhisattva actions. You should not grasp the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. You should not grasp the flawed and flawless dharmas, the dharmas of the world and beyond the world, the conditioned and unconditioned dharmas. Why? All kinds of giving and the nature of giving are empty. All givers and the nature of the giver are empty. All receivers and

the nature of the receiver are empty. All effects caused by practicing giving and their nature are empty too. In emptiness, giving, givers, receivers, and the effects of giving are all unattainable. The differences between all dharmas and their self-nature are empty in the final analysis. In emptiness in the final analysis, all dharmas are unattainable. Because all dharmas are unattainable, the grasping of the dharmas is also unattainable.'

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the great bodhisattvas have practiced the fathomless prajna paramita and achieved expedient skillfulness since the time they first aspire to the bodhi. Because of the power of expedient skillfulness, they can well establish sentient beings and let them dwell in pure precept. After sentient beings have dwelled in pure precept, great bodhisattvas will further teach them, 'You should from now on treat all sentient beings with loving-kindness and compassion. You should not kill, lie, or hold incorrect views. Rather, you should cultivate correct views. Why? All dharmas are without self-nature, you should not differentiate among or become attached to them. You must further contemplate and investigate: What dharma is called intending to kill? What conditions cause killing? And so on. You must contemplate: What is the circumstance that stimulates one to initiate incorrect views? What conditions make incorrect views arise? The self-nature of all these dharmas is empty.'

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas have achieved such expedient skillfulness, so they can do a good job to assist sentient beings to mature, and teach through innumerable gates that the effects caused by practicing giving and pure precept are unattainable, let them know that the self-nature of the effects of practicing giving and pure precept is empty. After getting to know this truth, they will not be attached to them. Because of

nonattachment, their minds will stay away from restlessness. Because of staying away from restlessness of mind, they will be able to elicit exquisite wisdom and permanently terminate the enduring disposition of vexations and complexes and enter the realm of nirvana without remainder.

(The Buddha described how great bodhisattvas expediently and skillfully teach sentient beings the empty nature of giving and pure precept, let their minds stay clam and enter nirvana.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, all these are spoken in terms of the worldly perspective instead of ultimate meaning. Why? In emptiness, not a little bit of dharma is attainable. All dharmas, such as entering nirvana in the past, future, and present; ones who enter nirvana; and the cause of attaining nirvana are all nonexistent and empty in the final analysis. The emptiness in the final analysis is nirvana. There is no other real dharma than nirvana.

(The Buddha taught that emptiness in the final analysis is nirvana.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas have practiced the fathomless prajna paramita and achieved expedient skillfulness since the time they first aspire to the bodhi. Because of the power of expedient skillfulness, they have deep loving-kindness and compassion on sentient beings because sentient beings are so easy to get angry and hate, so, say to them, 'Now you should cultivate and stay in forbearance to overcome the negative factors in your mind and practice the actions of patience without reluctance. The self-nature of the dharmas that you hate is empty, how can you be angry at empty dharmas? You should further contemplate and investigate: Which has made me angry? Who is angry? Whom will you be mad at? The original nature of these dharmas is empty, and the dharmas with empty original nature are also empty. The empty nature is not created by the Thus-Comers,

bodhisattvas, self-enlightened ones, voice-hearers, heavenly dragons, humans, or nonhumans, nor is it created by the Heaven of the Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, or Heaven of Nonthinking and Not Nonthinking. You should further reasonably contemplate and ask: Where do anger and hatred come from? To whom do they belong? Which has caused them? What effects will be produced by them? What benefits will be brought about by them? The original nature of all dharmas is empty; in empty nature, no anger or hatred exists. So, you must refrain from hating and getting angry so that you can benefit greatly.'
(The Buddha described how great bodhisattvas expediently and skillfully guide sentient beings to cultivate forbearance.)

"Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas thus should achieve superior expedient skillfulness to establish sentient beings in the truth of empty nature and the cause and effect of empty nature, and then demonstrate to, encourage, admire, and acclaim sentient beings to cultivate the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, so that they will dwell in, realize insightfully, and attain it step by step.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, all these are spoken in terms of the worldly perspective instead of ultimate meaning. Why? In empty original nature, ones who attain, things attained, the time and the place of attainment are all unreal.
(It is in terms of worldly perspective to teach sentient beings this way. In terms of ultimate meaning, all these dharmas are unattainable.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, this is called reality, the truth of empty original nature. Great bodhisattvas should follow this empty original nature, the reality, to practice the fathomless prajna paramita. They should not intend to attain sentient beings and their establishment if they would like to benefit sentient beings.

Why? All dharmas are far apart from sentient beings. Because the dharmas are far apart from sentient beings, they are unattainable. Dharmas and sentient beings are established in mutual dependence. But to speak in terms of ultimate meaning, all are empty.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, since the moment aspiring to the bodhi, great bodhisattvas have achieved such expedient skillfulness when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita. Because of the power of expedient skillfulness, great bodhisattvas encourage the sentient beings, who are tired and lazy in body and mind, to diligently cultivate various virtuous dharmas, and say, 'Good gentlemen, you must deeply believe that in the empty original nature, there is no tiredness or laziness, no tired and lazy ones, no place where and time when tiredness and laziness happen, and no cause of tiredness and laziness. All these dharmas are empty in their original nature. Emptiness is the only truth of all dharmas. You should initiate diligence in body and mind, abandon tiredness and laziness, and cultivate diligently various virtuous dharmas. Namely, you should diligently cultivate giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; 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; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable; the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering; the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations; the stage of pure contemplation, stage of embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and the stage of Thus-Comer; the stage of

ecstasy, stage of freedom from defilement, and so forth, and the stage of dharma cloud; all dharani gates and all samadhi gates; the five eyes and the six supernatural powers; the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity; the thirty-two perfect major marks and the eighty distinguishing minor features; staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times; the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi; all bodhisattva actions; the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas; and the rest of immeasurable and boundless Buddha dharmas. You should cultivate all these virtuous dharmas diligently and tirelessly. Tiredness and laziness bring people endless suffering. Good gentlemen, you must know that all dharmas are empty and without hindrance in their original nature. You must contemplate and understand that in this unhindered emptiness, the dharmas such as tiredness and laziness, ones who are tired and lazy, the time when and the place where tiredness happens, and the cause of tiredness are unattainable.'

(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas should expediently and skillfully guide sentient beings to cultivate diligence.)

"Well-Appearing One, as great bodhisattvas achieve superior expedient skillfulness, they are able to well establish sentient beings, guide them to dwell in empty original nature of all dharmas, free from dualistic thought thinking. Why? The empty original nature is without differentiation or separation; it leaves no space for duality.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when great bodhisattvas practice the

fathomless prajna paramita, they will give cautions and teachings of empty original nature to sentient beings and guide them to cultivate and learn diligently. They will teach, ‘Good gentlemen, you should diligently cultivate the virtuous dharmas. When cultivating giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita, you should not reflect on the forms of duality and nonduality. When cultivating the rest of immeasurable and boundless Buddha dharmas, you should not reflect on the forms of duality and nonduality. Why? Good gentlemen, the original nature of all dharmas is empty; you cannot reflect on empty original nature, considering whether it is dual or not dual.’

“Well-Appearing One, when great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they will achieve superior expedient skillfulness, practice bodhisattva actions, and assist sentient beings to mature. When sentient beings become more mature, great bodhisattvas will establish them, step by step, to dwell in stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, self-enlightenment bodhi, various stages of great bodhisattva, or the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, since the moment when great bodhisattvas begin aspiring to the bodhi, they have practiced the fathomless prajna paramita. They have observed that some sentient beings are staying in restless minds. They cannot restrain their sense roots when encountering stimuli, and thus always initiate tumultuous karma. After seeing what happens to the sentient beings, great bodhisattvas will teach and caution them expediently and guide them to enter superior concentrations, and say, ‘Come here, good gentlemen, you should cultivate superior samadhi so that you can avoid staying in restless mind or restless thoughts attached to superior concentration. Why? It is because the original nature of all dharmas is empty.

In the emptiness of original nature, the dharmas, such as the restless mind or the concentrative mind, are unattainable. If you can dwell in such superior concentration, you will be able to quickly fulfill the virtuous things that you must pursue. You also can dwell in the empty original nature as you wish. What are the virtuous things that you must pursue? They are pure and superior karmas of the body, the speech, and the mind, including giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas, and so forth, and the great bodhisattva actions, as well as the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, assisting sentient beings to mature, and dignifying and purifying Buddha lands. All these pure and superior virtuous dharmas will be accomplished quickly because of the power of the superior concentration. You will be able to dwell in empty original nature as you wish because of this power.'
(The Buddha taught about superior concentration that great bodhisattvas will teach sentient beings to practice.)

"Well-Appearing One, when practicing the expedient skillfulness of the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should do virtuous and beneficial things uninterruptedly to benefit sentient beings since the time aspiring to until attaining the bodhi. To bring benefits and happiness to sentient beings, they will travel from one Buddha country to the other, stay close to various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, make offerings to them, and hear correct dharma at various Buddhas' places. For innumerable kalpas, they will be reborn frequently through various bodies for numberless kalpas until they finally attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. During this period, they will never get lost. They will attain dharani rooted in body, speech, and mind and never diminish. Why? These great bodhisattvas always well cultivate the perfect knowledge of all phenomena. Because of cultivating the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, they can always reflect on what they do.

Because of these reasons, they can cultivate all paths, including the paths of voice-hearer, path of self-enlightened one, path of bodhisattva, path of Thus-Comer, path of superior heavenly being, path of superior human being, and the path of supernatural powers of bodhisattva. Because of dwelling in the path of supernatural powers, they can do various beneficial things consistently for sentient beings. Even when they are reborn through the reincarnation of birth and death in different destinies, their supernatural powers never diminish at all. Because of the non-diminishing supernatural powers, they can always accomplish superior beneficial things for themselves and for others. Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas thus can dwell in the expedient skillfulness of empty original nature to undertake beneficial things for sentient beings perfectly. (The Buddha described how great bodhisattvas visited with many Buddhas and would go through reincarnation to learn and undertake many beneficial things for sentient beings.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas have achieved such expedient skillfulness since the time they first aspire to the bodhi when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita. Because of the power of expedient skillfulness, they can dwell in the empty original nature and observe clearly that the sentient beings have inferior wisdom and thus make evil karmas because of their upside-down knowledge. These great bodhisattvas will caution and teach them expediently and guide them into the fathomless prajna paramita. They will say, 'Good gentlemen, you should cultivate prajna paramita and contemplate the original nature of all dharmas as empty. If you can do so, the positive karmas of the body, speech, and mind that you are cultivating will lead you to enjoy the sweet effect of nectar in the endless future. Good gentlemen, the original nature of all dharmas is empty. In the empty original nature,

sentient beings and dharmas are unattainable, but the dharmas that you are cultivating will not lose or diminish. Why? Good gentlemen, the empty original nature neither increases nor decreases. In the empty original nature, there are no addition and subtraction, or those who can add or subtract. Why? The empty original nature has neither self-nature nor not self-nature; it is far apart from various differentiations and nonsensical arguments. In it, there is no dharma of addition or subtraction, or the one who can add or subtract. Because of this reason, what one does will not lose or diminish either. Therefore, you should cultivate prajna paramita and contemplate the empty original nature when doing whatever you should do.'

(The Buddha described how great bodhisattvas teach sentient beings about empty original nature of all dharmas.)

"Therefore, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the expedient skillfulness of the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should caution and teach sentient beings to let them enter prajna paramita, dwell in the emptiness of original nature, and cultivate various virtuous karmas.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, the great bodhisattvas thus will caution and teach sentient beings to cultivate various virtuous karmas tirelessly. Namely, they not only consistently practice the path of the ten positive karmas themselves but also advise and encourage others to do so. They not only accept and embrace the five precepts for lay believers themselves but also advise and encourage others to do so. They not only accept and embrace the eight precepts for lay believers themselves but also advise and encourage others to do so. They not only accept and embrace the precepts for monastics themselves but also advise and encourage others to do so. They not only cultivate consistently the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations themselves, but also advise and encourage

others to do so. They not only cultivate consistently the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path themselves, but also advise and encourage others to do so. They not only cultivate consistently the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration themselves, but also advise and encourage others to do so. They not only cultivate consistently giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita themselves, but also advise and encourage others to do so. They not only dwell peacefully in internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature themselves, but also advise and encourage others to do so. They not only dwell peacefully in realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable themselves, but also advise and encourage others to do so. They not only dwell peacefully in the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering themselves, but also advise and encourage others to do so. They will not only cultivate consistently the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations themselves, but also advise and encourage others to do so. They not only cultivate consistently the bodhisattva stages themselves but also advise and encourage others to do so. They not only cultivate consistently the dharani gates and samadhi gates themselves but also advise and encourage others to do so. They not only cultivate consistently the five eyes and six supernatural powers themselves but also advise and encourage others to do so. They not only cultivate consistently the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power themselves but also advise and encourage others to do so. They not only cultivate consistently great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity themselves, but

also advise and encourage others to do so. They not only cultivate consistently staying in correct mindfulness and always dwelling in equanimity themselves but also advise and encourage others to do so. They not only cultivate consistently the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena themselves, but also advise and encourage others to do so. They not only cultivate consistently the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features themselves but also advise and encourage others to do so. They not only initiate consistently the knowledge of stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and the knowledge of self-enlightenment bodhi without dwelling in them themselves but also advise and encourage others to do so. They not only initiate all great bodhisattva actions themselves but also advise and encourage others to do so. They not only initiate consistently the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas themselves, but also advice and encourage others to do so.

(Great bodhisattvas not only cultivate, dwell in, or initiate various superior holy dharmas themselves, but also encourage others to do so. The Buddha emphasized such bodhisattva actions.)

"Well-Appearing One, when great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they should cultivate virtuous karmas consistently and tirelessly, and caution and teach sentient beings to cultivate virtuous karmas consistently and tirelessly. Well-Appearing One, this is called the expedient skillfulness possessed by great bodhisattvas when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita. With this power of expedient skillfulness, great bodhisattvas help sentient beings dwell peacefully in reality, without destroying its forms. The great bodhisattvas will realize insightfully the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi soon.

(The Buddha explained the expedient skillfulness of great bodhisattvas.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “If the self-nature of all dharmas is empty, and in empty original nature, not only all sentient beings and all dharmas are unattainable, but non-dharmas are also nonexistent, how can great bodhisattvas realize insightfully the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly for the sake of sentient beings?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “It is as you say. The original nature of all dharmas is empty, and in the empty original nature, not only sentient beings and dharmas are unattainable, but non-dharmas are also nonexistent. You must know, Well-Appearing One, if the original nature of all dharmas is not empty, then great bodhisattvas will not be able to dwell peacefully in the empty original nature and seek to realize insightfully the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge quickly when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, nor will they be able to teach about empty original nature to benefit the sentient beings. Because the original nature of all dharmas is empty, great bodhisattvas will dwell peacefully in the empty original nature, seek to realize insightfully the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge quickly, and teach about the empty original nature to benefit all sentient being when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita.

“Which dharmas’ original nature is empty, so that great bodhisattvas get to know them accurately and thus teach it for others when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita? You must know, Well-Appearing One, the original nature of all dharmas is empty. Namely, the original nature of matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness is empty. The original nature of the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere is empty. The original nature of the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere is empty. The original nature of the eye realm,

ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm is empty. The original nature of the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm is empty. The original nature of the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm is empty. The original nature of the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact is empty. The original nature of the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact is empty. The original nature of the earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm is empty. The original nature of cause and condition, consecutive thoughts, the conditions that stimulate the mind, and the conditions that reinforce main causes is empty. The original nature of the dharmas produced by conditions is empty. The original nature of ignorance, action, and so forth, and old age and death is empty. The original nature of giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita is empty. The original nature of internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature is empty. The original nature of realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable is empty. The original nature of the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering is empty. The original nature of the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations is empty. The original nature of the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path is empty. The original nature of the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration is empty. The original nature of the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations is empty. The original nature of the stage of pure contemplation, stage of embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and the stage of Thus-Comer is empty. The original nature of the stage of

ecstasy, stage of freedom from defilement, and so forth, and the stage of dharma cloud is empty. The original nature of dharani gates and samadhi gates is empty. The original nature of the five eyes and six supernatural powers is empty. The original nature of the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power is empty. The original nature of great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity is empty. The original nature of staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times is empty. The original nature of the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena is empty. The original nature of the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features is empty. The original nature of stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi is empty. The original nature of all great bodhisattva actions is empty. The original nature of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas is empty. The original nature of the permanent elimination of enduring disposition of vexations is empty. And the original nature of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge is empty. When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should get to know accurately that the original nature of the five aggregates, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge is empty, then dwell in the empty original nature, teach sentient beings about the empty original nature of all dharmas.
(The Buddha taught that when great bodhisattvas practice prajna paramita, they should get to know accurately that the original nature of all dharmas is empty, then they teach this to sentient beings.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, if the original nature of internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature were

not empty, then great bodhisattvas, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, should not teach sentient beings that the original nature of all dharmas is empty. If they teach so, they will destroy the empty original nature. But the truth is that the original nature is empty and indestructible; it is neither permanent nor destructible. Why? The truth is, the original nature is empty; it does not have direction or location; it comes from nowhere and goes nowhere. This truth is also called dharma dwelling, in which there is no dharma, nor are there gathering and dispersion, decrease and increase, arising and extinction, and contamination and purification. It is the nature, in which all dharmas originally dwell. As dwelling peacefully in it and seeking to realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge quickly, great bodhisattvas will not see any dharma that can be or cannot be realized. Because all dharmas can dwell nowhere, it is called dharma dwelling. When dwelling peacefully in it and practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas certainly will attain non-regression in the pursuit of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi if they can see the empty original nature of all dharmas. Why? These great bodhisattvas will not see any dharma that stands in their way. If they can see all dharmas without hindrance, they will not be puzzled about the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and thus will not regress in the pursuit of it.

(The Buddha said that the empty original nature is dharma dwelling, in which great bodhisattvas can attain nonregression in the pursuit of unsurpassed bodhi.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when dwelling in the empty original nature of all dharmas, great bodhisattvas will contemplate the emptiness of the original nature and see that it is unattainable; namely, the 'I,' the sentient being, and so forth, and the knower and the viewer and their establishment are unattainable. Matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness and their establishment are

unattainable. The eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere and their establishment are unattainable. The sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere and their establishment are unattainable. The eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm and their establishment are unattainable. The sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm and their establishment are unattainable. The eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm and their establishment are unattainable. The eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact and their establishment are unattainable. The feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact and their establishment are unattainable. The earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm and their establishment are unattainable. Cause and condition, consecutive thoughts, conditions that stimulate the mind, and the conditions that reinforce main causes and their establishment are unattainable. The dharmas produced by conditions and their establishment are unattainable. Ignorance, action, and so forth, and old age and death and their establishment are unattainable. Giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita and their establishment are unattainable. Internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature and their establishment are unattainable. Realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable and their establishment are unattainable. The noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering and their establishment are unattainable. The four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path and their establishment are unattainable. The four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations and their establishment are unattainable. The liberation

gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration and their establishment are unattainable. The eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations and their establishment are unattainable. The stage of pure contemplation, stage of embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and stage of Thus-Comer and their establishment are unattainable. The stage of ecstasy, stage of freedom from defilement, and so forth, and stage of dharma cloud and their establishment are unattainable. The dharani gates and samadhi gates and their establishment are unattainable. The five eyes and six supernatural powers and their establishment are unattainable. The Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power and their establishment are unattainable. Great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity and their establishment are unattainable. Staying in correct mindfulness and always dwelling in equanimity and their establishment are unattainable. The perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena and their establishment are unattainable. Stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi and their establishment are unattainable. All great bodhisattva actions and their establishment are unattainable. The unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas and its establishment are unattainable. The flawed and flawless dharmas and their establishment are unattainable. The dharmas of and beyond the world and their establishment are unattainable. The conditioned and unconditioned dharmas and their establishment are unattainable. And the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features and their establishment are also unattainable.

(Dwelling in empty original nature, great bodhisattvas will see that all dharmas and

their establishments are unattainable.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, suppose that a Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One had made transformed four groups of people: monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen. Then a transformed Buddha was made to teach these transformed four groups of disciples and followers for one kalpa or longer. What do you think about this? Would these transformed followers attain stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, self-enlightenment bodhi, or nonregression in the pursuit of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "No, they would not, World-Honored One. Why? All these transformed people are not real. In unreal dharmas, there is no attainment of effects or nonregression."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "So are all dharmas. Their original nature is empty, so they are not real. In emptiness, which kinds of great bodhisattvas will teach which kinds of sentient beings about which kinds of dharmas to let them realize and attain stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and be conferred the prophecy of achieving nonregression in the pursuit of the bodhi?

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas have lectured on the empty dharmas to sentient beings, but sentient beings are unattainable. Realizing that sentient beings are attached to upside-down thoughts, great bodhisattvas are motivated by great compassion to work diligently to relieve sentient beings. The not upside-down thoughts are without differentiation, and those who are free from differentiation are not upside down. While those who differentiate are the upside-down ones. You must know, Well-Appearing One, realizing the upside-down dharma will lead to freedom from upside-down thoughts. In the not upside-down dharma, the

‘I,’ the sentient being, and so forth, and the knower and the viewer are nonexistent. The aggregates of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features are also nonexistent.

(The Buddha distinguished between the upside-down and not upside-down dharmas.)

“You must know, Well-Appearing One, this nonexistence is the emptiness of original nature. When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in the empty original nature and observed that sentient beings are falling in upside-down thinking. Great bodhisattvas thus are determined to expediently and skillfully relieve sentient beings from the thoughts of existence and nonexistence of matter, feeling, and so forth, and eighty distinguishing minor features. They will also relieve them from flawed dharmas, such as the five aggregates, and the flawless dharmas, such as the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth. Why? The flawless dharmas, such as the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth are still not like the ultimate meaning that is without arising, extinction, form, action, nonsensical argument, and differentiation, so sentient beings also should be relieved from these flawless dharmas. The real ultimate meaning is the emptiness of original nature. The emptiness of original nature is the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi that the Buddhas have realized insightfully.

(The Buddha also distinguished between flawed and flawless dharmas.)

“You must know, Well-Appearing One, in the empty original nature, the ‘I,’ the sentient being, and so forth, and the knower and viewer are unattainable. Matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness are unattainable. The eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere are unattainable. The sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere are unattainable. The eye realm, ear realm, and

so forth, and conscious realm are unattainable. The sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm are unattainable. The eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm are unattainable. They eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and consciousness contact are unattainable. The feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are unattainable. The earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm are unattainable. Cause and condition, consecutive thoughts, conditions that stimulate the mind, and the conditions that reinforce main causes are unattainable. The dharmas produced by conditions are unattainable. Ignorance, action, and so forth, and old age and death are unattainable. Giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita are unattainable. Internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are unattainable. Realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable are unattainable. The noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering are unattainable. The four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path are unattainable. The four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations are unattainable. The liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration are unattainable. The eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations are unattainable. The stage of pure contemplation, stage of embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and the stage of Thus-Comer are unattainable. The stage of ecstasy, stage of freedom from defilement, and so forth, and the stage of dharma cloud are unattainable. The dharani gates and the samadhi gates are unattainable. The five eyes and the six supernatural powers are unattainable. The Buddha’s ten abilities, four

kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and the eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power are unattainable. Great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity are unattainable. Staying in correct mindfulness and always dwelling in equanimity are unattainable. The perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are unattainable. Stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi are unattainable. The great bodhisattva actions are unattainable. The unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas is unattainable. And the thirty-two perfect major marks and the eighty distinguishing minor features are unattainable.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi not for the sake of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, but for the sake of the empty original nature of all dharmas. The original nature was empty in the past, will be empty in the future, and is empty at present; it is always empty. Great bodhisattvas have always dwelled in empty original nature paramita. To relieve sentient beings from attachment to the thought of sentient beings and the thought of dharmas, great bodhisattvas have practiced the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths. As they practice the perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, they equally practice all paths; namely, they practice the path of voice-hearer, the path of self-enlightened one, the path of bodhisattva, and the path of Thus-Comer.

(Great bodhisattvas have always dwelled in the empty original nature of all dharmas. As they practice the perfect knowledge of the forms of all paths, they equally practice all paths.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, after fulfilling the perfect knowledge

of the forms of the paths, great bodhisattvas will further assist sentient beings to mature, dignify and purify Buddha lands, and choose to prolong their lifespans to realize insightfully the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Because they have realized the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, they are able to keep the Buddha eye and prevent it from discontinuation and destruction. What is the Buddha eye? It is the emptiness of original nature. The Buddhas of the ten directions in the past, future, and present always adopt the empty original nature as the Buddha eye to teach correct dharma for sentient beings.

(The Buddha stated that the empty original nature is the Buddha eye. Great bodhisattvas have realized the unsurpassed bodhi to keep Buddha eye from discontinuation. Thus-Comer has always adopted empty original nature as Buddha eye to teach sentient beings.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, it is doubtless that no Buddha will be born in the world far apart from the empty original nature. All Buddhas appearing in the world will always teach the meanings of the empty original nature. The sentient beings guided and converted by the Buddhas need to hear the meanings of the empty original nature taught by the Buddhas before entering onto the holy path to attain the effects of the path. There is no expedient way other than the empty original nature. (Empty original nature is the expedient way of Buddha dharmas.)

"Therefore, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas would like to realize insightfully and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, they should dwell correctly in the empty original nature and cultivate the six paramitas and the rest of great bodhisattva actions. If they can do this way, they will never get lost in or regress from the pursuit of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge so they can always benefit sentient beings."

(Great bodhisattvas will not get lost or regress if they dwell in empty original nature to cultivate various holy dharmas.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, “Great bodhisattvas are unique and unusual. Although they practice the empty original nature of all dharmas, they do not lose or destroy the empty original nature. Namely, they are not attached to the thought that matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas are different from the empty original nature. World-Honored One, matter is the empty original nature, and the empty original nature is matter. And so on, the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas is the empty original nature, and the empty original nature is the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas.”

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, “Yes, it is as you say. Great bodhisattvas are unique and unusual. Although they practice the empty original nature of all dharmas, they never lose or destroy the empty original nature.

“You must know, Well-Appearing One, matter is not different from the empty original nature, and the empty original nature is not different from matter. Matter is the empty original nature, and the empty original nature is matter. And so on. The unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas is not different from the empty original nature, and the empty original nature is not different from the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas. The unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas is the empty original nature, and the empty original nature is the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas.
(The Budda confirmed the statement that matter, feeling, and so forth, and the unsurpassed bodhi is not different from the empty original nature, and the empty

original nature is not different from matter, feeling, and so forth, and the unsurpassed bodhi.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, if matter is different from the empty original nature and the empty original nature is different from matter; if matter is not the empty original nature and the empty original nature is not matter; and so on, if the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas is different from the empty original nature and the empty original nature is different from the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas; if the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas is not the empty original nature and the empty original nature is not the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, then great bodhisattvas should not contemplate the original nature of all dharmas as empty, nor will they realize insightfully and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

(The Buddha said that if matter, feeling, and so forth are different from empty original nature, and empty original nature is different from matter, feeling, and so forth, great bodhisattvas will not contemplate the original nature as empty and realize and attain the unsurpassed bodhi.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, because matter is not different from the empty original nature and the empty original nature is not different from matter; matter is the empty original nature and the empty original nature is matter; and so on, because the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas is not different from the empty original nature and the empty original nature is not different from the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas; the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas is the empty original nature and the empty original nature is the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, great

bodhisattvas are able to contemplate the original nature of all dharmas as empty when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, and thus can realize insightfully and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Why? No dharma is real, permanent, destructible, and terminable either far apart from the empty original nature or in the empty original nature. But ignorant sentient beings have incorrect understanding and insist that matter is different from the empty original nature, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas is different from the empty original nature. Because of this reason, they do not know matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness as they really are. Because of the lack of correct knowledge, they are attached to matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Because of the attachment, they imagine that there are the 'I' and the associated images in matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Because they hold incorrect knowledge about internal and external things, they receive matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness that will come up in the future, and cannot be liberated from birth, old age, illness, death, worry, sorrow, misery, and upset in various destinies; they will continue to drift endlessly in the three realms.

"Because of this cause and condition, great bodhisattvas should dwell in the empty original nature paramita to practice the fathomless prajna paramita. They should not be attached to matter or destroy matter by thinking whether it is empty or not empty. And so on. They should not be attached to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas or destroy the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi by thinking whether it is empty or not empty. Why? Matter does not destroy emptiness, and emptiness does not destroy matter; one should not think that this is matter, and it is emptiness. And so on. The unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas does not destroy emptiness, and emptiness does not destroy the

unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas; one should not think that this is the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas and that is emptiness. Like empty space that does not destroy empty space: the realm inside empty space does not destroy the realm outside empty space, and the realm outside empty space does not destroy the realm inside empty space; so, matter does not destroy emptiness, and emptiness does not destroy matter. And so on, the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas does not destroy emptiness, and emptiness does not destroy the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas. Why? All these dharmas are without self-nature, we should not differentiate and say that this is empty, and it is not empty. It is because the original nature of all dharmas is empty, and there is no differentiation in the empty original nature."

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Chapter 29

Giving and Others

Section 3

(In the Third Assembly)

At that time, Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha again, “If the original nature of all dharmas is empty, and in the empty original nature, there is no differentiation, then why do great bodhisattvas dwell in the aspiration to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and vow that they will swear to pursue the broad, great, unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, turn the wonderful dharma wheel and deliver sentient beings? World-Honored One, the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi is broad, great, and very profound; no one can realize it insightfully with either dualistic or nondualistic mental images. How can great bodhisattvas realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi that they are pursuing? I am begging the Thus-Comer’s compassionate teaching in this regard.”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “Yes, it is as you say. The unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi is broad, great, and very profound; no one can realize it with either dualistic or nondualistic mental images. Why? The bodhi has no duality or differentiation. Practicing with duality or differentiation, no one can realize the broad, great, unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.

“You must know, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should not practice the bodhi with duality or differentiation; they should dwell nowhere to aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. If they do this, they will be able to approach and realize insightfully the broad, grand, unsurpassed, perfect, and universal

bodhi.

(The Buddha taught that great bodhisattvas should dwell nowhere to aspire to the unsurpassed bodhi.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi that great bodhisattvas pursue cannot be realized through practicing dualistic forms. Nowhere can the bodhi for bodhisattva be practiced. Namely, it cannot be practiced in matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness; in the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere; in the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere; in the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm; in the sight realm, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image realm; in the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm; in the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact; and in the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact. The bodhi for bodhisattva cannot be practiced in the earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and the consciousness realm; in cause and condition, consecutive thoughts, conditions that stimulate the mind, and the conditions that reinforce main causes; and in the dharmas produced by conditions. It cannot be practiced in ignorance, action, and so forth, and old age and death. It cannot be practiced in giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita. It cannot be practiced in internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; in realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable; in the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering. It cannot be practiced in the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and the noble eightfold path; in the four meditations, four immeasurable minds,

and four formless concentrations; in the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration; and in the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations. The bodhi for bodhisattva cannot be practiced in the stage of pure contemplation, stage of embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and the stage of Thus-Comer; in the stage of ecstasy, stage of freedom from defilement, and so forth, and the stage of dharma cloud; in dharani gates and samadhi gates; in the five eyes and six supernatural powers; in the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; in great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity; in the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features; in staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times; in the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; in stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi; in all great bodhisattva actions; and in the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas. Why? The bodhi for great bodhisattva is not attached to the 'I' or the associated images in terms of names and voices. Namely, the bodhi will not think, 'I practice in matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.'

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, the bodhi for great bodhisattvas should not be practiced with grasping or renunciation. It does not differentiate among all dharmas."

(The Buddha taught that the unsurpassed bodhi for great bodhisattvas could not be realized through practicing dualistic forms or dwelling in various dharmas with grasping or renunciation.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “If the bodhi for great bodhisattvas cannot be practiced with grasping or renunciation, and does not differentiate among all dharmas, then where will this bodhi be practiced?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One by asking him, “What do you think about this? Where will the bodhi for the transformed bodies of the Buddha be practiced? Will it be practiced with grasping? Will it be practiced with renunciation?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “World-Honored One, as the transformed bodies of the Buddha do not exist, how can the bodhi be practiced somewhere with grasping or renunciation?”

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, “What do you think about this? Where will the bodhi for arhats in dreams be practiced? Will it be practiced with grasping? Will it be practiced with renunciation?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “No, World-Honored One. The arhats have permanently eliminated all vexations; they have no more dullness and drowsiness, sleepiness, covers, and bonds; they do not dream either, so how can their bodhi be practiced somewhere with grasping or with renunciation in dreams?”

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, “Yes, it is as you say. So does the bodhi for great bodhisattvas when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita. It will not be practiced with grasping or renunciation. It will be practiced nowhere because they have thoroughly understood that the original nature of all dharmas is empty.” (The Buddha explained the bodhi could not be practiced with grasping or renunciation because the original nature of all dharmas are empty.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “When great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, the bodhi will not be practiced with grasping or renunciation. It can be practiced nowhere. Namely, it will

not be practiced in matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi; it will not be practiced in the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge either. If this is the case, do great bodhisattvas practice the ten stages; six paramitas; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; the sixteen kinds of emptiness; the meditation, samadhi, and samapatti; the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity, the eighty distinguishing minor features, and the rest of immeasurable Buddha dharmas? Won't the great bodhisattvas dwell in the superior supernatural powers, assist the sentient beings to mature, dignify and purify the Buddha lands, and realize insightfully and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Although the bodhi for great bodhisattvas can be practiced nowhere, great bodhisattvas still would like to practice the ten stages, the six paramitas, and so forth, and the superior supernatural powers to assist sentient beings to mature, dignify and purify Buddha lands, and realize insightfully and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge to benefit all sentient beings."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "If the bodhi for great bodhisattvas can be practiced nowhere, do great bodhisattvas dwell in the ten stages, the six paramitas, and so forth, and the superior supernatural powers of bodhisattva to cultivate them long enough to fulfill them, then assist sentient beings to mature, dignify and purify Buddha lands, and realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge to benefits sentient beings?

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “Although the bodhi for great bodhisattvas can be practiced nowhere, great bodhisattvas, in order to benefit sentient beings, still should dwell in and cultivate the ten stages of bodhisattva, the six paramitas, and so forth long enough to fulfill them. They should dwell in superior supernatural powers of the bodhisattva, assist sentient beings to mature, and dignify and purify Buddha lands long enough to fulfill them, so that they can realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. You must know, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas cannot fulfill the cultivation of all virtuous roots, they will not be able to attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.
(The Buddha stated that although the bodhi for great bodhisattvas can be practiced nowhere, great bodhisattvas still should practice various virtuous holy dharmas and help sentient beings, dignify and purify Buddha lands long enough to fulfill them, so that they can attain the perfect knowledge.)

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas would like to attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, they should dwell in the empty original nature of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the empty original nature of all bodhisattva actions and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. They should also dwell in the empty original nature of all dharmas and the empty original nature of all sentient beings. They should further cultivate and fulfill the ten stages of bodhisattva and giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas. They should also cultivate the superior supernatural powers of the bodhisattva, assist sentient beings to mature, and dignify and purify Buddha lands, so they will be able to realize insightfully and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.
(The Buddha instructed that for the sake of achieving the unsurpassed bodhi, great

bodhisattvas should dwell in the empty original nature of the six paramitas, all bodhisattva actions, the unsurpassed bodhi, all dharmas, and all sentient beings to cultivate and fulfill ten stages, paramitas, supernatural powers, assisting sentient beings, dignifying and purifying Buddha lands.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, the empty original nature of all dharmas and all sentient beings is extremely tranquil; in it, not a little piece of dharma can increase or decrease, arise or extinguish, contaminate or purify, and attain effects and intuitive contemplation.

(The features of the empty original nature are described by the Buddha.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas lecture on the cultivation of prajna paramita to accurately understand the empty original nature and thus realize insightfully and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, in terms of the worldly way instead of ultimate meaning. Why? It is because in ultimate meaning, the dharnas such as matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, the great bodhisattva actions, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi are all unattainable. Those who can practice great bodhisattva actions are unattainable; those who can attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi are also unattainable. You must know, Well-Appearing One, all these dharmas and the sentient beings are established in terms of the worldly way instead of ultimate meaning.

(The Buddha explained why all dharmas and sentient beings, and the process of realizing the unsurpassed bodhi are established in terms of the worldly way instead of the ultimate meaning.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas have practiced bravely and assiduously the bodhi actions

since they begin aspiring to the bodhi. But they do not attain the mind, sentient beings, great bodhi, Buddhas, or bodhisattvas. It is because the original nature of all dharmas and all sentient beings is empty; all these dharmas are unattainable." (Great bodhisattvas do not attain all factors related to pursuing the unsurpassed bodhi because the original nature of all dharmas is empty, and these dharmas are unattainable.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "If all dharmas are nonexistent and their original nature is empty and unattainable, then how can great bodhisattvas practice the bodhi actions? How can they attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One by asking, "What do you think about this? You relied on the termination of various realms and the incorrect views about the existence of self to eliminate vexations and achieve flawless roots. You could dwell in uninterrupted concentration and realized stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, and finally arhat effect. During that period, did you see the attainment of the mind, path, and the effects of various paths in dreams?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "No, World-Honored One."

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "If you did not attain anything during those times, why did you say that you attained arhat effect?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "I said that in terms of the worldly way instead of ultimate meaning."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "Yes, it is as you say. So do great bodhisattvas, who say that they practice the bodhi actions and attain the great bodhi in terms of the worldly way instead of ultimate meaning.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, matter, feeling, thinking, action, and

consciousness are established in terms of the worldly way. And so on, the great bodhisattva actions and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi are also established in terms of the worldly way. It is in terms of the worldly perspective instead of ultimate meaning to establish sentient beings, bodhisattvas, and the Buddhas.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas do not see any dharma that can increase, decrease, benefit, or harm the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi only because the original nature of all dharmas is empty.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas have contemplated the original nature of all dharmas, and seen that it is unattainable, not to mention the initial aspiring mind. As the initial aspiring mind is unattainable, how can we say that the cultivation of the ten stages, and so forth, and the six paramitas, the thirty-seven factors for enlightenment, the three liberation gates, and the rest of immeasurable and boundless Buddha dharma is attainable? It does not make sense to say that the cultivation is attainable. Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas thus practice the expedient skillfulness of the fathomless prajna paramita, practice various bodhi actions, realize insightfully the great bodhi, and deliver all sentient beings incessantly."

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Great bodhisattvas have cultivated diligently giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; dwelled peacefully in internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; dwelled peacefully in realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable; dwelled peacefully in the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering; cultivated the four bases of

mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; cultivated the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; cultivated the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration; cultivated the eight liberation gates, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations; cultivated the stage of ecstasy, stage of freedom from defilement, and so forth, and the stage of dharma cloud; cultivated all dharani gates and all samadhi gates; cultivated the five eyes and six supernatural powers; cultivated the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; cultivated great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity; cultivated the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features; cultivated staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times; cultivated the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; cultivated the great bodhisattva actions; and cultivated the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. But because they have not cultivated the path of the bodhi to its perfection, they are unable to realize and attain the unsurpassed bodhi. How should great bodhisattvas cultivate the path of the bodhi to its perfection to attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "If great bodhisattvas can practice the expedient skillfulness of the fathomless prajna paramita, due to the power of the expedient skillfulness, great bodhisattvas will be able to cultivate giving paramita without attaining giving, alms givers, receivers, and what they have done, nor getting far away from these various dharmas when practicing giving paramita. If great bodhisattvas can practice giving this way, they will cultivate the bodhi path to its

perfection soon. Well-Appearing One, this is how great bodhisattvas practice the expedient skillfulness of the fathomless prajna paramita, cultivate the bodhi path to its perfection, and realize insightfully the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. The same is true for the cultivation and fulfillment of pure-precept paramita, forbearance paramita, and so forth, and the great bodhisattva actions and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi."

(The Buddha instructed how great bodhisattvas could fulfill the six paramitas and other holy dharmas through expedient skillfulness to realize the unsurpassed bodhi.)

At that time, Sariputra asked the Buddha, "World-Honored One, how will great bodhisattvas cultivate the bodhi path correctly, diligently, and bravely when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Sariputra, "When great bodhisattvas practice the expedient skillfulness of the fathomless prajna paramita, they should not combine with or separate from matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness. They should not combine with or separate from the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere. They should not combine with or separate from the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere. They should not combine with or separate from the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm. They should not combine with or separate from the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm. They should not combine with or separate from the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm. They should not combine with or separate from the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact. They should not combine with or separate from the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact. They should not combine with or separate from the earth realm,

water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm. They should not combine with or separate from cause and condition, consecutive thoughts, conditions that stimulate the mind, and the conditions that reinforce main causes. They should not combine with or separate from the dharmas produced by conditions. They should not combine with or separate from ignorance, action, and so forth, and old age and death. They should not combine with or separate from giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita. They should not combine with or separate from internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature. They should not combine with or separate from realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable. They should not combine with or separate from the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering. They should not combine with or separate from the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path. They should not combine with or separate from the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations. They should not combine with or separate from the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration. They should not combine with or separate from the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations. They should not combine with or separate from the stage of pure contemplation, stage of embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and the stage of Thus-Comer. They should not combine with or separate from the stage of ecstasy, stage of freedom from defilement, and so forth, and the stage of dharma cloud. They should not combine with or separate from dharani gates and samadhi gates. They should not combine with or separate from the five eyes and six supernatural powers. They should not combine with or separate from the Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds

of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power. They should not combine with or separate from great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity. They should not combine with or separate from the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features. They should not combine with or separate from staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times. They should not combine with or separate from the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena. They should not combine with or separate from stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi. They should not combine with or separate from all great bodhisattva actions and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas. Why? It is because all dharmas have no self-nature that can combine or separate. (When practicing prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should not combine with or separate from all dharmas.)

"Therefore, Sariputra, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should cultivate the bodhi path correctly, diligently, and bravely this way."

In the meantime, Sariputra asked the Buddha again, "If all dharmas have no self-nature that can combine or separate, how great bodhisattvas initiate prajna pramita and cultivate and learn it? If great bodhisattvas do not cultivate and learn prajna paramita, they will not be able to attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi that they pursue."

The Buddha replied to Sariputra, "You are right when you say if great bodhisattvas do not cultivate and learn prajna paramita, they will not be able to attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi that they pursue. Sariputra, if great

bodhisattvas would like to realize insightfully the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, they should learn prajna paramita. Sariputra, the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi that great bodhisattvas pursue can only be realized and attained through expedient skillfulness.

"Sariputra, if great bodhisattvas, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, see that the self-nature of the dharmas is attainable, they will grasp them. If they do not see that the self-nature of the dharmas is attainable, what will they grasp? They will not grasp that this is prajna paramita, and those are meditation, diligence, forbearance, pure-precept, and giving paramitas. They will not grasp that these are 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 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; cause and condition, consecutive thoughts, conditions that stimulate the mind, and the conditions that reinforce main causes; the dharmas produced by conditions; ignorance, action, and so forth, and old age and death; internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable; the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; the liberation gates of

emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration; the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations; the stage of pure contemplation, stage of embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and the stage of Thus-Comer; the stage of ecstasy, stage of freedom from defilement, and so forth, and the stage of dharma cloud; the dharani gates and samadhi gates; the five eyes and six supernatural powers; the Buddha's ten abilities, 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 thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features; staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times; the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi, great bodhisattva actions, the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, ordinary sentient beings, voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, great bodhisattvas, and the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones.

"Sariputra, when great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they know accurately that the nature of all dharma is ungraspable. Namely, they know that all dharmas are ungraspable. Prajna paramita, meditation paramita, and so forth, and giving paramita are ungraspable. Matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness are ungraspable. The eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere are ungraspable. The sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere are ungraspable. The eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm are ungraspable. The sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm are ungraspable. The eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and

conscious consciousness realm are ungraspable. The eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are ungraspable. The feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact are ungraspable. The earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm are ungraspable. Cause and condition, consecutive thoughts, conditions that stimulate the mind, and the conditions that reinforce main causes are ungraspable. The dharmas produced by conditions are ungraspable. Ignorance, action, and so forth, and old age and death are ungraspable. The four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path are ungraspable. Internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature are ungraspable. Realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable are all ungraspable. The noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering are ungraspable. The four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations are ungraspable. The liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration are ungraspable. The eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and the ten universal contemplations are ungraspable. The stage of pure contemplation, stage of embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and the stage of Thus-Comer are ungraspable. The stage of ecstasy, stage of freedom from defilement, and so forth, and the stage of dharma cloud are ungraspable. The dharani gates and samadhi gates are ungraspable. The five eyes and six supernatural powers are ungraspable. The Buddha’s ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha’s wisdom and power are ungraspable. Great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity are ungraspable. The thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features are ungraspable. Staying in correct mindfulness

and always dwelling in equanimity are ungraspable. The perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena are ungraspable. Stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi are ungraspable. All great bodhisattva actions and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas are ungraspable. And the ordinary sentient beings, voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, bodhisattvas, and the Thus-Comers are ungraspable.

(Great bodhisattvas know accurately that all dharmas are ungraspable.)

"Sariputra, because great bodhisattvas accurately know that the nature of all dharmas is ungraspable, they become free from hindrance in all dharmas. Sariputra, this ungraspable paramita is unhindered paramita, and this unhindered paramita is prajna paramita. Great bodhisattvas should learn from it. Sariputra, if great bodhisattvas learn from it, they will not attain all dharmas, not to mention they will attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, prajna paramita, the dharma of ordinary sentient being, the dharma of voice-hearer, the dharma of self-enlightened one, the dharma of bodhisattva, and the Buddha dharma. Why? Sariputra, not a single dharma has self-nature. In the dharmas without self-nature, where is the dharma of ordinary sentient being? Where are the dharma of stream-enterer, self-enlightened one, bodhisattva, and Buddha dharma? Sariputra, as all these dharmas are unattainable, based on what dharmas can we establish individuals in reincarnation? As the individuals in reincarnation are unattainable, how can we say that these are the ordinary sentient beings, stream-enterers, and so forth, and the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones?"

(The Buddha said that because great bodhisattvas know that the nature of all dharnas is ungraspable, they will be free from all dharmas and do not attain them.)

Meanwhile, Sariputra asked the Buddha again, “If all dharmas have no self-nature and therefore are unreal, then how can we tell that these are ordinary sentient beings and this is the dharma of ordinary sentient being? And so on, how can we distinguish that these are the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones and this is the Buddha dharma?”

The Buddha said to Sariputra, “What do you think about this? Is there really matter to which ignorant ones were, are, and will be attached? Are there really feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness to which ignorant ones were, are, and will be attached? And so on, is there really the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi to which ignorant ones were, are, and will be attached to? Are there really the ordinary sentient beings, voice-hearers, and so forth, and the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones to whom ignorant ones were, are, and will be attached?”

Sariputra replied, “No, World-Honored One. They are just the delusions caused by upside-down attachment held by ignorant ones.”

The Buddha said to Sariputra, “When great bodhisattvas practice the expedient skillfulness of the fathomless prajna paramita, they have contemplated and realized that all dharmas do not have self-nature, and therefore are unreal, but in order to relieve ignorant sentient beings from various upside-down attachments, they aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and guide sentient beings expediently in terms of the worldly way.”

In the meantime, Sariputra asked the Buddha again, “Why do great bodhisattvas guide sentient beings expediently in terms of the worldly way to relieve them from various upside-down attachments although the great bodhisattvas have contemplated and realized that all dharmas have no self-nature and therefore are

unreal when they practice the expedient skillfulness of the fathomless prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Sariputra, "The great bodhisattvas have achieved expedient skillfulness when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita. Namely, they have seen that there is not a dharma ready for one to dwell in. Dwelling in the dharmas means hindrance. Hindrance makes one withdraw. Withdrawal makes one weak and inferior and thus tired and less diligent.
(The Buddha warned that dwelling in dharmas makes one tired and not diligent.)

"Sariputra, all dharmas are not real. They are selfless and without associated images. The self-nature of all dharmas is non-nature, so their self-nature is empty and tranquil, and their particular characteristics are empty and tranquil too. Only the ignorant ones, because of upside-down delusions, are attached 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 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; cause and condition, consecutive thoughts, conditions that stimulate the mind, and the conditions that reinforce main causes; the dharmas produced by conditions; 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; realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable; the noble truths of

suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration; the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations; the stage of pure contemplation, stage of embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and the stage of Thus-Comer; the stage of ecstasy, stage of freedom from defilement, and so forth, and the stage of dharma cloud; the dharani gates and samadhi gates; the five eyes and six supernatural powers; the Thus-Comer's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity; the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features; staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times; the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi; the great bodhisattva actions; the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi; and the ordinary sentient being, voice-hearer, and so forth, and the Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One.

"As great bodhisattvas contemplate all dharmas, they realize that all dharmas are unreal, without selfness and associated images, and adopt non-nature as self-nature; their original nature is empty and tranquil, and their particular characteristics are empty and tranquil too. The great bodhisattvas thus assume themselves as transformed teachers to teach the dharma of giving to stingy and greedy sentient beings, the dharma of pure precept to precept violators, the dharma of forbearance to

angry ones, the dharma of diligence to lazy and tired ones, the dharma of meditation to restless ones, and the dharma of prajna to wisdom abusers. Great bodhisattvas thus help sentient beings dwell in giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita. They further teach them about superior holy path to help them get rid of birth and death. The sentient beings who learn this path will be able to attain stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, or self-enlightenment bodhi, or enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising, and further dwell in the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi."

In the meantime, Sariputra said to the Buddha: "When knowing that sentient beings are nonexistent, great bodhisattvas still guide them to dwell peacefully in giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas. They further teach them superior holy path to get rid of birth and death and attain stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Why are these great bodhisattvas not called the ones with attainment?"

The Buddha said to Sariputra, "When these great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they do not attain sentient beings. Why? They do not see any attainable sentient being, but only the provisional name of sentient being established in terms of the worldly way. Sariputra, when great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they teach sentient beings correct dharma based on two principles: one is of the world, the other is of ultimate meaning. Sariputra, within these two principles, the establishment of sentient beings is unattainable, but great bodhisattvas teach sentient beings expediently and skillfully about the essential meaning. Upon hearing the correct dharma, sentient beings do not attain selfness of present dharmas, not to mention the holy effects in the future. Sariputra, this is how

great bodhisattvas expediently and skillfully teach sentient beings the essential meaning of the dharma, so sentient beings can cultivate correct actions and realize the effects without attachment to the attainment of the effects only because they know that all dharmas are unattainable."

In the meantime, Sariputra said to the Buddha, "These great bodhisattvas are the real great bodhisattvas. Although they do not attain one nature, different nature, general nature, or other nature, they still put on a great armor of merits and virtues. Because they have worn such a great armor of merits and virtues, they will not be reborn in the realm of desire, the realm of form, or the realm of formlessness. They will not see the conditioned realm and the unconditioned realm. Although they have educated sentient beings and let them get rid of the three realms, they will not attain sentient beings or the establishment of sentient beings. Without attaining the establishment of sentient beings, they will be free from bondage and relief. Because they have no bondage or relief, they will not be contaminated or purified. Because they are not contaminated or purified, they will not understand the differences among various destinies. Because they do not understand the differences among various destinies, they will not invite negative karmas or vexations. Because they are free from negative karmas and vexations, there will be no effects that mature in different types and at different times. As no effects mature in different types and at different times, how can there be the differences of the three realms in which the 'I' and the sentient beings reincarnate?"

The Buddha replied to Sariputra, "Yes, it is as you say. Sariputra, if sentient beings were existent in the past and became nonexistent later, then what bodhisattvas and Thus-Comers teach would be incorrect. If sentient beings were nonexistent and became existent later, then what bodhisattvas and Thus-Comers teach would be

incorrect too. The same principle also applies to the reincarnation of various destinies. Therefore, Sariputra, whether the Thus-Comers appear in the world or not, dharma nature always dwells in realness, dharma realm, and the nature of nonillusion and has never changed. Dharma nature, dharma realm, dharma dwelling, dharma concentration, realness, and the reality of all dharmas are like empty space; within them, no 'I,' the sentient being, and so forth are attainable, not to mention various dharmas, such as matter, feeling, and so forth are attainable. If this is the case, how can we say that the reincarnation in various destinies is attainable? If the reincarnation in various destinies is unattainable, how can we assist sentient beings to mature and help them become liberated? It is in terms of the worldly way to say that these dharmas are existent.

"Sariputra, the self-nature of all these dharmas is empty. Great bodhisattvas have heard accurately the teachings given by the Buddhas in the past. To liberate sentient beings from upside-down attachment, they have pursued the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. When they are pursuing it, they do not think, 'I have attained or I will attain this dharma to liberate sentient beings from the suffering in birth and death that they have been attached to.'

"Sariputra, to liberate sentient beings from upside-down attachment, great bodhisattvas put on the great armor of merits and virtues and work diligently and correctly without indulgence and attachment. They do not regress from the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. They have never been hesitant or skeptical about the bodhi. They do not think, 'Should I or should I not attain?' They rather think, 'I certainly should attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, so that I can do many beneficial things for sentient beings. I should liberate them from the upside-down delusions so they will not suffer from birth and death in various

destinies any longer.' Sariputra, although great bodhisattvas have delivered sentient beings and liberated them from the reincarnation of birth and death in various destinies, they will attain nothing. It is in terms of the worldly way to say that these things are existent.

(Great bodhisattvas have vowed to relieve sentient beings from birth and death, but they themselves will attain nothing.)

"Sariputra, a magician and disciple used tricks resembling the Heavenly Emperor's webs to make innumerable hundreds of thousands of koti nayuta transformed sentient beings, then made various most delicious food and drinks to feed and satisfy these sentient beings. After doing this, the magician was delighted and claimed, 'I have accumulated a lot of blessings.' What do you think about this? Did this magician or disciple really feed and satisfy the sentient beings?"

Sariputra replied, "No, World-Honored One."

The Buddha said to Sariputra, "So do great bodhisattvas. In order to deliver sentient beings, they have since first aspiring to the bodhi cultivated giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; dwelled peacefully in internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; dwelled peacefully in realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable; dwelled peacefully in the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering; cultivated the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; cultivated the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; cultivated the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration; cultivated the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal

contemplations; cultivated the stage of ecstasy, stage of freedom from defilement, and so forth, and the stage of dharma cloud; cultivated the dharani gates and samadhi gates; cultivated the five eyes and six supernatural powers; cultivated the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; cultivated great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity; cultivated the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features; cultivated staying in correct mindfulness and always dwelling in equanimity; cultivated the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; fulfilled the great bodhi of bodhisattva path, and assisted sentient beings to mature and dignified and purified Buddha lands.

"Sariputra, although the great bodhisattvas have focused on these beneficial things for sentient beings, they have not attained anything from sentient beings or all dharmas. They do not think that they have adopted certain method to tame various sentient beings or have assisted them to stay far away from upside-down attachment, thus they will not suffer from repeatedly going through birth and death any longer."

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, "World-Honored One, what are the great bodhi paths for great bodhisattvas, through which they can assist sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify Buddha lands, and great bodhisattvas are able to realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita are the great bodhi paths for great bodhisattvas. And so on, the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, perfect knowledge of all phenomena, and the rest of

immeasurable and boundless Buddha dharmas that various great bodhisattvas have practiced since the time they begin aspiring to the great bodhi, are all the great bodhi paths for great bodhisattvas. Great bodhisattvas are able to realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly if they cultivate these paths, assist sentient beings to mature, and dignify and purify Buddha lands expediently and skillfully. But they will not have a thought of attaining sentient beings or Buddha lands."

(The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, explaining what the great bodhi paths are, through which great bodhisattvas can assist sentient beings and dignify and purify Buddha lands and attain the unsurpassed bodhi without attaining sentient beings and Buddha lands.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "How do great bodhisattvas expediently and skillfully assist sentient beings to mature when cultivating giving paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "When cultivating the expedient skillfulness of giving paramita, great bodhisattvas will not only practice giving themselves, but also sincerely and enthusiastically teach and advise others to do so. They will say, 'Good gentlemen, don't be attached to giving. If you are attached to giving, you will receive rebirth. If you receive rebirth, you will experience innumerable and boundless suffering repeatedly. Good gentlemen, in ultimate meaning of the truth, the giving, the giver, the receiver, the things given, and the effects of practicing giving are nonexistent. The original nature of all these dharmas is empty. In the empty original nature, the dharmas are ungraspable, the empty nature of all dharmas is ungraspable too.' Thus, Well-Appearing One, when cultivating giving paramita, great bodhisattvas should not only practice giving themselves but also encourage others to do so. But they will not attain giving, the giver, the receiver, the

things given, and the effects caused by practicing giving. Such giving paramita is called nonattainment paramita. You must know, Well-Appearing One, by attaining nothing in dharmas, great bodhisattvas can educate sentient beings expediently and skillfully and allow them to dwell in stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and approach the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Well-Appearing One, this is how great bodhisattvas assist sentient beings to mature and bring benefits to them when cultivating giving paramita.

(Responding to Well-Appearing One's question, the Buddha instructed that great bodhisattvas should not only practice giving themselves but also encourage others to do so. But they should not attain giving, the giver, the receiver, the things given, and the rewards.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas not only practice giving themselves but also encourage others to do so. They always praise publicly and correctly the way of practicing giving and rejoice and acclaim those who are practicing giving. After cultivating such great giving, these great bodhisattvas will be reborn in the noble family of Ksatriya, Brahman, elder, or lay believer and enjoy wealthy and prosperous life. They may also be reborn as a king of a small kingdom, a great king of a great kingdom, or a wheel-turning king of the four continents and live a wealthy, noble, and easy life.

"These great bodhisattvas will be reborn in these places with noble and high positions. They will absorb various sentient beings with the four approaches of absorption and teach sentient beings to dwell peacefully in giving, and further dwell peacefully in pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna. These great bodhisattvas will further guide the sentient beings to dwell peacefully in the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, four formless concentrations, thirty-seven

factors for enlightenment, and three liberation gates. After guiding various sentient beings to dwell in all these virtuous dharmas, they will further help them enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising, and attain stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and arhat effect; or attain self-enlightenment bodhi, or cultivate various stages of bodhisattva step by step and realize insightfully the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly. These great bodhisattvas will again say to sentient beings, ‘Good gentlemen, you should initiate great aspiration toward the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi to do beneficial things for all. The dharmas that sentient beings have differentiated in delusions and been attached to are all without self-nature. They are wrongly regarded as existent because of the upside-down and delusive attachment. Therefore, you should work diligently to terminate such delusions and attachments and encourage others to do so. You should liberate yourselves from birth and death and assist others to do so. Then, you will not only greatly benefit yourselves, but also greatly benefit others.’”

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Chapter 29

Giving and Others

Section 4

(In the Third Assembly)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should consistently cultivate giving paramita this way. Because of this giving paramita, they will never be reborn in bad destinies, poverty, or borderlands from the moment they first aspire to the bodhi until attaining it. To bring benefits and happiness to sentient beings, they are often reborn in human world as a wheel-turning king and lead a wealthy, noble, and easy life. Why? It is based on the powers of the causes that effects are produced. The bodhisattvas who have become wheel-turning king will think like this when they see beggars, 'Why do I drift in birth and death to be a wheel-turning king? Isn't it because I have vowed to benefit sentient beings?' After having this thought, he said to the beggar, 'You may take whatever you like from me, all treasures and properties because they are all yours. Why? It is for the sake of your peaceful and happy life that I received this body and accumulated these properties. So, come and take them from me either for yourselves or for others, don't be hesitant or skeptical.' As great bodhisattvas initiate compassionate mind on sentient beings, they fulfill great compassion immediately beyond specific causes and conditions. Because of the quick fulfillment of great compassion, they will always bring benefits and happiness to innumerable sentient beings, but do not attain anything from them, including the superior effects derived. They know that it is in terms of the worldly way that various beneficial things for sentient beings are established. They also understand that all

establishments are like echoes and images that look existent while they are not. They do not grasp dharmas due to this reason.

(The Buddha described how great bodhisattvas practiced giving paramita when they were reborn as a wheel-turning king.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas should cultivate giving paramita this way. That is, they will give their own bodies, including bones and flesh, to others without an attachment to sentient beings. They are not reluctant to renounce various external supplies as they absorb sentient beings to relieve them from birth, old age, illness, and death quickly."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "Which supplies will be used when they absorb sentient beings to relieve them from birth, old age, illness, and death?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "All supplies will be used to support sentient beings for their cultivation of giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; for their dwelling in internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; dwelling in realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable; dwelling in the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering; for their cultivation of the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; cultivation of the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and the four formless concentrations; cultivation of the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration; cultivation of the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations; cultivation of the stage of pure contemplation, stage of embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and the stage

of Thus-Comer; cultivation of the stage of ecstasy, stage of freedom from defilement, and so forth, and the stage of dharma cloud; cultivation of all dharani gates and all samadhi gates; cultivation of the five eyes and the six supernatural powers; cultivation of the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; cultivation of great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity; cultivation of staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times; cultivation of the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; attainment of stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi; cultivation of all great bodhisattva actions; and cultivation of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. You must know, Well-Appearing One, all supplies are used to absorb sentient beings and liberate them from birth, old age, illness, and death quickly. Great bodhisattvas should frequently adopt all kinds of supplies to absorb sentient beings expediently and skillfully, to relieve sentient beings from birth, old age, illness, and death quickly.
(The Buddha instructed that great bodhisattvas should use all supplies to support sentient beings in their cultivation of or dwelling in various superior holy dharmas.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when dwelling peacefully in giving paramita, great bodhisattvas not only practice giving paramita themselves, but also encourage others to do so. When seeing sentient beings violate pure precept, they will compassionately advise them to accept and embrace pure precept, and say, 'We will give you all living supplies, so you won't be short of them. If you violate pure precept and create bad karma because of the shortage of living supplies, we will give you all that you need. So, you must dwell peacefully in pure precept, rules, and demeanors, and gradually you will put an end to all suffering. You will further learn to get rid of

birth and death and attain happiness in nirvana based on one of the three vehicles suited to you.'

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in giving paramita. They not only accept and embrace pure precept but also encourage others to do so. They always praise correctly and publicly the way of observing pure precept and rejoice and acclaim those who observe pure precept. Well-Appearing One, this is how great bodhisattvas not only practice giving paramita themselves, but advise and encourage other sentient beings to dwell peacefully in pure precept to become liberated from birth and death and attain happiness of nirvana. (The Buddha described how great bodhisattvas guided sentient beings to cultivate pure precept by giving them living supplies.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when dwelling peacefully in giving paramita and observing that sentient beings hate each other, great bodhisattvas will advise them compassionately, 'Why do you hate each other? You should not make bad karma because of poverty. If you need something, please let me know. Don't be hesitant or skeptical, I will give you what you need. You must not hate each other; rather, you should cultivate forbearance and treat each other with compassion.' You must know, Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in giving paramita. After advising and encouraging sentient beings to cultivate forbearance, these great bodhisattvas will further intensify their determination by saying, 'Anger and hatred are not real and destined. They are caused by delusive differentiation since the original nature of all dharmas is empty. Why are you angry because of delusive and unreal dharmas and thus blame and destroy each other? You should not hate and get angry and create negative karma because of delusion and differentiation. That will only make you fall into hells, the realm of animals, the realm

of ghosts, and the rest of negative places, but bring you severe, poisonous, overwhelming, powerful, penetrating, and fierce suffering; all are extremely difficult to endure. You should not be attached to illusory phenomena of the unreal things and get angry and thus make guilty karma. Because of the guilty karma, no one can be reborn as inferior humans, not to mention reborn in heaven or in human world to hear the Buddha dharma, develop deep belief in it, and cultivate as they are taught. You must know that it is a rare privilege to be reborn as a human being. It is more difficult and invaluable to encounter the Buddha. It is even more difficult and unusual to develop a belief in the Buddha, hear his teaching of the dharma, and accept and embrace it. You have been privileged to be reborn as a human being, don't lose this good opportunity because of your anger and hatred. Once you lose it, it will be very hard to get it back. Therefore, you should cultivate forbearance and refrain from treating sentient beings with anger and hatred.'

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in giving paramita. They not only practice forbearance themselves but also encourage others to do so. They praise correctly and publicly the way of practicing forbearance and rejoice and acclaim those who practice forbearance. Well-Appearing One, this is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in giving paramita and encouraged others to practice forbearance. These sentient beings will thus get rid of birth and death through the cultivation of the three vehicles gradually, and step by step.

(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas dwell in giving paramita and expediently guide sentient beings to learn and cultivate forbearance.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when great bodhisattvas dwelled peacefully in giving paramita, they observed that sentient beings were exhausted and

tired physically and mentally. So, the great bodhisattvas said to sentient beings with compassion, ‘Why don’t you diligently cultivate virtuous dharmas? Why are you so tired?’ The sentient beings replied, “I have no living supplies, so I cannot cultivate various virtuous dharmas.’ The bodhisattvas said to them, ‘I can give you the supplies so you will not be short of them any longer. Now you should diligently cultivate giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna.’ After receiving the supplies, the sentient beings now could diligently cultivate virtuous dharmas and fulfill them soon. After virtuous dharmas were fulfilled, their flawless dharmas were also elicited step by step, and were able to attain stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, or self-enlightenment bodhi, or enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising, starting to cultivate various stages of bodhisattva step by step until realizing insightfully and attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.

“You must know, Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in giving paramita. They not only work diligently themselves but also advise and encourage others to practice diligence. They praise correctly and publicly the way of diligence and rejoice and acclaim those who have practiced diligence. Well-Appearing One, this is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in giving paramita and guide sentient beings to stay far away from tiredness and laziness, let them cultivate various virtuous dharmas diligently and get rid of the bondage quickly. (The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas practice giving paramita to guide sentient beings expediently to fulfill diligence.)

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when great bodhisattvas dwelled peacefully in giving paramita and noticed that some sentient beings were restless in body and mind, so said to them with compassion, ‘Why don’t you cultivate

meditation, but lose correct mindfulness in restlessness and reincarnate in birth and death?' These sentient beings replied, 'We cannot cultivate meditation because we have no sufficient living supplies.' The bodhisattvas said to them, 'We will give you all that you need. From now on, you should not initiate delusive differentiation and grasp various internal and external mental images to confuse your own minds.' In the meantime, the sentient beings had gained the supplies that they previously lacked, so they were able to cease delusions, differentiations, investigations, and negative desires and entered the first meditation, and then the second, third, and fourth meditations. Based on the meditations, they were able to initiate and dwell in loving-kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity. Based on the meditations and the four immeasurable minds, they could further enter the four formless concentrations. With their hearts becoming tender under the impacts of the meditations, the immeasurable minds, and the formless concentrations, they started to cultivate the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path. They could further fulfill emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration, and attain the effects of the three vehicles suitable for each of them.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, having dwelled peacefully in giving paramita, the great bodhisattvas not only cultivate meditation themselves, but also encourage others to do so. They always praise correctly and publicly the way of cultivating meditation and rejoice and acclaim those who cultivate meditation. Well-Appearing One, this is how great bodhisattvas dwell in giving paramita and encourage others to stay far away from restlessness and cultivate various meditations to attain great benefits.

(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas dwell in giving paramita to help sentient beings cultivate meditation.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when great bodhisattvas dwelled peacefully in giving paramita, they noticed that some sentient beings were ignorant and upside down in thinking, so said to them with compassion, 'Why don't you cultivate prajna but let yourself reincarnate in birth and death with upside-down ignorance?' These sentient beings replied, 'We cannot cultivate and learn prajna because we have no sufficient living supplies.' The bodhisattvas said to them, 'We can give you all that you need. You may accept them. Then you should cultivate giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, and meditation. After you have cultivated them to their perfection, you should further contemplate and investigate carefully the real phenomena of all dharmas and cultivate prajna paramita. When you contemplate, you should look at all dharmas and see if they are attainable. You will also see if the 'I,' the sentient being, and so forth, and the knower and the viewer are attainable. You will see if 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 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; cause and condition, consecutive thoughts, conditions that stimulate the mind, and the conditions that reinforce main causes; the dharmas produced by conditions; ignorance, action, and so forth, and old age and death; the realm of desire, the realm of form, and the 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; realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable; the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration; the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations; the stage of pure contemplation, stage of embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and the stage of Thus-Comer; the stage of ecstasy, stage of freedom from defilement, and so forth, and the stage of dharma cloud; the dharani gates and the samadhi gates; the five eyes and the six supernatural powers; the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity; the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features; staying in correct mindfulness and dwelling in equanimity at all times; the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi; and all great bodhisattva actions and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddha are attainable.'

"As these sentient beings obtained the living supplies, they were not in shortage now, so they started to cultivate, by following the bodhisattvas' words, giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, and meditation. When cultivating prajna paramita, they contemplated and investigated carefully all dharmas. They found that the real nature of all dharmas is unattainable. Realizing that the real nature of all dharmas is unattainable, they were free from attachment and did not see any dharma

as with arising and extinction, contamination and purification. As realizing that all dharmas were unattainable, they did not differentiate and say that these were hells, this was the realm of animals, and that was the realm of ghosts. Nor would they differentiate and say that these were asuras, these were humans, and those were heavenly beings. They would not differentiate between observing precept and violating precept, or between ordinary sentient beings and holy ones. They would not differentiate between stream-enterers and bodhisattvas and the Buddhas, or between the conditioned and unconditioned realms. Because they were free from such differentiations, they would realize, step by step, the holy effects of the three vehicles suitable for each of them.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, as these great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in giving paramita, they not only cultivate prajna themselves, but also encourage others to do so. They always praise correctly and publicly the way of prajna and rejoice and acclaim those who cultivate prajna. Well-Appearing One, this is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in giving paramita, encourage sentient beings to cultivate diligently prajna, and assist them to attain superior ultimate peace and happiness.

(The Buddha described how great bodhisattvas dwell in giving paramita to expediently guide sentient beings to cultivate and fulfill prajna.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, some great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in giving paramita. They not only practice giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas themselves, but also encourage others to practice the six paramitas. Seeing that sentient beings still reincarnate in various destinies, experience suffering in birth and death, and cannot get rid of it. To relieve sentient beings from the suffering in birth and death, they first

provide them with various supplies to support their lives, then absorb them expediently and skillfully with various flawless dharmas beyond the world. After receiving the supplies, the sentient beings have no more worries, so they cultivate bravely and vigorously. They thus can dwell in internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; dwell in realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable; dwell in the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering; cultivate the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; cultivate the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; cultivate the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration; cultivate the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations; cultivate the stage of pure contemplation, stage of embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and the stage of Thus-Comer; cultivate the stage of ecstasy, stage of freedom from defilement, and so forth, and the stage of dharma cloud; cultivate the dharani gates and samadhi gates; cultivate the five eyes and six supernatural powers; cultivate the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; cultivate great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity; cultivate staying in correct mindfulness and always dwelling in equanimity; cultivate the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; and cultivate the rest of boundless Buddha dharmas. Because they are absorbed by flawless dharmas, they are able to get rid of the suffering of birth and death and attain happiness in nirvana.

(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas dwell in giving paramita to practice six

paramitas, and encourage sentient beings to practice six paramitas, helping them get rid of birth and death.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in giving paramita. They not only practice various superior flawless dharmas but also encourage others to do so. They always praise correctly and publicly the way of practicing flawless dharmas and rejoice and acclaim those who have practiced the flawless dharmas. Well-Appearing One, this is how great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in giving paramita, absorb sentient beings with flawless dharmas, relieve them from birth and death, and further help them attain happiness in nirvana. (The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas dwell in giving paramita to practice flawless dharmas, and encourage sentient beings to practice flawless dharmas, helping them get rid of birth and death.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in giving paramita. Seeing that sentient beings are worried and anxious because they are short of living supplies and no one can help them, the great bodhisattvas thus say, 'I like to help you, you can rely on me. I will give you all you need, including clothing, drinks, food, and others. You may ask me for anything you want, I will give them to you, making you happy and at peace. As you receive these objects, you may think they belong to you. Why? I have accumulated many properties and goods for a long time just for your sake. You should take them freely without hesitation. After receiving them, you should cultivate various virtuous actions. Then you can also help other sentient beings and guide them to cultivate virtuous dharmas. Namely, you can guide them to cultivate giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas. You can guide them to dwell peacefully in internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature;

dwell peacefully in realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable; dwell peacefully in the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering; cultivate the thirty-seven factors for enlightenment; cultivate the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; cultivate the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration; cultivate the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, and ten universal contemplations; cultivate the stage of pure contemplation, stage of embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and the stage of Thus-Comer; cultivate the stage of ecstasy, stage of freedom from defilement, and so forth, and the stage of dharma cloud; cultivate the dharani gates and samadhi gates; cultivate the five eyes and six supernatural powers; cultivate the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; cultivate great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity; cultivate staying in correct mindfulness and always dwelling in equanimity; cultivate the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; and cultivate the rest of immeasurable and boundless Buddha dharmas.'
(The Buddha described how great bodhisattvas dwell in giving paramita to expediently lead sentient beings to cultivate virtuous dharmas and guide them to help other sentient beings.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, after teaching and guiding various sentient beings this way, the great bodhisattvas will further assist them to cultivate and learn the flawless dharmas, and let them dwell in stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi, or the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi according to individual differences.

"Well-Appearing One, the great bodhisattvas thus should cultivate giving paramita and expediently and skillfully assist sentient beings to mature, so they will be liberated from birth and death in bad destinies and able to realize nirvana correspondent with one of the three vehicles."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "How will great bodhisattvas cultivate pure-precept paramita and the rest of bodhisattva paths for great bodhi, and expediently and skillfully assist sentient beings to mature?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Some great bodhisattvas have cultivated pure-precept paramita expediently and skillfully. They saw that sentient beings were in shortage of living supplies and were worried and upset, could not cultivate the virtuous dharmas. The great bodhisattvas would say to them with compassion, 'If you cannot cultivate the virtuous dharmas because of the shortage of living supplies, I can give you all you need, so that you will not make negative karmas because of vexations. You must start to cultivate and learn virtuous dharmas, such as giving, pure precept, and so forth.' As great bodhisattvas dwell in pure-precept paramita, they will absorb various sentient beings in a way appropriate for them. They will teach stingy and greedy ones to cultivate giving and learn not to cling to their bodies, lives, and properties. They will teach precept violators to cultivate pure precept, correctly accept and practice the path of the ten positive actions, dwell in rules and demeanors, learn not to break precept, and stay away from contamination, mixture, grasping, and attachment. They will teach angry ones to cultivate forbearance, staying motionlessly to all slanders, insults, and harmful intentions. They will teach lazy and tired ones to cultivate virtuous dharmas diligently as rescuing the one whose head is on fire. They will teach restless ones to cultivate meditation, so their minds will always be in tranquility and stability and stay away from turbulence

and wandering. They will teach ignorant ones to cultivate exquisite wisdom, those who are attached to the dharmas to contemplate emptiness, and those who are in shortage of the rest of merits and virtues to cultivate the rest of merits and virtues. Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas thus should dwell peacefully in pure-precept paramita to expediently and skillfully assist sentient beings to mature, so they will be liberated from the suffering of various negative destinies and realize and attain nirvana in the three vehicles.

(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas dwell in pure-precept paramita to guide sentient beings expediently to practice the six paramitas.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, some great bodhisattvas who have cultivated the remaining four paramitas and other bodhisattva paths of the great bodhi, will also expediently and skillfully assist sentient beings to mature in all virtuous dharmas and let them either get rid of the suffering of bad destinies or realize and attain nirvana of the three vehicles in a similar way as mentioned above."

(The Buddha concluded how great bodhisattvas dwell in the other four paramitas or other bodhisattva paths to assist sentient beings to mature.)

Chapter 30

The Buddha Countries

Section 1

(In the Third Assembly)

At that time, Well-Appearing One thought to himself, ‘What are great bodhisattva paths, in which great bodhisattvas can dwell peacefully, wear the armor of merits and virtues, and bring benefits and happiness to all sentient beings, so can realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge quickly?”

The Buddha could read Well-Appearing One’s mind, so he said, ‘You must know, Well-Appearing One, giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, as well as the rest of immeasurable and boundless Buddha dharmas are great bodhisattva paths. Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, all dharmas in general are great bodhisattva paths.

(The Buddha explained the meaning of great bodhisattva path and content.)

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, what do you think about this? Is there any dharma that great bodhisattvas should not learn? Can great bodhisattvas realize the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge if they do not learn this dharma?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “No, World-Honored One.”

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, “Yes, you are correct. There is not a dharma that great bodhisattvas should not learn. If great bodhisattvas miss any dharma in their learning, they certainly will not attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Why? If great bodhisattvas cannot know all dharmas universally, they will not become a Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One.”

(The Buddha said that great bodhisattvas should learn all dharmas to become a Buddha. Therefore, all dharmas are within the great bodhisattva paths.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “If the self-nature of all dharmas is empty, how can great bodhisattvas learn all dharmas? Does World-

Honored One argue nonsensically about sensical dharmas, saying that these dharmas are so and those dharmas are not so; these are the causes and those are the purposes; these dharmas belong to the world and those dharmas are beyond the world; these dharmas are flawed and those dharmas are flawless; these dharmas are conditioned and those dharmas are unconditioned; and this is the dharma of ordinary sentient being, the dharma of stream-enterer, the dharma of self-enlightened one, or the dharma of bodhisattva, and that is the Buddha dharma?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "You are asking a good question. The self-nature of all dharmas is empty. If the self-nature of all dharmas is not empty, then great bodhisattvas would not attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Because the self-nature of all dharmas is empty, great bodhisattvas certainly will realize insightfully and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. As to your question, 'If the self-nature of all dharmas is empty, how can great bodhisattvas learn all dharmas, including the dharma of bodhisattva and the Buddha dharma?' Well-Appearing One, I will say that if sentient beings understand that the self-nature of all dharmas is empty, then great bodhisattvas will not need to learn all dharmas, attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, and teach and explain them for sentient beings. Because sentient beings do not know that the self-nature of all dharmas is empty, great bodhisattvas have to learn all dharmas, realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, and teach and explain the truth to various sentient beings.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, as great bodhisattvas are determined to cultivate and learn the paths of bodhisattva, they should contemplate and investigate this carefully: 'The self-nature of all dharmas is unattainable. The dharmas are caused by delusive differentiation. I must carefully contemplate and investigate the self-

nature of all dharmas and realize that it is empty in the final analysis, so we should not be attached to the dharmas; namely, we should not be attached to matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and all great bodhisattva actions and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas. Why? As the self-nature of all dharmas is empty, the empty nature should not be attached to the empty nature. In emptiness, the empty nature is unattainable, let alone the empty nature can be attached to emptiness.'

(Great bodhisattvas should contemplate to understand that the self-nature of all dharmas is empty.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, when contemplating and investigating all dharmas this way, great bodhisattvas will not be attached to dharma nature, but they will cultivate and learn the dharmas consistently, diligently, and tirelessly. When dwelling in this learning, great bodhisattvas will contemplate the different mental images of sentient beings; namely, they will contemplate where the mental images of sentient beings will go. After taking this contemplation, they realize accurately that the mental images of sentient beings will go to and stay in where delusive differentiations are located. At that time, the bodhisattvas will think, 'I know that their mental images have gone to where the delusive differentiations are located, so it will not be difficult to liberate the sentient beings from that attachment.' After having such a thought, the great bodhisattvas will stay peacefully in prajna paramita and give cautions and teachings expediently and skillfully to sentient beings, 'You must from now on leave the delusive differentiation that you are attached to and enter correct dharma to cultivate virtuous actions.' They will further say, 'You should practice giving now, so you will not be in shortage of living supplies. But you should not be over proud of this and become arrogant. Why? In relevant dharmas, nothing is solid

and real. You should practice pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna now, then you will be sufficiently equipped with merits and virtues, and again you should not be over proud of this and become lazy and less self-restrained. Why? In all their relevant dharmas, nothing is solid and attainable. And so on, you should practice stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and the rest of immeasurable and boundless Buddha dharmas now. But you should not be over proud of this and become arrogant and less self-restrained. Why? In all related dharmas, nothing is solid and attainable."
(The Buddha cautioned that great bodhisattvas should cultivate all dharmas, but should not be arrogant, because all relevant dharmas are unattainable.)

"As great bodhisattvas dwell peacefully in the expedient skillfulness of prajna paramita and teach sentient beings, they should caution them to stay away from attachment when practicing the bodhisattva paths. Why? No one can be attached to dharma nature. Those who become attached to something and the things they are attached to are all without self-nature. Given this truth, all dharmas are empty.
(Great bodhisattvas should caution sentient beings to stay away from attachment when practicing bodhisattva paths.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, when cultivating the bodhisattva paths this way, great bodhisattvas do not dwell in all dharmas. They adopt nondwelling as expediency. Although practicing giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita, they do not dwell in them. Although they practice the great bodhisattva actions, the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, and the rest of innumerable and boundless Buddha dharmas, they do not dwell in them. Why? The self-nature and the mental images are empty; within them, there is no dwelling.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, although great bodhisattvas can attain stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi, they should not realize these effects and dwell in them. Why? There are two reasons. One reason is that these effects have no self-nature, those who dwell and the place of dwelling are unattainable. The other reason is that, for great bodhisattvas, these effects are not good enough. That is why they will not realize and dwell in them. These great bodhisattvas will always think, 'I certainly can attain stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi; there is no reason that I cannot attain them. But I must refrain from realizing and dwelling in them. Why? From the moment I first aspire to the great bodhi, I have been dedicated wholeheartedly to the pursuit of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. I have had no other thought than this one. It is definite that I will attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, so why should I go astray to stay in other effects?'

(Great bodhisattvas choose not to dwell in voice-hearer and self-enlightened one.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, since the moment of beginning to aspire to the bodhi until entering onto the bodhisattva path, these great bodhisattvas have no other thought than the pursuit of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. You must know, Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas have had no other thought than the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi since the time of attaining the first stage until the tenth stage. You must know, Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas have been dedicated to the pursuit of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi without always staying in restless mind. All their karmas of body, speech, and mind are initiated in accord with the bodhi. You must know, Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas have dwelled in the mind of the bodhi to initiate the bodhi path, they will not be disturbed by the things other than this one."

(Great bodhisattvas have always dedicated to the pursuit of the unsurpassed bodhi with unwavering commitment.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “If all dharmas do not arise in the final analysis, how do great bodhisattvas initiate the bodhi path?”

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, “You are correct saying that all dharmas do not arise. Those who have reached the stage of nonaction and nonaspiration can realize that all dharmas have no arising.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “Is the dharma nature of all dharmas always as it has been whether the Buddhas appear in the worlds or not?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “Yes. Sentient beings cannot understand that the dharma nature of all dharmas is always as it has been, so they reincarnate in birth and death and suffer. Great bodhisattvas thus inspire sentient beings to pursue the bodhi path, allowing them to be relieved from the suffering of birth and death through the bodhi path, so that they can realize and attain permanent happiness and tranquility in nirvana.”

(This is why great bodhisattvas inspire sentient beings to pursue the unsurpassed bodhi.)

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “World-Honored One, do great bodhisattvas use the path of arising to attain the bodhi?”

The Buddha replied, “No.”

“World-Honored One, do they use the path of nonarising to attain the bodhi?”

The Buddha replied, “No.”

“World-Honored One, then do they use the path of arising and nonarising to

attain the bodhi?"

The Buddha replied, "No."

"World-Honored One, do they use the path of nonarising and not nonarising to attain the bodhi?"

The Buddha replied, "No."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "Then how do they attain the bodhi?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "The bodhi is attained not through path or nonpath. Why? The bodhi is the path, and the path is the bodhi. Therefore, the bodhi is attained neither through path nor through nonpath."
(The Buddha said that the bodhi is the path, and the path is the bodhi; therefore the bodhi is attained not through path or nonpath.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "If the bodhi is the path, and the path is the bodhi, then doesn't it mean that great bodhisattvas have attained the bodhi when they attain the path? If this is the case, why does the World-Honored One teach great bodhisattvas about 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, thirty-two perfect major marks, eighty distinguishing minor features, and the rest of innumerable and boundless Buddha dharmas and insist that they should cultivate and realize them?"

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "What do you think about this? Does the Buddha attain the bodhi?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "No, World-Honored One. Why? The Buddha is the bodhi, and the bodhi is the Buddha. Therefore, we should not say that the Buddha

attains the bodhi."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "Yes. But you asked, 'Doesn't it mean that great bodhisattvas have attained the bodhi when they attain the bodhi path?' Well-Appearing One, you must know, as great bodhisattvas have not cultivated and fulfilled the bodhi path, how can we say that they have attained the bodhi?

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas have fulfilled giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, as well as the rest of innumerable and boundless Buddha dharmas, then from that time on, they will stay in incessant very brief instants of diamond-like concentrations correspondent with prajna, and their hindrance caused by the vexations derived from incorrect views of selfness and the incorrect understanding of all dharmas will be terminated permanently, while their heavy, enduring negative disposition of vexations will cease forever. They will realize insightfully and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, and become the Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One, who has attained great freedom and self-ease in all dharmas."

(The Buddha explained how great bodhisattvas attain the bodhi and become a Buddha.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "How do great bodhisattvas dignify and purify Buddha lands?"

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "Since the moment great bodhisattvas begin to aspire to the bodhi until ultimately attaining it, they have always purified their own three heavy bondages of the karmas in body, speech, and mind, and purified others' three heavy bondages of the karmas in body, speech, and mind. This is how they dignify and purify Buddha land in which they live."

(The Buddha stated that great bodhisattvas dignify and purify Buddha lands by means of purifying their own three heavy bondages in body, speech, and mind and purifying others' three heavy bondages of body, speech, and mind.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "What are the three heavy bondages of the karmas in body, speech, and mind?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Killing, stealing, and adultery are the three unvirtuous body karmas in the heavy bondage of bodhisattva. Lying, divisive words, rude and evil words, and filthy words are the four unvirtuous speech karmas in the heavy bondage of bodhisattva. Greed, anger and hatred, and incorrect views are the three unvirtuous mind karmas in the heavy bondage of bodhisattva. (The Buddha explained what the three heavy bondages of body, speech, and mind are.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas have the minds of stinginess, precept violation, anger and hatred, laziness and tiredness, restlessness, and wisdom abuse, they are also called having the heavy bondage.
(The meaning of heavy bondage.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas have impurity in the aggregate of precept, aggregate of concentration, aggregate of wisdom, aggregate of liberation, and the aggregate of the knowledge and the views of liberation, they are also called having the heavy bondage.
(Another meaning of heavy bondage.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas have stayed far apart from the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, four bases of power, five roots, five powers, seven factors for enlightenment, and noble eightfold path, and so forth, and all great bodhisattva actions and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal

bodhi of the Buddhas, they are also called having the heavy bondage.

(Another meaning of heavy bondage.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas are craving for stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi, they are also called having the heavy bondage.

(More meanings of heavy bondage were provided by the Buddha in this and following paragraphs.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas have initiated the thoughts of the aggregates of matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness, they are called having the heavy bondage. And so on, if they have initiated the thoughts of all great bodhisattva actions and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, they are called having the heavy bondage. If they have initiated the thoughts of ordinary sentient being, self-enlightened one, bodhisattva, and Thus-Comer, they are also called having the heavy bondage. If they have initiated the thoughts of the hells, animals, ghosts, human beings, heavenly beings, men, and women, they are also called having the heavy bondage. If they have initiated the thoughts of the realm of desire, the realm of form, and the realm of formlessness, they are also called having heavy bondage. If they have initiated the thoughts of the virtuous dharmas, the not virtuous dharmas, the flawed dharmas, the flawless dharmas, the dharmas of the world, the dharmas beyond the world, the conditioned dharmas, and the unconditioned dharmas, they are also called having the heavy bondage.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, innumerable and boundless dharmas that sentient beings are attached to; the delusive differentiations of all sentient beings and the karmas thus derived in body, speech, and mind; and all unendurable things are called the heavy bondage. Great bodhisattvas should stay far away from all these

kinds of heavy bondage.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should stay far away from these kinds of heavy bondage mentioned above. They should not only practice giving paramita themselves but also encourage others to do so. They should give food, drinks, and other living supplies to various sentient beings wherever and whenever they need. They should not only practice giving themselves this way but also encourage others to do so. After practicing giving this way, they will further transfer the virtuous roots thus derived along with sentient beings equally toward dignifying and purifying Buddha land in which they live, so they will bring benefits and happiness to all sentient beings perfectly and quickly. These great bodhisattvas will not only practice pure-precept paramita, forbearance paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita themselves, but also encourage others to do so. They will further transfer the virtuous roots thus derived along with sentient beings equally toward dignifying and purifying the Buddha land in which they live, so they will bring benefits and happiness to all sentient beings perfectly and quickly.

(Great bodhisattvas should not only cultivate six paramitas themselves but also encourage others to do so. They should further transfer the virtuous roots thus derived along with sentient beings equally toward dignifying and purifying Buddha lands in which they live.)

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, some great bodhisattvas have used supernatural power of aspiration to fill the entire large threefold thousand-world with exquisite seven treasures as offerings to the Buddha, dharma, sangha, and pagoda. After making the offerings, the great bodhisattvas are delighted to vow, ‘I swear to transfer these virtuous roots along with various sentient beings equally toward

dignifying and purifying the Buddha land in which we live, so that the seven treasures are magnificently dignified and all sentient beings are allowed to enjoy them freely without greedy attachment.'

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, some great bodhisattvas have used supernatural power of aspiration to play the most wonderful music in heaven and human world as offerings to the Buddha, dharma, sangha, and pagoda. After making the offerings, the great bodhisattvas make a great vow, 'I swear to transfer the virtuous roots thus derived along with various sentient beings equally toward dignifying and purifying the Buddha land in which we live, so that in my land various kinds of wonderful music are constantly played to entertain all sentient beings but will not make them greedy and become attached.'

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, some great bodhisattvas have used supernatural power of aspiration to fill the entire large threefold thousand-world with various fragrant heavenly flowers as offerings to the three gems and the pagoda. After making the offerings, the great bodhisattvas make a great vow, 'I swear to transfer the virtuous roots thus derived along with various sentient beings equally toward dignifying and purifying the Buddha land in which we live, so that in my land there will have such wonderful fragrant flowers at all times to entertain various sentient beings but will not make them greedy and become attached.'

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, some great bodhisattvas have used supernatural power of aspiration to prepare hundreds of courses of most delicious food and drinks as offerings to the Buddha, dharma, sangha, and pagoda. After making the offerings, the great bodhisattvas are delighted to make a great vow, 'I swear would to transfer the virtuous roots thus derived along with various sentient beings equally toward dignifying and purifying the Buddha land in which we live, so

that when I attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal enlightenment, all sentient beings in my land will enjoy such hundreds of delicious food and drinks without greed and attachment.'

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, some great bodhisattvas have used supernatural power of aspiration to prepare various wonderful heavenly and human spread fragrance and fine and tender clothes as offerings to various Buddhas, self-enlightened ones, voice-hearers, and great bodhisattvas. The great bodhisattva also made offerings to the dharma and pagoda. After making the offerings, the great bodhisattvas are delighted and made a great vow, 'I swear to transfer the virtuous roots thus derived along with various sentient beings equally toward dignifying and purify the Buddha land in which we live, so that when I attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, the sentient beings in my land will always enjoy freely such clothing and spread fragrance without greed and attachment.'

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, some great bodhisattvas have used supernatural power of aspiration to prepare various wonderful phenomena of five desires in heaven and human world as offerings to the Buddhas, pagoda, self-enlightened ones, voice-hearers, and great bodhisattvas, as well as the rest of sentient beings. After making the offerings, the great bodhisattvas are delighted and make a great vow, 'I swear to transfer the virtuous roots thus derived along with various sentient beings equally toward dignifying and purifying the Buddha land in which we live, so that various sentient beings in my land will enjoy freely as they wish the most wonderful phenomena of sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental-image without greed and attachment.'

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, some great bodhisattvas have practiced the fathomless prajna paramita and worked diligently and correctly with the great

vows in mind. The great bodhisattvas have not only dwelled in internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature themselves, but also encouraged others to dwell in internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature. And so on. They have not only cultivated the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi themselves, but also encouraged others to do so. After accomplishing these things, the great bodhisattvas further make a vow, 'When I attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, the sentient beings in my land will not stay far away from these merits and virtues.'

"Thus, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas will be able to dignify and purify the Buddha lands because of their aspirations.

(The Buddha described how various great bodhisattvas make different great vows to dignify and purify Buddha lands to benefit sentient beings living in those lands.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the bodhi path in the lands in which they live, these great bodhisattvas will fulfill the aspirations that they have initiated through diligent and assiduous cultivation and learning. Because of this cause and condition, they can achieve all virtuous dharmas and assist others to achieve all virtuous dharmas step by step. They can not only cultivate superior perfect marks to dignify their bodies but also assist others to cultivate superior perfect marks to dignify their bodies because of the blessings that they have absorbed.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, after fulfilling the aspirations through cultivation, the great bodhisattvas will be able to dignify and purify the Buddha land in which they live. When they realize insightfully and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, the sentient beings they have guided and helped will be reborn in the same land to join and share the dharma joy of the great vehicle in this pure land."

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Chapter 30

The Buddha Countries

Section 2

(In the Third Assembly)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas should diligently dignify and purify Buddha lands, so that in those lands the three negative destinies, incorrect views and their destinies, and poisonous greed, anger, and ignorance will not be heard. The voice-hearer and the self-enlightened one will not be heard. The undesirable things such as impermanence and suffering will not be heard. The supplies for absorption will not be heard. The 'I' and the associated images will not be heard. The hidden roots of vexations, complexes, bonds, and upside-down attachment will not be heard. And the establishment of the effects of cultivation for the sentient beings will not be heard either. What will be heard are the voices of emptiness, formlessness, nonaspiration, nonarising, nonextinction, and nonnature. Correspondent with the differences of intentions and favorites of the sentient beings, exquisite voices affecting each other through breezes inside and outside the forests will be heard when they say, 'All dharmas have no self-nature. Because they have no nature, they are empty. Because they are empty, they are formless. Because they are formless, they are without aspiration. Because they are without aspiration, they are without arising. Because they are without arising, they are without extinction. Therefore, all dharmas are inherently tranquil, while the self-nature is always in nirvana. Whether the Thus-Comer appears in the world or not, the dharma nature of all dharmas is there as it has always been.' The sentient beings in those lands can hear such wonderful voices day

and night, saying that all dharmas have no nature and are empty, whether they stand, walk, lie, or sit.

(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas should diligently dignify and purify Buddha lands.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas have dwelled in their pure and dignified Buddha lands. When they realize insightfully and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones in the ten directions will praise and acclaim their Buddha names. If sentient beings can hear these Buddhas' names, they certainly will attain nonregression in the pursuit of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. As these great bodhisattvas realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi in each pure and dignified Buddha land where they live, they will teach correct dharma to the sentient beings in that land. When hearing the teachings, the sentient beings will not wonder if the dharma that they have heard is correct or not. Why? These sentient beings have already understood thoroughly that all dharmas are realness, dharma realm, and dharma nature. All these are dharmas; none of them is not dharma. Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas will be able to dignify and purify Buddha lands this way.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, some transformed sentient beings do not possess virtuous roots. They have not planted virtuous roots in the places of the Buddhas, bodhisattvas, self-enlightened ones, voice-hearers, and so forth. They are absorbed by evil intellectuals and stay away from virtuous friends. They do not hear correct dharma and are often influenced by incorrect views. They thus fall into two extremes, insisting that one's life is either discontinued or changeless. They not only initiate incorrect attachment themselves but also lead others to do so. They mistake

fake triple gem for triple gem and triple gem for fake one. They slander correct dharma and acclaim incorrect dharmas. Because of this cause and condition, they fall into various bad destinies and suffer severely. When great bodhisattvas dwelling in their own lands realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, they notice that these sentient beings are reincarnating in birth and death and suffering endlessly, so they use supernatural powers to guide them expediently, allow them to abandon incorrect views and hold correct views. These sentient beings thus are rid of bad destinies and reborn in human world. The great bodhisattvas further use supernatural powers to expediently teach them, let them dwell in correct aspiration, so they do not drift in bad destinies any longer. These great bodhisattvas further assist them to cultivate superior virtuous roots and assist them to be reborn in pure and dignified Buddha lands to enjoy dharma joy of great vehicle in pure lands.
(The Buddha had in these paragraphs told the stories of how great bodhisattvas dignify and purify Buddha lands to assist sentient beings.)

"Well-Appearing One, tgreat bodhisattvas can dignify and purify the Buddha lands this way. Because the lands are extremely pure, the sentient beings born there will not initiate delusion, differentiation, and hesitation, saying that these are virtuous dharmas and those are not virtuous dharmas; these are morally related dharmas and those are morally unrelated dharmas; these are the dharmas of the world and those are the dharmas beyond the world; these are the flawed dharmas and those are the flawless dharmas; and these are the conditioned dharmas and those are the unconditioned dharmas. All these differentiations and hesitations do not arise in the final analysis. Because of this cause and condition, these sentient beings certainly will attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and turn the wonderful dharma wheel to deliver other sentient beings.

“You must know, Well-Appearing One, these are the merits and virtues of the great bodhisattvas who have dignified and purified Buddha lands to bring benefits and happiness to all sentient beings.”

Chapter 31

Teaching and Converting

Section 1

(In the Third Assembly)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “Do these great bodhisattvas dwell in definitive correct orientation or in uncertainty?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “These great bodhisattvas have all dwelled in correct orientation.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “In which orientation do these great bodhisattvas dwell? Do they dwell in the vehicle of voice-hearer, the vehicle of self-enlightened one, or the unsurpassed vehicle?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “They have dwelled in the unsurpassed vehicle.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “When do the great bodhisattvas start to dwell in definitive correct orientation? Is it at the moment they begin to aspire to the bodhi? Is it when they reach the stage of nonregression, or when they stay in the last stage?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “They all dwell in the definitive correct orientation at these three stages.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “Will the great bodhisattvas dwelling in definitive correct orientation fall into the bad destinies?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “Once great bodhisattvas dwell in the definitive correct orientation, they will never fall into the bad destinies.”

The Buddha continued to ask Well-Appearing One, “What do you think about this? Will stream-entry aspirants, stream-enterers, once-returners, nonreturners, arhats, and self-enlightened ones fall into the bad destinies?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “No, World-Honored One.”

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, “So do great bodhisattvas. Great bodhisattvas have cultivated giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita and the rest of innumerable and boundless Buddha dharma from the moment they first aspire to the bodhi. They have already eliminated all not virtuous dharmas. Because of this cause and condition, it is unreasonable to say that they will be reborn in bad destinies or in the heaven of longevity where the superior virtuous dharmas are inaccessible. They will not be reborn in the border lands, poverty, or the low social status where people cannot cultivate superior virtuous dharmas; where incorrect views are popular and people do not believe in cause and effect; where people are used to filthy jobs or inferior livelihood, and where the triple gem is not heard, and the four groups of Buddhist believers are not available. These great bodhisattvas will not be born in a family holding incorrect views or in a family holding nonsensical arguments about human life and the world. Nor will they be reborn in the family, where the law of cause and effect is ignored so people will not cultivate virtuous deeds and refrain from doing evil actions. Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, it also does not make sense to say that these great bodhisattvas will

practice the path of the ten not virtuous karmas since the time they first aspire to the bodhi."

(The Buddha outlined the good qualities of great bodhisattvas who are committed to the unsurpassed bodhi.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "If the great bodhisattvas have achieved such merits and virtues of the virtuous roots and are not reborn in bad destinies, why does the World-Honored One often tell stories of previous lives about those great bodhisattvas who were reborn in bad destinies? During those periods, where were their virtuous roots?"

(Great bodhisattvas choose to be reborn into bad destinies not because of the effects of negative karma, but out of an aspiration to help sentient beings there.)

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "These great bodhisattvas were reborn in bad destinies not because of their filthy karmas but because they were willing to receive inferior bodies to bring benefits and happiness to sentient beings. So, this should not be the reason to challenge my words."

The Buddha further asked Well-Appearing One, "What do you think about this? Will self-enlightened ones or arhats act expediently and skillfully as great bodhisattvas, who are willing to receive the bodies of animals and initiate unsurpassed forbearance, loving-kindness, and compassion when hunters come to kill them? In this case, will they not fight back but choose to sacrifice their own lives to bring benefits and happiness to the hunters?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "No, the self-enlightened ones and arhats will not act like great bodhisattvas."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "Because of this cause and condition, you must know that to bring benefits and happiness to sentient beings,

fulfill great loving-kindness and great compassion, and realize the great bodhi quickly, great bodhisattvas choose to receive the bodies of the animals. It is not because of the contamination of bad karmas that cause them to reincarnate in that destiny."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "In which virtuous roots do the great bodhisattvas dwell when they choose to be reborn in bad destinies in order to bring benefits and happiness to sentient beings?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Which virtuous roots have the great bodhisattvas not yet fulfilled? To attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, they should fulfill all virtuous roots. Since the time they first aspire to the bodhi until finally sitting firmly on the throne of the wonderful bodhi, the great bodhisattvas have worked diligently and consistently to fulfill all virtuous roots. When fulfilling all virtuous dharmas, they are qualified to attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. They cannot attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi even with only one virtuous dharma unfulfilled. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, since the moment they begin to aspire to the bodhi until sitting firmly on the throne of the wonderful bodhi, the great bodhisattvas should learn to fulfill all virtuous dharmas, so they will be able to attain the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, terminate permanently the enduring negative disposition of vexations, and realize insightfully and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge." (The great bodhisattvas should fulfill all virtuous dharmas before they can attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "How will the great bodhisattvas be reborn in bad destinies and receive the bodies of animals after achieving various virtuous, pure, and flawless holy dharmas?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One by asking him, “What do you think about this? Have the Thus-Comers achieved all virtuous, pure, and flawless holy dharmas?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Yes, the Thus-Comers have achieved all virtuous, pure, and flawless holy dharmas.”

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, “What do you think about this? Do Thus-Comers transform themselves into animals to perform Buddhist services to bring benefits and happiness to sentient beings?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Yes, the Thus-Comers will without reluctance transform themselves into animals to perform Buddhist services in order to bring benefits and happiness to all sentient beings.”

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, “What do you think about this? When the Thus-Comers transform themselves into animals, are they real animals? Will they thus experience suffering?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “When the Thus-Comers are transformed into animals, they are not real animals and do not suffer.”

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, “So are the great bodhisattvas. Although they have achieved various virtuous, pure, and flawless holy dharmas, they choose to receive the bodies of animals to assist sentient beings to mature.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, what do you think about this? Will the arhats who have permanently eliminated all flaws transform themselves into inferior beings in order to offer services and bring joys to others?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Yes, some arhats who have already permanently eliminated all flaws will also transform themselves into inferior bodies in order to offer services and bring joys to others.”

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, “So do the great bodhisattvas. They have achieved various virtuous, pure, and flawless holy dharmas, but in order to bring benefits and happiness to sentient beings, they choose to receive the bodies of animals and perform the Buddhist services. But they will not suffer or be contaminated by the faults of the animals.

(Such pure and fully developed bodhisattvas will not suffer or be contaminated when they choose to be reborn as animals to assist sentient beings.)

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, what do you think about this? A skillful magician and disciple made transformed elephants, horses, and so forth to entertain audience. Are they real elephants and horses?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “No, the transformed elephants, horses, and so forth are not real.”

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, “So are great bodhisattvas. They have achieved various virtuous, pure, and flawless holy dharmas. To bring benefits and happiness to sentient beings, they choose to receive the bodies of animals. But they are not real animals; they are not contaminated by the faults of the animals.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “With broad and great expedient skillfulness, the great bodhisattvas have achieved various virtuous, pure, and flawless holy dharmas. For the sake of sentient beings, they choose to receive appropriate bodies expediently and do beneficial things accordingly. World-Honored One, in which dharmas do the great bodhisattvas dwell to expediently and skillfully receive various bodies without being contaminated?”

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, “The great bodhisattvas have dwelled in the fathomless prajna paramita to act expediently and skillfully. They can go to as many Buddha worlds in the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges,

appearing in various bodies to bring benefits and happiness to sentient beings without being contaminated. Why? They do not attain anything in all dharmas; namely, they do not attain the dharmas that contaminate, the dharmas contaminated, and the causes and conditions of the contamination. Why? It is because the self-nature of all dharmas is empty.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, empty nature cannot contaminate empty nature. Emptiness cannot contaminate dharmas, and dharmas cannot contaminate emptiness. Why? In emptiness, empty nature is unattainable, let alone dharmas. This is called unattainable emptiness. When dwelling in this emptiness, great bodhisattvas can realize insightfully the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and turn the wonderful dharma wheel to deliver sentient beings."
(The great bodhisattvas dwelling in unattainable emptiness can realize the unsurpassed bodhi.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "The great bodhisattvas act expediently and skillfully because they have dwelled in the fathomless prajna paramita. Can they also act expediently and skillfully when dwelling in other dharmas?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Do you mean that there are dharmas not contained in the fathomless prajna paramita?"

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "As the self-nature of the fathomless prajna paramita is empty, how can we say that the fathomless prajna paramita consists of all dharmas? We will not say that an empty dharma can consist of some dharmas but cannot consist of other dharmas."

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One by asking him, "Isn't the self-nature of all dharmas empty?"

Well-Appearing One replied, “Yes, it is empty.”

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, “If the self-nature of all dharmas is empty, doesn’t emptiness consist of all dharmas?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Yes, it does.”

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, “Because of this cause and condition, the fathomless prajna paramita can consist of all dharmas. You must know that when dwelling in the fathomless prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas can do beneficial things expediently and skillfully.”

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “How can great bodhisattvas initiate and dwell in supernatural power paramita, go to as many Buddha worlds in the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges, make offerings respectfully to various Buddhas, World-Honored Ones, hear and accept the teachings of correct dharma at various Buddhas’ places, and plant various virtuous roots when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita and dwelling in the empty self-nature of all dharmas?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “When great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they universally contemplate as many Buddha worlds, the Buddhas, and their teachings in the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges and realize that their self-nature is empty. But in the meantime, there are names established for the worlds, the Buddhas, and the dharmas. The great bodhisattvas have also realized that the self-nature of these established names is empty.

(When great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they contemplate and realize that various dharmas and their names are empty.)

“You must know, Well-Appearing One, if the self-nature of the established names of the worlds in the ten directions, the Buddhas, and their teachings were not

empty, then emptiness should be taught as existent. As emptiness is taught as not existent, it implies that the self-nature of all dharmas is empty. This is a perfect principle, which is comprehensive and not dualistic or different.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, when the great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they can initiate superior supernatural powers paramita due to the expedient skillfulness caused by universal contemplation of emptiness. Because of dwelling in this supernatural powers paramita, they can activate the supernatural powers of heavenly eye, heavenly ear, transformation, reading others' minds, knowing previous lives, and the subtle and exquisite flawless wisdom.

(The Buddha said that due to the expedient skillfulness caused by realizing emptiness, great bodhisattvas can activate six supernatural powers.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, without the supernatural powers, great bodhisattvas cannot freely assist sentient beings to mature, dignify and purify Buddha lands, and realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Therefore, the supernatural powers paramita is the path of the bodhi. Great bodhisattvas should follow this path to pursue the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, so that they can not only fulfill all virtuous dharmas themselves but also encourage others to cultivate various virtuous dharmas. Although they have performed these virtuous dharmas, they are not attached to them. Why? These great bodhisattvas have realized that the self-nature of the virtuous dharmas is empty. The empty self-nature is not the dharma that one can grasp. To grasp is to crave. While there is no attachment, there is no craving. Because there is no craving for the empty self-nature, the one who craves, the object of yearning, and the causes and conditions of craving are all unattainable.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna

paramita, great bodhisattvas should dwell peacefully in supernatural powers paramita and activate the incomparably pure heavenly eye. They will use this heavenly eye to contemplate and see that the self-nature of all dharmas is empty. After seeing that the self-nature of all dharmas is empty, they will not make karma based on the phenomena of the dharmas. They will teach sentient beings about this dharma, but they will not attain the phenomena of the sentient beings and their establishment. These great bodhisattvas thus will adopt nonattainment as expediency to activate superior supernatural powers of the bodhisattva and undertake all services that should be done.

(The Buddha taught that without six supernatural power, great bodhisattvas cannot assist sentient beings and dignify and purify Buddha lands. They can use heavenly eye to see that the self-nature of all dharmas is empty and adopt nonattainment as expediency to undertake various Buddhist services.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas can use the extremely incomparable pure heavenly eye to contemplate as many Buddha worlds of the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges. After seeing these worlds, they will activate supernatural power of transformation to go to those lands to assist sentient beings there. They will benefit them with giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; the thirty-seven factors for enlightenment; the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; liberations, samadhi, and samapatti; emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration; the rest of superior virtuous dharmas; and the dharmas of the voice-hearer, self-enlightened one, bodhisattva, and the Buddha.

(Great bodhisattvas will use supernatural power of transformation to go to many Buddha lands to assist the sentient beings living there.)

“As the great bodhisattvas travel around the ten directions, they feel deep compassion for stingy and greedy sentient beings. They will teach them to practice giving, saying, ‘The stingy and greedy ones will suffer from poverty. Poverty will make them less dignified and virtuous; they will not be able to benefit themselves, let alone to benefit others. Therefore, you must practice giving diligently, so you will not only make yourselves peaceful and happy but make others peaceful and happy. Don’t kill and eat others because of poverty, otherwise you will not be liberated from the suffering of various bad destinies.’

(Great bodhisattvas teach sentient beings to practice giving, pure precept, and so forth through supernatural powers.)

“When seeing that sentient beings violate precept, great bodhisattvas will also feel deep compassion for them, so will teach them to observe pure precept, saying, ‘The precept violators will suffer in bad destinies and become less dignified and virtuous. They will not be able to rescue themselves, not to mention rescue others. Therefore, you should observe pure precept. Don’t let the mind of violating precept arise even for a short instant, let alone for a long time. Don’t allow your mind to be out of control so you will not regret that.’

“When seeing that sentient beings hate and harm others, great bodhisattvas will feel deep compassion for them, so will teach them to cultivate forbearance, saying, ‘Do not hate and harm each other. The minds of anger and hatred are not compliant with the virtuous dharmas; rather, they will increase evil dharmas and bring about damage. The mind of hatred will make one fall into bad destinies and suffer severely and endlessly. Therefore, you must not allow the mind of hatred to arise even for a brief instant, let alone for a long time. You should treat others with loving-kindness and compassion and do beneficial things for others to create positive

connections with others.'

"Seeing that sentient beings become tired and lazy, great bodhisattvas feel deep compassion for them, so say, 'You should work diligently and attentively. Don't be lazy and tired of doing virtuous dharmas. Lazy ones cannot accomplish various superior virtuous dharmas. Because of laziness, one will fall into bad destinies and suffer endlessly. Therefore, you must not allow the mind of laziness to arise even for a brief instant, let alone for a long time.'

"Seeing that sentient beings lose tranquility, great bodhisattvas feel deep compassion for them and say, 'You should cultivate meditation. Don't let restless mind arise. Restless mind is not compliant with virtuous dharmas; it increases negative dharmas and brings about decay and damage, making sentient beings fall into bad destinies. So, you should not allow restless mind to arise even for a brief instant, let alone for a long time.'

"Seeing that sentient beings are ignorant and abusing wisdom, great bodhisattvas feel deep compassion for them, so teach, 'You should cultivate superior wisdom. Don't let negative wisdom arise. Those possessing negative wisdom will not be able to dwell in various virtuous destinies, let alone attain liberation. Because of negative wisdom, one will fall into bad destinies and suffer endlessly. Therefore, you must not allow the mind correspondent with ignorance and wisdom abuse to arise even for a brief instant, let alone for a long time.'

(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas feel compassion for sentient beings and teach them to cultivate the six paramitas.)

"Seeing that sentient beings are greedy and seek many things, great bodhisattvas feel deep compassion for them, so expediently teach them to cultivate the contemplation of impurity. Seeing that sentient beings are easy to hate and get

angry, great bodhisattvas feel deep compassion for them, so expediently teach them to cultivate the contemplation of loving-kindness and compassion. Seeing that sentient beings are ignorant, great bodhisattvas feel deep compassion for them, so expediently teach them to cultivate the contemplation of dependent origination. Seeing that sentient beings are arrogant, great bodhisattvas feel deep compassion for them, so expediently teach them to cultivate the contemplation of various realms. Seeing that sentient beings do a lot of general contemplations and specific investigations, great bodhisattvas feel deep compassion for them, so expediently teach them to cultivate the contemplation of breathing counting. Seeing that sentient beings lose correct paths, great bodhisattvas feel deep compassion for them, so expediently teach them to approach correct paths; namely, the paths of voice-hearer, self-enlightened one, bodhisattva, and Thus-Comer. The great bodhisattvas will further expediently teach them, 'The self-nature that you are attached to is empty. In empty dharmas, nothing you can be attached to. Nonattachment is the form of emptiness.'
(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas compassionately and expediently teach sentient beings the contemplations of impurity, loving-kindness and compassion, dependent origination, and so forth.)

"Well-Appearing One, when great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they will dwell in supernatural powers paramita, so they will be able to teach correct dharma freely and easily and bring benefits and happiness to various sentient beings. You must know, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattva stay far away from supernatural powers paramita, they will not be able to teach correct dharma freely and easily and bring benefits and happiness to various sentient beings. You must know, Well-Appearing One, a bird without wings cannot fly far away in empty space freely and easily. So do great bodhisattvas; without supernatural powers,

they cannot freely and easily teach correct dharma and bring benefits and happiness to various sentient beings. Therefore, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should initiate and activate supernatural powers paramita. If they can initiate and activate supernatural powers paramita, they will be able to teach correct dharma freely and easily and bring benefits and happiness to sentient beings.

(The Buddha advised that great bodhisattvas should activate supernatural powers to teach sentient beings easily and efficiently.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas use the incomparable purest heavenly eye to universally contemplate as many Buddha worlds in the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges and sentient beings born there. Upon seeing them, great bodhisattvas will initiate supernatural powers paramita to visit them instantaneously. The great bodhisattvas will further use the supernatural power of reading others' minds to know these sentient beings' minds and associated images, then teach the essential meanings of the dharma to them appropriately. They will teach them giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita; the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration; the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations; the dharani gates and samadhi gates; internal emptiness, external emptiness and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable; the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering; cause and condition, consecutive thoughts,

conditions that stimulate the mind, and the conditions that reinforce main causes; various dharmas produced by conditions; ignorance, action, and so forth, and old age and death; various aggregates, spheres, realms, and gates; and the paths of voice-hearer, self-enlightened one, bodhisattva, the bodhi, and nirvana, so all sentient beings will gain superior benefits and happiness after hearing the dharma.
(The Buddha described how great bodhisattvas use heavenly eye and the supernatural power of reading others' minds to teach sentient beings appropriately.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas can hear all human and nonhuman voices and sounds with their purest, incomparable heavenly ears. Because of the heavenly ear, they can hear universally the correct dharma taught by all Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Ones in as many Buddha worlds of the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges. After hearing the teachings, they will accept and embrace them and reflect on their essential meanings. They will further teach accurately what they have heard to various sentient beings. They will teach giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita, the bodhi, and nirvana, so that all sentient beings will gain superior benefits, peace, and happiness upon hearing the teachings.
(The Buddha described how great bodhisattvas use heavenly ear to expediently and skillfully teach sentient beings.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas will get to know accurately the minds and the associated images of sentient beings with their purest, incomparable supernatural power of reading others' minds. They will, according to individual differences, teach them the essential meanings of the dharma, including giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita, the bodhi, and nirvana, so these sentient beings will gain superior benefits, peace, and

happiness.

(Great bodhisattvas use supernatural power of reading others' minds to teach sentient beings.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, the great bodhisattvas will get to know accurately the names and other characteristics of various Buddhas and their disciples in the past with their supernatural power of knowing previous lives. If sentient beings like to know their own previous lives, the great bodhisattvas will also let them know to benefit them. In addition, the great bodhisattvas will take this opportunity to teach them correct dharma, including giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita, the bodhi, and nirvana, so these sentient beings will gain superior benefits, peace, and happiness after hearing the dharma.

(The Buddha taught how great bodhisattvas use supernatural power of knowing previous lives to teach sentient beings.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas will go to as many Buddha worlds of the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges with their swift supernatural power of transformation, make offerings to various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, and plant virtuous roots at the Buddhas' places. Then they will return to their original lands and tell the sentient beings about those Buddha lands. By taking this opportunity, they teach sentient beings the correct dharma, including giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita, the bodhi, and nirvana, so these sentient beings will gain superior benefits, peace, and happiness after hearing the dharma.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas know accurately that the sentient beings still have flaws; they also know accurately the expediency to achieve flawlessness. They will teach those who have not yet become

flawless the essential meanings of the dharma; namely, giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita, the bodhi, and nirvana, so these sentient beings will gain superior benefits, peace, and happiness after hearing the dharma.

"Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas thus should initiate supernatural powers paramita. After cultivating and learning supernatural powers paramita perfectly, the great bodhisattvas will be able to receive various bodies freely and joyfully without being contaminated by their faults, pains, and pleasures. It is like the transformed Buddhas who can accomplish all kinds of services without being contaminated by the faults, pains, and pleasures.
(The Buddha explained how great bodhisattvas could use supernatural powers to offer Buddhist services without being contaminated by their transformed bodies.)

"Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas should play supernatural powers paramita. If they can do this way, they will be able to assist sentient beings to mature, dignify and purify Buddha lands, and realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge quickly. You must know, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas do not assist sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify Buddha lands, they will not be able to realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Why? If the great bodhisattvas have not been equipped with sufficient nutrients for the bodhi, they certainly will not attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge."
(Great bodhisattvas should have sufficient nutrients to achieve the perfect knowledge.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "What are the nutrients for the bodhi to enable great bodhisattvas to realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “All virtuous dharmas are the nutrients for great bodhisattvas. They can realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge only if such nutrients are fully prepared.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “What are all virtuous dharmas?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “From the moment great bodhisattvas first cultivate giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita, they have been free from differentiation and attachment. They do not think, ‘These are giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita. We start to cultivate giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita from here and for this purpose.’ They do not have such differentiation because they know that the self-nature of all dharmas is empty. To cultivate the six paramitas this way will not only benefit oneself but benefit all sentient beings because it allows them to get rid of birth and death and attain nirvana. So, these are the virtuous dharmas, they are also called the nutrients for great bodhisattvas. To cultivate this way is also called the path of bodhisattva. The great bodhisattvas in the past, future, and present had attained, will attain, and are attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi by following this path. It had assisted, will assist, and is assisting sentient beings to ferry the ocean of birth and death and realize the happiness of nirvana.

(The Buddha explained the meanings of nutrients for great bodhisattvas and the path of bodhisattva in this and the following paragraphs.)

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, since the time when great bodhisattvas are determined to cultivate the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations; cultivate the four bases of mindfulness, four correct

endeavors, and so forth, and noble eightfold path; dwell peacefully in internal emptiness, external emptiness, and so forth, and emptiness of selfless self-nature; dwell peacefully in realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable; dwell peacefully in the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering; cultivate the liberation gates of emptiness, formlessness, and nonaspiration; cultivate the eight liberations, eight vexation-overcoming meditations, nine concentrations in sequence, and ten universal contemplations; cultivate various stages of bodhisattva; cultivate the dharani gates and the samadhi gates; cultivate the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, and so forth, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power; cultivate great loving-kindness, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity; cultivate to stay in correct mindfulness and dwell in equanimity at all times; and cultivate the perfect knowledge of everything, perfect knowledge of the forms of the paths, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena, they have not had differentiation and attachment. They do not think, 'These are the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and so forth, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena; the cultivation of the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and so forth, and perfect knowledge of all phenomena should start from here and for this purpose.' They do not have these three kinds of differentiation and attachment because they know that the self-nature of all dharmas is empty. To cultivate the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and so forth this way will not only benefit oneself but also benefit all sentient beings by allowing them to get rid of birth and death and attain nirvana. Therefore, these are virtuous dharmas; they are also called the nutrients for great bodhisattvas. To cultivate this way is also called the path of the bodhisattva. The great bodhisattvas in the past, future, and present had attained, will attain, and are

attaining the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi by following this path. It also had assisted, will assist, and is assisting sentient beings to ferry the ocean of birth and death and realize the happiness of nirvana.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, the merits and virtues that immeasurable great bodhisattvas have cultivated are also called virtuous dharmas; they are also called the nutrients for bodhisattvas or the path of bodhisattva. Great bodhisattvas should cultivate such superior virtuous dharmas to their perfection before they can realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. They should realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge before they can turn the correct dharma wheel and let sentient beings get rid of the suffering of birth and death and realize and attain ultimate, permanent happiness of nirvana.

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "If all these dharmas are the dharmas for bodhisattva, then what are the dharmas for Buddha?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "The dharmas for bodhisattva are also called Buddha dharma. As bodhisattvas are awakened to the phenomena of all dharmas, they will attain the perfect knowledge of all phenomena and permanently eliminate the enduring disposition of vexations. As the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones are awakened to all dharmas in compliance with prajna intuitively and instantaneously, they realize insightfully and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. This is how the Thus-Comer differs from bodhisattva. Both two holy ones are holy, but they differ in progression and effect, so their achievements differ. Well-Appearing One, the bodhisattvas are those who have walked on the correct path of all dharmas incessantly but have not fully stayed far away from the hindrance of darkness; they have not yet reached the other shore, attained freedom and ease, and attained the perfect effect. If they have

walked on the liberation path of all dharmas, fully stayed far away from the hindrance of darkness, reached the other shore, and attained freedom, easiness, and perfect effect, they will be called the Buddha. This is how bodhisattva differs from the Buddha. Because the states differ, their dharmas differ, but we should not say that their dharma nature is different."

(The Buddha explained how bodhisattva differs from Buddha, and the same dharma nature they both share.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "If the characteristics of all dharmas are empty, then how can there be the differences in the emptiness of the characteristics? How can we differentiate among hells, the realm of animals, and so forth, and heaven? How can we differentiate among the embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and the Thus-Comer? As the individuals in reincarnation are unattainable, the karma they make should be unattainable too. If karma is unattainable, then the effects that mature in different types and at different times should also be unattainable. If this is the case, how can there be such differences?

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Yes, it is as you say. The characteristics of all dharmas are empty. In this emptiness, the individuals in reincarnation and the effects of the karma that matures in different types and at different times are nonexistent. In nonexistence, there are no different forms. Sentient beings do not fully know the empty characteristics of all dharmas, so they incessantly make various karmas, the virtuous, not virtuous, or the flawless ones. Because of making virtuous karmas, they are reborn in heaven or in human world. Because of making various not virtuous karmas, they fall into the three bad destinies. Because of the virtuous karmas and the increase and growth of the definitive positive-oriented karmas, they will be reborn in the realm of form or in the realm of formlessness.

Because of the additional effort in making flawless karmas, they will be elevated to different holy stages. Because of this cause and condition, great bodhisattvas are determined to cultivate giving, pure precept, forbearance, diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, as well as immeasurable and boundless Buddha dharmas.

"As great bodhisattvas cultivate all these factors for enlightenment incessantly and thus fulfill all of them, they will be able to initiate diamond-like concentration to reach the bodhi. They will further realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, and greatly benefit the sentient beings without failure. They thus help sentient beings get rid of birth and death and realize and attain permanent happiness, tranquility, coolness, and freshness in nirvana."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "When the Buddhas attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal enlightenment, will they also attain the dharmas of birth and death in various destinies?"

The Buddha replied, "No."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "When the Buddhas realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal enlightenment, will they also attain negative karmas, positive karmas, negative and positive karmas, and neither negative nor positive karmas?"

The Buddha replied, "No."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "If the Buddhas do not attain the differences among birth and death of various destinies and the karmas, why do they establish the differences among hells, the realm of animals, and so forth, and heaven and human world, or establish the differences among the levels of embryonic Buddha nature, and so forth, and the Thus-Comer?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One by asking him, “Do sentient beings know that the characteristics of all dharmas are empty?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “No, World-Honored One.”

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, “If sentient beings understand by themselves that the characteristics of all dharmas are empty, then great bodhisattvas will not need to pursue the expedient skillfulness of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi to relieve sentient beings from the birth and death in bad destinies. Because sentient beings do not understand that the characteristics of all dharmas are empty, they reincarnate through various destinies and suffer endlessly. After hearing the Buddhas’ teachings and getting to know that the characteristics of all dharmas are empty, great bodhisattvas aspire to realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and expediently and skillfully relieve sentient beings from the birth and death in various destinies in order to benefit them.

(The Buddha explained why great bodhisattvas should learn all bodhisattva actions to relieve sentient beings from birth and death.)

“You must know, Well-Appearing One, great bodhisattvas always think, ‘It is not right to say that all dharmas really have characteristics as ignorant ordinary sentient beings have insisted. Because of the power produced by upside-down differentiation, ignorant sentient being mistake nonexistence for existence; namely, they mistake nonexistent ‘I’ for existent ‘I,’ nonexistent sentient being for existent sentient being, and so forth, and nonexistent viewer for existent viewer. They mistake nonexistent matter for existent matter, and mistake nonexistent feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness for existent feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. And so on. They mistake nonexistent unconditioned dharmas for existent unconditioned dharmas. Because of the impact of the upside-down differentiation,

they mistake unreal for real. Their delusive attachment thus disturbs their minds and causes them to make virtuous and not virtuous karmas of body, speech, and mind and prevents them from getting rid of the bad destinies in birth and death. These are the sentient beings that I should rescue and liberate.' After having this thought, great bodhisattvas will practice the fathomless prajna paramita, absorb various virtuous dharmas in it, cultivate various bodhisattva actions correctly, and step by step fulfill the nutrients for the bodhi. Upon fulfilling the nutrients for the bodhi, they will realize insightfully and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. After attaining the bodhi, they will teach, explain, and establish respectively the meanings of the four noble truths for sentient beings, saying that this is the noble truth of suffering, this is the noble truth of the cause of suffering, this is the noble truth of the cessation of suffering, and this is the noble truth of the path for ceasing suffering. They will further absorb all factors for enlightenment in the four noble truths, establish the triple gem, the Buddha, dharma, and sangha, based on all factors for enlightenment. Because of the appearance of the triple gem in the world, the sentient beings can be liberated from birth and death. If sentient beings do not believe and take refuge in the triple gem, they will continue to make karmas, reincarnate in various destinies, and receive inexhaustible suffering. Therefore, sentient beings should take refuge in the triple gem to bring benefits, peace, and happiness to themselves and to others."

(The Buddha urged sentient beings to take refuge in the three gems.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "Is it through the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path for the cessation of suffering, or through the perfect knowledge of the four noble truths that sentient beings can realize and enter nirvana?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "It is neither through the four

noble truths nor through the perfect knowledge of the four noble truths that sentient beings can realize and enter nirvana. Well-Appearing One, I have said that the nature of equality of the four noble truths is nirvana, and this nirvana cannot be realized through the four noble truths or through the perfect knowledge of the four noble truths. It is through prajna paramita to realize the nature of equality, and this is called entering nirvana."

(The Buddha taught that sentient beings should realize the nature of equality through prajna paramita to enter nirvana.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "What is the nature of equality of the four noble truths?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Where there are no four noble truths or the perfect knowledge of the four noble truths is the nature of equality of the four noble truths. This nature of equality is the four noble truths. The phenomena of the nature of realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable have always dwelled and never lost, decayed, or changed whether the Thus-Comer has appeared in the world or not. This is the nature of equality of the four noble truths. The great bodhisattvas have practiced the fathomless prajna paramita to become awakened to this nature of equality of the four noble truths. If they can be awakened to this nature of equality of the four noble truths, they are called awakened to all noble truths, and thus they will realize and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi soon."

(The Buddha concluded that only through the nature of equality of the four noble truths that great bodhisattvas could become awakened to all noble truths and attain the unsurpassed bodhi.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Why are

great bodhisattvas called as ones awakened to all noble truths if they can become awakened to the nature of equality of the four noble truths when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita? Why do they not fall in the stage of voice-hearer or self-enlightened one, but enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising if they become awakened to the nature of equality of the four noble truths?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, there is not a dharma that great bodhisattvas do not see accurately. They have seen accurately that all dharmas are unattainable. When they see that all dharmas are unattainable, they have seen accurately the emptiness of all dharmas. That is, they have seen that all dharmas, whether absorbed or not absorbed by the four noble truths, are empty. When they see this way, they can enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising. Because they can enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising, they can dwell in the stage of embryonic Buddha nature. Once dwelling in this stage, they certainly will not stop there without advancing farther. If they stop there, they are destined to fall into the stage of voice-hearer or self-enlightened one. Once dwelling in the stage of embryonic Buddha nature, they will move forward and initiate the four meditations, four immeasurable minds, and four formless concentrations. Once dwelling peacefully in such stage of samatha, they will be able to solve all problems about the dharma nature and understand insightfully the four noble truths. At that they will know universally about suffering without being attached to suffering. They will terminate permanently the cause of suffering without being attached to the termination. They will realize the cessation of suffering without being attached to the cessation. They will cultivate the path for the cessation of suffering without being attached to the path. They will just initiate a mind compliant with, approaching, and entering the bodhi, and realize accurately the real phenomena of all dharmas as they

really are.”

(The Buddha explained how great bodhisattvas could avoid falling into the two vehicles.)

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Chapter 31

Teaching and Converting

Section 2

(In the Third Assembly)

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, how are great bodhisattvas awakened to the real phenomena of all dharmas?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “As great bodhisattvas contemplate and realize that all dharmas are empty, they are awakened to the real phenomena of all dharmas.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “How do great bodhisattvas contemplate and realize all dharmas as empty?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “As great bodhisattvas contemplate and realize the characteristics of all dharmas as empty, they realize that all dharmas are empty.

“You must know, Well-Appearing One, as great bodhisattvas contemplate and realize that all dharmas are empty through the vipasyana of the empty characteristics, they do not see the self-nature of all dharmas where one can dwell. It is through this way that they can realize insightfully and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Why? The self-nature of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas and all dharmas is non-nature. The self-nature of matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness is non-nature. And so on, the self-nature of all great bodhisattva actions and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas

is non-nature. This non-nature is not created by the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones, self-enlightened ones, bodhisattvas, voice-hearer aspirants, voice-hearers, or the rest of sentient beings. But ordinary sentient beings do not see and realize that all dharmas are empty as they really are, so great bodhisattvas have to practice the expedient skillfulness of the fathomless prajna paramita and teach and explain to sentient beings what they have been awakened to and what they have realized to relieve them from attachment and from the suffering of birth and death, and let them attain ultimate peace and happiness in nirvana."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "If the self-nature of all dharmas is non-nature, and this non-nature is not created by Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones, self-enlightened ones, bodhisattvas, or voice-hearers, why are different dharmas established? Why are there differences among hells, the realm of animals, realm of ghosts, human world, and heaven? Why are theredifferences among heavenly beings in the Heaven of the Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and the Heaven of Nonthinking and Not Nonthinking? Why are there differences of the three vehicles? Why are there differences among the karmas that cause hells, the realm of animals, realm of ghosts, the human world containing continent Jambudvipa, continent of Purvavideha, continent of Aparagodaniya, and continent of Uttarakuru, and various heavens including the Heaven of the Four Great Kings, Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, and so forth, and the Heaven of Nonthinking and Not Nonthinking? Why are there differences among the karmas that cause stream-enterers, once-returners, and so forth, and self-enlightened ones and the karmas that cause bodhisattvas and various Thus-Comers?

"World-Honored One, as the dharmas without nature certainly cannot operate, so how can one be reborn in hells, the realm of animals, and so forth, and the Heaven of Nonthinking and Not Nonthinking because of the karmas? And so on, how can one attain stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and self-enlightenment bodhi because of the karmas? How can one enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising because of the karmas? How can one, because of the karmas, attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, become the Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One, and bring benefits, peace, and happiness to all sentient beings?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Yes, it is as you say. The dharmas without nature cannot be established as different. They have no karmas, effects, or actions. But ignorant ordinary sentient beings cannot understand the precepts and rules of the holy dharma. They do not know accurately that the self-nature of all dharmas is non-nature. That is why they continuously initiate karmas based on ignorant and upside-down views and thus receive various bodies by following the powers of their karmas. It is dependent on different kinds and levels of the received bodies, that hells, the realm of animals, realm of ghosts, human world, heavens, and so forth are established. To relieve ignorant sentient beings from the suffering of birth and death, different holy dharmas and precepts are established. Depending on the different holy dharmas and precepts, the stage of stream-enterer, once-returner, and so forth, and the stages of the self-enlightened one, bodhisattva, and the Thus-Comer are established. But the nature of all dharmas is non-nature, and in all dharmas without nature, there are no different dharmas, karmas, effects, and operations. The dharmas without nature is always without nature.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, as you say, the dharmas without nature

cannot operate, so how can we say that one will attain stream-entry effect, once-return effect, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, become the Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One, and bring benefits, peace, and happiness to all sentient beings because of different karmas? Well-Appearing One, what do you think about this? Are the paths cultivated without nature? Are stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, self-enlightenment bodhi, various paths of the bodhisattva, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge without nature?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "They are all without nature. All the paths cultivated, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are without nature."

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, "What do you think about this? Can dharmas without nature attain dharmas without nature? "

Well-Appearing One replied, "No, World-Honored One."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "All dharmas are without nature and paths. They are neither correspondent nor not correspondent. They are immaterial, invisible, and unsubstantial. They are with only one form, and that is formlessness. The ignorant sentient beings have delusive differentiation about the formless dharmas and mistake them for the dharmas with forms. They are attached to various aggregates, spheres, and realms, and mistake impermanent for permanent, suffering for pleasure, selflessness for selfness, and impurity for purity. They are ignorant and upside down and mistake the dharmas without nature for with nature. Because of this cause and condition, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas will achieve superior expedient skillfulness to rescue these sentient beings, liberate them from the upside-down and delusive differentiation, expediently

relocate them in formless dharmas, and let them cultivate and learn diligently to get rid of birth and death and realize and attain the ultimate peace and happiness of nirvana."

(The Buddha explained why great bodhisattvas aspire to the bodhi and relieve from the suffering caused by incorrect knowledge views.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Are there few things that are real, solid, not void, and not delusive, to which ignorant sentient beings are attached, they thus make karmas to reincarnate in various destinies, cannot get rid of the suffering of birth and death? If nothing is real, solid, not void, and not delusive, how are they attached to the dharmas and make karmas to reincarnate in various destinies?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "There is nothing as insubstantial as a feather's tip to which ignorant sentient beings are attached is real, solid, not void, and not delusive. It is only because of the upside-down attachment that sentient beings make karmas and reincarnate in various destinies and cannot get rid of all kinds of suffering in birth and death. Let me tell you some similes to make its meanings clear and easy for understanding. The wise ones can attain correct understanding owing to similes.

"Well-Appearing One, what do you think about this? Seeing in dreams that someone enjoys the pleasures of the five desires, are the images in dreams real? Can the person in dreams feel pleasures?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "No, World-Honored One, the images in dreams are not real. The person in dreams cannot feel the pleasures of the five desires."

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, "What do you think about this? Are there dharmas, the flawed or flawless, of or beyond the world, conditioned or

unconditioned, not like the dharmas in dreams?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "No. They are all like the dreams in dreams. World-Honored One, not a dharma, flawed or flawless, of or beyond the world, conditioned or unconditioned, is not like the dharmas in the dreams."

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, "What do you think about this? Is there real reincarnation of birth and death in various destinies in dreams?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "No, World-Honored One."

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, "What do you think about this? Is there real cultivation of paths in dreams? Can one stay away from contamination and attain purity through the cultivation in dreams?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "No, World-Honored One. Why? The images in dreams are not real; they cannot establish and cannot be established. As the cultivation of the paths is nonexistent, how can one stay away from contamination and attain purification through the cultivation in dreams?"

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, "What do you think about this? Are the images reflected in clear mirrors real so that one can make karmas, and because of these karmas one will fall into inferior destinies or be reborn in human world or heaven to experience various pains and pleasures?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "No, World-Honored One. The images reflected in clear mirrors are not real; they can only deceive ignorant ones. So, how can the images make karmas and cause one to fall into inferior destinies or in human world and heaven to experience various suffering and pleasures?"

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, "What do you think about this? Can the images reflected in clear mirrors serve as the real path enabling one to get rid of contamination and attain purity?"

Well-Appearing One replied, “No, World-Honored One. Why? Because those images are not real; they cannot establish or be established. As the cultivation of the path is nonexistent, how can one get rid of contamination and attain purity through it?”

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, “What do you think about this? Are echoes in valley real that can make karmas and cause one to fall into inferior destinies or be reborn in human world and heaven to experience various pains and pleasures?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “No, World-Honored One. The echoes in valley are not real that can only deceive ignorant ones. How can they make karmas and cause one to fall into inferior destinies or be reborn in human world and heaven to experience various pains and pleasures?”

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, “What do you think about this? Can echoes serve as the real path and enable one to get rid of contamination and attain purity?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “No, World-Honored One. Why? The echoes in valley are unreal and cannot establish or be established. As the cultivation of the path is nonexistent, how can one get rid of contamination and attain purity through it?”

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, “What do you think about this? Are illusory images of water under sunlight real that will create karmas and cause one to fall into inferior destinies or be reborn in human world or heaven to experience various pains and pleasures?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “No, World-Honored One. The illusory images of water under sunlight are unreal and can only deceive ignorant ones. How can they create karmas and cause one to fall into inferior destinies or be reborn in human world or heaven to experience various pains and pleasures?”

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, “What do you think about this? Can illusory images of water under sunlight serve as the real path and enable one to get rid of contamination and attain purity?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “No, World-Honored One. Why? The illusory images of water under sunlight are unreal and cannot establish or be established. As the cultivation of the path is nonexistent, how can one get rid of contamination and attain purity through it?”

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, “What do you think about this? Are shadows real? Can they create karmas and cause one to fall into inferior destinies or be reborn in human world or heaven to experience various pains and pleasures?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “No, World-Honored One. The phenomena shown in shadows are unreal and can only deceive ignorant ones. How can they create karmas and cause one to fall into inferior destinies or be reborn in human world or heaven to experience various pains and pleasures?”

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, “What do you think about this? Can the phenomena shown in shadows serve as the real path to enable one can to get rid of contamination and attain purification?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “No, World-Honored One. Why? The phenomena shown in shadows are unreal and cannot establish or be established. As the cultivation of the path is nonexistent, how can one get rid of contamination and attain purification through it?”

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, “What do you think about this? Are the transformed elephants, horses, and so forth in the tricks of magician real and can create karmas, cause one to fall into inferior destinies or be reborn in human world or heaven to experience various pains and pleasures?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “No, World-Honored One. The transformed elephants, horses, and so forth are all unreal. They can only deceive ignorant ones. How can they create karmas and cause one to fall into inferior destinies or be reborn in human world or heaven to experience various pains and pleasures?”

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, “What do you think about this? Can the transformed things really serve as the path so that one can cultivate it to get rid of contamination and attain purification?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “No, World-Honored One. The transformed elephants, horses, and so forth, are unreal and cannot establish or be established. As the cultivation of the path is nonexistent, how can one get rid of contamination and attain purification through it?”

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, “What do you think about this? Are the transformed bodies made by transformers real? Can they create karmas and thus cause one to fall into inferior destinies or be reborn in human world or heaven to experience various pains and pleasures?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “No, World-Honored One. The transformed bodies are not real, so how can they create karmas and cause one to fall into inferior destinies or be reborn in human world or heaven to experience various pains and pleasures?”

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, “What do you think about this? Can transformed bodies really serve as the path so that one can cultivate it to get rid of contamination and attain purification?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “No, World-Honored One. Why? The transformed bodies are not real; they cannot establish or be established. As the cultivation of the path is nonexistent, how can one get rid of contamination and attain

purification through it?”

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, “What do you think about this? Are the images appearing in mirages real? Can they create karmas and thus cause one to fall into inferior destinies or be reborn in human world or heaven to experience various pains and pleasures?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “No, World-Honored One. All those appearing in the mirages are not real, so how can they create karmas and thus cause one to fall into inferior destinies or be reborn in human world or heaven to experience various pains and pleasures?”

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, “What do you think about this? Can the images in mirages really serve as the path so that one can cultivate it to get rid of contamination and attain purity?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “No, World-Honored One. Why? All those phenomena appearing in mirages are not real. They cannot establish or be established. As the cultivation of the path is nonexistent, how can one get rid of contamination and attain purity through it?”

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, “What do you think about this? Are there dharmas, flawed or flawless, of or beyond the world, and conditioned or unconditioned, not like dreams, echoes, illusory images of water under sunlight, shadows, illusions, transformed things, and mirages?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “No, World-Honored One. There are no dharmas, flawed or flawless, of or beyond the world, and conditioned or unconditioned, that are not like dreams, echoes, and so forth.”

(All dharmas are like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and transformed things and mirages.)

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, “What do you think about this? Are there contaminated or purified ones among these dharmas?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “No, World-Honored One, there are no contaminated or purified ones among these dharmas.”

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, “If the contaminated ones and the purified ones are nonexistent, then contamination and purification should be nonexistent also. Why? The sentient beings dwelling in the delusive differentiation of the ‘I’ and the associated images insist that there are the contaminated and the purified ones, and thus contamination and purification are existent. While those who can see reality and understand that the contaminated and purified dharmas are nonexistent, therefore, contamination and purification are also nonexistent. It is because the self-nature of all dharmas is empty.”

(The Buddha taught that since the self-nature of all dharmas is empty, all dharmas, whether conditioned or purified, are nonexistent.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, “Ones who can see the truth are without contamination and purification, and ones who cannot see the truth are also without contamination and purification. Why? The self-nature of all dharmas is non-nature. World-Honored One, ones who tell the truth are without contamination and purification, and ones who do not tell the truth are also without contamination and purification. Why? The self-nature of all dharma is non-nature. World-Honored One, the dharmas without self-nature are without contamination and purification, while the dharmas with self-nature are also without contamination and purification. Why? The self-nature of all dharmas is non-nature. World-Honored One, if ones who have seen and can tell the truth are without contamination and purification, and ones who have not seen and cannot tell the truth are also without contamination and purification, then

why does the World-Honored One sometimes teach about the pure dharma?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "I say that the nature of equality of all dharmas is pure dharma."

(The Buddha said that the nature of equality of all dharmas is pure dharma.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "What is the nature of equality of all dharmas?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "The nature and the phenomena of realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable of all dharmas are always there whether the Thus-Comers appear in the worlds or not. This is called the nature of equality of all dharmas. This nature of equality is called pure dharma. It is in terms of the worldly perspective instead of ultimate meaning to say that it is pure. Why? In ultimate meaning of the truth, there is neither differentiation nor nonsensical argument. All dharmas are unspeakable, so we cannot say that they are contaminated or purified."

(The Buddha taught that in terms of worldly perspective, there is pure dharma, but in terms of ultimate meaning, all dharmas are neither contaminated nor purifies; they are unspeakable.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha again, "If all dharmas are like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages and appear as existent although they are unreal, then why do great bodhisattvas rely on these unreal dharmas to aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and vow, 'I swear to fulfill the six paramitas, and so forth, and the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features. I swear to emit innumerable lights to illuminate the boundless worlds of the ten directions. I swear to initiate an exquisite and beautiful voice to fill universally the boundless worlds of the ten directions and teach various

wonderful dharma gates for sentient beings depending on individual differences of their minds and the associated images, so they can cultivate and learn diligently what suitable and beneficial for each of them?'"

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, "What do you think about this? Are not the dharmas that you are speaking of like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "Yes, but I still have some things that I cannot understand. If all dharmas are like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages that are unreal, then why do great bodhisattvas sincerely swear when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita that they will fulfill all Buddha dharmas to bring benefits, peace, and happiness to innumerable sentient beings? All dharmas that one sees in dreams, images, and so forth, and mirages cannot practice giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita, not to mention they can fulfill the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features. All dharmas that one sees in dreams, images, and so forth, and mirages cannot accomplish the things they aspire to, and other dharmas, it is because all of them are not real."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "Yes, it is as you say. The unreal dharmas cannot practice giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and the thirty-two perfect major marks and eighty distinguishing minor features, as well as other dharmas. The unreal dharmas cannot accomplish the things that one aspires to, nor the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, because the six paramitas and the rest of immeasurable and boundless Buddha dharmas are unreal, they cannot realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. You must know, Well-Appearing One, all these dharmas are created by thinking. The dharmas created by

thinking cannot attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, all these dharmas can initiate and activate the bodhi path but cannot contribute to the attainment of the effects. It is because these dharmas have no arising, elicitation, and real phenomena. Great bodhisattvas have since the time they first aspire to the bodhi initiated various superior virtuous dharmas; namely, the six paramitas, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, but they realize that all these dharmas are like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages; they are all nonexistent.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, these dharmas are unreal, but great bodhisattvas certainly will not be able to assist sentient beings to mature, dignify and purify Buddha lands, and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge unless they have fulfilled all these dharmas. It means that if great bodhisattvas cannot fulfill the six paramitas, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, they certainly will not be able to assist sentient beings to mature, dignify and purify Buddha lands, and attain the perfect knowledge of all phenomena.
(Although great bodhisattvas have aspired to and cultivated various holy dharmas, they realize that all these dharmas are nonexistent. Although these dharmas are unreal, great bodhisattvas cannot assist sentient beings and purify Buddha lands unless they fulfill these holy dharmas.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should know accurately that all virtuous dharmas that they cultivate and in which they dwell are like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages. When they cultivate the six paramitas, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena, they should know accurately that these virtuous dharmas are like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages. When they assist sentient

beings to mature, dignify and purify Buddha lands, and realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, they also should know accurately that all these virtuous dharmas are like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages. They should know accurately that the different minds and the associated images of all sentient beings are like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should not grasp all dharmas as existent or nonexistent. Even if they can realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge through grasping, they still should know that all those dharmas are like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages, so they should not grasp it as existent or nonexistent. Why? The six paramitas, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena are ungraspable. All dharmas, including the flawed and flawless dharmas, the dharmas of the world and beyond the world, and the conditioned and unconditioned dharmas, are ungraspable. They aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi after knowing that all dharmas are ungraspable. Why? All dharmas are ungraspable and unreal; they are like dreams, echoes, and so forth, and mirages. The ungraspable dharmas cannot realize and attain the ungraspable dharmas. Sentient beings neither see nor understand these dharmas. To benefit these sentient beings, great bodhisattvas will aspire to and pursue the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi.

(The Buddha emphasized that great bodhisattvas should know that all dharmas are unattainable and that they should not grasp them.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, in order to benefit sentient beings, great bodhisattvas have, since the time first aspiring to the bodhi, cultivated giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita. They have pursued

the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi not for their own sake or for the purpose other than benefiting sentient beings.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas have observed that ignorant ones embrace incorrect thinking and mistake nonexistent selfness for existent selfness, nonexistent sentient being for existent sentient being, and so forth, and nonexistent viewer for existent viewer. Great bodhisattvas thus feel deep compassion for them, so teach them expediently to stay away from delusive attachment and relocate them in the formless realm of sweet cool nectar. When they dwell in formlessness, their minds are not occupied by the thoughts of the 'I,' the sentient being, and so forth, and the viewer, all kinds of restlessness, wandering, distraction, nonsensical arguments, and differentiation are removed. Their minds rather will dwell in tranquility, indifference to fame and wealth, and a realm free from nonsensical arguments.

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, these great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita in an expedient way. They are not attached to the dharmas themselves; they teach others not to be attached to all dharmas. They have taught this in terms of the worldly perspective instead of ultimate meaning."
(The Buddha described how great bodhisattvas guided sentient beings expediently to remove incorrect understanding and attachment.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "When the Buddha realized insightfully the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, is the Buddha dharma he attained called attainment in terms of the worldly way or the ultimate meaning?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "It is in terms of the worldly way instead of the ultimate meaning. If it is based on ultimate meaning, both the one who

attains and the things attained are unattainable. Why? If we say someone has attained this dharma, it means the attainment is existent. The existence of an attainment implies that it is dualistic. Those attached to duality will not attain the effects or the intuitive insight."

(The Buddha explained why the attainment of Buddha dharma is so called in terms of worldly perspective instead of ultimate meaning.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "If those attached to duality cannot attain the effects or the intuitive insight, can attached to nonduality attain the effects and the intuitive insight?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Both either attached to duality and attached to nonduality cannot attain the effects and the intuitive insight. Once staying in attachment, both are dualistic. Being not attached to duality and nonduality is called attaining the effects; it is also called intuitive insight. Why? Saying that attachment to this will attain effects and intuitive insight is a nonsensical argument, while saying that attachment to that will not attain effects and intuitive insight is also a nonsensical argument. In the equal nature of all dharmas, all nonsensical arguments are existent. Staying away from nonsensical arguments is called the nature of equality of the dharmas."

(The Buddha taught that being not attached to duality and nonduality is attaining the effects; it is called intuitive insight. Attachment to all sayings is nonsensical argument.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "If the self-nature of all dharmas is non-nature, what is the nature of equality in the non-nature dharmas?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "If there are neither nature nor

non-nature, and the nature of equality is unspeakable, then this is the nature of equality of all dharmas. You must know, Well-Appearing One, as the nature of equality is unspeakable and unknown, there will be no dharma attainable other than the nature of equality; there will be no nature of equality apart from all dharmas. You must know, Well-Appearing One, both ordinary sentient beings and the holy ones cannot practice the nature of equality because both are not in such status."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "Is the nature of equality of the dharmas the locus where the Buddha practices?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "All holy ones cannot practice or realize the nature of equality of the dharmas. The stream-enterers, once-returners, nonreturners, arhats, self-enlightened ones, bodhisattvas, and the Thus-Comers cannot practice the nature of equality of the dharmas. It is because in it, all nonsensical arguments and differentiations are not active."

(The Buddha described the status of the nature of equality of all dharmas.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "The Thus-Comers have attained perfect freedom and easiness in all dharmas, why can we say that the nature of equality of the dharmas is not the locus where Thus-Comers practice?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "It is correct to say that the Thus-Comers have attained perfect freedom and easiness in all dharmas. If the nature of equality of the dharmas is different from the Buddha, it is reasonable to say that it is the locus where the Buddhas practice. But because the nature of equality is not different from the Buddha, it is unreasonable to say that it is the locus where the Buddhas practice.

(The Buddha explained why the nature of equality is not the locus where Thus-Comer

practices.)

"You must know, Well-Appearing One, if the nature of equality of the sentient beings, and so forth, and the nature of equality of the Thus-Comers are with only one form, namely, the formlessness, that is equal and without duality or difference, then we should not say that this is the nature of equality of the sentient beings and that is the nature of equality of the Thus-Comers. In this nature of equality, all natures of equality are unattainable, so the differences between ordinary sentient beings and the holy ones are unattainable also."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, "If the different forms in the nature of equality of all dharmas are unattainable, then there should be no differences among the dharma of ordinary sentient beings, the dharma of stream-enterers, and so forth, and sentient beings."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "Yes, it is as you say. In the equality of all dharmas, there should be no differences among the dharma of ordinary sentient beings, the dharma of holy ones, and sentient beings."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "If in the equality of all dharmas, the dharma of ordinary sentient beings, the dharma o holy ones, and sentient beings are not different, why does the triple gem appear in the world? There should be no differences among the Buddha, dharma, and sangha."

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One by asking him, "What do you think about this? Does the triple gem, the Buddha, dharma, and sangha, differ from the nature of equality?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "If my understanding of the Buddha's teaching is correct, the Buddha, dharma, and sangha and the nature of equality should not be different. Why? The Buddha, dharma, and sangha and the nature of equality are

neither correspondent nor not correspondent; they are immaterial, invisible, and unsubstantial and with only one form, namely, the formlessness. But the Thus-Comers have expedient skillfulness in the formless dharmas, so they establish the names and forms of various dharmas and sentient beings, saying that these are the ordinary sentient beings and their dharma, these are the stream-enterers and their dharma, and so forth, and those are the Thus-Comers and the Buddha dharma."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "Yes, it is as you say. The Buddhas have expediently and skillfully established the different names and forms of the dharmas and sentient beings.

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, what do you think about this? If the Buddhas do not realize and attain the unsurpassed bodhi, and if they do not establish for the sentient beings the names and forms of the dharmas, can sentient beings get to know by themselves the differences among hells, the realm of animals, and so forth, and the sphere of nonthinking and not nonthinking? Can sentient beings understand by themselves the differences among matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all phenomena; the perfect knowledge of the phenomena of the wonderful aspirations, the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, the triple gem, and the three vehicles? Can sentient beings get to know by themselves all these different names and forms?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "No, World-Honored One. If the Buddhas have not established these different names and forms for sentient beings, they will not be able to get to know them by themselves."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "Therefore, although the Buddhas have established different names and forms by means of formless expedient skillfulness, these dharmas are unmovable in the nature of equality."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “If the Buddhas are unmovable in the nature of equality of the dharmas, are ordinary sentient beings, voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, and bodhisattvas also unmovable in the nature of equality of all dharmas?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “Yes, they are also unmovable. It is because all dharmas and the sentient beings do not go beyond the nature of equality. They do not go beyond realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable either. The dharma of ordinary sentient beings and the dharma of holy ones do not differ in realness, dharma realm, and so forth, and the realm of the inconceivable.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha again, “The ordinary sentient beings, the holy ones, and the nature of equality of all dharmas are not different, while the nature of all dharmas and the nature of sentient beings are different because their forms are different, then their dharma natures should be different; namely, because the forms of matter, feeling, and so forth, and the conditioned and unconditioned dharmas are different, their natures should also be different.

“World-Honored One, if the natures of all dharmas were different, then their dharma natures should be different. But why do we establish only one form of dharma nature for various dharmas? Why do great bodhisattvas not differentiate among the natures of all dharmas and all sentient beings when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita? If they do not differentiate among the natures of all dharmas and all sentient beings, they should not be able to practice the fathomless prajna paramita. If they cannot practice the fathomless prajna paramita, they will not be able to progress from one bodhisattva stage to the other. If they cannot progress from one bodhisattva

stage to the other, they will not be able to enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising. If they cannot enter onto the bodhisattva path of nonarising, they will not be able to go beyond the stage of voice-hearer and the stage of self-enlightened one. If they cannot go beyond the stage of voice-hearer and the stage of self-enlightened one, they will not be able to fulfill the supernatural powers paramita. If they cannot fulfill the supernatural powers paramita, they will not be able to play supernatural powers freely and at ease. If they cannot play supernatural powers freely and at ease, they will not be able to fulfill giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita. If they cannot fulfill giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita, they will not be able to travel from one Buddha land to the other to stay close with and make offerings to various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones. If they cannot stay close with and make offerings to various Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, they will not be able to hear correct dharma and plant virtuous roots at various Buddhas' places. If they cannot hear correct dharma and plant various virtuous roots at various Buddhas' places, they will not be able to assist sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify Buddha lands. If they cannot assist sentient beings to mature and dignify and purify Buddha lands, they will not be able to attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, turn the wonderful dharma wheel, and deliver the sentient beings."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "You asked, 'If ordinary sentient beings, holy ones, and the nature of equality of all dharmas are not different, but the natures of all dharmas and the sentient beings are different because their forms are different, then the dharma natures should be different. But why do we establish only one form of dharma natures for various dharmas? Why do great bodhisattvas not differentiate among the natures of all dharmas and all sentient beings when they

practice the fathomless prajna paramita?' What do you think about this? Is the dharma nature of matter empty? Are the dharma natures of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness empty? And so on. Are the dharma natures of the conditioned dharmas and the unconditioned dharmas empty?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "Yes, all these dharma natures are empty."

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, "What do you think about this? Are different forms of the dharmas attainable in emptiness? Namely, are the different forms of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness attainable? And so on. Are the different forms of the conditioned and unconditioned dharmas attainable?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "No, World-Honored One. In emptiness, all different forms are not attainable."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "Then we should know that the nature of equality of the dharmas is neither with ordinary sentient beings nor far apart from ordinary sentient beings. And so on. The nature of equality of the dharmas is neither with the Buddhas nor far apart from the Buddhas. The nature of equality of the dharmas is neither with matter nor far apart from matter; it is neither with feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness nor far apart from feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. And so on. The nature of equality of the dharmas is neither with nor far apart from the conditioned dharmas and the unconditioned dharmas."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Is the nature of equality of the dharmas conditioned or unconditioned?"

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "The nature of equality of the dharmas is neither conditioned nor unconditioned. But the unconditioned dharmas are unattainable apart from the conditioned dharmas, while the conditioned dharmas are unattainable apart from the unconditioned dharmas. You must know, Well-Appearing

One, the conditioned realm and the unconditioned realm are neither correspondent nor not correspondent. They are immaterial, invisible, and unsubstantial, and with only one form, namely, formlessness. The Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, have taught this in terms of the worldly perspective instead of ultimate meaning. Why? In ultimate meaning, no actions of body, speech, and mind are attainable, while far apart from the actions of body, speech, and mind, no ultimate meaning is attainable. To be with the nature of equality of the conditioned and the unconditioned dharmas is called ultimate meaning. There is no other ultimate meaning apart from the conditioned and the unconditioned dharmas. Therefore, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should not separate from ultimate meaning to practice bodhisattva actions, assist sentient beings to mature, dignify and purify Buddha lands, realize insightfully and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge quickly, and bring benefits and happiness to all sentient beings in the endless future."
(The Buddha explained the features of ultimate meaning and its relationship with conditioned and unconditioned dharmas.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "If the original nature of equality of all dharmas is empty, and this empty original nature in all dharmas neither creates nor gets created, then why do great bodhisattvas absorb and benefit sentient beings with the four approaches without moving the ultimate meaning when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Yes. As you say, the original nature of equality of all dharmas is empty, and this emptiness is neither the maker nor the product in all conditioned dharmas. But great bodhisattvas still work hard to benefit sentient beings with the four approaches of absorption. If sentient beings can understand by themselves that the original nature of all dharmas is empty, the

Buddhas and bodhisattvas need not to adopt supernatural powers to perform many unusual things. That is, they need not to stay unmovable in empty original nature to help sentient beings eliminate various delusive differentiations, let them dwell in the emptiness of all dharmas to get rid of the suffering of birth and death. They need not to guide sentient beings to stay away from the thought of the 'I,' the sentient being, and so forth, and the viewer; the thought of matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness; the thought of the eye sphere, ear sphere, and so forth, and conscious sphere; the thought of the sight sphere, sound sphere, and so forth, and mental-image sphere; the thought of the eye realm, ear realm, and so forth, and conscious realm; the thought of the sight realm, sound realm, and so forth, and mental-image realm; the thought of the eye consciousness realm, ear consciousness realm, and so forth, and conscious consciousness realm; the thought of the eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact; the thought of the feelings produced by eye contact, ear contact, and so forth, and conscious contact; the thought of the earth realm, water realm, and so forth, and consciousness realm; the thought of cause and condition, consecutive thoughts, conditions that stimulate the mind, and the conditions that reinforce main causes; the thought of the dharmas produced by conditions; the thought of ignorance, action, and so forth, and old age and death; the thought of the flawed dharmas and flawless dharmas; the thought of the dharmas of the world and beyond the world; the thought of the conditioned dharmas and unconditioned dharmas and all other thoughts, let them dwell in the unconditioned realm and get rid of birth, old age, illness, and death. In the unconditioned realm, all dharmas are empty. It is in terms of the worldly perspective to call it unconditioned realm."

(The Buddha explained why Thus-Comers and great bodhisattvas work hard to teach and guide sentient beings.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “Based on which emptiness to say that all dharmas are empty?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “The nature of matter, feeling, and so forth, and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge is empty, so all dharmas are empty.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, what do you think about this? As transformed bodies perform transformed things, are they real and not empty?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “They are not real. World-Honored One, the transformed things are not real. They are all empty.”

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, “The transformed things and emptiness are neither combined nor separate. They are empty because of emptiness of emptiness. We should not differentiate between emptiness and transformed things. Why? In emptiness, both emptiness and transformed things are unattainable. All dharmas are empty in the final analysis.

“Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, matter, feeling, and so forth, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi are all transformed things, and all transformed things are empty. Furthermore, it is based on this principle to establish various individuals. The ordinary sentient beings, voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, bodhisattvas, and the Thus-Comers are all transformed beings, and transformed beings are empty.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “As all dharmas of the world, such as aggregates, spheres, realms, and so forth and sentient beings are transformed. Are the dharmas beyond the world, such as the four bases of mindfulness, four correct endeavors, and so forth, and various sentient beings transformed?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “All dharmas of the world and beyond the world are transformed. Among them, there are the transformed self-enlightened ones, transformed bodhisattvas, transformed Thus-Comers, transformed vexations, and the transformed karmas. Because of this cause and condition, I will say that all are illusory and transformed, equal and not different.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “Are all the effects caused by termination transformed? Namely, the holy effects, such as stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, self-enlightenment bodhi, and the Thus-Comer who have eliminated permanently the enduring disposition of vexations, are these effects transformed?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “All dharmas correspondent with the two forms of arising and extinction are transformed.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “What dharmas are not transformed?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “The dharmas not correspondent with arising and extinction are not transformed.”

(The Buddha distinguished the transformed dharmas from the not transformed dharmas.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “What dharmas are not correspondent with arising and extinction?”

The Buddha replied, “The dharmas that are not delusive are nirvana, and these dharmas are not correspondent with arising and extinction.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “The World-Honored One has taught about the equal dharma nature, saying that all dharmas are empty and cannot be moved, no duality is attainable, and not a dharma has a self-

nature that is not empty. Then why is it said that nirvana is not transformed?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Yes, it is as you say. Not a dharma has a self-nature that is not empty. This emptiness of self-nature is not made by voice-hearers, self-enlightened ones, bodhisattvas, Buddhas, or other sentient beings. The self-nature is always empty whether the Buddhas are present in the world or not. This empty nature is nirvana. Therefore, I say that nirvana is not transformed. The nonexistent dharmas are called nirvana; it can be said that they are without arising, extinction, and transformation.

(The Buddha explained the meaning of nirvana.)

"Furthermore, Well-Appearing One, as novice bodhisattvas hear that all dharmas are empty in the final analysis, and so forth, and nirvana is like the transformed thing, they will be shocked, scared, and terrified and thus cannot cultivate the virtuous dharmas. So, I teach them that, if the dharmas are not correspondent with arising and extinction, they are not like the transformed ones; there is no nirvana that is not empty."

(The Buddha stated that the not empty nirvana refers to the dharmas that are not correspondent with arising and extinction. There is no nirvana that is not empty.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "How do we teach and caution novice great bodhisattvas who just begin to aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and let them know that the original nature of all dharmas is always empty, so they will not be frightened and scared when hearing emptiness in the final analysis?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "Are all dharmas existent previously and become nonexistent later? Isn't the nature of all dharmas originally empty? The fact is that the dharmas are neither existent previously nor nonexistent

later. The original nature has always been empty, so you should not be frightened. You should teach and give cautions to novice great bodhisattvas who just begin to aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi this way, let them know that the original nature of all dharmas is always empty, so they will be delighted to accept and believe in it upon hearing the emptiness in the final analysis."

(The Buddha concluded that the self-nature of all dharmas is always empty. Novice great bodhisattvas should be taught and cautioned with this truth.)

When the Bhagavat was teaching this sutra, innumerable great bodhisattvas, voice-hearers, humans, and nonhumans were greatly delighted. They joyfully accepted, believed in, and practiced the teaching given by the Buddha.

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Chapter 1

Exquisite Actions

Section 1

(In the Fourth Assembly)

This is what I heard.

At one time, the Bhagavat lived in Rajagriha on the summit of Mount Vulture Peak. He stayed with 1,250 senior monks, who were all arhats, who had eliminated all flaws and had no more vexations. They had attained genuine ease. Their minds were well liberated, and their wisdom was well released. They had been well tamed as smart horses and great dragons. They had accomplished all that should be done, abandoned all that should be renounced, and attained genuine self-benefit. They had ended all bonds and gained liberation through correct knowledge. After achieving ultimate, uppermost easiness, they all became arhats except Ananda, who was still in the process of learning. Among them, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One was the leader.

At that time, the Buddha said to the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One, "You have a great talent for debate and giving lectures. Why don't you lecture on and explain the fathomless prajna paramita for great bodhisattvas, teach and give cautions to them, so that they can attain a thorough and in-depth understanding of prajna paramita?"

Meanwhile, Sariputra thought to himself, "Will Well-Appearing One lecture on and explain the fathomless prajna paramita for bodhisattvas with his own talent or with the support of the overwhelming authority and supernatural powers of the Thus-

Comer?"

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One could read Sariputra's mind with the support of the supernatural powers of the Buddha, so he said to Sarriputra, "The World-Honored One's disciples dare to lecture on, manifest, and explain the essential meanings of the dharma only with the support of the authoritative supernatural powers of the Thus-Comer. Why? Sariputra, the Buddha has first taught him by lecturing on, manifesting, and explaining the essential meanings of the dharma, then he cultivated and learned diligently and attentively by following the Buddha's teaching, realized the real nature of all dharmas, and then lectured on, manifested, and explained what he has learned for others. If what he teaches is not in conflict with the dharma nature, it must be due to the support of Buddha's authoritative supernatural powers that he has been elevated to the same flow of the dharma nature. Therefore, I cannot lecture on and explain the fathomless prajna paramita for great bodhisattvas, give teachings and cautions to them, and guide them to gain a thorough understanding of prajna paramita quickly with my own talent of debate without the support of the Buddha's powers."

At that time, Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, "World-Honored One has ordered me to lecture on and explain the fathomless prajna paramita for great bodhisattvas, give teachings and cautions to them, so they can understand prajna paramita thoroughly and quickly. World-Honored One, as we talk about the bodhisattvas, what dharmas does this designated name bodhisattva represent? World-Honored One, I cannot see any dharma that can be called great bodhisattva, nor can I see any dharma that is called prajna paramita. World-Honored One, as I cannot see and attain bodhisattva, the dharma of the bodhisattva, and prajna paramita, how can I lecture on and explain the fathomless prajna paramita for great bodhisattvas? World-Honored One, what fathomless prajna paramita will I teach? To which great

bodhisattvas will I give teachings and cautions to help them understand prajna paramita thoroughly and quickly? World-Honored One, if great bodhisattvas are not drowned, regressive, shocked, and frightened upon hearing these words, they rather dwell in, cultivate, and thoroughly understand prajna paramita, this is exactly the right way of teaching and giving cautions to great bodhisattvas for assisting them to attain ultimate understanding of prajna paramita quickly. This is called the way of lecturing on and explaining the fathomless prajna paramita.

(Well-Appearing One described how he saw the right way of guiding great bodhisattvas to cultivate prajna paramita with the Buddha's powerful support.)

"Furthermore, World-Honored One, when great bodhisattvas cultivate prajna paramita, they should learn not be attached to the great bodhi mind. Why? The mind is not the mind nature. The original nature of the mind is pure."

In the meantime, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, "Is the mind nature not the mind?"

Well-Appearing One replied to Sariputra by asking, "Is the mind nature the same as the mind attainable, or are they not the same attainable?"

Sariputra replied, "No, both are unattainable, Well-Appearing One."

Well-Appearing One asked Sariputra, "If both are unattainable, why do you ask if there is the mind nature that is not the mind?"

In the meantime, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, "Then what is the mind that is not the mind nature?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "If the mind does not decay or differentiate, it is called the mind nature."

(Well-Appearing One explained the meaning of mind nature. Although the mind arises and extinguishes, its nature does not.)

Meanwhile, Sariputra admired Well-Appearing One, “Excellent, excellent! It is really as you say. The Buddha says that you are the best one who always dwells in the concentration without arguments. How true are the Buddha’s words! If great bodhisattvas are not drowned, regressive, shocked, and frightened upon hearing these words, they must have stayed in nonregression in the pursuit of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. If great bodhisattvas contemplate and investigate the mind as not the mind nature this way, you must know that they are not far away from the fathomless prajna paramita. If good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth would like to cultivate and learn diligently the stage of voice-hearer, self-enlightened one, or bodhisattva, they should wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, and cultivate and learn diligently and attentively the fathomless prajna paramita, so they will fulfill the cultivation expediently, skillfully, and quickly. Why? In the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita, all the dharmas that must be learned are comprehensively taught. If great bodhisattvas would like to pursue diligently the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, cultivate correctly various bodhisattva actions, and achieve expedient skillfulness and various Buddha dharmas, they should wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, understand thoroughly, and cultivate the fathomless prajna paramita as they are taught. Why? In the profound sutras of prajna paramita, the dharmas that all great bodhisattvas should learn are comprehensively taught. If great bodhisattvas can cultivate and learn them diligently and attentively, they certainly will attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and whatever they pursue will also be fulfilled.”

(Sariputra admired Well-Appearing One’s statement. He also praised prajna paramita and explained why great bodhisattvas should wholeheartedly learn and cultivate prajna paramita.)

At that time, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, "World-Honored One, I have contemplated bodhisattva and realized that it is just a provisionally given name. I do not know, attain, or see anything real in it. So, what fathomless prajna paramita can I lecture on and explain? Which great bodhisattvas can I lecture to and explain for? Which great bodhisattvas will I teach and caution, so what prajna paramita will they get to know thoroughly? World-Honored One, I have contemplated bodhisattva and the fathomless prajna paramita and realized that they are just provisionally given names; I do not know, attain, or see anything real in them. So, when I say that there are the bodhisattva and the fathomless prajna paramita, I have doubt and shame. World-Honored One, the names of the fathomless prajna paramita and the bodhisattva are not definite or endurable. Why? These two names are nonexistent, and nonexistent dharmas are neither definite nor persistent. If great bodhisattvas hear about the fathomless prajna paramita and are not drowned, withdrawn, shocked, and frightened, rather they deeply believe in and understand it, you must know that these great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in prajna paramita and will not stay far away from it. They will adopt non-dwelling as expediency to dwell peacefully in the stage of nonregression of the bodhisattva. (Well-Appearing One emphasized that the fathomless prajna paramita and bodhisattva are just the names, they are not changeless and permanent.)

"Furthermore, World-Honored One, when cultivating prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should not dwell in matter, nor should they dwell in feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Why? If they dwell in matter, they will practice matter instead of prajna paramita; if they dwell in feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, they will practice feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness instead of prajna paramita. Why? The makers and the practitioners cannot absorb prajna

paramita. If they cannot absorb prajna parramita, they will not be able to cultivate and learn prajna paramita. If they cannot cultivate and learn prajna paramita, they will not be able to fulfill prajna paramita. If they cannot fulfill prajna paramita, they will not be able to attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. If they cannot attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, they will not be able to absorb the sentient beings. Therefore, they should not absorb or be absorbed by matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Why? Matter cannot absorb or be absorbed by prajna paramita; feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness cannot absorb or be absorbed by prajna paramita either. As matter cannot absorb or be absorbed, it is not matter; as feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness cannot absorb or be absorbed, they are not feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. As prajna paramita cannot absorb or be absorbed, it is not prajna paramita either.

"Great bodhisattvas should practice the fathomless prajna paramita this way. If they practice the fathomless prajna paramita this way, they engage in a bodhisattva concentration without absorbing and receiving all dharmas. It is a broad, great, unsubstantial, and immeasurable concentration not shared by all voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones. It does not absorb or receive the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge either. Why? The perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge cannot be cultivated and attained through grasping the forms. All kinds of grasping forms will invite vexations. If one could cultivate and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge through grasping forms, then the celibacy practitioner King Prasenajit would not develop a belief in and understanding of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. The celibacy practitioner Prasenajit had aspired to and approached the Buddha dharma owing to his powers of belief and understanding; a practice beginning with belief. He could understand insightfully the perfect

knowledge of all perfect knowledge through a contemplation of the emptiness of all dharmas based on a little knowledge. After the insightful understanding, he did not grasp the phenomena of matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. He did not contemplate this knowledge with joy or pleasure; with inner matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness; with outer matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness; with inner and outer matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness; or far apart from matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. The celibacy practitioner King Prasenajit had developed a deep belief in and understanding of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge through various gates far apart from the phenomena. He did not grasp or was attached to all dharmas. Thus, the celibacy practitioner King Prasenajit had developed a belief in and understanding of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge by means of the gates far apart from the phenomena, without grasping the phenomena of all dharmas or reflecting on various formless dharmas. Because of the power of his definitive understanding, he did not grasp, renounce, attain, or realize all dharmas; he even did not grasp his own belief and understanding, and so forth, and nirvana. He had adopted real dharma nature as the criterion.

(Well-Appearing One suggested how great bodhisattvas learn prajna paramita, citing the celibacy practitioner King Prasenajit as an example.)

"World-Honored One, the fathomless prajna paramita of the great bodhisattvas does not absorb matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Although it does not absorb all dharmas, it will not attain nirvana until fulfilling the Buddha's ten abilities, four kinds of fearlessness, four unhindered understandings, and eighteen distinctive features of Buddha's wisdom and power, and so forth. You must know that the fathomless prajna paramita of the great bodhisattvas does not grasp anything, but

it can accomplish various superior services.

"Furthermore, World-Honored One, when cultivating prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should contemplate these questions: 'What is prajna paramita? Why is it called prajna paramita? For what purpose is prajna paramita made?' World-Honored One, when cultivating prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should contemplate and investigate: 'If the dharmas are nonexistent and unattainable, how can we seek and identify prajna paramita?' World-Honored One, if great bodhisattvas, when contemplating and investigating these things, are not drowned, withdrawn, shocked, and frightened, you must know that they are not away from the fathomless prajna paramita."

(Well-Appearing One stated more on how great bodhisattvas cultivate prajna parmita.)

Meanwhile, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, "If matter is far apart from the self-nature of matter; feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are far apart from the self-natures of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness; prajna paramita is far apart from the self-nature of prajna paramita; and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge is also far apart from the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, then how do we know that the great bodhisattvas are not far apart from prajna paramita?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "Yes, Sariputra. Matter is far apart from the self-nature of matter; feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are far apart from the self-natures of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness; prajna paramita is far apart from the self-nature of prajna paramita; and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge is far apart from the self-nature of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. The particular characteristics of prajna paramita are far apart from the particular characteristics; the self-nature of parjna paramita is far apart from the self-

nature; the forms are far apart from the self-natures; the self-nature is far apart from the forms; the forms are far apart from the forms; the self-nature is far apart from the self-nature; ones making the forms are far apart from the ones receiving the forms; ones receiving the forms are far apart from the ones making the forms; ones making the forms are far apart from the ones making the forms; and the ones receiving the forms are also far apart from the ones receiving the forms. If great bodhisattvas can realize these meanings as they really are, they will never be far away from the fathomless prajna paramita."

In the meantime, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, "If great bodhisattvas can learn from these meanings, will they accomplish the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge soon?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "Yes, Sariputra. If great bodhisattvas can learn from these meanings, they will accomplish the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge soon. Why? Sariputra, these great bodhisattvas will realize that all dharmas are without arising and extinction. Sariputra, if great bodhisattvas practice the fathomless prajna paramita this way, they are very close to the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.

(Great bodhisattvas should realize that all dharmas are without arising and extinction.)

"Furthermore, Sariputra, when practicing matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, the great bodhisattvas are with the mental images of matter, and so forth; with the mental images of the forms of matter, and so forth; with the mental images of the formless forms of matter, and so forth; with the mental images of the arising of matter, and so forth; with the mental images of the extinction of matter, and so forth; with the mental images of the decay of matter, and so forth; with the mental images of the emptiness of matter, and so forth; and with the mental images of

thinking that ‘I can practice,’ ‘I am a bodhisattva and I can practice,’ or ‘I am a bodhisattva and I can attain,’ then you must know that these great bodhisattvas have no expedient skillfulness, and what they are doing is not prajna paramita.” (Well-Appearing One further stated how great bodhisattvas attached to the phenomena could not practice prajna paramita.)

In the meantime, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, “Then how should great bodhisattvas practice so they are recognized as practicing prajna paramita?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “If great bodhisattvas do not practice matter, the forms of matter, the formless forms of matter, the arising of matter, the extinction of matter, the decay of matter, and the emptiness of matter, they indeed practice prajna paramita. If the great bodhisattvas do not practice feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness; the forms of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness; the formless forms of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness; the arising of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness; the extinction of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness; the decay of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness; and the emptiness of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, they indeed practice prajna paramita. If the great bodhisattvas do not grasp the practice, nonpractice, practice and nonpractice, and nonpractice and not nonpractice, they indeed practice prajna paramita. Why? Sariputra, it is because all dharmas are ungraspable, cannot be followed, cannot be grasped, and are far apart from the forms of nature. This is called the concentration without grasping and attachment for great bodhisattvas. This concentration is so broad, unsubstantial, and immeasurable that it is not shared by all voice-hearers or the self-enlightened ones. If great bodhisattvas dwell in this concentration, they will be able to realize insightfully and attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi very soon.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the great virtuous one Sariputra again with the support of the supernatural powers of the Buddha, “If great bodhisattvas dwell in this concentration, you must know that they should had been conferred the prophecy by the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones in the past. Although these great bodhisattvas have dwelled in this concentration, they do not see this concentration, nor are they attached to the name of this concentration. They will not think or say, ‘I entered, will enter, or am entering this concentration.’ They will not think or say, ‘I am the only one who can enter this concentration.’ All reflections or differentiations like these will not arise owing to the power of this concentration.”

(Well-Appearing One encouraged great bodhisattvas to practice the concentration without attachment.)

In the meantime, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, “If great bodhisattvas were conferred the prophecy of becoming a Buddha by various Buddhas in the past, can they manifest this concentration?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “No, they cannot. Why? Sariputra, these good gentlemen have neither understood nor reflected on this concentration.”

Sariputra asked, “Do you say that these good gentlemen have neither understood nor reflected on this concentration?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “I am certain that these good gentlemen have neither understood nor reflected on this concentration. Why? The concentration is nonexistent. Since good gentlemen do not understand and reflect on this concentration, such concentration will fail to enable them to understand or contemplate all dharmas. Why? It is because all dharmas are nonexistent.”

In the meantime, the Bhagavat admired Well-Appearing One, “Excellent,

excellent! It is as you say. That is why I say that you are the best one among those who dwell in concentration without arguments. It is with the support of the Thus-Comer's supernatural powers that you can state this dharma. Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas would like to learn prajna paramita, they should learn this way. Why? If they learn this way, they are genuine learners of the fathomless prajna paramita."

(The Buddha admired Well-Appearing One's statement: great bodhisattvas should practice concentration without attainment and attachment.)

In the meantime, Sariputra said to the Buddha, "Are great bodhisattvas the genuine learners of prajna paramita if they can learn this way?"

The Buddha replied to Sariputra, "If great bodhisattvas can learn this way, they are the genuine learners of prajna paramita because they have adopted nonattainment as skillful means."

Meanwhile, Sariputra asked the Buddha, "Do great bodhisattvas adopt nonattainment as skillful means if they learn in this way?"

The Buddha replied to Sariputra, "If great bodhisattvas learn in this way, they do not attain as all dharmas."

Meanwhile, Sariputra asked the Buddha again, "Which dharmas do great bodhisattvas learn when they learn in this way?"

The Buddha said to Sariputra, "When great bodhisattvas learn in this way, they do not learn any dharmas. Why? Sariputra, all dharmas are not existent as viewed by ordinary sentient beings."

Meanwhile, Sariputra asked the Buddha again, "If this is the case, how can various dharmas become existent?"

The Buddha replied to Sariputra, "The dharmas are existent because they are

nonexistent. The ignorant one cannot thoroughly understand that all dharmas are nonexistent. They always differentiate and become attached to two extreme viewpoints, mistaking nonexistent nature of all dharmas for impermanent or permanent due to the increasing powers caused by their ignorance, greed, and craving. Because of this reason, they neither understand nor observe the nature of dharmas is nonexistent. Thus, they differentiate among all dharmas. Because of their differentiation, they become attached. Due to attachment, they differentiate among the dharmas with nonexistent nature, unable to understand these dharmas as they really are. Because of this reason, they differentiate among the past, future, and present. They also seek names and forms of the dharmas. Being attached to names and forms, they differentiate among all nonexistent dharmas. Because they differentiate among all nonexistent dharmas, they neither realize nor see the real path. So, they cannot get rid of birth and death in the three realms. They do not believe in the truth and cannot be awakened to reality. They inevitably remain ignorant. To relieve these ignorant sentient beings, great bodhisattvas should refrain from the attachment to the nature and the forms of all dharmas."

In the meantime, Sariputra asked the Buddha again, "As great bodhisattvas learn this way, won't they simultaneously learn the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge?"

The Buddha replied to Sariputra, "When learning this way, great bodhisattvas do not intend to learn the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Staying away from attaining the perfect knowledge, the great bodhisattvas do really learn the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge and become close to it. They will be able to fulfill the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge quickly."

(Great bodhisattvas reach the perfect knowledge quickly because they do not intend to

attain it.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “If someone asks me, ‘Can the transformed ones become close to and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge if they cultivate and learn the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge?’ Then how shall I answer?”

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, “Let me ask you this question, and you may answer as you like. What do you think about this? Are the transformed beings different from matter? Are they different from feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Transformed beings are not different from matter, and matter is not different from transformed beings. Transformed beings are matter, and matter is transformed beings. Transformed beings are not different from feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are not different from transformed beings. Transformed beings are feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, and feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are transformed beings.”

The Buddha asked Well-Appearing One, “What do you think about this? Can we establish the provisional name ‘great bodhisattva’ by using the similar reasoning for five aggregates?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Yes, World-Honored One.”

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, “As great bodhisattvas aspire to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and cultivate prajna paramita, they learn to view all dharmas as transformed beings. Why? It is because the transformed beings are the five aggregates. Why? The five aggregates and the six sense roots are like the transformed beings; all of them are not real.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, “Are great bodhisattvas the novice great-vehicle learners frightened and terrified upon hearing this and will withdraw?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “If great bodhisattvas the novice great-vehicle learners have stayed with evil friends, they will be frightened and terrified and will withdraw when hearing this. If they have stayed with virtuous friends, they will not be frightened and terrified, so they will not withdraw when hearing this.”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “Who are the evil friends for bodhisattvas?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “The evil friends for great bodhisattvas are those who teach and caution great bodhisattvas and let them stay away from giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita and the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. They influence and encourage them to learn the worldly texts featuring forms grasping and the sutras with the dharma for voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones. They do not let them know the demonic hindrances and the faults brought about; they are glad to see or make them fail in what they are cultivating and learning. These are the evil friends for bodhisattvas.”

(The Buddha outlined the traits of evil friends for bodhisattvas.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, “What are the virtuous friends for bodhisattvas?”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “The virtuous friends for great bodhisattvas are those who teach and caution great bodhisattvas to learn giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita and the perfect

knowledge of all perfect knowledge. They guide them to stay away from the worldly texts featuring the forms grasping and the sutras with the dharma for voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones. They further inform them about demonic hindrances and their faults and awaken them to avoid the hindrances expediently, so they can fulfill quickly what they are cultivating and learning. These are called the virtuous friends for great bodhisattvas who have aspired to the great vehicle with great vows and dignity."

(The Buddha outlined the traits of virtuous friends for bodhisattva.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "When we talk about great bodhisattva, what is the meaning of the term bodhisattva?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One. "Bodhisattva means to learn and be awakened to all dharmas without attachment and hindrance. It also means aspiring to the realization of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi to benefit sentient beings."

(The Buddha explained the meaning of bodhisattva.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha again, "Why is bodhisattva called mahasattva (the great)?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "It is because bodhisattvas will stand up as the leaders of all great sentient beings, so they are called mahasattva."

(The Buddha explained why bodhisattva is also called mahasattva.)

In the meantime, Sariputra said to the Buddha, "I would like to say few words about why bodhisattvas are also called mahasattva with my own talent of debate. I am asking for your kind permission."

The Buddha replied to Sariputra, "It is the good time to do so. You may say as you like."

Sariputra said, “Bodhisattvas have lectured expediently and skillfully on the essential meanings of the dharma for sentient beings to terminate incorrect views, such as the ‘I,’ the sentient being, the living one, the individual in reincarnation, existence, nonexistence, the discontinuation of life, the permanence of life, the reality of body, and the rest of incorrect attachments, so they are also called mahasattva.” (Sariputra explained why bodhisattva is also called mahasattva.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One also said to the Buddha, “I would like to say few words about why bodhisattva is also called mahasattva with my own talent of debate. I am asking for your kind permission.”

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “It is a good time to do so. You may say as you like.”

Well-Appearing One said, “In order to realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, bodhisattvas have begun an aspiration to the bodhi, flawless mind, unequaled equal mind, and the mind not shared by voice-hearers and self-enlightened ones, and they are not attached to these minds, so they are called mahasattva. Why? It is because the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge is flawless and will not fall into the three realms. To aspire to the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge is also flawless and will not fall into the three realms. Besides, they will not be attached to this mind. So, bodhisattvas are also called mahasattva.” (Well-Appearing One explained why bodhisattva is also called mahasattva.)

In the meantime, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, “Why should bodhisattvas not be attached to their minds?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “It is because the minds have no nature, no one should be attached to them.”

In the meantime, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, “But do the minds

have non-nature?"

Well-Appearing One replied to Sariputra by asking, "Is this non-nature attainable whether it is existent or not?"

Sariputra replied, "No, Well-Appearing One."

Well-Appearing One said, "As this non-nature of the mind is unattainable whether it is existent or not, how can we ask do the minds have non-nature?"

Meanwhile, Sariputra admired Well-Appearing One, "Excellent, excellent. Yes, it is. The Buddha says that you are the best among those who dwell in the concentration without arguments. What true words the Buddha has said!"

In the meantime, Fully Loving-Kind One (Purna) said to the Buddha, "I would like to say few words about why bodhisattvas are also called mahasattva. I am asking for your kind permission."

The Buddha replied to Fully Loving-Kind One, "It is a good time to do so. Why don't you say as you like?"

Fully Loving-Kind One said, "In order to universally benefit all sentient beings, bodhisattvas put on the armor of great merits and virtues and aspire to the great vehicle. Because they aspire to the great vehicle, they are called mahasattva." (Fully Loving-Kind One explained why bodhisattva is also called mahasattva.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, "As the World-Honored One has said, great bodhisattvas have put on the armor of great merits and virtues. Which great bodhisattvas have worn the armor of great merits and virtues?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "The great bodhisattvas have thought, 'I should deliver innumerable, countless, and boundless sentient beings, so they will enter the realm of nirvana without remainder. Although I have delivered innumerable, countless, and boundless sentient beings to let them enter the realm of

nirvana without remainder, no dharma or sentient being has attained nirvana.' Why? It is because the dharma nature of all dharmas is always so. A magician and disciple made transformed people at the four-way intersection to show how these people killed each other. What do you think about this? Were the transformed people really wounded or killed in these tricks?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "No, World-Honored One."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "So are great bodhisattvas. Although they have delivered innumerable, countless, and boundless sentient beings to let them enter the realm of nirvana without remainder, no dharma exists, nor sentient being attains nirvana. If great bodhisattvas are not frightened, terrified, or withdrawn upon hearing this, you must know that they are wearing the armor of great merits and virtues."

(The Buddha explained the meaning of great bodhisattvas who wear the armor of great merits and virtues.)

At that time, Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, "If my understanding of the Buddha's teachings is correct, the great bodhisattvas indeed wear the armor of the great merits and virtues if they do not wear the armor of great merits and virtues."

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, "Yes. As great bodhisattvas do not wear the armor of great merits and virtues, they do wear the armor of great merits and virtues. Why? The perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge does not make or act, and all sentient beings do not make or act either. Great bodhisattvas put on the armor of great merits and virtues in order to benefit sentient beings."

(The great bodhisattvas who do not wear the armor of great merits and virtues indeed wear the armor, because they do not have the thought of attainment.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "Why do great

bodhisattvas wear the armor of great merits and virtues to benefit sentient beings, but the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge does not make or act, and all sentient beings do not make or act either?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, "It is because all makers are unattainable. Why? Matter neither makes nor fails to make, neither acts nor refrains from action; feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness neither make nor fail to make, neither act nor refrain from action. Why? Matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are unattainable."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, "If my understanding of the Buddha's teachings is correct, matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness are neither contaminated nor purified. Why? Matter is without bondage or relief; feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are without bondage or relief. The realness of matter is without bondage and relief; the realness of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness is also without bondage and relief."

In the meantime, Fully Loving-Kind One asked Well-Appearing One, "Venerable one, do you say that matter is without bondage and relief, and feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are without bondage and relief; the realness of matter is without bondage and relief, and the realness of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness is without bondage and relief?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "Yes."

Fully Loving-Kind One asked, "What kind of matter is without bondage and relief? What kinds of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are without bondage and relief? What realness of matter is without bondage and relief? What realness of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness is without bondage and relief?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "Matter that resembles the transformed things is

without bondage and relief, and feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness that resemble the transformed things are also without bondage and relief. The realness of matter that resembles the transformed things is without bondage and relief, and the realness of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness that resembles the transformed ones is also without bondage and relief. Why? Matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness and their realness are nonexistent, so they are without bondage and relief. They are far away, so they are without bondage and relief. They are tranquil, so they are without bondage and relief. They are formless, so they are without bondage and relief. They are without making, so they are without bondage and relief. They are without arising, so they are without bondage and relief. They are without extinction, so they are without bondage and relief. And they are without contamination and purification, so they are without bondage and relief. This is how great bodhisattvas aspire to the great vehicle and wear the armor of merits and virtues."
(Well-Appearing One said that the five aggregates and the realness of the five aggregates that resemble the transformed things are without bondage and relief. It is because they are nonexistent, far away, tranquil, formless, without making, without arising, without extinction, and without contamination and purification.)

Meanwhile, Fully Loving-Kind One joyfully believed in and accepted what he heard. He then stopped speaking and stayed silent.

At that time, Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "It is said that great bodhisattvas have aspired to the great vehicle, worn the armor of merits and virtues, and ridden the great vehicle. What is great vehicle? How can we distinguish that someone has aspired to the great vehicle? Where is the great vehicle from? Where will it go and dwell? What will dwell in this great vehicle? Who will appear by riding this great vehicle?"

The Buddha replied to Well-Appearing One, “The great vehicle is a designated name of immeasurable and countless quantity; it is formed by boundless merits and virtues.

“As to your second question: ‘How can we distinguish that someone has aspired to the great vehicle?’ You must know, Well-Appearing One, if great bodhisattvas practice diligently giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita, and progress from one stage of the bodhisattva to the other, you must know that they have aspired to the great vehicle.

(The Buddha explained the meaning of great vehicle and how to recognize one who has aspired to the great vehicle.)

“You also asked, ‘Where is the great vehicle from? Where will it go and dwell?’ You must know, Well-Appearing One, the great vehicle is from the three realms and will go to dwell in the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. But because it has adopted nonduality as expediency, it has no coming and has no going and dwelling.

(The Buddha provided further explanations regarding the great vehicle.)

“Then you asked, ‘Who will dwell in the great vehicle?’ You must know, Well-Appearing One, nothing dwells in the great vehicle because all dharmas dwell nowhere. The great vehicle dwells in non-dwelling.

“Your last question, ‘Who will appear by riding the great vehicle?’ You must know, Well-Appearing One, no one will appear by riding the great vehicle. Why? The vehicle, the rider, the cause of the riding, the purpose of the riding, the place where the riding happens, and the time when the riding happens are all nonexistent and unattainable because all dharmas are nonexistent and unattainable. Therefore, we will not ask such question: Which dharma will ride on which dharma to go somewhere and

dwell in somewhere?”

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha again, “The great vehicle riders are superior to all heavenly beings, human beings, asuras, and so forth in the world. They are the noblest and the superior ones. The great vehicle is equivalent to empty space. Empty space can universally accept innumerable, countless, and boundless sentient beings; so is the great vehicle. Empty space comes from nowhere, goes nowhere, and dwells nowhere; so does the great vehicle. Empty space is unattainable in the past, future, and the present; so is the great vehicle. Therefore, the great vehicle is the noblest and the superior one; it is equivalent to empty space. It accepts all; it is motionless; and it does not dwell. Its three phases of time are equal; it surpasses the three phases of time, so it is called the great vehicle.” (Well-Appearing further described the great vehicle as being like empty space.)

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, “Excellent, excellent! It is as you say. The great vehicle of bodhisattva possesses such boundless merits and virtues.”

Meanwhile, Fully Loving-Kind One asked the Buddha, “The World-Honored One wanted the great virtuous Well-Appearing One to lecture on and explain the fathomless prajna paramita for great bodhisattvas, why does he now speak about the great vehicle?”

At that time, Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha, “Various meanings in regard to the great vehicle that I have spoken of so far are not contrary to prajna paramita.”

The Buddha said to Well-Appearing One, “Various meanings about the great vehicle that you have spoken of so far are all compliant with prajna paramita without conflict. Why? It is because all virtuous dharmas are absorbed in the fathomless prajna paramita.”

(Great vehicle in essence is not conflict with prajna paramita. All virtuous dharmas are contained in prajna paramita.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to the Buddha again, “Great bodhisattvas in the past, future, and present are all unattainable. Why? Because matter is boundless, we must know that great bodhisattvas are also boundless. Because feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are boundless, great bodhisattvas are also boundless.

“Furthermore, World-Honored One, great bodhisattvas are nonexistent and unattainable being with matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Great bodhisattvas are nonexistent and unattainable apart from matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. World-Honored One, I have sought dharmas great bodhisattva in all dharmas with all methods, in all places, and at all times, but I cannot see or attain great bodhisattva. I have sought the fathomless prajna paramita, but I cannot see or attain the fathomless prajna paramita. I have also sought the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, but I cannot see or attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Why do you want me to teach and caution great bodhisattvas, let them understand prajna paramita thoroughly and thus realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge quickly?

“Furthermore, World-Honored One, great bodhisattvas have no self-nature and are merely provisional name, much like saying that the ‘I,’ the sentient being, and so forth are without arising in the final analysis, without self-nature, but are merely provisional names. Which matter does not arise in the final analysis? If it does not arise in the final analysis, it should not be called matter. Which feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness do not arise in the final analysis? If they do not arise in the final analysis, they should not be called feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness.

World-Honored One, like matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, great bodhisattva is unattainable. This nonattainment is unattainable too. I have in all these dharmas sought the bodhisattva with all methods, in all places, and at all times, but I cannot attain the bodhisattva. As bodhisattva and so forth cannot be found, which dharma will I teach? Where and when will I realize the dharma? Which dharma can I realize?

(Well-Appearing One said that he had always sought great bodhisattva with all methods and at all places, but he could not find one. How could he teach and caution them about prajna paramita, which is also unattainable?)

"Furthermore, World-Honored One, the Buddha and the Bhagavat are merely provisional names; all bodhisattvas are merely provisional names; and the fathomless prajna paramita is merely a provisional name. They are all like the 'I,' the sentient being, and so forth that do not arise in the final analysis; they are merely provisional names and have no self-nature. So are various dharmas that have merely provisional names but have no self-nature. What is matter as it cannot be grasped and does not arise? What are feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness as they cannot be grasped and do not arise? As the self-nature of various dharmas cannot be grasped and does not arise, the dharmas without nature will not arise, and the dharmas without arising will not arise either, how can I teach and caution great bodhisattvas who do not arise in the final analysis about the prajna paramita that does not arise in the final analysis to let them understand prajna paramita thoroughly? World-Honored One, there is no dharma that can be attained, nor can great bodhisattva practice the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi apart from the dharma of nonarising.

(Well-Appearing One continued to question that as the self-nature of various dharmas cannot be grasped and does not arise, the dharmas without nature will not arise, and

the dharmas without arising will not arise either, how could he teach and caution great bodhisattvas who do not arise in the final analysis about the prajna paramita that does not arise in the final analysis to let them understand prajna paramita thoroughly?)

"World-Honored One, if the great bodhisattvas are not drowned, withdrawn, shocked, and frightened when hearing this saying, you must know that they are capable of cultivating prajna paramita. Why? When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, the great bodhisattvas will contemplate and investigate various dharmas. At that time, they will not attain, receive, grasp, dwell in, or be attached to all kinds of matter; they will not establish matter either. They will not attain, receive, grasp, dwell in, or be attached to all kinds of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness; they will not establish feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness either. When practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, these great bodhisattvas will not see matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Why? It is because the nature of matter is empty and thus is without arising and extinction; the nature of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness is empty and thus is without arising and extinction too.

"World-Honored One, the matter that has no arising and extinction is not matter; the feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness that have no arising and extinction are not feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Why? Matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness are not apart from nonarising and nonextinction; they are not dualistic either. Why? The dharmas without arising and extinction are not one, two, many, or different. So, the matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness without arising and extinction are not matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness. World-Honored One, the matter that is not dualistic is not matter; the feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness that are not dualistic are not feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. World-Honored One, matter, feeling, thinking, action, and

consciousness have entered the not dualistic dharma number. As we talk about matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness, we talk about the not dualistic dharma too."

In the meantime, Sariputra said to Well-Appearing One, "According to my understanding of your statement, the 'I,' the sentient being, and so forth do not arise in the final analysis; matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness do not arise in the final analysis; various Buddhas and bodhisattvas do not arise in the final analysis. If this is the case, why do great bodhisattvas cultivate hundreds of thousands of difficult and painful actions and experience innumerable, intolerable, and severe suffering to deliver immeasurable and countless sentient beings?"
(Similar questions have frequently been raised by Buddha dharma learners, suggesting a common skepticism.)

Well-Appearing One replied, "Sariputra, I do not mean that as great bodhisattvas cultivate hundreds of thousands of challenging tasks in the circumstance where all relevant dharmas are unattainable, they do experience innumerable intolerable and severe suffering to deliver immeasurable and countless sentient beings. When great bodhisattvas cultivate innumerable difficult actions for the sake of sentient beings, they do not have a thought of doing painful actions. Why? If they undertake cultivation with a thought of painfulness, they will not be able to bring great benefits to innumerable, countless, and boundless sentient beings. Because great bodhisattvas have adopted nonattainment as expediency, they experience pleasure in painful actions, and ease in difficult actions. They also view sentient beings as parents, brothers, wives, and themselves. To deliver these sentient beings, they have aspired to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi to bring great benefits to innumerable, countless, and boundless sentient beings.

(Well-Appearing One said that as great bodhisattvas engage in difficult things, they do not feel painful because they adopt nonattainment as expediency and view sentient beings as family, relatives, or friends.)

"Furthermore, Sariputra, as great bodhisattvas regard all sentient beings as parents, brothers, wives, and themselves, they think, 'I should deliver all sentient beings so that they can be liberated from all kinds of suffering in birth and death. I should initiate hundreds of thousands of difficult and painful actions. I choose to sacrifice myself instead of renouncing them, but I will not dwell in the thinking of the suffering of sentient beings or my own painful actions.' They will further think, 'I should liberate all sentient beings so that they can get rid of the boundless aggregates of suffering. If I must cut my body to hundreds of thousands of pieces for the sake of them, I will not withdraw from doing so, while I will not have a thought of the difficult or painful actions.'

"Furthermore, Sariputra, the great bodhisattvas will think, 'I have always sought my own self-nature with all methods, in all places, but I cannot find it. The same is true with various inner and outer dharmas; they are all nonexistent and unattainable.' If dwelling in this thought, they will not see the difficult and the painful actions, and thus they will be able to cultivate hundreds of thousands of difficult and painful actions to bring great benefits to immeasurable, countless, and boundless sentient beings."

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Chapter 1

Exquisite Actions

Section 2

(In the Fourth Assembly)

In the meantime, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, “Are bodhisattvas really without arising?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Bodhisattvas are really without arising.”

Sariputra asked, “Are only bodhisattvas without arising? Are the dharmas of bodhisattva also without arising?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “All dharmas of bodhisattva are without arising.”

Sariputra asked, “Are only the dharmas of bodhisattva without arising, or is the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge also without arising?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “The perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge is also without arising.”

Sariputra asked, “Is only the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge really without arising, or are the dharmas of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge also without arising?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “The dharmas of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are also without arising.”

Sariputra asked, “Are only the dharmas of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge without arising, or are ordinary sentient beings also without arising?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “Ordinary sentient beings are also without arising.”

Sariputra asked, “Are only ordinary sentient beings without arising, or are the dharmas of ordinary sentient beings also without arising?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “The dharmas of ordinary sentient beings are also without arising.”

Meanwhile, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, “If bodhisattvas are actually without arising, the dharmas of bodhisattva are actually without arising, the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge is actually without arising, the dharmas of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge are actually without arising, ordinary sentient beings are actually without arising, and the dharmas of ordinary sentient being are also actually without arising, then won’t great bodhisattvas realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge any time? Won’t the dharmas without arising attain the dharmas without arising?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “I won’t say that there are the realization, attainment, and intuitive contemplation in the dharmas without arising. Why? It is because various dharmas without arising are unattainable.”

Sariputra asked again, “Are the dharmas with arising allowed to realize the dharmas with arising? Are the dharmas without arising allowed to realize the dharmas without arising?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “I will not say that the dharmas with arising are allowed to realize the dharmas with arising, or the dharmas without arising are allowed to realize the dharmas without arising.”

Sariputra asked, “But are the dharmas with arising allowed to realize the dharmas without arising, and the dharmas without arising allowed to realize the dharmas with arising?”

Well-Appearing One replied. “I will not say that the dharmas with arising are

allowed to realize the dharmas without arising, or the dharmas without arising are allowed to realize the dharmas with arising."

Sariputra asked, "If this is the case, then will there be attainment and intuitive contemplation?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "Although there are attainment and intuitive contemplation, it is not through these two approaches that realization is achieved. It is in terms of the worldly perspective to establish attainment and intuitive contemplation. In ultimate meaning, there are no attainment and intuitive contemplation."

Meanwhile, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, "Are the dharmas that have not arisen yet allowed to arise? Are the dharmas that have already arisen allowed to arise?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "I will not say that the dharmas that have not yet arisen are allowed to arise, or the dharmas that have already arisen are allowed to arise."

In the meantime, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One again, "Is arising allowed to arise? Is nonarising allowed to arise?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "I will not say that arising is allowed to arise, or nonarising is allowed to arise."

In the meantime, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, "Benevolent one, would you like to talk and debate about the forms of nonarising in the dharmas without arising?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "I do not like to talk and debate about the forms of nonarising in the dharmas without arising."

Meanwhile, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, "As talking about

nonarising of the dharmas without arising, is this talk also without arising?"

Well-Appearing One, "Yes. When talking about the nonarising of the dharmas without arising, these dharmas and this speech are without the meaning of arising. It is in terms of the worldly perspective to talk about the forms of nonarising."

Meanwhile, Sariputra acclaimed Well-Appearing One, "Benevolent one, you are the best one among all dharma lecturers. You are only second to the Buddha, the World-Honored One. Why? All questions about various dharma gates you can answer well without hesitation and delay, and you do not move or transcend dharma nature."

Well-Appearing One said, "If the Buddha's disciples are not attached to all dharmas, they will be able to answer these questions freely, easily, and fearlessly without moving the dharma nature. Why? It is because all dharmas do not require reliance."

Meanwhile, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, "Which paramita power will enable one to speak such fathomless essential meanings of the dharma?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "The power of prajna paramita enables one to speak such fathomless essential meanings of the dharma. Why? It is through prajna paramita that one can thoroughly understand that all dharmas require no reliance. If great bodhisattvas are not skeptical or suffocated when hearing the fathomless prajna paramita, you must know that they have always adopted nonattainment as expediency to diligently rescue and relieve sentient beings. They have dwelled in this dwelling and never stayed away from it. You must know that these great bodhisattvas have achieved superior intention, an intention correspondent with great compassion." (Well-Appearing One said that it is through the power of prajna paramita that one can understand and speak fluently about the essential meaning of the dharma, the empty and unattainable nature of all dharmas, including bodhisattva, the dharma of

bodhisattva, and so forth, in terms of worldly and ultimate meaning respectively.)

In the meantime, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, “If great bodhisattvas can always dwell in such dwelling without staying away from it and achieve an intention correspondent with great compassion, then all sentient beings should also become great bodhisattvas. Why? All sentient beings will also dwell in this dwelling and stay in such an intention and never stay away from the fathomless prajna paramita. Because the nature of the intention correspondent with great compassion are equal, great bodhisattvas should not be different from all sentient beings.” (Sariputra stated the truth in terms of ultimate meaning.)

Well-Appearing One said, “Excellent, excellent! It is as you say. You have understood what I mean accurately. It seems that you are challenging me, while you have truly helped me. Why? Sariputra, because the sentient beings have no self-nature, you must know that this dwelling and this intention have no self-nature either. Because sentient beings are nonexistent, you must know that this dwelling and this intention are nonexistent also. Because sentient beings are far away, you must know that this dwelling and this intention are far away also. Because sentient beings are tranquil, you must know that this dwelling and this intention are tranquil also. Because sentient beings are unattainable, you must know that this dwelling and this intention are unattainable also. Because sentient beings are without awakening, this dwelling and this intention are without awakening also. Because of this cause and condition, the great bodhisattvas never stay away from this dwelling and this intention, and they are not different from sentient beings because all dharmas and all sentient beings are empty in the final analysis and are without differentiations. If great bodhisattvas can achieve this knowledge without hesitation and hindrance, they are the real cultivators of the fathomless prajna paramita.”

(Well-Appearing One described great bodhisattvas who are the real cultivators of prajna paramita.)

At that time, the World-Honored One admired Well-Appearing One, "Excellent, excellent! You have lectured on and explained well the fathomless prajna paramita for tgreat bodhisattvas. You can do so because of the authority and powers of the Thus-Comer. All those who would like to lecture on and explain the fathomless prajna paramita for great bodhisattvas should do as you do. All great bodhisattvas who would like to learn prajna paramita should learn as you say. If great bodhisattvas learn prajna paramita as you say, they will realize insightfully the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly and bring benefits and happiness to all sentient beings in the endless future. Therefore, to realize insightfully the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, great bodhisattvas should learn the fathomless prajna paramita." (The Buddha admired Well-Appearing One, implying that he was a good teacher for great bodhisattvas.)

Chapter 2

Heavenly Emperor Indra

(In the Fourth Assembly)

At that time, Heavenly Emperor Indra and forty thousand heavenly sons from the Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens, the four great kings the world protectors and the twenty thousand heavenly sons from the Heaven of Four Great Kings, the King Brahma as the lord of the realm of Saha (the Barely Tolerable Realm) and his ten thousand Brahma followers, and so forth, and the lords of the five heavens

of the pure residence and hundreds of thousands of heavenly sons were present in the assembly. The body lights of all these heavenly beings were bright because of their pure karmas, but in comparison with the body lights of the Thus-Comer, the former ones became dim and invisible.

Meanwhile, Heavenly Emperor Indra asked Well-Appearing One, "Immeasurable heavenly beings in the large threefold thousand-world are present here and now, expecting to listen to you the great virtuous one's teaching, explanation, and cautions of the fathomless prajna paramita for great bodhisattvas, to understand prajna paramita quickly and thoroughly. We are begging you the great virtuous one's kindness and mercy to teach us and let us know how great bodhisattvas should dwell in and learn prajna paramita."

At that time, Well-Appearing One replied to Heavenly Emperor Indra, "I am lecturing on and explaining the fathomless prajna paramita for great bodhisattvas by following the Thus-Comer's direction with the support of his authoritarian and mighty powers. All heavenly ones may practice as great bodhisattvas do when I teach them where they should dwell and how they should learn. Please listen and reflect carefully!

"Kausika, you heavenly beings have all initiated an aspiration to the bodhi; even those who had not yet done so have done this now. But those who have entered onto the path of nonarising for voice-hearer and self-enlightened one will not turn to the great bodhi. Why? Kausika, they have restricted themselves within the specific flow of birth and death. If they would like to convert to the path of the great bodhi, I will be very delighted to work with them together. Why? Superior ones should pursue superior dharmas, and that is the pursuit that I certainly will not object to and discourage."

(Well-Appearing One encouraged all heavenly beings to aspire to bodhisattva path even those who have dwelled in voice-hearer vehicle.)

At that time, the World-Honored One admired Well-Appearing One, "Excellent, excellent! Now you can lecture on and explain the fathomless prajna paramita for great bodhisattvas. You can also encourage great bodhisattvas so that they will enjoy prajna paramita and cultivate it diligently."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One asked the Buddha, "I know I have been granted great favors, so I should pay back with gratitude. Why? Various Buddhas and their disciples in the past had lectured on giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita for great bodhisattvas; they have given teachings and cautions to great bodhisattvas and absorbed and protected them. The World-Honored One was among them who had learned pure celibacy at that time. Now he has realized the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, turned the wheel of the wonderful dharma, and greatly benefitted us. Therefore, we should now follow the Buddha's teaching to lecture on giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita for various great bodhisattvas and give teachings and cautions to them. We should absorb, accept, and protect them and keep them in our minds, so that they will learn pure celibacy diligently, realize insightfully the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi quickly, turn the wheel of wonderful dharma in the endless future, and bring benefits, happiness, and peace to all sentient beings. This is the way of expressing our gratitude for the favors and merits that we have received."
(Well-Appearing One expressed his deep gratitude and would repay the Buddha by lecturing on prajna paramita for great bodhisattvas.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, "You asked 'Where should great bodhisattvas dwell and how should they learn prajna

paramita?' I am going to tell you where great bodhisattvas should dwell and how they should learn prajna paramita. Please listen to me carefully.

"Kausika, when wearing the armor of great merits and virtues, great bodhisattvas should dwell in prajna paramita based on empty form. They should not dwell in matter, or in feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. They should not dwell in stream-entry effect, or in once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, and self-enlightenment bodhi. They should not dwell in the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas. They should not dwell in the thoughts that these are matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness or these are stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, self-enlightenment bodhi, and unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of various Buddhas. They should not dwell in matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness as permanent or impermanent, pleasant or painful, with or without selfness, pure or impure, and empty or not empty. They should not dwell in stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, self-enlightenment bodhi, and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of various Buddhas as manifested by the unconditioned dharmas. They should not dwell in stream-entry effect as a real field of bliss and think that they are worthy of offerings and will enter nirvana after returning for seven times. They should not dwell in once-return effect as a real field of bliss and think that they are worthy of offerings and will cease all kinds of suffering after returning once. They should not dwell in nonreturn effect as a real field of bliss and think that they are worthy of offerings and will extinguish all flaws without returning. They should not dwell in arhat effect as a real field of bliss and think that they are worthy of offerings and will certainly enter nirvana without remainder in present life. They should not dwell in self-enlightenment bodhi as a real field of bliss and think that they are worthy of

offerings and will transcend the stage of voice-hearer and enter nirvana before reaching the stage of the Buddha. They should not dwell in the stage of the Buddha as a real field of bliss and think that they are worthy of offerings and will transcend the stages of ordinary sentient being, voice-hearer, self-enlightened one, and bodhisattva, and bring benefits, peace, and happiness to innumerable, countless, and boundless sentient beings so they will enter nirvana without remainder. They should not dwell in the stage of the Buddha and think that they will deliver immeasurable and boundless sentient beings and let them all attain one of the three vehicles, and after accomplishing all Buddhist services they will enter nirvana without remainder." (These are the thoughts that great bodhisattvas should grasp when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita based on empty form.)

In the meantime, Sariputra thought to himself, "If, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should not dwell in where the Buddha peacefully dwell to bring benefits, peace, and happiness to innumerable, countless, and boundless sentient beings and guide them to enter nirvana without remainder, nor should they dwell in the stage of the Buddha to deliver all sentient beings and guide them to attain the three vehicles suited to them and enter the realm of nirvana without remainder after accomplishing all these Buddhist services, or dwell in the rest of dharmas, then where will great bodhisattvas dwell?"

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One could read Sariputra's mind with the support of the Buddha's authority and supernatural powers, so he said, "What do you think about this? Where does the Thus-Comer's mind dwell?"

Sariputra replied to Well-Appearing One, "The Thus-Comers' minds dwell nowhere. Why? They are called Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones because their minds dwell nowhere. Their minds

will not dwell in the conditioned realm, the unconditioned realm, or the conditioned and unconditioned realm."

(The Thus-Comers' minds dwell nowhere.)

Meanwhile, the long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to Sariputra, "So do great bodhisattvas when they practice the fathomless prajna paramita. Like the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones, the great bodhisattvas neither dwell nor not dwell in all dharmas. Sariputra, when practicing the fathomless prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should adopt nonattainment as expediency to dwell and learn like the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones."

(Well-Appearing One said that great bodhisattvas should neither dwell nor not dwell in all dharmas when they practice prajna paramita.)

At that time, some heavenly sons in the assembly thought to themselves, "The words and spells of yaksas and so forth, are so different, subtle, and concealed, but we can understand them. The great virtuous Well-Appearing One has explained the fathomless prajna paramita by means of various words, but we still cannot understand it."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One could read the heavenly sons' minds, so he said to them, "Can't you understand what I am saying?"

The heavenly sons replied, "No. We cannot understand the fathomless words and meanings of prajna paramita that the great virtuous one has taught."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to them again, "I have not said or demonstrated the meanings correspondent with the fathomless prajna paramita, and you have not heard anything from me either. So, what can you understand? Why? Heavenly sons, it is because the meanings correspondent with the fathomless prajna

paramita are apart from all written and spoken words."

In the meantime, the heavenly sons thought to themselves again, "The great virtuous Well-Appearing One has tried to explain and manifest the fathomless meanings of prajna paramita in all possible ways in order to make them understandable, but its essential meanings have become more profound, subtler, and more immeasurable."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One knew what they were thinking, so said to them, "You must know, heavenly sons, matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are not fathomless and subtle; stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, and arhat effect are not fathomless and subtle; self-enlightenment bodhi is not fathomless and subtle; and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas is not fathomless and subtle. Why? Heavenly sons, it is because all dharmas are subtle and profound, while the ones who speak, hear, and understand them are unattainable. Therefore, you must cultivate forbearance for the profound and solid dharmas. You must know, heavenly sons, if you would like to realize and dwell in stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, arhat effect, self-enlightenment bodhi, or the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas, you should cultivate them based on this forbearance."

(Well-Appearing One encouraged heavenly sons to cultivate forbearance for understanding the profound meanings of the dharma.)

In the meantime, the heavenly sons thought again, "Now, which dharmas will the great virtuous Well-Appearing One teach for which sentient beings?"

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One knew the thought of the heavenly sons, so he said, "You must know, heavenly sons, I would like to lecture on the dharmas that are like illusions, transformed things, and dreams for the sentient beings

who are also like illusions, transformed things, the dreams. Why? Heavenly sons, the listeners do not hear, understand, and realize insightfully the dharmas spoken."

Meanwhile, the heavenly sons asked Well-Appearing One, "Are the speakers, the listeners, and the dharmas spoken like illusions, transformed things, and dreams?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "Yes, they are. Illusion-like sentient beings speak about illusion-like dharmas for illusion-like listeners. Sentient beings resembling transformed things speak about the dharmas resembling transformed things for listeners resembling transformed things. Dream-like sentient beings speak about dream-like dharma for dream-like listeners. All sentient beings and all dharmas are like illusions, transformed things, and dreams. All dharmas and all sentient beings are not apart or different from illusions, transformed things, and dreams. You must know, heavenly sons, the 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, and the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas are all like illusions, transformed things, and the phenomena in dreams."

(All dharmas and all holy effects are like dreams, illusions, and transformed things.)

Meanwhile, the heavenly sons asked Well-Appearing One again, "Are the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones and the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddha also like illusions, transformed things, and dreams?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "Yes, they are. Even nirvana is like illusions, transformed things, and dreams."

In the meantime, the heavenly sons asked Well-Appearing One, "How could

nirvana be also like illusions, transformed things, and what one sees in dreams?”

Well-Appearing One replied, “If there were some dharmas that were superior to nirvana, I would say that they were also like illusions, transformed things, and what one sees in dreams. Why? Illusions, transformed things, and the phenomena in dreams are not apart or different from all dharmas and nirvana. They are all unattainable and unspeakable.”

(Well-Appearing One concluded that all dharmas and nirvana are not different from illusions, transformed things, and dreams; they are all unattainable and unspeakable.)

At that time, Sariputra, Mahākauṣṭhila, Fully Loving-Kind One (Purna), Mahākāśyapa, and so forth asked Well-Appearing One, “The prajna paramita that you are speaking is too profound to understand. Who can believe in it and accept?”

The long-lived sage Joyfully Celebrating One said to the senior voice-hearer Sariputra and so forth, “The great bodhisattvas of nonregression deeply believe in and accept this prajna paramita. Innumerable great arhats who are fully equipped with correct views and have eliminated various flaws permanently also deeply believe in and accept this prajna paramita.”

(The great bodhisattvas of nonregression and flawless arhats can deeply believe in and accept the profound prajna paramita.)

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said, “The fathomless prajna paramita cannot be believed or accepted. Why? In it, there is no dharma that can be manifested and established. Because there is no dharma that can be manifested, demonstrated, and established, ones who believe in it and accept it are unattainable.”

(Well-Appearing One explained the nature and traits of the fathomless prajna paramita.)

In the meantime, Heavenly Emperor Indra thought to himself, “The great

virtuous Well-Appearing One is showering great dharma rain. I should make some transformed flowers as offerings to spread around him.' After having such a thought, various exquisite and delicate flowers spread above Well-Appearing One.

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One thought to himself, "I have not seen such flowers in various heavens. These flowers are so delicate and exquisite that they must not be planted in water or on ground. They must be transformed from the minds of heavenly beings."

In the meantime, Heavenly Emperor Indra could read Well-Appearing One's mind, so said to him, "These flowers dispersed around were not planted in water or on ground; they were not transformed from the minds of heavenly beings either. Why? These dispersed flowers are without the nature of arising."

At that time, Well-Appearing One said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, "The flowers without arising are not flowers."

Meanwhile, Heavenly Emperor Indra thought, "The great virtuous Well-Appearing One is very knowledgeable and deeply intelligent. He can teach the meaning of the truth without destroying provisional names."

After having such a thought, he said to Well-Appearing One, "Yes, it is as you say. Great bodhisattvas should learn in all dharmas as the venerable one has taught."

The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, "Yes, it is as you say. Great bodhisattvas should learn in all dharmas as I have taught.

"Kausika, when great bodhisattvas learn this way, they will not learn matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness; they will not learn stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, and arhat effect; they will not learn self-enlightenment bodhi; and they will not learn the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas. If they do not learn these stages, they are called learning the

perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge of the Buddha. If they can learn the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge of the Buddha, they learn the innumerable and boundless Buddha dharmas. If they can learn the innumerable and boundless Buddha dharma, they will not learn matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness as increase or decrease. If they do not learn matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness as increase or decrease, they will not learn matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness as with grasping or renunciation. If they do not learn matter, feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness as with grasping or renunciation, they will not learn all dharmas as with grasping or renunciation. If they do not learn all dharmas as with grasping or renunciation, they will not learn all dharmas as capable of absorbing, receiving, extinguishing, and decaying. If they do not learn all dharmas as capable of absorbing, receiving, extinguishing, and decaying, they will not learn the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge as capable of absorbing, receiving, extinguishing, and decaying. If great bodhisattvas learn this way, they are called really learning the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, and they will realize insightfully and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge quickly."

(Well-Appearing One stated how great bodhisattvas could really learn the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.)

Meanwhile, Sariputra asked Well-Appearing One, "Is it true that if great bodhisattvas do not learn all dharmas as being able to absorb, receive, extinguish, and decay, nor do they learn the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge as being able to absorb, receive, extinguish, and decay, then they are called really learning the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, and they will realize insightfully and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge quickly?"

Well-Appearing One replied, “Yes, it is true. If great bodhisattvas do not learn all dharmas as being able to absorb, receive, extinguish, and decay, nor do they learn the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge as being able to absorb, receive, extinguish, and decay, then they are called really learning the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, and they will realize insightfully and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge quickly. It is because they have adopted nonattainment as expediency.”

(Great bodhisattvas should adopt nonattainment as expediency to achieve the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge quickly.)

At that time, Heavenly Emperor Indra asked Sariputra, “Where will great bodhisattvas seek when they learn prajna paramita?”

Sariputra replied, “The great bodhisattvas should seek prajna paramita in Well-Appearing One’s teaching.”

Heavenly Emperor Indra asked Sariputra, “Venerable one, whose supernatural powers have you relied on when you say so?”

Sariputra replied, “I have relied on the Thus-Comer’s supernatural powers to say so.”

Meanwhile, Heavenly Emperor Indra asked the long-lived sage Sariputra again, “Whose supernatural powers has the venerable Well-Appearing One relied on when he teaches prajna paramita?”

Sariputra replied, “The long-lived sage Well-Appearing One has relied on the Thus-Comer’s supernatural powers to teach prajna paramita.”

At that time, Well-Appearing One said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, “You asked ‘whose supernatural powers has Well-Appearing One relied on when he teaches prajna paramita?’ Kausika, you must know that it is because of the Thus-Comer’s

supernatural powers that I can teach prajna paramita.

"Kausika, you also asked 'where will great bodhisattvas seek when they learn prajna paramita?' Kausika, when learning prajna paramita, great bodhisattvas should not seek prajna paramita in matter or far apart from matter; they should not seek it in feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness or far apart from feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness. Why? Matter is not prajna paramita; nor is there prajna paramita apart from matter. Feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are not prajna paramita; nor is there prajna paramita apart from feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness."

In the meantime, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to Well-Appearing One, "The prajna paramita that great bodhisattvas learn is a great paramita, a measureless paramita, and a boundless paramita."

Well-Appearing One replied, "Yes, Kausika! The prajna paramita that great bodhisattvas learn is a great paramita, a measureless paramita, and a boundless paramita. Why? Kausika, you must know, because matter is great, prajna paramita is great too; because feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are great, prajna paramita is great too. Kausika, because matter is measureless, prajna paramita is measureless too; because feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are immeasurable, prajna paramita is measureless too. Kausika, because matter is boundless, prajna paramita is boundless too; because feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness are boundless, prajna paramita is boundless too.
(Well-Appearing One explained why prajna paramita is great, measureless, and boundless.)

"Furthermore, Kausika, because the dharmas to be perceived are boundless, prajna paramita is boundless too. Kausika, why is prajna paramita boundless because

the dharmas to be perceived are boundless? As all dharmas in the past, future, and present are unattainable, they are called boundless. Because the dharmas are boundless, the dharmas to be perceived are also boundless. Because of this reason, prajna paramita is boundless too. Therefore, I say that because the dharmas to be perceived are boundless, prajna paramita is boundless too.

"Furthermore, Kausika, because all dharmas are boundless, prajna paramita is boundless too. Kausika, why is prajna paramita boundless because all dharmas are boundless? It is because the boundaries of all dharmas are unattainable. Why? The boundaries of matter in the past, future, and present are unattainable; the boundaries of feeling, thinking, action, and consciousness in the past, future, and present are unattainable too. Because of this reason, the boundaries of prajna paramita in the past, future, and present are also unattainable. Therefore, I say that because all dharmas are boundless, prajna paramita is boundless too.

"Furthermore, Kausika, because all sentient beings are boundless, prajna paramita is boundless too. Why? The boundaries of all sentient beings are unattainable. Therefore, I say that because the sentient beings are boundless, prajna paramita is boundless too."

In the meantime, Heavenly Emperor Indra asked Well-Appearing One, "Great virtuous one, why is prajna paramita boundless because all sentient beings are boundless?"

Well-Appearing One replied, "Kausika, I say so not because the quantity of sentient beings is too big to be counted. The boundaries of sentient beings are unattainable, so I say that because all sentient beings are boundless, prajna paramita is boundless too."

Heavenly Emperor Indra said, "Based on what meaning do you say so?"

Well-Appearing One said, “Kausika, let me ask you a question, and you may answer as you like. What do you think about this? As sentient being is a designated name of dharma, which dharma is it?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “Sentient being is neither a designated name of the dharma, nor not a designated name of the dharma. It is a provisionally established name, without entity, without owner, and without conditions.”

Well-Appearing One asked, “Kausika, what do you think about this? Are there real sentient beings 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 are manifested, so they are called boundless. It is because their central parts and boundaries are unattainable.

“Kausika, what do you think about this? If the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones have spoken innumerable names of sentient beings with boundless voices for as many great kalpas as the sands of the Ganges, are these sentient beings real? Do they really have arising and extinction?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “No, great virtuous one. Why? It is because the original nature of all sentient beings is pure. They have been nonexistent since the time unknown. The nonexistent sentient beings cannot have arising and extinction.”

Well-Appearing One said, “Based on this meaning, I say that because all sentient beings are boundless, prajna paramita is boundless. Kausika, you must know that the prajna paramita that great bodhisattvas have learned is great, measureless, and boundless.”

(Well-Appearing One had guided Kausika by clarifying the nature of sentient beings

and its designated name, and concluded that the prajna paramita that great bodhisattvas learn is great and immeasurable.)

At that time, in this assembly, Heavenly Emperor Indra and the heavenly beings from the realm of desire, King Brahma and the heavenly beings from the realm of form, and Maheśvara, the deities, and the heavenly ladies all rejoiced. They were so excited that they danced and spoke out loudly, “Excellent, excellent! Because the Buddha has appeared in the world, the venerable Well-Appearing One is able to lecture on and explain, with the support of the Buddha’s authority and supernatural powers, the subtle dharma nature, prajna paramita, so various heavenly beings, human beings, asuras, and so forth have greatly benefitted. If great bodhisattvas can cultivate the fathomless prajna paramita as they are taught and never stay away from it, we will make offerings respectfully to them as we do to the Buddha, the World-Honored One.”

(The heavenly beings joyfully acclaimed and expressed their gratitude to prajna paramita, the Buddha, and Well-Appearing One for teaching them the excellent dharma.)

At that time, the Buddha said to the heavenly beings and so forth, “Yes, it is. If great bodhisattvas practice prajna paramita as they are taught and never stay away from it by adopting nonattainment as expediency, you heavenly beings and so forth should make offerings to them as you do to the Buddha, the World-Honored One. You must know, when I first met Burning Lamp Buddha at the four-way intersection in the capital of King Lotus, I made a five-stem flower as an offering to him. I bowed down to the ground with my hair covering the mud and listened to his teaching of the essential meanings of the dharma. Because I had adopted nonattainment as expediency, I could stay with the fathomless prajna paramita and the remaining

innumerable and boundless Buddha dharma. So the Burning Lamp Buddha conferred on me the prophecy of attaining the great bodhi and said, ‘Good gentleperson, after countless kalpas, you will become a Buddha in this world during the Kalpa of the Sages with these names: the Capable, Benevolent, Tranquil, and Silent Thus-Comer, One Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened One, and so forth, and the Buddha, the Bhagavat. You will lecture on the fathomless sutras of prajna paramita and deliver immeasurable sentient beings.’”

(The Buddha told heavenly beings how he was conferred by Burning Lamp Buddha the prophecy of attaining the Buddhahood because of his nonattainment.)

In the meantime, the heavenly beings and so forth said to the Buddha, “Such prajna paramita is so unique and rare, for it enables great bodhisattvas to elicit and absorb the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge quickly and bring benefits and happiness to all sentient beings in the endless future.”

Chapter 3

Making Offerings to Pagodas

Section 1

(In the Fourth Assembly)

At that time, the World-Honored One knew that the heavenly deities from the realm of desire and the realm of form, the four groups of believers, including monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen, had witnessed what was happening, and respectfully believed in and accepted the Buddha’s teaching, so he turned to Heavenly Emperor

Indra and said, “Kausika, if good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, diligently and attentively cultivate and learn, reasonably reflect on, and correctly lecture for others on the fathomless prajna paramita, you must know that all evil demons and human-like nonhumans cannot do harm to them, nor will disasters and accidents happen to them, then they will live a long life without illness and enjoy peace and happiness in body and mind. Furthermore, Kausika, if heavenly sons have initiated an aspiration to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, but have not heard, accepted, embraced, read, recited, cultivated and learned diligently, and reflected reasonably on the fathomless prajna paramita, they should come and join these good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth to wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, and recite the fathomless prajna paramita, reflect reasonably on its essential meanings, understand them thoroughly, and then lecture on them for others. Furthermore, Kausika, if the good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth have wholeheartedly listened to, accepted, embraced, read, recited, cultivated and learned diligently and attentively, and reflected reasonably on the fathomless prajna paramita, then they will not be scared or frightened when they stay in empty houses and wilderness, or travel on perilous roads and in dangerous areas. The virtuous heavenly deities will come to stand with them and protect them.”

(The Buddha told Kausika the merits and benefits that will be gained by heavenly sons if they diligently cultivate and reflect on prajna paramita and teach others.)

Meanwhile, the four great heavenly kings and their followers joined their palms together and said to the Buddha respectively, “If good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth can wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently and attentively, reflect reasonably on, write, explain, and

disseminate extensively prajna paramita, we will always stay with them, keep them, and protect them respectfully, so they will not be disturbed or annoyed by all disasters and accidents."

(Heavenly kings and heavenly beings swore to protect prajna paramita practitioners.)

Meanwhile, Heavenly Emperor Indra and the heavenly beings joined their palms respectfully and said to the Buddha, "If good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth can wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently and attentively, reflect reasonably on, write, explain, and disseminate extensively prajna paramita, we will always stay with them and respectfully keep and protect them, so they will not be disturbed and annoyed by all disasters and accidents."

In the meantime, the heavenly king Brahma and various Brahma followers joined their palms respectfully and said to the Buddha, "If good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth can wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently and attentively, reflect reasonably on, write, explain, and disseminate extensively prajna paramita, we will always stay with them respectfully and keep and protect them, so they will not be disturbed and annoyed by all disasters and accidents."

Meanwhile, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the Buddha, "It is unusual, World-Honored One; it is unique, Well-Gone One. If good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on, write, explicate, and disseminate extensively the fathomless prajna paramita, they will absorb and receive merits and virtues in present life. If the good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth absorb and receive prajna paramita, they will equally absorb and receive giving, pure precept, forbearance,

diligence, meditation, and prajna paramitas."

At that time, the World-Honored One said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, "Yes, it is as you say. Kausika, if good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth absorb and receive prajna paramita, they absorb and receive the six paramitas simultaneously. (Absorbing prajna paramita equals receiving the six paramitas simultaneously.)

"Furthermore, Kausika, if good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth can wholeheartedly listen to, accept, receive, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently, reflect reasonably on, write, explicate, and disseminate extensively prajna paramita, they will attain the merits and virtues. I am going to explain respectively in this regard. Please listen to me carefully and reflect on it."

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, "Yes. We look forward to listening to you with great joy.

At that time, the Buddha said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, "Kausika, if the evil other-path believers, evil demons and their followers, and other furious and arrogant ones go to great bodhisattvas' places and try to do harm to them, then something very bad will happen to themselves as soon as their mean motives arise, and what they intend to do will fail. Why? Kausika, as these good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth have wholeheartedly listened to, accepted, embraced, read, recited, cultivated and learned diligently, reflected reasonably on, written, explicated, and disseminated extensively the fathomless prajna paramita, the law of the dharma will intrinsically make the evil ones bring calamity to themselves instead of to the good gentlemen, and so forth, so their harmful intention to others will fail.
(The Buddha was teaching about the merits and benefits that would be gained by prajna paramita practitioners.)

"Furthermore, Kausika, some good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth

have wholeheartedly listened to, accepted, embraced, read, recited, cultivated and learned diligently, reflected reasonably on, written, explicated, and extensively disseminated prajna paramita. Meanwhile in the same place, evil demons and their followers, other-path believers, and furious and arrogant ones are jealous of and hate the correct dharma, so they scold, reject, and fight against it and try to make it disappear, then their attempt will fail. But because they have heard about prajna briefly, their evils will extinguish gradually, while their merits and virtues will arise, and afterward they will be able to ride the three vehicles to cease suffering or get rid of the negative destinies and be reborn in heaven or human world.

"Kausika, if good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth can wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently and assiduously, reflect reasonably on, write, explicate, and disseminate extensively the fathomless prajna paramita, they will gain such merits, virtues, and superior benefits.

"Kausika, there was once an excellent antidote called Mahilā that could treat all kinds of poisoning; wherever there was this medicine, no poisonous insects could get close. A big poisonous snake was hungry and looking for food. As the snake aimed at a smaller animal and was going to bite, the animal was frightened and rushed to the medicine for help. The snake was scared away because of the smell of the medicine. Why? Kausika, it is because this medicine has powerful effect for decontaminating poisons and is good for health. So is prajna paramita. You must know, Kausika, prajna paramita has similar powerful effects and authority. If good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently and assiduously, reflect reasonably on, write, explicate, and disseminate extensively prajna paramita, then various evil demons cannot do any harm to these good gentlemen, and so forth. Because of the authority

and supernatural powers of prajna paramita, all evil attempts initiated by demons extinguish and fail. Why? Kausika, the mighty powers of prajna paramita will destroy evil dharmas and foster all virtuous dharmas.

"Furthermore, Kausika, if good gentlemen gentlewomen, and so forth can wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently and assiduously, reflect reasonably on, write, explicate, and disseminate prajna paramita, then the four great heavenly kings, Heavenly Emperor Indra, King Brahma as the lord of this Barely Tolerable realm, the heavenly beings of the Heavens of the Pure Residence, and so forth, as well as the rest of virtuous deities will frequently come to support and assist them, so they will not be disturbed or harmed by all disasters and accidents, and whatever they look for reasonably, will always be satisfied. The present Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones in the worlds of the ten directions will always protect them and keep them in mind so the evils will extinguish and the virtuous will grow and increase.

"Furthermore, Kausika, if good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth can wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently and assiduously, reflect reasonably on, write, explicate, and disseminate extensively prajna paramita, then their words will be with authority and dignity, so the hearers will accept respectfully. Their voices will sound properly and never be too noisy. They will offer services persistently to virtuous friends. They will return with gratitude the favor granted by others. Their minds will not be concealed by stinginess, jealousy, hared, anger, suffocated afflictions, flattery, deception, and arrogance. Why? Kausika, because of the fathomless prajna paramita, these good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth will have their powers and dignity increased and body and mind well tamed.

They will stay far away from the hidden roots of vexations and complexes such as greed, hatred, and ignorance. With correct knowledge of loving-kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity, these good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth will always think: 'I should not follow the powers of stinginess and greed. If I follow their powers, I will fall into poverty and inferiority, and my giving will be incomplete. I should not follow the powers of precept violation. If I follow its powers, I will fall into various negative destinies, and my pure precept will be incomplete. I should not follow the powers of hatred and anger. If I follow their powers, I will have deficient physical roots and ugly appearance, and my physical body of the bodhisattva and my forbearance will be incomplete. I should not follow the powers of laziness and tiredness. If I follow their powers, I will be unable to cultivate the path of the bodhisattva, and my intensified diligence will be incomplete. I should not follow the powers of restlessness. If I follow its powers, I will be unable to cultivate superior concentrations of bodhisattva, and my various meditations will be incomplete. I should not follow the powers of ignorance. If I follow its powers, my superior wisdom will not be complete, and I will be unable to transcend the stages of voice-hearer and self-enlightened one, not to mention the attainment of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. Therefore, I should not follow the powers of stinginess, greed, and so forth.' Kausika, through these kinds of reflection, these good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth will always stay in correct mindfulness and their minds will not be concealed by vexations.

(The Buddha described the superior virtues and distinguishing abilities that the prajna paramita practitioners would gain.)

"Kausika, if good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth can wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently and assiduously,

reflect reasonably on, write, explicate, and disseminate extensively prajna paramita, they will attain such merits, virtues, and superior benefits."

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Chapter 3

Making Offerings to Pagodas

Section 2

(In the Fourth Assembly)

At that time, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, such prajna paramita is unique and rare. It can help great bodhisattvas stay away from arrogance and advance toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge that they are pursuing.”

Meanwhile, the Buddha asked Heavenly Emperor Indra, “Why do you say that prajna paramita is unique and rare because it can help great bodhisattvas stay away from arrogance and advance toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge that they are pursuing?”

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, “World-Honored One, if great bodhisattvas do not stay in prajna paramita when cultivating giving, pure precept, and so forth, and prajna and the rest of Buddha dharmas, they will stay away from expedient skillfulness and become arrogant even if they have cultivated various virtuous dharmas. In this case, they will not be able to transfer virtuous dharmas toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. If they stay in prajna paramita when cultivating giving, pure precept, and so forth, and prajna and the rest of Buddha dharmas, they can adjust their minds to stay away from arrogance owing to expedient skillfulness and transfer the virtuous dharmas that they have cultivated toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.”

At that time, the Buddha said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, “Yes, it is as you

say.

“Kausika, if good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth can wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently and attentively, reflect reasonably on, write, explicate, and disseminate extensively prajna paramita, their bodies and minds will remain in peace and happiness. They will not be disturbed or annoyed by disasters. If they recite prajna paramita wholeheartedly with compassionate mind to protect and keep various sentient beings in war, all will not be injured or killed. Their enemies will have loving-kind minds arise at that time too. If their enemies have evil minds arise, they will be defeated and will withdraw. The good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth will not be injured or killed in war. Why? Kausika, because they have cultivated prajna paramita. They will not only subjugate and overcome their own vexations, negative karmas, swords, and rods, but also others’ vexations, negative karmas, swords, and rods.

“Furthermore, Kausika, if good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth can wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently and attentively, reflect reasonably on, make offerings respectfully to admire and acclaim, write, explicate, and disseminate extensively prajna paramita, then they will not be harmed by poisons, witches, spirits, evil prayers, and curses, nor will they be drowned and burned, injured and killed by swords, rods, wild animals, enemies, robbers, evil deities, evil demons, and monsters. Why? It is because prajna paramita is the great supernatural spell, the great bright spell, the unsurpassed spell, and the unequaled equal spell. Prajna paramita is the king of all spells; it is the highest, the most exquisite, and the incomparable one. Prajna paramita possesses great authority and power; it can subjugate and overcome all but cannot be subjugated and overcome by all. These good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth, who have cultivated and

learned diligently and assiduously this spell king, will not harm themselves, others, or both. Kausika, when learning prajna paramita, the great spell king, the good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth will realize insightfully the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi without attaining selfness and the dharmas. Because of nonattainment, they will attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. They will turn the wheel of the unsurpassed dharma expediently according to individual differences of the minds and actions of all sentient beings, so the sentient beings can practice as they are taught and gain great benefits. Why? Kausika, the bodhisattvas in the past, future, and present had learned, will learn, and are learning the fathomless prajna paramita, the great spell king, nothing they cannot realize or attain. Therefore, it is called the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.
(The Buddha called prajna paramita the king of all spells, the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge; those who cultivate it can realize and attain all.)

"Kausika, if good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth can wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently and assiduously, reflect reasonably on, make offerings respectfully to, esteem and acclaim, write, explicate, and disseminate extensively the prajna paramita, they will gain such merits and virtues in present and future.

"Furthermore, Kausika, if good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth write prajna paramita, the great spell king, locate it in a pure and clean place, and make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim it, then all humans and nonhumans of the country or the city in which they live will not be harmed or damaged by all disasters, accidents, and plagues even if these good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth do not listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently and attentively, and reflect reasonably on, or explicate and analyze prajna paramita

respectively for others.

(The Buddha had taught in these paragraphs that superior merits and benefits will be gained by those who have wholeheartedly read, cultivated, learned, explicated, written, and lectured extensively on prajna paramita.)

"Furthermore, Kausika, if good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth are afraid of enemies, wild animals, disasters, evil prayers, plagues, poisons, and curses, they should write prajna paramita, the great spell king, place them in fragrant bags, and then store the bags in a treasure container. They will always carry them and make offerings respectfully to them wherever they go. Then all their fears will be gone, various heavenly deities, dragons, and virtuous ghosts will stay with and protect them, except when they must face consequences from past negative karma. Kausika, when humans or animals enter or approach the yard where the bodhi tree is planted, they will not be harmed by the humanlike nonhuman spirits. Why? It is because all Buddhas in the past, future, and present had sat, will sit, and are sitting there to attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. When attaining the bodhi, they will also kindly bring peace and happiness to sentient beings and relieve them free from fear, anger, and harm in body and mind. The same is true with prajna paramita. Where there is parjna paramita, all heavenly deities, dragons, asuras, and so forth will always keep and protect it. Kausika, where there is prajna paramita, there is the genuine pagoda. All sentient beings should pay homage to it, make best offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim it. Why? This is where all sentient beings take refuge."

In the meantime, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the Buddha again, "Suppose that some good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth have written prajna paramita, made various wonderful offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim it, and further made the most wonderful wreaths, spread fragrances, powdered incenses, clothing,

jewel necklaces, treasure banners, canopies, exquisite rarities, entertainment, music, and lamps as offerings to it. On the other hand, suppose that some other good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth have built a pagoda decorated with seven treasures after the Buddha passed into nirvana. They stored the Buddha's relics in a treasure container in the pagoda, made offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim it. They further made various most wonderful wreaths, spread fragrances, powdered incenses, clothing, jewel necklaces, treasure banners, canopies, exquisite rarities, entertainment, music, and lamps as offerings to them. Between these two groups of good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth, which one will gain more blessings?"

At that time, the Buddha replied to Heavenly Emperor Indra by asking him, "Let me ask you a question, and you may answer as you like. What do you think about this? Through which path of cultivation is the Thus-Comer able to attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, and gain the physical body that he will rely on?"

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, "It is through the cultivation of prajna paramita that the Thus-Comer is able to attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, and gain the physical body that he relies on."

At that time, the Buddha said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, "Yes, it is as you say. It is through the cultivation of prajna paramigta that I can attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, and gain the physical body that I have relied on. Why? Kausika, it does not make sense to say that one can attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, and gain the physical body that they will rely on without learning prajna paramita.

"Kausika, merely because of attaining the perfect major marks, the Thus-Comer will not be named Thus-Comer. It is through the realization and attainment of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge that the Thus-Comer is so named. Kausika, the Thus-Comer attains the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge mainly because of prajna paramita. To make this perfect knowledge persist, the Thus-Comer has cultivated and fulfilled the perfect major marks. Without the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, all heavenly beings, heavenly dragons, humans, and nonhumans will not make offerings respectfully and sincerely to esteem and acclaim the perfect major marks. That is why when I pass away and enter nirvana, various heavenly beings, dragons, humans, and nonhumans will make offerings respectfully and sincerely to esteem and acclaim my relics.

"Kausika, as some good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth write this prajna paramita, make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim it, they equally make offerings to the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, the perfect major marks embodying the Buddha, and the relics of the Buddha after entering nirvana. Why? Kausika, all these dharmas are all based on prajna paramita. Therefore, Kausika, if some good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth have written this prajna paramita and dignified it respectfully, and further made various most wonderful wreaths, and so forth, and lamps as offerings to esteem and acclaim it, while on the other hand, some other good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth build a pagoda decorated with seven treasures, place the Buddha's relics stored in a treasure container in the pagoda after Buddha enters nirvana, make various most wonderful wreaths, and so forth, and lamps as offerings to esteem and acclaim the relics, then the blessings gained by the former ones will be more than the latter ones by innumerable times. Why? Kausika, as the good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth make offerings to

prajna paramita, they equally make offerings to the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, the perfect major marks of the Buddha, and the Buddha's relics."

In the meantime, Heavenly Emperor Indra asked the Buddha, "Many human beings in the continent of Jambudvipa do not write prajna paramita and dignify it with various treasures. They do not make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim it, nor do they listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently and assiduously, and reflect reasonably on it. Don't they know that if they can write prajna paramita, dignify it with treasures, make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim it, wholeheartedly listen to it, and further accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently and assiduously, and reflect reasonably on it, they will gain various merits, virtues, and superior benefits?"

The Buddha replied to Heavenly Emperor Indra, "Let me ask you some questions, and you may answer as you like. What do you think about this? How many persons in the continent of Jambudvipa have achieved pure realization of the Buddha, the dharma, and the sangha? How many have attained stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, or arhat effect? How many have truly aspired to self-enlightenment bodhi? How many have truly aspired to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas?"

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, "In the continent of Jambudvipa, very few people have achieved the pure realization of the Buddha, the dharma, and the sangha. Fewer people have attained stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, or arhat effect. Fewer people have truly aspired to self-enlightenment bodhi. Even fewer people have truly aspired to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas."

The Buddha said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, "Yes, it is as you say.

“Kausika, in the continent of Jambudvipa, very few people have achieved the pure realization of the Buddha, the dharma, and the sangha. Fewer people have attained stream-entry effect, once-return effect, nonreturn effect, or arhat effect. Fewer people have truly aspired to self-enlightenment bodhi. Fewer people have truly aspired to the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas. Fewer people have cultivated and learned diligently and assiduously the bodhi actions after initiating aspiration to the bodhi. Fewer people have deeply believed in and accepted prajna paramita when cultivating and learning the bodhi actions diligently and assiduously. Fewer people have cultivated prajna paramita after they have developed deep belief in and accepted prajna paramita. Fewer people have dwelled peacefully in nonregression after cultivating prajna paramita. Even fewer people have realized the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi insightfully and quickly after dwelling in the state of nonregression.

“Kausika, if great bodhisattvas have dwelled peacefully in the stage of nonregression and continued to pursue the realization of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, they will be able to deeply and respectfully believe in and accept the fathomless prajna paramita, wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently and assiduously, and reflect reasonably on and lecture correctly for others on the fathomless prajna paramita. They will further make various most wonderful wreaths, spread and powdered fragrances, and so forth, and lamps as offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim the fathomless prajna paramita.

“Kausika, I have used my pure, unhindered Buddha eye to universally look at the boundless worlds in the ten directions. Although innumerable and countless sentient beings have initiated to aspire to the bodhi and cultivated the bodhisattva actions, only one, two, or three great bodhisattvas among them can dwell in the

bodhisattva stage of nonregression. Most of them have stayed far away from the expedient skillfulness of the fathomless prajna paramita, regressed and fallen into inferior intention and action of voice-hearer or self-enlightened one. Why? Kausika, the merits and virtues of the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi of the Buddhas are extremely difficult to realize. The sentient beings with inferior wisdom, laziness, tiredness, inferior diligence, and inferior definitive understanding are unable to realize and attain them.

(The Buddha said that most of great-vehicle practitioners in the worlds of the ten directions regressed and fell into inferior intention and actions.)

"Therefore, Kausika, if good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth have initiated an aspiration to the bodhi and cultivated the bodhisattva actions, and would like to realize insightfully and quickly the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi without hindrance, they should very often listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently and assiduously, and reflect reasonably on prajna paramita, They should teach about, and love to lecture for others on prajna paramita. They should further write and dignify prajna paramita with treasures and make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim it. Why? Kausika, these good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth should think, 'When the Thus-Comer was in the stage of the bodhisattva, he had cultivated and learned diligently the fathomless essential meanings of prajna paramita, so he could realize insightfully the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi. We should also cultivate and learn prajna paramita diligently and assiduously. Prajna paramita is our grand master; we should learn from it, so that all our wishes will be fulfilled perfectly.' Kausika, whether the Buddha stays in the world or enters nirvana, great bodhisattvas should always rely on the fathomless prajna paramita and cultivate and learn it diligently and assiduously."

(The Buddha urged great bodhisattvas should cultivate prajna paramita diligently as the Buddha did when he was a bodhisattva.)

In the meantime, Heavenly Emperor Indra asked the Buddha again, “Suppose that some good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth can wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently and assiduously, reflect reasonably on, and disseminate extensively for others the fathomless prajna paramita. Suppose that they have further written and dignified it with various treasures, and made the most exquisite wreaths, fragrances, and so forth, and lamps as offerings to esteem and acclaim the fathomless prajna paramita, then how much will these good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth be blessed because of this cause and condition?”

The Buddha replied to Heavenly Emperor Indra, “The blessings thus gained by these good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth will be innumerable, boundless, inconceivable, inestimable, and countless and cannot be described by similes.

“Furthermore, Kausika, suppose that the good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth, after the Thus-Comers passes into nirvana, have built a pagoda with exquisite seven treasures and decorated it magnificently with various rarities to store and pay homage to the Buddhas’ relics. Suppose that they have further made various best heavenly floral wreaths, fragrances, and so forth, and lamps as offerings to esteem and acclaim the relics, then what do you think about this? Will these good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth 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 to Kausika, “Suppose that some other good gentlemen,

gentlewomen, and so forth have developed belief in prajna paramita, and understand its fathomless essential meanings with respect, pure, and clean minds. To pursue the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, they have wholeheartedly listened to, accepted, embraced, read, recited, cultivated and learned diligently and assiduously, and reflected reasonably on the very profound essential meanings of prajna paramita. They have further disseminated extensively prajna paramita for other sentient beings. They have contemplated and investigated it carefully with intensified wisdom. To sustain the correct dharma to avoid its discontinuation, so that the Buddha eye will not be destroyed and terminated, the correct dharma will not be concealed, more bodhisattvas will be absorbed and grow, and the pure dharma eye of the world will never be destroyed and terminated, they have written this fathomless prajna paramita, dignified it with various treasures, made the most wonderful wreaths, spread fragrances, powdered incenses, clothing, jewel necklaces, treasure banners, canopies, rarities, entertainment, music, and lamps as offerings to esteem and acclaim it, then the blessings thus gained by these good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth will be much more than the former ones who have built pagodas to pay homage and make offerings to the Buddha's relics by innumerable and countless times.

"Furthermore, Kausika, let us put this aside at this moment. Suppose that the good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth, after various Thus-Comers pass into nirvana, have built pagodas with seven treasures and dignified them magnificently with the decoration of various rarities, filling the entire continent of Jambudvipa, the four continents, the small thousand-world, the medium thousand-world, or the large threefold thousand-world. Suppose that they have further made various exquisite heavenly floral wreaths, fragrances, and so forth, and lamps as offerings to esteem and acclaim the relics for the rest of their lives, then what do you think about this? Will

these good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth be much blessed because of this cause and condition?"

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, "They will be very much blessed, World-Honored One. They will be very much blessed, Well-Gone One."

The Buddha said to Kausika, "Suppose that some other good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth have developed a belief in and understanding of the profound essential meanings of prajna paramita with respect and pure and clean minds. In order to pursue the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, they have wholeheartedly listened to, accepted, embraced, read, recited, cultivated and learned diligently and assiduously, reflected reasonably on, disseminated extensively for sentient beings, and contemplated and investigated carefully with intensified wisdom the fathomless essential meanings of prajna paramita. Furthermore, in order to ensure that the correct dharma will never extinguish, the Buddha eye will never be destroyed and terminated, the correct dharma will never be concealed, more bodhisattvas will be absorbed and will grow, and the pure dharma eye of the world will never be destroyed and terminated, they have written the fathomless prajna paramita, dignified it with various treasures, made many most wonderful wreaths, spread fragrances, powdered incenses, clothing, jewel necklaces, treasure banners, canopies, rarities, entertainment, music, and lamps as offerings to esteem and acclaim prajna paramita, then the blessings thus gained by these good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth will be much more than those who have built pagodas in order to pay homage and make offerings to the Buddha's relics by innumerable and countless times.

"Furthermore, Kausika, let us put this matter aside at this moment. Suppose that all sentient beings in this continent of Jambudvipa, the four continents, the small thousand-world, the medium thousand-world, or the large threefold thousand-world

have, after the Thus-Comers pass into nirvana, each built a big pagoda to store and worship the Buddha's relics. The pagodas were built with seven treasures, dignified and decorated with various rarities. All sentient beings further made the wonderful heavenly floral wreaths, fragrances, and so forth, and lamps as offerings to esteem and acclaim the pagodas. What do you think about this? Will the sentient beings in the continent of Jambudvipa, the four continents, the small thousand-world, the medium thousand-world, and the large threefold thousand-world be much blessed because of this cause and condition?"

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, "They will be very much blessed, World-Honored One. They will be very much blessed, Well-Gone One."

The Buddha said to Kausika, "Suppose that some other good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth have developed a belief in and understanding of the fathomless essential meanings of this prajna paramita with respect and pure and clean minds, and in order to pursue the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, they have wholeheartedly listened to, accepted, embraced, read, recited, cultivated and learned diligently and assiduously, reflected reasonably on, disseminated extensively for sentient beings, and contemplated and investigated carefully with intensified wisdom the fathomless essential meanings of prajna paramita. Furthermore, in order to ensure that the correct dharma will never extinguish, the Buddha eye will never be destroyed and terminated, the correct dharma will never be concealed, more bodhisattvas will be absorbed and will grow, and the pure dharma eye of the world will never be destroyed and terminated, they have written this fathomless prajna paramita, dignified it with various treasures, made the most wonderful wreaths, spread fragrances, powdered incenses, clothes, jewel necklaces, treasure banners, canopies, rarities, entertainment, music, and lamps as offerings to esteem and acclaim it, then the blessings gained by

these good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth will be much more than those who have built pagodas in order to pay homage and make offerings to the Buddha's relics by innumerable and countless times.

"Furthermore, Kausika, let us put this matter aside at this moment. Suppose that the sentient beings in this continent of Jambudvipa were reborn as human beings simultaneously. In order to store and worship the Buddhas' relics after various Thus-Comers passed into nirvana, each of them built a pagoda with seven treasures and dignified and decorated it with various rarities. Such pagodas were as many as filling up the entire continent of Jambudvipa. Suppose that the sentient beings in the four continents were also reborn as human beings simultaneously. In order to store and worship the Buddhas' relics after the Thus-Comers passed into nirvana, each of them built a pagoda with seven treasures and dignified and decorated it with various rarities. The pagodas were as many as filling up the entire four continents. Suppose that the sentient beings in the small thousand-world were reborn as human beings simultaneously. In order to store and worship the Buddhas' relics after the Thus-Comers passed into nirvana, each of them built a pagoda with seven treasures and dignified and decorated it with various rarities. The pagodas were as many as filling up the entire small thousand-world. Suppose that the sentient beings in the medium thousand-world were reborn as human beings simultaneously. In order to store and worship the Buddhas' relics after the Thus-Comers passed into nirvana, each of them built a pagoda with seven treasures and dignified and decorated it with various rarities. The pagodas were as many as filling up the entire medium thousand-world. Suppose that the sentient beings in the large threefold thousand-world were reborn as human beings simultaneously. In order to store and worship the Buddhas' relics after the Thus-Comers passed into nirvana, each of them built a pagoda with seven

treasures and dignified and decorated it with various rarities. The pagodas were as many as filling up the entire large threefold thousand-world. All these human beings each carried various wonderful heavenly floral wreaths, fragrances, and so forth, and lamps as offerings to esteem and acclaim each of the pagodas for one kalpa or for a longer time. What do you think about this? Will the sentient beings in the continent of Jambudvipa, the four continents, the small thousand-world, the medium thousand-world, and the large threefold thousand-world be much blessed because of this cause and condition?"

Heavenly Emperor Indra replied, "They will be very much blessed, World-Honored One. They will be very much blessed, Well-Gone One."

The Buddha said to Kausika, "Suppose that some other good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth have developed belief in and understanding of the fathomless essential meanings of this prajna paramita with respect and pure and clean minds, and in order to pursue the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, they have wholeheartedly listened to, accepted, embraced, read, recited, cultivated and learned diligently and assiduously, reflected reasonably on, disseminated extensively for the sentient beings, and contemplated and investigated carefully with intensified wisdom the fathomless essential meanings of prajna paramita. Furthermore, in order to ensure that the correct dharma will never extinguish, the Buddha eye will never be destroyed and terminated, the correct dharma never be concealed, more bodhisattvas will be absorbed and will grow, and the pure dharma eye of the world will never be destroyed and terminated, they have written this fathomless prajna paramita, dignified it with various treasures, made the most wonderful wreaths, spread fragrances, powdered incenses, clothes, jewel necklaces, treasure banners, canopies, rarities, entertainment, music, and lamps as offerings to esteem and acclaim prajna paramita, then the

blessings thus gained by these good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth will be much more than those who have built pagodas to pay homage and make offerings to the Buddhas' relics by innumerable and countless times."

In the meantime, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the Buddha, "Yes, World-Honored One. Yes, Well-Gone One. If good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim the fathomless prajna paramita, they equally make offerings respectfully to esteem and acclaim the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge of the Buddhas in the past, future, and present.

"World-Honored One, let us put all the sentient beings in the large threefold thousand-world who built the pagodas with seven treasures to store and worship the relics of the Buddhas aside at this moment. Suppose that the sentient beings in as many worlds in each of the ten directions as the sands of the Ganges were reborn as human beings simultaneously. In order to store and worship the Buddhas' relics after the Thus-Comers passed into nirvana, each of them built a pagoda with seven treasures, and further dignified it with various rarities. The pagodas were as many as filling up all worlds in each of the ten directions. Each of these human beings carried various wonderful heavenly flower wreaths, fragrances, and so forth, and lamps as offerings to esteem and acclaim the pagodas for one kalpa or for a longer time. The blessings thus gained by these sentient beings were innumerable but not incomparable. On the other hand, suppose that some other good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth have developed a belief in and understanding of the profound essential meanings of prajna paramita with a pure and reverent mind. To pursue the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, they have wholeheartedly listened to, accepted, embraced, read, recited, cultivated and learned diligently and assiduously, reflected reasonably on, and disseminated extensively for sentient beings

the fathomless prajna paramita. They have contemplated and investigated it carefully with intensified wisdom. Furthermore, in order to ensure that the correct dharma will never extinguish, the Buddha eye will never be destroyed and terminated, the correct dharma never be concealed, more bodhisattvas will be absorbed and will grow, and the pure dharma eye of the world will never be destroyed and terminated, they have written this fathomless prajna paramita, dignified it with various treasures, made the most wonderful wreaths, spread fragrances, powdered incenses, clothes, jewel necklaces, treasure banners, canopies, rarities, entertainment, music, and lamps as offerings to esteem and acclaim prajna paramita, then the blessings thus gained by these good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth will be much more than former ones by innumerable, boundless, and countless times, beyond calculation and reasoning."

At that time, the Buddha said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, "Yes, it is as you say. Kausika, the merits and virtues gained by these good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth will be much more than the former ones by immeasurable, boundless, inconceivable, and inestimable times; even more than one can count and imagine. Why? Kausika, the fathomless prajna paramita can lead to the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge of the Thus-Comer, while the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge of the Thus-Comer can lead to the relics of the Buddhas.

"Therefore, Kausika, if good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth develop belief in and understanding of the profound essential meanings of prajna paramita with a pure and reverent mind; if, in order to pursue the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi, they wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently and assiduously, reflect reasonably on, lecture on and explicate extensively for sentient beings, and contemplate and investigate carefully with

wisdom the profound essential meanings of prajna paramita; if they can write the fathomless prajna paramita and dignify it with various magnificent treasures, and further make various most exquisite flower wreaths, spread fragrance, powdered incenses, clothing, jewel necklaces, treasure banners, canopies, rarities, entertainment, music, and lamps as offerings to esteem and acclaim them, so that the correct dharma will endure endlessly, the Buddha eye never discontinues, and the correct dharma never become obscure; and if, in order to absorb and receive the bodhisattvas and foster their growth, and ensure the pure dharma eye of the world to exist without decay, then the merits and virtues gained by these good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth, will be much more than those who have built pagodas to store and worship the relics by one hundred, one thousand, and so forth, and upanisadam times."

At that time, forty thousand heavenly sons in the assembly simultaneously said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, "Great immortal one, all should listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently and assiduously, reflect reasonably on, lecture on and explicate extensively for others, esteem, and acclaim the fathomless prajna paramita. Why? If one can wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently and assiduously, reflect reasonably on, lecture on and explicate extensively for others, esteem, and acclaim the fathomless prajna paramita, then all evil dharmas will diminish and decrease, and the virtuous dharmas will grow and increase."

At that time, the Buddha said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, "You should wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently and assiduously, reflect reasonably on, lecture on and explicate extensively for others, esteem, and acclaim this fathomless prajna paramita. Why? If the asuras and their evil gang members initiate this thought in their minds, 'We should start a war with the

Heaven of the Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens,' then you and all beings in various heavens must recite prajna paramita, make offerings to esteem and acclaim it with deepest sincerity. At that time, the evil thought will disappear immediately from the minds of the asuras and their gang members."

Meanwhile, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the Buddha, "The fathomless prajna paramita is a great supernatural spell, a brilliant spell, an unsurpassed spell, and an unequaled equal spell. It is the king of all spells. It is the noblest, superior, uppermost, and most exquisite one. It can subjugate all but cannot be subjugated. Why? The fathomless prajna paramita can extinguish all evil and not good dharmas and can fulfill all superior and virtuous dharmas."
(Heavenly Emperor Indra said that prajna paramita is the king of all spells. It can subjugate all evils and fulfill all virtuous dharmas.)

At that time, the Buddha said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, "Yes, it is as you say. Why? Kausika, the Buddhas in the past, future, and present had realized, will realize, and are realizing the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi based on this fathomless prajna paramita, the great supernatural spell, so they are able to turn the wonderful dharma wheel and deliver sentient beings. I have also relied on this fathomless prajna paramita, the great supernatural spell, to realize the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi and teach the unsurpassed dharma to heavenly beings and human beings.

"Kausika, because of the great supernatural spell, the fathomless prajna paramita, the path of the ten virtuous karmas, four meditations, four immeasurable minds, four formless concentrations, thirty-seven factors for enlightenment, six supernatural powers, and the rest of immeasurable and boundless Buddha dharmas correspondent with enlightenment have arisen in the world. Kausika, in summary, all

eighty-four thousand aggregates of virtuous dharmas appear in the world because of the fathomless prajna paramita. Kausika, all Buddha's perfect knowledge, natural perfect knowledge, and the inconceivable perfect knowledge appear in the world because of the fathomless prajna paramita. Kausika, bodhisattvas appear in the world because of prajna paramita. Because of the bodhisattvas, the enlightenment relevant paths of the ten virtuous karmas, four meditations, four immeasurable minds, four formless concentrations, thirty-seven factors for enlightenment, six supernatural powers, and the rest of immeasurable and boundless Buddha dharmas have appeared in the world. The bodhisattvas had appeared in the world when the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones were not available. The bodhisattvas had heard the dharmas equivalent to the fathomless prajna paramita and achieved the superior expedient skillfulness. The bodhisattvas were compassionate and merciful to sentient beings, so they established the enlightenment-related paths of the ten virtuous karmas, four meditations, four immeasurable minds, four formless concentrations, thirty-seven factors for enlightenment, six supernatural powers, and the rest of immeasurable and boundless Buddha dharmas. Kausika, as the full moon appears and shines brilliantly in the night times, the powers of the heavenly stars, and so forth, and the medicines are activated and will increase accordingly. When the Thus-Comers, Ones Worthy of Offerings, Perfectly and Universally Enlightened Ones entered nirvana and were not available in the world, the correct dharma became dim and invisible. During that time, it was because of the bodhisattvas that all exquisite actions in accord with the correct dharma remained active in the world until the reappearance of the Thus-Comers in the world. All expedient skills of the bodhisattvas are accomplished owing to prajna parramita. Therefore, prajna paramita is the root of all superior virtuous dharmas.

(The Buddha said to Kausika that various virtuous dharmas relevant to enlightenment, all kinds of wisdom, and bodhisattvas appear in the world because of the profound prjna paramita. All Thus-Comers realize and attain the unsurpassed bodhi based on prajna paramita.)

"Furthermore, Kausika, if good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth can wholeheartedly listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently and assiduously, reflect reasonably on, write, explicate, and disseminate extensively the fathomless prajna paramita, they will achieve merits, virtues, and superior benefits of and beyond the world presently and in the future."

(Great bodhisattvas can achieve the merits and benefits of and beyond the world through diligently learning, explaining, and lecturing prajna paramita.)

Meanwhile, Heavenly Emperor Indra asked the Buddha, "What merits, virtues, and superior benefits of and beyond the world will good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth achieve presently and in the future?"

The Buddha replied to Heavenly Emperor Indra, "These good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth will not be harmed by poisons, evil prayers, or curses. Neither fire nor water can harm them, nor can weapons or violence threaten their lives. They will not die because of any of the four hundred and four kinds of disease except in cases where negative karma from the past comes to fruition. Kausika, as they face lawsuit or oppression from enemies or robbers, wholeheartedly reciting prajna paramita will protect them from punishment and harm; adversaries will not be able to harm or expose their faults. Why? Kausika, it is because of the authority and powers that the fathomless prajna paramita intrinsically possesses. Kausika, if good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth would like to visit king, princes, and high-ranking officials, they will be warmly received and respectfully offered gifts. Why?

Kausika, reciting the prajna paramita can inspire loving-kindness and compassion in others. Because of this cause and condition, all negative situations, such as wilderness, perilous and dangerous places, evil nonhumans, and so forth will not harm them. Kausika, these good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth certainly will achieve such merits, virtues, and superior benefits in this lifetime.
(The merits, virtues, and benefits these good people will gain in this lifetime.)

"Kausika, wherever they are reborn, these good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth will not stay far away from the superior virtuous dharmas. They will not fall into negative destinies. They will bring benefits to sentient beings and realize and attain the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge step by step. Kausika, these are the merits, virtues, and superior benefits that these good gentlemen, gentlewomen, and so forth certainly will achieve in the future."
(The merits, virtues, and benefits these good people will gain in the future.)

At that time, many other-path celibacy practitioners came to the Buddha's place to find out his faults. Heavenly Emperor Indra saw what was happening, so he thought to himself, 'Now there are so many other-path believers coming to the assembly to find out the Buddha's faults. Won't it hinder prajna? I must recite the fathomless prajna paramita that I have learned from the Buddha to drive these evil ones away.' After Heavenly Emperor Indra recited the fathomless prajna paramita, all these other-path practitioners bowed and paid homage to the Buddha from far away, walked around the World-Honored One clockwise, and left immediately.

In the meantime, Sariputra thought to himself, "Why did they come and leave?"

The Buddha could read Sariputra's mind, so said to him, "Those other-path pursuers came to look for my faults. Heavenly Emperor Indra has recited prajna

paramita, so they left just when they arrived. Sariputra, I do not see that those other-path pursuers have any positive dharmas. They came merely with evil intentions to find my faults. Sariputra, I do not see that various heavenly demons and other-path pursuers can take advantage to do any harmful thing successfully when sentient beings are talking about prajna paramita. It is because the authority and strength of prajna are so powerful and overwhelming that nothing can destroy it."

At that time, the evil demons thought, "Today the Buddha is teaching prajna paramita. He is surrounded by four groups of followers. The heavenly beings from the realm of desire and the realm of form have also attended the assembly. In this assembly, it is quite certain that some great bodhisattvas will be conferred by the Buddha the prophecy of attaining the bodhi, and will soon attain the unsurpassed, perfect, and universal bodhi to turn the wonderful dharma wheel. It means that my country will become emptier. I should go and destroy the dharma eye." After having this thought the demons made four transformed armies and rushed aggressively and fiercely to Buddha's place.

Meanwhile, Heavenly Emperor Indra thought after seeing what was happening, "Won't the evil demons make these transformed things to harass the Buddha and hinder prajna paramita? Why? These four armies are so magnificently decorated that their appearance surpasses the armies of various heavenly kings, so they must be transformed by evil demons. The evil demons have for a long time tried to find out the Buddha's faults and destroy all superior things cultivated by the sentient beings. I should recite the fathomless prajna paramita to drive the evil demons away."

In the meantime, after having this thought, Heavenly Emperor began to recite the fathomless prajna paramita. Because of the authority and the power of prajna

paramita the great spell king, the evil demons were forced to leave.

In the meantime, innumerable heavenly beings from the Heaven of Thirty-Three Smaller Heavens made the transformed exquisite-sound heavenly flowers and spread them around the Buddha. The heavenly beings all joined their palms respectfully and said to the Buddha, “We pray and wish that this prajna paramita will dwell in the human beings of the continent of Jambudvipa forever. We also wish that this prajna paramita will disseminate extensively in the human beings of the continent of Jambudvipa. The triple gem, the Buddha, the dharma, and the sangha, will never extinguish in this world; they rather will continuously bring benefits to the world, so all sentient beings in this world will attain superior benefits, peace, and happiness.” (Heavenly beings expressed kind wishes, hoping that prajna paramita would persist in the world to benefit all sentient beings.)

At that time, each of heavenly beings again made transformed exquisite-sound heavenly flowers and spread them around the Buddha. All of them further said to the Buddha, “If sentient beings can cultivate prajna paramita, all evil demons and their followers will not be able to take advantage to find out their faults.”

Meanwhile, Heavenly Emperor Indra said to the Buddha, “If sentient beings are privileged to hear about the merits, virtues, and the name of prajna paramita, they must have made offerings to innumerable Buddhas, made great vows at various Buddhas’ places, and accumulated many virtuous roots so that they have such privilege. Only few virtuous roots will not suffice to give them this privilege, not to mention if they are privileged to listen to, accept, embrace, read, recite, cultivate and learn diligently and assiduously, reflect reasonably on, write, explicate, disseminate, make offerings respectfully to, esteem, and acclaim prajna paramita. We must know that these sentient beings have already accumulated inconceivable merits, virtues, and

wisdom. Why? To pursue the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge of the Buddhas, one should first pursue the essential meanings of prajna paramita. To seek great treasures, one should seek diligently and expediently in the big and deep ocean. So, if one would like to pursue the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, they should do it in the essential meanings of prajna paramita."

At that time, the Buddha said to Heavenly Emperor Indra, "Yes, it is as you say. The attainment of the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge by various Buddhas is accomplished because of prajna paramita. Therefore, it is said that prajna paramita is the superior root of Buddha dharma."

(The Buddha affirmed Kausika's statement that one should first pursue prajna paramita before pursuing the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.)

At that time, Joyfully Celebrating One asked the Buddha, "World-Honored One, why do you only admire prajna paramita? Why don't you admire giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, forbearance paramita, diligence paramita, meditation paramita, and the rest of merits and virtues?"

The Buddha replied to Joyfully Celebrating One, "I only admire prajna paramita because it is the leader of the other five paramitas and the rest of merits and virtues.

"Furthermore, Joyfully Celebrating One, what do you think about this? If one cultivates giving, pure precept, and so forth, and prajna without transferring them toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, can they be called truly cultivating giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita?"

Joyfully Celebrating One replied, "No, World-Honored One, the one can be called truly cultivating giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and

prajna paramita only when the transference toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge has been done."

The Buddha asked Joyfully Celebrating One, "What do you think about this? If one cultivates giving, pure precept, and so forth, and prajna without transferring the merits thus derived toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, can the results caused by this cultivation be called giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth?"

Joyfully Celebrating One replied, "No, World-Honored One. The results of the cultivation of giving, pure precept, and so forth, and prajna should be transferred toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge so that the results can be called giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita."

The Buddha asked Joyfully Celebrating One, "What do you think about this? If one cultivates the virtuous roots without transferring them toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, can they attain the perfect virtuous roots?"

Joyfully Celebrating One replied, "No, World-Honored One. The cultivation of the virtuous roots should be transferred toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge so that they become perfect."

The Buddha asked Joyfully Celebrating One, "What do you think about this? Can the virtuous roots be really transferred toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge if they are apart from prajna paramita?"

Joyfully Celebrating One replied, "No, World-Honored One. All virtuous roots can be really transferred toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge only if they are in accord with prajna paramita."

(The Buddha guided Ananda to the realization that all virtuous roots should be transferred toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge to become perfect,

while without prajna paramita, no such transference is possible.)

The Buddha asked Joyfully Celebrating One, “What do you think about this? Are the authority, supernatural powers, merits, and virtues of the fathomless prajna paramita conceivable?”

Joyfully Celebrating One replied, “No, World-Honored One. The authority, supernatural powers, merits, and virtues of the fathomless prajna paramita are inconceivable. The rest of virtuous roots are all inferior to it.”

The Buddha said to Joyfully Celebrating One, “Because of this cause and condition, I say that prajna paramita is the leader of the other five paramitas and the rest of merits and virtues. Because of prajna paramita, the other five paramits and the rest of merits and virtues can be fulfilled. Therefore, I have only admired prajna paramita. When I admire prajna paramita, I equally admire the other five paramitas and the rest of merits and virtues.”

At that time, Joyfully Celebrating One asked the Buddha, “How does one cultivate giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita and the rest of merits and virtues and undertake the transference toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge?”

The Buddha replied to Joyfully Celebrating One, “When cultivating giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita and the rest of merits and virtues, one should adopt nonduality, nonarising, and nonattainment as expediency to undertake the transference toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.”

The long-lived sage Joyfully Celebrating One asked the Buddha again, “When cultivating giving paramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita and the rest of merits and virtues, which kinds of nonduality, nonarising, and

nonattainment should be adopted as expediency to undertake the transference toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge?"

The Buddha replied to Joyfully Celebrating One, "When cultivating giving pramita, pure-precept paramita, and so forth, and prajna paramita and the rest of merits and virtues, one should adopt nonduality, nonarising, and nonattainment of matter, feeling, and so forth, and consciousness as expediency to undertake the transference toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge. Because the natures of matter, feeling, and so forth are empty, the emptiness of the natures of matter, feeling, and so forth is not different from giving, pure precept, and so forth. You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, because of the fathomless prajna paramita, the transference toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge becomes possible. Because of the transference toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge, the boundless merits and virtues of giving, pure-precept, and so forth can be fulfilled. Therefore, prajna paramita is the leader and the guide of all merits and virtues of giving, pure precept, and so forth.

(The Buddha taught that when great bodhisattvas cultivate the six paramitas and the rest of virtuous dharmas, they should adopt nonduality, nonarising, and nonattainment of various dharmas as expediency to undertake the transference toward the perfect knowledge of all perfect knowledge.)

"You must know, Joyfully Celebrating One, because of the combination of various conditions, seeds planted under the grounds will grow. The vast earth is where the growth of seeds relies, and because of the earth, the growth can be established. Similarly, the merits and virtues of giving, pure precept, and so forth grow and are established through prajna paramita. Therefore, I say that prajna paramita leads and guides the merits and virtues of giving, pure precept, and so forth. That is why I have

admired prajna paramita instead of the rest of merits and virtues. As I admire prajna, I equally admire the rest of merits and virtues."

(The Buddha explained why he particularly admired prajna paramita.)